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**Elisabeth Eysbock's Keyboard Book**

*By Thurston Dart*

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# Elisabeth Eysbock's Keyboard Book<sup>1</sup>

*By Thurston Dart* (CAMBRIDGE)

A substantial number of early collections of keyboard music were compiled for women musicians. Among the best known are those bearing the names of Anna Magdalena Bach from the 18th century and My Lady Nevell from the 16th century, but the list also includes the 17th-century virginal books of Elizabeth Rogers, Ann Cromwell, Priscilla Bunbury and Lady Jean Campbell.

When I visited the Library of the Royal Swedish Academy of Music in 1959, Miss Cari Johansson showed me another 17th-century keyboard book originally belonging to a musical girl. To the Librarian of the Academy, Dr Gösta Morin, and to Miss Johansson I am grateful for many courtesies, and I should like to thank the Academy for permission to study the manuscript and to publish this introductory note about it. To the best of my knowledge the book has not been discussed before.

Elisabeth Eysbock's keyboard book (Kungl. Musikaliska Akademiens Bibliotek, Tablature no. 1) consists of sixty-four unnumbered folio leaves, written in German keyboard tablature. The binding dates only from 1916; before that the pages were preserved in an 18th-century paper folder. A note on the first leaf of the manuscript records that the book was bought in Aachen in 1775 and was presented to the Academy two years later. The same page also bears the stamp of the *Utile Dulci Society*. Founded in 1766, this was the most important predecessor of the Academy, some of its members being among those who set up the Academy itself. The first leaf of the manuscript records for us the book's original owner, for it is inscribed:

Mademoiselle  
Elisabett Eysbock  
gehordt dis bucgh



<sup>1</sup> This study was originally written for a Festschrift in honour of Dr Hans Albrecht; a slightly different version appears in the memorial volume for him.

A Madamā:  
 Madamaselle Elisabetha Eisbock de francofort  
 apertient ce present liure qui le trouve ou le  
 prendt et non le rand et ung grand Forfant  
 [stamp of Utile Dulci]  
 Le verd de Mer lunique Colleur  
 Je adore pour mon bonheur.  
 Tel qui desire na respos &c.

Experts in genealogy will no doubt be able to identify with precision Miss Elisabeth Eysbock of Frankfurt. Even someone like myself with no special knowledge of this subject will be able to deduce from her attempts at French, and from the special geographical and musical characteristics of the ninety-odd pieces in the book, that she was a Protestant of Frankfurt-am-Main, that she may have been Dutch, and that she compiled the book around 1600. Perhaps, indeed, the curious device immediately below "gehordt dis bucgh" may be a stylized form of this date in Roman numerals (MDC, which can also be written as C1D1C).

The contents of the manuscript are best set out in tabular form. For my own convenience I have assigned foliations to my photocopy of the manuscript, taking Miss Eysbock's declaration of ownership as f. 1; I have also numbered the pieces. Those which merely continue or complete a previous item have not been assigned a separate number. Identifications of tunes or composers have been added in square brackets, their sources being given in the notes that follow the list of contents. Certain changes in the layout of the tablature probably reflect successive stages in the compilation of the manuscript. Thus from f. 1 to f. 43' inclusive the tablature, in a rather untidy writing, runs across a single page at a time. At f. 44 a new and neater layout is adopted, seemingly in a new hand. From f. 45' to f. 54, and from f. 55' to f. 64, the tablature runs right across both leaves of the open page, the single-page layout being resumed for ff. 55 and 64'. The style of the music suggests to me that Miss Eysbock was a player of the harpsichord or virginals, not the organ or clavichord; German "organ" tablature was used for all keyboard instruments, though this fact is often forgotten.

*List of contents of the manuscript*

f.	no.	title
1		[Elisabeth Eysbock's statement of ownership]
1'		[blank]
2	1	Ach Nachbar Rolandt mein hertz ist voller Pin
2'		Reprinse

3	2	Allamande Damour
3'	3	Alamande fortune helas pourquoy
4	4	Reprinse la finigret
4'	5	Gaillarde
5	6	Simphonia Angelica A 4 [Lord Zouche's Maske]
5'	7	[no title]
6	8	Gailiarde de Swarhenbergh
6'	9	Passamezo d[I]talye
7'		Altere passamezo
8		Altere Passameso d[I]tallie
9	10	Reprinse
9'	11	Gailliarde d[I]tayle
10		Altere galiarde
10'	12	Allamande [by Dowland]
11	13	Engelscher Dans
11	14	Engelsche Corant
12	15	Daunckett dem Herren da my er ist freundtliche
16	16	Die lustelycke May is angecomen par Godardum A 4
13	17	Bey mir mein hertz: Deutscher dans
18		Der nachdanns
13'	19	Englische Curante
14	20	Gallyarde D'englitterre
14'	21	Gallyarde
15	22	Corantte de fransse
15'	23	Corante de prinse parma
16	24	Kein wunsch uf er dem solt mir euberverdenn
16'	25	Reprinse
26		Gailiard d'ingleterrae
17	27	Galyard d[I]taly Duraly
17'		Alter galyarde de Italye
18		Galyarde A 3
18'	28	Englischer Brandt
19	29	Englischer Dantz
19'	30	Madrigali Io vo gridando Girolamo Converso A 5
20	31	Ce moys de May per Godardum A 4
21'	32	Morgens segent: Ich danck dir O lieber Herre dass du uns hast bewartts
22	23	Das Vatter unser
23	34	Nu lob mein seel denn Herren
23'	35	Sola solette ei mine vo candanvo Madrigalli A 5 [by Converso]
24'	36	Pavana Lachrima [by Dowland]
25		Alter pavana
25'	37	Pavana Angelica [by Philips]
27		A 3 Pavane
27'	38	Madonna mia pieta A 4
28	39	Passamezo in b
29		Alter Passamezo

31	40	En[g]lender Dans
	41	Brande
31'	42	Reprinse
	43	Deutscher Dans
32	44	Students Dantz
32'	45	Ridon di magio A 4 voc.
33	46	Galyard Imperial
33'	47	Nu bin ich einmal frey Jacobus Meylandt A 3
34	48	Fortune, ofte brant
34'	49	Allamand de Brusselle
35	50	La saltarelle
35'	51	Deutscher Dans
	52	Reprinse
36	53	Deutsche dans [Bruynsmedelyn]
36'	54	La saltarelle
37	55	Allamande de frederico
37'	56	Reprinse
38	57	Si tanto gratioso per Giouvan Ferrette A 5
38'	58	Allamande Doulandt
39'	59	Donna crudel A 5 [by Ferretti]
40'	60	Gallyarde che passa
		Alter gallyarde
41'	61	Bonieur mon ceour A 4 [by di Lasso]
43	62	Pavana de la tromba
44	63	Pavanilie espaignol
45'	64	Lobet den herren alle Heiden
46'		Lobet den Herren alle Heiden [entirely different tune]
46'	65	Galliard
46'	66	Lavolta
47'	67	Pavan tromba
48'	68	Galliard
49'	69	Allein nach dir Her
51'	70	Bitt wolt mir ein tanzlein klein machen
52	71	Von grund des hertzen mein
53	72	Den lustelyken May
55	73	Meines Hertzens trost
	74	Wer habet ortan [?]
55'	75	Hatt dir denn amor so durchschossen
55'	76	Frisch auf mein lieber töchterlein
	77	Dantz [Allemande Alliance]
56'	78	Matronna mia filtaz [?]
57	79	Qui vis ingenuis [Piper's Pavan]
57'	80	Chi mira gli occhi
58	81	Dantz
58'	82	Jubilate Deo
59'	83	Lieb hatt mein Hertz aus freud gebracht in smertz

	84	Pavan
60'	85	Pavana de la Batalie
61'	86	Pavan angelica
62'	87	Galliard [by Dowland]
	88	Frölich wöllen wir singen
63'	89	Corant
	90	Ich bin euer troster
64'	91	Hertzlich lieb hab ich dirs O Herr

Here are a few notes of concordances and identifications of tunes other than those whose identity is immediately recognisable. No doubt there are many more still to be made; I have concentrated only on those most germane to my own studies in English music of this time. So far as I can tell, the settings of these tunes found in the Eysbock manuscript are unique, though many of the tunes themselves are familiar enough in the "international" stock of tunes of the years around 1600. Thus the tune of no. 1 occurs in many Dutch sources—e.g., the Thysius lutebook and Valerius' *Nederlandtsche Gedenck-Clanck*—and there is a fine setting by William Byrd, under the title of "Lord Willoughby's Welcome Home". The use of the word "Reprinse"—which in this keyboard manuscript may stand for "continuation" or "variation" or "Nachtanz" or even "section"—suggests the most likely meaning for the unexplained abbreviation "Rep." of the FitzWilliam Virginal Book. No. 2 corresponds with the "Almande Amour" of the Thysius lutebook, f. 480. Other tunes also found in this book are those of nos. 3, 5 ("In een groot ongheluck"), 12 ("Mr Daulants Allemande", f. 492), 16, 20 (very similar to the "Gaillarde", f. 26), 22 ("Courante" f. 434), 33, 48, 53 ("Bruynsmedeleyn"), 55 ("Allemande", f. 507), 59 (by Ferretti), 61 (by di Lasso), 66 ("Volte de France", f. 370), 77 ("Allemande Alliance", f. 488), 85 (f. 144) and 87 (Dowland's song "Can she excuse"). No. 6 is the well-known "Lord Zouche's Maske", found in Morley's *Consort Lessons* (1599) and elsewhere; the setting in Miss Eysbock's manuscript is so harmonically inept that I suppose it to be one of her own attempts at composition.

Settings of the harmonic grounds known as the *passamezzo antico*, the *passamezzo moderno* and the *chi passa* are found in source after source at this time, so that it is hardly surprising to find examples in the present manuscript. Thus no. 9 consists of three consecutive settings of the *antico* ground, each running into the next without a break; no. 39 is another setting of the same ground, no. 10 is a kind of saltarello made out of similar material, and no. 11 consists of two consecutive settings of the ground as a galliard. No. 27 comprises three consecutive settings of the *moderno* ground, no. 60

Den lustelyken May

Anon.  
(Eysbock MS, f. 53)

two of the *chi passa* ground. Godard's song no. 16 seems to have been widely popular during the early seventeenth century; John Bull set it, and it is a favourite tune in contemporary printed song-books. No. 35 also occurs in Morley's *Consort Lessons*, and it was parodied to English words as "When all alone my bonny lass". Other tunes found in the *Consort Lessons* include

Transcribed by  
Thurston Part  
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Cambridge 16  
ii  
62

Notes & symbols in square brackets are editorial. Obvious errors of octave & rhythm have been corrected without comment.

nos. 37 ("Philips Pavan"), 62 and 67 ("De la tromba pavan"), 79 ("Piper's Pavan") and 87 ("Can she excuse"). The tune of no. 40 was known to Valerius ("Engelsche Foulle, of Walsch Wallinneken") and in the FitzWilliam Virginal Book it is called "Muscadin"; but Valerius' "Students' Dance" is not the same as no. 44 of Miss Eysbock's book. No. 45 is reminiscent of Morley's canzonet "Lady, if I through grief", and no. 56 recalls Valerius' tune "Quand la bergère". No. 58 is similar to, and no. 84 identical with, the tune known as "Mall Sims" (also found in Valerius). No. 63 is the familiar "Pavaniglia" or "Spanish pavan" also set by Bull and Sweelinck.

To my regret I have not yet been able to identify the English originals of nos. 13, 14 (somewhat like "Greensleeves", in duple time), 19, 20, 26, 28,

29 and 86. Like most of the tunes in the manuscript they appear in embellished forms, and it is not always easy to discern the original tune beneath the ornamentation. But a complete report on Elisabeth Eysbock's tablature cannot be made until someone is prepared to transcribe it in its entirety. I have had time to transcribe no more than half-a-dozen pieces; these suggest to me that the manuscript contains some good music (for instance, the two settings of "Den lustelycken Mey"), as well as a fair number of errors. One idiosyncrasy of its notation is worth mentioning: a symbol looking like the numeral "3" is apparently used to denote an ornament of some kind. This symbol appears in contexts like those in which the familiar but enigmatic symbol  $\int$  of the English virginalists is found; it may well have the same meaning. But this, like many other features of the book, must await a fuller investigation. I have tried only to touch on some aspects that make this new manuscript of special interest to an English musical historian.