Abstract

Female lute accomplishment and performance practices in early seventeenth-century England

by Sara Salloum

This study explores the pedagogy, performance practices, and accomplishments of women lute players in early seventeenth-century England and analyses the ways in which lute-related skills contributed to performative self-fashioning through musical accomplishment. The opening chapter explores ideas associated with female lute players through an analysis of depictions of female lutenists in visual art and poetry, and compares these symbolic and fantastical depictions with the reality of women's lute performance practices which took place within domestic spaces. The second part of this chapter develops a methodology incorporating practice-based research involving early seventeenth-century clothing in the context of personal historical reenactment experiences, shedding light on historical women's lute technique. A detailed case study on one particular female-owned source of lute music, the manuscript GB-London, Royal Academy of Music MS603 (known as the 'Margaret Board lute book') follows over the course of the following two chapters, and a range of aspects of this manuscript are explored. Chapter 2 presents new archival information about Margaret, her life and family, and explores what this information tells us about her lute book and the music contained within. In turn, aspects of the musical and social network encoded in the manuscript offer insights into the place of music in Margaret's life. Chapter 3 focuses on the lute lesson as it would have been experienced by a young gentry lady in the first quarter of the seventeenth century (explored through the Board lute book). Aspects of Margaret Board's lessons are reconstructed, and her theoretical and practical musical accomplishments investigated, via the practice-based analysis of her diligently notated symbols for ornamentation. The final chapter contains the critical commentary on the four pieces of creative-practice output which accompany the written thesis.

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Note on spelling

All spellings in quotations from primary sources have been modernised, with no changes to capitalisation. Contractions and abbreviations have been expanded.

Statement of copyright

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Introduction

If ever I am to mention that I have a career as a musician, I find a common follow-up question is for me to be asked what instrument I play. It is always a welcome inquiry, yet I tend to feel a little awkward when I must reveal that it is the Renaissance lute, worried that my acquaintance may not know what this instrument is. While I can be met with a blank look at times, those who are familiar with the lute are usually able to recall the instrument from when they have seen it pictured in Medieval, Renaissance, or Baroque artworks. It is unsurprising that depictions of lute players in art tend to stick in peoples' minds, as these images tend to be evocative and imbued with a sensuousness, or a frivolity, or perhaps a sense of grandeur and splendour, that is captivating to see. I also find that people recall the lute from where it has come up in popular media such as medieval-fantasy films, series, or video games. In these contexts, a male jester-like figure is typically presented, and he travels from inn to inn entertaining with instrumentals and songs. The character of 'Dandelion' from videogame *The Witcher 3* is a classic example of this lutenist-singer stereotype from popular media (figure 0.1). Unsurprisingly, these audiences tend to show a great degree of surprise when I reveal my research interest in female lutenists of the early modern period, often asking me: 'so… did women play the lute?'

Figure 0.1: 'Dandelion' from The Witcher 3, The Official Wicher Wiki (https://witcher.fandom.com/wiki/Dandelion).

I have always been frustrated by these such remarks, as many hundreds of remarkable pieces from the lute's English 'Golden Age' repertoire (c.1590-1630) survives due to the accomplished hands of female lutenists.[1] Furthermore, there is evidence to suggest that the lute came to be regarded as a 'woman's instrument' by the late seventeenth century; for instance, in his list of the commonly heard 'outcries' against the lute, Thomas Mace writes:

> The Fifth Aspersion is, That it is a Woman's Instrument.
>
> If This were True, I cannot understand why It should suffer any Disparagement for That; but rather that It should have the more Reputation and Honour.[2]

Female lute players were also prevalent in visual art from the period, illustrating the strong connection between women and the lute (which was both real and poetic/symbolic). As the most iconic instrument of the Renaissance, the lute was used frequently in visual art to communicate specific symbolic ideals or allegorical messages. Virtues included mathematical precision and the harmony of the spheres, but the lute could also be used to communicate many vices such as (when held in the arms of women in particular) the effeminising ecstasy of sound, and lewd insinuation.[3]

The current field of research on early modern lutes and lutenists

Current research relating to lute playing tends to revolve around the categorisation and discussion of the sources of lute music,[4] discussion of professional (male) composers of lute music,[5] and discussion of music pedagogy in Renaissance Europe. [6] However, research on women's lute performance

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[1] Julia Craig-McFeely, "Elizabethan and Jacobean lute manuscripts: types, characteristics and compilation," *Études Anglaises special issue: Early modern english manuscripts* 72, 4 (2019). In particular, see sections on 'non-professional copying' and 'pedagogical books', 375-7.

[2] Thomas Mace, ed., *Musick's Monument; or, A remembrancer of the best practical musick, both divine, and civil, that has ever been known, to have been in the world divided into three parts*, Early English Books Online Text Creation Partnership (London: T. Ratcliffe, and N. Thompson, 1676), 46.

[3] See Carla Zecher, "The Gendering of the Lute in Sixteenth-Century French Love Poetry," *Renaissance Quarterly* 53 (2000).

[4] See Julia Craig-McFeely, "English Lute Manuscripts and Scribes 1530-1630" (DPhil, University of Oxford 1994); Craig-McFeely, "Elizabethan and Jacobean lute manuscripts: types, characteristics and compilation." Matthew Spring, *The Lute in Britain: A History of the Instrument and Its Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006). Also, a vast number of articles from *The Lute Society Journal* categorise lute music, for example: Ian Harwood, "The Origins of the Cambridge Lute Manuscripts," *The Lute Society Journal* 5 (1963); John M Ward, "The Lute Books of Trinity College Dublin: II: Ms.D.l.21: The So-called Ballet Lute Book," *the Lute Society Journal* 10 (1968); Curtis A Price, "An Organizational Peculiarity of Lord Herbert of Cherbury's Lute Book," *The Lute Society Journal* 11 (1969).

[5] See, for example, the twenty-nine articles from *The Lute Society Journal* on professional male lute composers, many of these revolving around John Dowland, Daniel Bachelor, John Johnson, Thomas Campion, Thomas Morley etc. Also, see musical editions of lute music which compile music organised by professional composer, such as: John Dowland, "The Collected Lute Music of John Dowland ", ed. Diana Poulton and Basil Lam (Faber and Faber, 1998); Anthony Holborne, "The complete works of Anthony Holborne: Music for Lute and Bandora", ed. Masakata Kanazawa (Harvard University Press 1967).

[6] Evan MacCarthy's thesis on music and learning in Renaissance Ferrara explores the Italian renaissance approach to musical education and it focuses on the analysis of material evidence such as students' notebooks

practices is greatly unrepresented in this field of study. An illustrative example of this is how, of the fifty-seven volumes of *The Lute Society Journal* (spanning seventy-seven years from 1959 to 2016) a mere seven articles pay any regard women's lute practices (be they early modern or modern women).[7] This is curious when we consider that one of the most important figures of the lute's revival, and author of many Lute Society articles, was the female scholar and lutenist Diana Poulton.[8] Additionally, when it has come to the production and dissemination of contemporary sheet music, the tendency publish collected editions of lute music based on their connection with a professional male composer, with their titles defined by the composer, has meant that female lutenists from the early modern period have been inadvertently obscured from view (take, for instance, Diana Poulton's *The Collected Works of John Dowland* (1998), or Masakata Kanazawa's *The Complete Works of Anthony Holborne: Music for Lute and Bandora* (1967)). This emphasis on the professional male composer has permeated the world of early music despite the fact early modern women lutenists are so often the reason lute music has survived in such attentive and meticulous handwriting, as they copied them out into their lute lesson books. The time and labour invested in making amateur music books, and the social functioning behind these practices, is also an understudied area at present, though Glenda Goodman's book, *Cultivated by Hand: Amateur Musicians in the Early American Republic* (2020) has brought this subject to light within the context of eighteenth-century bourgeois amateur musicians from across the United States.[9] Many of the ideas and terminologies Goodman uses are directly applicable to early modern English pedagogical lute books, and her research has been informative to this study.

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while discussing the mentality on musical education in the court of Ferrara. Evan MacCarthy, "Music and Learning in Early Renaissance Ferrara, c. 1430-1470" (Harvard, 2010).

[7] See the full output of *The Lute Society Journal* (Renamed *The Lute* From 1982). Articles on the topic of women lutenists are as follows: David Scott, "Elizabeth I as Lutenist," *The Lute Society Journal* 18 (1976); Matthew Spring, "The Lady Margaret Wemyss Manscript," *The Lute Society Journal* 27 (1987); Tim Crawford, "A personal tribute to Diana Poulton," *The Lute Society Journal* 35 (1995); Martin Shepherd, "The interpretation of signs for graces in English lute music," *The Lute Society Journal* 36 (1996); Margaret Yelloly, "Lady Mary Killigrew (c. 1587-1656), Seventeenth-Century Lutenist," *The Lute Society Journal* 42 (2002); Ian Harwood, "Personal Recollections of Francesca McManus (24/12/1937-23/11/2007)," *The Lute Society Journal* 47 (2007); Anthony Bailes, "The Bowe that is too much bent, breaketh'; The pitch of Miss Burwell's lute, reconsidered," *The Lute Society Journal* 54 (2014).

[8] Diana Poulton (Edith Eleanor Diana Chloe Poulton née Kibblewhite, 18 April 1903 – 15 December 1995). English lutenist and musicologist. She was a pupil of Arnold Dolmetsch (1922–5) and became a leading member of the early music revival, playing a key role in the revival of the popularity of the lute and its music. For further information about her life and her contributions to the lute revival see Thea Abbott, *Diana Poulton: The lady with the Lute* (Smokehouse Press, 2013).

[9] See Glenda Goodman, *Cultivated by Hand: Amateur Musicians in the Early American Republic* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020).

Research on female education in the early modern period

In *A Room of One's Own*, Virginia Woolf wondered why so little information on Renaissance women survives:

> What I find deplorable, I continued, looking about the bookshelves again, is that nothing is known about women before the eighteenth century. I have no model in my mind to turn about this way and that […] I am not sure how they were educated; whether they were taught to write; whether they had sitting-rooms to themselves; how many women had children before they were twenty-one; what, in short, they did from eight in the morning till eight at night.[10]

While a vast amount of research has since been conducted on accomplished women of the past, and in particular continental European women,[11] Woolf's observation is still, sadly, apposite nearly a century on in relation to scholarship on women's musical education in England.[12] There is far less published research exploring English women's musical learning, or the precise details on how they acquired their learning. As Kenneth Charlton has argued in relation to women's education in general in England, the fact 'that some women in the past were 'learned', 'cultivated', 'educated' in the achievement sense, is not difficult to demonstrate', but 'precisely how they came to achieve that learning, by what means, at whose hands, is rather more difficult'.[13] While there has been significant research on the general education received by gentry sons in the early modern period, a similar study has not been conducted on gentry daughters.[14] In relation to music, Michael Gale's PhD thesis on men's lute pedagogy and practices in England c.1550-c.1640 has discussed the popularity of

[10] Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One's Own* (London: Hogarth Press, 1929). 48.

[11] The recent work of scholars including Tess Knighton and Laurie Stras has advanced our knowledge of women's musical education and accomplishment in continental Europe. See, for instance, Alessandra Franco, "Malleable Youth Forging Female Education in Early Modern Rome," in *The Youth of Early Modern Women*, ed. Elizabeth S. Cohen and Margaret Reeves (Amsterdam University Press, 2018); Barbara Bulckaert, "Self-tuition and the intellectual achievement of early modern women," in *Women, education, and agency, 1600 - 2000*, ed. Jean Spence (New York: Routledge, 2009); Kristine K. Forney, "A Proper Musical Education for Antwerps Women," in *Music Education in the Middle Ages and Renaissance*, ed. Jr Russell E. Murrary, Susan Forscher Weiss, and Cynthia J. Cyrus (Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2010); Laurie Stras, *Women and Music in Sixteenth-Century Ferrara* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018); Tess Knighton, "Isabel of Castile and her Music Books: Franco-Flemish Song in Fifteenth-Century Spain," in *Queen Isabel I of Castile: Power, Patronage, Persona*, ed. Barbara Weissberger (Woodbridge: Tamesis, 2008). Women's theatrical performance in pre-restoration England as a form of self-fashioning has also been fascinatingly explored by, among others, Karen Britland, Claire McManus and Sophie Tomlinson. English women's and girls' non-musical education has also been the subject of much-needed recent research by Orlagh Davies. See Karen Britland, *Drama at the Courts of Queen Henrietta Maria* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006); Clare McManus, *Women on the Renaissance Stage: Anna of Denmark and Female Masquing in the Stuart Court* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002); Sophie Tomlinson, *Women on Stage in Stuart Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Orlagh Davies, "'When She Went to School': Dramatic Representations of Female Education, c.1590-1730" (PhD thesis, University of Durham, 2023).

[12] A notable recent exception is Amanda Eubanks Winkler, *Music, Dance, and Drama in Early Modern English Schools* (Cambridge Cambridge University Press, 2020).

[13] Kenneth Charlton, *Women, Religion and Education in Early Modern England* (Taylor & Francis Group, 1999), 4.

[14] See Patrick Wallis and Cliff Webb, "The education and training of gentry sons in early modern England," *Social History* 36 (2011).

learning the lute within the context of Oxford University colleges (in which women could not at the time study), [15] but the context of women's learning the lute in this time period remains largely unexplored.

Musical proficiency – whether in relation to singing or performance on a select variety of instruments held to be appropriate – was one of the talents expected of well-educated and broadly accomplished young women of royal or noble birth.[16] Women of the leisured classes were expected to possess some skill in reading musical notation, singing, dancing and playing at least one musical instrument.[17] Generally, evidence suggests female music-making was restricted to private settings of the house or court, but also that the ability to play a musical instrument was particularly useful as a tool of courtship through which a young woman might make herself desirable to a gentleman. As Katherine Butler argues in *Music in Elizabethan Court Politics*, music's status as a social accomplishment, combined with its sensual connotations made it particularly alluring.[18] The English Scholar Robert Burton (1577-1640) even noted that music was 'the way their parents think to get them husbands', because 'to hear a fair young gentlewoman play upon the virginals, lute, viol, and sing to it, must needs be a great enticement.' [19] In relation to the lute specifically, the work of Butler and others on lute playing at the English Court tells us that an ability on the lute was a highly desirable ability for young women in this social context to possess.[20] Furthermore, Butler's research into music and court politics in Elizabethan England explores how Elizabeth I's patronage of the arts positively influenced English lute playing traditions, and this had a great influence on noble families.[21]

Therefore, the gap in knowledge on female lute education in England is an issue in obvious need of addressing: girls and young unmarried women formed a significant audience demographic for lute tuition as a whole in England. That lute playing was exceedingly popular amongst young women is also possible to deduce from surviving pedagogical manuscript sources, as well as printed music tutors (though, as some of these sources reveal, they tended to stop playing once they became

[15] Michael Gale, "Learning the lute in early modern England, c.1550-c.1640" (PhD thesis, University of Southampton 2014).
[16] Katherine Butler, *Music in Elizabethan Court Politics* (Rochester, N.Y.: Boydell Press, 2015), 17.
[17] Karin Pendle, "Musical Women in Early Modern Europe," in *Women and Music*, ed. Karin Pendle (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2001), 61.
[18] Butler, *Music in Elizabethan Court Politics*, 20.
[19] Robert Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy, what it is with All the Kinds, Causes, Symptoms, Prognostics, and Several Cures of it* (London, 1621), 580-6.
[20] Butler, *Music in Elizabethan Court Politics*, 19-20.
[21] Ibid., in particular see Chapter 1, 'Music, Authority and the Royal Image', 15-41.

wives).[22] Noblewomen and girls were key recipients of lute instruction within the English court and its noble satellite environment, and it is these women's manuscripts that preserve a great proportion of the music composed during England's 'Golden Age' of lute playing (c.1590-1630). This suggests that much of the pedagogical material circulating England would have been made very suitable for girls (perhaps even directed towards this young female market via their parents) though the specifics of this dynamic have not yet been given any attention.

An extensively explored research area has assessed the notion of 'the feminine' in relation to a more general musical practice in the early modern period, and this has shed light on women's musical practices more generally. Central to this research is Linda Austern's work on a variety of aspects of music and its connection with early modern ideas on femininity, including constructions of gender and attitudes toward women as well as the gendering of early modern music itself.[23] Austern's research discusses the arguments of Renaissance authors of moral philosophy and education who considered the physical power of music to be directly related to feminine beauty, the beauty of the natural world, and sexual allure. There is also a significant body of research on medieval and early modern ideas about women's bodies and sexual difference.[24] The interest of this study in relation to this research is how such ideologies influenced women's lute playing, particularly aspects of technique such as posture and the disposition of the hands upon the instrument. I explore the extent to which Renaissance notions of femininity impacted on young women's engagement with lute playing and on their musical educations.

[22] For example, '…when they have been married, have forgotten all, as if they had never known what a Lute had meant', in Thomas Robinson, *The Schoole of Musicke* (London, 1603), 5. The topic of women giving up the lute upon marriage further discussed in David Price, *Patrons and Musicians of the English Renaissance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 40.

[23] See Linda Austern, *Both from the Ears and Mind: Thinking about Music in Early Modern England* (Chicago The University of Chicago Press, 2020); Linda Austern, ""Lo here I Burn": Musical Figurations and Fantasies of Male Desire in Early Modern England," in *Eroticism in Early Modern Music*, ed. Bonnie J. Blackburn and Laurie Stras (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Ltd., 2015); Linda Austern, "Women's Musical Voices in Sixteenth-Century England," *Early Modern Women* 3 (2008); Linda Austern, "Portrait of the Artist as (Female) Musician," in *Musical Voices of Early Modern Women: Many Headed Melodies*, ed. Thomasin LaMay (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Ltd., 2005); Linda Austern, "Nature, Culture, Myth, and the Musician in Early Modern England," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 51 (1998); Linda Austern, ""Sing Againe Syren": the Female Musician and Sexual Enchantment in Elizabethan Life and Literature," *Renaissance Quarterly* 42, 3 (1989); Linda Austern, "Alluring the Auditorie to Effeminacie: Music and the Idea of Feminine in Early Modern England," *Music & Letters* 74 (1993).

[24] See Thomas Laqueur, *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud* (Harvard University Press, 1992); Gail Kern Paster, *The Body Embarrassed: Drama and the Disciplines of Shame in Early Modern England* (Cornell University Press, 1993).

Female agency in the early modern period

Early modern women who have been largely overlooked by historians thus far are those who, for the most part, aligned themselves with the gender norms of the time and sought agency and individuality as they operated and navigated from within a highly patriarchal social environment. In relation to the historiography of women's lives during the period in general, Martha Howell has pointed out that, in the last few decades, historians studying predominantly late medieval and early modern women have regularly used the framework of 'agency' to shape their studies of historical actors, but that 'the women in such studies are credited with agency because in some way they seem to have skirted or even reshaped the patriarchal structure of their day'.[25] However, Howell considers this a problematic use of the term 'agency' as, in some studies, women's capacity for agency is produced by a feature of the patriarchal structure itself.[26] Dympna Callaghan, who has explored representations of female agency in relation to class in the context of Shakespearean drama, argues that being able to assert agency is unavoidably dependent on multiple other factors: namely, race and class. As she writes: 'women are always marked by their social status'.[27] Callaghan further warns against the 'critical trend whereby some endeavours to ascribe female agency almost deny women's oppression altogether'.[28] When approaching my research into female lute students from wealthy gentry families (such as Margaret Board), maintaining an awareness of the privileges their class status afforded them cannot be ignored, though this is not to deny their subordination within their society more broadly.

> [There existed] restrictions imposed upon women as a group no matter what degree of [sometimes considerable] latitude they are able to achieve in the exercise of personal or political agency. This is because for feminism changing history does not mean denying or downplaying women's subordination in the past but rather changing the present by coming into a much fuller understanding of the history that has produced it.[29]

It is important to recognise that female agency can be achieved even from within a patriarchal regime, though, as in the instance of a woman like Margaret Board, that agency was often asserted in relation to an accompanying assertion of class privilege. Neither men nor women were able to free themselves entirely from these interlocking structures that permeated every aspect of society.

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[25] Martha Howell, "The Problem of Women's Agency in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe," in *Women and Gender in the Early Modern Low Countries, 1500 - 1750*, ed. Sarah Joan Moran and Amanda Pipkin (Brill, 2019), 21.
[26] Ibid. 22-5.
[27] Dympna Callaghan, *Shakespeare without Women* (London: Routledge, 1999), 8.
[28] Ibid.
[29] Dympna Callaghan, ed., *A Feminist Companion to Shakespeare 2nd Edition* (Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, 2016), xix.

Exploring these issues in relation to music specifically, Chiara Bertoglio argues that the lack of opportunities for professional musicianship for women in the sixteenth century is an 'objective fact', but we should remember that the possibility of choosing one's occupation freely and depending on one's talents and inclination was a comparative luxury for most men and women at that time.[30] Early modern Europe was an era in which women's access to education was limited and 'unofficial', in terms of women being unable to achieve named degrees or titles through their academic or artistic pursuits, yet the lives of a number of remarkable and well-educated women suggest there were avenues of high-level education for at least some women, and that the overall picture is, in reality, a complex one.

This is further complicated by the difficulty of identifying and locating the surviving sources with which to write such as history. Barbara Bulckaert has argued that the marginality, exclusion and secondary status of early modern women has meant that female achievement, since it was not always to be located within mainstream educational settings, therefore habitually lacks documentation and evidence.[31] Of course, this does not mean that education did not take place; indeed, the Board lute book represents a rare treasure and insight as it *does* document female education and achievement in extraordinary detail.

This study is focused on women who operated very much from within the patriarchal framework, but whose unpublished work demonstrates their agency in the form of their highly personal musical development. I would argue that female lutenists such as Margaret Board have been largely overlooked by scholars thus far due to the assumption that music played by women in private domestic settings is less interesting in comparison with sources of music created by professional, and male, musicians, and the further assumption that these musical women were passive receptors of the music of (male) others, and that they did not therefore contribute anything of significance to the wider musical culture of the period. (This also points to the predominance in music history of the past, at least, to privilege professional over amateur in studies of English music history of this period.) I seek to demonstrate in this thesis to what extent the opposite is in fact true. However, I remain attentive to the fact that women like Margaret Board's capacity to assert agency through musical accomplishment, however impressive, was ultimately governed and circumscribed by the patriarchal structures of seventeenth-century English society. As her lute book elegantly, yet elegiacally attests, her playing ended with her marriage. Margaret's position of economic and class privilege was also crucial in affording her the opportunities to develop her musical accomplishments;

[30] Chiara Bertoglio, *Reforming Music: Music and the Religious Reformations of the Sixteenth Century* (Boston: De Gruyter, 2017), 627.
[31] Bulckaert, "Self-tuition and the intellectual achievement of early modern women," 16.

in this study's third chapter in particular I highlight how that privilege, and the musical agency it afforded, necessarily came at the expense of those in less fortunate social circumstances.

Research context: key sources and originality

This study draws together existing research on printed and manuscript sources of lute music, lute pedagogy, and women and children in the early modern period, and combines this research with multiple forms of practice-based research to assess early modern English women's lute performance skills and accomplishments. The archival, musical and source-based research intersects in a two-way relationship with the practice-based experimental elements, and forges a new methodology for studying early modern English musical women. Auto-ethnographic approaches to performance are utilised as a research 'tool' in conjunction with the analysis of surviving literary and musical evidence, resulting in a deeper and more fully faceted understanding of the research area. Additionally, self-produced audio and video recordings bring research findings 'to life', demonstrating new methods of communication for academic research. The use of a practice-based methodology and the creation of multiple video and audio recordings as a form of research, demonstration, and communication is a key component of the originality of this study. Furthermore, it confirms the success, and therefore the validity. of research conducted in this manner. Thus, extending possibilities for further projects incorporating practice-based research.

This study focuses on four pedagogical English lute manuscripts[32] owned and produced by young women during the course of their private lute lessons.[33] The manuscripts in question are listed and detailed below (Table 1.1). One of these lute music sources, the manuscript known as the Margaret Board lute book (GB-London, Royal Academy of Music MS603), is the key focal point of this study from the second chapter onwards. The pedagogical source type, and particularly the Margaret Board lute book, is appropriate for several reasons: 1) Fingerings are most often notated consistently within this manuscript type, with great care and attention to detail. 2) These manuscripts are amongst the lengthiest surviving sources of English lute music, with some containing up to one-hundred works copied by a single hand. This gives the opportunity to review a wide selection of fingering examples used by a scribe and offers detailed information on the performance practice of individuals. 3) The musical and textual standard of pedagogical lute books is generally very high and, visually, they are

[32] Pedagogical books are those owned and produced by students of the lute. The English sources of solo lute music are contained in several different types of manuscript, of which Julia Craig-Mcfeely has differentiated between printed sources, scribal publications, fragments, teaching fragments, professional books, pedagogical books, household/personal anthologies, foreign sources with activity by an English scribe, and 'ghosts'. See Craig-McFeely, "English Lute Manuscripts and Scribes 1530-1630," 70.
[33] Ibid. 87.

very clearly presented.[34] My study will focus on the four pedagogical lute books listed as they were female-produced and owned, and additionally they are appropriate in terms of length, musical standard, and meticulousness of copying.

Table 0.1: Key manuscript sources of lute music explored in this study.

Source	Original owner and scribe	Copying date
US-Washington Folger-Shakespeare Library, Ms.V.b.280 (olim 1610.1)	Anne Bayldon (in part)	c.1590
GB-London, British Library, Eg.2046	Jane Pickeringe	1616
GB-London, Royal Academy of Music, MS603	Margaret Board	c.1620
GB-London, British Library, Add.38539	Margaret L.	c. 1620 (and one entry c. 1630-40)

In addition to these pedagogical lute books, this research consults four early modern instructional books on the lute (see Table 0.2), and analyses to what extent these texts and treatises discuss aspects of posture and technique, the language and metaphors used to talk about the desired sound of the lute, and on lute performance. This is the context against which observations from the pedagogical lute manuscripts are compared and discussed.

Table 0.2: Lute tutor texts and treatises explored in this study.

Text/Treatise	Author	Date
The Schoole of Musicke	Thomas Robinson	1603
Varietie of Lute Lessons	Robert Dowland	1610
The Burwell Lute Tutor	Mary Burwell (copyist)	c.1668-71
Musick's Monument	Thomas Mace	1676

[34] Craig-McFeely, "English Lute Manuscripts and Scribes 1530-1630," 70.

Research questions and thesis structure

Most broadly, this thesis seeks to answer the question: what was women's lute playing like in early seventeenth-century England? Through a combination of historical-musicological and practice-based research methods I aim to shed new light on the contexts in which women played the lute, exploring what music female lutenists played, what technique(s) they used, and what their lute lessons specifically entailed. I also seek to answer the overall question: how did lute playing fit into women's lives, and what was its purpose? Each chapter within this thesis focuses on previously underexplored evidence that reveals some answers to these questions.

Chapter 1 centres on female lute playing posture and technique in connection with early seventeenth-century female clothing. Part 1 of this chapter contains an analysis of depictions of female lutenists in early modern art (poetry and visual art), and Part 2 focuses on the realities of playing the lute (with an accurately historically reenacted technique) as a woman within a gentry household. Overall, this chapter asks: what can depictions of female lutenists in visual art tell us about lute performance and posture, and how does this compare with the physical reenactment of female lute performance? (Are the artistic depictions misleading?) To answer these questions, I analyse the clothing worn by women when playing the lute and assess what this clothing feels like today to wear and to play the lute in. Most specifically I ask: did structured and rigid undergarments worn by women in the period have an influence on lute playing and posture, and what does it feel and look like to use the 'table-top method' (detailed in Robinson's *The Schoole of Musicke* and Mace's *Musick's Monument*) for holding the lute while wearing this clothing?

Chapter 2 is a focused study on Margaret Board and her lute book. Part 1 presents new archival information about Margaret and the Board family of Lindfield, West Sussex, and Part 2 offers an analysis of the primary source of her lute book (pedagogical manuscript), exploring in detail what this source tells us about her musical life and network. I seek to answer the questions: who was the owner and creator of this early seventeenth-century lute manuscript, and what new details about her life and her family can I uncover? What evidence does the lute book provide about the musical education she received, and of the musical network she was a part of? What are the full contents of the Margaret Board lute book, and what makes this manuscript interesting and unique?

Chapter 3 focuses on the lute lesson received by a typical seventeenth-century female student, and this is explored through a case study on the 'graces' (ornaments) notated and performed by Margaret Board in GB-London, Royal Academy of Music, MS603. I seek to reveal new information about Margaret's education and musical accomplishment through my analysis, asking: what do Margaret's grace signs reveal about her lute education and her musical accomplishment? What do

her technical lute accomplishments reveal about her approach to music and her purpose for her lute playing? To contextualise Margaret's lute education, I explore the evidence in printed lute tutor books and other literary sources to interrogate what they tell us about lute pedagogy for gentry women in England more broadly.

The final chapter of this thesis contains a critical commentary of the creative outputs which accompany the musicological research detailed in Chapters 1-3. The commentary answers questions about how the initial ideas for my creative output were sparked, how they were developed, and how the resulting outputs demonstrate, reflect, inform and impact the research conducted on women's lute performance practices and education in early modern England. Specific questions I explore here are: how has the research influenced and informed my own performance practices, and vice versa – in what ways is my performance practice research in its own right? With regards to the specific pieces of creative output produced, I ask the questions: what information can be given about the clothing I am wearing in the filmed performance scenes? How does the setting influence my own performance practice? How were the ideas for my recorded album developed? What were my sources of creative inspiration, and why was the final piece of creative output installed onto a cassette mixtape?

The creative practice output which accompanies this thesis

A creative musical output was to be a central component of this practice-based project on female lutenists in early seventeenth-century England. Ideas on how to incorporate the creative element evolved continuously and greatly over the three-year period: beginning as the very basic idea to perform a single live lute recital, and transforming into something far more inventive, strategic, original and meaningful – to the research project, but also to me personally as a musician. The development and evolution of my research into female lutenists presented the opportunity for my creative practice to enhance the overall project in a way that went far beyond the presentation of a typical recital. I realised the potential to create evocative and communicative audiovisual works that would be both musically and visually artistic in their nature and designed to not simply reflect the research but demonstrate it in a way that connects with a broader audience. In this way, the resulting creative components contribute discoveries of great significance to the overall project, which the written thesis would not have been able to achieve by itself.

A personal and intensely original performance practice element was designed to both demonstrate and inform (with a transfer of ideas in both directions) the research conducted in Chapters 1-3 of the thesis. In connection with Chapter 1, which discusses the effect of early modern women's clothing on lute playing and posture, the creative output element is a collection of four precisely and attentively

reconstructed female lute performance practice scenes, filmed in accurate period clothing, and using the reconstructed 'table-top' method of holding the lute. In connection with the source study on the Margaret Board lute book which forms Chapter 2 of this thesis, the creative element comprises a thirty-minute selection of pieces from the manuscript which have been recorded and arranged into an original self-produced album. In connection with Chapter 3, on the topic of the lute lesson and markers of female accomplishment, the private lute lesson for a young lady is brought to life via the medium of an electroacoustic work, which incorporates dramatic readings from surviving seventeenth-century lute tutors, 'behind the scenes' audio from my own lute practice, pedagogical lute duets, and audio and insights from within lessons with my very own tutor: the internationally renowned lutenist Jacob Heringman. The album and electroacoustic work were ultimately combined to form sides A and B of a self-produced physical cassette tape/mixtape. The cassette mixtape is a physical artwork which combines music with visual and interactive art. The intention is for it to resemble a tiny version of the Margaret Board lute book; one that can be opened up and listened to (Side A). On the 'flip side' one can hear inside a lady's lute lesson (the electroacoustic work on Side B). This expresses two of the identities of the Board lute book: its identity as a musical collection manuscript valued for both its content and aesthetic appeal, and as a documentation of a course of private lute lessons. Overall, the creative outputs are artistic demonstrations of many of the ideas explored in my thesis. They reflect core themes of early modern women's lute playing, and aptly communicate these themes within a modern context, bringing both the creative practice and the research to a broader audience. Furthermore, the novel and original approach to this work significantly expands the possibilities (and proves the validity) of future research involving performance practice.

Chapter 1 : Female lutenists in visual and literary representations and in material history: a practice-based analysis of women's lute technique in early modern England.

The most iconic instrument of the Renaissance, the lute, inspired, alongside its female practitioners, many evocative representations in the visual arts, poetry, and music; yet, whilst these depictions communicated a multiplicity of ideas and ideals, as will be shown in this chapter, they did not convey realistic portrayals of musical performance. Some paintings expressed the overtly erotic connotations of women playing instruments, whereas others intended to capture the divine harmoniousness of a modest woman dedicated to her musical tuition. The image of a lute could symbolise modesty, mathematical precision, and the divine harmony of the spheres, but also the very opposite: the ecstasy of sound, or the suggestion of a pregnant belly.[35] This chapter first examines some representative portraits of female lute practitioners of the Elizabethan and early Stuart period; it then considers the realities and practicalities of playing this intimate and complex instrument and tackles the issues that arise when we view Renaissance images as realistic and representative of lute performance practice. Furthermore, the chapter draws upon textual pedagogical material: printed lute tutors such as Thomas Robinson's *The Schoole of Musicke* (1603), and female-owned pedagogical lute manuscripts such as the Margaret Board lute book,[36] to present evidence of how female lutenists were taught to hold and play the lute when practicing and performing within their own private chambers. The chapter then moves on to an autoethnographic account of my own historical-reenactment experiences at Bramhall Hall and Skipton Castle, where I utilised my expertise as a lute performer to both explore and demonstrate aspects of female lute performance practice. With regards to the autoethnographic research, the most striking and unexpected conclusion drawn was in relation to the undergarments worn (the 'bodies')[37] and their effect on lute posture. Popular opinion, derived largely from Hollywood, has led us to think of early modern undergarments as being uncomfortable, unnatural, and restricting. This is illustrated by countless magazine articles; according

[35] Carla Zecher, "The Gendering of the Lute in Sixteenth-Century French Love Poetry," *Renaissance Quarterly* 53 (2000), 772.
[36] Margaret Board, GB-London, Royal Academy of Music, MS603, c.1620-1625.
[37] I typically use the term 'bodies' (or a 'pair of bodies') in this thesis as this is what they were called at the during the first half of the seventeenth century in England, which is the time frame of primary focus in this research. The term 'stays' does not come into being until the late seventeenth century. For further info see Sarah A. Bendall, *Shaping Femininity: Foundation Garments, the Body and Women in Early Modern England* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2021). Additionally, see the online work of Sarah A. Bendall following her PhD research on the reconstruction of seventeenth-century bodies: "Dame Filmer Bodies, c. 1630-1650 Reconstruction," Material Culture, Dress and Fashion History, 16th July 2016, accessed 7th March 2024, https://sarahabendall.com/2016/07/16/dame-filmer-bodies-c-1630-1650-reconstruction-part-one-the-patern-materials/.

to *The Hollywood Reporter*, 'Emma Stone Says Her Organs Shifted While Wearing Corset in *The Favourite*, a 2018 costume drama set in Restoration England.[38] If we were to take this information at face value, we would naturally assume historical undergarments posed a barrier to music making, and that the musical women encased in corsets must have struggled physically when attempting to play a string instrument such as the lute. However, my personal experience of wearing bodies revealed something altogether very different. Working with historical reenactors led to my discovery that undergarments, if accurately tailored following early modern designs and materials, worked in close relationship with the well-documented Renaissance lute hold described by surviving English lute tutor books. My research method of a practice-based experience, or an 'embodied experience', was modern and original approach to this subject, and this has made it possible for me to draw this revelatory conclusion.

Part 1: The image of a lute: instruments and female players in visual art

Symbolism in early modern art

The so-called *Rainbow Portrait of Queen Elizabeth I* (fig. 1.1) excellently represents the usage and importance of symbolism in early modern English portraiture. It usefully contrasts with a miniature of Elizabeth playing the lute, and so contextualises more fully our understanding of depictions of lutes and lute players which follow in this chapter. The silent, spectacular visual symbolism of the *Rainbow Portrait*, commissioned by either Elizabeth herself or an advisor, was designed to dazzle, inspire and intimidate observers.[39] First and foremost, the rainbow she holds in her right hand (whose original colours have faded), clearly a fantastical, impossible gesture, is intended to represent peace and power over nature. The rainbow suggests that Elizabeth is the sun, the ultimate symbol of monarchy, and the Latin motto *non sine sole iris* (no rainbow without the sun) confirms as much. As Daniel Fischlin argues, 'there is strong evidence to support a reading of the portrait as primarily a political allegory, one whose religious dimensions underpin an iconographic representation of sovereign self-investiture'.[40] The alarmingly realistic eyes and ears which embellish the orange of her gown communicate the queen's power and influence. There is a threatening edge to them as they

[38] Lindsay Weinberg, "Emma Stone Says Her Organs Shifted While Wearing Corset in 'The Favourite'," *The Hollywood Reporter* (2018). https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/lifestyle/style/emma-stone-says-her-organs-shifted-wearing-corset-favourite-1155460/.

[39] Significant studies on the emblematic images of music include Julia Craig-McFeely's thesis chapter, *The Signifying Serpent: Seduction by Cultural Stereotype in Seventeenth-Century England* in "English Lute Manuscripts and Scribes 1530-1630" (DPhil, University of Oxford 1994), and Elena L. Calogero*, Ideas and Images of Music in English and Continental Emblem Books: 1550–1700*, Saecvla Spiritalia 39 (Baden-Baden: Verlag Valentin Koerner, 2009).

[40] Daniel Fischlin, "Political allegory, absolute ideology, and the 'Rainbow Portrait' of Queen Elizabeth I," *Renaissance Quarterly* 50 (1997): 177.

imply Elizabeth has her eyes and ears everywhere: she can see and hear all. They may also, in turn, convey that the world has its eyes and ears upon her. Another crucial point is that this work was painted in-or-around 1600, during what would be the final years of Elizabeth's reign when she was in her late sixties; yet the face appears flawless, ageless, and beautiful, 'the established Mask of Youth image of the Queen'[41] – far from what eye-witness accounts reported of the ageing Queen's face in reality. The Earl of Essex, Robert Devereux, for example, claimed to have encountered Elizabeth without the trappings of make-up and coiffure, and found 'an old woman […] no less crooked in mind than in body'.[42]

Figure 1.1: Attributed to Isaac Oliver (1556–1617) or Marcus Gheeraerts the Younger (1561–1636). *The Rainbow Portrait of Queen Elizabeth I*, c. 1600/1602. Oil on canvas, 1270 × 991mm. Collection of the Marquess of Salisbury, on display at Hatfield House, Hertfordshire.

[41] Roy Strong, *Gloriana: The Portraits of Queen Elizabeth I* (London: Thames & Hudson Ltd, 1987), 161.
[42] As quoted in Tracy Borman, *The Private Lives of the Tudors* (New York: Grove Press, 2017), 1-2.

In private seclusion, the natural body of Elizabeth offered a stark contrast to the queenly perfection she achieved through her courtly finery. Overall, it is clear from this example just how far removed from reality paintings in this period could be, but also that naturalism was never the intention. Elizabeth and her closest advisors policed the public image of the queen with the utmost care: her ageless representations that circulated in the realm sought to assure the people of England of timeless stability.[43] The strategic purpose of images and portraits was thus not necessarily in accordance with reality. This is crucial to remember in musical portraiture, beginning with Nicholas Hilliard's famous miniature of Queen Elizabeth I playing a lute (fig. 1.2).

Figure 1.2: Nicolas Hilliard (c. 1547-1619), *Queen Elizabeth I Playing the Lute*, c. 1580. Vellum on card, 48mm x 39mm. Berkeley Castle, Gloucestershire.

None of Elizabeth's great state paintings on display in palaces, nor any of her portraits which circulated in printed copies, show her with a lute. Hilliard's work is small and intimate, and was intended for private appreciation. It belonged to Henry Carey, Lord Hunsdon, and was probably gifted to him by Elizabeth.[44] A young woman playing the lute was frequently used to depict intimacy in the Renaissance; this explains Hilliard's motif. At the same time, any hint at sensuality is carefully balanced. Hilliard clearly made every effort to distance Elizabeth from any overtly sexual associations that would have negatively affected her royal status, as Katherine Butler's analysis of this miniature affirms.[45] Elizabeth's clothing speaks a silent language: her dress (which would have originally dazzled

[43] A point comprehensively made in Strong, *Gloriana: The Portraits of Queen Elizabeth I*.
[44] Hunsdon was Elizabeth's cousin and the Carey family would have seen Elizabeth play for recreation in her private apartments, see Katherine Butler, *Music in Elizabethan Court Politics* (Rochester, N.Y.: Boydell Press, 2015), 42.
[45] Ibid., 15.

in a silver leaf, now blackened by tarnishing) with a closed neckline and high ruff conveyed wealth and majesty in both its colour and design. Importantly, the lightness of the lute exercise contrasts with the backdrop of the black throne decorated symmetrically with crowned globes.[46] The latter's inclusion is no accident and reminds the viewer of the powerful identity of the royal sitter, showcased in full decorum. This is a Queen who makes herself heard by the world's ears, albeit in an entirely different way to those that decorate the Queen's mantle in the *Rainbow Portrait*.

The image of a lute

The image of a lute on its own could have very specific meanings, as can be seen in *The Ambassadors*, the masterful double portrait of Jean de Dinteville and Georges de Selve (fig. 1.3). It was the most famous work created by German-born Hans Holbein the Younger, who was welcomed into England by Sir Thomas More in 1526. The life-size panel, painted in London in 1533, captures the state of England within the Renaissance world. Two French ambassadors to England, some of the most powerful men in Europe, stand next to an assortment of objects that signify knowledge, discovery and the arts. A globe, positioned to show the 'new world', is placed alongside a lute, a Turkish rug, an astronomical globe, and a selection of mathematical instruments which references music as one of the mathematical sciences and part of the Quadrivium.[47] Medieval understandings of music as a mathematical discipline were further developed by Renaissance thinkers in accordance with humanistic thought, and this is reflected in the objects presented. The direct analogy between music and maths is illustrated by Thomas Robinson in The *Schoole of Musicke* (1603):

> But of necessity, a Musician must be a perfect Arithmetician, for that Music consisteth altogether of true number, and proportion, and thus, at this so chief, and necessary science of Arithmetic, I hold it best to stay the process of Music, as touching the necessity of other than these, which I have mentioned to be fit in a good Musician.[48]

The objects in Holbein's *The Ambassadors* convey a world of new discovery, but they also reference the chaos of England's gradual separation from the Catholic church in the year leading up to the Act of Supremacy (1534). Across the lower part of the painting a distorted image reveals itself as a skull - a memento mori - when viewed from the correct angle, and a close examination of the lute (the detail is quite extraordinary) reveals one of its strings is broken. This inverts the meanings usually associated with the lute: rather than divine musical perfection and concordance, we are instead reminded of a horrid *dis*cord. Furthermore, Barbara Russano Hanning has shown that the lute was often used a symbolically in vanitas paintings as an 'emblem of decay' as its 'sound is so fragile that it

[46] Butler, *Music in Elizabethan Court Politics*, 15.
[47] See Roger Bray, "Music and the Quadrivium in Early Tudor England " *Music & Letters* 76 (1995).
[48] Thomas Robinson, *The Schoole of Musicke* (London, 1603), sig. Br.

evaporates almost instantly'.[49] Thus a depiction of the instrument is also able to suggest the transience of human activity more generally. As Vanessa Agnew has commented: 'These objects [depicted in *The Ambassadors*] represent the tools of the ambassadorial trade', with music's role of connoting, and creating political harmony suggested by the musical instruments represented.

> But they also point to another set of meanings. In addition to the visually encrypted skull, we see that the lute has a broken string and that the flute is disassembled in its case—all early modern allegories for *vanitas*. Music, one might say, puts the ambassadors' command of the world into larger perspective by reminding the viewer of the insignificance and impermanence of worldly endeavours.[50]

As every lutenist will know, the delicate gut stings of the lute are rather prone to breaking. Thus, the use of a lute string to symbolically depict both the precariously close relationship between political creation and destruction through metaphor of musical harmony and discord, and the transitory nature of mortal existence and undertakings through the figure of the lute's rapidly decaying resonance, is rather ingenuous as well as sublimely poetic.

[49] Barbara Russano Hanning, "Some Images of Monody in the Early Baroque," in *Con Che Soavita: Studies in Italian Opera, Song, and Dance, 1580-1740*, ed. Iain Fenlon and Tim Carter (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 1-12; here, 7.
[50] Vanessa Agnew, *Enlightenment Orpheus: The Power of Music in Other Worlds* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 80.

Figure 1.3: Hans Holbein (c.1497-1543), *The Ambassadors*, 1533, and lute detail. Oil on oak, 2070 × 2095mm. National Gallery, London.

The broken lute string as a poetic expression also features in Andrea Alciato's emblem book *Emblematum liber* (1531). The text here makes a connection between the lute (or simply music) and the emotions, or the 'humours' of the body. As Butler points out, images equating lutes and men's hearts were common in such emblem books, often punning on the Latin words *cor* (heart) and *cordae* (strings).[51] Additionally, The expression of building political alliance within the poem resonates with the concerns of Holbein's *Ambassadors*.

Exiliens infans ſinnoſi è faucibus anguis,
Eſt gentilitijs nobile ſtemma tuis.
Talia Pelleum geſiſſe nomiſmata regem,
Vidimus, hisq; ſuum concelebrare genus.
Dũ ſe Ammone, fatum matrẽ anguis imagine luſam,
Diuini & ſobolem ſeminis eſſe docet.
Ore exit tradunt ſic quoſdam eniter angues,
An quia ſic Pallas de capite orta Iouis.

FOEDERA ITALORVM.

Hanc cytharam á lembi, que forma halieutica fertur
Vendicat & propriam muſa latina ſibi.
Accipe Dux, placeat noſtrũ hoc tibi tempore munus
Quo noua cum ſocijs fœdera iure paras.
Difficile eſt niſi docto homini tot tendere chordas,
Vnáq; ſi fuerit non bene tenta fides.

Ruptaue (q, facile eſt) perit omnis gratia cõchæ,
Illæq; præcellens cantus ineptus erit.
Sic Itali coeunt proceres in fœdera, concors,
Nil eſt quod timeas ſi tibi conſtet amor.
At ſi aliquis deciſcat (uti plerunq; uidemus,
In nihilum illa omnis ſoluitur harmonia.

IN SILENTIVM.

Cum tacet haud quicquam differt ſapientibus amens
Stulticiæ eſt index linguaq; uoxq; ſuæ.
Ergo premat labias digitoq; ſilentia ſignet
Et ſeſe pharium uertat in Harpocratem.

ETIAM FEROCISSIMOS DOMARI.

A 3

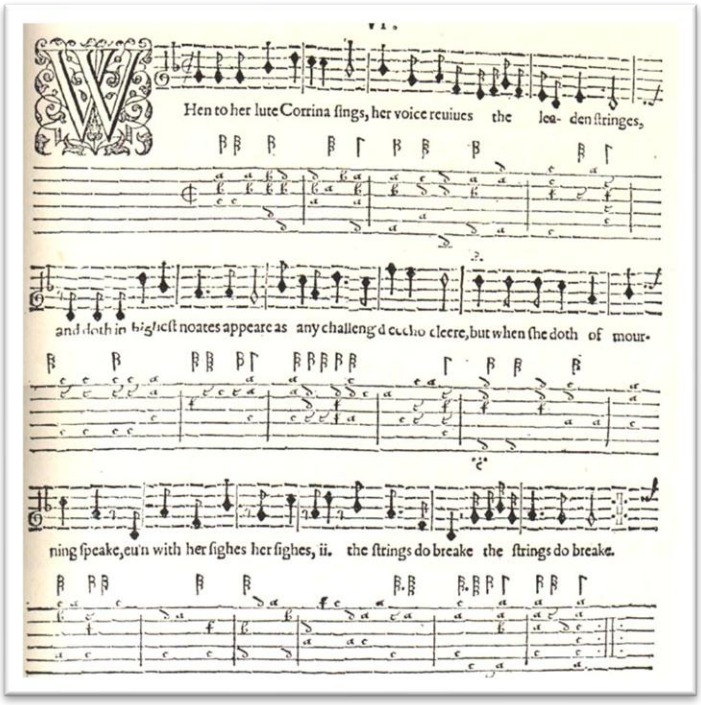
Figure 1.4: Andrea Alciato, *Emblematum liber* (Augsburg, 1531), sig. A2v-A3r.

[…] When you contrive to forge new allegiances with allies.
It is difficult except for a wise man to pull so many strings,
And if one string should not be tuned well.
Or broken (which is easy to do) all the grace of the instrument [shell] dies,
And that excellent song will be unpleasant.[52]

[51] Butler, *Music in Elizabethan Court Politics*, 9.
[52] Translation mine, with thanks to Dr Joe Lockwood for his assistance. Andrea Alciato, *Emblematum liber* (Augsburg, 1531), sig. A2v-A3r.

Lutes in the hands of women

An example which aptly shows the symbolic complexity at play within representations of specifically female lutenists is the song 'When to her lute Corrina sings' by Thomas Campion (fig. 1.5). The poem describes a female performer, Corrina, who is singing whilst accompanying herself on the lute. A listener, probably male, describes both the beauty of her performance and the way her playing is able to influence his emotions. The poetry is sensual, yet it also alludes to the positive inspiration of love that was associated with both women and music in the early modern period. This is suggested by the conceit that through her natural singing voice and musical giftedness she wields the ability to either 'revive' or 'break' the otherwise inanimate strings of the lute. The speaker in Campion's poem also likens the strings of the lute which Corrina is playing to their own heart strings, which conveys the pain and intimacy of the situation, and closely links the female lute performance with the onlooker's mind, body and spirit. Thus, throughout the poem it is indicated that both women and music have the power to influence the emotions of a (male) listener. Interestingly, the poem emphasises not the dangers of a seductive siren-like female musician, but rather the emotional and physical feelings she is able to arouse, in a way that is presented in an overall positive light. Corrina's clear and reviving voice is refreshing and pleasing to the listener, and the musical setting colours this language appropriately, with the poem's 'highest notes' which 'echo clear' appearing when the voice reaches its registral extreme, 'her sighs' written into a pattern of rising fourths, the musical break in the melodic line on the word 'the' at the final cadence, and the lute imitating the sound of a lute string breaking when the 'strings do break'.



When to her lute Corrina sings,
Her voice revives the leaden strings,
And doth in highest notes appear,
As any challeng'd echo clear;
But when she doth of mourning speak,
Ev'n with her sighs the strings do break.

And as her lute doth live or die,
Led by her passion, so must I,
For when of pleasure she doth sing,
My thoughts enjoy a sudden spring,
But if she doth of sorrow speak,
Ev'n from my heart the strings do break.

Figure 1.5: Thomas Campion, 'When to her lute Corrina sings' from *A Book of Ayres* (1601).

The poem encapsulates a very positive presentation of the tropes associated with a female musician in the period; however, this was not always the case. Butler has shown that, paradoxically, female musicians were attacked by many early modern writers for inciting lust and were often compared with prostitutes and the sirens of ancient mythology.[53] As Linda Austern writes, well into the seventeenth century the 'lustful woman was regarded as the incarnation of evil by English writers', and 'feminine sexuality of any sort, especially the forbidden self-expression of feminine desire, was associated with sin and damnation'.[54] Austern also discusses music and its connection with early modern ideas on femininity, attitudes toward women, and the gendering of early modern music itself.[55] She also discusses the positive ideas which surrounded female musical performance, and argues both femininity and music were associated with spiritual transport.[56]

This positive framing of a female musician and the charm of music in Campion's poem derives largely from the lute's connection with classical antiquity, which was one of its most prominent symbolic

[53] Butler, *Music in Elizabethan Court Politics*, 23-4.
[54] Linda Austern, ""Sing Againe Syren": the Female Musician and Sexual Enchantment in Elizabethan Life and Literature," *Renaissance Quarterly* 42, 3 (1989), 422.
[55] Linda Austern, "Women's Musical Voices in Sixteenth-Century England," *Early Modern Women* 3 (2008), 127-52.
[56] See Austern, ""Sing Againe Syren": the Female Musician and Sexual Enchantment in Elizabethan Life and Literature."

associations. Educated early modern audiences were aware of the lute's place in mythological stories, where the instrument often appeared to have magical properties; Orpheus, for example, charmed monsters of the underworld with his lyre or 'lute' (the words were often used interchangeably in early modern texts that engaged with classical legacies). Indeed, the mid-seventeenth-century instructional manuscript for the lute known as the *Burwell Lute Tutor* (a pupil's copy of a sixty-eight-page long treatise on the lute, probably originally written by a lute master, and copied in longhand by the noblewoman Miss Mary Burwell in c.1668-71)[57] makes this exact reference: 'The pagan antiquity […] hath made gods of those that hath been the first inventors of the lute', and that '[they] will have us believe that Orpheus delivered his wife Euridice from the captivity and the pains of Hell by the charms of his lute'.[58]

Lutes played by women, were perceived as having a similarly quasi-magical charming effect on early modern men, as the following comment by Constantijn Huygens, after witnessing a private musical performance by Mrs Mary Killigrew[59] during a visit, suggests:

> …from that snow white throat such a song, sounding not mortal but *celestial*, blended itself with the lute, and, you may say, with a truly *Thracian* thumb on the lively strings.[60]

Constantijn Huygens (musician, poet, diplomat and father of the physicist and astronomer Christiaan Huygens) was a constant and welcome visitor and the Killigrew's house in London in 1621 and 1622.[61] His use of the word 'Thracian' again connects the modern lute with the classical myth of Orpheus and the persuasive power of music.[62] Additionally, his word-choice of 'celestial' reveals his feeling that Mary's musical ability was somewhat magical and/or spiritual in quality. In this way, Huygens' comments on Mary Killigrew's playing emphasises the positive virtues of music and how it

[57] Robert Spencer suggests that the *Burwell Lute Tutor* is a pupil's copy of a method likely written by the lutenist and teacher John Rogers (d. 1676), who was in turn a pupil of Ennemond Gautier (c. 1575 - 1651). Spencer also says it is possible the method was copied by either Mary or her mother, Elizabeth Burwell. See Spencer, Introductory study to the *Burwell Lute Tutor*. Thurston Dart argues Mary Burwell was the sole copyist and has pinpointed the time of copying to the years between 1668 and 1671 and– its completion coming one year before Mary's marriage. Dart also argues the lute tutor cannot be identified with any confidence. See Thurston Dart, "Miss Mary Burwell's Instruction Book for the Lute," *The Galpin Society Journal* 11 (1958): 5-6.
[58] Dart, "Miss Mary Burwell's Instruction Book for the Lute," 9.
[59] Mary Killigrew was the wife of Sir Robert Killigrew (c.1579-1633), diplomat and member of an old Cornish family. See Margaret Yelloly, "Lady Mary Killigrew (c. 1587-1656), Seventeenth-Century Lutenist," *The Lute Society Journal* 42 (2002), 30.
[60] Jonckbloet. W L. A., et Land, J.P. N., *Musique et Musiciens au XVIIe Siecle, Correspondance et oeuvre musicale de Constantijn Huygens* (Leyde, 1882) CCXXVI. Translation in Yelloly, "Lady Mary Killigrew (c. 1587-1656), Seventeenth-Century Lutenist." 27. Emphasis mine.
[61] Yelloly, "Lady Mary Killigrew (c. 1587-1656), Seventeenth-Century Lutenist," 27.
[62] The mythological musician Orpheus was by tradition a native of Thrace (a region of Southeast Europe and Asia Minor [modern Turkey].

can connect one with the love and grace of the divine. This notion is argued fervently by the *Burwell Lute Tutor*, for example, in specific connection with the lute:

> […] celestial melodies […] this admirable music which warmed the hearts of the Shepherds in the dead of Winter […] Lutes and voices […] kindled their Souls with so fervent a so devout a zeal that they did run without wavering to the Manger.[63]

The connection with the ancient world is a notion also thoroughly detailed within the *Burwell Lute Tutor's* opening chapter on the 'divine origins' of the lute:

> If we consider the excellency of the Lute whereof we shall make a whole discourse hereafter or if we trust piously the Divines we shall easily believe that the Lute hath his derivation from heaven in effect that had the happiness to be present at the birth of the Incarnate word.[64]

In the same manner, the lute in the hands of the poetic character Corrina inspires a sense of heavenly grace and conveys spiritual or quasi-magical ability.

While Campion's intelligent setting aligns with courtly music of the period, the poem does not fail to include the erotic codes associated with female lute playing. The poem is sexually suggestive in the second stanza as the speaker implies Corrina not only has the ability to manipulate the lute, but also that with the lute in her hands, she has the ability to influence the passions of her observer-listener. For example, the line 'And as her lute doth live or die / Led by her passion, so must I', alludes to the arousal of sexual pleasure. To 'die' references 'le petit mort' or 'little death', which refers specifically to the sensation of orgasm that was likened to death.[65] The inclusion of such a euphemism is highly typical for this musical-poetic genre. While Scott Trudell's scholarship highlights the existence of a modest number of English lute songs written in the female voice,[66] Pamela Coren argues that, overall, lute songs overwhelmingly conveyed male fantasies of a woman, depicting them as objects of desire; in her view, such songs were largely designed for man's pleasure.[67] Austern has similarly argued that music from virtually every secular genre offered a range of expression of male sexuality and male fantasy that provided 'a safe outlet for erotic urges, means to reinforce the rhetoric of courtship and the reaffirmation of patriarchal codes'.[68] Unsurprisingly, these works so often involve sexually-charged images, where the spiritual and the erotic are ever entangled.

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[63] Dart, "Miss Mary Burwell's Instruction Book for the Lute," 7.
[64] Ibid.
[65] "s.v. petit mort (n.)," in *Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford University Press, 2023).
[66] See Scott Trudell's chapter "Performing Women in English Books of Ayres" in Leslie C. Dunn and Katherine R. Larson, ed. *Gender and Song in Early Modern England* (London: Routledge, 2014): 1-16.
[67] Pamela Coren, "Singing and Silence: Female Personae in the English Ayre'," *Renaissance Studies* 16 (2002), 541.
[68] Austern, ""'Lo here I Burn": Musical Figurations and Fantasies of Male Desire in Early Modern England," in *Eroticism in Early Modern Music*, ed. Bonnie J. Blackburn and Laurie Stras (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Ltd., 2015), 180.

Images of female lutenists and erotic codes

Depictions of female lute playing in Continental European sources could have connotations of sexual pleasure, and might be located in humorous or bawdy surroundings. For instance, this mid-sixteenth-century example by Frans Huys presents a lewd joke within the setting of a lute maker's workshop (fig. 1.6). The act of re-stringing the lute is used as a euphemism, as indicated by the caption which underlines a scene depicting several undesirable women lining up and demanding to be 'serviced' by the lute maker.

Figure 1.6: Frans Huys (1522-62), *The Lute-Maker*, c.1550. Engraving, 291 x 430mm. Stedelijk Prentenkabinet, Antwerp.

> Meester ian slecht hoot, wilt mijn lviite versnaren – ick en sal vrou langnvese, laet mii ongeqvelt.
> Want ick moetse, voor modder miilken bewaren – die hadde haer lvitte, oock seer geerne gestelt.
>
> Master Jan Bad Head, please restring my lute - I will do it Mistress Longnose, then leave me be. I have to save myself for Mother Slipper – she also likes to have her lute tuned.[69]

Richard Leppert argues the lute had become associated with procuresses and prostitutes by the seventeenth century and was used symbolically to indicate their profession[70]. As Carla Zecher further argues, by the middle of the seventeenth century lute playing had become a metaphor for sex, and

[69] Translation mine, with my thanks to Sarah Wauters and David van Edwards for their assistance.
[70] Richard Leppert, *The Sight of Sound. Music, Representation and the History of the Body* (CA: Berkeley, 1993), 60.

additionally the Flemish word for lute (luit) was also the word for 'vagina'.[71] This explains the abundance of artworks from the Low Countries presenting prostitutes holding lutes: take, for instance, the prolific seventeenth-century Dutch painter Gerrit van Honthorst who commonly depicted female lute players in highly suggestive situations and poses. His portrayals of musicians were most commonly mixed ensembles of both men and women in colourful dress within scenes of joyous music making, and he also painted solo female lute players (see figures 1.7 and 1.8 below).

Figure 1.7: Gerrit van Honthorst (1592-1656), *Woman tuning a lute*, 1624. Oil on canvas, 840 x 670mm. Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg.

[71] Zecher, "The Gendering of the Lute in Sixteenth-Century French Love Poetry," 774.

Figure 1.8: Gerrit van Honthorst (1592-1656), *Woman playing a lute*, 1624. Oil on canvas, 820 x 680mm. Musée du Louvre, Paris.

It is obvious the lutenists depicted in these examples are courtesans, made apparent by their free and smiling expressions, loosely pinned hair, rosy cheeks, low cut bodices and the coloured feathers in their hair. They are often also in the act of stringing their lutes; a pose that the aforementioned Fran Huys engraving reveals as a sexual innuendo. A particularly suggestive example by Honthorst is *The Procuress* (see fig. 1.9 below) Here, an elderly procuress recommends a comely courtesan to a gentleman with a purse. The lute held in the courtesan's left hand symbolises her profession, and while her and the gentleman's hands do not physically touch, they do appear sensuously entwined in the shadow they cast over the rose of the lute.

Figure 1.9: Gerrit van Honthorst, *The Procuress*, 1625. Oil on woodpanel, 710 × 1040mm. Centraal Museum, Utrecht.

The same insinuations can be found in sixteenth-century French poetry: a mistress described in Pierre de Ronsard's (1524 - 1585) ode to Peletier Du Mans has a 'lascivious hand' well suited to both lute-playing and love-making:

> [With] a naive spirit, and naive grace:
> A lascivious hand, whether she [or it] embraces
> Her lover, lying in her lap,
> Or whether [she/it] plays her lute,
> And with a voice that even surpasses her lute.[72]

Additionally, lute-playing is remembered among the overwhelmingly musical accomplishments of Joachim Du Bellay's fantasy courtesan: 'I had in bed a hundred thousand ruses […] I had learned to play the lute well'.[73] Any image of a woman playing a lute (besides those belonging to allegorical

[72] From Carla Zecher: Pierre de. Ronsard, *Euvres completes* ed. Paul Laumonier, Isidore Silver, and Raymond Lebegue, 20 vols. (Paris, 1914-75), 1:5-6, 31-35. 'L'esprit naif, naive la grace: / La main lascive, ou qu'elle embrasse / L'amy en son giron couche, / Ou que son Luc en soit touche, / Et une voix qui mesme son Luc passe'. The third-person feminine subject pronoun of the second line (also implied in the fourth) may be read as referring either to the woman or to her hand, since 'main' (hand) is feminine.

[73] Joachim Du Bellay, *CEuvres poetiques*, ed. Henri Chamard, 6 vols. (Paris, 1908-31), 5:168, 345-52. 'Avois au lict cent mille gaillardises, / Mille bons mots & mile mignardises: / De bien baler on me donnoit le pris, / J'avoy du luth moyenement appris, / Et quelque peu entendoy la musique: / Quant la voix, je l'avois angelique, / Et ne se fust nul autre peu vanter / De scavoir mieux le Petrarque chanter" (I had in bed a hundred thousand ruses, / A thousand little words and a thousand caresses; / They praised me for my repartee; / I had learned to play the lute well, / And knew something of music; / As for my voice, it was angelic, / And there was no-one who could claim / To sing Petrarch better than I'.

series) were subject to erotic interpretation. For this reason, Albert de Mirimonde has pointed out it is precisely because of this type of lewd insinuation we seldom see Saint Cecilia depicted as a lutenist in sixteenth-and seventeenth-century art.[74]

Images of lutes in the hands of English women

Figure 1.10: [clockwise] John de Critz the Elder (attr.) (1551/2 – 1642), *Lady Mary Wroth*, c.1620. The sitter is holding a theorbo or archlute. Oil on canvas, 2032 x 559mm. Penshurst Place, Kent. Anthony van Dyck (1599-1641), *Lady Isabella Rich, Marquess of Bath*, 1635. Oil on canvas, 2121 x 1308mm. Private collection (sold by Christie's, 1987). Studio of Anthony van Dyck (1599-1641), *Katherine, Lady Stanhope and Lucy, Lady Hastings*. Oil on canvas, 1240 x 1565mm. Private collection. Lady Anne Clifford, detail from Jan van Belcamp (1610–1653), *The Great Picture*, 1646. Oil on canvas, 2540 x2540mm; sides 2540 x 1168mm. Abbot Hall, Kendal.

[74] Albert P. de Mirimonde, *Sainte-Cecile Metamorphases d'un theme musical* (Geneva: Editions Minkoff, 1974), 7.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, then, there are only four portraits in existence which depict a named English noblewoman with a lute: the seventeenth-century portraits of Lady Mary Wroth, Lady Isabella Rich Lady Anne Clifford,[75] and Lady Lucy Hastings[76] (see fig. 1.10 above). Within these works, the lute is held symbolically as a signifier of a dedicated, talented, wealthy and, above all, eligible woman. To be pictured in the act of actually playing the lute would certainly have invited improper interpretations for ladies of such status. Indeed, the portrait of Lady Hastings holding her lute in a playing position is undeniably the most risqué, however, the careful positioning of her body which is turned away from the viewer maintains an overall sense of modesty in its depiction of the sitter. By greatest contrast in the portrait of Lady Mary Wroth, who faces the viewer front-on, the rigid stance of the subject, her fine satin white clothing (symbolising virginity), and the abundance of the colour red (connoting nobility), [77] all distance her from the erotic continental connotations of the lute. Thus, it is held here as a decorative and expensive prop; a signifier of status, class, piety and education. However, the lute's well-established connotations in continental representations meant that its inclusion in English portraits, however distanced from the specifics of those continental examples, could retain a subtle erotic frisson for those viewers able to detect it. In English portraiture the lute could add a suggestion of sensuality which would have been viewed favourably by a nobleman in search of a both virtuous and fertile wife: one who is able to grant him both spiritual and physical pleasure, and indeed many children.

Works which do show a woman in the act of playing the lute invariably do not present a named or identifiable Englishwoman but generic female musicians within allegorical scenes. The anonymous late sixteenth-century *vanitas* painting from the English school, sometimes called *Death and the Maiden* (see fig. 1.11 below), is a classic example. Here, life and vitality (symbolised by the lute playing woman) is contrasted by the personification of death, who looms from behind. The accompanying Latin text means: 'Death is the thing that is last in line'.[78] Thus once more the depiction of the instrument is more symbolic than naturalistic, as reflected in the gravity-defying playing posture (although the painting may have a closer connection with live music-making than many such images: Peter Hewit has made the intriguing suggestion that the depiction of a treble lute

[75] Butler, *Music in Elizabethan Court Politics*, 15.
[76] I give my thanks to Chris Wilson and Chris Goodwin for bringing my attention to this fourth example of an English noblewoman pictured with a lute. For futher information see Robin Blake, *Anthony van Dyck: A Life 1599-1641* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee Press, 2000).
[77] For descriptions of colour symbolism see Elizabeth Nelson, "Le Blason des Couleurs: A Treatise on Colour Theory and Symbolism in Northern Europe during the Early Renaissance" (PhD Pembroke College at Brown University, 1985). The colour white is discussed on pages 112-3, red on 105.
[78] Translation mine. For further information about the symbolism contained within this painting see Peter Forrester, "An Elizabethan allegory and some hypotheses", *The Lute Society Journal* 34 (1994): 11-14.

and empty part-book means the painting may have been designed to hang in a room where lute consort music was played, reminding the performers of the ephemerality of their recreation).[79]

Figure 1.11: *Death and the Maiden*, c.1570. Anonymous English School. Oil on woodpanel, 650 x 495mm. Hall's Croft, Stratford upon Avon.

Given the sensual or overtly erotic nature of so many portrayals of female lute players throughout Renaissance Europe, it is therefore not surprising that Nicholas Hilliard's famous miniature of Queen Elizabeth which opened this chapter, remained an extraordinary, rare example.

[79] Peter Hewitt, "The Material Culture of Shakespeare's England: a study of the early modern objects in the museum collection of the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust" (PhD University of Birmingham, 2014), 255.

Lute design and self-fashioning

Rather fascinatingly, there is evidence that not only the depiction of lutes, but physical lutes themselves (and related plucked string instruments) were visually fashioned to communicate aesthetic, social, or political ideals. For example, Queen Elizabeth was said to have played an instrument with 'strings of gold and silver':[80] certainly a product of the regal image that Elizabeth had cultivated to involve music. Another (though more unusual) example of a visually fashioned musical instrument is the following rare fragment of a surviving early seventeenth-century English Renaissance lute (of unknown provenance) found to be blackened with a wood stain (see figures 1.12 and 1.13 below). On the back of the lute (the ribs), one can see the blackening as well as where the black has worn off revealing the original varnish colour. Most of the stain has since been removed from the soundboard of the lute, but the rosette remains blackened.[81]

Figure 1.12: Original Renaissance lute fragment showing blackened ribs, photographed by Tony Johnson, 2020.

[80] The seventeenth-century music publisher John Playford describes may have been an orpharion, bandora, or cittern, or poliphant. See Butler, *Music in Elizabethan Court Politics*, 17.
[81] I am tremendously grateful to the luthier Tony Johnson for providing me with photos of and information about these seventeenth-century lute fragments, which are currently in his possession.

Figure 1.13: Original Renaissance lute fragment showing soundboard and rosette, photographed by Tony Johnson, 2020.

The reason for this blackening remains up for debate; for certain, it has no influence on the sound of the instrument, and therefore it can be assumed with confidence the reason was symbolic or aesthetic. The colour black had a particularly strong association with Protestant modesty in early modern England; to the Protestants, black represented restraint, and they used the colour to contrast themselves with Catholics, whom they regarded as colour-loving and corrupt.[82] The blackening might also have been intended to make the lute appear to be made of solid ebony, a more expensive wood than the spruce and maple used in its construction. Alternatively, the blackening could have provided a dark background to emphasise the pleasing visual aesthetic of the lutenist's (pale) hands upon the instrument. Fair skin was viewed as an indicator of wealth as the skin would not have been tanned by the sun or calloused by any form of manual domestic work. Whatever the specific intention behind the blackening, the material lute suggests a conscious performative self-fashioning on the owner's part. Such self-fashioning might have played out in multiple forms: in artistic depictions as well as live musical performance.

[82] Michel Pastoureau, *Black: The History of a Color* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2009), 17.

Part 2: Historical reenactment and performance practice as research

While artists focus on the symbolic potential of depictions of female lutenists, they seem overwhelmingly less interested in representing or documenting reflections of realistic performance practices. As a professional lute player myself I cannot help being perplexed by some of the performance techniques being represented in these images. In particular, I am struck by how it is almost always impossible to tell, in any clear or consistent sense, exactly how the lutenists are keeping their instruments suspended in a functional playing position. After sifting through hundreds of images (I express my gratitude for the Lute Society's new lute image digitisation project *LuteIDB*)[83] I noticed how, more often than not, the lute appears to be held up by seemingly invisible forces (see figures 1.14 to 1.16 below). In particular, there is no obvious technique showing how the neck of the lute is being held at the upward (roughly 45 degree) angle that is necessary for ease and comfort of playing. There is no visible use of a strap, which is something twenty-first-century lutenists commonly rely on, and if a table is pictured within the scene the lute appears to be held on top of this table in a way that does not indicate how the lute's neck is being supported. As a lutenist, I am well aware that one must not use the left arm to support the neck, as the hand must be free to both move continuously up and down the length of the neck and facilitate the complex intricate and delicate movements of the fingers. Given the highly symbolic nature of the depictions of lutes and lute players, and how they are often placed within scenes to represent or communicate virtues or vices, it is clear they are not a reliable source of information on genuine performance practices.

[83] Luke Emmet and David Van Edwards, "LuteIDB," (UK: The Lute Society, 2022), https://www.lutesociety.org/lute-idb/index.html.

Figure 1.14: Parrasio Micheli (c.1516-1578), *Woman with a lute*, 1570. Oil on canvas, 953 x 832mm. Sarah Campbell Blaffer Foundation, Houston.

Figure 1.15: Jan van den Hoecke (1611-1651), *Portrait of a woman playing a Lute*, 1640. Oil on wood, 760 x 660mm. Musée du Louvre, Paris.

Figure 1.16: Giacomo Franco (1550-1620), *Habiti d'huomeni et donne venetiane* (detail: part 2 plate 5), 1610. Engraving, 260 x 200mm. University of St Andrews Library, St Andrews.

Evidence of lute performance practices in printed English lute tutors

So where can we look? One excellent source of information about realistic performance practices are the 'teach yourself at home' lute tutors that survive from the period. Fortunately, two such printed tutors contain exquisitely detailed and practical explanations of how one should ideally hold the lute. The earliest of these is *The Schoole of Musicke* (1603) by Thomas Robinson, which offers the following advice within its 'General rules':

> First sitting upright with your body, lean the edge of the Lute against the table, and your body against the Lute, not too hard for hurting your Lute, neither to softly for letting of it fall, for the table, your body, and your right arm, must so poise the Lute, that you may have your left hand at liberty to carry to, and fro, at your pleasure…[84]

Thomas Mace describes precisely the same method in his publication, *Musicks Monument* (1676). These are the only two surviving English printed sources that describe how to hold the lute in detail. The fact they describe the same technique is interesting since they are separated by several decades,

[84] Robinson, *The Schoole of Musicke*, sig. Br.

indicating the technique was standard practice in England over a long period.[85] Mace elaborates at length on posture and the positioning of hands:

> The First Thing I would have you regard, is your Posture, viz. How to sit, and hold your Lute: For the Good Posture has two Commodities depending upon it. The first is, it is Comely, Credible, and Praise-worthy. The second is, it is Advantageous, as to Good Performance, which upon your Tryal, you will soon perceive, although very many do not mind it. Now as to This Order, first set your self down against a Table, in as Becoming a Posture, as you would choose to do for your Best Reputation.
>
> Sit Upright and Straight; then take up your Lute, and lay the Body of it in your Lap a-Cross; Let the Lower part of It lie upon your Right Thigh; the Head erected against your Left Shoulder and Ear; lay your Left hand down upon the Table, and your Right Arm over the Lute, so, that you may set your Little Finger down upon the Belly of the Lute, just under the Bridge, against the Treble or Second String; And then keep your Lute stiff, and strongly set with its lower Edge against the Table-Edge, and so (leaning your Breast something Hard against Its Ribbs) cause it to stand steady and strong, so, that a By-stander, cannot easily draw it from your Breast, Table and Arm. 'This is the most Becoming, Steady, and Beneficial Posture. The reason why I order your Left Hand to lie upon the Table, is for an especial Great Benefit; For if first you be thus able to manage the holding of your Lute with One Hand, the work will come easily on, because the work of the Left Hand is the most Difficult, and therefore must have no hindrance, or impediment, but must be Free.[86]

Robinson and Mace's descriptions of the lute technique clearly echo one another, with the 'edge of the Lute against the table' (Robinson) and 'its lower Edge against the Table-Edge' (Mace) indicating the same positioning of the lute. Starting with the appraisal of such early teaching manuals, I adopted a practice-based methodology to reconstruct and analyse their technique. I was aware it would be important not only to reconstruct the technical position with the lute, but to also create the entire set-up as accurately as possible, particularly the clothing worn, but also the furniture used, as well as taking into consideration other aspects of the physical space. Thus began my foray into the world of historical reenactment.

Early modern clothing and performance practice: the inspiration

During a stay in Edinburgh in the summer of 2021 I escaped the Fringe crowds by ducking inside one of the National Museum of Scotland's typically quieter permanent exhibitions: the Art, Design and Fashion Galleries, located on the first floor. A personal interest in fashion and textiles draws me to these halls regularly, but I did not on that occasion anticipate that I would consciously register for the first time a piece on display that would change the course of my musicological research. A fine yellow-gold knitted ladies' jacket of early seventeenth-century English origin (fig. 1.17) was an understated piece within an eclectic cabinet designed to display the variety of textures that can be created by different fabrics. While the jacket was made of expensive quality materials (an exquisite

[85] Thomas Mace [b. 1612/13] published *Musick's Monument* in 1676 but was writing retrospectively about his earlier experience, likely from around the 1630s. However, this is still some 30 years later than Robinson.
[86] Mace, *Musick's Monument*, 71.

blend of silk, silver thread, and linen) it differed greatly from any other clothing items I had seen from this period, whether in artistic depictions of women or in museum collections. This jacket appeared to resemble what I could only describe as early modern 'loungewear'. With its knitted construction, created with fine needles, the garment would have a stretch to it and would certainly have been very comfortable. The museum had labelled the jacket as 'probably worn by a woman as informal dress in the home'.[87] Upon reading this, my vision of what an early modern Englishwoman looked like as she practiced her lute in her chamber, and what her clothing may have felt like, was immediately changed.

Figure 1.17: Ladies' knitted jacket of silk, silver and linen, c.1600-1650. Art Design and Fashion Galleries, National Museum of Scotland.

[87] National Museum of Scotland, visited in the summer of 2021, Art, Design and Fashion Galleries, ground floor.

Visually, it is clear from the construction of the knitted jacket that 'bodies' (or 'pair of bodies') were worn underneath it. This can be deduced by the flat-chested form of the jacket. Bodies were worn to support the back, bust, and overall upper body of a woman, as well as provide a flat, smooth foundation and silhouette which was both fashionable and practical.[88] Initially, I was confused by the museum piece as there seemed a paradox between the idea of a 'loungewear' jacket paired with very structured undergarment. Bodies (particularly ones structured with whalebone) are very different to any kind of underwear worn by British women today (for an example of a surviving pair of late Elizabethan bodies see fig. 1.18). My personal interest and curiosity in this garment (stemming from my experience as a lute player) was in specific relation to what it might feel like to wear and to perform music in. Namely: were bodies uncomfortable to wear? And would wearing them make playing more difficult? Bodies were the part of the seventeenth-century women's outfit that I was primarily interested in, in terms of its potential effect on lute playing and posture. My ultimate question was: would the clothing be the crucial element that would reveal or explain how renaissance lute technique, as described by the surviving printed early modern English lute tutors, functions? And, would it reveal anything about the overwhelmingly unrealistic depictions of female lutenists? To answer these questions, I was keen to get involved in historical reenactment.

[88] See Sarah A. Bendall, *Shaping Femininity: Foundation Garments, the Body and Women in Early Modern England* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2021).

Figure 1.18: A pair of fustian 'straight' bodies stiffened with whalebones and bound with suede, made by her tailor in 1603. Queen Elizabeth's funeral effigy, Westminster Abbey. Photography by Dean and Chapter of Westminster.[89]

'Why don't you experience it for yourself?': Historical reenactment as practice-based research

My first glimpse into the world of historical reenactment came about quite by chance, due to conversations I had at the Lute Society UK's 2022 'LuteFest', a 3-day residential course which takes place every March at Benslow Music in Hitchin, Herefordshire. The event attracts many amateur, student, and semi-professional lutenists from around the world who are looking to meet one another, play music together, and benefit from classes given by an impressive line-up of internationally renowned professional lutenists and tutors. During one of the (well-needed) coffee breaks in between activities I got talking to a group of participants about my interest in seventeenth-century clothing in connection with my research on female lutenists. Unbeknown to me, I happened to be speaking to a member of the reenactment group '1635 Household': a costumed history interpretation group, active for over 30 years, and specialising in the portrayal of domestic life in Britain during the reign of King Charles I (1625-1649). The group has appeared at heritage properties across the UK, working with organisations such as English Heritage, the National Trust, museums,

[89] Ninya Mikhaila and Jane Malcolm-Davies, *The Tudor Tailor: Reconstructing Sixteenth-Century Dress* (London: Batsford, 2006), 24.

private enterprises and local government educational departments.[90] Delighted to have made contact with someone with expertise so specific to what I had been aiming to research, I asked if I could attend one of their events to take pictures of the clothing, and to observe how lute technique may be affected by the rigid undergarments worn. Luckily for me, the reply was: 'I can do you one better – why don't we put you in some clothing and you can experience it for yourself?'.

Much of what I then learnt about early-to-mid-seventeenth-century clothing was gained from my experiences wearing the garments myself, for a total of six days and across three different events in the North of England: two at Bramhall Hall in Stockport, and one at Skipton Castle in North Yorkshire. Going into the events, I was keen to experience an outfit or outfits that would have realistically been worn by a gentry lady in the comfort of her own home: a space where she would have engaged in activities such as lute playing, not necessarily dressed in the finery typically worn when she was going to present herself publicly, or have her portrait painted. My intention, then, when going into my historical reenactment experiences was a focus on historical accuracy and physical comfort through my clothing choices, rather than focusing on putting together the most visually impressive outfits reminiscent of the overly imaginative portraits of lute-playing women.

When it came to my focus and parameters, I was interested in re-creating, very specifically, female attire of gentry status in England in and around 1620, because this aligned with the date of the primary subject of this study: the years when Margaret Board, a young gentry lady of West Sussex, was engaged in her lute lessons. I was also interested in representing clothing that would likely have been worn within the comfort of the home in cold weather, as England was experiencing what has since been termed the 'Little Ice Age' at that time.[91] Of course, the usefulness of this methodology is reliant on the quality of the clothing I could access. Therefore, I was immensely fortunate to work with garments hand-made by Carolyn Richardson,[92] member of 1635 Household, with over 30 years' experience handcrafting thoroughly researched re-creations of seventeenth-century garments. Her expertise extends to accurate cutting, design, fabric composition, colour, and seventeenth-century sewing and embroidery techniques. Thanks to some of the additional objects owned by the group I was even able to experience using historically accurate furniture. This was crucial to the experience of reenacting the table-top method of holding the lute, as well as providing the overall immersive sensory experience of living as a seventeenth-century gentlewoman.

[90] "1635 Household," 2021, https://www.1635.org.uk/about-us.html (Costumed history interpretation group specialising in the portrayal of domestic life in early 17th century Britain).
[91] "Hendrick Avercamp: The Little Ice Age," National Gallery of Art, https://www.nga.gov/features/slideshows/the-little-ice-age.html.
[92] Whom I encountered at 'LuteFest' in March 2021 and who generously invited me to take part in the events organised by 1635 Household.

Getting dressed as a seventeenth-century gentry lady

Figure 1.19: Myself pictured in a linen shift and back-laced bodies, 2023. Photography by Carolyn Richardson.

This series of photographs document my re-creation of the experience of getting dressed in England in the early seventeenth century, in an outfit that is both warm and an example of homely attire. Pictured to the right are the first two layers in the dressing process: the full-length linen shift, and the back-laced bodies. The linen shift was the foundational layer that was worn day and night, for comfort, warmth, and to keep the subsequent layers of clothing clean and separate from the body. As previously mentioned, the supportive undergarment pictured here (fig. 1.19) is not called a 'corset' but rather 'bodies' or a 'pair of bodies', as it was usually two pieces laced together at both the front and back.[93] The bodies pictured here are laced only at the back, due to my conscious decision to be dressed as a lady of high status and wealth, and whose family could afford to hire handservants. Back-laced bodies require a servant to assist in the dressing process. They also allow for a smoother line at the front which is ideal for lute playing. The bodies were stiffened with many thin bone (originally whalebone) rods to hold the upper body firmly in place and give the torso an overall cylindrical and flat-chested shape.

[93] Mikhaila and Malcolm-Davies, *The Tudor Tailor: Reconstructing Sixteenth-Century Dress*, 12.

Figure 1.20: As above, with added woollen stockings, garters, and shoes, 2023. Photography by Carolyn Richardson.

My woollen stockings were worn for warmth, tied above the knees with knitted woollen garters (fig. 1.20). My shoes were silk with a small heel and a leather sole. Interestingly, the shoes were identical to each other (no difference between the left and right).

Figure 1.21: As above, with added petticoat, roll farthingale, and silk skirt, 2023. Photography by Carolyn Richardson.

An elegant floor-length silk chiffon skirt was added, atop a linen petticoat and 'roll farthingale' (commonly called a 'bum roll'), a donut-like ring of padded fabric designed to add volume at the hips and create the shape fashionable in the 1620s (which was considerably *less* voluminous than the wheel-like farthingales worn until the late Tudor period). The sheer amount of fabric had a considerable weight to it, revealing the necessity of the bodies in providing the support and structure required in carrying the skirts (fig. 1.21).

Figure 1.22: As above, showing the back-lacing on the bodies and my hair dressed with pearls, 2023. Photography by Carolyn Richardson.

The back-lacing of the bodies is shown here (fig. 1.22). As was typical for an unmarried woman, the hair was left uncovered, though it was mostly pinned into a high bun. It was fashionable to cut the hair on the sides of the head (sections above the ears) slightly shorter, and to leave these sections loose (and typically they would be curled with irons and arranged to frame the face and neck).

Figure 1.23: As above, with added silk velvet jacket, 2023. Photography by Carolyn Richardson.

The final item of clothing was a silk velvet jacket with a rabbit fur trim (fig. 1.23). This style of outerwear was intended for comfort and warmth in the home, while still being a conspicuous display of wealth. Instead of wearing the upper modular part of the blue silk gown (a matching bodice with additional boning and voluminous sleeves) I opted for a more comfortable and homely alternative. This loungewear-like jacket acted as my version of the knitted ladies' jacket from the National Museum of Scotland. It would have likely been the form of attire in which a gentry lady would have engaged in domestic recreational activities such as playing the lute. Additionally, as mentioned above, warm clothing would have been of particular importance during the 'Little Ice Age'; the climatic phenomenon which peaked in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, characterised by extremely severe winters that arrived early and lasted well into spring. During some years, such as during the 1610s, winter temperatures

averaged well below freezing. This jacket is considerably warmer than the bodice that matches the skirt.

Dressed in this thoroughly researched early seventeenth-century outfit, what remained was finding an appropriate setting to reenact female domestic lute music making. This I found within the elegant Bramhall Hall: one of the Northwest of England's grandest black and white timber-framed buildings (figure 1.24). While it is largely a Tudor manor house built in the traditional local style, its oldest parts date from the fourteenth century, with additions made in the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries. For 500 years (spanning from the late fifteenth to late nineteenth centuries) the house was home to the Davenports, a family of significant landowners in the region. The building is an exquisite surviving example of an early modern manor house complete with many original Jacobean internal fixtures and furnishings. In August 2023 I took part in another event, this time at Skipton Castle in North Yorkshire. It felt poignant to reenact lute performances at this location since Skipton Castle was owned by the aforementioned female lutenist Lady Anne Clifford (1590–1676), who was the last Clifford to have ownership. The castle was the last Royalist stronghold in the north of England to surrender, in December 1645. Lady Anne ordered the post-siege repairs and planted a yew tree in the central courtyard in commemoration.[94] The tree remains in the courtyard to this day (as can be seen in fig. 1.26) and the experience I had performing the lute in rooms just above the courtyard connected me intimately with this history and with Anne.

In *1635 Household*'s reenactment events in these locations the interiors and furnishings were restored to an accurate seventeenth-century state and the daily routine of a contemporary gentry household was recreated. This included recreation, mealtimes, sociability, study etc., in their appropriate sequence within the daily running of the household. Within these contexts – historically accurate clothing, historically accurate furniture, historically accurate domestic routines – I was finally primed to recreate the lute performance practices of a young early modern gentry lady, and specifically Thomas Robinson's instructions on how to hold the lute.

Re-constructing early modern English lute technique at Bramhall Hall and Skipton Castle

As discussed within the introduction to this study, one of the most important and desirable qualities achieved by female (and male) musicians in the early modern period was the illusion of effortlessness in their performance practices. Personally, I know very well from years of performance experience that if one is to play the lute in a truly virtuosic way it is crucial to have an excellent

[94] "The History of Skipton Castle: Lady Anne Clifford (1590-1676)," A Castle Jewel of the North: Skipton Castle, accessed 29th November, 2023, https://www.skiptoncastle.co.uk/hist.asp?page=3.

technique as the foundation upon which to achieve that most desirable impression of effortlessness (the 'virtuosity', or 'nonchalance' (*sprezzatura*) that Baldassare Castiglione most famously discussed in *Il Cortegiano* (1528)).[95] I have learnt via my own performance practice that three forces need to be in operation when it comes to creating a reliable basic lute hold. The lute is supported from behind by the lutenist's body, then the weight of the right arm is a second force which secures it from the front/side. Then a final third force is needed in order to keep the lute elevated. In modern practice this could either be the lutenist's raised thigh (left or right), or a strap securing the lute to the body. It is of the utmost importance that the left arm (and hand) is able to move freely and is never used to support the weight of the lute.

Robinson's description in his lute tutor, *The Schoole of Musicke* (1603) emphasises these same main technical points when it comes to the basic lute hold: he mentions the importance of 'sitting upright', and the importance of the freedom of the left hand ('your left hand at liberty to carry to, and fro, at your pleasure'), and he speaks of the three forces involved keeping the lute in place: 'the table, your body, and your right arm, must so poise the Lute'.[96] The only difference between this early modern method and my personal practice was the use of the table in keeping the lute elevated. Therefore, this was the factor I was most interested in testing out in seventeenth-century attire.

The *Burwell Lute Tutor* contains no discussion of the forces involved in keeping the lute upright, though it is very detailed and particular about the use of the hands:

> For the carriage of the hands, 'tis a thing of great importance when you begin to learn; that we called the placing of the hands upon the lute, that is rather the work of the master than of the scholar.[97]

The treatise argues here that good pedagogy at this early stage is mainly the responsibility of the *tutor*. This is an issue too complex for the student to tackle on their own, through guesswork, or even by reading tutor-like books; a physical tutor must be relied upon to guide the student, and to guide them expertly. This indicates that holding the lute well i.e., knowing how to place and use the hands with good technique, was knowledge that could only be imparted by a player with an already existing high level of technical proficiency. Arguably then, the ideal method of researching seventeenth-century lute hold would be by carefully analysing any source materials in conjunction with diligently working with the instrument, and with an experienced teacher as the *Burwell Lute Tutor* insists on.

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[95] See Baldassarre Castiglione, *The courtyer of Count Baldessar Castilio diuided into foure bookes*, trans. Thomas Hoby (London, 1561).

[96] Robinson, *The Schoole of Musicke*, sig. Br. Interestingly, and rather surprisingly, Robinson's and Mace's tutors are the only surviving tutor books which contains such a practical and specific description of how to hold the lute. Robert Dowland's *Varietie of Lute Lessons* (1610) does not describe the basic lute hold, despite the detail it contains on so many other points, such as left and right-hand fingering, and ornamentation.

[97] Dart, "Miss Mary Burwell's Instruction Book for the Lute," 23.

However, while my own lute teacher is undoubtedly expertly experienced, he is not a seventeenth-century lutenist with a knowledge or performance practice of the table-top method of holding the lute. Therefore, I was unable to be guided by a teacher in my learning of this technique and was ultimately required to become my own teacher. My method was initially one of trial and error, and my substitute for a 'second pair of eyes' on what I was doing were the many photographs I took (see figures 1.24-1.26). These photos allowed me to continuously analyse my progress with regard to the re-construction of the technique, which the sources detail as being the ideal and sole way of holding the lute. The photos I took during this process also allowed for comparisons to be made between this realistic performance practice and the highly unrealistic early modern depictions of female lutenists discussed in the first part of this chapter.

Returning to Robinson's instruction on lute hold: when I had tried to recreate this lute hold in modern clothing, prior to my historical reenactment experiences at Bramhall Hall and Skipton Castle, it seemed to make only a limited degree of sense to me. I observed the necessity for the lute to be leant at an angle against the edge of the table, with the bottom of the lute dropping down slightly below table-height to securely pin the instrument in place and to keep the neck elevated to a comfortable position for my left hand. However, in terms of the comfort and ease experienced, I would admittedly not have gone further than thinking it 'just about functioned'. It was hard for me to see this as an ideal way to hold the lute, and personally I still preferred the reliability of my modern lute strap. The lute did not feel as secure in my hands when using the table-top method as there was a tendency for it to slip or move against my body. Additionally, I found that connecting myself with the rigid structure of the table felt restrictive to my overall freedom of movement, which I considered to be an impediment to the micromovements involved in performing with great musical expression. There was also the obvious impractical aspect of being rooted to a single position within a room. From the standpoint of a twenty-first-century musician, I kept thinking this would never be a practical option when on tour and giving concerts in different spaces and locations (for reliable consistency I would have to bring my own table to every gig!).

Figure 1.24: My lute playing reenactment at Bramhall Hall, Stockport, England, May 2023. Photography by Carolyn Richardson and myself.

When I tried this in seventeenth century female dress, however, it transformed the experience completely. This led to an 'eureka moment' when I realised that the rigid and flat body shape provided by my bodies worked far *better* in conjunction with the table-top method of playing. I found that the lute being held between not one but *two* firm and flat surfaces – the table edge and my torso, created an entirely balanced, secure, and therefore elegantly poised way of holding the lute (see specifically fig. 1.25 below). This was far more so the case when wearing bodies than when dressed in modern clothing. I also observed that the table carpets had no greater effect on dampening the resonance of the lute more so than a clothed body. Interestingly, the overall technique (which delicately balances the lute between points of light force/weight) has less of a dampening or 'smothering' effect on the resonance of the instrument in comparison to holding it fully against a modern-clothed (softer) body. Furthermore, I observed that the height of my shoes' heels had no effect on the functioning of the technique when using the 'table-top' method, and that the technique functioned consistently well when using tables and chairs of varying heights.[98] Additionally, I noticed that reading from musical notation either laid flat on table or positioned on a

[98] As the secure balancing of the lute was achieved entirely by the upper portion of my body (torso only) in relationship to a table, the height or precise angle of my legs (and/or thighs) was not a factor that had to remain consistent. Additionally, as it was possible to slightly vary and adjust the angle at which the lute was held against the table edge, in response to how low or high the table sits in relation to the body, the method was easily achievable at a variety of chair and table heights (which I experienced across the two reenactment events).

writing desk (e.g. fig. 1.24) did not affect my sound quality or projection but had an influence on posture, as my gaze, and therefore my head, was brought into a slight downward tilt. This made it clear to me why playing from memory was deemed advantageous during the period, particularly when playing to guests.[99] Overall, my experience suggested that there must have been an intimate relationship between the clothing of an early modern gentry lady and her lute playing practices. In short, I deduced that the performance worked symbiotically with the clothing, which in turn functioned in alignment with the social status of the performer, and ultimately the aesthetics they were aiming to perform. I would not have realised this without the use of a practice-based methodology, which made this conclusion self-evident.

Figure 1.25: Further photographs from Bramhall Hall, May 2023. Close-ups showing the table-top method of holding and playing the lute, with two lutes of different shape and size. Photography by Carolyn Richardson.

[99] See my four reenacted female lute performance scenes and critical commentary (contained within Chapter 4 of this thesis) for a visual demonstration of lute playing when reading notation laid flat on the table-top, in comparison with my head raised towards my audience.

Figure 1.26: My lute performance reenactment at Skipton Castle, Yorkshire, England, August 2023. Photography by Carolyn Richardson and myself; shown alongside the aforementioned portrait of amateur lutenist Lady Anne Clifford, who was the owner of Skipton Castle, and resided there for a period in her life.

I had initially gone into the experiment with an expectation – influenced by the popular-level discourse on historical women's clothing discussed above – that the clothing would be a barrier to lute playing as it would feel restrictive and even uncomfortable on my body, and therefore restrictive on my movements, and by extension impair my ability to play the lute. The clothing was indeed restrictive in a small number of very specific ways: when it came to movements such as bending over, lifting the arms above shoulder level, or walking quickly, for instance. But when it came to the movements involved in lute playing it did not impede *any* of the movements I required. The sorts of motions involved in playing the lute are generally minimal, balanced (when played with good technique), and gracefully poised. These sorts of movement were not at all restricted in the way that running, bending over, etc., were. Additionally, I did not find the bodies to be at all uncomfortable. The pressure or 'squeeze' they applied was evenly distributed around my entire upper body (no fear of any of my organs shifting) and they were well tailored to fit my exact dimensions. I would go as far as to say I found them to be comfortable, and indeed beneficial in the context of multiple weekend-long stints of intensive lute playing at Bramhall Hall and Skipton Castle as they supported my back, keeping my posture upright with little additional physical effort. The only situation where the lifting of the arms is required in my performance practice as a twenty-first-century lutenist is when I am using a strap and I am required to thread myself in between the strap and the lute to put it on (this required lifting the lute above head height). Also, taking the lute in and out of its case from the floor

requires bending over. There is no direct evidence for an early modern female lutenists being required to make either of these movements. There are no depictions or descriptions of a strap being used in lute playing and, quite often, images involving lutes show lute cases being hung up on walls (see figures 1.27 and 1.28). Lute tutor books contain no explicit mention of lute cases. Mace's *Musicks Monument* even recommends keeping your lute under the bed covers as a way of keeping the moisture levels consistent around the instrument.[100] My practice-based experiences of day-to-day life as an early modern gentry woman at Bramhall Hall and Skipton Castle further demonstrated that gentry ladies would not have been bending over repeatedly to take lutes in and out of cases. A lute may be left on a table, hung on a wall, put inside a case that was hung on a wall, or brought to and from them by servants.

Figure 1.27: Master of the Female Half-lengths (c.1490-c.1540), *Female Musicians*, c.1500. Oil on panel, 532 x 375mm. Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg

[100] 'And that you may know how to shelter your Lute, in the worst of Ill weathers, (which is moist) you shall do well, ever when you Lay it by in the day-time, to put It into a Bed, that is constantly used, between the Rug and Blanket; but never between the Sheets, because they may be moist with Sweat, &c. This is the most absolute and best place to keep It in always, by which doing, you will find many Great Conveniences…if you should do to a Lute lying abroad, exposed to the moist Air, in a Damp Room, or the like; first, Snap goes your Strings, and it may be by and by off comes your Bridge; and your Barrs cannot hold long fast. All which Mischiefs I have often known; the which are assuredly prevented by a Warm Bed'. Mace, *Musick's Monument*, 62-3.

Figure 1.28: Hendrick Gerritsz Pot (attr.), (c.1580-1657), *The Lute Player*, c.1600. Oil on panel, 380 x 260mm. Private collection (sold by Bonhams auction, 2014, London).

After achieving a thorough understanding of what it both looked and felt like to perform the lute with an historically informed early modern English technique, I returned to the artistic depictions of lutenists, to examine if this functional historical technique was ever represented. Whilst the overwhelming majority of images appear either unrealistic or semi-realistic, an anonymous portrait survives of Nicholas Lanier (1588 –1666) which depicts the musician using the table-top method of playing with outstanding accuracy (see fig. 1.29 below).[101] This depiction shows the musician 'at work' rather than idealised: it is possible to observe how Lanier is holding the lute at the angle required to support the instrument against the table edge, and how the lower portion of the lute therefore dips beneath the level of the table. My experiences working with male members of *1635 Household* taught me that men's clothing and undergarments offered similar rigidity to bodies, however, further practise-based research is required in this area to reveal more about the specific effects of men's clothing on lute technique and posture. Lanier was an English composer and musician active in the early seventeenth century, and he was also a painter and scenographer.[102]

[101] For further information on the provenance of this portrait, see Benjamin M. Hebbert, "A new portrait of Nicholas Lanier," *Early Music*, 38 (2010): 509–522.
[102] Michael I. Wilson, "Lanier, Nicholas," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2008).

There is a chance that this image is a self-portrait (the direct gaze of the sitter may indicate that he may have been looking in a mirror as he painted); if so, this image might be especially representative of actual playing technique. Lanier may have been consciously aiming to portray himself as a highly accomplished musician with an excellent technique; such a depiction may have had a positive influence on his employability as a court musician, and as a private tutor. Indeed, he was the first to hold the title of Master of the King's Music from 1625 to 1666, an honour given to musicians of great distinction.[103]

Figure 1.29: Portrait of Nicholas Lanier (1588-1666), 1613. Anonymous, possibly self portrait; possibly English School. Oil on panel transferred to canvas, 905 x 720mm. Private collection (sold by Weiss Gallery, 2010, London).

[103] Ibid.

While female-sitter examples are a rarity, the following three examples by sixteenth and seventeenth-century French and Italian artists demonstrate a functional table-top method of lute hold in female performance contexts (see figures 1.30-1.32). However, showcasing the beauty and sensual appeal of the female musician was a priority to artists and their patrons even in these most realistic of lute technique depictions. Significantly, even in these portrayals the women's bodies are turned outwards in a way that displays their faces, necks, shoulders, and/or hands more advantageously to the viewer.

Figure 1.30: Simon Vouet (1590-1649), *La Joueuse de luth chantant son amour*, 1649. Oil on canvas, 740 x 640mm. Musée d'art et d'histoire, Genève.

Figure 1.31: Luigi Miradori (c.1600-1610-1656 or 1657), *Lute payer with vanitas symbols*. Oil on canvas, 1360 x 1000mm. Galleria di Palazzo Rosso, Genoa.

Figure 1.32: Claude Deruet (attr.), (1588–1660), *Princesse royale jouant du luth*. Oil on canvas, 1045 x 830mm. Private collection (sold via online auction hosted by Artnet, 2007).

'You must not less please the eyes than the ears': the appearance of effortlessness in female lute playing

Why then do no surviving images from the early modern period depict a woman playing the lute in an entirely practical way? Why – even in depictions more representative of actual performance practices (as my experiences at Bramhall and Skipton demonstrated) – are some of the fantastical and sensuous aspects of the much more obviously non-naturalistic representations with which this chapter began still reproduced?

In addition to illustrating the lens through which female lute players were viewed during the period, these images also indicate the level of accomplishment women achieved at the art of performing music with a feigned effortlessness. The following quote from the mid seventeenth-century *Burwell Lute Tutor* demonstrates how important this façade was in relation to lute playing when in company:

> …look cheerfully upon the company […] the grace and cheerfulness in playing not being less pleasing than the playing itself. One must then sit upright in playing to show no constraint or pains, to have a smiling countenance, that the company may not think you play unwillingly, and show that you animate the lute as well as the lute does animate you. Yet you must not stir your body nor your head, nor show any extreme satisfaction in your playing. You must make no mouths, nor bite your lips, nor cast your hands in a flourishing manner that relishes of a fiddler. In one word, you must not less please the eyes than the ears.

This is the very definition of the *sprezzatura* that Castiglione most famously discussed. Similarly to the *Burwell Lute Tutor*, Castiglione advises an elegance should be achieved in musical performance as

a matter of utmost importance – and very specifically in relation to female practices – arguing that women are 'not to use in singing or playing upon instruments to much division and busy points, that declare more cunning then sweetness'. [104] In the context of female lute playing in early modern England, female-produced and owned lute books give evidence to show young women and girls were learning music filled with many complex divisions, and polyphonic complexity that demanded an exceedingly proficient and developed technique. Therefore, it was clearly another facet of their accomplished performance practice to be able to also perform these aspects with a supposed ease and overall elegance. A comparison can be made between early modern female lute performance practice and present-day models, figure skaters and ballet dancers. In all cases there is extraordinary skill, strength, support at the core of what the artist is doing, but the overall result must appear graceful and effortless. This is a crucial facet integrated within the training and practice of such art forms. The end-goal of the appearance of effortlessness can make it hard for a spectator to tell exactly what is going on underneath, and I suspect this is a factor that led to the production of consistently unrealistic depictions of female (and male) lute playing in the early modern period.

During my reenactment experiences at Bramhall Hall and Skipton Castle I was able to observe how the skilful table-top method of holding of the lute sometimes can, even in reality, appear as a physical anomaly. This is illustrated by the following photograph taken of me performing at Bramhall Hall by an audience member (see fig. 1.33), where objectively it is not possible to tell exactly how I am keeping my lute held upright or precisely how it leans against or atop the table which I am sitting behind. However, what is very revealing in this instance is the fact that as the photograph was taken I was aware that I was being observed in that moment, and that I could not help but semi-consciously adjust my body position to the camera: to showcase the lute and my body in a way that would be more aesthetically pleasing. Specifically, I turned my face a little toward the light, and I raised the lute upwards slightly, so that its soundboard was not so greatly obscured by the table. On a practical/technical level I could still play music in this way, but the hold was less stable and the lute a little more precarious in my arms. Admittedly, it made for a pleasing photograph, and the position was functional for a short duration of playing; however, I was aware that playing like this for a long time would lead to tension issues in the body. I realised that it was likely when a lady was about to be seen fleetingly or if she was posing for a portrait – even if she was an accomplished player with an excellent technique – she may very well have adjusted herself to prioritise the visual aesthetic for a moment: to create a self-fashioned pose for a more elegant-than-life image to be captured. This

[104] Castiglione, *The courtyer of Count Baldessar Castilio diuided into foure bookes*. Within section: 'Of the chief conditions and qualityes in a waytyng gentylwoman'.

experience sheds further light on the question of why unrealistic lute playing poses are so commonly seen in early modern depictions of female lute players.

Figure 1.33: Myself playing the lute at a table during my seventeenth-century reenactment experience at Bramhall Hall, 2023. Photography by Carolyn Richardson.

As this chapter has shown, many early modern depictions of female lutenists were fantasy images crafted to communicate specific messages – symbolic representations of, among other things, moral virtues, vices, and political ideologies. Descriptions of lute posture in the surviving English lute tutors

differ from the majority of the artistic depictions. Through my own experiences working with historical reenactors, in particular my experience of lute playing using accurate period clothing and furniture, I was able to gain fresh insights into the reality of lute playing for women in the period. Recreating the lute hold described by Robinson's tutor *The Schoole of Musicke* I experienced how crucial seventeenth-century bodies are to lute performance practices for women. This insight allowed me to identify a small subset of images that do represent this technique somewhat accurately, while still capturing the fantasy and sensuousness of the majority of the early modern artistic depictions of women playing lutes. A final and unexpected realisation was my discovery that it is possible for the tabletop technique to appear unrealistic even in a photograph. The skilful pinning of the lute between table and bodies, combined with a high degree of skill in lute performance practices, can produce a graceful visual illusion for the sake of the observer when desired.

Chapter 2 : Margaret Board and her Lute Book

This chapter contains a focused source study on the early seventeenth-century English lute manuscript: GB-London, Royal Academy of Music MS603 (see fig. 2.1), more commonly known as the 'Margaret Board lute book', or simply the 'Board lute book'. The chapter is organised into two parts. Part 1 provides information (including new archival discoveries) on the owner, Margaret Board's, personal life, including information about her family, location, and where her lute lessons likely would have taken place. The most significant discovery is her exact marriage date which helps to date her lute book more accurately than had previously been possible. Part 2 looks specifically at the lute book's physical properties and what they reveal, as well as the textual content (titles of pieces, names mentioned) which sheds light on Margaret's wider musical life and network.

The Board lute book has not been adequately studied specifically as an example of a female owned and produced object. Questions about what the source can tell us about women's musical practices have not yet been asked or explored. Previous analysis of this manuscript has focused on listing the pieces contained within in view of attributing them to professional (male) composers wherever possible, but not including discussion of the female owner-producers of these types of lute books. This chapter considers, through its analysis of the Board manuscript, how Margaret (and by extension other lute book-producing women alike) were greatly significant to lute musical culture in early seventeenth-century England, and how they had their own musical agency. These themes are further explored in the third chapter of this thesis, where the context and content of the lute lesson for a young gentry lady is analysed and explored.

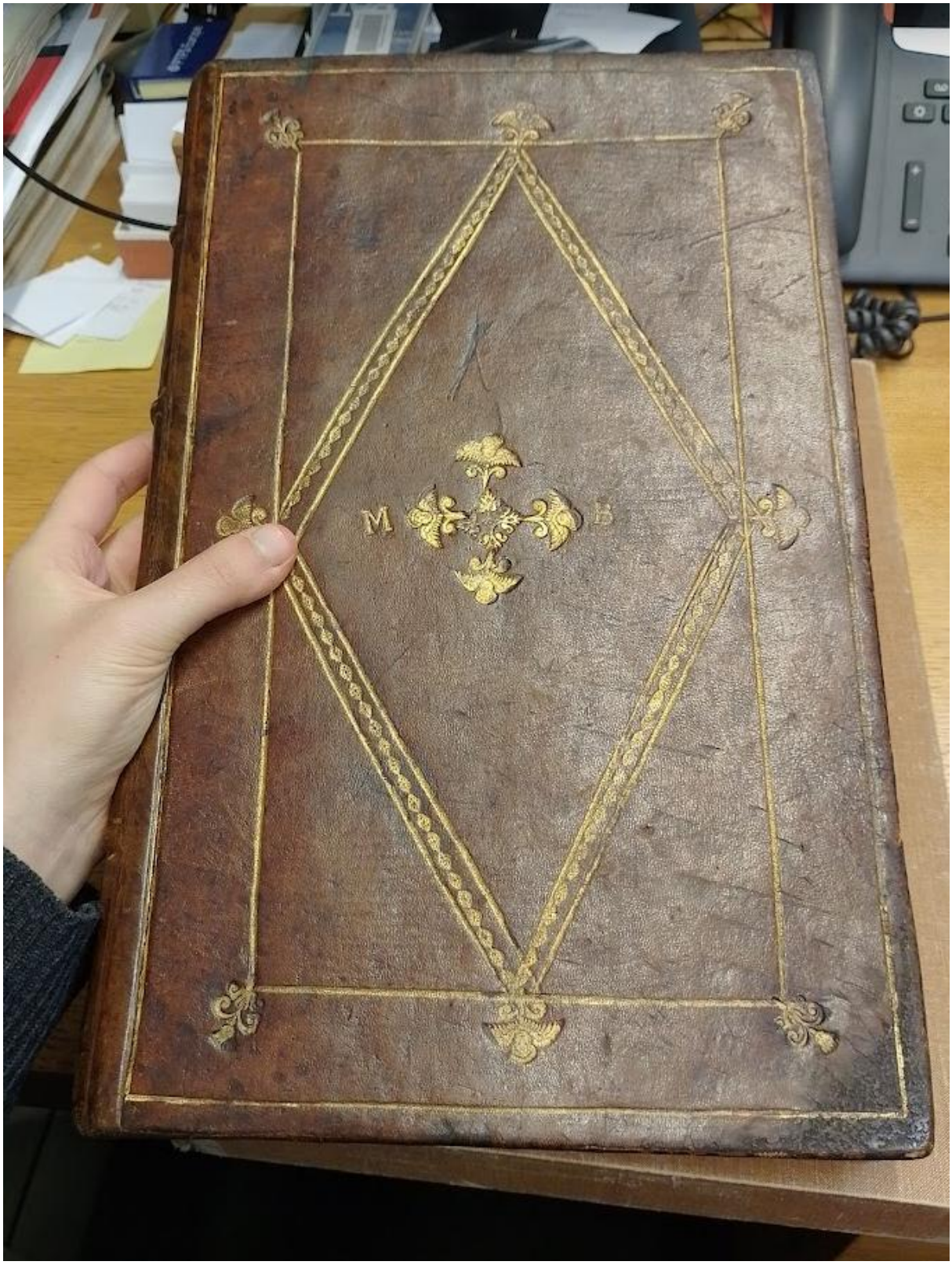

Figure 2.1: Leatherbound front cover of the Margaret Board lute book (GB-London, Royal Academy of Music MS603). Photographed by myself in the library office at RAM, London.

Part 1: Margaret Board (b. 1600) of Lindfield, West Sussex

Music from early modern England's 'Golden Age' of lute music (c.1550-1630) was circulated mainly in manuscript, rather than printed books. What survives today from England during this period amounts to a repertory of about 2100 pieces by around 100 known composers, and possibly just as many anonymous composers who wrote only one or two surviving pieces (for information about all the sources of English lute music, categorised by professional and non-professional types, see Appendix 1). Some of the most immaculately presented lute manuscripts were penned by female lute players who learnt and played the lute to themselves or to small audiences within domestic settings.[105] Since, as Julia Craig-McFeely has observed, 'intimate knowledge of every source is impossible', [106] the purpose of this chapter is to focus attention on a single manuscript: the lute book originally owned and made by Margaret Board during the early seventeenth century. The Board lute book is one of just fourteen surviving manuscripts copied by English lute students.[107] Of the fourteen survivors, only six books can be identified with certainty as having been produced and owned (or at least partly produced, and at one point owned) by women: the Board lute book, Jane Pickeringe lute book,[108] ML lute book,[109] and Folger lute book[110] from England; and the Wemyss lute book[111] and Rowallan lute book[112] from Scotland. Four can be identified as having been made and/or owned by men, and the provenance of the remaining four are unknown as they contain no signature to identify the original owner. Despite Craig-McFeely's acknowledgement (some three decades ago) that English lute lesson books were predominately produced by young women,[113] this is still not often reflected in popular or scholarly discourses. This chapter's focus is a corrective to these impressions: as a female owned-produced lute book the Board lute book is in fact representative of the majority of English lute lesson book sources. Centring this manuscript is thus both a consciously feminist decision, and a way of shedding light on this musical culture more broadly. The first section of this chapter is

[105] England's "Golden Age" of lute music is attached broadly to the period 1550-1630. 'Apart from the evolution and brief but prolific work of the lute-song writers, the concept of a Golden Age stems from the apparent maturing of an idiomatic English solo style, synthesized from various continental influences, and resulting in an identifiably insular harmonic flavour, texture and group of genres'. Julia Craig-McFeely, "English Lute Manuscripts and Scribes 1530-1630," (DPhil, University of Oxford 1994), introduction.
[106] Ibid., 6
[107] Ibid., 87.
[108] Jane Pickeringe, GB-London, British Library, Eg.2046, 1616 and c1630-50.
[109] Margaret L., GB-London, British Library, Add.38539, c1620 and one piece c1630-40.
[110] Anne Bayldon, US-Washington Folger-Shakespeare Library, Ms.V.b.280 (olim 1610.1) c1590.
[111] Margaret Wemyss, GB-Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland, Dep.314, No.23, 1643-4.
[112] Anna Hay, Mary Hay, and Sir William Mure of Rowallan, GB-Edinburgh, University Library, Ms.La.III.487, c1605-8 and c1615-20.
[113] Craig-McFeely, "English Lute Manuscripts and Scribes 1530-1630," 87-88.

therefore concerned with Margaret Board herself, and the second focuses on her manuscript as a source of lute music and evidence of a musical network.

The question of ownership: the identity of Margaret Board and the provenance of the Board lute book

The name of the original owner of the Board lute book is evidenced undeniably by the copious signatures of Margaret Board (most commonly written as 'Margaret Board her Book', in various spellings) which can be found on the front and end papers of the manuscript (see fig. 2.2). The gold-stamped initials 'M B' on the book's leather binding further asserts Margaret Board's ownership of what was very clearly a pedagogical lute book, based on the literary musical and palaeographical evidence within, as is further explored in this chapter. The first 30 folios of the lute book contain a fine selection of solo lute music in Margaret's hand. The copying is clearly her work as the scribal features are analogous with all other surviving lute books copied by gentry amateur lute players, and entirely unlike the hands of professional lute players and tutors: the musical notation is meticulous, neat, and includes symbols for ornaments as well as copious attributions. The repertoire is typical of the late Elizabethan period, largely copied from earlier sources for six- or seven-course lute but frequently altered and adapted to fit Margaret's lute of nine-courses. The musical content copied into the further pages of the Board lute book was added by a small number of later scribes who copied out pieces in the 'transitional lute tunings' (which were popular during the 1620s and 30s, suggesting that this manuscript had a long usable lifespan overall).[114] See Appendix 2 for information about all of the scribes active within the Board lute book.

[114] Michael Gale, "John Dowland, Celebrity Lute Teacher," *Early Music* 41 (2013): 206.

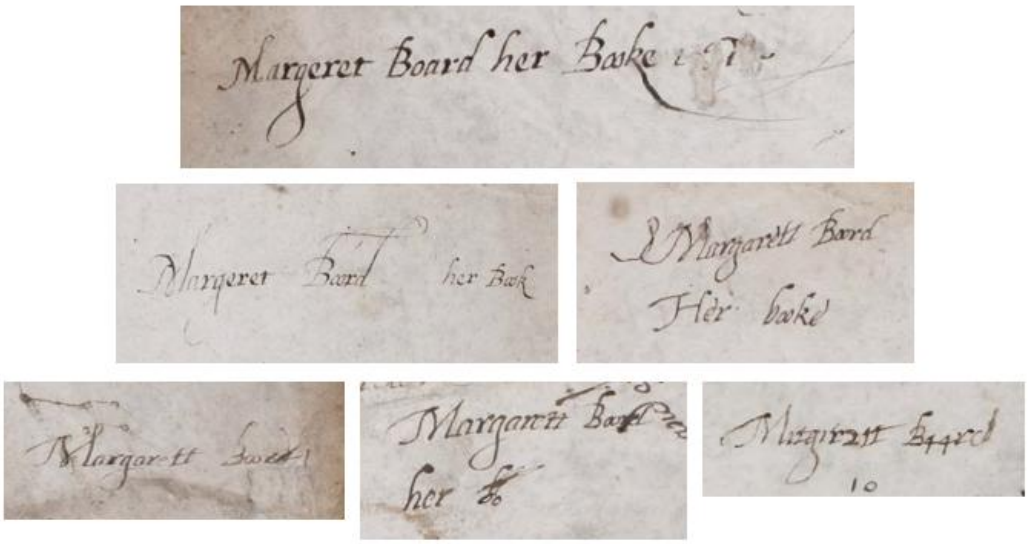

Figure 2.2: Signatures of Margaret Board from the front and end papers of the Board lute book.

The most extensive research that has been conducted on the provenance of the Board lute book to-date is contained within the late musicologist Robert Spencer's notes on the manuscript, which followed his discovery and purchase of the lute book from the antiquarian booksellers Maggs Bros. Ltd. in 1973.[115] Spencer's analysis of the watermarks of the music paper contained in Board lute book suggest the paper was made in France towards the end of the sixteenth century: four main watermarks can be distinguished throughout the manuscript, and the end-paper watermarks suggest English manufacture around 1620.[116] Spencer has therefore suggested the book was bound and sold as a blank lute book in London in about 1620, but this cannot be known for certain. On folio 30r John Dowland (c. 1563 – buried 20 February 1626) is referred to as 'Doctor Dowland', and so Spencer suspected all the music copied into the book up to piece 104 must date from before 1621,[117] when

[115] Margaret Board, *The Board Lute Book. Facsimile edition with an introductory study by Robert Spencer* (Leeds: Boethius Press, 1976), 1-2. The lute book was offered to Maggs in 1970 by Lt.-Col. Peter Gilbert Norman Tindal-Carill-Worsley (1910-2012), but the ownership of the book between that point and when it was owned by Margaret Board is unknown. After being part of Robert Spencer's private library for 24 years from 1973-1997, it was bequeathed to the library of the Royal Academy of Music, London in 1997, following Spencer's death. It is today part of the Royal Academy of Music special collection.

[116] For full information and images of the watermarks, see Robert Spencer's notes in Board, *The Board Lute Book. Facsimile edition with an introductory study by Robert Spencer*

[117] It is not known precisely when Dowland's doctorate was awarded, but references to Dowland as 'Doctor' appear first in 1620 in Peacham's epigram *Thalia's Banquet*, and again in *The Compleat Gentleman* two years later. An overview of Dowland's outstanding achievement comes from the pen of writer, poet and medical doctor Thomas Lodge in *A Learned Summary*, where the description of him is written as 'Doctor Dowland, an ornament of Oxford'. This means the date for the music in the Board lute book can be pushed slightly backwards from Spencer's analysis to the earliest possible date of 1620.

Dowland's having achieved his doctorate was first documented.[118] Craig-McFeely has also suggested the Board lute book was 'almost certainly originally sold as a bound and ruled lute book'.[119] My own observations, discussed in Part 2 of this chapter, confirm the paper was bought as a pre-ruled tablature paper, but that it was almost certainly purchased in the form of an informal and unbound 'workbook' manuscript (possibly sewn into a cardboard cover), which was only transformed into a leatherbound volume upon the completion of Margaret's copying, and the conclusion of her lute lessons.

Spencer had deduced that Margaret Board was baptised in 1600 in Lindfield, West Sussex.[120] He noted that the signature of an unknown 'Mary Jordan' (fig. 2.4), probably a subsequent owner of the book, is also written on the end paper. Margaret's father was Ninian Board of Paxhill, and the wills of two of Margaret Board's other family members indicate she was married at some point between 1623 and 1631, when she became Margaret Bourne (the name written on folio 32v, see fig. 2.3). Spencer had not managed to discover the date of Margaret's marriage, or any information about her whereabouts after her marriage.[121] This newly discovered information, as well as information on the likely identity of Mary Jordan, is provided and evidenced within the following pages of this chapter.

Figure 2.3: Signature of Margaret Bourne from within the Board lute book, f. 32v.

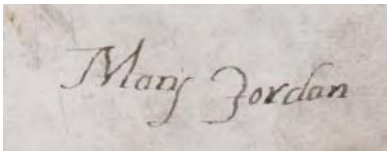

Figure 2.4: Signature of Mary Jordan from the back endpaper of the Board lute book.

[118] Board, *The Board Lute Book. Facsimile edition with an introductory study by Robert Spencer* 1-2.
[119] Craig-McFeely, "English Lute Manuscripts and Scribes 1530-1630," Case studies: Board and Hirsch, 102.
[120] Board, *The Board Lute Book. Facsimile edition with an introductory study by Robert Spencer* 1.
[121] Ibid., 2.

Margaret Board's hand within the Hirsch lute book

It is not only Margaret Board's handwriting which is preserved on the first 30 folios of the Board lute book, but also evidence of her unique and intelligently self-fashioned performance practice (as is explored in depth within Chapter 3 of this thesis). The evidence for this lies in the comparison that can be made between the nature of her copying for her own lute book, and the copying she did for a manuscript compiled for the purposes of another lutenist (of an unknown identity), most likely a teacher, within the lute book commonly known as the Hirsch lute book (GB-London, British Library, Ms.Hirsch.M.1353).[122] Whilst Margaret adorns her own music with copious ornamentation symbols in Board, they are absent from the pieces she adds to Hirsch. Craig-McFeely identified the Hirsch lute book as a collection of musical exemplars copied out from earlier sources (in order to preserve or re-organise them) by several of a lute teacher's students. Margaret Board was one of the students involved and hers is the first hand to appear in the manuscript beside the teacher's.[123] This is further evidence that Margaret Board was a (very capable) student of the lute, and that she had both physical and intellectual ownership over the musical content of her manuscript, the Board lute book.

New archival information on Margaret Board and the Board family of Paxhill

This chapter begins with an investigation of Margaret Board, and some preliminary findings that help to illustrate her life as well as the context of her lute book. Through tracing Margaret and her family through various historical records including those of heraldic visitations which took place in Sussex in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, wills, postmortem inquisitions, and records of baptisms and

[122] The anonymous lutenist, whose scribal hand is also in the lute book, wrote in a more conservative secretary hand and is referred to by Craig-McFeely as 'Scribe A' (Margaret Board being 'Scribe B'). See "English Lute Manuscripts and Scribes 1530-1630," Case studies: Board and Hirsch, 122.

[123] The independent researcher Andre Nieuwlaat published his argument that Margaret Board of Lindfield was not the producer of the Board lute book, or the scribe of either Board or Hirsch, but that they were in fact both copied by John Dowland: see Andre Nieuwlaat, "A different interpretation of the Hirsch and Board lute books," *Gelut-Luthinerie* 3 (2019). The issue of the primary copyist of Board is called into question in Nieuwlaat's article as Robert Spencer's original dating of the Hirsch lute book appears to have been erroneous, thus ruling out the possibility of Margaret Board's involvement (she would not have yet been born). I do not support Nieuwlaat's conclusions. The Board lute book is very clearly a pedagogical lute book, is in the main meticulously and neatly copied, and the book is signed many times by Margaret Board. John Dowland's handwriting, described by Craig-McFeely as one of the 'messiest tablature hands surviving', is identifiably present *alongside* Margaret's obviously distinct, neat scribal hand in sections of the Board book: see Craig-McFeely, "English Lute Manuscripts and Scribes 1530-1630," 84. Craig-McFeely's thorough case study of the Hirch lute book within Chapter 7 of her PhD thesis confirms Margaret Board of Lindfield copied music into both the Board and Hirsch books, and addresses the issue of dating: the Hirsch book is in fact later, rather than earlier than Spencer had suggested: 'Taking into account all the internal 'literary' and paleographical evidence, it would seem likely that Hirsch was copied in the early seventeenth century, possibly as a way of preserving a master's exemplar, or simply as an organised copy of parts of one or more earlier sources, thus accounting for the early nature of the repertory it contains. Thus, the conclusion is that the Hirsch lute book is a copy of an exemplar or exemplars dating from the late sixteenth century, and its date of copying is more likely to be c1620 than c1595'. See Craig-McFeely, "English Lute Manuscripts and Scribes 1530-1630," Case studies: Board and Hirsch, 101-22.

marriages from a number of parish churches from throughout Sussex and within London, I have made several fresh discoveries. The information collected has enabled the more accurate mapping of Margaret Board's extended family tree, and securing the date and location of Margaret Board's marriage as well as the date and location of her first child's baptism. Additionally, further research on Paxhill House in Lindfield, West Sussex, has brought to light new details about the Board family's residence and, by extension, their relative status and wealth as members of the English landed gentry. However, the most poignant new discovery this thesis presents with regards to the Board lute book is the precise date of Margaret's marriage to Henry Bourne, as it allows for Margaret's musical copying within the Board lute book to be dated with much greater accuracy than has been previously achieved.

A record of the family's line of succession was recorded during heraldic visitations that took place between the years of c.1530 and 1664.[124] The majority of the information presented within the diagram below is contained within *The Visitation of Sussex, Anno Domini 1662* created by Sir Edward Bysshe,[125] and these have been combined with additional records [126] to present a diagram that centres around Margaret Board, presenting details on key figures within her extended family (see fig. 2.5). Documentation of the family taken at the visitation shows the family were landed gentry who resided in Lindfield, of which Margaret's father, Ninian, was heir. This information is confirmed by

[124] Heraldic visitations were tours of inspection undertaken by Kings of Arms, and more often by junior officers of arms as deputies, throughout England, Wales and Ireland. They took place from 1530 to 1688 and registered and regulated the coats of arms of nobility, gentry and boroughs, and recorded pedigrees. See Adrian Ailes, "The Development of the Heralds' Visitations in England and Wales 1450-1600," *Coat of Arms* 5 (2009): 7-23.
[125] This being a twentieth-century antiquarian publication editing earlier sources.
[126] The majority of the information presented within this diagram is contained within Arthur W. Hughes-Clarke, ed., *The Visitation of Sussex, Anno Domini 1662: Made by Sir Edward Bysshe, Knt.*, vol. 89, Publications of the Harleian Society (1937), 15. Additional sources are as follows: for information on William Morley and Mary of Glynde, see Andrew Thrush and John P. Ferris, eds., *Morley, William (c.1531-97), of Glynde, Suss*, The History of Parliament: the House of Commons 1604-1629 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010). Accessed online: http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1558-1603/member/morley-william-1531-97 (retrieved 1st Feb. 2021).
For Nicholas Jordan, see Andrew Thrush and John P. Ferris, eds., *Jordan, Nicholas (1570-1629), of the Inner Temple, London and East Street, Chichester, Suss.; formerly of Horsham, Suss*, The History of Parliament: the House of Commons 1604-1629 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010). Accessed online: http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1604-1629/member/jordan-nicholas-1570-1629#footnote3_bd9tlmp (retrieved 4th Feb. 2021). For Mary Jordan, daughter of Nicholas Jordan, see R. Garraway Rice, *The Parish Register of Horsham in the County of Sussex, 1541-1635*, vol. 11, Sussex Record Society, (1915), 198. Accessed online: https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uva.x000876434 (retrieved 19th Dec. 2020). For Margaret Board's marriage date, see Willoughby A. Littledale, ed., *The Registers of St. Benet's and St. Peter, Paul's Wharf, London*, vol. 2, Marriages, St. Benet, 1619 to 1730 (Publications of the Harleian Society, 1910), 11. Accessed online: https://archive.org/details/registersofstben39stbe/page/10/mode/2up (retrieved 23rd Jan 2020). For Harbert Bourne, see Arthur W. Hughes-Clarke, ed., *The Registers of St. Mary Magdalen, Milk Street, 1558 To 1666, and St. Michael Bassishaw, London*, vol. 73, Part II (Baptisms and Marriages 1626 to 1733; Burials 1626 to 1735) (Publications of the Harleian Society, 1943), 4.

Ninian Board's post-mortem inquisition, which also lists the lands that he owned.[127] As can be seen in the family tree diagram, Margaret Board was Ninian Board's eldest child. The family's line of succession passed via Ninian's younger brother Anthony before his eldest son, as Ninian died when Herbert Board was only four years old.[128] Margaret's mother, who was also named Margaret, was the daughter of the M.P., William Morley of Glynde, who erected Glynde Place in 1569, which still stands today.[129] There is no record of lute playing elsewhere in the family, though it is likely this is due to these records (other pedagogical or household anthology lute books) being lost, rather than non-existent.

[127] Frederick W. T. Attree, "*Notes of Post Mortem Inquisitions Taken in Sussex: 1 Henry Vii, to 1649 and After*, Abstracted and Translated by F.W.T. Attree," (London: Mitchell, Hughes and Clarke, 1912), 33. Accessed online: https://archive.org/details/notesofpostmorte00greauoft/page/32/mode/2up (retrieved 6th December 2020). Transcript as follows:
Ninian Boorde. Vol 292, No.159. E.G., 7 Nov. 4 James. Died 2 Oct. last. Heir, son Herbert Boord, aged 4 years 1 month 17 days. Lands. – Manors of Graunts in North Lancing, Cattesfield, and lands in Horsted Keynes, Warbleton, Lindfield, West Hoathly, Clayton, and lands in Newdigate, Surrey, and Staplehurst, Kent, also lands in Horsted Keynes settled on him 20 Sept. 35 Eliz. on his (Ninian's) marriage with Margaret, one of the daughters of William Morley of Buxted, esq., by his father Thomas Boorde, gent., and also reversion of other lands after the death of Elizabeth his mother.
[128] Attree, "*Notes of Post Mortem Inquisitions Taken in Sussex: 1 Henry Vii, to 1649 and After*, Abstracted and Translated by F.W.T. Attree," 33.
[129] Anthony Hampden, *A Glimpse of Glynde: The History of England Through the Eyes of a Sussex Village* (Book Guild, 1997), 45.

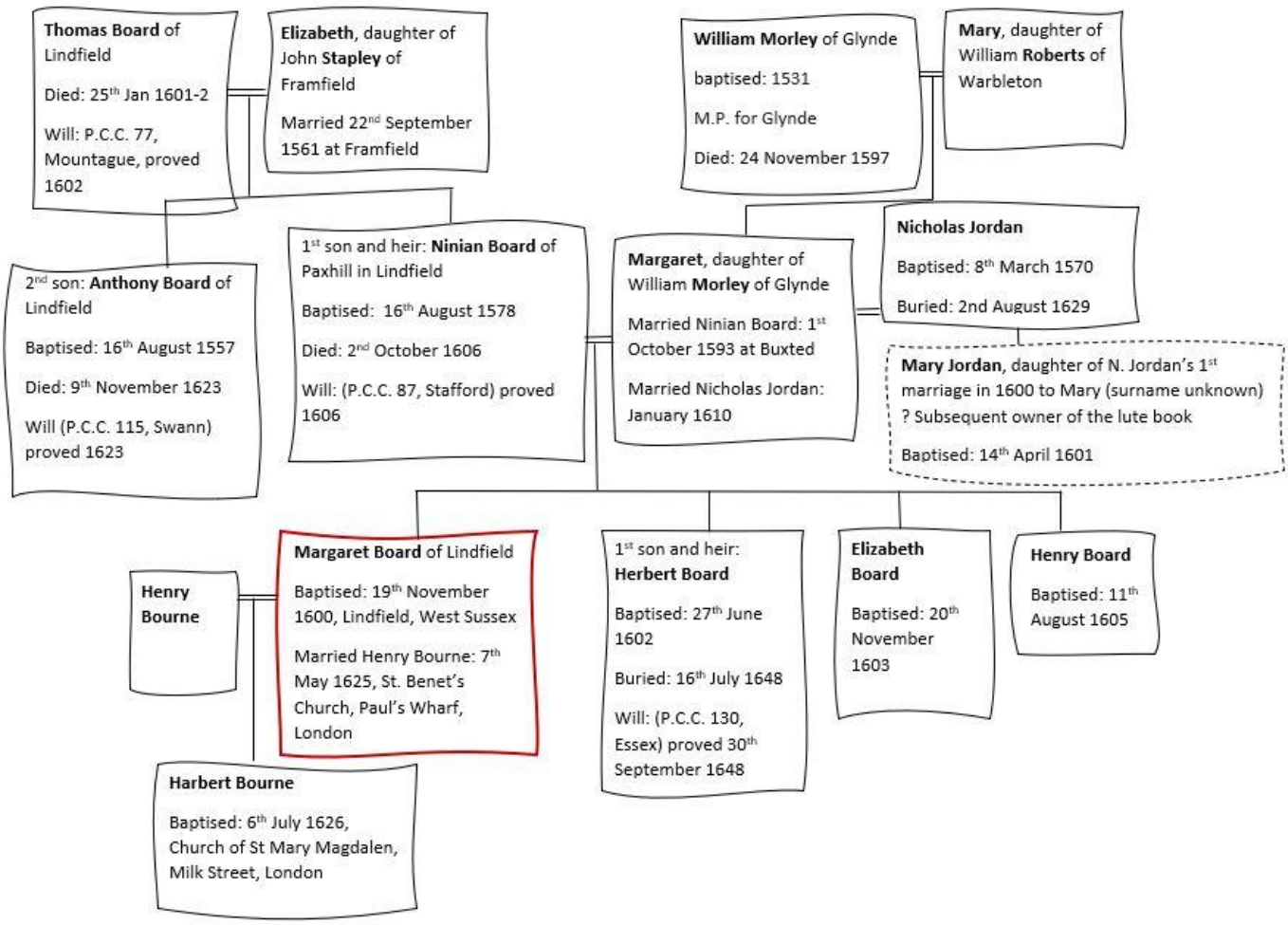

Figure 2.5: My reconstructed family tree of the Board Family of Lindfield c.1540-1626, focusing on Margaret Board, owner-producer of the Board lute book.

The Board's family home, Paxhill House (fig. 2.6), was built by Margaret Board's father Ninian between 1595 and 1606 in the Elizabethan style to replace an earlier house.[130] It stands on the hill to the north-east of Lindfield Bridge and its lands. Ninian's initials are inscribed above the main entrance, as well as the year 1606. With the house's completion coming when Margaret Board would have been about 6 years of age it is likely she would have resided there during her early youth.

[130] Richard Bryant, "The house on the hill: Paxhill," *Lindfield Life* (2019). https://www.lindfieldlife.co.uk/the-house-on-the-hill. Accessed online: https://www.lindfieldlife.co.uk/the-house-on-the-hill

Figure 2.6: Samuel Hieronymus Grimm (1733-1794). *Parkshill Mr Boards*, ?1787. Graphite and watercolour on paper, 225 x 180mm (original image), mounted on a secondary sheet of paper on which were added decorative borders of ruled ink lines and bands of watercolour wash, 300 x 222mm. British Library, Add. MS. 5672, f. 35 [63].

After Ninian's death in 1606, the estate passed down through the family, with the last male heir, William Board, dying in 1790. When put up for sale in 1877 it listed an extensive range of rooms and servants' quarters. The coach house in the Elizabethan style had space for eight carriages. [131]

The parish records (published by the Harleian Society in 1910) of the Church of St Benet in Paul's Wharf, City of London, reveal that 'Henry Bourne and Margarett Bourd' were married on the 7th of May 1625.[132] I have not been able to find any information about Henry Bourne or his family. Given Margaret Board's social status, it is likely he was the subsequent son of another gentry family in the South of England. Interestingly, the Church of St Benet has been the official church of the College of Arms since 1556, so perhaps Henry Bourne was an Officer of Arms. The newly married Margaret and Henry Bourne appear to have had their first child the following year as a Harbert Bourne (generally spelled like this), the son of Henry Bourne and Margaret, was recorded to have been baptised at St Mary Magdalen, Milk Street, City of London, on 6th July 1626. The fact their marriage took place in

[131] Ibid.
[132] See Willoughby A. Littledale, ed., *The Registers of St. Benet's and St. Peter, Paul's Wharf, London*, vol. 2, Marriages, St. Benet, 1619 to 1730 (Publications of the Harleian Society, 1910), 11. Accessed online: https://archive.org/details/registersofstben39stbe/page/10/mode/2up (retrieved 23rd Jan 2020).

London, alongside evidence of the christening of their first child in London, indicate that the young couple resided in the city after their marriage.

Margaret's lute lessons with John Dowland

Within the Board lute book there are a small number of contributions written in John Dowland's hand. [133] The fact Margaret took one or more ad hoc lessons with John Dowland suggests that she frequented the City of London during her youth, before her marriage to Henry Bourne in 1625. While there is no firm evidence detailing where Dowland's teaching took place, it seems very likely his teaching happened in London, since Dowland had commitments at court from 1612-1626. Michael Gale discusses how a hotbed of musical expertise was to be found on a small collection of streets just outside the city walls, centring on Fleet Street and Fetter Lane (fig. 2.7). Dowland's residence in his later years was on Fetter Lane, [134] very close to the Inns of Court where he is known to have taken freelance work as a musician.[135] It is possible Margaret may have received her lessons at Dowland's home, as there is evidence the lutenist Philip Rosseter taught a young Miss Lettice Newdigate (a member of another gentry family) at his home on Fleet Street during the month of July in 1620, which was just around the corner from Dowland's residence.[136] Of similar landed gentry status, Margaret Board's family would certainly have been wealthy enough to afford their eldest daughter the expense of her lessons with Dowland.

[133] Craig-McFeely explains that the hand of John Dowland is apparent within the book: he adds whole pieces of music, music theory tables to book's flyleaf, and hold signs to some of Margaret's copying. It is likely that he was not her first or principal teacher as his hand is limited to only a part of the book, though no other scribe seems to have intruded on Margaret's copying. It is unusual to be able to name the teacher as well as the pupil in a book, but the Board lute book is an exception. See Craig-McFeely, "English Lute Manuscripts and Scribes 1530-1630," 93.

[134] This is given as John Dowland's address in 1604, see John Dowland, *Lachrimae, or Seaven Teares* (London: John Windet 1604).

[135] See Gale, "John Dowland, Celebrity Lute Teacher."

[136] A payment of 15 shillings 'to Roceter teaching Mistress Letis upon lewte', V. Larminie, "The undergraduate account book of John and Richard Newdigate, 1618-1621," *Camden Miscellany* 39 (1990): 210. As quoted in Gale, "John Dowland, Celebrity Lute Teacher," 211.

Figure 2.7: Detail from Frans Hogenberg, 'Londinium Feracissimi Angliae Regni Metropolis'. Published in George Braun, *Civitates Orbis Terrarum* (Cologne, 1572). Hand-coloured engraving, 398 x 548mm. Victoria and Albert Museum, London. The detail highlights Fleet Street and Fetter Lane.

F. J. Fisher and Linda Levy Peck have shown how London increasingly became an arena for conspicuous consumption during seventeenth century and discussed how the consumption of luxury goods transformed social practices amongst the elite.[137] Aristocrats began to inhabit the West End from the City of London in large numbers at this time, and the creation of the New Exchange (built 1608-9 by the Earl of Sailsbury, located on the south side of the Strand and featuring many small shops selling luxury goods) followed this mass movement.[138] In addition to those who had specific business at court, increasing numbers of country landowners and their families lived in London for part of the year – for the social life, and to enjoy the consumption of various desirable and prized luxury goods and global commodities. These consumables played a key role in the self-identifying and self-fashioning of buyers.[139] Gale has brought to light the fact that it was not only physical

[137] See F. J. Fisher, "The development of London as a centre of conspicuous consumption in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries," *Transactions of the Royal Histotrical Society* 30 (1948): 37-50; Linda Levy Peck, *Consuming Splendor: Society and Culture in Seventeenth-Century England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).
[138] Peck, *Consuming Splendor: Society and Culture in Seventeenth-Century England*, 47.
[139] Ibid., 46-7.

objects that were prized and consumed, but social interactions too, and he discusses this with specific refence to the Folger and Board lute books:

> We have observed that personal encounters with famed musicians were becoming increasingly prized so, whilst the Board and Folger Lutebooks were undoubtedly useful as musical documents, they had also become objects invested with a value far beyond that: these autograph materials stood out as the material residues of those prestigious social interactions.[140]

Gale argues the signatures and musical annotations found within these pedagogical books were not, as we may have assumed, meant to certify or approve the musical text copied by the student: rather the teacher's penmanship upon the music was proof that a particularly desirable social encounter had taken place, and the physical mementos were 'means of advertising one's own encounter with musical celebrity'.[141] Margaret's family's desire for their daughter to have such encounters with John Dowland indicates she (and her family) were musically discerning, wealthy, and had their finger on the pulse with regards to metropolitan musical culture. As the daughter of a gentry family, perhaps Margaret was one of these country dwellers (with access to a City of London townhouse owned by her family) moving into the West End, perhaps after her marriage, as part of this mass-movement into and expansion of the city (see fig. 2.8 for locations of two London churches Margaret is known to have visited, giving some indication of the location of her London residence). Margaret's leatherbound and beautifully gold tooled lute book is indeed a material trace of her (musical) sociability. This is an aspect explored within the second part of this chapter, where the musical interactions Margaret had are explored in detail, and the musical content of the lute book is analysed with the purpose of comparing its content to contemporary sources of lute music.

Crucially, the Board family would have been seeking to secure Margaret a profitable marriage through their efforts to ensure her a high-quality musical education. Using musical ability to attract suitors was exceedingly commonplace, in fact, the philosopher Robert Burton remarked in *An Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621) that learning to sing, dance and play upon the lute was part of a Gentlewoman's education even 'before she can say her *Pater Noster*, or ten Commandments', as it was 'the next way their parents think to get them husbands'.[142]

[140] Gale, "John Dowland, Celebrity Lute Teacher," 215.
[141] Ibid.
[142] Robert Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy, what it is with All the Kinds, Causes, Symptoms, Prognostics, and Several Cures of it* (London 1621), 487.

Figure 2.8: Detail from Frans Hogenberg, 'Londinium Feracissimi Angliae Regni Metropolis'. Published in George Braun, Civitates Orbis Terrarum (Cologne, 1572). Hand-coloured engraving, 398 x 548mm. Victoria and Albert Museum, London. The detail highlights the location of two Churches Margaret Board is known to have visited.

The end of Margaret's lute lessons

While these discoveries offer new insight into the life of Margaret Board of Lindfield, the most interesting discovery in terms of dating the Board lute book, as well as revealing Margaret's age at the time of her copying, is the record of Margaret's marriage. On folio 32v of the lute book, there is a sentence written in Latin beneath the last piece copied in Margaret Board's hand. The line reads: *Sic finem ludendi facio. Margret Bourne.* (Thus I make an end to playing. Margaret Bourne.).[143] This indicates that she stopped playing shortly after she had gained her married name. The Latin word *ludendi* (playing)[144] refers to the childlike practice of playing of a game, or with a toy, rather than the word that would be used for the playing of a musical instrument (one would not in general use this word for 'play' in the context of using musical instruments). Rather, one would more normally use, for example: *tangere* [*chordas*] ('to touch' [strings]), *sonare* ('sound'), or *fidibus canere* (to 'sing with' the instrument). Margaret's use of *ludendi* is interesting as it gives some indication of her (or her family's) mentality with regards to learning the lute: that it was an activity and practice that existed

[143] Translation mine, with thanks to Dr Joe Lockwood for his assistance.
[144] *ludendi* = gerund (verbal noun) of verb *ludo.* The basic senses of this verb are 'play; sport; tease; trick', "Ludo," in *Pocket Oxford Latin Dictionary* ed. James Morwood (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 109.

within the realm of childhood. Naturally, childish things are put away when a young person enters into matrimony (and by definition, becomes an adult), and this indicates that Margaret concluded her musical copying at the age of just 24. However, Margaret's finished lute book was an object of considerable value (the investment made in its binding and gold tooling is evidence of how it was viewed as such) probably even more so in the year following Margaret's marriage, as John Dowland died on the 20th February that year. Perhaps the newly wedded Margaret Bourne signed of in this manner before passing the book to its next owner – perhaps a younger family member, or a friend. A likely candidate is Margaret's stepsister named Mary Jordan (the only other name which can be seen signed on the back endpaper of the lute book) who was one year younger than Margaret. Margaret Board's mother re-married in 1610, four years after Ninian Board's death. Her new spouse was Nicholas Jordan, who had a daughter from his previous marriage in 1600: Mary Jordan, who was born in 1601.[145]

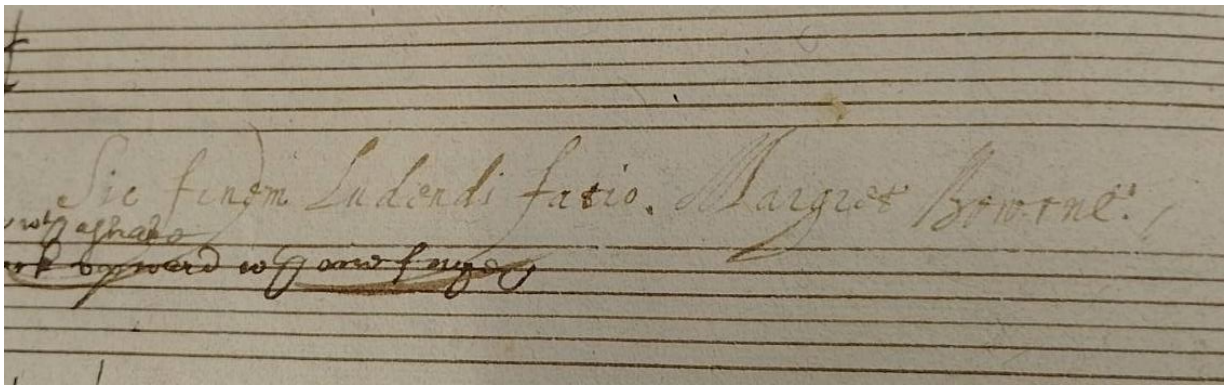

Figure 2.9: The Latin sentence written in Margaret's hand: *Sic finem ludendi facio. Margret Bourne*. (Thus I make an end to playing. Margaret Bourne.). The Board lute book, f. 32v.

It cannot be known for certain whether Margaret's 'signing-off' does necessarily literally mean she stopped practicing or playing the lute altogether at this point in her life, however, several Renaissance sources indicate it was very typical for both women and men to stop playing music at the point at which they married. For instance, Thomas Robinson's *The Schoole of Musicke* (1603) includes the following passage of dialogue between a Knight and fictional lute student 'Timothy':

[145] For Mary Jordan, daughter of Nicholas Jordan, see R. Garraway Rice, *The Parish Register of Horsham in the County of Sussex, 1541-1635*, vol. 11, Sussex Record Society, (1915), 198. Accessed online: https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uva.x000876434 (retrieved 19th Dec. 2020). For Nicholas Jordan, see Andrew Thrush and John P. Ferris, eds., *Jordan, Nicholas (1570-1629), of the Inner Temple, London and East Street, Chichester, Suss.; formerly of Horsham, Suss*, The History of Parliament: the House of Commons 1604-1629 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010). Accessed online: http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1604-1629/member/jordan-nicholas-1570-1629#footnote3_bd9tlmp (retrieved 4th Feb. 2021).

> It is very true that many, both men and women, that in their youth could have played passing well, in their age, or when they have been married, have forgotten all, as if they had never known what a Lute had meant.[146]

Additionally, Robert Burton commented in *An Anatomy of Melancholy*:

> We seek this daily verified in our young women and wives, that they being maids took such pains to sing, play and dance, with such cost and charge to their parents to get those graceful qualities, now being married will scarce touch an instrument, they care not for it.[147]

Richard Mulcaster, a leading educator of the era, confirms this and tells us that young women often forget their music when they become young wives and mothers.[148]

This was not always the case, however. Contrary to this apparent norm, the *Burwell Lute Tutor*, copied by Miss Mary Burwell in c.1668-1671 contains within it the argument that students of the lute should continue playing into their old age. The tutor claims that if the lute is routinely played, a person will never suffer with gout or lose their hearing, as the body's humours are constantly stabilised by the 'wholesome harmony' of the lute.[149] There are examples of early modern women continuing their musical activities after marriage, and specifically in the cases of Lady Mary Killigrew,[150] Elizabeth Berkeley, and Margaret Hoby. In the instance of Lady Killigrew, Constantijn Huygens (musician, poet, diplomat and father of the physicist and astronomer Christiaan Huygens) was a constant and welcome visitor and the Killigrews' house in London in 1621 and 1622. Constantijn noted in his letters that Mary 'sang divinely while accompanying herself on the lute', as well as remarking that: 'The whole household was harmonious. Most beautiful mother – mother (I am still astonished) to twelve children'[151] The noblewoman, Katherine Berkeley played the lute as a married woman:

> At the lute she played admirably, and in her private chamber would often singe thereto, to the ravishment of hearers, who to her knowledge were seldom more than one or two of her gentlewomen. Howbeit, I have known divers of her servants secretly harkening at the windows, and at her chamber-door, whom her husband hath sometimes there found, and privately stood amongst them, if which number three or four times myself hath been one.[152]

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[146] Thomas Robinson, *The Schoole of Musicke* (London, 1603), 5.
[147] Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy, what it is with All the Kinds, Causes, Symptoms, Prognostics, and Several Cures of it* 532.
[148] Richard Mulcaster, *Positions Concerning the Training Up of Children* (London, 1581), 177.
[149] Thurston Dart, "Miss Mary Burwell's Instruction Book for the Lute," *The Galpin Society Journal* 11 (1958), 48.
[150] See Margaret Yelloly, "Lady Mary Killigrew (c. 1587-1656), Seventeenth-Century Lutenist," *The Lute Society Journal 42* (2002).
[151] Jonckbloet. W L. A., et Land, J.P. N., Musique et Musiciens au XVIIe Siecle, Correspondance et oeuvre musicale de Constantijn Huygens (Leyde, 1882) CCXXVI. Translation in Yelloly, "Lady Mary Killigrew (c. 1587-1656), Seventeenth-Century Lutenist," 27.
[152] Thomas Dudley Fosbroke, *Berkeley Manuscripts: Abstracts and Extracts of Smyth's Lives of the Berkeleys* (London: John Nichols & Sons, 1821), 205-6.

It is likely that musically accomplished women would naturally take on the role of teaching their children to play the lute as married women: Kenneth Charlton has discussed how mothers played a central role in the overall education of their children,[153] and Barbara Kiefer Lewalski discusses in *Writing Women in Jacobean England* (1993), how the diaries of Margaret Hoby and Grace Sherington, Lady Mildmay detail the large responsibility women had for household management, the education of their own as well as other's children, the medical treatment of the sick, as well as many other activities that constituted an aristocratic woman's 'domestic province'.[154] The teaching of the lute and other musical skills may well have been a natural part of that domestic province.

However, the manner of Margaret's signing-off, and her specific reference to her lute practice being childlike 'play', indicates that she did not play in any capacity after her marriage. Furthermore, the signature certainly marks the point at which she stopped copying into her lute book, and it had in fact already begun to be taken over by another (unknown) scribe. Perhaps lute playing was only something Margaret had time to pursue during her youth. On becoming a wife, and not before long a mother (and adopting the new roles associated with it) it likely meant it was time for her to end her play. Perhaps the death of John Dowland in 1626 may also have had some influence on her decision to end her music making. In terms of the content of the lute book, all of the music written in Margaret's hand was almost certainly copied before the summer of 1626, and most likely before her marriage in the spring of 1625, with her signature being added shortly afterwards. If Spencer was correct in his dating of the paper that made up the lute book, this means all of the music copied in Margaret Board's hand was copied within a mere four to five-year period, when Margaret was aged 19-24. However, it is likely that this was not her only lute book, and that she was compiling earlier music into a single book during this time. Given the advanced level of the music in this book, it appears very likely it represents her playing and learning at quite an advanced level. Nevertheless, for all the music in this lute book to be copied within such a short timeframe, and for Margaret to have achieved such a level of proficiency by such a young age, Margaret must have been an incredibly dedicated student. There is evidence for this even within the content of the book; the end of the Allemande by Robert Dowland has been reworked into a more elaborate and technically demanding section - seemingly just for her. Gale suggests Margaret may have written the passage herself, or perhaps Dowland reworked the passage to challenge her (meaning that Margaret would have copied down the revised version which Dowland showed or dictated to her).[155] Additionally, her

[153] See Kenneth Charlton, *Women, Religion and Education in Early Modern England* (Taylor & Francis Group, 1999).
[154] Barbara Kiefer Lewalski and William R. Kenan, *Writing Women in Jacobean England* (Harvard University Press, 1993), 4.
[155] Gale, "John Dowland, Celebrity Lute Teacher," 210.

book contains a plethora of specific and unique ornamentation signs, which offers tremendous insight into her distinctly personal performance practice (a topic I explore in great depth as part of the third chapter of this thesis). The book is not only a reminder of the importance of music-making amongst gentry families of the English Renaissance, but a testament to the extraordinary capabilities of this young female lutenist, whose life had (until now) gone largely unsung.

It is impossible not to feel a sense of sadness at the abrupt end to Margaret's lute education, which was directly linked to her marriage. It is impossible for this not to strike a modern audience as being oppressively stifling of this young woman's talent, autonomy, and agency, which had been expressed within her lute book up until that point. However, the function of musical education for women in the early modern period was very often a 'tool' or means to an end: the end being a well-timed and profitable marriage, which Margaret Board appears to have very successfully achieved. A high-quality musical education was a parental investment, and in the case of daughters specifically, to secure a young person a profitable marriage was to give them financial security for a considerable portion of their adult lives. Once matrimony had been achieved, arguably there was no use, or indeed time, for the continued acquisition of skills and accomplishments like lute playing. In this regard, the approach taken by Margaret Board's family in facilitating her lute education up until the point of her marriage appears very much to follow the social trend of the time. However, the surviving evidence documenting lute playing by married women shows that at least some women continued playing, and it is clear (from the comments made about their playing by listeners) it was because they had a personal love of the art, and a high ability and talent for it. Undeniably then, there is a sadness in that lute playing was seen to be a childhood pursuit within the Board's household. A pursuit that Margaret Board no longer had the time or liberty to continue, following her marriage. The sense of injustice that is felt by modern audiences speaks to the differences between our views and values of musical education today (music for the sake of art and timeless enjoyment) compared to early modern views (music as a social tool). It is clear from the content of the Board lute book that Margaret was a highly accomplished player, so the conclusion of her lute lessons seems a tragedy. However, there was at least a continued sense of appreciation of the physical material she had created during her musical education in the form of her lute book being bound into a beautiful gold tooled leather bound book (the properties of which are fully detailed and explored in part two of this chapter). The book transitioned from being a pedagogical music 'workbook' to being a valued and treasured household anthology of lute music. Binding the book was a way to better preserve and honour it, and was a way to be able to display it to visitors in a way that would identify the Board family as being highly accomplished. The gold stamping of Margaret Board's initials on the front cover also honoured Margaret's agency in creating the resulting very fine collection of lute music.

Part 2: Margaret Board's lute book: a source study

The following section of this chapter is a study of the physical properties and internal musical and textual content of the Board lute book in view of it being a document evidencing Margaret Board's musical life and agency. Firstly, the state of current scholarship on this musical source (in terms of its physical properties and musical content, and categorisation) is assessed. The most thorough studies on the Board lute book to date have been conducted by musicologists Robert Spencer and Julia Craig-McFeely. Spencer's study, which accompanies a facsimile reproduction of the lute book, comprises an inventory of pieces contained within the source (with modernised spellings) including concordances and notes, and listing folio numbers. He also includes details about the lute tunings used for all pieces, notes on the various scribes, signs used for fingerings and graces, and brief notes on the music theory lesson in John Dowland's hand which appears on folio 1. There is no analysis of the musical content of the Board lute book in Spencer's study in terms of how it compares overall to other sources – it is a valuable but brief overview. Julia Craig-McFeely's study, contained within her PhD thesis 'English Lute Manuscripts and Scribes 1530-1630' (1994), as well as her later article 'Elizabethan and Jacobean lute manuscripts: types, characteristics and compilation' (2019) references Spencer's work regarding the physical properties of the Board lute book, and similarly presents notes on the musical content (most thoroughly within the appendix to her PhD thesis), listing folio numbers, original ascriptions, titles (modern), composers, concordances and cognates – for the Board lute book as well as every other English lute source from the period 1530-1630. McFeely also discusses some key features of the Board lute book within the body of her thesis: most significantly this includes details about the manuscript's compilation and characteristics, which allow it to be identified as a pedagogical book, and comparisons are made between the Board lute book and other similar lute music sources in view of highlighting similarities and differences between them. Craig-McFeely also presents detailed information about Margaret Board's uniquely identifiable scribal hand, and touches upon the subject of her lessons with Dowland, as well as the appearance of her scribal hand within the Hirsh lute book (as previously discussed).[156] However, the information Craig-McFeely presents on the Board lute book is limited by the wide scope of her thesis, as it collectively assesses all of the sources and scribes from the English lute Golden Age.

No prior study has offered a focused analysis of the musical and textual content of the Board lute book in view of it being a document evidencing a woman's musical life and practices. Previous studies have been oriented towards detailing and presenting clear information about the appearance

[156] See Craig-McFeely, "English Lute Manuscripts and Scribes 1530-1630," Case studies: Board and Hirsch, 101-22.

and content of the Board lute book with a view to discern piece titles written within the book and connect them with professional composers (men), for the purpose of evaluating and recording the surviving lute music repertory. However, there has been little analysis of what the Board lute book and its content means beyond that; what it tells us about Margaret Board as a musical agent, her lute lessons, the culture of lute playing amongst early modern women, etc. It is perplexing that such little attention has been given to what this source reveals about female musical agency in the early modern period, as it so clearly comes from the context of women's domestic musical practices.

This chapter offers fresh insight into Margaret Board's musical life by re-analysing physical properties of her lute book, as well as focusing acutely on the textual content of the book. An analysis of the many names mentioned throughout the book sheds new light on Margaret's musical network and the interactions she may have had with a variety of professional musicians in and around London. This original analysis and new findings offer fresh insights into how Margaret went about her learning and her music collecting: they show it is possible that Margaret directly encountered a maximum of nine lutenist-composers during the period of her lute education, and that she may also have received lessons from the lutenist Richard Allison (in addition to John Dowland). Additionally, new data analysis of the cross-over between the Board lute book and similar English pedagogical lute books, as well as all other lute music sources from England and abroad, offers a greater understanding of the musical content of this source in a wider context. Finally, an analysis of some of the stand-out writing contained within the Board lute book (Margaret's 'signing off' written in Latin, a fragment of a poem by Edward Dyer, and other notes and sketches relating to the study of both writing and mathematics) reveal new significant pieces of information about Margaret's high level of education, accomplishment, and it is revealing of Margaret's own sense of ownership over her skill as a lutenist.

Material properties of the Board lute book

Margaret Board's lute manuscript, which survives in most excellent condition, is in upright folio format measuring 341mm x 207mm (see fig. 2.10). Physically, and in terms of its musical content, it is most similarly comparable to three other manuscripts: the MS Egerton 2046, copied by Jane Pickeringe, and Add. MS 38539, copied by 'Margaret L.', both held by the British Library, and the manuscript known commonly as the 'Folger Dowland lute book', a manuscript copied and owned at least in part by a mistress Anne Bayldon, and which is now part of the holdings of the Folger Shakespeare Library.[157] Alongside the Board lute book, these four manuscripts are the only surviving

[157] The Folger Shakespeare Library is an independent research library on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., United States. It has the world's largest collection of the printed works of William Shakespeare, and is a primary repository for rare materials from the early modern period (1500–1750) in Britain and Europe.

lute books copied and owned by identifiable young English women who were learning to play the lute during the early seventeenth century. All four manuscripts are large, wide-ranging collections containing highly virtuosic lute pieces for solo lute, and a small number of duets or duet parts. There are three other similar surviving lute lesson books which may have been female-owned and produced, but they contain no complete signature or other information to identify the original owner.[158]

Figure 2.10: Front cover of the binding (pictured left) and the first page of lute tablature notation on f. 1 (pictured right) of the Board lute book.

Material features

An analysis of the material features of the Board lute book reveals key information about how the book was compiled, how and when it was bound, and how this relates to how the object was used: both as a pedagogical tool, and also as an object of social significance. This in turn reveals key

[158] The three manuscripts in question are: EIRE-Dublin, Trinity College Library, Ms.410/1 (Dallis lute book'), EIRE-Dublin, Trinity College Library, Ms.408/2, and GB-Cambridge University Library, Ms.Dd.4.22.

information about the nature and manner of Margaret Board's lute lessons. What is obvious is that the music paper on which Margaret Board's music copying is written was purchased with pre-ruled six-line tablature staff lines, as there are some blank pages in the book which are ruled, and there are no un-ruled blank pages besides the front and end papers. It is therefore likely the lute book began life as a paper 'workbook' (perhaps sewn into a plain cardboard cover) which Margaret copied her music and lesson materials into until it became physically full and musically substantial enough to warrant turning into a more substantial leather bound volume: the music would have been copied into the book before the book was bound into its current handsome leather and gold-tootled final form. There is evidence for this in how the piece titles written into the left-hand margins are slightly buried in the book binding (see fig. 2.11). Additionally, it seems logical and practical that to create the final 'presentation copy' of a collection of music (worthy of an expensive binding) one would copy onto a semi-permanent booklet of ruled tablature paper first rather than a bound book, as this makes for an ergonomically flat surface which can be worked upon for ease of copying. Additionally, mistakes can be managed to some degree (undesired pages could hypothetically be removed and not included in the final bound volume, for instance).

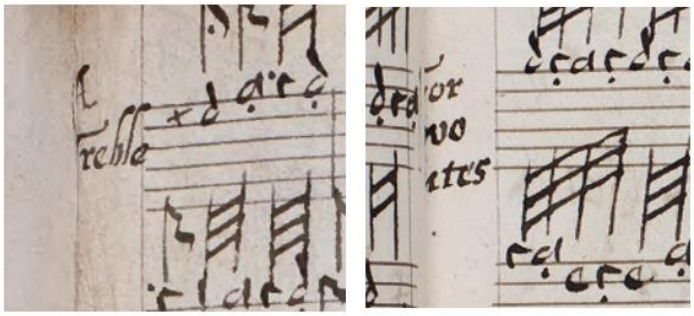


Figure 2.11: Margaret Board's handwriting of the words: 'A Treble' (f. 2) and 'For two lutes' (f. 6), which appear semi-buried in the binding margin of the Board lute book.

It is likely that the book underwent a change of function and usage at the point at which it was bound, transforming it from being used as a lesson workbook and becoming something along the lines of a family heirloom which was both valued and prized for the beauty of both its musical content and physical form. Additionally, and very importantly, it could be shown off to guests: it would have been a useful object for self-fashioning as an educated and accomplished family who had a personal connection with a number of musical celebrities. Once bound, the lute book may have remained in possession of the Board family, which offers a suggestion as to why Margaret did not continue to add musical content to it after her marriage. It is impossible to know how much or little the workbook may or may not have been edited before it was bound into its final lute book form. Interestingly, it is possible to see there are five missing pages in the book that appear to have been ripped out at some point in time *after* the workbook was bound, indicating a wish to remove that

music at a later date. There are stubs for four of five of these pages, and on one stub it is possible to see a tablature note ‘c’ written by Margaret Board (fig. 2.12). It is unclear why these pages were removed. It is possible that the pieces contained errors, were replications of other pieces found earlier in the book, or were in some other way undesirable -- but this was not realised until after the music sheets were bound.

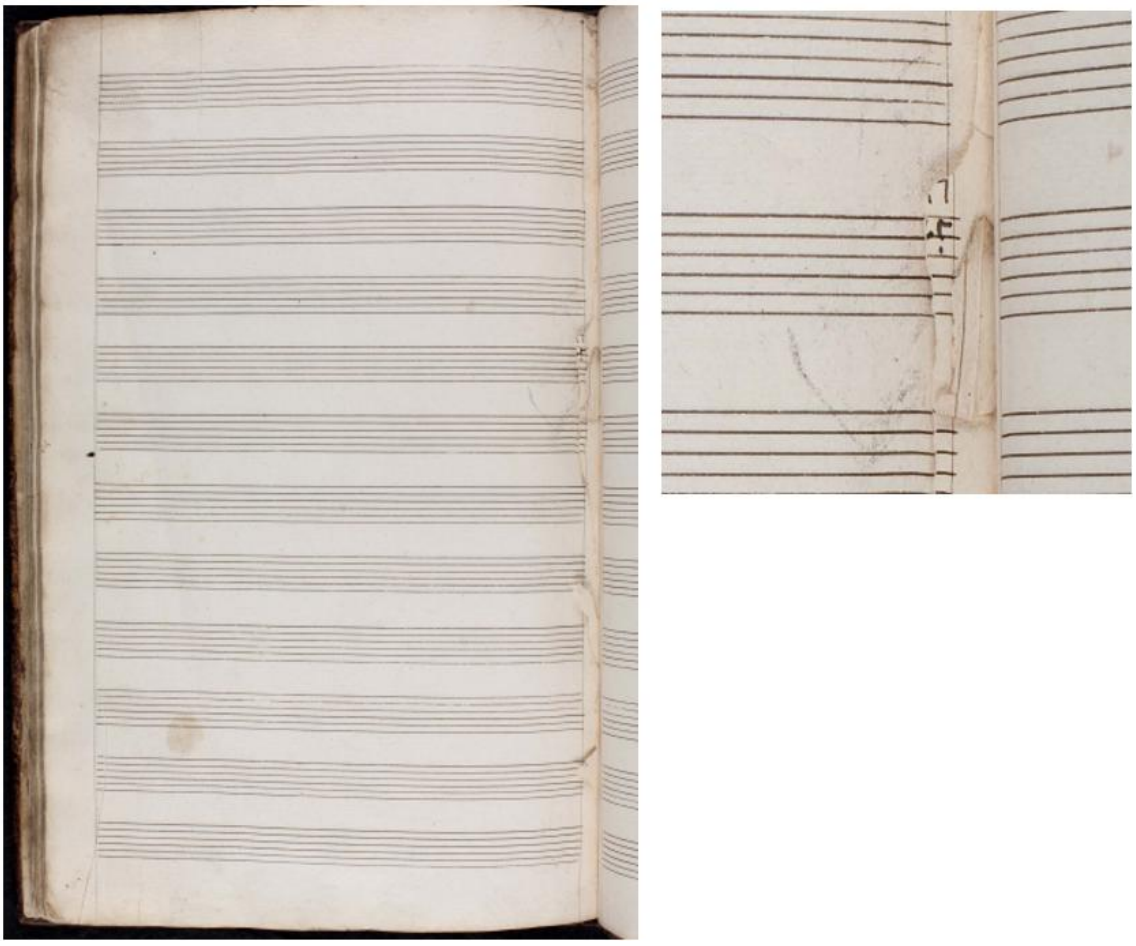


Figure 2.12: Stubs from several ripped-out pages and the preserved tablature letter ‘c’ written in Margaret Board’s hand, from the Board lute book, f. 83.

The practice of binding a lute book at the end of copying means a decision can be made as to whether the initial music workbook ends up being worth the investment of being transformed into a more permanent volume. It is clear that the book was bound at or towards the end of Margaret Board’s (exclusive) ownership and usage of the book – when she had amassed a repertory of over one hundred pieces, immaculately copied with regards to both neatness and musical accuracy, and of an impressive musical standard. I suggest that the Board lute book was bound after Margaret Board copied out her music, but before the later scribes wrote pieces into it. Evidence in favour of this hypothesis is the fact it is Margaret Board’s initials of ownership that are stamped onto the front

cover. Furthermore, later scribes have not written anything in the left-hand margins, which would have been rendered much smaller due to the binding (besides the occasional small mensuration symbols always unobscured and visible on the innermost side of a margin); rather, their titles are always indented and written within the ruled tablature lines. The functioning of the lute book is revealed by the music later added to it by a number of scribal hands, as they illustrate the book's continued usage. Clearly, the book continued to be enjoyed, read, and likely played from, after it was bound. This is indicative of the value the object was viewed to have had, and the respect with which this (and other similar) female-produced lute books were continuously treated with after they had served their initial pedagogical purpose.

The musical content of the Board lute book

The manuscript contains 188 lute pieces and exercises in tablature, alongside a page of notes and diagrams relating to music theory. The most extensive exploration of the musical content of this lute book has been by Robert Spencer in his introductory notes which accompany the facsimile edition of the book, and also Julia Craig-McFeely's analysis of the manuscript, which was part of her PhD thesis 'English Lute Manuscripts and Scribes', published in 1994. Craig-Mcfeely includes within her appendix: a table listing the musical content of the lute book including folio numbers, original ascriptions, titles (modern), composers (where they have or can be attributed), and the concordances and cognates for each piece. This section of the chapter is a further analysis of the contents of the Board lute book specifically. I analyse Craig-McFeely's findings with the intention of shedding light on aspects of this data set which have not been given previous attention. I focus in particular on the Board lute book's similarities and distinct qualities with respect to other contemporary sources, and through this the musical and social networks it both facilitated and documents. Firstly, I investigate all of the names mentioned throughout the book, as these give insight into who existed in Margaret Board's musical social sphere, and with whom from that network of musicians and patrons she may have had interactions. I also analyse the book in relation to other pedagogical lute manuscripts, compiling statistical information on how much cross-over there is between this manuscript and all other pedagogical English manuscripts in terms of their musical content. I also analyse the cross-over between the Board lute book and all other sources of lute music, to see how this manuscript compares not only to other pedagogical books but professional, printed, and foreign lute music sources. My analysis focuses only on the pieces copied by (or for) Margaret Board, the first scribe of the lute book (out of five scribes in total, see Appendix 2). This includes pieces 1-104 and 187-8. A total of 106 pieces of lute music. My analysis of Margaret Board's section includes two pieces copied out by John Dowland (piece no. 36 and 187), as it is more likely than not that these pieces were copied for Margaret to learn and play (given Dowland died

before the end of Margaret's lute lessons, and given their placement in the book being amongst or next to at least one of the pieces copied in Margaret's own hand. All the pieces in Margaret Board's section of the lute book are detailed in the following section of the chapter.

Contextualising the Board Lute Book: Types of Lute Manuscripts and Julia Craig-McFeely's research on English lute manuscripts and scribes

As a manuscript compiled by a young gentry lady, the Board lute book is an example of non-professional music copying. The types of manuscripts that fall into the non-professional lute manuscript category are: 1) Pedagogical books, compiled by pupils while taking lessons in lute playing, and 2) Household or personal anthologies, collections of repertory by individuals or related groups which can be single or multiple-scribe compilations. Both manuscript types were copied by amateurs, and Craig-McFeely adds these were both amateur musicians and amateur copyists, who were almost all of a higher social class than the musicians involved with the professional books. Many of them were also women.[159] Craig-McFeely has remarked that 'non-professionally copied books provide insight into domestic music-making by women and the high standard of musicianship they reached. Pedagogical books were predominantly copied by women and large numbers of compositions were dedicated to women, evidence of the extent to which they were associated with this instrument'.[160]

Examples of professional copying includes: 1) Bespoke copying, where books are sold with lute music already copied into them by a professional scribe, and: 2) Archive collections, which consist of fragments, playing and non-playing copies. Craig-McFeely argues archive collections were created for the preservation of large quantities of music by multiple composers (no single-composer collections survive). Professional lute players needed to maintain a repertoire of current popular works as well as music for teaching. The most logical format would be single sheets or small sections of unbound sheets that were portable and convenient to lend to students and other players. No lute books survive that belonged to eminent lute composers such as Dowland, Holborne, Allison etc., or any of those professional lutenists employed by the English court or English households that hired musicians. The way professional musicians worked is in fact similar to the way professional lutenists work today: we rely on photocopies or hand copies of single pieces for recitals and teaching. We do not carry facsimiles or multi-work collections from which we were to play but one or two pieces, though we may have some such collections, put together by professional printers, in our possession

[159] See Julia Craig-McFeely, "Elizabethan and Jacobean lute manuscripts: types, characteristics and compilation," *Études Anglaises special issue: Early modern english manuscripts* 72, 4 (2019), 375-7.
[160] Craig-McFeely, "Elizabethan and Jacobean lute manuscripts: types, characteristics and compilation," 376.

at home. Craig-McFeely has remarked 'the lutebooks of the masters do not survive because they simply never existed'.[161]

As part of her PhD thesis, Craig-McFeely categorised all of the English Lute manuscripts into the following sub-groups:

- Pedagogical books
- Household or personal anthologies
- Printed books of lute music
- Scribal publications
- Professional books
- Teaching fragments
- Fragments
- Foreign sources with activity by an English scribe

I will adopt Craig-McFeely's categorisation terms throughout my analysis of the Board lute book. Craig-McFeely used one other category of 'Ghosts', but I have chosen to omit these manuscripts from my study as these manuscripts themselves are lost. (These sources were described by a writer cataloguing a library or private collection, but later researchers were unable to locate it).[162] A table showing all the English lute sources of lute music categorised by professional and non-professional types can be seen in Appendix 1.

Pedagogical lute books

The Board lute book can be easily defined as a Pedagogical book, due to a number of its features, ranging from physical attributes to the repertory it contains and layout. Craig-McFeely defines pedagogical books as 'those written by students of the lute, almost always under the direction of a tutor'.[163] She makes a distinction between two types of pedagogical book: the most common being one 'compiled by a young woman, or less usually a young man, from the leisured classes learning the instrument as part of their social armour', and the second type being 'compiled by a man with a lower social status, who may have intended to use the skill either semi-professionally, or as an attempt to improve his social standing by complementing his other professional skills'.[164] Typical observations for pedagogical books (of the main group, copied by young women), relating to physical attributes, the scribe(s), repertory, and layout are listed in the table below, as well as information on how the Board lute book compares with each observation.

[161] Ibid., 372.
[162] Craig-McFeely, "English Lute Manuscripts and Scribes 1530-1630," 101.
[163] Ibid., 87.
[164] Ibid. See chapter 3: 'Manuscripts: Types, Characteristics and Compilation', 70-102.

Table 2.1: Observations on pedagogical lute books applicable to the Board lute book

	Observation (following Craig-McFeely, 1994)	**Applicable to Board?**
Physical	Book typically bound after ruling but before copying	Appears to be bound after both ruling and copying
Scribe	Book compiled by the scribe under the direction of a tutor	Yes
	Handwriting and presentation generally elegant with high textual standard	Yes
	Markings from a tutor present, with evidence of his activity seen in corrections and/or performing indications	Yes
	Identity of teacher usually unknown	John Dowland identified as a teacher
	Fingerings and graces may be used and notated throughout; pieces may be heavily graced by the pupil	Yes
	Scribe almost always writes own name within the book and initials likely stamped on the cover	Yes
	Didactic material is likely to be present in the form of tables or different settings of single pieces	Yes
	Usually written by a single scribe, though this scribe may be interrupted or emended by a teacher	Yes, for the majority of the book
Repertory	Copious ascriptions which are usually highly accurate	Yes
	Progressive in musical standard from simpler pieces and duets to longer and more difficult works	Yes
	Re. duets, often only one part is copied. Where both parts copied, they may not be on the same opening	Yes
	Some easier versions of difficult pieces may be found	Yes
	Repertory is likely to range from old-fashioned to contemporary and may be entirely retrospective	Yes
Layout	Later layers may be present, as these books often leave blank folios at the end of the collection	Yes
	Music is usually carefully fitted into the available space, and gaps may be filled with very short pieces	Yes
	New pieces usually start at the top of a page	Yes
	Unused lines are generally avoided, and the scribe may make awkward compressions to facilitate this	Yes
	The copying span of the original scribe is likely very short, usually the duration of their lessons only, though later layers may continue for some decades	Yes

Very nearly all characteristics of pedagogical books as identified by Craig-McFeely are indeed the case for the Margaret Board lute book, so there is no doubt the manuscript is an example of this genre of source.

Only one of a collection of lesson materials?

Whilst the Board lute book does progress from shorter and easier to more complex and technically demanding pieces, it is typical of other surviving examples of pedagogical lute sources from the period in that it does not contain music or exercises simple enough for the absolute beginner. Therefore, it is likely the Board lute book would not have been Margaret's only lute book, or at least not her only lesson material. I believe it was more likely part of a wider collection of lute lesson materials. This is the lute book which survived, probably because it was the most neatly and elegantly put together; perhaps a 'presentation copy' of the more accomplished pieces she learnt during the course of her lessons. It is clear it was her last lute book due to the inclusion of her married name and her 'signing-off' at the end of her copying. Practically speaking, she would have needed additional lesson materials and earlier simpler pieces that were either part of an earlier lesson book, or more likely various loose sheets which were not deemed worthy of binding into a final book.

From the viewpoint of a performer and teacher, a clear sense of pedagogical progression is evident at the very beginning of the book (f. 1-1v); but it then progresses very quickly from an intermediate to very high level, and remains consistently at a high level of virtuosity throughout the layer in Board's and Dowland's hands. Interestingly, this is very similar to the layout of contemporary printed tutor books. It is hard to believe that someone would have learnt the pieces without a considerable degree of pedagogical supplementation of additional technical exercises, studies, and simply far more beginner-friendly pieces. What also strikes me is the limited scope of the piece-types contained within the book: the music is falls into two categories: 1) settings of popular tunes and 2) dances, which primarily are one of the following four: pavans, galliards, almains and courants. This is very similar to the Pickeringe, ML, and Folger lute books in terms of genres of solo lute music represented. This is also very similar to the printed lute tutors, though these tend to contain far more fantasias than the Board lute book does, and fewer ballad settings and 'toys'. The low representation of fantasias in pedagogical lute books may be due to these pieces being from an improvised genre and tradition, which were not commonly notated by professional players and teachers (unless they were to publish a collection of works). Therefore, written examples may not have always existed for students to borrow and copy out. See chapter three of this thesis for a more focused and in-depth analysis of the Board lute book as a source of lute pedagogy, from my own performance-based perspective.

The contents of the Board lute book

As Craig-McFeely's PhD thesis contains, within its appendix, a complete list of the contents of the Board lute book, here I present a list of pieces only from Margaret Board's section of the book.

Table 2.2: Musical content of Margaret Board's layer of the Board lute book.

Piece no.	Folio no.	Titles (edited & spellings modernised)
1	1/1 1/2	A treble The ground to the treble before
2	1/3	Orlando
3	1v/1	Delacourt pavan
4	1v/2	Marc Antoine Galliard
5	2/1	Rogero
6	2/2	A Pavan
7	2v/1	Flat Pavan Mr Johnson
8	2v/2 3/2	Hunt's Up treble The ground to the treble before
9	3v/1	Ambroses Pavan
10	3v/2	(No title in MS)
11	4/1	Ambroses Galliard: the Galliard to the Pavan before
12	4/2	A Maske
13	4v 5/2	The Spanish Measures treble Richard Allison The ground to the treble before by Mr Allison
14	5/3	Light of Love
15	5/4	The Scolding Woman
16	5/5	Prelude
17	5v-6/1	Philips' Pavan
18	6/2	An Almain for two lutes
19	6/3	(No title in MS)
20	6v-7/1	Delight Pavan Mr John Johnson
21	7/2	A Courant
22	7v/1	Delight Galliard
23	7v/2	Loathe to Depart
24	8/1	Courant
25	8/2	The French King's Maske
26	8v-9/1	Passamezzo Pavan by Mr Richard Allison
27	9/2	(No title in MS)
28	9v 10/1	Passamezzo Galliard R.A. The Galliard to the Pavan before by Mr Richard Allison.
29	10/2	The Lady Banning her Almain made by Mr Sturt
30	10/3	When will my Love come Home/Go from my Window by Mr Richard Allison
31	10v-11/1	Solus cum Sola by Mr Dowland, Bachelor of Music
32	11/2	Home Again, Market is Done
33	11/3	I Cannot Keep my Wife at Home
34	11v-12/1	Lachrimae Pavan made by Mr John Dowland, Bachelor of Music

35	12/2	Sellenger's Round
36	12v/1	Almain Robert Dowland
37	12v/2	Bonny Sweet Robin
38	13/1	An Almain by Mr John Dowland, Bachelor of Music
39	13/2	Lavolta
40	31v-14/1	Primero Richard Allison
41	14/2	Flow Forth Abundant Tears
42	14v-15	Delight treble/Delight Pavan for Consort John Johnson
43	15v/1	(No title in MS)
44	15v/2	Courant
45	16/1	A Galliard of Mr Daniel Bacheler
46	16/2	The Prince his Almain
47	16v-17/1	A Galliard by Mr John Dowland, Bachelor of Music
48	17/2	My Mistress Farewell
49	17/3	The Lady Phyllis' Maske
50	17v-18	The King of Denmark his Galliard/Mr Dowland his Battle Galliard
51	18v/1	(No title in MS)
52	18v/2	Mrs Lettice Rich her Courant
53	18v/3	A Lavolta Mrs Lettice Rich
54	18v/4	Courant
55	19/1	A Galliard Mr Allison
56	19/2	A Courant
57	19v-20	Quadran Pavan
58	20v/1	A Galliard
59	20v/2-21/1	A Dream
60	21/2	The Lord Burrow's Galliard
61	21/3	Mr Lusher's Almain
62	21v/1	If my Complaints John Dowland, Bachelor of Music
63	21v/2-22	Il Nodo de Gordio by Mr Holborne
64	22v/1	A Galliard
65	22v/2	Courant
66	22v/3	Courant
67	23/1	The Prince of Portugal his Galliard
68	23/2	Poor Tom
69	23/3	Branle de la Torche
70	23v/1	A Galliard Mr Allison
71	23v/2	Fair Ministers Disdain Me Not…[etc.]
72	24/1	Courant
73	24/2	The Queen's Galliard by Mr Dowland, Bachelor of Music
74	24v	(No title in MS)
75	25/1	The French tune
76	25/2	Courant
77	25/3	The Eglantine Branch
78	25v/1	The Wood Bind
79	25v/2	The Gillyflower
80	25v/3	Almain
81	26/1	The Witches Dance
82	26/2	The Gathering of Peascods
83	26/3	(No title in MS)

84	26/4	(No title in MS)
85	26v/1	Marigold Gold
86	26v/2	Mr Dowland's Midnight
87	27/1	The Prince his Courant Robert Johnson
88	27/2	Joan to the Maypole
89	27v/1	The Hunter's Carrier
90	27v/2	(No title in MS)
91	27v/3	Antique Maske per Mr Confesso, set by Mr Taylor
92	28/1	The Prince's Maske
93	28/2	Almain Robert Johnson
94	28v/1	An Almain Philip Rosseter
95	28v/2	(No title in MS)
96	29/1	Courant
97	29/2	Praeludium by Mr Dowland
98	29v	A Fantasy
99	30/1	Courant by Doctor Dowland[165]
100	30/2	Almain Mr Johnson
101	30/3	An Almain Mr Johnson
102	30v/1	An Almain Mr Jenning
103	30v/2	The Lady Eliza her Maske
104	30v/3	(No title in MS)
105	83v/2	Dulciana

Margaret's musical sphere

Where pieces in the MS are attributed to a named composer, it is possible in each such instance that this represents a trace of a social interaction: Margaret may have had a personal encounter with that professional musician. It is, for instance, certain that she had at least one lesson (and in probability many more) with John Dowland, due to the evidence of his handwriting at several points throughout the book.[166] These are as follows:

1. A collection of theoretical tables (f.[i]v)
2. (?) Performance directions added to Margaret's copy of his Lachrimae pavan (f.11v-12r)
3. A copy of an Almande by Robert Dowland (f 12v)
4. (?)Performance directions added to Margaret's copy of his (J. Dowland's) Almande (f.13r)
5. Short fragments of tablature (f.83.v)

Several pieces composed by John Dowland in Board's hand exist throughout the book too, with more pieces being attributed to him than any other composer in this layer. Dowland is noted as the composer of nine out of the total 106 pieces. While the majority of pieces in the book are without attribution, the existing attributions are (similarly to other female owned pedagogical lute books)

[165] On folio 30 (piece no. 99) John Dowland is referred to as 'Doctor Dowland' for the first time, rather than Mr Dowland (as in pieces 31, 34, 38, 47, 50, 62, 73, 86 and 97), indicating the pieces were copied chronologically.
[166] See Gale, "John Dowland, Celebrity Lute Teacher." In particular, his discussion on ascriptions and signatures within lute books indicating that an encounter with musical 'celebrity' took place (see pages 213 and 215).

copious in comparison with other types of lute books, and their inclusion rewards further analysis as it gives a sense of who existed in Margaret Board's "musical sphere", or at least in her musical consciousness. Her collected repertoire extends backwards in time and outwards in geography from southern England, encompassing both music with foreign origins and the work of composers who themselves migrated. The collection ranges from settings of bawdy ballads to the compositions of court musicians to pieces connected with European Royalty. The names of professional lutenist-composers to which Margaret attributes pieces make up the greater part of the names appearing in the book, but they are accompanied by several mentions of English and European Royalty, English Lords and Ladies where pieces have been written in their honour, and one arranger. Full details can be found in the table below.

Table 2.3: Names mentioned within the Board lute book

Names mentioned in the manuscript (in order of appearance)	Folio	Relationship between the person mentioned and the piece of music	No. of cognates/ concordances
Mark Antony	1v/2	Composer	0
John Johnson	2v/1	Composer	12
Ambrose [?Lupo de Milan]	3v/1	Composer	0
Richard Allison	4v-5/1	Composer	0
Richard Allison	5/2	Composer	0
Peter Phillips	5v-6/1	Composer	13
John Johnson	6v-7/1	Composer	17
The French King	8/2	Written in honour of	5
Richard Allison	8v-9/1	Composer	0
Richard Allison	10/2	Composer	0
The Lady Banning	10/2	Written in honour of	1
John Stuart	10/2	Composer	1
Richard Allison	10/3	Composer	15
John Dowland	11v-12/1	Composer	4
Robert Dowland	12v/1	Composer	0
John Dowland	13/1	Composer	0
Richard Allison	13v-14/1	Composer	1
John Johnson	14v-15	Composer	17
Daniel Bacheler	16/1	Composer	10
John Dowland	16v-17/1	Composer	6
The Lady Phyllis	17/3	Written in honour of	0
The King of Denmark	17v-18	Written in honour of	11
John Dowland		Composer	
Mrs Lettice Rich	18v/2	Written in honour of	2
Mrs Lettice Rich	18v/3	Written in honour of	0

Richard Allison	19/1	Composer [167]	9
The Lord Burrow	21/2	Written in honour of	4
Mr Lusher	21/3	Composer	1
John Dowland	21v/1	Composer	10
Anthony Holborne	21v/2-22	Composer	6
The Prince of Portugal	23/1	Written in honour of	2
Richard Allison	23v/1	Composer	9
Queen Elizabeth I	24/2	Written in honour of	2
John Dowland		Composer	
John Dowland	26v/2	Composer	1
Robert Johnson	27/1	Composer	1
Mr Confesso	27v/3	Composer	1
Robert Taylor	27v/3	Arranger	1
Robert Johnson	28/2	Composer	2
Philip Rosseter	28v/1	Composer	0
John Dowland	29/2	Composer	0
John Dowland	30/1	Composer	0
Mr Johnson[168]	30/2	Composer	0
Robert Johnson	30/3	Composer	7
Mr Jenning	30v/1	Composer	0
The Lady Eliza (Queen Elizabeth I)	30v/2	Written in honour of	2

Frequency of appearance of each name

Mark Antony (1 mention)
John Johnson (3 mentions)
Ambrose (1 mention)
Richard Allison (8 mentions)
Peter Philips (1 mention)
The French King (1 mention)
The Lady Banning (1 mention)
John Stuart (or Sturt) (1 mention)
John Dowland (9 mentions)
Robert Dowland (1 mention)
Daniel Bachelor (1 mention)
The Lady Phyllis (1 mention)
The King of Denmark (1 mention)
Mrs Lettice Rich (2 mentions)
The Lord Burrow (1 mention)
Mr Lusher (1 mention)
Anthony Holborne (1 mention)
The Prince of Portugal (1 mention)
Queen Elizabeth I (2 mentions)
Robert Johnson (3 mentions)
Mr Confesso (1 mention)

[167] However, Craig-McFeely attributes this piece to Robert Johnson in the appendix to her thesis.
[168] Margaret does not specify if this is John or Robert Johnson.

Robert Taylor (1 mention)
Philip Rosseter (1 mention)
Mr Jenning (1 mention)

The specific proportions are as follows. There are forty-six people mentioned in total. Thirty-five are composers, and there are ten instances where a piece has been written in honour of someone (domestic or foreign princes; aristocratic patrons; one arranger). The two composers who stand out in terms of the frequency of their being mentioned are Richard Allison and John Dowland. It is possible Margaret had lessons with Allison as well, likely before her lessons with Dowland, as Allison is mentioned more towards the beginning of the book, Dowland towards the latter half.

The case can be made that Margaret may have met some of the musicians mentioned within her lute book. Deducing whether or not an encounter could have taken place is based and relies upon three key facts: 1) Margaret spent some proportion of time in London during the period in which she was having lute lessons. 2) The person in question is a professional lutenist-composer working in London (either full-time or at least in part) at a time that crosses over with Margaret's lute education. 3) The inclusion of a composer's name alongside a piece of music in an amateur's lute book was a way of indicating an encounter with musical celebrity took place. As discussed in the first part of this chapter, interacting with musical celebrities and acquiring material evidence from these interactions was highly desirable. John Dowland, whom Margaret was taking lessons with, was not in fact the most celebrated lutenist in London at the beginning of the seventeenth century, and it is likely Margaret would have encountered, or would have been aiming to encounter a number of London-based lutenists if she did indeed travel to or reside in London. See appendix 1 for a table which presents information about each person mentioned within Margaret's lute book, and assesses, based on the key points mentioned, if it is possible that an encounter took place.

Out of the twenty-four people mentioned within the Board lute book, it is possible that Margaret encountered a maximum of nine (lutenist-composers) as these were people active at the English Court or residing or working in the South of England during Margaret Board's youth, when she was actively taking lute lessons. However, given she was likely in London (and around Fetter Lane) for her lute lessons, any social time she had may have facilitated encounters with various lutenist-composers from whom she acquired pieces for her lute book. Furthermore, a wider network would have been opened up to her via teacher(s): her interactions with John Dowland's network would have, by association, connected her with many musical celebrities as well as Lords, Ladies, and members of Royal families from across Europe. Contrary to the idea of a woman being confined to an entirely private sphere for her musical practices, Margaret's lute book illustrates stark evidence of a high level of musical-social engagement. This is encoded in the pages of the book: its inclusion of copious

attributions displays Margaret's connection with a musical community and, by extension, a cosmopolitan international network.

Comparing pieces in the Board Lute Book with all other pedagogical books

In order to get a greater sense of how the Board lute book compares to the other surviving pedagogical English lute manuscripts, I have analysed the contents of each of the fourteen manuscripts and compiled data on the cross-over between them. The table below shows the number of times each of the other fourteen surviving pedagogical lute manuscripts share a piece in common with the Board lute book.

Table 2.4: Number of pieces from the Board lute book found within other English pedagogical lute manuscripts.

Pedagogical manuscript	**No. pieces in common with the Board lute book**
GB-London, British Library, Add.38539 (*ML lute book*)	14
GB-London, British Library, Eg.2046 (*Pickeringe lute book*)	12
US-Washington Folger-Shakespeare Library, Ms.V.b.280 (olim 1610.1) (*Folger lute book*)	12
EIRE-Dublin, Trinity College Library, Ms.408/2	9
GB-Lam MS 601. (*Mynshall lute book*)	8
EIRE-Dublin, Trinity College Library, Ms.410/1 (*Dallis lute book*)	6
GB-Cambridge University Library, Add.8844 (*Trumbull lute book*)	5
GB-Lam MS 602 (*Sampson lute book*)	3
GB-Cambridge University Library, Ms.Dd.4.22	3
GB-Cambridge University Library, Add.2764(2)	2
GB-Edinburgh, University Library, Ms.La.III.487. (*Rowallan lute book*)	1
GB-Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland, Dep.314, No.23. (*Wemyss lute book*)	0
GB-London, British Library, Stowe.389	0

Interestingly, there is surprisingly little cross-over between the Board lute book and the other pedagogical books. Out of the 106 pieces in Margaret Board's section of the lute book, the most the musical content crosses over with any other pedagogical manuscript is only by fourteen pieces. This speaks to the uniqueness of an individual student's lessons, and the degree to which their lessons were tailored towards them, their technical abilities, and musical preferences. Both the Folger lute book and Board lute book have evidence of lessons from John Dowland within them, yet the two books share only twelve pieces in common. It indicates Dowland, and other teachers presumedly, did not have a set pedagogy for their students when it came to the pieces they set, but that the

students' lute book was curated more by their personal tastes, abilities, and the music they happened to encounter and enjoy enough to create and retain their own personal copy.

Something of note, however, is that when there is crossover with a particular piece, there tends to be several concordances with the other pedagogical books. Clearly, there were certain pieces that were popular with students, and made their way into many lute books. The pieces with the most cross-over, each existing in at least three different pedagogical books, are:

- Piece no. 5, 'Rogero' (ballad tune) (contained in 5 pedagogical books)
- Piece no. 7, 'The Flat Pavan' by John Johnson (5)
- Piece no. 20, 'Delight Pavan' by John Johnson (5)
- Piece no. 24, 'Courant' (3)
- Piece no. 30, 'Go from my Window' (ballad tune) (3)
- Piece no. 34 'Lachrimae Pavan' by John Dowland (4)
- Piece no. 35, 'Sellenger's Round' (ballad tune) (3)
- Piece no. 37 'Bonny Sweet Robin' (ballad tune) (5)
- Piece no. 50, 'The King of Denmark's Galliard' by John Dowland (3)
- Piece no. 75, 'The French Tune' (ballad tune) (3)

It is only the pieces that were exceedingly popular that exist in multiple pedagogical sources. Additionally, there is more crossover towards the beginning of the book and this decreases towards the end. The repertoire contained towards the beginning of the Board lute book is also retrospective in nature: from the late sixteenth century or the first decade of seventeenth century. A greater number of pieces composed closer to the time of Margaret's copying begin to appear towards the mid-section of her layer of the book (e.g.: compositions by John Dowland on f. 12v and Robert Dowland on f. 13, both which appear to have been written specifically for her). It seems logical that a pedagogical lute book would begin with a few more common pieces that made good lessons, and then as the student progresses, the book becomes more original and less similar to other surviving pedagogical books.

Comparing the Board Lute Book with all other concordances/manuscript types

In order to assess how the Board lute book compares to the wider context of lute music sources, I have collated information about the cross-over of musical content between this book and all other lute music sources.

Table 2.5: Cognates and concordances with the Board lute book from all other lute manuscript types.

Type of manuscript	No. cognates and concordances with the Board lute book
Foreign source (manuscript or printed)	108
Pedagogical	86
Professional	83
Anthology	40
Foreign source with activity by an English scribe	12
Printed source (English)	11
Virginal book	3
Guardbook	2
Teaching fragment	1

Interestingly, the Board lute book shares more pieces with foreign sources than with any other lute manuscript type. One might be inclined to believe this indicates she was educated abroad. However, given that the musical content of her lute book is overwhelmingly English in origin, and the musicians and patrons mentioned throughout the book are overwhelmingly English-based, this more likely indicates the popularity of English music on the continent, rather than indicating anything about Margaret Board's location. In fact, this data gives an overall warped sense of where Margaret's music came from, as it is based entirely on which lute manuscripts just so happened to survive into the twenty-first century. Many of the pieces contained within Margaret's book have no cognates or concordances, but this is likely due to the fact Margaret was copying pieces directly from teaching fragments from the collections of professional lutenists, which would have been preserved to a lesser extent in comparison to the more valuable pedagogical books, household anthologies, and archive collections. Forty-three pieces appear to be unique to the Board Lute Book (40.56% of the overall musical content). This is unlikely for a pedagogical book, as Margaret would have been copying down each piece from another source. The fact there is only one piece in common between the Board lute book and any surviving teaching fragment indicates just how many teaching fragments have been lost to time.

Margaret Board's musical individuality and agency

What is most striking is that despite the fact pedagogical English lute books are so similar in their form, format, construction, layout and inclusion of genres of pieces, they are in fact very distinct from one another in terms of their specific music content. The more than 40% overall content uniqueness of the Board lute book highlights the individuality of the source, and this shows the individuality and personality of its original owner-producer, Margaret Board. The uniqueness of her musical collection is also indicative of her personal musical experiences regarding interactions and encounters with members of her musical network, and those whom she had second hand

connections with. This would have been different for each individual female lute student, and this is ultimately reflected by the materials created by each young woman. The personal musical experiences encoded into the Board lute book are markers of the agency Margaret wielded with regards to her lute lessons. The enthusiasm she had for her education, music collecting, and diligent musical copying is made clearly apparent by the impressively lengthy and musically accomplished repertory she amassed within the pages of her lute book, and by the physicality of the handsome leather binding with her initials gold-stamped so boldly on its front cover.

Another piece of evidence, which is much less obvious but greatly significant nevertheless, and which is revealing of Margaret's mindset and attitude towards her education is a fragment of a poem by Edward Dyer (1543 – 1607) written at an almost upside-down angle across the top right-hand corner of the endpaper of Margaret Board's lute book (see fig. 2.13). The poem was set as a lute song by John Dowland, and published in his *The Third and Last Booke of Songs or Aires* (1603), and reads as follows:

The lowest trees have tops, the Ant her gall,
The fly her spleen, the little spark his heat,
And slender hairs cast shadows though but small,
And Bees have stings although they be not great.
Seas have their source, and so have shallow springs,
And love is love in beggars and in kings.

Where waters smoothest run, deep are the fords,
The dial stirs, yet none perceives it move:
The firmest faith is in the fewest words,
The Turtles cannot sing, and yet they love,
True hearts have eyes and ears, no tongues to speak:
They hear, and see, and sigh, and then they break.[169]

[169] John Dowland, *The Third and Last Booke of Songs or Aires. Newly composed to sing to the Lute, Orpharion, or viols, and a dialogue for a base and meane Lute with five voices to sing thereto* (London: Thomas Adams, 1603), song 19.

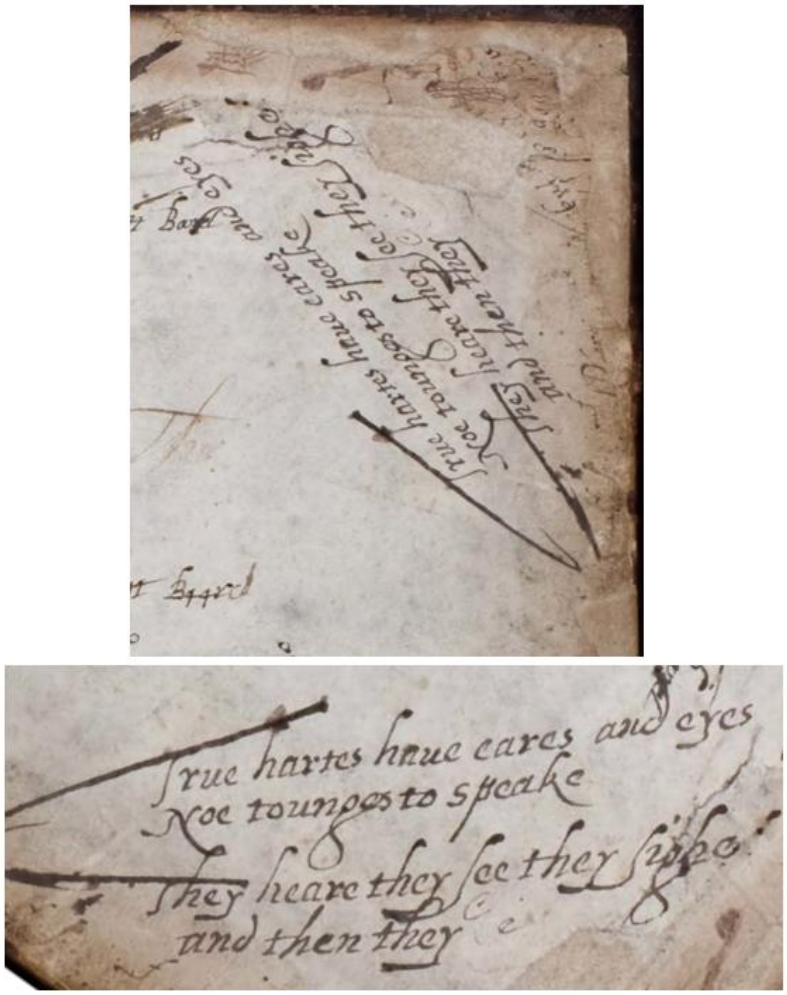


Figure 2.13: Copy of a poem fragment originally by Edward Dyer (1543-1607) from the back endpaper of the Board lute book. (Original orientation is as upper image).

Overall, the poem expresses that even the smallest creatures have power, agency, and dignity ('Bees have stings although they be not great') and that deep feelings are also felt by those that appear unassuming or inexpressive on the surface ('The Turtles cannot sing, and yet they love'). One cannot help but notice the strong parallel between this sentiment and the experience of being a girl or young woman in the early modern period: in reference to girls being both physically small in stature and limited in opportunity by social convention – yet lacking no such feeling or being any less deserving of dignity because of this reality. The poem is constructed of two six-line stanzas which take the form: ABABCC, ABABCC. It is only the final couplet that has been copied into the lute book, and its slanting and largely upside-down angle suggest it may have been written in company, while book was on table and oriented away from the copyist (perhaps because the book was being played from by someone else across the table). The fact this poem has been set by John Dowland suggests that Margaret may have been copying the words down while in a lesson with him. Several small

mistakes can be observed in Margaret's copy: the words 'ears and eyes' are inverted in comparison with Dowland's published setting. Also, the line 'They hear, and see, and sigh' is miscopied as 'They hear they see they sigh'. These small errors indicate Margaret may have been copying the words from memory, or perhaps that Dowland had dictated the words to her inaccurately, as they were from his memory. Curiously, the final word 'break' is omitted from the lines copied into the Board lute book. I do not believe, however, that this omission happened by mistake, but rather that Margaret was cleverly playing with the meaning of the poem fragment, and expressing herself and her thoughts about her lute playing through them. The final couplet of Dyer's poem expresses the sentiment that true and raw human emotions are inexpressible in words, and that this results in a feeling of pain and heartbreak. However, the omission of the final word 'break' in Margaret's copy of the rhyming couplet conveys her feeling that lute playing grants her the ability to give voice to these otherwise inexpressible emotions. Opposite to how the symbolic broken lute string in Hans Holbein's *The Ambassador's* conveys turmoil and disarray (as discussed in Chapter 1), the absence of the word 'break' from Margaret's fragment of Dyer's poem communicates that the accomplished musical performances she is able to achieve (upon her well-maintained lute) bestows her emotional harmony, through the facilitation of the expression of deepmost feelings. Crucially, the idea that the lute could be used as a form of emotional communication or discourse was ubiquitous in the period: the idea that music has a rhetoric, and the lute strings literally harness the ability to 'speak'. For instance, here the trope is articulated in relation to a woman's lute playing in Thomas Heyward's tragedy *A Woman Killed With Kindness* of 1603: 'Oft hath she made this melancholy wood, / Now mute and dumb for her disastrous chance, / Speak sweetly many a note'.[170] Additionally, Margaret's sentiment about inexpressible emotions relates to literary evidence from the early modern period which claimed the lute had the ability to soothe melancholy. For instance, in a letter to Princess Mary from Catherine of Aragon in 1534, at a time when the Queen clearly feared for her daughter's life, she asks Mary to find comfort in prayer and sacred texts, as well as suggesting that she could 'sometimes for your recreation use your virginals or lute'.[171] Additionally, Robert Burton advocates for the medicinal use of music (a 'remedy' which 'physicians have prescribed') in his publication *An Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621).[172] Margaret demonstrates not only her attitude towards the lute, but also her education and high degree of accomplishment, through her poetic playing on these words.

[170] Martin Wiggins, ed., *'A Woman Killed with Kindness' and Other Domestic Plays* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), Scene 15, 119.
[171] Catherine of Aragon, "Letter of Catharine of Aragon to her daughter Princess Mary: April 1534," ed. Marilee Hanson (English History Online, 2015 1534). https://englishhistory.net/tudor/letter-katharine-aragon-daughter-princess-mary-april-1534/.
[172] See Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy, what it is with All the Kinds, Causes, Symptoms, Prognostics, and Several Cures of it* see 'Musicke a remedy', 372-5.

The intentional pun that is made through the omission of the word 'break' also demonstrates Margaret's knowledge and understanding of Latin vocabulary: as by insinuating that the lute gives the ability to express the emotions of the heart, Margaret reveals her awareness of the Latin words *chordae* (strings) and *corda* (hearts). As discussed in chapter 1, this was a poetic expression and play on words (exemplified by Alciato's *Emblematum liber* (1531)) that was widely understood and used during the early modern period. This is a second example within the Board lute book that showcases Margaret's Latin knowledge, the first instance of this being the aforementioned inclusion of her 'signing-off': *Sic finem ludendi facio*, on folio 32v of the lute book.

The poem fragment and other pieces of writing practice on the endpaper of the Board lute book (see in particular her practicing superscript contractions and abbreviations, fig. 2.14) additionally demonstrate Margaret's accomplishment in handwriting, which was a highly specialised skill in this period. Craig-McFeely acknowledges that it was still mainly practised only by the professional classes and the nobility, even into the middle of the seventeenth century, and that if aptitude was shown by a child they would have been viewed and treated much like an artistically gifted child would be today. Furthermore, she explains that it took a long time to teach and acquire, demanded a great deal of effort from the pupil, and came at considerable expense to the parent. [173]

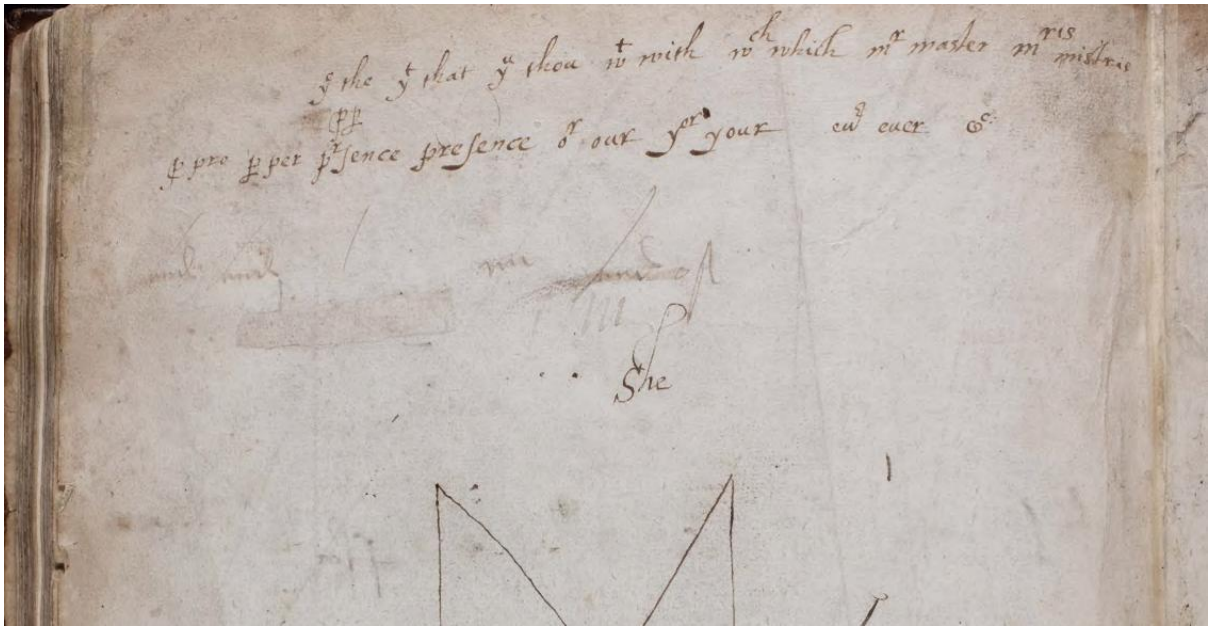


Figure 2.14: The practicing of superscript contractions and abbreviations, from the back endpaper of the Board lute book.

[173] Craig-McFeely, "English Lute Manuscripts and Scribes 1530-1630," 110.

A variety of mathematical and geometrical jottings also litter the back endpaper of Margaret's lute book, indicating her impressive education extended to maths. Examples of this include: columns of numbers (though what they reference is unclear), angled lines forming the shape of a large eight-pointed star, Margaret's signature legibly written in a combination of letters and numbers, and curious bold ink lines added to the two capital letter T's of 'True' and 'They' of the aforementioned Dyer poem (see figures 2.15-2.17). The most notable of these examples, in terms of gaining insight into Margaret's broad education and intellectual ability, is her inclusion of a version of her signature created with a mixture of letters and numbers, doodled on the back endpaper (see fig. 2.15). This signature is further evidence of Margaret's natural tendency to 'play' with the education she clearly excelled in, and of her ability (and desire) to link together technical principles with artistic skills, cleverly recombining them in a form of creative self-expression.

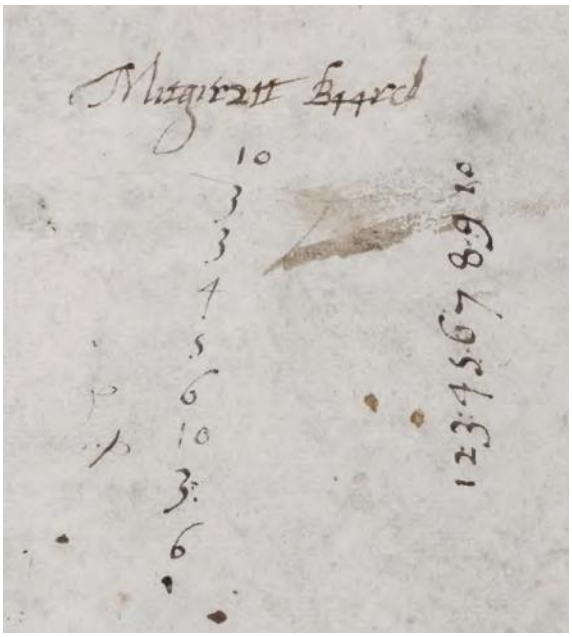


Figure 2.15: Columns of numbers notated beneath a version of Margaret Board's signature created using a mixture of letters and numbers, from the back endpaper of the Board lute book.

Furthermore, the bold and straight lines (added after the original crosses of the capital T's of notated) are at contrasting angles to one another (see fig. 2.16 below), and were clearly applied with a deliberately firm and rapid hand movement in comparison with the original writing, resulting in a heavier ink-stroke (the same ink appears to have been used, however, as these lines have faded to the same degree as the original writing). The appearance of multiple columns of numbers in close proximity to these lines, and the eight-pointed star on the adjacent back endpaper (fig. 2.16) is suggestive of the idea that the added lines may relate to geometrical concepts. Perhaps, they are

loose representations of a chord [174] and a tangent [175] (common straight lines on a circle) as the vocabulary of these concepts connects with Latin words with meanings relevant to the lute and the sentiment of the poem fragment: *tangere* meaning in general 'to touch' (but in the context of lute-playing, 'to pluck [a string]' (*tangere chordas*)), and the mathematical chord again referencing the pun between *chordae* (strings) and *corda.* Tantalisingly, it is in fact possible to draw a perfect circle in relation to the two lines, if indeed they are interpreted as a chord (upper line) and a tangent (lower line). However, the original page shows no indication of the existence of this circle.

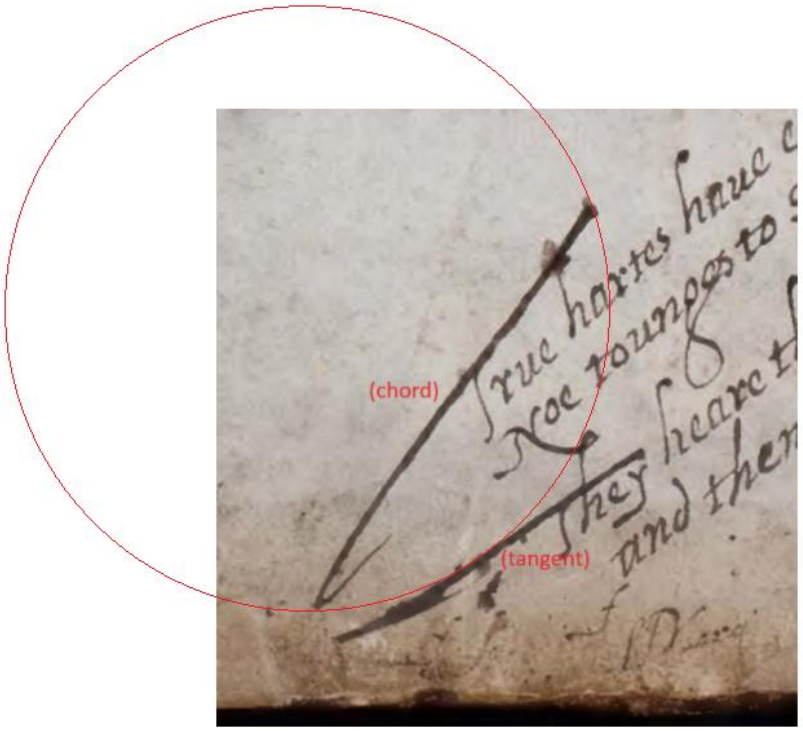


Figure 2.16: Two capital letter 'T's' with added bold horizontal lines, from the back endpaper of the Board lute book.

[174] The straight line joining the extremities of an arc [i.e. of a circle]. Mathematics. See "Chord, N. (1), Sense 4," in *Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford University Press, 2023). https://doi.org/10.1093/OED/1023738354. For example: 'The knowledge of chordes and arkes' in Euclid, *Elements of Geometrie iii*, trans. H. Billingsley (1570), f. 80v. Additionally, 'A Chord is a right line drawne from one end of the Arch to the other end thereof' in T. Blundeville, *Exercises ii* (London: John Windet, 1594), f. 47v

[175] Of a line or surface in relation to another (curved) line or surface: Touching, i.e. meeting at a point and (ordinarily) not intersecting; in contact. Geometry. See "Tangent, Adj. & N," in *Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford University Press, 2023). https://doi.org/10.1093/OED/5416024506. For example: 'Our moderne Geometricians haue of late inuented two other right lines belonging to a Circle called lines Tangent, and lines Secant' in Blundeville, *Exercises ii*, f. 47v.

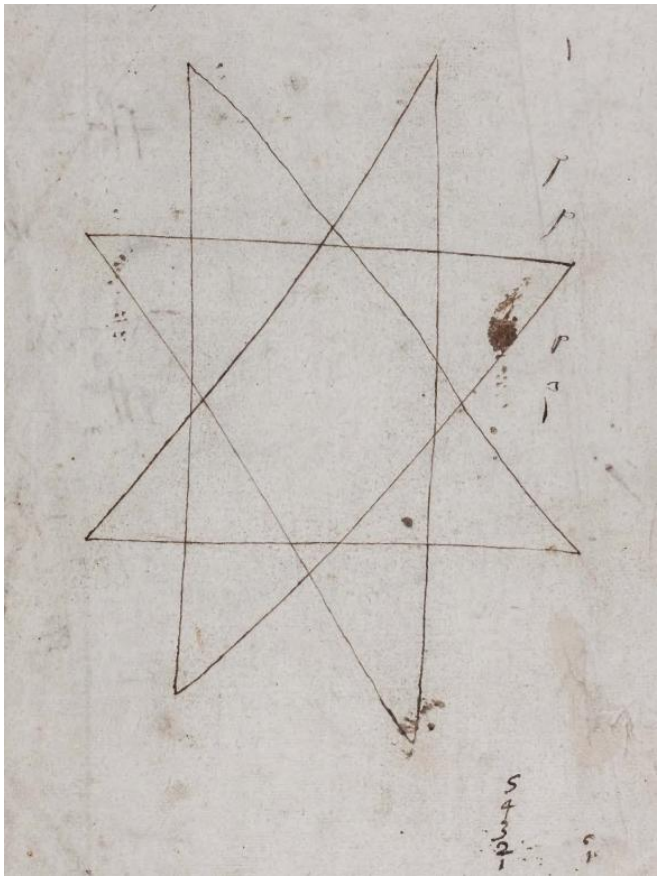


Figure 2.17: Angled lines forming the shape of a large eight-pointed star, from the back endpaper of the Board lute book.

Overall, these playful linguistic and mathematical doodles delightfully showcase Margaret's impressive education which encompassed lute playing, Latin vocabulary, and mathematics, and it is therefore important to acknowledge the many iterations of Margaret Board's signature and other pieces of her handwriting which fill almost every blank space on the front and back endpapers of her lute book. Her copious signatures in particular are indicative of her continuous self-declaration of ownership of both the book and her stellar education, which is what this material represents. A particularly charming example of this is the inclusion of the word 'She' (fig. 2.18). The physical location of the word is significant: standing in the middle of a page, upright and in its own space. It suggests the self-awareness, self-possession, agency and confidence Margaret possessed when it came to her learning, and it speaks to the attentiveness and affection with which she treated her lute book – even if it were only to last as long as her childhood years would allow.

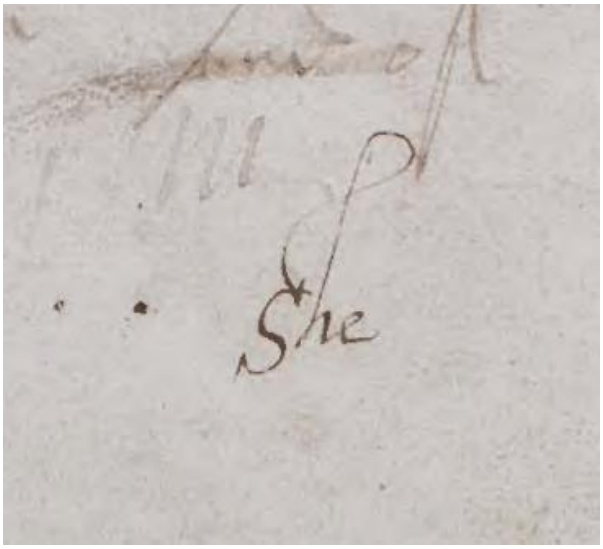


Figure 2.18: The inclusion of the word ‘She’, positioned upright and central on the back endpaper of the Board lute book.

Chapter 3 : Reconstructing the lute lesson for a young gentry lady

> Why, gentlemen, you do me double wrong
> To strive for that which resteth in my choice.
> I am no breeching scholar in the schools.
> I'll not be tied to hours, nor 'pointed times…[176]

In William Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew* (first published in 1623), the fair Bianca, object of desire of multiple suitors, reminds her 'tutors' that she is at liberty to take her lessons at whatever time she pleases, as she is being tutored at home and not in a school. When the two men are arguing with each other about who should give their lesson first, Bianca interjects and settles the matter by stating that she does not have to adhere to specific lesson times but can run to the schedule that best suits her. She then instructs the music teacher to tune his lute; once he is done, she will leave the philosophy lesson to turn to music. Such forthrightness seems somewhat unexpected from a desirable female character created at the turn of the seventeenth century, and whilst literary sources, such as plays, from early modern England are indeed fictional, they no doubt would have been drawing upon and projecting common social conventions that were recognisable to the audience. The self-government that *The Taming of the Shrew*'s Bianca displays in her approach to her education is fascinating as it challenges the idea that musical women in the early modern period lacked this kind of autonomy, particularly with regards to their education. Through an analysis of many rich and varied source materials pertaining to lute playing, this chapter argues that domestic lute tuition was one area where upper-class women were able to achieve a level of agency: here they were able to express their creativity and innovation, and also to self-govern and self-fashion the way in which they wanted to present themselves to the outside world, via the specific skills gained from these desirable accomplishments.

The central piece of evidence within this chapter is the unpublished amateur lute lesson book of Margaret Board, which demonstrates high levels of accomplishment through its record of both theoretical musical knowledge and creative performance skills. Lute manuscripts copied out by young students in early modern England typically contain a high level of technical and musical detail pertaining to lute performance practice, in comparison with professional manuscripts or printed sources, and the Board lute book is no exception. In fact, it is a particularly outstanding example. The manuscript specifies many varied performance directions and right-hand fingerings, and it contains many symbols for left-hand ornaments (typically referred to in early modern manuals as 'graces'). It is therefore, a particularly useful source to analyse when reconstructing the musical performances of

[176] Scene 6, lines 16-9. Gary Taylor et al., eds., *The New Oxford Shakespeare: The Complete Works Modern Critical Edition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 443.

young lute students, and in understanding the nature of the lute music lesson for a young lady in the seventeenth century. Whilst an investigation of the Board family and the material nature of the Board lute book has formed the second chapter of this thesis, the present chapter seeks to further analyse musical elements of the manuscript to reconstruct the practical nature of Margaret Board's lessons. The following research demonstrates that Margaret was being taught principles of music theory - such as the gamut and use of solmisation syllables - alongside her practical lute tuition. This well-rounded musical education would have allowed her to demonstrate a high degree of accomplishment, which she would have showcased both through her live performance practice, and through the creation of meticulous and beautiful musical materials such as her surviving lute book.

This chapter contributes hitherto unexplored practice-based methodology to current research on the subject of Margaret Board and lute playing in the early modern period. As a lute player specialising in historical performance practice, I utilise my own expertise to make new practical observations on the teaching and learning of certain musical skills that are evidenced within the Margaret Board lute book. Drawing on specific musical examples from this manuscript, this chapter illustrates a key skill that was developed by the student in the context of a lesson: the skill of gracing pieces in accordance with an understanding of Renaissance music theory. To explore Margaret's use of ornamentation and the link with music theory, this chapter includes a detailed case study on the ballad tune settings found throughout the lute book. Ballad tunes have been chosen as there are examples of these within the manuscript that are very heavily ornamented, so much so that they stand out from all the other music found throughout this lute book, as well as similar English lute manuscripts. Additionally, as ballad tunes were commonly known and readily recognisable pieces, the ornaments added to these tunes would have been particularly noticeable to early modern listeners, and therefore Margaret would have been particularly able to showcase her expertise and skill via her gracing of these pieces.

Female agency within the domestic music lesson

Female lutenists such as Margaret Board have unfortunately been largely overlooked by scholars thus far due to the assumption that the musical performances taking place in domestic settings were musically and technically limited in comparison to performances by professional players (who by definition in England could only be men). Musical women, who dominated the domestic musical sphere, did not – it has been widely assumed – contribute as much to the wider culture of lute music.[177] Additionally, it has been assumed that female musicians were but passive receptors for musical ideas created by men. However, as Bianca's assertiveness from *The Taming of the Shrew*

[177] See introduction to this thesis.

indicates, a level of freedom and self-direction was enjoyed by elite young women whose families could afford to hire private tutors. Shakespeare's lines also reference the power dynamic between pupil and tutor. The pupil was of higher social status than the music teacher, and the music tutor was employed in the home of the pupil; therefore, the power dynamic tipped in favour of the student. This aspect of private music tutoring is revealed by autobiographical writing of musician and music tutor Thomas Whythorne, as it was a topic of frequent concern within his diary. [178] The privately employed music tutor shows himself continuously anxious about the interpersonal dynamics he experienced when teaching one of his patrons: an unnamed widow who was prone to taking many liberties with Whythorne and who even pursued him romantically.[179] Whythorne's employer was both his 'mistress and scholar'; though within the sphere of 'music and teaching to play on musical instruments' he enjoyed some circumscribed authority over his pupil, on other occasions his subordinate position within the household is starkly obvious, such as when he is called to 'wait on [his mistress's] cup while she sat at meat'. It is clear that when romantic advances are made he is scarcely in a position to resist, despite his initial offence and aversion:

> considering that open contempt might breed such secret hate in her toward me as after might put me to apparent displeasure […] I determined with my self to bear all things that might happen as patiently as I could.[180]

As Katie Nelson summarises, professionally, (male) music tutors occupied a 'nebulous space' between that of the gentleman and the lowly minstrel, as they tip-toed the line between being master and servant, assuming both roles simultaneously when tutoring members of wealthy families.[181]

The complex role and kinds of agency afforded a recipient of private domestic musical education are particularly intriguing in the case of female students of gentry status, just as much as they are with male music pupils. Although Margaret Board was a much younger pupil than Whythorne's mistress and lover, the economic relationship between employer and employee remains unchanged between the two scenarios. The Board family employed tutors who were naturally of a lower status to themselves, and as such, a gentry lady such as Margaret was, at least in part, her own master when it came to her private education. This is made very apparent when we observe how the pedagogical materials that survive from female lute students of the period, in the form of beautifully presented and bound manuscripts, are typically stamped in gold with the initials of the *student*, and signatures of the *students'* name tend to be found multiple times within, whereas the tutor is rarely named. The

[178] Thomas Whythorne*, The Autobiography of Thomas Whythorne*, ed. James Osborn (Oxford, 1961).
[179] Ibid., 38-9.
[180] Ibid.
[181] Katie Nelson, "Thomas Whythorne and Tudor Musicians" (PhD thesis, University of Warwick 2010), 212.

case study on Margaret Board's notated graces, which is contained within this chapter, shows that Margaret Board was one such female student who displayed an unusually high degree of self-awareness and assertiveness in her learning. Indeed, all the other surviving pedagogical lute books from this period demonstrate agency on the part of the student, made obvious via their ownership markings, and clear diligent and attentive care that has been taken by these student copyists in creating them; however, the case study on the musical content within the Board lute book contained within this chapter reveals how Margeret Board's lute and music-theoretical accomplishment surpassed that of other female lute students of the period for whom evidence survives. As this chapter shows, the Board lute book reveals a dynamic between female student and male tutor in which the female pupil's agency and individuality is dominant.

Reconstructing the Lute Lesson

Interestingly, the scene in *The Taming of the Shrew* is not presented as a lute lesson in particular but a music lesson more broadly, even though the instrument being taught is the lute. The lute in this context is in the first instance a tool used in the teaching of the 'science' of music. In Bianca's music lesson, her tutor insists that before coming to the instrument, he must first teach her some theory:

> Madam, before you touch the instrument,
> To learn the order of my fingering
> I must begin with rudiments of art,
> To teach you gamut in a briefer sort…[182]

Whilst the tutor is in fact using this 'lesson' as a strategy to woo Bianca (by weaving a love poem into his gamut), the depiction suggests that both music theory instruction and practical lute learning would have gone hand in hand in the context of a lesson, with the lute aiding the intellectual teaching/learning (and vice versa). Printed lute tutor books from the period further evidence this as a typical approach to a music lesson: good lute instruction was not about gaining an exclusively practical ability or learning lute pieces aimlessly, but rather learning to play the lute as part of a broader education in the 'science' of music. For instance, Robinson's *The Schoole of Musicke*, which was intended for the beginner lute student, speaks of the connection between music, mathematics, medicine, and divinity. He particularly emphasises the necessity for the musician to be versed in arithmetic, as in the Boethian conception of *musica*:[183]

[182] Scene 6, lines 60-3. Taylor et al., *The New Oxford Shakespeare: The Complete Works Modern Critical Edition*, 444.
[183] See Roger Bray, "Music and the Quadrivium in Early Tudor England" *Music & Letters 76* (1995).

> Of necessity, a Musician must be a perfect Arithmetician, for that Music consisteth altogether of true number, and proportion, and thus, at this so chief, and necessary science of Arithmetic, I hold it best to stay [support] the process of Music…[184]

Robert Dowland's *Varietie of Lute Lessons* (1610) also contains a tutor method intended for 'young beginners'.[185] Originally by John Baptise Besard and translated by Robert Dowland, it includes a step-by-step process for learning a new piece of music, which advises that the student should 'examine each part of it diligently', indicating the importance of the mental process of analysis and the reading of musical notation alongside practical lute playing.[186]

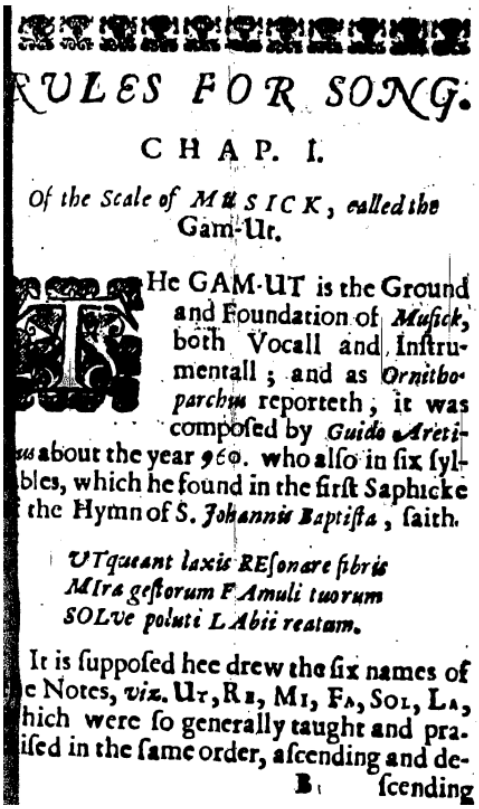
Curiously however, neither lute tutor includes a diagram or description of the gamut or other general basic principles of music theory that are not directly connected with the physicality of the lute, tablature, fingerings, or the fretboard. Furthermore, none of the other surviving female-owned lute books (besides the Board lute book, as is later discussed) contain this sort of theoretical musical material within their pages. [187] Perhaps beginner repertory was not notated because it was learnt aurally and committed to memory: it is possible that an ability to read notation (and especially staff notation) was not strictly necessary for the social functions of a young women when initially learning to play the lute, and it might have been gained at a more advanced stage in the learning process, however, this seems unlikely as the Burwell Lute Tutor insists upon the importance of reading from notation during practice: 'you must not learn without understanding and skill, but have your eye always upon the book'. [188] Furthermore, the fictional parent within Robinson's lute tutor deems it necessary to check if Timotheus, the prospective lute teacher for his children, is able to teach them to sight-read:

> [Knight:] […] can you play any lesson at the first sight and also teach others to do the same?
>
> Tim.: Yea Sir, that I can, or else I were not worthy to be a teacher […].[189]

As these general skills are mentioned as important by the tutors, it seems likely a student would have received this knowledge, even from the very beginning of their lessons. Families may have invested in other books to supplement or complement a book specific to lute playing, to fulfil this requirement, such as Morley's *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke* (1597), or

[184] Thomas Robinson, *The Schoole of Musicke* (London, 1603), sig. B2r.
[185] Robert Dowland, *Varietie of Lute Lessons* (London, 1610), sig. Bv.
[186] Ibid.
[187] This is curious, as Glenda Goodman's research shows that it was not uncommon for female-produced musical collections (for other instruments or voice) to include diagrams of the gamut, even into the nineteenth century, see Chapter 1 in Goodman, *Cultivated by Hand: Amateur Musicians in the Early American Republic* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020).
[188] Thurston Dart, "Miss Mary Burwell's Instruction Book for the Lute," *The Galpin Society Journal* 11 (1958), 42.
[189] Robinson, *The Schoole of Musicke*, sig. Br.

perhaps *The Pathway to Musicke* printed by William Barley in 1596.[190] These texts begin with the most rudimentary theory of the gamut as an initial step in music pedagogy. Practical music publications such as Playford's *Breefe Introduction to the Skill of Musick* (1654) and John Day's *Whole Booke of Psalms* (1562) also began with the teaching of the gamut.[191]



RULES FOR SONG.

CHAP. I.

Of the Scale of MUSICK, called the Gam-Ut.

THe GAM-UT is the Ground and Foundation of *Muſick*, both Vocall and Inſtrumentall; and as *Ornithoparchus* reporteth, it was compoſed by *Guido Aretius* about the year 960. who alſo in ſix ſyllables, which he found in the firſt Saphicke the Hymn of S. *Johannis Baptiſta*, ſaith.

UTqueant laxis REſonare fibris
MIra geſtorum FAmuli tuorum
SOLve poluti LAbii reatum.

It is ſuppoſed hee drew the ſix names of the Notes, *viz.* UT, RE, MI, FA, SOL, LA, which were ſo generally taught and praiſed in the ſame order, aſcending and deſcending

B

Figure 3.1: John Playford, *An introduction to the skill of Musick* (2nd edition, 1655), sig. Bv.

Of course, for those who invested in private tuition, information about music theory could be acquired verbally within the one-to-one context of the music lesson itself. Records of this learning may have been recorded on loose sheets or within separate workbooks designated for the learning of music theory (which were never bound alongside advanced repertoire). As the surviving female-owned pedagogical lute books from early modern England contain music which is remarkably musically and technically advanced, the indication is that they were but one material from a students' overall collection of lesson materials. One which was compiled towards the latter-end of a

[190] A complete list of printed musical-educational texts from England can be found in Samantha Arten, "*The Whole Booke of Psalmes*, Protestant Ideology, and Musical Literacy in Elizabethan England" (PhD Duke University, 2018), 116.
[191] Arten, "*The Whole Booke of Psalmes*, Protestant Ideology, and Musical Literacy in Elizabethan England."

course of lute lessons, and with a view to compile and record the musical repertoire acquired, and to preserve a record of the expensive, socially impressive, and desirable education and encounters that took place (exemplified by the Board lute book, as explored in Chapter 2). It seems plausible that most of the evidence of female students learning rudimentary theoretical principles such as the gamut would only have been kept temporarily, or had only been leant to them for a time by their tutors, and therefore they did not make their way into later-stage leather bound and gold-tooled prized pedagogical volumes.

By stark contrast, Margaret's pedagogical lute manuscript contains a full-page illustration of the gamut written on the front endpaper (fig. 3.2). The page also includes lessons relating to solmisation syllables, and where each note of the gamut falls upon the fretboard of the lute. The inclusion of such diagrams in Margaret's lute book is concrete evidence that she was taught music theory in conjunction with her lute lessons, and it is a rare and valuable insight into the sort of theoretical musical education that could experienced by at least some English women. As no such diagram(s) can be found in similar female-owned pedagogical lute books from early modern England, it suggests the lesson contained here is unusual. The level of detail contained upon the page and its appearance within a lute book predominately containing advanced repertoire suggests Margaret had a deeper understanding of music theory than was typical for lute students of her demographic, and also that this lesson was likely given to her at a mid-to-late stage in her musical development. Furthermore, as the tables are in Dowland's scribal hand it is clear it was based on Dowland's experience and teaching methods. As this chapter will go on to show, his lesson within Margaret's lute book shows she was educated in both English theoretical principals and continental performance practice conventions.

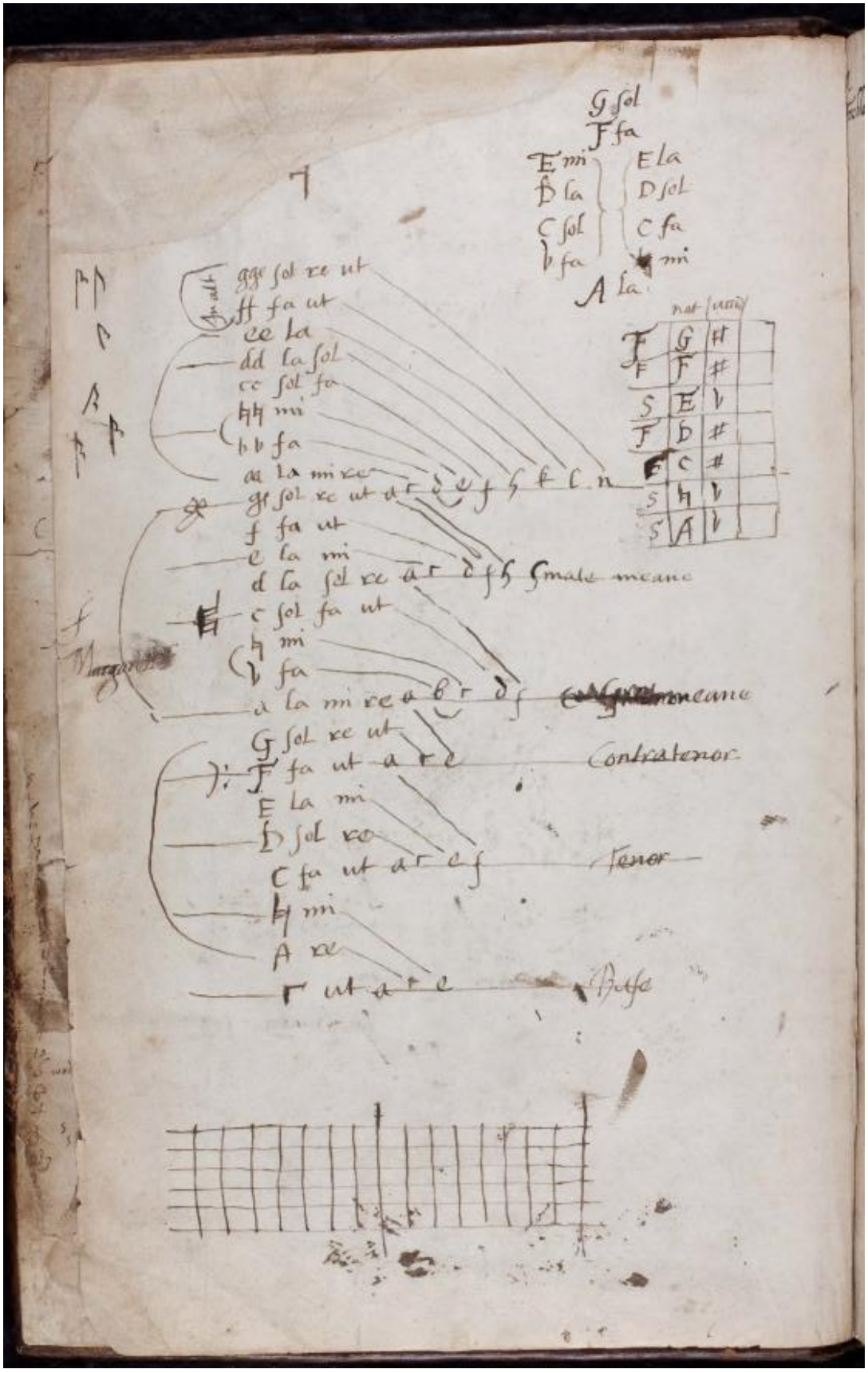


Figure 3.2: Front endpaper of the Margaret Board lute book (GB-London, Royal Academy of Music MS603), showing a diagram of the gamut, amongst other theoretical tables.

The smaller diagrams in the upper right corner of the page show that Margaret was taught solmisation in accordance with contemporary English practice.[192] Despite the presentation of the more classical (continental) gamut, where overlapping hexachords can be seen (and therefore more than one solmisation syllable assigned to each note), the small diagram in the uppermost right corner indicates Margaret was also taught the principles of English fixed scales with one assigned syllable per note. In a key with no flats, solmise as follows: A = *la*, B = *mi*, C = *fa*, D = *sol*. In a key with one flat: A = *la*, Bb = *fa*, C = *sol*, D = *la*, etc. (see figure 3.3 below). These lessons are intimately connected to the musical content of Margaret's section of the Board lute book, and specifically the way she has implemented her use of ornamentation, as detailed in the following case study.

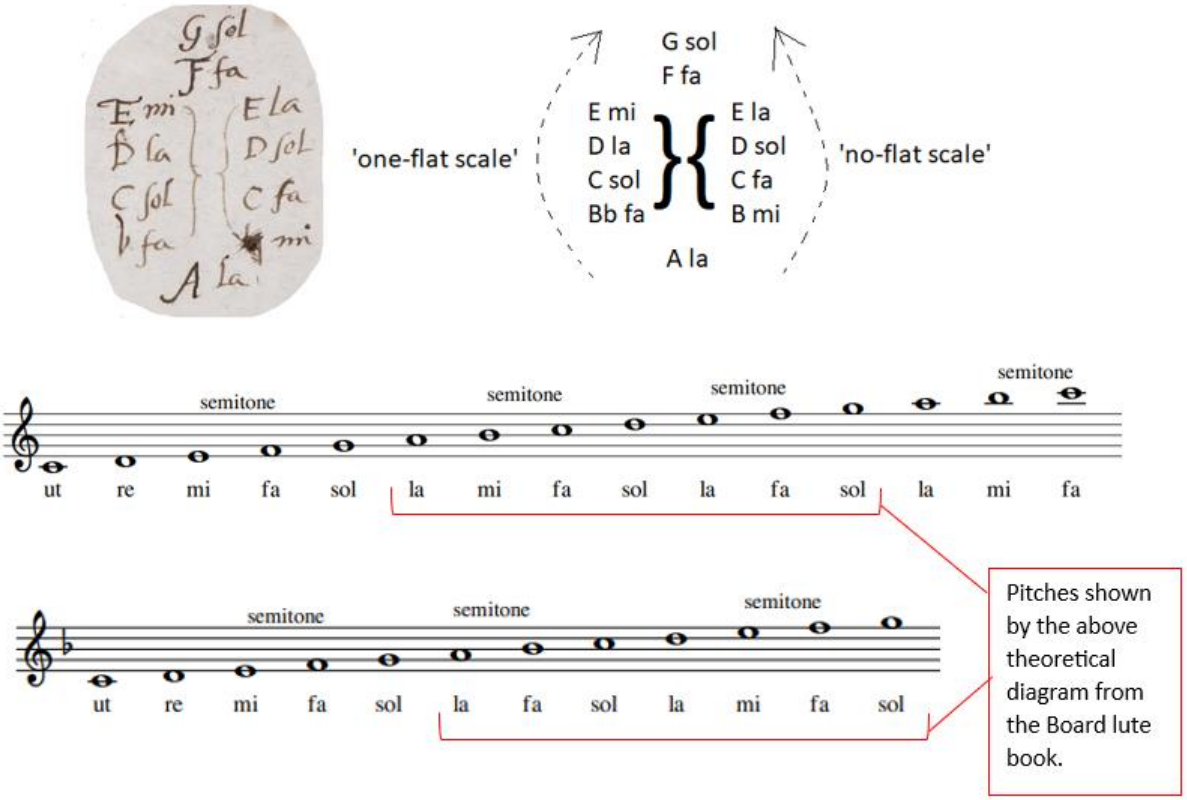


Figure 3.3: The 'no-flat scale' and 'one-flat scale' with fixed solmisation syllables.

[192] Scholars have noticed that around the turn of the seventeenth century, English music theory treatises began to demonstrate a new way of organizing pitches, naming scales according to a fixed series of solmisation syllables rather than by hexachords. English theorists moved away from hexachordal solmisation and adopted fixed scales, which differed by key signature rather than tonic (as in common-practice tonality). A single note would have only one assigned syllable, rather than the several possibilities offered by contextual hexachordal theory, though the specific syllables used to identify pitches varied by key signature and even by English author. In spite of the use of the traditional Guidonian syllables, hexachordal solmisation was abandoned. Two fixed scales are used, according to key signature: a no-flat scale and a one-flat scale. See 'Solmisation in England' in Arten, "*The Whole Booke of Psalmes*, Protestant Ideology, and Musical Literacy in Elizabethan England."

Case study: gracing the music in accordance with Renaissance music theory

A defining feature of seventeenth-century lute music is its ornate style. Layered atop a core composition, which could itself be harmonically ornate, additional decoration was achieved through two forms of ornamentation. Firstly, simple melodies could be embellished with improvised 'divisions', where each note of the melodic line was divided into several shorter, faster-moving notes. Secondly, 'graces', performed via the action of the left-hand alone, could be added to embellish individual notes. These graces included 'shakes' which are akin to modern-day mordents, and 'falls' which can best be compared to modern appoggiaturas. Symbols used to notate a variety of different graces are a common feature of the surviving pedagogical lute books from early modern England. They are not typically seen in other sources of lute music, such as professional books and printed books; it would seem professional players did not need to remind themselves of where to place their graces, and the limitations of printing meant that details such as graces were often omitted from printed books of lute tablature.[193] The following case study is concerned entirely with the graces found in lute music and how they are placed, specifically within the solo lute pieces copied out by Margaret Board. Other sources of lute music are also referenced where appropriate, in cases where comparisons will shed light on the Board lute book. As I will go on to show, my practice-based observations on the placement of Margaret Board's graces within pieces from her manuscript reveal a connection between the graces and principles of Renaissance music theory: they show that Margaret consistently embellishes 'hard' notes within the hexachord (*mi* and *la*) with shakes, and 'soft' notes (*ut* and *fa*) with falls.[194] This is not only evidence that Margaret was being taught music theory in conjunction with her lute lessons, but also that she had learnt to apply that theoretical knowledge to her performance practice. This means she could intentionally fashion her performances to demonstrate her musical learning, and therefore her level of accomplishment in academic and theoretical music, and its application in practice. This method of embellishment is unique to the Board lute book: Margaret's note and grace choices differ from those found in surviving examples by other copyists. This indicates that Margaret's education was uncommon in its inclusion and practical application of theoretical musical principals, and that Margaret was a notably intellectually gifted and engaged lute student.

Margaret routinely adds two distinct symbols (dots, and crosses) written to the left-hand-side of the tablature note to indicate the two aforementioned grace-types (shakes, and falls, respectively). These

[193] One exception being William Barley's printed music for the orpharion, which contains many symbols for graces throughout. See William Barley, *A new Booke of Tabliture* (London, 1596).
[194] Following the terminology set out in Anne Smith, *The Performance of 16th-Century Music: Learning from the Theorists* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011). See section titled 'The Inherent Qualities of the Syllables', 24-8.

are found consistently throughout the music copied in her hand, though some pieces are graced far more heavily than others. To demonstrate how Margaret's graces correspond with principles of music theory, the following case study focuses on the ballad tune settings found throughout her lute book. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, ballad tunes have been chosen as there are examples of these within the manuscript that are very heavily ornamented, and the graces added to these lute settings would have been particularly perceptible to listeners as the tunes were commonly known. Therefore, Margaret would have been particularly able to demonstrate her learning via her well-graced performances of these pieces.

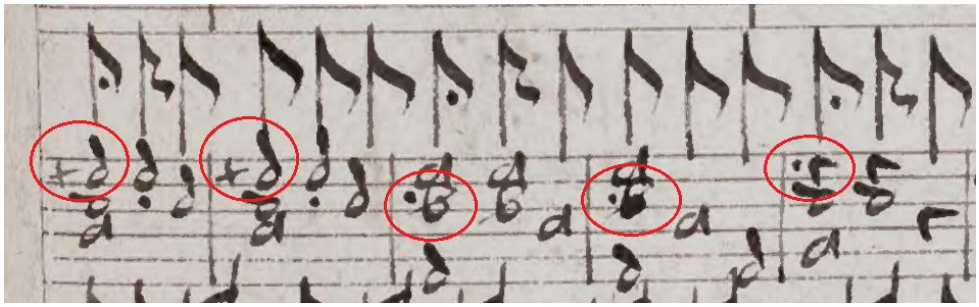


Figure 3.4: Detail from 'The ground to y treble before', highlighting two examples of falls (crosses) and three examples of shakes (dots), as notated within the lute tablature. The Board lute book, f. 1, bars 1-5.

Table 3.1 presents details on the settings of all the popular and widely known ballad tunes that exist as lute settings within the Board lute book. Pieces from this manuscript have been identified as ballads if the tunes and tune titles can be found in the English Broadside Ballad Archive (EBBA).[195]

Table 3.1: Ballad tune settings contained within in Margaret Board's section of the lute book.

	Ballad setting	Folio	Does it contain graces?	No. appearances of the original ballad tune in the EBBA	Concordances
1	Rogero	2/1	Yes	21	8 (5 pedagogical, 2 professional, one foreign source)
2	Light of love	5/3	Yes	1	6 (2 pedagogical, 1 professional, 3 foreign)
3	Go from my window	10/3	Yes	1	15 (3 pedagogical, 4 professional, 2 foreign, 2 anthology, 4 printed)
4	Sellenger's round	12/2	Yes	4	18 (3 pedagogical, 2 professional, 10 foreign, 1

[195] EBBA is a project of the Early Modern Centre in the English Department at the University of California. Directed by Patricia Fumerton, the EBBA team's priority is to archive all of the surviving ballads published during the heyday of the black-letter ornamental broadside ballad of the seventeenth century. This is currently estimated to stand at some 11,000 extant works. See Patricia Fumerton, Carl Stahmer, and Kristen McCants Forbes, "English Broadside Ballad Archive," (Santa Barbara: University of California Department of English). https://ebba.english.ucsb.edu/.

					anthology, 1 foreign with English scribe, 1 virginal book)
5	Bonny sweet Robin	12v/2	Yes	9	20 (5 pedagogical, 6 professional, 2 foreign, 5 anthology, 1 printed, 1 foreign with English scribe)
6	Poor Tom	23/2	Yes (but very few)	7	1 (pedagogical)
7	Dulcina	83v/2	No	33	0

Across the entire lute book, there are seven ballad tune settings in total, and five of these contain enough graces to be analysed with regards to the connection between graces and Renaissance music theory. These pieces are 'Rogero', 'Light of love', 'Go from my window', 'Sellenger's Round', and 'Bonny sweet Robin'. The following table contains information about the total number of graces notated for each piece, the piece length and overall form, and the percentage of graces which are added in accordance with the principle of playing shakes on 'hard' notes (*mi*, *la*) and falls on 'soft' notes (*ut*, *fa*). Overall, there is a high consistency of alignment with the principle of adding graces in this theoretically informed fashion, except in the case of 'Bonny sweet Robin'.

Table 3.2: Further information on the ballad tune settings included within the Board lute book.

	Ballad	**Folio**	**Length of piece (bars) And form**	**Total number of graces notated**	**% graces added to appropriate hard and soft solmisation syllables**
1	Rogero	2/1	48 A1, A2, A3	38	100%
2	Light of love	5/3	33 A1, A2, A3, A4	11	100%
3	Go from my window	10/3	25 A1, A2, A3	48	95.8%
4	Sellenger's round	12/2	119 A1,B1,C1:A2, B2, C2: A3, B3, C3	21	100%
5	Bonny sweet Robin	12v/2	32 A1, B1, A2, B2	16	12.5%

In general, if very few ornaments are included in a particular piece, they tend to be reserved for the odd *mi* and/or *fa* notes at cadence points. These moments have been noted by the lute researcher and specialist Martin Shepherd, who has argued the Board lute book uses a distinctive 'cadential

ornament'.[196] In essence, he noticed the tendency for a shake to be placed on the penultimate melody note and a fall placed on the final melody note, though he did not make the connection with the gamut and solmisation. Two pieces, however, stand out as being far more heavily ornamented: 'Go from my window' and 'Rogero'. 'Go from my window' in particular features densely placed ornaments throughout this short piece: across a mere 25 bars in length, it has 48 notated graces. Therefore, it makes sense to isolate this piece as the focus-point of a practice-based analysis, to fully detail and explain Margaret Board's rationale for ornamentation.

The connection between Margaret Board's graces and solmisation first became apparent to me as a performance practitioner. One day, while at my lute, I decided to try my hand at some of the abundantly ornamented music in the Board lute book and thus focused on Margaret Board's copy of 'Go from my window' (an arrangement attributed to Richard Alison.) This version exhibits a surprisingly high number of graces (for a visual impression, see fig. 3.5 below) which exceed that usually seen in the many copies of settings of this ballad tune (fifteen surviving concordances from lute manuscripts alone). However, the numerous grace signs probably do not indicate Margaret was ornamenting this melody more heavily than other players, but rather that she was very diligent and methodical in *notating* her ornaments, as part of a pedagogical process (with ornaments not typically notated in professional manuscripts, for instance). Such diligently notated pedagogical lute music is thus greatly informative of performance practices: for instance, one very immediate observation was the implication for performance tempo when incorporating this many graces.

[196] See Martin Shepherd, "The interpretation of signs for graces in English lute music," *The Lute Society Journal* 36 (1996).

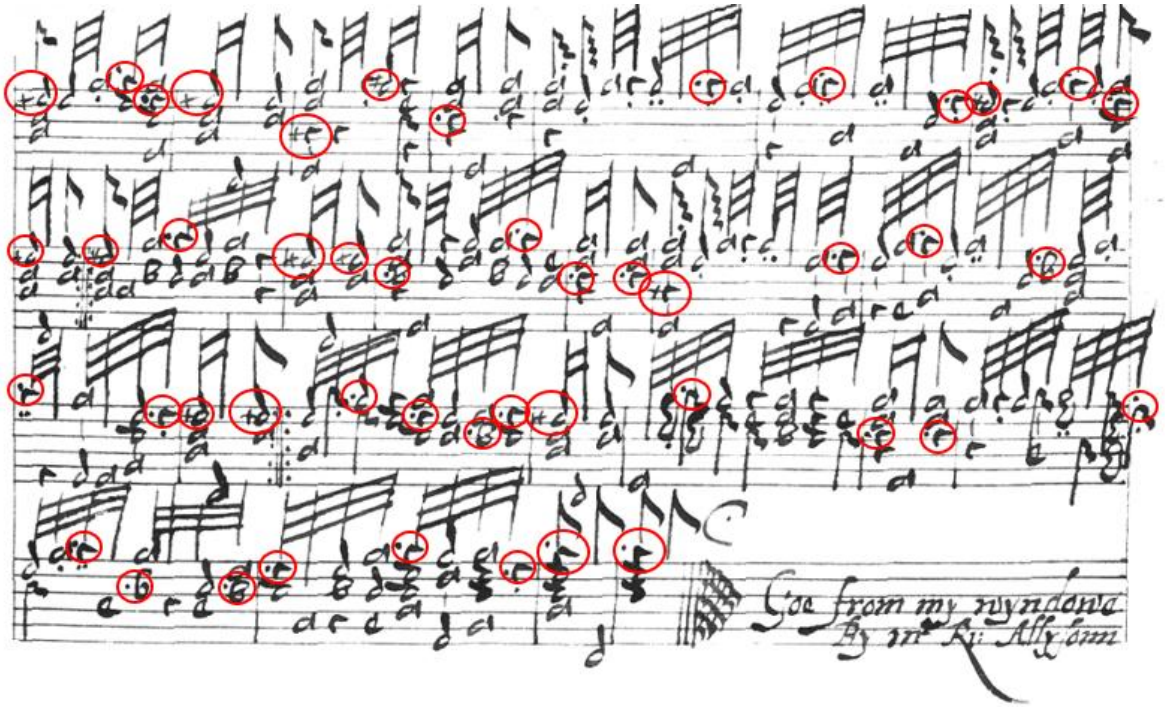


Figure 3.5: 'Goe from my wyndowe By mr Ri: Allysonn', highlighting all of the left-hand ornaments notated throughout the tablature. The Board Lute Book, f. 10/3.

The question of the precise meanings of all the symbols used for graces in the Board lute book has been addressed in print by Robert Spencer.[197] I am in agreement with Spencer that the cross sign indicates a fall (Spencer writes more specifically that these are half-falls or back-falls), and that the dot indicates a shake (fig. 3.6). However, I would argue there are more options in practice for each ornament symbol than Spencer points out. All of the variant versions of the shakes and falls that are available, in theory, to the lute player can be seen in figure 3.7. The precise version of a grace used is most often dictated by the practical reality of which finger(s) the lutenist has available at the given moment, but also by the melodic direction (which influences if a shake is to be performed in a standard or inverted form).

[197] See Margaret Board, *The Board Lute Book. Facsimile edition with an introductory study by Robert Spencer* (Leeds: Boethius Press, 1976).

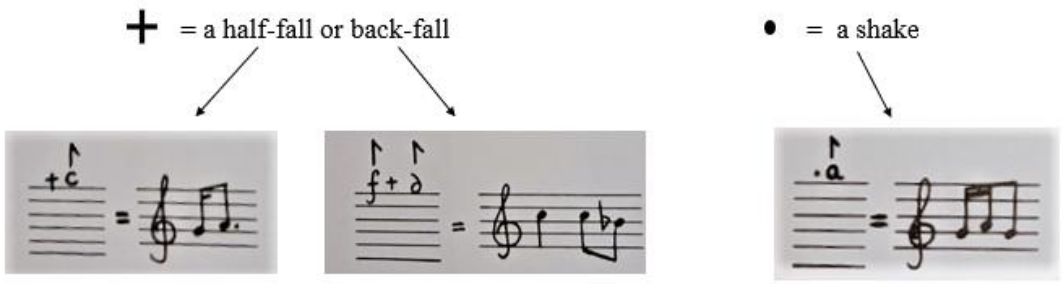


Figure 3.6: Robert Spencer's analysis of the grace signs from the Board lute book. Images from *Margaret Board, The Board Lute Book. Facsimile edition with an introductory study by Robert Spencer* (Leeds: Boethius Press, 1976), introduction.

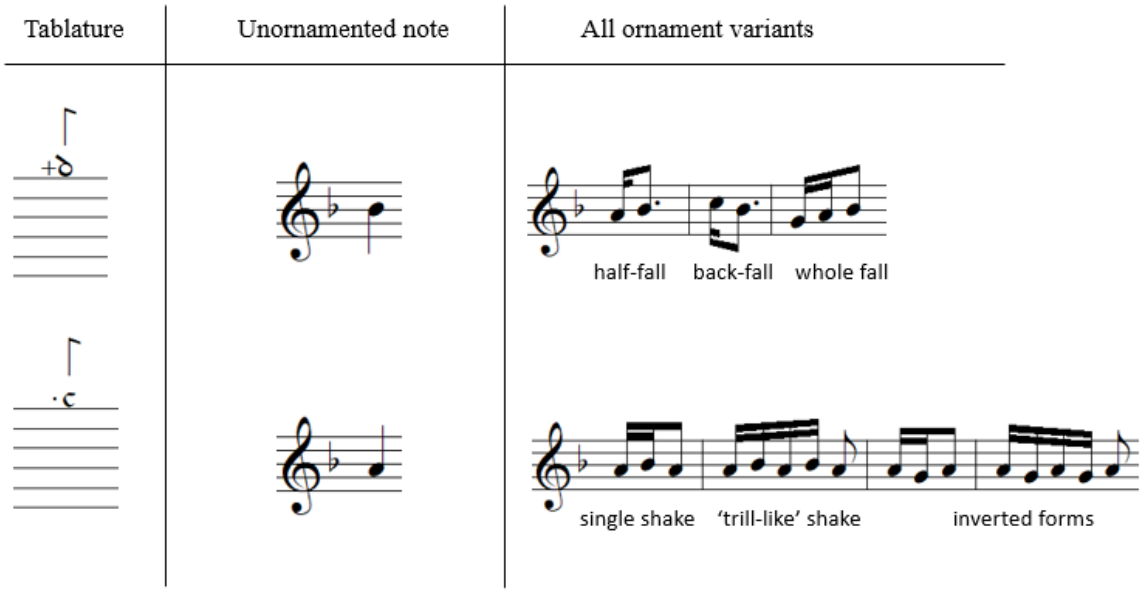


Figure 3.7: All of the variant versions of the shakes and falls that are available to the lute player in theory, if a symbol for a grace is given.

The link between Margaret's graces and Renaissance music theory became apparent to me in my practice, as I was struggling with the phrasing of 'Go from my window' when reenacting the notated graces faithfully. To me, it initially felt as though the graces were placed counter-intuitively, as they disrupted the tasteful phrasing I was trying to achieve. For example, if we take just the first four bars of the ballad tune, we have a melodic line which rises and falls in an ascending sequence (fig. 3.8).

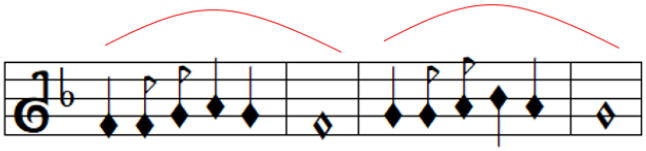


Figure 3.8: My expectation of the musical phrasing of the melody of the popular ballad tune 'Go from my window', bars 1-4 (melody line only).

My initial interpretative instinct was to phrase in accordance with the melodic construction and contour of the line: in a pair of two bar phrases, with a dynamic rise and fall in accordance with the rise and fall of the melody. I thought I was being 'musical 'in my phrasing of the tune, yet in order to achieve this phrasing I noticed I was experiencing problems with the mechanics of my left-hand technique: it felt as though I was fighting the instrument, the graces, and overall musical setting. If we look at the way the tablature is constructed, with only an understanding of modern music theory in mind, the construction seems counter-intuitive. Let us pay particular attention to bar three (see fig. 3.9 and 3.10): at the highest point in the melodic line, where I as a performer wanted to create the loudest sound (at the registral climax of the melody) I was limited to plucking a single note, with no chord simultaneously sounded. That single note is also graced with a fall – executed as a 'hammer on'[198] – which invariably has the effect of softening the note. This was unexpected and seemed counter-intuitive to me. Additionally, the following melody note, where the melody begins to descend, is accompanied by three harmony notes plucked at the same time. This makes it very hard, if not impossible, to perform the subtle rise-and-fall phrasing I was aiming for.

[198] A term from modern classical guitar technique: a pitch either above or below the notated tablature note is plucked with the right-hand, and a finger of the left hand is used to sound the second (main) pitch, with a swift percussive motion.

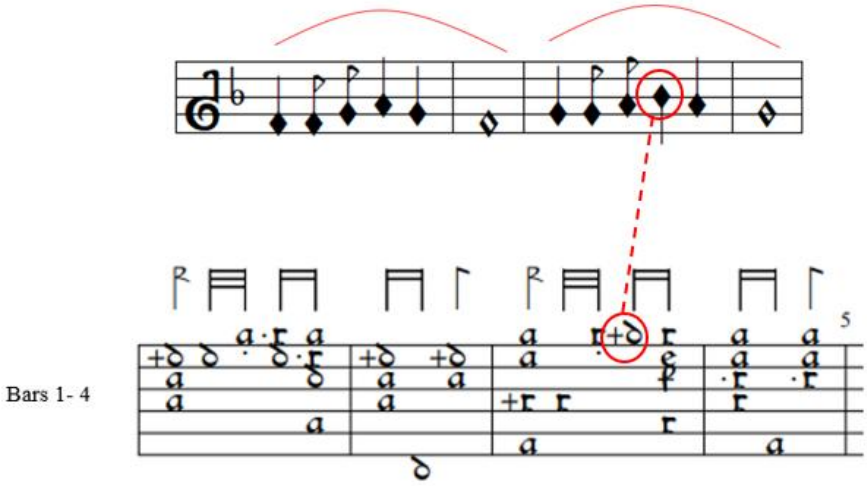


Figure 3.9: 'Goe from my wyndowe BY mr Ri: Allysonn' from the Board Lute Book, folio 10/3, bars 1-4. Tablature digitisation my own, with the use of software *Fronimo 3.0* created by Francesco Tribioli (2019).

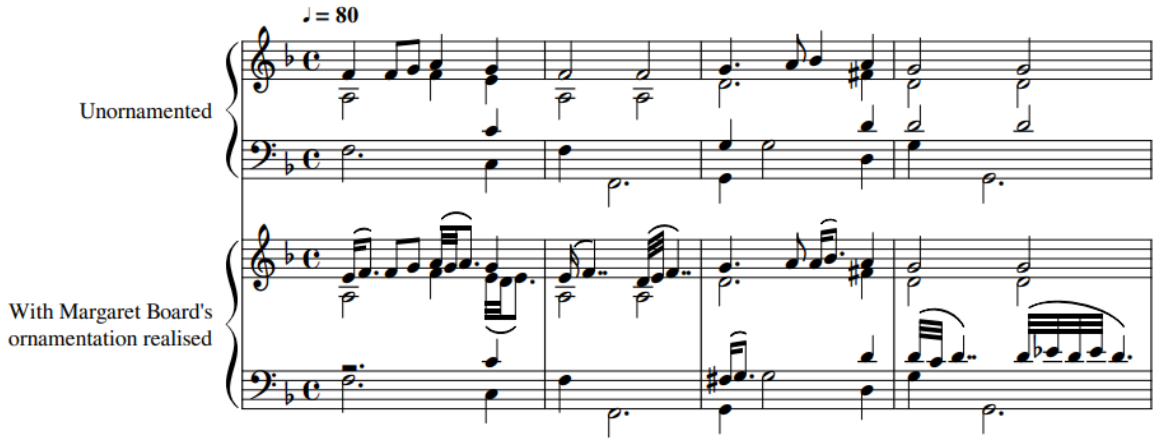


Figure 3.10: 'Goe from my wyndowe…', Board lute book, f. 10/3, bars 1-4. Transcription and typesetting my own, created with *Musescore 3*. The realised graces are but one possible interpretation only.

For a while I purposefully ignored the piece and did not practice it because of my confusion and frustration over the ornament placement, until I encountered Anne Smith's research into historical performance practice, specifically, her work on solmisation in *The Performance of 16th-Century Music: Learning from the Theorists*. Here, Smith discusses the way Renaissance theorists conceptualised the inherently different qualities of the six notes within a hexachord. Reading this, realisation dawned: perhaps the phrasing that I deemed to be musically logical or 'correct' as a

twenty-first-century performing musician is not what early modern English lutenists would have deemed tasteful, as our musical understandings are based on different theoretical frameworks. The graces Margaret added were surely selected and used for a specific effect and reason. They would have been deliberate. This led me to ask: what was the intention, the reasoning behind the placement of graces in this piece, and in general, in Renaissance lute music?

In Renaissance music theory, the collection of pitches considered foundational to music was known as the gamut. Its lowest note was designated by the Greek letter 'Γ' (gamma) and the system ascended in pitch through seven overlapping hexachords. Practically all music theory books presented the gamut as a ladder diagram with an ascending scale, and all the notes contained within the gamut written up the left-hand side. One example would be the gamut from Thomas Morley's *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practical Musicke* (1597) (fig. 3.11). Each hexachord had the same intervallic structure of tone, tone, tone, semitone, tone, tone – aurally memorised through the application of the traditional solmisation syllables: *ut, re, mi, fa, sol, la*. The syllables aided singers in sightreading as they highlighted the semitone interval to them, which only occurred between *mi* and *fa*. Pitches could be identified by their function within the system of overlapping hexachords via the different solmisation syllables that they could carry (i.e. C *sol fa ut* = 'middle C'). Evidence that the language of hexachords and solmisation was also used to teach lute students about music is found on the first page of Margaret Board's lute book, which features a music theory lesson. It contains theoretical diagrams and notes in a hand identified as John Dowland's. The centrepiece of this lesson is a diagram of the gamut, starting with Γ *ut* and ending on G *sol re ut*.

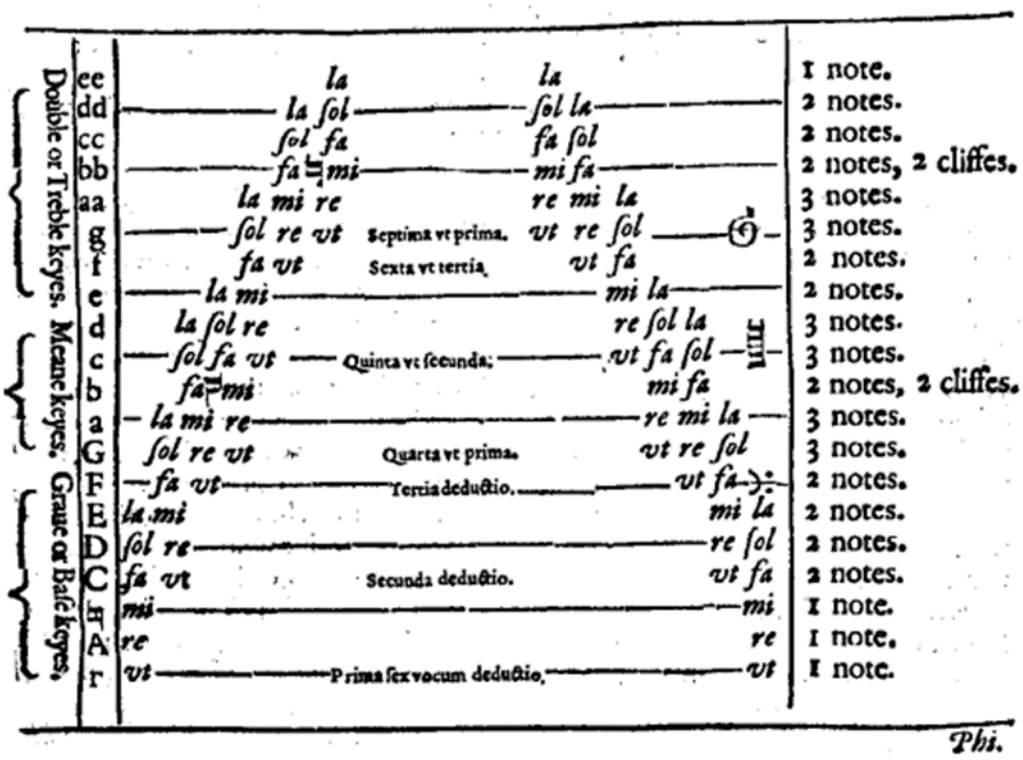


Figure 3.11: Diagram of the 'gamut' from Thomas Morley's *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practical Musicke* (London, 1597).

As Anne Smith explains, the varying dynamic qualities conventionally ascribed to the six pitches within each hexachord were as follows: *ut* and *fa* were viewed as extremely gentle and sweet; *re* and *sol* are the middle or natural voices and emit an average sound; and *mi* and *la* are clear and hard.[199]

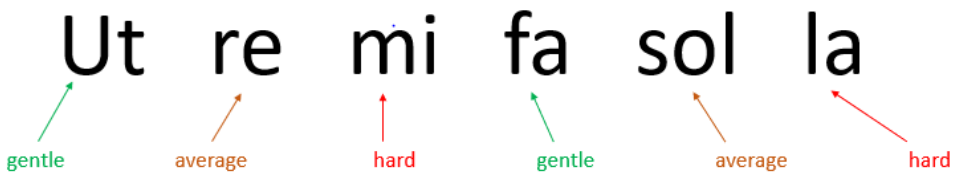


Figure 3.12: The varying dynamic qualities of the six pitches within the hexachord, as explained by Anne Smith in *The Performance of 16th-Century Music: Learning from the Theorists* (2011).

Smith remarks that the different qualities of the syllables were conventionally observed in performance practice, but not so commonly commented upon by theorists.[200] However, as she points

[199] This is distinct from the notion of soft, natural, and hard hexachords, see Jehoash Hirshberg, "Hexachord," in *Grove Music Online* (2001). https://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000012963.

[200] Smith, *The Performance of 16th-Century Music: Learning from the Theorists*, 27.

out, one prominent music theorist who did write about the differences in colour between the solmisation syllables was Martin Agricola (1486-1556), in his *Musica Choralis Deudsch* (1533).[201] The work of Bonnie Blackburn and Leofranc Holford-Strevens has also explored the history of the characterization of the *mi* and *fa* syllables as hard and soft, and the long-standing literary associations of this distinction.[202] Smith's arguments are based on evidence of continental performance practices, Morley's *A Plaine and Easie Introduction* making no mention of this performance convention. However, Margaret Board was taught at least in part by John Dowland, who spent the larger portion of his career working on the continent (evidence of Dowland's interest in continental music theory is his published translation of *Micrologus* in 1609, originally printed in Leipzig by Andreas Ornithoparcus in 1517).[203] Margaret's unique style of gracing her music in the style of continental practices appears to be influenced by Dowland's tuition, as the page of theoretical tables found in the Board lute book are written in her teacher's scribal hand.

If we applied solmisation syllables to the first four bars of 'Go from my window', it would appear as follows (fig. 3.13). As discussed previously, in early modern England specifically, some theorists simplified the system to adopt fixed solmisation that did not mutate between hexachords, and only used the syllables *mi fa sol* and *la*. Dowland's music theory lesson contained on the front endpaper of the Board lute book teaches both systems. In the example below you can see the musical phrase solmised both ways: using the classical six-syllable system (above) and the four-syllable newer English variant (below).

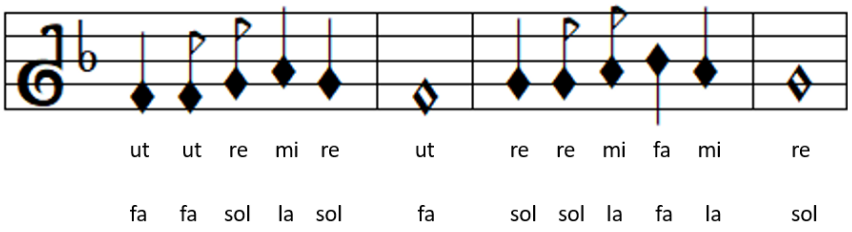


Figure 3.13: Solmisation syllables applied to the first four bars of the popular ballad tune, 'Go from my window'. Classical six-syllable system syllables (above) and the four-syllable newer English variant syllables (below).

[201] Smith includes a translation of Agricola's comments on the syllables, arguing that Agricola was not the first nor only theorist to make such distinctions, see Smith, *The Performance of 16th-Century Music: Learning from the Theorists*, 26.
[202] See Bonnie J. Blackburn, 'The Lascivious Career of B-Flat' and Leofranc Holford-Strevens, 'Fa mi la mi so la: The Erotic Implications of Solmization Syllables' in Bonnie J. Blackburn and Laurie Stras, eds., *Eroticism in Early Modern Music* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015).
[203] See John Dowland, *Andreas Ornithoparcus his Micrologus, or Introduction: containing the art of singing Digested into foure books* (London: Thomas Adams, 1609).

To bring out the varying dynamic qualities of the syllables on the lute, graces offer a way of hardening or softening a particular note, rather than relying only on varying the weight of the plucking finger. Shakes can be used to add emphasis; this grace increases rhythmic energy by applying rapid repeated alternations, starting with a plucked original pitch, and 'shaking' between this and its upper or lower neighbour. The fact that the central pitch is initially plucked means dynamic emphasis can be added by the right hand; the shake can then be used to add sustain (duration) to the sounding of the note. The fall, or half-fall, by contrast, has the opposite effect; in performance we begin by plucking a pitch either above or below the written note, and hammer-on or pull-off onto the central pitch, which as a result greatly softens its sound. A note graced with a fall will always be considerably quieter than an ungraced note or one decorated with a shake, since the central pitch is struck only with the left hand.[204]

Discussions of ornaments appear in lute tutor books from the early modern period, and some comments indicate that they can be employed to make notes sound louder and harder, or sweeter and milder. For instance, Thomas Robinson says that 'relishes' create 'passionate play' and that one can play 'a strong relish for loudness, or a mild relish for passionate attention'.[205] In *A Variety of Lute Lessons* (1610), Dowland writes that one may use 'biting sounds', when appropriate.[206] However, neither of these texts are very specific in a technical or theoretical sense about where or how ornaments should be employed. Overall, they tend to emphasise the performer's discretion, for instance: 'they cannot by speech or writing be expressed'; 'thou wert best to imitate some cunning player, or get them by thine own practice'; use ornaments 'when you judge them decent'.[207] For more specific information about the practice, we must look to the handwritten sources of talented lute students.

In Allison's setting of 'Go from my window', to emphasise the hard syllable *mi* in bar one, we could, for instance, employ a 'biting' shake. We could then add a 'mild' fall to the *fa* in bar 2 (see fig 3.13). This is precisely what Margaret notates in her copy of the piece. In fact, she graces almost every *mi* and *la* note in the melody with a shake, and very nearly every *ut* and *fa* with a fall. (Whether Margaret had in mind the classical six-syllable system or the newer English four-syllable system of solmisation is in fact unclear, since in the English system, classical syllables are replaced by ones with the same conventional characterisation. Both designate a soft, average, or hard syllables in the same places within the system, as *ut* is exchanged with *fa* [both by convention soft syllables], *re* with *sol*

[204] The fall and shake are the only two graces notated in Margaret Board's scribal work.
[205] The term is used synonymously with 'grace' in Robinson's writing: Robinson, *The Schoole of Musicke*, sig. Cv.
[206] Dowland, *Varietie of Lute Lessons*, sig. C2r.
[207] Ibid.

[both average] and *mi* with *la* [both hard]. In the following discussion, I will however employ only the classical system in my examples for clarity; the same points regarding the conventional quality of a particular solmisation syllable apply, whichever system is used.)

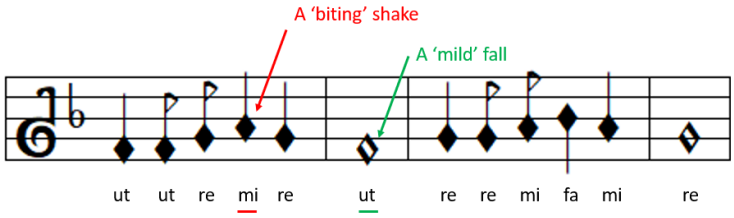


Figure 3.13: Graces that could be applied to the first four bars of the popular ballad tune, 'Go from my window', to bring out the varying dynamic qualities of the syllables on the lute.

The example below (fig. 3.14) shows bars 1-4 of the ballad tune, with Margaret's notated graces conforming to this pattern.

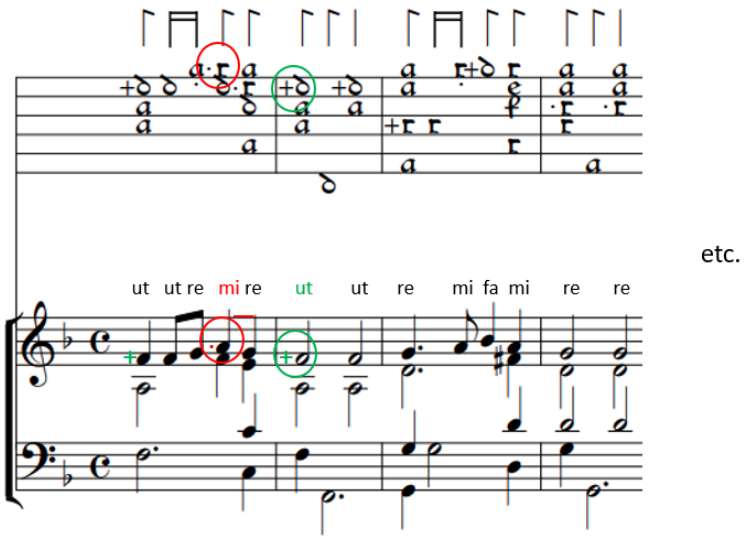


Figure 3.14: Two of Margaret's notated graces highlighted in 'Goe from my…', Board lute book, f. 10/3, bars 1-4. Tablature digitisation and transcription my own, using *Fronimo 3.0*.

Additionally, Margaret often chooses to ornament a lower voicing in the chord beneath the average-sounding *re* or *sol* notes in the tune, which adds decoration without over-emphasising the melody note, keeping it neutral-toned (fig. 3.15). Figure 3.16 provides a full transcription of Margaret's graced version featuring my suggested realisation of the graces.

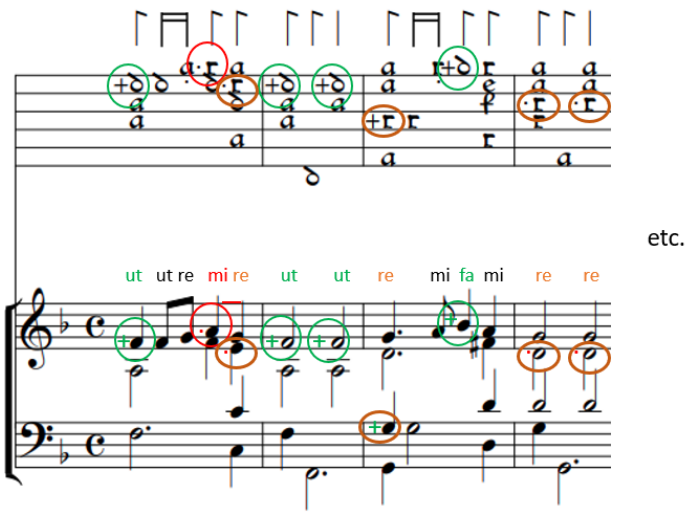


Figure 3.15: All of Margaret's notated graces highlighted in 'Goe from my…', Board lute book, f. 10/3, bars 1-4. Tablature digitisation and transcription my own, using *Fronimo 3.0.*

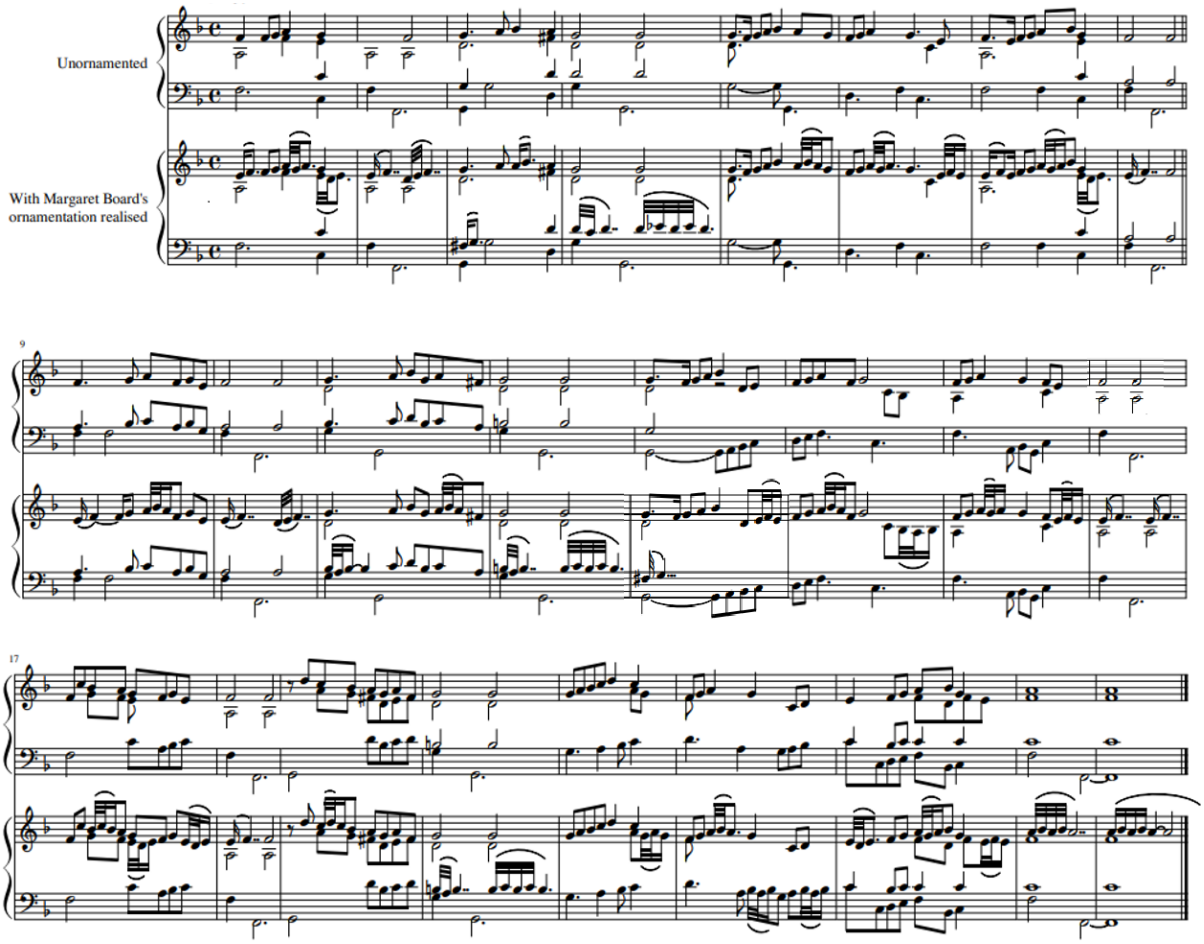


Figure 3.16: Full transcription of 'Goe from my wyndowe…', Board lute book, f. 10/3. Transcription and typesetting my own, created with *Musescore 3*. The realised graces are but one possible interpretation only.

This analysis of 'Go from my window' reveals how Margaret Board was deliberately demonstrating her knowledge of key academic music principles through her gracing of this music, and this explains why my initial expectation about the phrasing of the melody was at odds with the technical demands encoded into the tablature. Whilst my expectation was a rise-and-fall style of phrasing with the loudest sound being produced at the melody's registral climax, this note is in fact the quietest note in Margaret's copy. An understanding of the principals of Renaissance music theory and specifically the different inherent qualities of the notes and solmisation syllables within the hexachord (ut/fa = soft, re/sol = average, mi/la = hard) reveals Margaret's logic and intent. The note at the registral climax is the note *fa*, which should be gentle and sweet. This gentleness can be achieved with the use of a grace that softens a plucked pitch on the lute through its inherent physical technique.

By applying the grace of a fall to the note *fa*, it is evident that Margaret was performing a highly skilful demonstration of her knowledge of music theory, showing that she had even mastered the ability to apply it to her performances on the lute, integrating these two facets of her musical accomplishment. As is shown by my transcription and suggested realisation of the graces within 'Go from my window' the fully-graced piece is transformed by the addition of the graces into a far more musically intricate and complex piece. Margaret's detailed ornamentation articulates the melodic line of this ballad tune in a very deliberate way: emphasising some of the notes within the melody line, and sweetly softening others, in accordance with, and based on, her understanding and application of Renaissance music theory.

It was particularly ingenious for Margaret to apply this demonstration to a ballad tune setting as it derives from a vocal melody that was commonly known. She would have been, in effect, 'singing' with the lute and mastering the performance of the qualities of the different solmisation syllables through it. This further suggests the conscious intent Margaret had in embellishing her music in this manner, and using her skill to demonstrate her learning to others in order to impress and self-fashion as an accomplished young woman.

Margaret's 'Go from my window' in comparison with other lute books, and a closer look at Margaret's 'Bonny sweet Robin'

It is essential to address the question of whether ornamentation in other English lute music sources show graces being applied to music in this manner, or if Margaret Board is unique in her music theory-based application of graces. Unfortunately, however, a review of the concordances of 'Go from my window' shows there is little material to make comparison with, as only a minority of the other versions of settings of this ballad tune contain any signs for graces at all. As previously mentioned, there are a total of fifteen concordances of this ballad tune in English lute sources (three

pedagogical, four professional, two foreign, two anthology, four printed). Of these, there are only three examples of versions of 'Go from my window' which contain notated graces. The pedagogical category offers the Folger lute book version only (on f. 17) where only shakes are notated, and overall, the music is not graced anywhere nearly as fully as the example in the Board lute book. William Barley's *A new Booke of Tabliture for the Orpharion* (1596) is a rare example of a printed book containing signs for graces, but its setting of 'Go from my window' (sig. C2r-C4v) contains only a very small number, placed almost exclusively and consistently on one chord/note only. The only remaining example is the Euing lute book (GB-Glasgow University Library, Ms Euing 25 (olim R.d.43)), a household anthology of lute music, which contains two versions of the ballad 'Go from my window' (on f. 17v-18 and 48v-49). The copies in this source contain more grace signs than the version from the Folger lute book, though still considerably fewer than Board, and most notably, the graces have not been applied with the same principles. This evidence indicates that Margaret had a unique style with regards to embellishing her performances with the graces: a distinctive way in which she purposefully demonstrated her knowledge and mastery of music theory and practice.

Additional evidence to suggest Margaret's application of graces was unique to her performance practice is an analysis of the grace symbols applied to her copy of 'Bonny sweet Robin' (fig. 3.17). As shown in Table 3.2 earlier in the case study, this is the only example of a ballad tune setting from the Board lute book where the graces are not added to the appropriate hard and soft solmisation syllables (a mere 12.5% align with the principle, as opposed to the 95.8-100% in all the other examples). However, in Margaret's copy of 'Robin', the signs for graces appear to have been partially added by another scribe. Many fall signs are clearly not in Margaret's scribal hand, as they are written as x's rather than as upright crosses (+: Margaret's usual sign), and appear to have been added at a later date, after the original tablature (and some of the graces) were copied by Margaret.

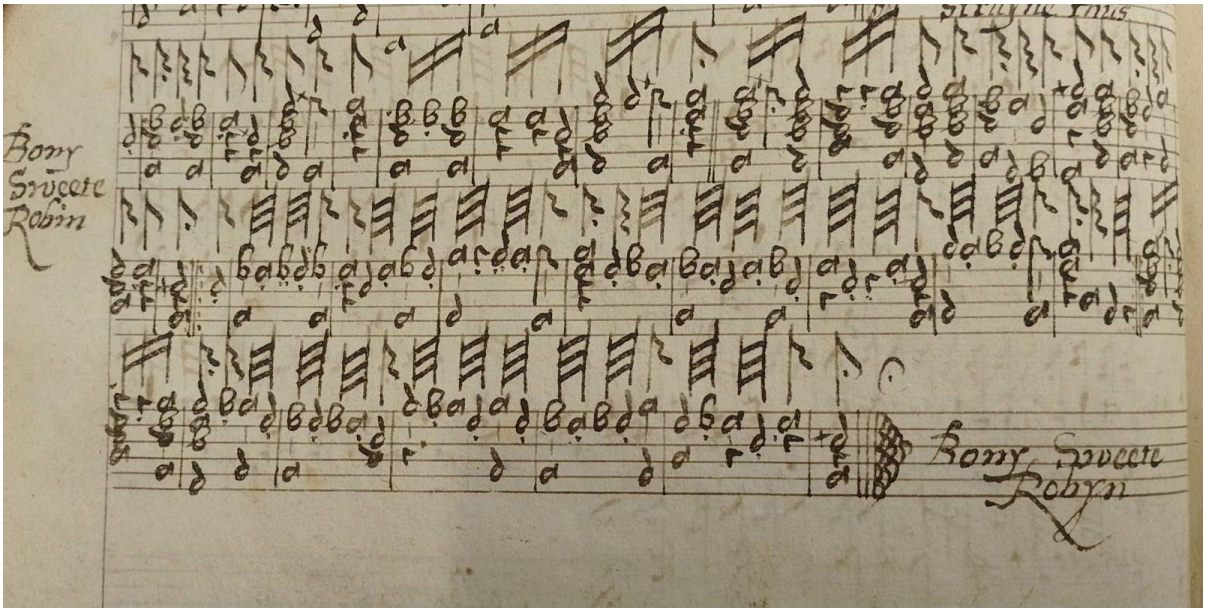


Figure 3.17: 'Bony Sweete Robyn', from the Board lute book, f. 12v/2.

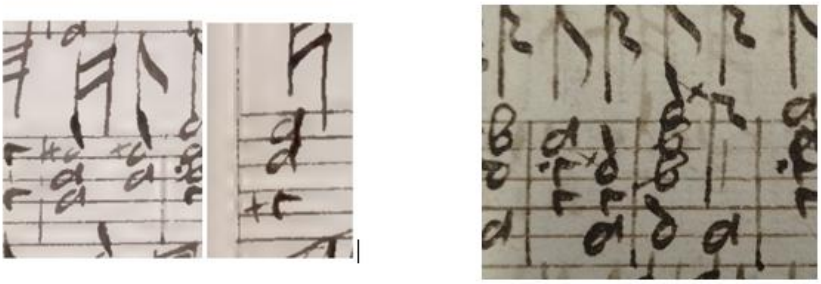


Figure 3.18: Examples of falls typical of Margaret's scribal hand (left) vs. the falls seen in 'Bony Sweete Robyn' (right), Board lute book, f. 2v/2, bars 2-3.

As can be seen above (fig. 3.18), the image on the left shows the way Margaret typically notates falls in her own scribal hand: notice how they are clearly crosses (+) rather than x's, and slant upwards slightly from left to right. The image on the right shows the falls signs added to 'Bonny sweet Robin' in bars 2-3. They are very clearly in a different scribal hand, though the original tablature is in Margaret's hand.

Additionally, it is possible to observe that this scribe adapted the original grace on the tablature note *f* (melody note C) in bar 3 from a shake to a fall; the 'x'-like fall appears to have been written on top of a pre-existing dot (as can be observed in the close-up on this image below, see fig. 3.19).

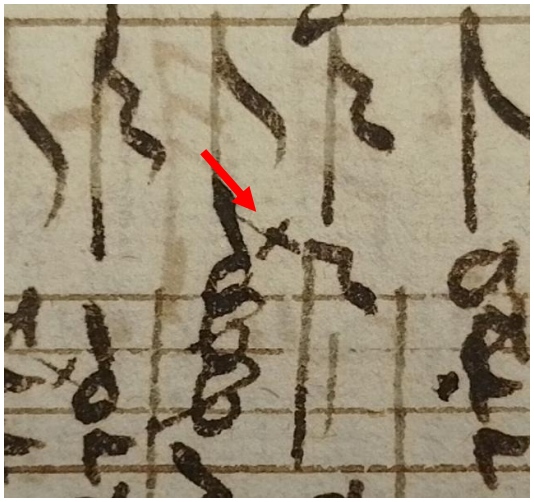


Figure 3.19: An 'x-like' fall sign which appears to have been written on top of a pre-existing dot in 'Bony Sweete Robyn', Board lute book, f. 2v/2, bar 3.

Furthermore, the fall signs, and in particular the sign placed beside the tablature letter *d* of bar 2, appear to have been added by another scribe as they look 'squeezed in', in the small remaining blank space between the tablature letters already existing on either side of it. While it is much harder to tell one scribal hand apart from another when it comes to the notation of the dots placed to the left-hand side of the notes (shake signs), a clue that some of these were added by another scribal hand is similar: a number of these also appear cramped beside, or slightly above, the relevant tablature letter (see fig. 3.20 below). This is in stark contrast with Margaret's usual grace notation style, where ample space is typically made for the grace signs.

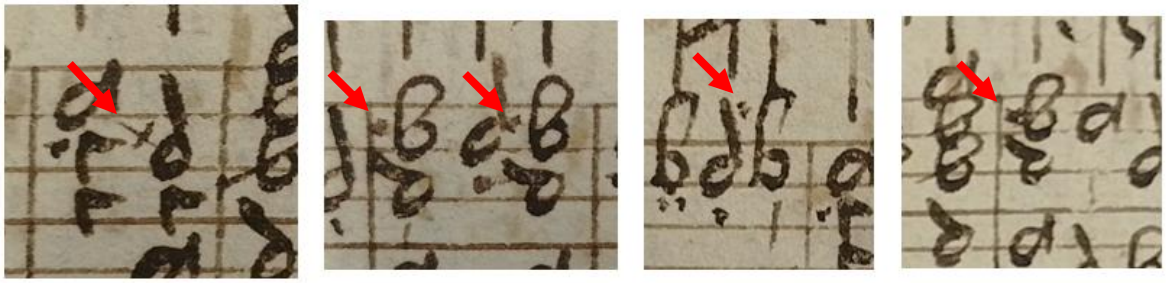


Figure 3.20: Isolated grace signs which appear 'squeezed' into the original tablature notation. [Images from left to right:] A fall beside the tablature letter d from bar 3; two shakes beside two b tablature letters from bar 1; a shake beside tablature letter b from bar 18; a shake beside tablature letter b bar 12, all within 'Bony Sweete Robyn', Board lute book, f. 2v/2.

Further still, the following notated fall signs shown below (fig. 3.21) are also from Margaret's copy of 'Bonny sweet Robin', and whilst they appear more similar to the style of Margaret's crosses, closer inspection reveals they are rightward-leaning, and also appear 'squeezed in' after the initial copying of the tablature: Margaret's crosses are consistently slanting leftwards, and are always positioned

directly to the left side of a note, whereas these are placed slightly above (where space was found). This appears to be the work of a third scribal hand, as these signs are different from the 'x'-like examples found in bars 2-3.

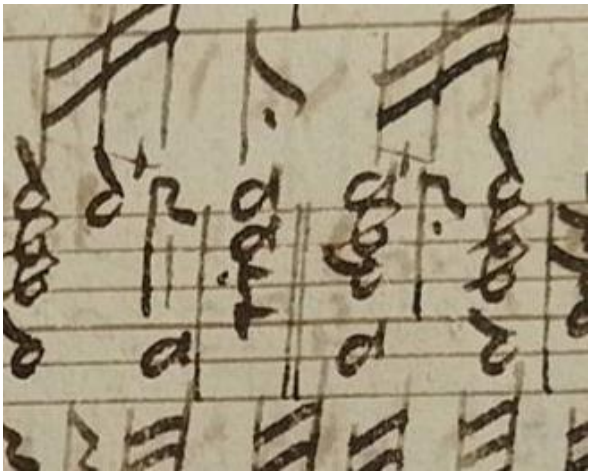


Figure 3.21: Fall signs added in by what appears to be a third scribal hand in 'Bony Sweete Robyn', Board lute book, f. 2v/2, bars 7-9.

Interestingly, there are also a couple of examples of falls in 'Robin' that *do* look like Margaret's hand, like this one from bar 13 (fig. 3.22):

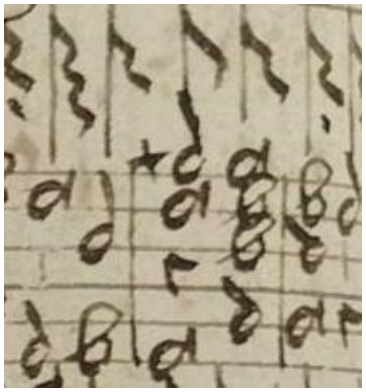


Figure 3.22: Fall sign in what appears to be Margaret's scribal hand in 'Bony Sweete Robyn', Board lute book, f. 2v/2, bar 13.

Even more interestingly, this fall is one of the mere two graces in this piece which align with the principal of embellishing notes in accordance with hard and soft solmisation syllables. It is a fall placed on a *fa* (soft) note. (The other grace that aligns with the theory is the shake in bar 26, and seeing as this is notated by a very simple dot it more difficult to make a distinction between different scribal hands). This would indicate Margaret had developed her own unique style of gracing her music during her lessons, and that other methods of gracing were used by the later scribes in the

Board book (and elsewhere in contemporary sources). This is further evidence of the unification of theoretical and practical accomplishments encoded into Margaret's layer of the Board lute book.

Was Margaret Board a typical student?

In some regards, Margaret was a typical student of the lute, however, some key evidence recorded in her layer of the Board lute book reveals she was in some ways unusual, and that the overall picture is a complex one. As the eldest daughter of a gentry family from the South of England, her receiving of a private musical education during childhood is, broadly speaking, typical. However, as was discussed in Chapter 2, the investment made by her family on the exact nature of this education seems particularly high, given she was afforded expensive lessons with John Dowland, as well as interactions with similarly famous and celebrated musicians of her day. The pressure put on a child when such an investment is made can be fierce, and it seems clear a certain pressure to progress and excel in her maidenhood accomplishments existed for Margaret, indicated by the disciplined meticulousness with which she approached her copying, and her rate of copying (while still maintaining such a high degree of accuracy). Furthermore, the copious titles and attributions included in Margaret's layer of the Board lute book convey her extensive effort to showcase her connection with a wide socio-musical world. Also, her knowledge of Latin (evidenced by the book) displays an unusually high level of education, particularly for her gender. These inclusions indicate a conspicuous self-fashioning, and the fact Margaret was a scribe for the anonymous teacher who directed the compilation of the Hirsch lute book shows she had achieved a certain renown for her skill as a copyist, likely also for her skills as a lute player, and her tablature-reading proficiency. All of this evidence suggests a higher level of ability than was typical for her demographic. Furthermore, Margaret's own mentality towards her lute education is communicated via the jottings and doodles which litter the back endpaper of her book. These often playful inclusions not only reveal the impressive breadth of her education (beyond what is seen in any similar surviving lute book from the period), but also Margaret's intellectual playfulness, gained from the plethora of abilities her thorough education granted her. Finally, as this chapter of this thesis reveals, the inclusion of a page of diagrams relating to principles of music theory within her lute book (which was probably a book compiled towards the latter-end of her lute lessons) indicates she had an atypically high level of musical comprehension, and her use of graces throughout her music demonstrate her unique desire and ability to make her musical performances her own.

However, the end of Margaret's lessons coming in tandem with her marriage shows that she was, in this way at least, more typical than not for her class, age, and gender. The style of her musical copying, being so in common with the meticulous style of other amateur gentry lute players of the

period, additionally shows how Margaret's approach was typical for an amateur musician from a wealthy family. One who was able to grant ample time to the learning of such skilful accomplishments, and to acquire them at one's chosen pace and in accordance with one's own level of ability. This remains unlike a professional lute player who would, by necessity, be operating and working under entirely different demands, conditions, and scenarios.

Chapter 4 : Demonstrating research through creative practice: Reenacting female lute performance in the domestic space, and the 'Margaret Board mixtape'

The potential of a practice-based research project

During the early stages of this practice-based research project I had an expectation that the musical output I would produce would be a live recital featuring music from mainly female-owned/produced sources of early modern lute music, perhaps contextualised by other lute music sources from the period. I made considerable progress in choosing my desired repertoire: even creating a thorough excel spreadsheet to compile potential pieces and to keep track of my overall timings, just as I would do for any recital I would prepare for in a professional context. However, this rudimentary initial idea eventually developed consciously, purposefully (drastically, I must admit) and ultimately very meaningfully, over the duration of my research pursuits.

I realised, during the mid-stages of my research project, the opportunity and potential I had at my disposal to create something far more interesting than a 'standard' or 'typical' recital as my performance output. I also realised the extent to which a typical twenty-first-century recital would in fact be about the furthest thing away from an accurate representation of women's musical practices in the early modern period. These realisations, combined with the fruits of my musicological analysis, resulted in the manifestation of a collection of artworks that are far more authentically representative and reflective of the activities of the female lutenists I had been so intently researching. The highly creative resulting output has enabled my research to be expressed and communicated in a distinctive and intensely original way, making that research more accessibly educational on the subject of female lute performance practices in early seventeenth-century England. This chapter is a 'behind-the-scenes' look at the process I experienced as I worked to create a collection of demonstrative and research-oriented recordings and other highly visual musical artworks to pair with this written thesis. Hyperlinks to all of the recordings and videos made are contained within this commentary, alongside many documentational images.

The validity of a practice-based project

The experience of embodying and expressing musicological research via my own performance practice was a methodology that successfully produced fresh and original insights of intimate relevance to this study. Insights which could only be gained and communicated via the adoption of a practice-based research method. Significant revelations came to me as a performer and researcher via the experience of performing the music *in tandem* with my archival, literary, and musical-

analytical research. By donning the clothing worn, motions performed, even the facial expressions employed by the historical actors I so carefully traced, I was able to deepen my understanding, make new connections and realisations not otherwise possible, and demonstrate and communicate 'findings' using not only the written word but the creative arts. The methods demonstrated by this thesis open up possibilities for future practice-based research as it demonstrates how one's own performance skills can be utilised at multiple points throughout a research project, and in a variety of ways. This includes explorative practical experiences used to test theories and gather information, such as in how I used a practice based method to research the table-top method of lute playing, something that had never been successfully analysed or tested to-date. The project also breaks new ground in its use of the creation of artworks which encapsulate or embody and then successfully communicate complex or novel aspects of musical research, as discussed in this chapter.

Art in honour of Margaret Board

A continuous feeling I had throughout the course of my research was the desire to honour and do justice to Margaret Board, the lutenist and original owner-creator of the Board lute book. Inspired by the self-possession and agency she so clearly strived for (as discussed in Chapters 2 and 3 of this thesis), and saddened by the ending of her musical 'play' that took place at the point at which she was married at the age of 25 (discussed in the first part of Chapter 2) I felt compelled to respect her as far as possible through my own musical creativity. This desire shaped the works I ultimately produced, as I wanted to represent each facet of Margaret's lute performance practice: this meant representing her musical collection, but also her lute lessons, and the physical lute book that she created and owned, which was the material expression of her learning. This aim directed me to design and create four works in total:

1. A filmed collection of short historically reenacted lute performances, in seventeenth-century clothing, and taking place in an accurately reconstructed social and domestic setting.
2. An album of lute music from the Margaret Board lute book, with album art.
3. An electroacoustic sound-work or 'sound-collage' capturing the soundscape of a lute lesson for a young English gentry lady.
4. A cassette tape entitled 'The Margaret Board Mixtape', fashioned to look like a tiny version of the Board lute book.

Included in this commentary chapter is an explanation of precisely how and why these four works were produced. I articulate how each work demonstrates the findings and arguments presented by each of the first three chapters of this thesis and show how they were transformed into creative practice: from the initial conception, through the experimentation process, to the result and impact.

Work 1: Four reenacted female lute performance scenes, set in the domestic space

The following commentary discusses four reconstructed scenes of female domestic lute music making: filmed in seventeenth-century reproduction clothing and with period appropriate reproduction set dressing (see fig 4.1). To reconstruct and showcase multiple realistic settings in which lute playing existed for early modern women (as detailed in Chapter 1) I devised four historically informed scenes which range from the most privately intimate to the most socially extroverted of atmospheres. Scene 1 captures the scenario of a woman playing alone in her private chamber for the purpose of personal recreation and finding solace. I play 'Anne Markham's pavan', a piece from the female-owned 'ML lute book' (GB-London, British Library, Add.38539, f. 28v-29a). It is a complex, detailed and intimate setting of this piece, and therefore fitting for an introspective solitary performance. I wear comfortable and warm clothing which also influences the introspective/inward-focused approach to my lute playing. Scene 2 captures the performative scenario of playing sprightly music to entertain a small gathering of three friends. I perform a collection of four 'Toys' from Jane Pickeringe's lute book (GB-London, British Library, Eg.2046 f. 21/2, 22/3, 24/2, 33v/2 respectively). These uncomplicated/unpretentious settings of charming folk tunes are highly suitable for entertaining a casual gathering of friends. I wear a more embellished outfit, and perform from memory in order to be able to look up pleasingly at my audience which creates a more extroverted overall performance (an open posture, engaged facial expression and physical demeanour). The music performed for Scene 3 was again enacted in the company of a small number of friends, but is not presented as a 'performance', per se, but as part of a casual moment of shared recreation in the late afternoon. I play two ballad tune settings from Anne Bayldon's lute book: 'Robin is to the greenwood gone' and 'Go from my window' (US-Washington Folger-Shakespeare Library, Ms.V.b.280 (olim 1610.1), f. 16v-17). Ballad settings are a very typical genre of lute music found within female-owned sources, and these specific settings were particularly popular in pedagogical and household lute books, thus, this is musical content that would have certainly been included in lute performances given by women in the home. There is a difference in my presentation in comparison with Scene 2 as I am not being actively listened to or observed, and therefore I do not play from memory. My demeanour is understated and thoughts more internal – though the atmosphere is different from entirely solitary playing, and the effect of the presence of company on my performance is apparent. Scene 4 recreates the scenario of a young lady performing to impress a sole visiting suitor, and is a performance given directly and intimately to him. I return to the ML lute book, this time performing 'Mrs White's choice' and 'Mary Hoffman's almain' (f. 2/1 and f. 2v/1 respectively). These pieces were chosen strategically to impress my suitor: they are particularly charming, elegant and technically impressive, as well as being pieces I was assured I could perform

particularly well, and I was therefore at greater liberty to craft and direct the visual elements of the performance with ease. Dressed in an expensive finely-made silk dress (with voluminous sleeves demonstrative of the latest fashion) and adorned with a necklace, pearl bracelet, hairpiece, a candlelit atmosphere, and inviting facial expressions (music memorised), this approach resulted in the most starkly distinct and contrasting overall performance result, in comparison with the other three videos.

A different approach was taken for the performance of each scene. My choices were thoroughly informed by the surviving literary evidence of lute performance practices of the period, then brought to life via my own body and lute performance skills. As can be clearly observed, my natural responses to the different atmospheres created by each of the four scenes (e.g. changes in my demeanour, musical expression, appearance and use of my facial expressions) give insight into the complexity and artistry involved in women's domestic lute performance practices.

Video links

The videos themselves can be accessed via hyperlinks, which are listed below:

Scene 1: https://youtu.be/WL7dnrFRTu8 Solitary lute playing.

Scene 2: https://youtu.be/miWoZTFNIfw Performing lute music to a small gathering of friends.

Scene 3: https://youtu.be/T45oFd9k8K8 Playing lute music in the evening, in casual company.

Scene 4: https://youtu.be/sU2Wegh7Qpo Performing for a suitor.

Figure 4.1: Stills from my self-filmed historically reenacted lute performance scenes.

The initial premise

In addition to the practical research experiences had at Bramhall Hall and Skipton Castle, as discussed in Chapter 1, I was keen to experience, create, and audio-visually capture a reenactment of one or more domestic lute performances akin to how they would have been carried out by early modern women (in terms of repertoire chosen, clothing worn, table-top holding technique used, length of performance, etc). My initial vision for this filmed recital was to bring my research 'to life' for an audience in a way that was both aural and visual. I could imagine a film of this kind to be exhibited for educational purposes at National Trust properties, for instance, or within heritage and cultural history museums. I also aimed to use the experience of creating the film to further inform myself about women's domestic practices, as the process would involve a personal living history experience that would enrich my own knowledge of lute performance practices for women in early seventeenth-century England.

Initially, a plan was set in motion to film on-set at Bramhall Hall, following fruitful discussions with members of the Hall's management team. A bespoke filming trip would demand a tremendous amount of pre-planning and involve multiple parties, co-ordinating dates and times with those parties, and preparing funding applications, so proactivity and plenty of advance planning was crucial in making my vision a reality. However, as my research into women's domestic music making progressed, the idea of filming at Bramhall Hall ended up being at odds with the portrayal of an accurate and authentic demonstration of the research findings. I realised that as an experience for

myself, as not only the event organiser but also the performer, the laborious organisation and the travel components involved in filming at Bramhall Hall would create an environmental set-up that would be the furthest thing away from the familiar, homely and reasonably solitary musical-performance setting that I would supposedly be showcasing. Additionally, the extra tasks involved, on top of the unfamiliar clothing and furniture I would be using, would be a barrier to me being able to perform with the sensitivity and musicality that I was usually capable of achieving in a less stressful environments. A highly familiar and personally controlled environment was a key element of what early modern women playing in their homes would have been experiencing - so this is what I wished to both experience and showcase in my filmed recital.

Choosing an ideal filming space

I then considered finding a filming location that would be closer to home, and so came across Bessie Surtees' House, a terraced seventeenth-century townhouse located in central Newcastle. I thought this could be a prime location as it is (as they emphasise) an example of domestic Jacobean architecture.[208] The rooms inside feature the oak-panel 'wainscoting' that the *Burwell Lute Tutor* mentions is an ideal setting for lute music (see fig.4.2). [209] I wrote to Historic England to enquire if I could be granted permission to book to film within the house, and whilst the managers were open to the prospect in principle, I was warned about the highly audible road and pub noise which permeates the interior rooms due to the original single-glazed windows. Unfortunately, this factor ruled out Bessie Surtees' house as an ideal filming location for the purposes of my project. It then struck me that if I wanted to focus more on reenacting the experience of lute playing as an early modern woman in a more controlled - but also more realistic - way it would make sense not to travel to some unfamiliar setting to film (visually accurate and beautiful as they may be) but rather to film inside a room in my own home (see fig. 4.3). Within my own domestic space, I would be able to experience, and therefore capture, the impact of a genuine homely setting on a musical performance. I did, however, pay Bessie Surtees' house a visit in order to gain a first-hand impression of the interior rooms (being interested particularly in the size(s) of rooms, layout, wall/flooring materials, natural lighting, and furnishings). The house is quite the hidden gem, and it inspired the scenes that I was to eventually create for my four filmed domestic lute performances. Within the

[208] For more information about this house see D. Heslop, G. McCombie, and C. Thomson, "Bessie Surtees House - two merchant houses in Sandhill, Newcastle-upon-Tyne," *Archaeologia Aeliana* 22 (1994); R. Polley, *Bessie Surtees House* (London: English Heritage, 1997).
[209] 'You will do well to play in a wainscot room where there is no furniture, if you can…', Thurston Dart, "Miss Mary Burwell's Instruction Book for the Lute," *The Galpin Society Journal* 11 (1958), 45.

remarkably well restored three story terraced building I was able to walk about three oak panelled rooms. These are examples of the ideal 'wainscot' rooms, described by the *Burwell Lute Tutor*.

Figure 4.2: Interior of the principal room on the first floor of Bessie Surtees' House, featuring fine carved oak wainscoting, elaborate plaster ceilings and carved fire surrounds. 41-44 Sandhill Quayside, Newcastle upon Tyne. Photography my own.

Figure 4.3: 'Behind the scenes' filming set-up of my historically reenacted scenes of early modern English domestic lute performance practices. Filming took place at my flat in Newcastle upon Tyne, 16th February 2024. Photography by Joe Lockwood.

I had the good fortune of having wooden floors throughout my own small flat in Newcastle, and wooden doors, and in also opting for an appropriately sized room within my home I was at least somewhat able to recreate the acoustic of a typical domestic wainscot room. I was also able to remove most of my furniture from the room to further capture the *Burwell Lute Tutor*'s description of the ideal acoustic setting. Whilst prioritising an environmental accuracy of size, acoustic, ambience, and privacy rather than accuracy of visual aesthetic, I aimed to balance and rectify this to at least some degree by incorporating visually historically accurate furnishings, set dressing, and of course clothing. Just like my experiences at Bramhall Hall and Skipton Castle, the clothing and furnishings were to be the most important and impactful aspects in terms of demonstrating my research on early modern female lute playing in these videos (for full details on my researching of this technique, see Chapter 1, Part 1). I was immensely fortunate to be able to hire specialist hand-sewn historically accurate seventeenth-century garments, and a reproduction chair and set

dressings, to use within my own home (see figures 4.4 and 4.5), from Carolyn Richardson of *1635 Household*: the reenactment group with whom I had previously worked at Bramhall and Skipton.

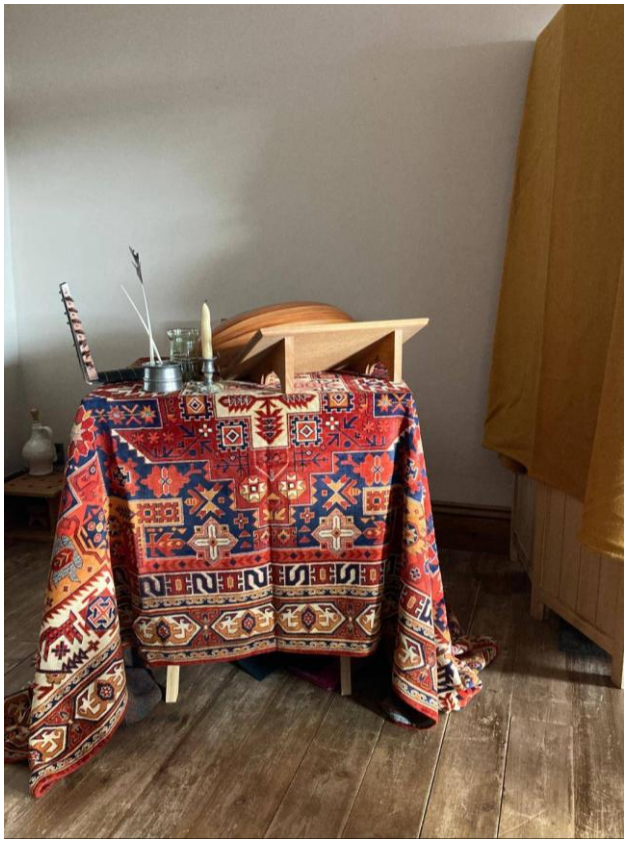


Figure 4.4: Front view of my historically reenacted domestic lute scenes set-up, showing table and set dressing. February 2024. Photography by Joe Lockwood.

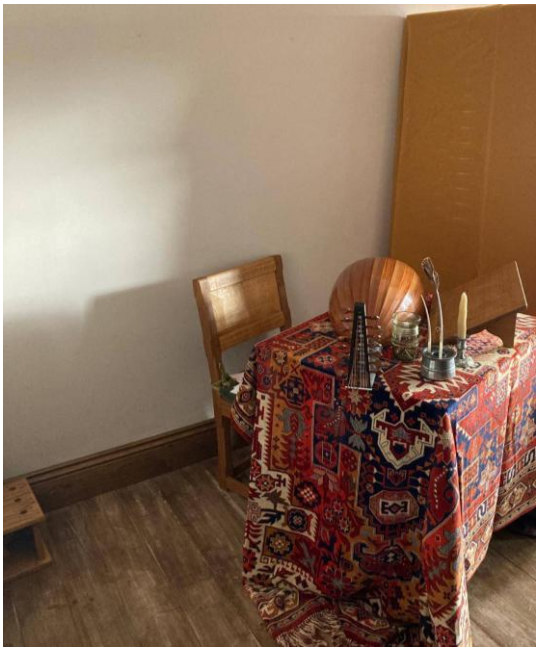


Figure 4.5: Side view of my historically reenacted domestic lute scenes set-up, showing set dressing, table and chair. February 2024. Photography by Joe Lockwood.

I also took into consideration the seventeenth-century notion of the intimate 'closet' setting, as explored by Danielle Bobker. Bobker argues that privacy within the home grew to become 'a distinctive and desirable experience' in the seventeenth century, and this led to the transformation of domestic architecture.[210] Whereas medieval and early modern house designs had prioritised space to practice trades, for communal dining, and hosting visitors, seventeenth-century homeowners began a trend of having separating rooms, corner or side rooms, and antechambers designated for personal use, and they began to take pleasure in solitary relaxation. Bobker explains these separating rooms had a variety of other names: study, office, library, dressing-room, gallery, or oratory, but that the most common was closet: 'the period's generic term for a private space'.[211]

Selecting the musical content of the videos

With informed decisions made on the environmental and visual aspects of the filmed recital, it was important to me to approach the musical content with the same level of thoroughness and with a highly conscious intent. To accurately demonstrate the music performed by women, I selected a small number of solo lute pieces from three female-owned lute manuscript sources. These being: GB-London, British Library, Add.38539 (originally owned by Margaret L.), GB-London, British Library, Eg.2046 (org. owned by Jane Pickeringe), and US-Washington Folger-Shakespeare Library, Ms.V.b.280 (olim 1610.1) (partially-owned by Anne Bayldon). These three sources represent all the surviving English lute manuscripts copied by identifiable women besides the Margaret Board lute book. The Board lute book was kept aside as I was also making, as a separate work, an entire album of pieces exclusively from this source.

After selecting the musical sources, specific pieces were chosen from each and themed around common genres. From the Margaret L lute book, dance forms written in honour of women were chosen: 'Mrs White's choice' (f. 2/1) and 'Mary Hoffman's almain' (f. 2v/1), both from the beginning of the lute book, and the more technically and musically challenging 'Anne Markham's pavan' positioned much further into the book (f. 28v-29a). All three pieces also survive elsewhere; in other pedagogical books, household anthologies, professional books, and a small number of foreign sources.[212] From Jane Pickeringe's lute book, a collection of four short pieces entitled 'Toys' were selected from throughout the manuscript (f. 21/2, 22/3, 24/2, 33v/2). These pieces are entirely unique to this manuscript, and a composer is not identified. From Anne Bayldon's lute book, a pair of

[210] Danielle Bobker, *The Closet: The Eighteenth-Century Architecture of Intimacy* (Princeton University Press, 2020), 13.
[211] Ibid. 14.
[212] For full details, see appendices from Julia Craig-McFeely, "English Lute Manuscripts and Scribes 1530-1630" (DPhil, University of Oxford 1994).

Ballad tune settings were selected: 'Robin is to the greenwood gone' (f. 16v) and 'Go from my window' (f.17). These were both very popular tunes to be set for solo lute and have a great many concordances. These two pieces fall upon a two-page spread within Anne's lute book, so it is likely they would have been performed as a pair, and they do indeed make for a musically tasteful pairing; the harmonic simplicity and rhythmic sprightliness of 'Go from my window' tastefully contrasts the elegantly melancholic 'Robin'. These pieces represent very typical genres of lute music found within female-owned sources. Therefore, it is precisely this sort of musical content that would have been included in lute performances given by women in the home.

Why four short lute playing scenes? My research-informed approach

I made the decision to perform my selected repertoire as four short sets, and within specific 'scenes', rather than a single longform recital, as female domestic lute performance was intended to entertain oneself or to entertain or impress family, friends, or other visitors, where lute playing could be paired alongside other domestic activities such as sewing, embroidery, reading, and conversation. Advice from *Varietie of Lute Lessons* (1610) suggests musical performances ought only to exist for as long as one feels inspired to come to music, and that neither practice nor performance should be strained or strenuous:

> It is most necessary […] to handle the lute often, yet never but when thy Genius favours thee, that is, when thou feelest thyself inclined to Music […] There is a certain natural disposition, for learning the Arts naturally infused into us, and showing it in us rather at one time than another, which if one will provoke by immoderate labour, he shall fight against Nature. Therefore when thou shalt find thyself aptly disposed, and hath time and opportunity, spare no pains, yet keep this course.[213]

It is apparent that short but captivating performances were what young women aimed for when their intention was to please or impress others: as is also indicated by the *Burwell Lute Tutor* that short sets of two contrasting pieces make for an ideal performance. The tutor specifies that after one has prepared the fingers (and the attention of the company) with a few chords, or an improvised (or at least improvised-sounding) praeludium, a 'grave' piece, and a 'most airy' piece are recommended to follow.[214] As in *Varietie,* it is also mentioned on more than one occasion in *Burwell* that players ought not play for too long: 'You must not play when the hand is weary';[215] 'So it is not good to play too much, for that makes the hand weak';[216] 'If you will play well of the lute you must not play too

[213] Robert Dowland, *Varietie of Lute Lessons* (London, 1610), sig. Br.
[214] Dart, "Miss Mary Burwell's Instruction Book for the Lute," 45.
[215] Ibid., 43.
[216] Ibid., 61.

many lessons'.[217] *Burwell* also advises not to play pieces with different lute tunings at one time.[218] Through my repertoire choices and pairings, my four short videos are informed by this advice. I made the decision to only perform surviving early modern English lute music as notated within female-owned lute books and not to include any improvisatory preludes of my own within the videos.

With the concept of short sets of music established, I also had the opportunity to present examples of four different domestic lute performance situations, ranging from solitary lute practice to a highly self-fashioned performance for a visiting suitor, and my chosen repertoire could be designated appropriately to each social (or anti-social) set-up. Each of these settings and their direct relevance in the context of female lute performance practices are evidenced and discussed in the earlier chapters of this thesis. For example, Catherine of Aragon's letter to her daughter Mary (discussed on page 112) illustrates the common practice of young women playing the lute for private comfort.[219] The setting of a woman playing to a small gathering of friends is illustrated by Constantin Huygens' complimentary comments about Mary Killigrew (as discussed on pages 36 and 88). Discussion of lute music being used by young women to attract and entice suitors is discussed at various points throughout this thesis (see in particular pages 87-8). My four scene concepts and the repertoire designated to each of them are detailed within Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1: Repertoire chosen for each of the four reenacted lute performance scenes.

Scene	Lute performance situation	Repertoire
1	Solitary lute playing, for personal introspection and comfort	Margaret L's lute book: Anne Markham's pavan' (f.28v-29a).
2	Performing lute music to a small gathering of friends	Jane Pickeringe's lute book: a collection of four 'Toys' (f.21/2, 22/3, 24/2, 33v/2).
3	Playing lute music in the evening, in casual company	Anne Bayldon's lute book: Ballad tune settings 'Robin is to the greenwood gone' (f.16v) and 'Go from my window' (f.17).
4	Performing the lute to impress a suitor	Margaret L lute book: dance form settings 'Mary Hoffman's almain' (f.2v/1) and 'Mrs White's choice' (f. 2/1).

[217] Dart, "Miss Mary Burwell's Instruction Book for the Lute," 61-2.
[218] Ibid. 62.
[219] Catherine of Aragon, "Letter of Catharine of Aragon to her daughter Princess Mary: April 1534," ed. Marilee Hanson (English History Online, 2015 1534), https://englishhistory.net/tudor/letter-katharine-aragon-daughterprincess-mary-april-1534/.

My clothing

My decision to perform and record four lute playing scenes also gave me the opportunity to experience and showcase four slightly different seventeenth-century outfits. While in continuous communication with Carolyn about what was possible on a practical level, I devised a plan to curate four appropriate early seventeenth-century outfits which differed in their formality, comfort level, richness of fabric (and therefore visual impact) in order to experience and showcase the differences between a woman's visual presentation for a private performance vs. her self-fashioning for the most advantageous of public displays. The clothing items worn for each of the four scenes are detailed in Table 4.2 below.

Table 4.2: Clothing worn for each of the four reenacted lute performance scenes.

Scene	**Lute performance situation**	**Clothing (and my rationale)**	Figure 4.6: [Images within this table] Myself shown in each of the outfits worn for each lute playing scene. February 2024. Photography by Joe Lockwood.
1	Solitary lute playing, for personal introspection and comfort	Playing for personal pleasure in complete privacy and in comfortable attire, and in the morning. Bodies are worn atop a linen shift, and over this a velvet and fur jacket added (casually, and un-tied) for maximum comfort and to provide some warmth.	

2	Performing lute music to a small gathering of friends	Jane Pickeringe lute book. Music is shared during a casual social gathering. Wearing: an expensive embroidered linen jacket underneath a velvet fur-trim robe (atop the shift and bodies; the hair is dressed with pearls and a decorative ruff and rebato is worn around the neck).	
3	Playing lute music in the evening, in casual company	Playing lute music in the evening, in casual company. Comfortable and warm silk and fur jacket is worn, tied in front, and the decorative ruff and rebato are added to frame the face.	
4	Performing the lute to impress a suitor	Self-fashioning to impress a visiting suitor! Highly structured/rigid and expensive blue silk gown is worn. This is the same gown that is detailed and discussed at length in chapter 1, part 2 (see pages 55-8 for full details).	

My bodies

For the filming of these reenacted lute performance scenes, I was exceedingly fortunate to be able to wear and experience a custom hand-made pair of seventeenth-century bodies designed to fit my exact dimensions. They were made by Carolyn Richardson of *1635 Household*, and closely modelled on a rare surviving example of an exceedingly fine bodies and stomacher dating from c. 1630-1650, now on display at the Gallery of Costume within Platt Hall at Manchester Art Gallery (see the original bodies in fig. 4.7, my custom-made bodies pictured in fig. 4.8, and an example of the original garment depicted in a portrait of Florence Poulett in fig. 4.9). As explored in Chapter 1: Part 2 of this thesis, the bodies are fundamental and crucial to the table-top method of playing the lute that I researched, and which I am using throughout these filmed scenes of domestic lute playing.

Figure 4.7: Bodies and stomacher of Dame Elizabeth Filmer (front and back), c. 1630-1650. Gallery of Costume, Platt Hall, Manchester Art Gallery, Manchester.

Figure 4.8: Myself pictured wearing a custom-made pair of seventeenth-century bodies, handcrafted by Carolyn Richardson. Modelled on the bodies and stomacher of Dame Elizabeth Filmer and designed to fit my exact dimensions. February 2024. Photography by Carolyn Richardson.

Figure 4.9: *Florence Poulett, daughter of John, 1st Lord Poulett, and her husband Thomas Smyth of Long Ashton, Somerset* (detail), anonymous (English School) c.1630. Oil on canvas, 2006 x 1625mm. This portrait shows the bodies worn exposed as a bodice paired with red silk skirts.

My audience: recreating an authentic social environment within my own home

I went about creating four different social settings (entirely literally) so that I could authentically experience and react to them in my performances. To do this, I recruited friends and family to come over to my flat on filming day. *The Burwell Lute Tutor* is very specific as to the size of the audience that may be observing the lute scholar perform, and the text makes mention of these aspects on two occasions. Firstly, in Chapter Eleven:

> let not the company exceed the number three or four, for the noise of a mouse is a hindrance to that music.[220]

The document adds to this in Chapter Fourteen that the reason for such a small audience size and the careful selection of an appropriate room is due to the fact that the 'gentle and soft playing is to be preferred', and therefore the lute is 'not being fit to play in a hall before a multitude of people'.[221] Taking the advice from this tutor, I opted to invite a total of three people to be present on filming day: performing Scenes 2 and 3 to all three audience members, and Scene 4 to just one member alone.

Additionally, *Burwell* contains a plethora of insightful comments on a number of aspects relating to the performance of the lute when in company. These relate to the pleasing visual aesthetic of lute playing, and on how to interact with your audience in a most compelling manner. Stressing that all of the movements associated with lute playing are 'handsome […] modest, free and gallant', setting the body in an 'advantageous posture',[222] the tutor recommends that one must keep a 'pleasing countenance'[223] at all times and that the eyes shall be 'used only in looking upon the company'.[224] The tutor offers advice for solitary lute practicing too, advising to 'have your eye always upon the book when you play'[225] and to ideally practice in the morning, when the hand is rested and 'more apt to be broken and receive good habits'.[226] I have consciously responded to and reenacted all of these points in my filmed sets.

The experience of playing alone vs in company: embodied research

The most striking revelation for me as a researcher and performer, that came from my experiences of playing the lute in these four social settings, was the very significant and noticeable effect they had on my playing. It is very apparent in the resulting videos that my entire demeanour changes based on my performance setting. The solitary lute playing is introspective, still, and understated, and this is heard in the music as well as observed in my posture, body movement, and facial expressions. The greatest contrast is observed in the final scene where I am performing directly and intimately to one other person alone, and aiming to affect and move them with my performance. My entire aura changes to suit this performance: as well as the musical shaping and expression being far more

[220] Dart, 'Miss Mary Burwell's Instruction Book for the Lute', 45.
[221] Ibid., 61. (Such a performance is said to be best suited to the violin, an instrument the tutor deems to be somewhat inferior to the lute). Interestingly, these reasons for playing to a small audience are entirely to do with practicalities relating to the nature of the lute as an instrument and not the constraints of social etiquette.
[222] Ibid., 48.
[223] Ibid., 42.
[224] Ibid., 48.
[225] Ibid., 42
[226] Ibid., 43.

extroverted, my face and body are far more animated and socially engaged. In part, I was responding naturally to each of the different social environments I was performing in, but I was also consciously enhancing or playing up to the energy of each setting as a performer. It is a part of my craft. I did not anticipate, however, how much this craft would inform musical performances presented to only a tiny gathering of people within my own home. This reveals how the domestic space can be transformed into a microcosm of highly performative and wide-ranging musical expression, and that in seventeenth century England, this musical microcosm could be encapsulated within a lady's small intimate chamber.

Work 2: *Margaret Board's lute book* (album): recordings and album art inspired by Jacob Heringman's *Jane Pickeringe's Lute Book* (2003)

The following commentary discusses the second piece of creative output I produced as part of this research project: a recorded album of solo lute music entitled *Margaret Board's Lute Book.* This creative practice component was developed in connection with my case study on Margaret Board and her pedagogical lute book, detailed within Chapter 2 of this thesis. The album comprises eighteen audio-recorded pieces of lute music sourced from Margaret's section of the lute book (which can be accessed via the hyperlinks below) as well as original album art (see fig. 4.10). A key source of inspiration for this work was the existing album: *Jane Pickeringe's Lute Book* (Avie Records, 2003) by professional lutenist (and my very own lute tutor) Jacob Heringman. Heringman's record comprises a charming selection of pieces for solo lute drawn exclusively from this female-owned manuscript. With my research centring on the Margaret Board lute book, I was enthusiastic about the idea of creating something of a 'partner album', with regards to both the musical concept and the art design. However, my concept for this album was eventually developed further: during the later stages of my research project, it was reimaged and combined with an electroacoustic sound-work (discussed in the next section of this chapter). These two components ultimately joined to form sides A and B of my final creative piece: *The Margaret Board Mixtape*, detailed and discussed in the final section of this commentary chapter.

Figure 4.10: Photograph of my newly created album CD, *Margaret Board's Lute Book* (self-produced, 2024), with album art.

Hyperlinks to the album tracks

1. https://youtu.be/neB3EImWnsU
2. https://youtu.be/khBcHwTissI
3. https://youtu.be/BXNKRZGJCvA
4. https://youtu.be/i-mTYHErjkg
5. https://youtu.be/eCW6pDN5Hao
6. https://youtu.be/RZatx4pEsCg
7. https://youtu.be/54a0XPgccm0
8. https://youtu.be/Z3FU-kqh5Dk
9. https://youtu.be/47WQmXTfiCA
10. https://youtu.be/I1jUsg2TLlw
11. https://youtu.be/riync3aU1TY
12. https://youtu.be/HXM0Bu3Lvao
13. https://youtu.be/C0kySRsTrE4
14. https://youtu.be/ZNlw3LYvR88
15. https://youtu.be/bbpK4B_zYzM
16. https://youtu.be/UPjWAIXE2Nw
17. https://youtu.be/gQT3sKeF8qc
18. https://youtu.be/BfV2CoJQHrg

The initial premise

In order to creatively demonstrate my research on Margaret Board and her lute book, I selected a repertory of pieces from the manuscript copied in Margaret's hand. The repertoire was recorded on my own eight-course Renaissance lute (after Sixtus Rauwolf) by English luthier Tony Johnson: a very similar instrument to the lute Margaret copied her music for (a nine-course renaissance lute tuned in vieil ton, as detailed in Chapter 2, page 92). To experience the music within Margaret's lute book in the most personal and intimate way possible I made the conscious decision to practice the pieces while reading directly from her handwritten tablature (read from printed copies of high-quality digital images of the original manuscript). Furthermore, at an earlier stage of the process (before making my final album recordings) I arranged to give a live recital version of my programme for the Scottish Lute and Early Guitar Society in October 2023,[227] where I even performed directly from a facsimile copy of the Board lute book. This pilot performance encouraged me to record the music in this same manner, and this decision shaped many of the creative and technical decisions I made for my recordings.

The practice of reading directly from Margaret's handwriting allowed me to pick up on the smallest of details and nuances when it came to her unique musical copying style, and by extension her musical personality. Initially, it took some getting used to; a great deal of patience and repetition was required before I was able to read the tablature with an ideal level of fluency. Much like the experience of reading someone's personal handwriting it can be a barrier at first, but perseverance is rewarded with a more intimate understanding of and connection with the personality embedded in the writing. This practical work also sparked the research that eventually formed into the case study on Margaret Board's graces, presented in Chapter 3 of this thesis. The plethora of performance markings, ornamentation signs, and right-hand fingerings in Margaret's copying make reading from the manuscript a highly informative and valuable pursuit, for example, the manuscript contains pedagogical markings by Margaret's teacher(s), among them John Dowland, therefore, reading directly from the manuscript can be, quite literally at times, an experience of a lesson from one of the masters of the lute's 'Golden Age'. Additionally, the experience of reading the original handwriting of an historical figure facilitates an emotional or sensory response that is impossible to quantify on a technical or analytical level, but is nevertheless felt. A personal connection or intimacy is experienced. As a lutenist I certainly experience this phenomenon when reading the hand-copied musical notation of historical lute playing women. Therefore, practicing from the manuscript directly

[227] An announcement and post-report of the meeting can be viewed on their website: see https://scottishluteandearlyguitarsociety.com/autumn-meeting-22nd-october-1-30pm/ and https://scottishluteandearlyguitarsociety.com/report-of-meeting-22-10-22/

greatly enriched my experience of the repertoire, and infused my resulting recordings with characterful quality – reflective of and in honour of Margaret Board.

Notes on my repertoire selection

The repertoire included in my album, *Margaret Board's Lute Book*, was very carefully and consciously selected. As analysed and discussed in chapter 2, the fine collection of late Elizabethan lute music contained within the Board lute book reflects a rich social-musical network: it includes pieces from many celebrity lutenist-composers of the period, as well as making reference to domestic and continental members of nobility and royalty (as discussed within Chapter 2, Part 2). Additionally, a wide range of musical genres from what could be considered 'high-brow' to 'low-brow' are represented; references from Italian epic poetry and courtly dances to bawdy ballad tunes are all included within a single lute collection. Margaret's lute book is not unique in this regard and this diversity is in fact very typical amongst all of the surviving pedagogical lute books, as well as household anthologies of lute music. Therefore, representing the genre diversity of the book was important to me, as it is illustrative of the culture of lute music collecting and performing for early modern women more broadly.

My selected programme and running order, with titles as they appear in the original manuscript, can be seen in Table 4.3 below. I chose to show the titles and ascriptions in their original form, to more faithfully represent Margaret's writing on the visual component of the album (the inner sleeve, containing the track list, see fig. 4.11).

Table 4.3: Information on the pieces chosen for the album Margaret Board's Lute Book, showing track numbers, folio numbers, and number of concordances in other early modern lute music sources.

Track no.	Piece title	MS folio no.	No. concordances
1	Preludium By Mr Dowland	29/2	0
2	Flatt Pavin Mr Johnson	2v/1	12
3	The Prince of Portinggall his gallyard	23/1	2
4	Orlando	1/3	10
5	Prelude	5/5	0
6	The Lady Phillys Mask	17/3	0
7	A lavolta Mris Lettis Rich	18v/3	0
8	Corrant	18v/4	0
9	The La: Banning her Almond Mad by Mr Sturte	10/2	1
10	A Treble and Ground	1/1	1 (treble only)
11	(exercise)	3v/2	1
12	Goe from my wyndowe By Mr Ri: Allysonn	10/3	15
13	Rogero	2/1	8
14	Bony Sweete Robyn	12v/2	20

15	Sellengers Rownde	12/2	18
16	A Phantazie	29v	5
17	Mr Dowlands Midnight	26v/2	1
18	Lothe to Departe	7v/2	4

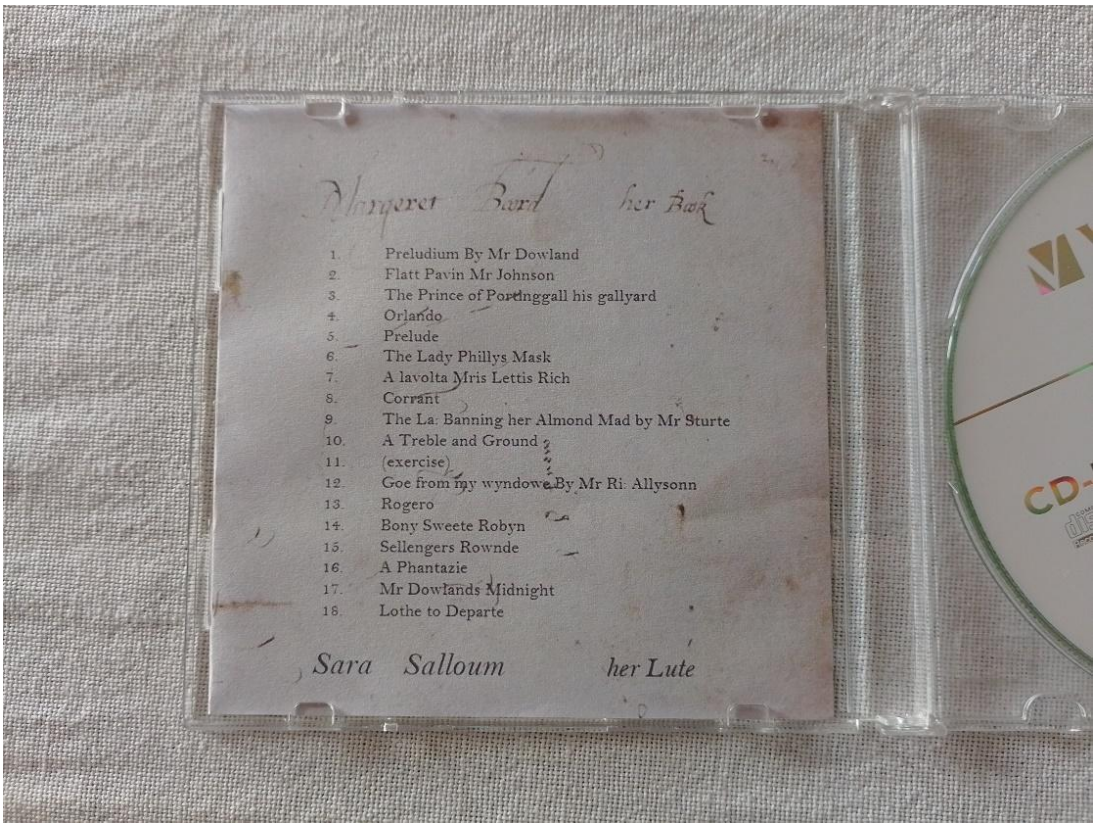


Figure 4.11: The inside of my CD album insert for *Margaret Board's Lute Book* (self-produced, 2024).

Designing the album art

For the creation of my album art, I took further inspiration from Jacob Heringman's album *Jane Pickeringe's Lute Book* (Avie Records, 2003) (see fig. 4.12). I delighted in listening to this album when I was a new student of the lute, as it was what first alerted me to the fact there was a significant female lute culture in operation in early modern England, filled with intricate and sublime music.[228] It is uncommon for professionally released lute records to centre on just one early modern English manuscript source, and a female-owned one is rarer still: far more typical would be a compilation of music from many sources based around a key theme or famous professional composer,[229] and this

[228] A second example of recordings from a woman's lute book is Elizabeth Kenny's *Flying Horse: music from the ML Lutebook* (2009).
[229] For example, see Paul O'Dette's *Daniel Bacheler: The Bacheler's Delight* (2007), *My Favourite Dowland* (2014), Nigel North's *John Dowland: Complete Lute Music* (2009), Bor Zuljan's *Dowland: A Fancy* (2020).

has inadvertently resulted in female lutenists being obscured from view (similar to the effect of modern editions of lute music, discussed in the introduction to this thesis, see page 14-5). Heringman's work lent a sense of purpose and encouragement to my pursuit of female-oriented research, and inspired my offering of a new recording drawing attention to female lute performance practices in the early modern period.

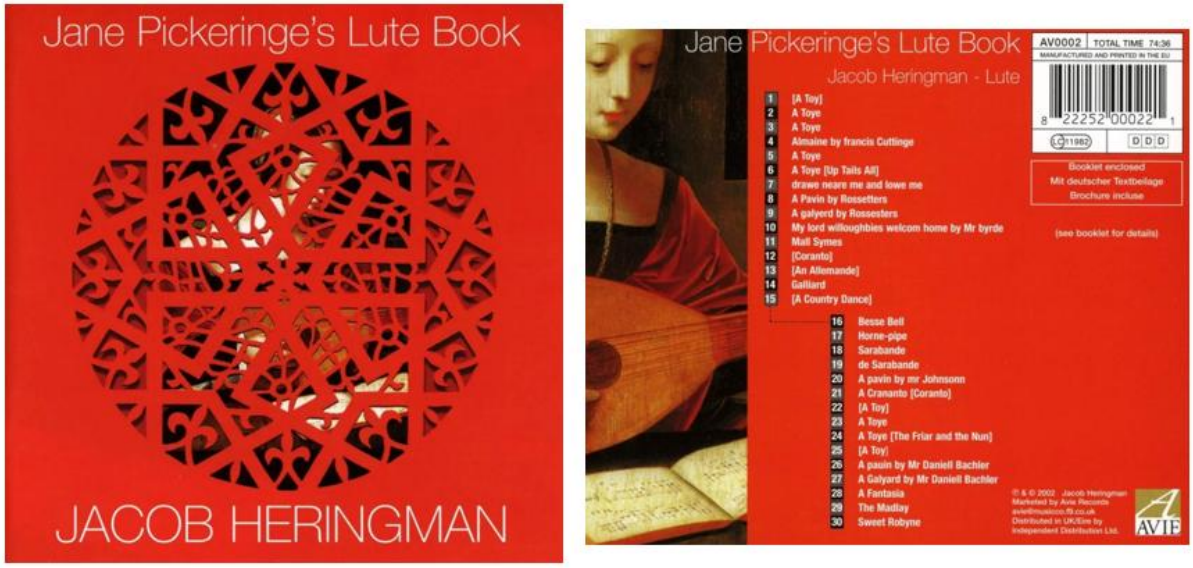


Figure 4.12: Images of the album art of Jacob Heringman's *Jane Pickeringe's Lute Book* (Avie Records, 2003).

The visual art of Heringman's album cover is beautifully reflective of the domestic and often private nature of women's lute practices in the period. I also enjoyed the title Heringman chose for his album, as it draws the attention entirely to the female lutenist, Jane, and her lute book: the source of his repertoire. I chose to adopt both of these ideas in my own album art design (see fig. 4.13). I used a cropped image of the centre of Margaret Board's leatherbound lute book cover: presenting the gold-tooling and her stamped initials as the centre focus, as this brings the viewers' attention to the physical manuscript itself, and its identity as an object of value and a symbol of female accomplishment. I also chose to include an image of the front endpaper of the manuscript, containing one of Margaret Board's signatures, for the reverse side of the album insert which lists the musical content. My realised vision of the existence of two 'partner' female-oriented lute albums can be seen in figure 4.14.

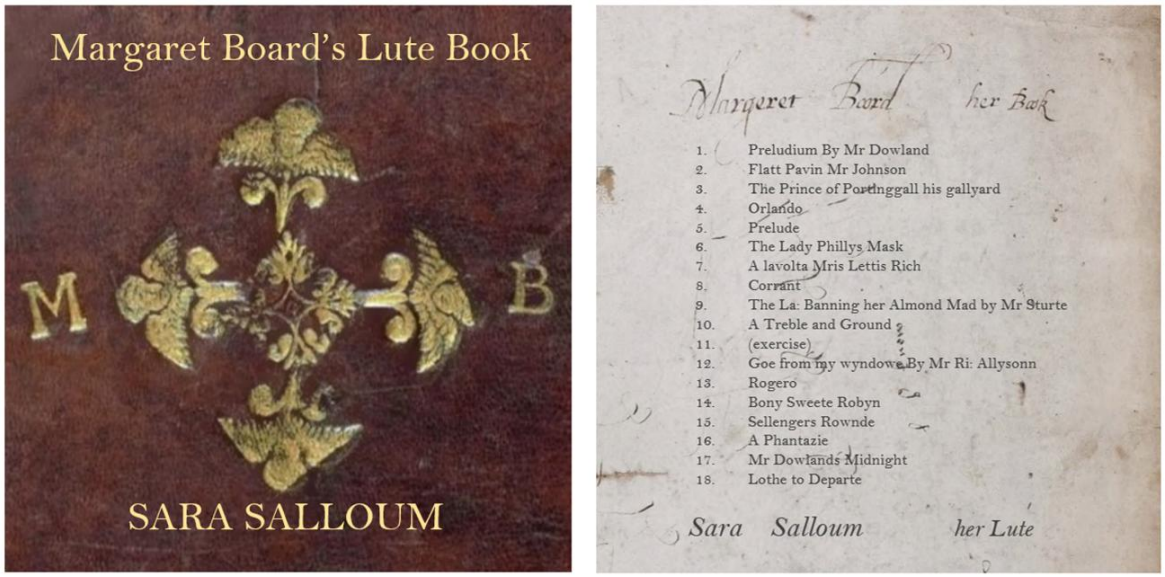


Figure 4.13: Digital images of my album art design for *Margaret Board's Lute Book* (self-produced, 2024).

Figure 4.14: My envisaged 'partner' lute albums paired side-by-side. Jacob Heringman's *Jane Pickeringe's Lute Book* [left] and my own *Margaret Board's Lute Book* [right].

Final reflections

Though I was always closely observing the tablature from the Board lute book, I was also adopting the role of 'live' musical interpreter and editor when performing directly from the source material. I discovered, through the practicing and preparation that took place in the lead up to my final

recordings, that in order to turn the music encoded on the page into a musically effective living and breathing performance version, some adjustments and changes to the tablature were required. This meant correcting some small but obvious copying errors, adding repeats at times and using different (greater or fewer) of the notated graces on these repeats. It became noticeable to me how the lute book functions as a place to store very detailed lute music, but that it would not necessarily always dictate the exact way that a musician would perform each piece – at least not on every performance occasion (this is especially true for the genre of preludes, which are intended to sound improvised, therefore demanding some musical freedoms and liberties to be taken at times). The resulting recordings on my album, *Margaret Board's Lute Book*, therefore, represent a creative collaboration between Margaret Board and myself. My personal creativity is unavoidably interwoven throughout the repertoire as the musical and technical aspects presented by the tablature involved my personal interpretation. The requirement of my creative involvement led to a positive realisation that this practice of musical co-authorship/ownership is authentic to early modern musical thought and practices: the act of copying a piece of music or writing, or the act of memorising (especially in a female context), was viewed as an act of embedding it onto one's own heart: and by extension taking a form of ownership over it (or creating a co-ownership).[230] This is further demonstrated in the context of lute music copying by the fact no two hand copied versions of one lute piece are ever exactly the same as each other. It is highly probable that personal adjustments and ownership-taking would have also taken place in live performance contexts. My recordings are a demonstration of this practice. When creating the square-form album (and later the cassette mixtape version) I visually demonstrated this co-authorship by including one of Margaret's original signatures – 'Margaret Board her Booke' – on the album insert, and coupling this with my own digital signature – 'Sara Salloum her Lute' – each name positioned at either end of the track list (as can be seen in fig. 4.13).

Work 3: *The lute lesson for a young English gentry lady*: an electroacoustic sound-work

The following commentary discusses the third creative output I produced as part of this research project: an electroacoustic sound-work entitled: *The lute lesson for a young English gentry lady*. This work was developed in connection with the third chapter of this thesis, which reconstructs aspects of Margaret Board's lute lessons and related musical and technical accomplishment. After my album of pieces exclusively from the Board lute book was completed, I reflected that there was a key

[230] See literature about women's reading practices: Jane Donawerth, "Women's Reading Practices in Seventeenth-Century England: Margaret Fell's "Women's Speaking Justified"," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* Vol. 37 (2006); Lewalski and Kenan, *Writing Women in Jacobean England*; Megan Matchinske, *Writing, Gender and State in Early Modern England: Identity Formation and the Female Subject* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

component to the Board lute book that I had not yet captured or expressed in a creative form. I had represented the lute book as a source of music but had not demonstrated it as material evidence of a pedagogical process. I had a feeling that there were, figuratively speaking, two 'sides' to the lute book. This thought is what eventually led to the idea to create this additional work in relation to the Board book: to better reflect, and therefore do greater justice to the manuscript and its creator.

This electroacoustic work can be accessed via the following hyperlink: https://youtu.be/kBrI21PSC0w

Figure 4.15: Thumbnail from the uploaded video-version of my sound-work, *The lute lesson for a young English gentry lady* (self-produced, 2024).

The sound-work was created using a collage of audio fragments, all relating to the learning of the Renaissance lute. These include readings of informative and entertaining quotations from surviving early modern English lute tutor books (discussed and referenced many times throughout this thesis), pedagogical duets and lessons sourced from printed tutor books and pedagogical lute books, audio clips from my own lute lessons with Jacob Heringman, audio clips of my own private practicing, and clips of some extraneous lute sounds (tuning, adjusting strings, plucking open strings, shuffling music pages, etc.). The resulting work offers an insight into the early modern English lute lesson that is both creative and highly informative about many pedagogical practices. The readings express historical advice pertaining to the holding the lute, the naming and plucking of the strings, theoretical terms such as the gamut and its application to the lute, and the practicing of time keeping. This primary source information is woven with examples of my own performance practice which demonstrate the lessons given, as well as expressing further aspects of pedagogy that can only be learnt by 'doing'.

During the composition process I observed many parallels between the source material and my own lute lessons, and I found the overall concept to be a successful way to demonstrate the clear connection between the advice given by lute tutors and the performance practice they describe. For instance, as can be heard in the audio fragments from my own lute lessons, I often take the lead and am assertive in asking for what I would like my tutor Jacob's attention and 'ear' on. This is simply a reality for me at this stage of my development and level of ability as a lutenist, but it is also curiously reflective of the dynamic between students and their tutors in the early modern period, where the power dynamic favoured that of the student (as discussed on pages 120-1). Furthermore, presenting key quotations alongside a musical (or otherwise auditory) demonstration of the quotation 'in action', heard immediately on the instrument, lends itself to a better communication and understanding of the primary sources. My approach to the sound work was to communicate some aspects of playing the lute that are hard to articulate in language, and offering some insight into the way my experience as a performer and learner has informed my musicological research.

Audio incorporated into the sound-work

00.00 – Reading from Robert Dowland's *Varietie of Lute Lessons* (1610).[231]
00.47 – Reading from The *Burwell Lute Tutor* (c.1670).[232]
01.06 – Reading from *Burwell*.[233]
01.33 – Audio extract of 'Plaine song for two Lutes', from *The Schoole of Musicke* (1603),[234] performed by myself.
02.07 – Reading from Thomas Mace's *Musick's Monument* (1676).[235]
02.25 – Reading from *The Schoole of Musicke.*[236]
02.47 – Reading from *The Schoole of Musicke.*[237]
03.51 – Reading from *Burwell*.[238]
04.28 – *The Schoole of Musicke*.[239]
04.38 – Audio extract from my lute lesson with Jacob Heringman, including 'Tw lesons to be plaid with tw lowtes' from the *Folger lute book*.[240]
05.01 – Reading from *Varietie of Lute Lessons.*[241]
07.07 – Reading from *Varietie of Lute Lessons*.[242]

[231] Thomas Robinson, *The Schoole of Musicke* (London, 1603), sig. Bv. ('He/him' adapted to 'she/her' and 'man' to 'woman').
[232] Dart, "Miss Mary Burwell's Instruction Book for the Lute," 16.
[233] Ibid., 17
[234] Robinson, *The Schoole of Musicke*, sig. Ev-Er.
[235] Thomas Mace, ed., *Musick's Monument; or, A remembrancer of the best practical musick, both divine, and civil, that has ever been known, to have been in the world divided into three parts*, Early English Books Online Text Creation Partnership (London: T. Ratcliffe, and N. Thompson, 1676), 45.
[236] Robinson, *The Schoole of Musicke*, sig. Br.
[237] Ibid., sig. B2v.
[238] Dart, "Miss Mary Burwell's Instruction Book for the Lute," 16.
[239] Robinson, *The Schoole of Musicke*, sig. Br.
[240] Bayldon, US-Washington Folger-Shakespeare Library, Ms.V.b.280 (olim 1610.1) f. 2v.
[241] Dowland, *Varietie of Lute Lessons*, sig. C2r.
[242] Ibid., sig. Br.

07.33 – Audio extract of my private practising of 'A galyerd by Rossesters' from the *Jane Pickering lute book*.[243]
09.20 – Reading from *The Schoole of Musicke*.[244]
09.38 – Audio extract from my lute lesson with Heringman, including 'Anne Markham's pavan' from the *M.L. lute book*.[245]
12.58 – Reading from *Musick's Monument*.[246]
16.27 – Reading from *Musick's Monument.*[247]
16.53 - Audio extract of my private practising of 'A galyerd by Rossesters' from the *Jane Pickering lute book*.[248]
23.32 – Reading from *Musick's Monument.*[249]
25.55 – Reading from *The Schoole of Musicke* sig.[250]

Work 4: *The Margaret Board Mixtape*

To creatively encapsulate and thoroughly demonstrate the research conducted on the Margaret Board lute book, the two aforementioned creative works, developed in connection with this lute music manuscript, were brought together to form an ultimate physical musical work entitled: *The Margaret Board Mixtape* (fig. 4.16).

[243] Jane Pickeringe, GB-London, British Library, Eg.2046: f. 26.2.
[244] Robinson, *The Schoole of Musicke*, sig. Br.
[245] M.L., GB-London, British Library, Add.38539: f. 28v-29.
[246] Mace, *Musick's Monument*, 80.
[247] Ibid., 76.
[248] Pickeringe, GB-London, British Library, Eg.2046: f. 26.2.
[249] Mace, *Musick's Monument*, 75.
[250] Robinson, *The Schoole of Musicke*, sig. H2v.

Figure 4.16: Photograph of my newly created album cassette, *The Margaret Board Mixtape* (self-produced, 2024), with an original cassette box insert designed to resemble the Board lute book (GB-London, Royal Academy of Music, MS603).

Why make a cassette tape in 2024?

As the creation of my electroacoustic sound-work of the lute lesson came towards its completion, the idea to transfer both this work and my recorded album onto a new physical medium began to manifest. I had a vision that the two audio-recorded elements could be copied onto each of the two sides of a blank cassette tape: the complete track list from my album would form Side A, and my electroacoustic expression of the lute lesson Side B. In doing this, I would be able to reflect the two 'sides' of the Margaret Board lute book, i.e., identifying it simultaneously as a personalised collection of lute music *and* as a record of lute pedagogy for a young gentry Englishwoman.

Installing the recorded materials onto a cassette would also allow me to re-invent the visual 'look' of the resulting artwork. The idea of copying the music onto tape became so suddenly appealing to me as, of all the standard physical mediums for recorded music, this was the one that most resembled a book with its rectangular box-like casing, as opposed to the flat and square form of a CD box or vinyl sleeve. I was interested in designing a cassette box insert that would resemble the Board lute book in miniature form. I realised that this would also be wonderfully interactive from an audience's perspective: the cassette box could be opened up like a book (see fig. 4.17) to reveal the recorded music inside – which has even been 'copied' over in an analogue fashion. It would also be very easily understood, by anyone handling the cassette box, exactly what Margaret's original lute book looks like. I felt this aspect was important to communicate as the manuscript (usually only referenced by its code-like shelf mark) is so handsomely leatherbound and gold-tooled with Margaret's initials decoratively stamped upon it. A showcase of the physicality of the lute book further connects with elements of my research on the material properties of the lute source (discussed in Chapter 2).

Figure 4.17: Photographs of *The Margaret Board Mixtape* (2024), showing how the cassette box can be opened like a miniature 'book' to reveal the music stored inside.

Despite the successive popularity of first CD and then online streaming, cassette tapes are still being produced and purchased today, and are even making a 'come-back', much like vinyl has done over

the last decade. For instance Sad Club Records, a British independent label founded in 2016 by Tallulah Webb, releases all its albums on cassette tape. 'I think cassettes are the way forward for DIY artists', Webb remarked to BBC News in 2020.[251] Typically of such recent cassette releases, the label's outputs feature visually compelling and creative designs for cassettes, boxes and sleeves. These can involve coloured cassettes, printed elements on cassettes, decorative and informative inserts, great variation in material and designs for the box, etc. (see fig. 4.18). The increasing vitality of cassette releases, with prominence given to aspects of visual design, inspired me to be similarly creative and inventive with my own cassette design for *The Margaret Board Mixtape*.

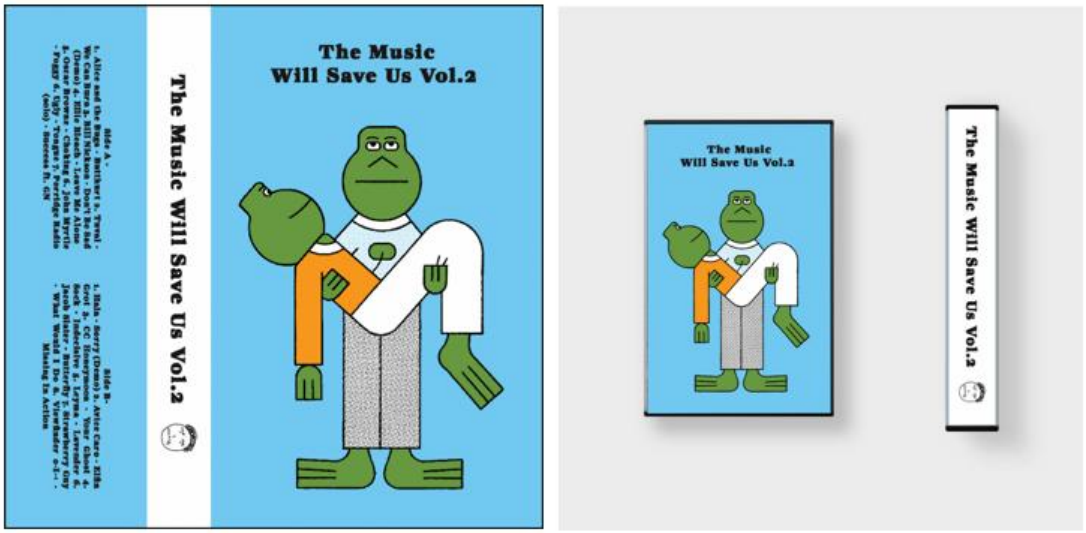


Figure 4.18: Images of the album art of *The Music Will Save Us Vol.2* by Various Artists (Sad Club Records, 2018). https://sadclubrecords.bandcamp.com/album/the-music-will-save-us-vol-2.

The (surprising) connection between early modern English lute books and cassette mixtapes of the 70s and 80s

Representing the Board lute book via the medium of a cassette tape is significant for another key reason: it reflects, in a relatable modern context, how an amateur female-owned and produced lute book is, in essence, a personal collection of mixed music compiled on the basis of what was popular, personally preferable, and self-fashioning at the time – just like the DIY mixtapes created by music aficionados in the 1970s and 80s. Both early lute books and mixtapes are examples of edited collections of an individual's cherry-picked music, gathered via interactions with peers, fellow music

[251] As quoted in the BBC Newsbeat article by Imran Rahman-Jones, "Cassette sales double in a year with Lady Gaga best-selling album on tape," *BBC News* (2020), https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/newsbeat-55476419.

lovers, and by extension the musical celebrities of the day, copied onto a physical object. Both objects are relatable to the activities and pastimes of young people.

After delving into some of the current literature on mixtape culture, I discovered just how many parallels can be drawn between cassette mixtapes and early modern lute books. Two main areas of direct comparison can be clearly drawn: firstly, practical aspects relating to the gathering of musical materials onto physical objects in an amateur context, and secondly, a relationship with self-fashioning through the display of musical knowledge which is encoded in an object that carries cultural capital. Defined as assemblies of personal collections of songs and/or music, mixtapes are created by copying from records belonging to peers and friends, with collections being governed by the preference of the individual listener; as Serge Lacasse and Andy Bennet term, a 'pick-and-mix approach'.[252] They also argue the 'cassette tape recorder … opened the door into a new world of musical ownership'.[253] However, this study of amateur lute books suggests the mixtape cannot be considered an entirely new world of ownership arising in the twentieth century: rather, a new technology that was facilitating that musical ownership. Furthermore, both objects relate to musical life in 'mundane' every-day and non-professional contexts: for personal, domestic and private use, and use within intimate social settings. As Lacasse and Bennett point out, both objects serve many functions for compilers: 'reactivating personal memories', being a 'medium for interpersonal communication', or even a 'flirtation instrument'.[254] Just as music from a lute book could be performed to a potential suitor, mixtapes were often gifted to potential lovers.

Both mixtapes and lute books have been used for the purpose of self-fashioning. As Kamal Fox argues, 'while narrators want their mixed tapes to be expressive, revealing, etc., they also employ them as a sort of mask, self-constructive guise or 'persona''.[255] Furthermore, just as musical accomplishment was encoded into female-owned lute books such as the Board lute book, the creative compilation of songs and instrumental pieces in the context of mixtapes, were arguably 'treated as art', according to Lacasse and Bennett. The social connections evidenced by mixtapes, allowing individuals to present themselves to be within musical 'inner circles', also have their parallel in the cosmopolitan musical network encoded in lute books such as Margaret Board's.[256] The art of producing mixtapes and the early modern amateur lute book and the lute lessons they represent are

[252] Serge Lacasse and Andy Bennett, "Mix tapes, memory, and nostalgia: an introduction to phonographic anthologies " in *The Pop Palimpsest: Intertextuality in Recorded Popular Music*, ed. Lori Burns and Serge Lacasse (Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 2018), 313.
[253] Ibid.
[254] Ibid., 315.
[255] Kamal Fox, "Mixed Feelings: Notes on the Romance of the Mixed Tape," *Rhizomes* 5 (2002), http://www.rhizomes.net/issue5/fox.html.
[256] Ibid., 314.

both forms of accruing and displaying cultural capital: 'The art of producing mix tapes [involves] individual's ability to demonstrate his/her skill as an auteur. The acquisition of such knowledge demands time, money, and effort […] through which cultural capital is displayed.'[257]

Song texts and arrangements were actively chosen by compilers to express feelings and messages to recipients: 'members of mix tape communities do not regard themselves simply as people who make compilations.'[258] In my thesis I take issue with how the lute community has been regarding women like Margaret Board as being simply people who passively compiled the music handed to them by other (male) musical agents. But this is so far from who they were and what they were doing. My research into mixtapes, and the parallels made with mixtape creators, helps to show this.

Designing the cassette insert

As previously mentioned, my intention for the design of the cassette insert was to make the overall cassette case look like a miniature version of the Board lute book. However, there were more parts to consider in relation to the inside of the insert. Cassette inserts come in a range of styles, and can contain very little, or lots of, text-based content inside. To take advantage of the possibility of including some illustrative text and images inside the insert, I opted for a U-card 5-panel style of insert. This would allow space for me to include a blurb about the Margaret Board and the lute book on an internal folding page within the insert, as well as provide space to include some significant pages and images relating to and visually expressing qualities of the manuscript.

Some archival research which did not make it into my final edit of Chapter 2, Part 1, was details about the Board family coat of arms and crest, noted in records of heraldic visitations of West Sussex. This is the Armoury that was recorded as being carried by the Board family in Margaret's lifetime. I decided the cassette insert was an ideal place to include some of this research, and I visually reconstructed the Armoury to include inside the insert.

[257] Lacasse and Bennett, "Mix tapes, memory, and nostalgia: an introduction to phonographic anthologies " 318.
[258] Ibid. See also Simon Frith, "Towards an Aesthetic of Popular Music," in *Music and Society: The Politics of Composition, Performance, and Reception*, ed. Richard Leppert and Susan McLary (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

The Board family Coat of Arms and Crest, as recorded in 1634

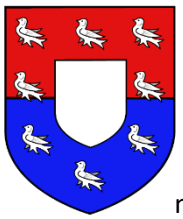


Figure 4.19: Visual reconstruction of the Board family Coat of Arms, as recorded in 1634.

'Per fess gules and azure, an escutcheon between an orle of eight martlets argent': [259] Per fess gules and azure means the shield is divided horizontally and coloured with the tinctures of red and blue. An escutcheon is a shield, in this case, placed in the centre of the coat of arms, surrounded by a border of eight martlets. A martlet in English heraldry is a mythical bird without feet which never roosts and is continuously on the wing. Argent is the metallic tincture of silver, interchangeable with white.[260]

Figure 4.20: Visual reconstruction of the Board family crest, as recorded in 1634.

'A goat passant ermine, horns or': [261] In heraldry, a goat passant means the creature is walking towards dexter (the viewer's left) with its right forelimb raised. Ermine is a 'fur', a type of tincture, consisting of a white background with a pattern of black shapes representing the winter coat of the stoat. 'Or' is the tincture of gold. When the horns are of a different colour it is said to be armed.[262]

Also included in the insert is a detail from the endpaper of the Board lute book: a point where Margaret was practicing her handwriting and writes the word 'She', in relative isolation in the centre of the page (as discussed on pages 116-7). I included this on the underside of the cassette insert in honour of Margaret and as a nod to the feminist nature of this project. See additional images of the cassette insert in figures 4.12-4.24.

[259] Arthur W. Hughes-Clarke, ed., *The Visitation of Sussex, Anno Domini 1662: Made by Sir Edward Bysshe, Knt*., vol. 89, Publications of the Harleian Society (1937), 92. Visual reconstruction my own, with special thanks to my brother, Malik Salloum, for creating the digital illustrations seen above.
[260] Arthur C. Fox-Davies, *A Complete Guide to Heraldry* (London: T.C. & E.C. Jack, 1909), 68-72, 97, 245.
[261] Hughes-Clarke, *The Visitation of Sussex, Anno Domini 1662: Made by Sir Edward Bysshe, Knt.*, 92.
[262] Fox-Davies, *A Complete Guide to Heraldry* 69-70, 213.

Figure 4.21: Digital copy of the front U-card 4-panel insert I designed for my cassette album, *The Margaret Board Mixtape* (2024).

Margaret Board's lute book, technically known as the Royal Academy of Music manuscript 603, is one of just fourteen surviving manuscripts copied by English lute students. Margaret was the eldest child, born in 1600, to Ninian and Margaret Board of Paxhill in West Sussex, and during her maidenhood years she learnt to play the lute to an extraordinary level of technical proficiency and musical accomplishment, as her surviving lute book evidences. The book would most likely not have been Margaret's only lute book, but part of a wider collection of lute lesson materials. This is the lute book which survived, probably because it was the most neatly and elegantly put together, perhaps a presentation copy of the more accomplished pieces she learnt during the course of her lessons. This book was indeed used within her lessons, however, as performance directions and corrections have been added to the enclosed tablature by one or more tutors. It appears Margaret frequented the city of London to attend lessons with the renowned lutenist John Dowland, as Dowland's handwriting appears within her manuscript, as well as copies of many of his compositions. The book also features the music of Richard Allison, Robert Johnson, John Sturt, Robert Dowland, Philip Rosseter, and Daniel Bachelor, among others. Margaret's desire to have such encounters with such musical celebrities indicates she (and her family) were musically discerning, wealthy, and had their finger on the pulse with regards to musical happenings, particularly in London.

Crucially, the family would have been seeking to secure Margaret a profitable marriage through their efforts to ensure her a high-quality musical education. Using musical ability to attract suitors was exceedingly commonplace, in fact, the philosopher Robert Burton remarked in An Anatomy of Melancholy (1621) that learning to sing, dance and play upon the lute was part of a Gentlewoman's education even 'before she can say her Pater Noster, or ten Commandments', as it was 'the next way their parents think to get them husbands'.

Upon her marriage to Henry Borne in 1625, and with the birth of their first child the following year, Margaret ceases her lute "play" and her beautiful, personalised gold-tooled and leatherbound lute book made its way to new hands. Quite remarkably, all the 107 pieces of music copied in Margaret Board's hand were copied within only a four to five-year period, indicating that Margaret must have been an incredibly dedicated student. There is evidence for this even within the content of the book; her book contains a plethora of specific and unique ornamentation symbols, which offer tremendous insight into women's lute performance practices. The book is not only a reminder of the importance of music-making amongst gentry families of the English Renaissance, but a testament to the extraordinary capabilities of young female lutenists, whose lives have gone largely unsung.

Sara Salloum, 2023

Figure 4.22: Digital copy of the back U-card 4-panel insert I designed for my cassette album, *The Margaret Board Mixtape* (2024).

Figure 4.23: Photograph showing my album cassette insert of *The Margaret Board Mixtape* (2024) being handled and read. Visible elements: the album track list, Margaret Board's signatures, Edward Dyer poetry fragment, and the Armoury of the Board family.

Figure 4.24: Photograph showing my album cassette insert of *The Margaret Board Mixtape* (2024) being handled and read. Visible elements: my sleeve notes on Margaret Board and her lute book.

Conclusion

> Of all the arts that I know there is none that engages more the inclination of men than the lute, for ravishing the soul by the ear and the eyes by the swiftness and neatness of all the fingers [...] In effect it seems that the lute was only invented for the soul, because the soul is soon weary and glutted of all other things except the lute. And if we consider all the works and handicrafts of the world, we will find that there is none where all the fingers of both hands are absolutely necessary but the lute. For it seems that God Almighty hath given us ten fingers to make us fit to animate this divine instrument, and that it hath been invented to make us admire the works of God in the composition of the human body, that is furnished with those ten little members, so quick, so neat, so strong, so sensible, so well articulated that they are capable to make a consort of music and to express such variety of sweet sounds out of a little dry wood and some sheep's-guts.[263]

This passage opens Chapter Fourteen of the *Burwell Lute Tutor*, titled 'Of the Enthusiasms and Ravishments of the Lute'. This surviving manuscript treatise was copied out by a young female student, Miss Mary Burwell, evidently from a manuscript leant to her by her lute master (whose identity is unknown). However, it is a woman who copied this version of the treatise, and therefore a woman speaking from the subject position. This passage excellently summarises the multiplicity of ideas and ideologies surrounding lute pedagogy and performance practice in seventeenth-century England. This includes the philosophical concept of *musica universalis*; the harmony of the spheres ('this divine instrument… to make us admire the works of God'), thus allowing the copyist to demonstrate her academic knowledge. The passage combines this with practical instrumental aspects, referring to 'well articulated' fingers, while also acknowledging the ideal 'composition of the human body' that the skilful holding of the lute facilitates: expressing that when the body and fingers are engaged in this way, they create art. Also referenced within the passage is a key social aspect that was closely bound with female lute playing in early modern England: a young woman's accomplishment upon the lute was unavoidably enticing to 'men', and it delighted both 'the ear and the eyes'. The (somewhat surprising) belittling of the physical body of the instrument at the end of this passage reveals how much the performance of the lute was really about the fashioning of the body of the lute *player*. The instrument – a mere bit of 'dry wood and sheep's-guts' – was simply the tool that allowed the hands; the body; the person; the woman; to fashion herself in accordance with social ideals, and elevate herself in accordance with the grace of God – and this is what was so enticing about women's lute performance practices in the eyes of their observers and admirers.

The passage from *Burwell* thus aptly and thoroughly illustrates the purpose of a lute education for English gentry folk, and particularly for gentry women, in the early modern period. Lute playing was a tool that enabled privileged women to fashion and display themselves to great social advantage. It gave them a method to demonstrate their academic knowledge and accomplishments, their skilful

[263] Thurston Dart, "Miss Mary Burwell's Instruction Book for the Lute," *The Galpin Society Journal* 11 (1958), 49.

manual dexterity, as well as the physical beauty of their hands, bodies, and postures. Overall, women were able to perform their graceful virtues through their performance of the lute: a skilful craft ultimately designed to attract an ideal suitor, and in so doing, these young and accomplished female lute players could gain personal and financial security in the next chapter of their lives. This is directly exemplified by the Margaret Board lute book, as Margaret's signing-off at the end of her copying (with her new married name 'Bourne') indicates she had made good use of this tool, and had no more need of this 'play' as she entered into married adult life.

The research contained within this thesis has demonstrated how and why lute playing was so advantageously and enthusiastically harnessed by many young English women in the early seventeenth century. Chapter 1 has explored the skilfulness and beauty of early modern English women's lute playing technique in connection with the physicality of their clothing and their domestic performance settings, and this research has shown how the virtuosic art of presenting visually appealing, elegant, and nonchalant lute playing was both socially expected and physically achieved by women. Chapter 2 has investigated Margaret Board and her surviving pedagogical lute manuscript. This case study has shed new light on Margaret's life, family, and musical-social network, as well as the mindset and approach she had toward the lute education which she engaged in so diligently during her childhood/maidenhood. This research has also revealed the extent to which Margaret's self-possession and social proactivity is encoded into her lute book, through its musical and textual content. Chapter 3 has inspected evidence of female lute accomplishment in specific relation to the theoretical and academic musical knowledge Margaret possessed, and the application and demonstration of that knowledge through her notation of highly graced (ornamented) pieces of lute music. This analysis has shown how Margaret's academic musical learning, and technical-practical lute learning, are also encoded into her lute book. Finally, the creative output produced as part of this research project, in connection with the historical-musicological research presented, has demonstrated many new ways in which female historical actors such as Margaret Board can be brought to life for new and diverse audiences today.

The research contained within this thesis has set up a much clearer picture of how early modern women operated within and contributed to the wider culture of lute playing in England's 'Golden Age' of lute music. It has shown that at least some women were capable of directing their lute education, and achieved a capacity for self-expression and intentional self-fashioning through such an education. It has also demonstrated that lute pedagogy for young women incorporated a range of skills that included the academic study of the theoretical principles of music, as well as a high level of practical and technical instrumental proficiency.

The developed understanding of musical English women offered by this research project facilitates further research into domestic musical practices in the early modern period. For instance, I would be delighted to see further research into early modern clothing and its impact on posture and technique in musical performances: a similar practice-based study to the one offered by this research project could be conducted on men's clothing and its effect on lute technique. The same methodology could also be applied to the study of other similar early modern instruments such as the viol, or to the study of related musical performance practices such as singing, and the performance of instruments requiring the use of the breath such as the recorder or flute. The research presented by this thesis also sets up the potential for the further study other female owner-producers of pedagogical lute books: similar focused case studies on women such as Jane Pickeringe and Margaret L., or the owners of the female-owned Scottish lute books would offer valuable additional information to the field of research on early modern musical women. Additionally, this thesis sets up a model that could be applied to the study of women's pedagogical music books from other historical periods, when other forms of domestic music making were highly popular pursuits in England (for similar reasons and contexts to early modern lute books: through their efforts to acquire desirable accomplishments). This could involve the study of young women who learnt to play popular domestic instruments such as the eighteenth-century pianoforte, or the late eighteenth-to-early nineteenth-century 'Romantic' guitar.

Appendices

Appendix 1: English lute sources categorised by professional and non-professional types.

Professional/ non-professional lute music (printed and manuscript sources)	**Sub-groups**	**No. of surviving examples**
Professional printed sources		15
Professional MS sources	Scribal publications	1
	Professional books	10
	Teaching fragments	5
Non-professional (all MS)	Pedagogical books	14
	Household or personal anthologies	12
Unspecified/ unknown	Fragments	6
	Foreign sources with activity by an English scribe	2

Appendix 2: Scribes active within the Board lute book

	Scribe	**Pieces written out**	**Type of lute & tuning**
Scribe 1	Margaret Board	1-35, 37-104 and 188	Nine-course lute in vieil ton (Renaissance 'G tuning' G-c-f-a-d'-g') with additional F, D and C basses
Scribe 2	John Dowland	36, 187 and the theoretical tables on folio [i]v	Piece 36 & theoretical tables: Six-course lute in vieil ton Piece 187: Seven-course lute in vieil ton with additional F bass
Scribe 3	Unknown scribe	105-6 Possibly, this scribe also wrote out pieces 111-86	Ten-course lute with basses tuned F, E, D and C Eleven-course lute in various tunings
Scribe 4	Unknown scribe	107-10	Ten-course lute with basses tuned F, E, D and C
?Scribe 5	Unknown scribe	111-86	Eleven-course lute in various tunings

Appendix 3: Information about each person mentioned within the Board lute book, and if an encounter was possible for Margaret Board.

Name (in order of appearance)	**General information (focusing on dates, locations, and the patron(s) of the musicians if known)**	**An encounter possible for Margaret Board?**
Mark Antony	Likely to refer to Mark Anthony Galliardello (died 15 June 1585), viol or violin player to English royalty 1547-85.[264] Mark Anthony 'Gagiardell' entered the royal service on 1st May 1545 and was in 1549 living in East Smithfield. By the beginning of Elizabeth's reign, he had moved to the liberty of Holy Trinity Minories, next to the city parish of St Botolph Aldgate.[265]	No. Mark Antony died many years before Margaret was born. The galliard in Margaret's lute book would have been an old-fashioned piece of music.
John Johnson	John Johnson (c. 1545 – 1594). English lutenist, composer of songs and lute music, attached to the court of Queen Elizabeth I. He was the father of the lutenist and composer Robert Johnson. He was appointed 'one of the musicians for the three lutes at 20 li[vres] a year' to Queen Elizabeth in 1580, but he probably was in the royal service from September 1579 onward. Nothing is known of his earlier professional life, but there are some indications that he might have been connected with the Earl of Leicester.[266]	No. Again, older music for Margaret.
Ambrose	Possibly Ambrose Lupo de Milan who was a viol or violin player, court musician and composer to the English court from the time of Henry VIII to that of Elizabeth I. He gave Queen Elizabeth a box of lute strings as a New Year's gift in 1578 and 1579.[267] He served in the English court string consort from 1 May 1540 until his death; in 1590 he was described as 'one of the eldest' of the group. He may be the author of some or all of the pieces ascribed to 'Ambrose' in English lute sources.[268] Alternatively, Ambrose may refer to Ambrose Dudley, Earl of Warwick (c. 1530–1589/90), see next entry.	No. Older music.
Richard Allison	Richard Allison (b ?1560–70; d ?before 1610). English composer. He referred in the dedication of his *Psalmes* to the late Ambrose Dudley, Earl of Warwick (died 1589/90) as 'my good Lord and Master'. He described his London address as Dukes Place, near Aldgate. In 1606 he published *An*	Possible encounter(s). Allison was active in his musical career until

[264] Margaret Board, *The Board Lute Book. Facsimile edition with an introductory study by Robert Spencer* (Leeds: Boethius Press, 1976).
[265] Brett Usher, "Galliardello, Mark Anthony (d. 1585), musician," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2004).
[266] Charles Edward McGuire and Jan W.J. Burgers, "Johnson, John (i)," in *Grove Music Online* (2001).
[267] Board, *The Board Lute Book. Facsimile edition with an introductory study by Robert Spencer*
[268] Peter Holman, "Lupo family," in *Grove Music Online* (2001).

	Howres Recreation in Musicke, acknowledging Sir John Scudamore (of Holme Lacy, near Hereford) as his patron.[269]	Margaret was around 9 years old. He may have taught her when she was young, as many of his pieces appear in her lute book; a similar number to Dowland, who did teach her.
Peter Philips	Peter Philips (b ?London, 1560–61; d Brussels, 1628). English composer and organist. He spent his maturity in the Spanish Netherlands, and for this reason has often been regarded as a member of the Flemish school; yet on the title-pages of all his publications he was at pains to describe himself as 'Inglese' or 'Anglo'. Apart from Byrd he was the most published English composer of his time. The first known reference to him is as a choirboy at St Paul's Cathedral, London, in 1574. There is evidence that he was later a pupil of Byrd. Sebastian Westcote, almoner of St Paul's was his master. Westcote had been in charge of the music and choirboys, being appointed during the reign of Queen Mary. Early in August 1582, shortly after his master's death, Philips fled England 'pour la foy Catholique' and lived in Brussels.[270]	No. Philips left England before Margaret was born.
The French King	Probably a reference to Louis XIII (27 September 1601 – 14 May 1643), King of France from 1610 until his death in 1643.	N/A
The Lady Banning	Lady Banning was Anne, the daughter of Sir Henry Glemham: she married Sir Paul Banning (or Bayning) 1588-1629, of Little Bentley, Essex in or before 1613, and died in 1639. She would have been known as Lady Banning from 1614 (when Sir Paul was knighted) until 1630, when she remarried.[271]	Unknown
John Stuart (or Sturt)	John Sturt was lutenist to Prince Henry in 1612, played in Chapman's Middle Temple masque (15th Feb 1613), and was a London Wait from 1613 until his death in 1625.[272] The ML lute book, (c.1610-40) is a major source for the music of John Sturt (fl.1612-1625) and he may even have been the main scribe (apart from the formation of the letter "e" the writing of tablature, final flourishes and text are very similar to the scribe of Berlin 40461 who apparently signed his name at the end of this corant).[273]	Margaret may have encountered him.
John Dowland	John Dowland (c. 1563 – buried 20 February 1626). English Renaissance composer, lutenist, and singer. Lived and	Yes. There is evidence of Dowland's teaching

[269] Diana Poulton and Warwick Edwards, "Allison [Alison, Allysonn, Aloyson], Richard," in *Grove Music Online* (2001).
[270] John Steele, "Philips [Phillipps, Phillips], Peter," in *Grove Music Online* (2001).
[271] Board, *The Board Lute Book. Facsimile edition with an introductory study by Robert Spencer*
[272] Board, *The Board Lute Book. Facsimile edition with an introductory study by Robert Spencer*
[273] Martin Shepherd, "Corants by John Sturt and Jacques Gaultier," (2016). https://luteshop.co.uk/2016/10/03/corants-by-john-sturt-and-jacques-gaultier/.

	worked on the Continent and in Denmark during the height of his career, then in England towards the end of his life.[274]	within Margaret's lute book.
Robert Dowland	Robert Dowland (c. 1591 – 1641) was an English lutenist and composer. He was the son of the lutenist and composer John Dowland. Robert Dowland wrote only a few known compositions.[275]	An encounter is possible, even likely, given she was taught by John Dowland.
Daniel Bachelor	Daniel Bachelor, also variously spelt Bachiler, Batchiler or Batchelar (baptized 16 March 1572 – buried 29 January 1619). English lutenist and composer. Of all the English lutenist-composers, he is now credited as probably being the most successful in his own lifetime. He was apprenticed at age seven to his uncle Thomas Cardell, lutenist and dancing master to Queen Elizabeth, suggesting that special talent was already evident. By October 1594, a year before the stipulated completion of his apprenticeship, he was in the service of the Earl of Essex at the generous salary of £30 (£20 was normal). Bacheler presumably remained as servant to Lady Essex after the Earl's execution in 1601; he accompanied her to the court of James I two years later. There, he was appointed groom of Queen Anne's Privy Chamber at the extraordinarily high yearly salary of £160. Other grooms were paid £60 and royal lutenists only £20–£40. He applied for and was granted a coat of arms in February 1607, confirming his status as 'gentleman'.[276]	Margaret may have encountered him.
The Lady Phyllis	I have been unable to identify this person.	-
The King of Denmark	Christian IV (12 April 1577 – 28 February 1648) was King of Denmark and Norway and Duke of Holstein and Schleswig from 1588 until his death in 1648. His reign of 59 years, 330 days is the longest of Danish monarchs and Scandinavian monarchies.	
Mrs Lettice Rich	Perhaps named after Lettice, daughter of Penelope, Lady Rich: she married Sir George Cary of Cockington, Devon.[277]	One would have to assume Margaret did not know her, seeing as her name is incorrectly written.
The Lord Burrow	Probably named after Thomas, Lord Burgh (d. 1597), to whom Holborne dedicated his Cittharn School, 1597.[278]	An encounter not possible, Lord Burgh died before Margaret was born.
Mr Lusher	I have been unable to identify this composer.	-

[274] Peter Holman and Paul O'Dette, "Dowland, John," in *Grove Music Online* (2001).
[275] Diana Poulton and Robert Spencer, "Dowland, Robert," in *Grove Music Online* (2001).
[276] Robert Spencer, "Bacheler [Bachiler, Batchiler, Batchelar], Daniel," in *Grove Music Online* (2001).
[277] Board, *The Board Lute Book. Facsimile edition with an introductory study by Robert Spencer*
[278] Board, *The Board Lute Book. Facsimile edition with an introductory study by Robert Spencer*

Anthony Holborne	Anthony [Antony] Holborne [Holburne] (c. 1545 – 29 November 1602) was a composer of music for lute, cittern, and instrumental consort during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I. An "Anthony Holburne" entered Pembroke College, Cambridge in 1562 (A Cambridge Alumni Database) and it is possible that this person is the same as the composer. A Londoner of the same name was admitted to the Inner Temple Court in 1565, and again this may have been the same person. It is certain, however, that the composer was the brother of William Holborne, and that he married Elisabeth Marten on 14 June 1584.[279] On the title page of both his books he claims to be in the service of Queen Elizabeth.	No, as Holborne died when Margaret was two years old.
The Prince of Portugal	Prince of Portugal (Portuguese: Príncipe de Portugal), officially Hereditary Prince of Portugal (Príncipe Herdeiro de Portugal), or Princess of Portugal, was the title held by the heirs apparent and heirs presumptive to the Kingdom of Portugal, from 1433 to 1645. Most likely this will refer to King Philip II or III (of Portugal)/ III or IV (of Spain).	N/A
Queen Elizabeth I	Elizabeth I (7 September 1533 – 24 March 1603). Queen of England and Ireland from 17 November 1558 until her death in 1603. Elizabeth was the last of the five monarchs of the House of Tudor.	
Robert Johnson	Robert Johnson (c. 1583 – 1633) was an English composer and lutenist of the late Tudor and early Jacobean eras. He was the son of John Johnson, who was lutenist to Elizabeth I. On 29 March 1596 he was indentured as 'allowes or covenant servaunt', for seven years to Sir George Carey, Lord Chamberlain from that year to 1603, who undertook to have him taught music and to provide him with board, lodging and clothing. At Midsummer 1604 he was appointed lutenist to King James I, and he held the post until his death, his name occurring annually in the Audit Office Declared Accounts up to 1633. This post had belonged to his father, from whose death it had remained unoccupied, apart from the brief appointment of Edward Collard in 1598–9. From 1610 to 1612 Johnson held a second appointment among the musicians to Prince Henry. Henry died in 1612, but the post was revived for Johnson in the years 1617–25 as musician to Prince Charles. This second royal appointment was transferred, after 1625, to the new group called the 'lutes, viols and voices' and Johnson held it too until his death.[280]	Margaret may have encountered him.
Mr Confesso	Confesse was a choreographer, employed in The Lord's Maske by Campion, 14th Feb 1613, as well as others 1610-13.[281]	Margaret may have encountered him.

[279] Warwick Edwards, "Holborne, Antony," in *Grove Music Online* (2001).
[280] David Lumsden et al., "Johnson, Robert (ii)," in *Grove Music Online* (2001).
[281] Board, *The Board Lute Book. Facsimile edition with an introductory study by Robert Spencer*

Robert Taylor	Robert Taylor (fl London, 1610; d London, before Oct 11, 1637). English composer. He is first heard of on 13 November 1610, registering the birth of his son Robert in the London parish of St Dunstan-in-the-West. He played the lute among Prince Henry's musicians in Chapman's Memorable Masque of the Inner Temple and Lincoln's Inn on 15 February 1613, and formally joined the group when it was reformed for Prince Charles in 1617. He became a member of the main royal music with the rest of his colleagues when he joined the newly-formed 'Lutes and Voices' at Charles's accession in 1625, and served until his death in the autumn of 1637; his son John Taylor was sworn into his place on 3 October. Robert was also a member of the London Waits from 1620 until his death, and was presumably the 'Mr Taylor' who taught a member of the Middle Temple the viol in the 1620s. He played bowed as well as plucked instruments.[282]	Margaret may have encountered him.
Philip Rosseter	Philip Rosseter (1568 – 5 May 1623) was an English composer and musician, as well as a theatrical manager. His family seems to have been from Somerset or Lincolnshire, he may have been employed with the Countess of Sussex by 1596, and he was living in London by 1598.[283] He was appointed lutenist at the court of James I in 1603, a position he retained until his death. In February 1613 he was one of the musicians (with John and Robert Dowland and Thomas Ford) in George Chapman's Middle Temple and Lincoln's Inn Masque. Rosseter is best known for A Booke of Ayres, a collection of songs with lute and bass viol accompaniment published in 1601 and dedicated to Sir Thomas Monson, a notable patron of music. The volume contains 21 songs each by Campion and by Rosseter.[284]	Margaret may have encountered him.
Mr Jenning	I have been unable to identify this composer	-

[282] Peter Holman, "Taylor [Tailour, Taylour], Robert," in *Grove Music Online* (2001).
[283] Ian Harwood, "Rosseter, Philip (c. 1568–1623), lutenist, composer, and theatre manager," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2004).
[284] David Greer, "Rosseter, Philip," in *Grove Music Online* (2001).

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