**Music supplement to Lute News 74 (June 2005)**

**Lute Music Ascribed to or associated with Robert Dowland**

This supplement includes all the lute music ascribed to, copied or possibly by, Robert Dowland (*c*1591-1641). As we all know, Robert was the son of John Dowland and he is best known as editor for the publication in 1610 of his two anthologies, arguably the best English lute print, *A Varietie of Lute-lessons*[[1]](#endnote-1) and the English and Continental lute song collection *A Musical Banquet*.[[2]](#endnote-2) However, the music reproduced here convinces me that as well as editor and lutenist, he was also a composer for the lute ranking equal to his contemporaries Robert Kindersley[[3]](#endnote-3) and John Maynard (1577->1614) and possibly Daniel Bacheler (1572-1619), John Danyel (1564-*c*1626),[[4]](#endnote-4) Robert Johnson[[5]](#endnote-5) and Philip Rosseter (1567/8-1623).[[6]](#endnote-6) In addition I am proposing that he was also arranger of earlier lute solos by John Dowland until now assumed to be the contribution of John to *Varietie*. If true then it is Robert rather than John that shared with some of his contemporaries a propensity for elaborate divisions typical of English renaissance lute music written in the early seventeenth century. I am suggesting that now as well as in his own time, Robert's virtues as a composer may have been overshadowed by his father. This may be because the music more securely ascribed to Robert is not so different to his father's whom he presumably imitated intentionally, unlike Robert Johnson who developed a very distinct style and arguably greater fame than his father John - although we don't know whether Thomas Cutting followed in his father Francis' footsteps as nothing composed by him is known to survive.

Biographical information on Robert Dowland is preserved in court and other records as well as the preface to his prints but there are periods of his life about which we know nothing.[[7]](#endnote-7) From the dedication of *Musicall Banquet*[[8]](#endnote-8) we learn that he got his name from his godfather Sir Robert Sidney (1563-1626) Viscount Lisle from May 1605, and according to the dedication of *Varietie[[9]](#endnote-9)* he received part of his education in the household of Sir Thomas Monson[[10]](#endnote-10) while his father was abroad. His year of birth *c*1591 is deduced from his marriage allegation of 1626 relating that 'This day appeared personally Rob Dowland of ye parish of St. Anne Blackfriars, London, a bachelor, aged about xxxv yeares and alleged that he intendeth to marry with Jane Smalley of ye same parish, spinster aged about xxv yeares and at her owne disposition, ... and desired licens for them to be married in ye parish church of St. Fayth, London.'[[11]](#endnote-11) The couple had a son John who died an infant in 1627 and a daughter Mary baptised in 1629.

Recently discovered household accounts of William Cavendish, first Earl of Devonshire (1551-1626), for the period 1608-1624 and probably relating to the London property in Aldersgate Street[[12]](#endnote-12) records payments to at least six lutenists resident in London during the years 1612-1616, including John and Robert Dowland. The accounts for May 1612 include £3 to 'young Dowland' for the cost of a suit, presumably for livery. Four payments were made to Robert between 1612 and 1616, one recorded as a quarter's salary. During this time whilst in his early twenties, his name appears among the lute players for Chapman's *Masque of the Inner Temple and Lincoln's Inn*, given at Whitehall as part of the marriage celebrations of Princess Elizabeth and Frederick, Elector Palatine.[[13]](#endnote-13)

In the early 1620s when Robert was presumably in his thirties he travelled on the continent with a group of English actors, who sought permission in August 1623 to return to England from the Duke of Wolgast in Pomerania.[[14]](#endnote-14) Then in January 1626 Robert succeeded to his father's post at court, although the warrant confirming his appointment was not made out until April.[[15]](#endnote-15) He is recorded in subsidy lists or accounts of the treasurer of the chamber (his salary) in all the years up to December 1641. A closer look at this period at court shows that he was appointed as one of the lutes with Robert Johnson, Maurice Webster, Nicolas Lanier and Timothy Collins in 1626, and that the group remained stable for some fifteen years, except that Lewis Evans replaced Robert Johnson when he died in 1634 and Dietrich Stoeffken replaced Maurice Webster in 1635. Robert may concurrently have held other posts in London as he is apparently listed amongst the 'Musicians for the Waytes' in 1641.[[16]](#endnote-16) Of other contemporary lutenists who were members of the court 'lutes and voices', Robert Kindersley died in 1634 and John Lawrence in 1635.[[17]](#endnote-17) Robert himself died late in 1641, when John Mercure[[18]](#endnote-18) was sworn ‘a musician to his majesty for the lutes and voices in ordinary in the place of Robert Dowland deceased’.[[19]](#endnote-19) Robert may be the 'Robert Doling a man sometyme servant to the king died in his house in the New Buildings in Chancery Lane the 28th: buried 29 [November 1641]' at St Andrews, Holborn.[[20]](#endnote-20)

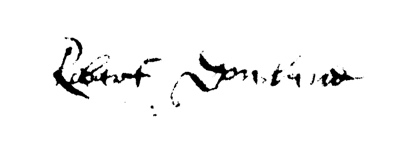
Turning to the music,[[21]](#endnote-21) there is no reason to doubt the ascription of the pavan with elaborate divisions dedicated to Sir Thomas Monson (no 1) and an almaine bearing Robert's name in one of the two manuscript sources of it that are known (no 5). The pavan is not known from elsewhere and is assumed to be an original composition by Robert. The anonymous version of the almaine in Krakow 40641 (no 5a) is a simpler arrangement than the one in the Margaret Board lute book (no 5b). The latter is largely written out in John Dowland's hand which presumably authenticates the ascription to Robert, unless he composed it himself and credited it to Robert to further his son's career - it is followed by an alternative, more elaborate, division of the second of the two strains in Margaret Board's hand.

The ascriptions, or lack of them, of the remaining items are problematic. Lady Clifton's Spirit[[22]](#endnote-22) (no 3a) is ascribed to Robert in *Varietie*, but is a reworking of an earlier work lacking divisions by John (no 3b). In the definitive biography of John Dowland,[[23]](#endnote-23) Diana Poulton assumed the ascription was in error and that this later version was also by John but misattributed in *Varietie*. However, it is difficult to accept that this would have passed the notice of both father and son if one or both were closely involved in the editorial process. Therefore I think it is equally likely that the reworking was by Robert so that the ascription is correct and that John may no longer have been able to improve on his earlier compositions, especially if is he really was as Robert described him in the preface 'to the reader' in *Varietie* as 'now gray, and like the Swan, but singing towards his end.' In fact, all the seven compositions ascribed to John Dowland in *Varietie[[24]](#endnote-24)* are reworked to a greater or lesser extent from earlier versions, and Diana Poulton assumed that all revisions were made by John assigning him a major role in his son's publication.[[25]](#endnote-25) However, it is surely also possible that the reworking of some or even all were by Robert, and the similarity to the style of his father is because he may even have attempted to imitate it.

A version of John Dowland's *King of Denmark's Galliard* is ascribed to Robert in Georg Leopold Fuhrmann's *Testudo Gallo-Germanica*[[26]](#endnote-26) (no 4). In this case, the version is not a reworking of John's original but an earlier version with far fewer elaborations than any of John's versions, especially the most refined version that appears in *Varietie* that is there ascribed to John. So one can only speculate why Fuhrmann ascribed it to Robert, as the latter's known sojourn abroad in the early 1620s was too late to have met and passed on the work to Fuhrmann for inclusion in his 1615 print, and although it is included here, the ascription can only be assumed to be an error.

A further six anonymous items are also associated with Robert. It might be assumed that Monson's galliard would pair with the pavan ascribed to Robert in *Varietie* and hence could have been composed by him too. However it is anonymous and although having the same key structure shares little thematic material. Also the pavan is notated for a seven course lute and the galliard for a nine-course lute. I have included the galliard (no 2) and can only wonder who the anonymous composer was, if not Robert himself.

Viscount Lisle/Robert Sydney's Galliard (no 6a) is the only lute solo in Robert's *A Musicall Banquet* and is unascribed so that it is not clear who was responsible for this particularly elaborate version. It uses the strains of an earlier anonymous galliard without divisions (no 6b) and Diana Poulton assumed both to be by John Dowland.[[27]](#endnote-27) The earlier version carries the appellation 'Suzanna' presumably because the opening is based on the Lassus' setting of the chanson *Susanne ung jour*. As argued above for Lady Clifton's Spirit, it is possible that John wrote the earlier version but that it was reworked by Robert for inclusion in *Musicall Banquet*. If so the rather fine divisions in this elaborate version would be the high point of Robert's surviving oeuvre.

Finally, John Ward has suggested that the hand that copied four corantos into the Folger-Dowland lute book (ff. 24v-25r) bear a close similarity to Robert Dowland's signature from the Guildhall library Ms. 10091/11, f. 34r.[[28]](#endnote-28) The tablature follows items copied out by John Dowland and unusually begin with time signatures, an idiosyncrasy of both the Dowlands. Robert is more likely to have collected rather than composed these items and as the manuscript dates from the 1590s, he would have been a young boy at the time. However tenuous the association with Robert, I have included them anyway (no 7-10).

The last item (no 11) is not associated with Robert Dowland - the title is not entirely legible and looks like 'Butts', possibly a dedicatee or even composer, otherwise unknown.

**Worklist**

Minor editorial changes have been made without comment

**1.** *Varietie* 1610, sigs. L1v-L2, *Pauin/ 7/ Sir Tho*[mas]*. Monson his Pauin* [header: *Composed by Robert Dowland.*]

**2.** *Varietie* 1610, sigs. N2r-N2v, *Galliard./ 7* [header: *Sir Thomas Monson his Galliard*]

**3a.** *Varietie* 1610, sigs. N1v-N2r, *The Right Honorable the Lady Cliftons Spirit./ Galliard 6/ Robert Douland*

**3b.** Dd.2.11, f. 58r, *K Darcies Spirite J: Dowl* [DowlandCLM no 45]

**4.** Fuhrmann 1615, pp. 112-3, *Galliarda.5.* [header: *Galliarda Robert. Doulandt. 5.*] = John Dowland King of Denmark's Galliard [DowlandCLM no 40]

**5a.** Kraków 40641, ff. 6v-7r, *Ballet*

**5b.** Board, f. 12v, *Almande R: D: / Almande Ro: Dowlande/ Or play the last devision of the last strayne thus*

**6a.** *Musicall Banquet* 1610, sig. B1r, *The Right Honorable the Lord Viscount Lisle, His Galliard* [index: *Sir Robert Sidney's Galliard*] [DowlandCLM no 38]

**6b.** Dd.2.11, f. 52, *Suzanna Galliard* [DowlandCLM no 91]

**7a.** Folger, f. 24v, *Corranto* ~= Herold, ff. 7v-8r, *Courant*

**7b.** Herbert, f. 28r ii, *Courante*

**8.** Folger, f. 24v, *Corranto*

**9.** Folger, f. 25r, *Corranto*

**10a.** Folger, f. 25r, *Corranto*

**10b.** Dd.9.33, f. 65r, [untitled]

**11.** Dd.9.33, f. 52r, *Butts* [Almaine]

John H Robinson, NewcastleUniversity, May 200

1. Copies in London, British Library [K.2.i.8]; Oxford, Bodleian Library; San Marino CA, Huntingdon Library; Washington DC, Library of Congress. Facsimile edition: Edgar Hunt (ed.), London, Schott, 1958. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Copies in London, British Library, Oxford, Bodleian Library; London, Royal College of Music. Facsimile edition: Diana Poulton (ed.), Menston, Scolar, 1969. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Andrew Ashbee and David Lasocki with Peter Holman and Fiona Kisby, *A Biographical Dictionary of English Court Musicians 1485-1714* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998) [BDECM], pp. 648-9, cf. *Complete lute solos of Robert Kindersley/Kennersley, Robert Taylor and Thomas Greeves*, Lute News 41 (March 1997). [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. BDECM, pp. 334-5, cf. Martin Shepherd, *The Complete Works of John Danyel, vol. I: Lute Music* (Lute Society Music Editions, 1997). [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. BDECM, pp. 630-2. [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. BDECM, pp. 973-5, cf. Robert Spencer, *The Lute Music of Philip Rosseter* (Lute Society Music Editions, 1997). [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. Diana Poulton, 'Dowland, Robert', *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, edited by Stanley Sadie (1980) v, p. 597 and *New Grove II* on-line; BDECM, pp. 357-8. [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. **Dedication** to *A Musicall Banquet*, sig. A2r: TO THE RIGHT HO/NORABLE SYR ROBERT/ SYDNEY, KNIGHT: Lord Gouernour of Vlissingen, and the Castle of Ramekins, Lord *Sydney* of Penshurst,/ Viscount *Lisle*, and Lord Chamberlaine to the Queenes/ Most Excellent majestie./ Right Honourable Lord: Since my best abilitie is not able in the least manner to counteruaile that dutie I owe vnto your Lordship, for two great respects; the one in regard (your Lordship vndertaking for mee) I was made a member of the Church of Christ, and withall receiued from you my name: the other the loue that you beare to all excellency & good learning, (which seemeth haereditarie aboue others to the Noble Familie of the *Sydneys*,) and especially to this excellent Science of Musicke, a skill from all antiquity entertayned with the most Noble & generous dispositions. May it please your Honour there-fore to accept these few, and my first labours, as a poore pledge of that zeale and dutie which I shall euer owe vnto your Honour, vntill time shall enable me to effect something more worthy of your Lordships view, hauing no other thing saue these few sheetes of Paper to present the same withall./ To your Honour/ in all dutie most deuoted,/ *Robert Douland*.' **To the Reader**, sig. A2v: Gentlemen: Finding myselfe not deceiued in the hope I had of your kinde entertayning my collected Lute-lessons which I lately set foorth, I am further encouraged to publish vnto your censures these AYRES, being collected and gathered out of the labours of the rarest and most iudicious Maisters of Musick that either now are or haue lately liued in Christendome, whereof some I haue purposely sorted to the capacitie of young practitioners, the rest by degrees are of greater depth and skill, so that like a careful Confectionary, as neere as might be I haue fitted my Banquet for all tastes: happily I shall be distasted by any, let them know what is brought vnto them is drest after the English, French, Spanish and Italian manner; the assay is taken before, they shall not need to feare poysoning. You Gentleman and friends that come in good-will, and not as Promooters into a countrey Market, to call our viands into question, what soeuer here is, much good may it doe you, I would it were better for you: for the rest I wish their lips such Lettuce as *Silenus* Asse, or their owne harts would desire./ Thine,/ Robert Douland.' [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. **Dedication** to *Varietie*, sig. A2r: 'TO THE RIGHT WORSHIP-FVLL, WORTHY, AND VERTVOVS Knight, *Sir Thomas Mounson*./ SYr, the gratefull remembrance of your bountie to me, in part of my Education, whilst my Father was absent from *England*, hath embouldned me to present these my first Labours to your worthi-nes, assuring my selfe that they being *Musicall* will be acceptable to the Patron of *Musicke*, and being onely out of duety Dedicated, you will daine to receiue them as a poore Testimonie of his gratitude, who acknowledgeth himselfe for euer vnable by his vttermost seruice to merit your Fauours. All that I can is to pray to Almighty God for the health and prosperitie of You and Yours, which I will neuer cease to doe./ Your Worships in all duety,/ *Robert Douland*.' Sig. A2v: '**To the Readers** whosoeuer./ GEntlemen: I am bold to present you with the first fruits of my Skill, which albeit it may seeme hereditarie vnto mee, my Father being a Lutenist, and well knowne amongst you heere in England, as in most parts of Christendome beside. I am sure you are not ignorant of that old saying, *Labore Deum omnia vendere*: And how perfection in any skill cannot be attained vnto without the waste of many yeeres, much cost, and excessiue labour and industrie, which though I cannot attribute to myselfe, being but young in yeeres, I haue ad-uentured like a desperate Souldier to thrust my selfe into the Vant-gard, and to passe the Pikes of the sharpest Censures, but I trust without daunger, because we finde it true in Nature that those who haue loued the Father, will seldome hate the Sonne. And not vnlike in reason that I should distast all, since my meanes and helpes of attaining what I haue, haue beene extraor-dinary. Touching this I haue done, they are Collections gathered together with much labour out of the most excellent Authors, as well as those beyond the Seas, as out of the workes of our owne Countrymen. The treatise of fingering I thought no scorne to borrow from *Iohn Baptisto Besardo* of Visonti, being a man generally knowne and honoured for his excellencie in this kinde. Put what-soever I have here done (vntill my Father hath finished his greater Worke, touching the Art of Lute-playing) I referre it to your iudicious censures, hoping that the loue which you all generally haue borne vnto him in times past, being now gray, and like the Swan, but singing towards his end, you would continue the same to me his Sonne, who in the meane time will consecrate my best indeauors at the shrine of your fauours, and shall euer remaine obliged vnto you for your curtesies to the vttermost of my power. / *Robert Douland*.' **The instructions**, sigs. B1r-E2r, are headed: 'NECESSARIE OBSERVATIONS BELONG-ING TO THE *LUTE*, AND LVTE / playing, by *John Baptisto Besardo* of Visonti: with choice varietie of LVTE-lessons, partly Inuented, and partly Col-lected out of the best AVTHORS, by *Robert Douland*, and *John Douland* Batcheler of MUSICKE.' [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
10. Sir Thomas Monson (1564-1641) was knighted in 1588 and succeeded to the manor at South Carlton, Lincolnshire in 1593, and member of parliament in 1597. He became a favourite with James I, who made him his master falconer early in his reign, and master of the armoury at the Tower in 1611 (Oxford Dictionary of National Biography). [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
11. BDECM, p. 357. [↑](#endnote-ref-11)
12. Lynn Hulse, 'Hardwick MS 29: A new source for Jacobean Lutenists', *The Lute* xxvi part 2 (1986) pp. 63-72. [↑](#endnote-ref-12)
13. Baildon, W. P., *The Records of the Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn*, The Black Books (1897-1902), vol. II, pp. 155-6: 'Item to John Sturte, Robert Taylor, Robert Dowland, and Thomas Davies for playing of Lutes, every one of them 2li.' A few lutenists were paid a little more: 'Item to Thomas Cutting, John Dowland, and Philip Rosseter for playing Lutes, every one of them 2li. 10s' and 'Item to Mr Thomas Ford for playing of Lute 2li. 10s. What a great night that was! [↑](#endnote-ref-13)
14. E. K. Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage* (1923), vol. II, p. 288. [↑](#endnote-ref-14)
15. Andrew Ashbee, *Records of English Court Music* (Snodland: Ashbee, 1988) [RECM], vol. III (1625-1649), pp. 16, 136. [↑](#endnote-ref-15)
16. Edward F. Rimbault, *Bibliotheca Madrigaliana* (London, 1747). [↑](#endnote-ref-16)
17. BDECM, pp. 630-2, 648-9, 712-3 and 1136-7. [↑](#endnote-ref-17)
18. BDECM, p. 799; Monique Rollin and Jean-Michel Vaccaro (eds.), *Oeuvres des Mercure* (Paris: CNRS, 1977). [↑](#endnote-ref-18)
19. RECM III, pp. 111-2, 114, 159. [↑](#endnote-ref-19)
20. BDECM, p. 357. [↑](#endnote-ref-20)
21. Lutes used are 6 course for nos. 3b 6b 11; 7 course [7F] nos. 7-10; [7D] nos. 1 3a 5a 6a; 8 course [7F, 8D] nos. 2 4; 9 course [7F, 8D, 9C] no. 5b. [↑](#endnote-ref-21)
22. Katherine Darcie, daughter and heiress of Sir Henry Darcy, in 1591 married Gervase Clifton, son of Sir John Clifton of Barrington Court, Somerset who was knighted sometime before 1597. [↑](#endnote-ref-22)
23. Diana Poulton, *John Dowland* (London: Faber, 1972/R1982), p. 157. [↑](#endnote-ref-23)
24. No **7.** sigs. H1r-H2r, *Composed by Iohn Douland, Batchelar of Musicke./ Fantasie. 7* [DowlandCLM no 1]; **12.** K1v-K2v, *Composed by Iohn Douland Batcheler of Musicke./ Pauin./ 5* [DowlandCLM no 14a]; **15.** L2v-M1r, *Here beginneth the Galliards: the first whereof is commonly knowne by the name of the most/ high and mightie Christianus the fourth King of Denmarke, his Galliard./ Galliard. 1/ Iohn Dowland, / Batcheler of Musick.* [DowlandCLM no 40 cf. no 20]; **16.** M1v, *The most sacred Queene Elizabeth, her Galliard./ Galliard./2/ Iohn Dowland,/ Batcheler of Musick.* [DowlandCLM no 41]; **17.** M2r, *The Right Honorable Robert Earl of Essex, high Marshall of England, his Galliard./ Galliard/ 3/ Iohn Dowland, Batcheler of Musick.* [DowlandCLM no 42a]; **18.** M2v, *The Right Honorable Ferdinando Earle of Darby, his Galliard./ Galliard./4/ Iohn/ Dowland,/ Batcheler/ of Musick.* [DowlandCLM no 44a]; **19.** N1r, *The Right Honorable the Lady Rich, her Galliard./ Galliard./5/ Iohn Dowland, Batcheler of Musick.* [DowlandCLM no 43a]. [↑](#endnote-ref-24)
25. Diana Poulton, *John Dowland*, p. 67, 108-11. [↑](#endnote-ref-25)
26. Facsimile: Lübeck: Tree Edition, 2003. [↑](#endnote-ref-26)
27. Diana Poulton, *John Dowland*, pp. 149-50. [↑](#endnote-ref-27)
28. John M. Ward 'The so-called "Dowland lute book" in the Folger Shakespeare library' *Journal of the Lute Society of America* ix (1976) p. 16. [↑](#endnote-ref-28)