**English Measures Old and New:**

**Dulwich College MS. XCIV/f.28**

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**Introduction**

A new source for English measures of the Elizabethan era is a rare gift of fate. Dulwich College MSS, 2nd Series XCIV/fol.28 (Figure 1) has been lying in plain sight, as it were, in the Dulwich College archives since 1884. A transcript by John Payne Collier had been published in 1844 in the recently-founded *Shakespeare Society Papers*. Unfortunately, Collier’s tarnished reputation for forging and altering manuscript sources led to widespread repudiation of his scholarship, and consequently neglect of a valuable manuscript of dances. However, recent forensic examination of Collier’s diverse activities by Arthur and Janet Ing Freeman attests that the manuscript is genuine, being neither forged nor altered¹. The manuscript comprises the eight dances, known also as ‘the old measures’: it includes a ninth measure also found in Rawlinson 280 (Source A) and is followed by four dances unique to this source. Three of the four ‘new’ measures can be matched to tunes in the Mulliner book of sixteenth century dance and sacred music². (See Appendix 1 for the relevant manuscripts, Appendix 2 for the eight ‘old measures’ and Appendix 3 for reconstructions of three new measures.)

The main purpose of this article is to bring the whole manuscript to the attention of dance scholars. The subsequent discussion explores in more detail the reasons for the manuscript’s omission from the lists of similar documents. The article then places this document chronologically in relation to the seven previously known sources, and the connection of the four ‘new’ measures with tunes in the Mulliner Book. A discussion also airs what the Dulwich manuscript adds to our understanding of the old and new measures of the early modern English dance repertoire. The article concludes with a contribution to the debate concerning the relationship of these lists of measures to the Inns of Court in London.

**Report and transcript**

**Dulwich College MSS, 2nd Series XCIV, fol. 28**

**The manuscript**

Vol. XCIV consists of loose sheets of paper, of various dates and in no logical order, guarded on stubs inside a late-sixteenth-century binding to form a volume. The leaves have been foliated, probably at the time of binding. Despite Collier’s reputation, there is no reason to suppose that it is not late-sixteenth-century paper, ink, or handwriting. Fol. 28 all seems to be in the same hand, albeit with inconsistencies of spelling and some odd abbreviations: for example, the use of the ‘per/par’ abbreviation to mean either ‘par’ (as in ‘parte’) or simply as a flourish on the letter ‘p’ (as sometimes in ‘reprince’). It looks typical of English Secretary hands of the 1570s or 1580s, but I would not date it much earlier than that. Also, typically, the spelling and punctuation are erratic, and the latter is probably not always meaningful. The dance directions are written in two columns, divided by decorative paraphs and straight lines to compartmentalize the descriptions, and there are also additional pen-mark squiggles to fill up short lines of text. An oddity which may or may not mean anything is the use of suprascript ‘w’ above some of the titles (‘Tynterneall’, ‘Cicilia Pavyon’ & ‘Cicilia Allmane’) and occasionally elsewhere in the text above the word ‘twice’ (at the very end of ‘The Queens Allmane’, at the very end of the ‘Cicilia Pavyon’, at the end of the second line of ‘La down Sella’ and above the third word of ‘La bonetta’). But the use of the suprascript is not consistent.

**The dance description**

Collier’s transcript of the leaf is not always accurate, so here is a full transcript:

[page 2]

\[\text{column 1}\]

The Passing measure pavyo\(^{\ddagger}\).

2: singles and a double forward and 2 singles syde. Reprince back.

Tyrctoloney.

A double forward, reprince back 4 tymes 2 singles a double forward Reprince back twice, a double forward, Reprince back 4 tymes.

My Lo: [i.e. Lord] of Essex measure.

A double forward. one single syde 4 tymes 2 syngles syde a double forw= ward rep[ar]ins back.

Tynterneal\(^{\ddagger}\)w

A double forward Reprince back once 2 singles a double rownde bothe wayes / a double forward Reprince

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The Report and transcript is by Jennifer Thorp.

The Discussion that follows is by Anne Daye.
back 3 tymes 2 Syngles, a double round both ways.

The old Allmayne.
2 Syngles, a double rounde both ways 4 doubles forward, 2 singles a double round both ways.

The Queenes Allmane.
2 Singles forward cast of a double rounde, 2 singles syde
Repryne back twies, 4 doubles forward 2 singles forward, cast of a double rounde, 2 singles syde
Reprince back twyesW.

Cicilia PavyonW.
One Single a double forward one syngle syde, repryne back a double forward 2 Syngles syde and 6 back twiesW, 2 Singles a double forward Repryne back twyes, one single a double forward one Single syde. Rep[ar]jins back. A double forward 2 Syngles syde and 6 back TwyesW.

[column 2]

Cicilia AllmaneW.
2 Singles and a double forward, one Single syde twyse, p[ar]te / 2 singles syde and houer [i.e. honour?]. Change places w[i]th 2 Syngles and a double / then houer and imbrace 2 Singles syde, and houer,
2 Singles a double, into yo[e] owne place agayne, then houer and imbrace.

The Black Allman.
4 doubles forward p[ar]te a double back, a double forward a double Syde
Longe on the Lefte Legge and a double on the right Legge / 2 Singles forew= ward 2 singles round, one after another, by both handes a double rounde on the Left hand and travys 4.

Labonetta [crossed through] La down Sella
2 doubles forward 2 singles syde a double forward Rep[ar]jnce back twyseW,
2 Singles forward Cast of a double round twies, the pavyon over travis
4 forward Rep[ar]jnce bace [meaning back?] twyse.

La bonetta
The Pavyon twyseW over, 2. doubles forward 2 Singles Syde Rep[ar]jnce back twise, a double and 6. forward, one Single syde, Rep[ar]jnce back twise.

Lasche Mysa.
2 doubles forward 2 Syngles syde twise the pavyon once over, by both handes and a double rounde both ways p[ar]te a double syde

Longe on the on the right hand, 2 Syngles
Syde. Turne a double rounde on the Lefte hand, 2 Syngles syde and turne a double rounde on the right hand.

Lapassarella, {The layout and abbreviations of this dance differ from the rest, because crammed into a smaller space at the foot of the column}
2 doubles forward, 2. Longe singles syde, 2 syngles forward, cast of a double, and turn yo[e] & doe two singles & a double forward yo' other way. And turne yo[e] agayne at ye' end of the double / 4 doubles forward
2. Longe Singles syde A double forward p[ar]te & turne in a double Twyes. /

Discussion
The J.P. Collier problem
John Payne Collier (1789–1883), dubbed ‘literary editor and forger’ by his biographers4, was at the heart of burgeoning Shakespearean and literary scholarship in the nineteenth century. We can now trace the practices of Collier through the extensive work of Freeman and Freeman5. Involved in the founding of influential scholarly societies, such as The Shakespeare Society in 1840 (the prospectus offered ‘all the Documents which have reference to Shakespeare’s Life’)6, he was an industrious publisher of documents and narratives of English letters. The trouble was that he polluted his work with fraud. One of his influential tomes was A History of English Dramatic Poetry and Annals of the Stage published by John Murray in 1831. Freeman and Freeman state that ‘fabrications of historical evidence and documentary text are interspersed in an otherwise meticulous and original scholarly work’7. Drawn to the then ‘chaotic archives’8 at Dulwich College in pursuit of the Alleyn and Henslowe papers, he may have found the dance manuscript there, but no proof remains of that. Wherever he found it, he was intrigued by the title of the first dance as ‘the Passing measure paviyv with its echo of Toby Belch’s taunt in Twelfth Night 5, 1: ‘he’s a rogue, and a passy-measures pavin’. As the main editor (4 of 5 volumes) and contributor under a variety of pseudonyms, including J.P.C., to the Shakespeare Society Papers, he revealed his discovery in an article, number VII ‘Illustration of a Passage in Twelfth Night: the passing measures Pavin’ in Shakespeare Society Papers Volume 1 (1844). During the 1860s the authenticity of his work was challenged; nevertheless, at his death in 1883, his reputation was not so tarnished that his family were not able to make a profit from the sale of his books and manuscripts in August 1884. As stated above, William Young, governor of Dulwich College, attended the auction with the aim of revealing the fraudulent trends of Collier’s practice and regain ownership of Alleyn’s diary and other items once in Dulwich archives. He paid £3:15s for a mixed lot no. 1051, which included the dance manuscript9. The manuscript has remained in the Dulwich College archives ever since. The purchase was recorded and published in a catalogue of holdings by Bickley in 1903, described as ‘A curious list of dances, with directions; amongst them are My lo. of Essex Measure, The Queenes Allmaine, Cicilia
Figure 1. Dulwich College MS. XCIV/f.28.
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Pavyon. Cir. 1600” and indexed as ‘Dances, list of, 1600’10. If a dance historian had come across this record, they would have chased it up immediately. Meanwhile, scholars grew increasingly aware of the problem of Collier’s mixed but extensive legacy to the world of English letters, to the point where his name became synonymous with forgery and plagiarism.

Freeman and Freeman’s magisterial publication of 2004 is an exhaustive study of Collier and the extant documents, separating the fraudulent from the genuine. As item B190, they match Collier’s 1844 article with the Dulwich College manuscript without giving notice of any fraud, and the manuscript is not included in Appendix 1 of Collier’s Physical Forgeries11. That the document is a genuine sixteenth century manuscript is further attested by the scrutiny of expert Jennifer Thorp.

How was it ‘lost’, but now is ‘found’?

I was first alerted to the existence of the dance list by a query in 2014 from musicologist John Harley to the Historical Dance Society about the nature of the dances in Collier’s 1844 article and their relationship to tunes in the Mulliner book. His own queries led on to the Freemans’ identification of the original manuscript as in Dulwich College archives, information which he kindly passed on. Scrutinising the document in situ convinced me that it was genuine and worthy of serious consideration. It seemed to me that if it had been a complete forgery, the author had an unlikely grasp of sixteenth century dance for the era. However, an expert was needed to review the document and make a valid transcription.

It is clear that this important addition to lists of English measures was unknown to Melusine Woods in 1952 and Mabel Dolmetsch in 1959, as both only knew of MS. Rawl. Poet 10812. Ironically, Arnold Dolmetsch taught music at Dulwich College from 1885, but his music research at that time was undertaken in the library of the Royal College of Music. He was then married to his first wife: Mabel, who became his third wife and undertook dance research, became his pupil in 1896 on the advice of a friend who had been a pupil at Dulwich College13. Peter Cunningham was the first to collate and transcribe six manuscripts in 1965 concerning English measures, linking them to the social practices of the Inns of Court14. His work was revised and edited by David Wilson in 198815. Neither author indicates any awareness of Collier’s source.

A fresh edition of this group of dances was published by Ian Payne in 2003, including a seventh manuscript which came to light in 1981, as a result of the searches by Records of Early English Drama for the county of Somerset16. The Taunton manuscript had been transcribed and discussed by James Stokes and Ingrid Brainard in 1992, followed by an extended commentary by John Ward in 199317. Ward in note 16, p. 14 refers to Collier’s article, which he had also previously mentioned in note 53 of an article of 198818. In both notes, Ward unambiguously condemns Collier’s manuscript as a complete fabrication. Robert Mullally in 1994 was equally sceptical, doubting its very existence19. Payne therefore had no reason to think that a further original source with choreographies for the Mulliner tunes was in existence20. It was not until 2004 when Freeman and Freeman had published their book that the essential link between the much-doubted Collier item and the genuine manuscript was available to scholars. With an emphasis on items relating to Shakespeare and other significant poets and dramatists, the dance manuscript is very much a minor strand in the Freemans’ publication, only to be found by those looking for it.

Meanwhile the tunes that we can now link to three of the dances unique to the Dulwich College Manuscript had been published in Musica Britannica 1, the Mulliner book, edited by Denis Stevens in 1951 and 1973. These agreeable little tunes have consequently circulated freely among amateur and professional early musicians. A study of the collection by Jane Flynn mentions Collier’s publication, noting that he does not say who owned the manuscript21. The Mulliner book was edited again by John Caldwell in 2011: in acknowledging the dances in Collier, he says ‘Their implications for the metre of the music and its repetition schemes are unclear’, but was evidently unaware of the location of the original manuscript22.

The Mulliner book and three tunes

BL Add Ms. 30513 is a musical commonplace book by Thomas Mulliner23. Little can be determined about his life, except that he was a copyist of keyboard music. The history of the manuscript is unknown until it was in the possession of John Stafford Smith in the late eighteenth century. It passed through the hands of E. F. Rimbault and W. H. Cummings, who sold it to the British Library in 1877. Stafford Smith published the three dance tunes in Musica Antiqua 1812: La Bounette, La Doune Cella and La Shymyze. Stevens comments: ‘we may be faintly amused by his choice’, but Stafford Smith groups them with other dance tunes from Arbeau and English manuscripts presumably to offer an insight into social dancing of the time24. Mulliner copied the music between 1545 and 1575, but is likely to have completed most of it by 1560. Mulliner also copied four galliards and four pavans. The three tunes linked to the Dulwich College manuscript comprise simple two-part forms of tune and bass, and are grouped together: no. 13 La bounette in duple time; no. 14 La doune cella also in duple time; no. 15 La shy myze in compound duple time. Further study by Flynn demonstrates that the tunes had a circulation in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries as ballad tunes25. Flynn adds evidence of their currency as dances in the words to Canzonet 7 published by Giles Farnaby in 159826:

Pearce did dance with Petronella
La Siamise and La Duncella
Pretty almans that were new –
Such he danced, and nothing true.
But when Petronella danced without him
All the maids began to flout him.

It formed a pair with Canzonet 6 in which Pearce’s love for Petronella springs from her gallant dancing.

Dating the Dulwich College manuscript

Although Collier’s activities have shorn the manuscript of any context of authorship or place, there are clues to its date of composition. To start with, Thorp identifies the paper as late sixteenth century and the handwriting as typical of English Secretary hand of the 1570s to 1580s. The dance
tunes in the Mulliner book were transcribed c.1560, and were in circulation for ballads by c.1600, familiar to Farnaby as dances by 1598. A date of 1570–1590 for the manuscript is in line with the tune history of the new dances: tunes circulating as songs or instrumental pieces by 1560, being adopted for new dances as they became familiar, dances which are widely known by the 1590s.

The Dulwich College manuscript shares several features with MS Rawlinson Poet. 108 (Source A in Appendix 1) of the late 1560s that are not found in the later sources (C of 1594 to H of c. 1672). The first is the use of the term ‘repynce’ for a backwards step, replaced from Source C onwards by the term ‘double backwards’. ‘Repynce’ is used in the pavyon, Turcyloney, Lord of Essex measure, Tyntermeall and Cicilia Pavyon in both documents. It belongs to an older vocabulary for the fifteenth century basse dance. They both use the title ‘Lord’ of Essex rather than ‘Earl’ of Essex found later. Both documents offer a different choreography for The Queenes Allmane to that of subsequent versions. Cicilia Pavyon is only found in these two documents.

A few details in Source A are not shared with the Dulwich College manuscript alongside all the later Sources C to H. Source A is the only document to state that doubles should be hopped in The old Allmayne and The Queenes Allmane. It is the only document to add the term ‘le basse’ to Turculeoney and the only one not to include The Black Allman (although the dance called The new cycillia allemaine in Source A may be an early form of The Black Allman). This implies that the Dulwich College manuscript post-dates Source A.

The title ‘The Passing measure pavyon’ provides further means to place the Dulwich College manuscript chronologically. The choreography of the dance itself remains constant throughout all documents. In Source A it is titled ‘The pavyon’ but in Sources C to H it is titled ‘The Quadran Pavan’. As the dance remains the same throughout these documents, the differing titles must relate to the music, based on one of the chordal progressions known as the passamezzo antico or the passamezzo moderno. The passamezzo antico was known also as ‘passameasure’, ‘passing-measure’, ‘passy-measures’ or ‘passasmeasures pavon’ while the passamezzo moderno was known as the ‘quadro’ or ‘quadran’ pavon. The new chordal progression emerged in the late 1550s and the term began to circulate in the 1570s. Source A and the Dulwich College manuscript probably indicate the use of the older chordal progression of passamezzo antico, with the new passamezzo moderno or quadran pavon taking over in the late sixteenth century by Source C of 1594.37 In his edition of the Mulliner Book, Caldwell notes the use of the passamezzo antico for no. 124 (‘passing-measures pavon’) and no. 128 (a galliard) and use of the passamezzo moderno for no. 122 (pavion), indicating that both were current at the time of its composition.

As indicated above, the date of the Dulwich College manuscript is closely tied to the date of composition by Gunter of Source A. A few clues may help to ascertain this. Gunter, admitted to Lincoln’s Inn in 1563 and called to the bar in 1574, also copied into the commonplace book two masque speeches composed by Thomas Pound performed at Lincoln’s Inn in 1566 and 1567 on the folios following the dance list.38 Three of the dances are named after Cecilia, probably Princess Cecilia of Sweden who visited Queen Elizabeth between September 1565 and April 1566.39

A more challenging issue of dating is posed by the dance ‘my lord off Essex measures’ (Source A) and ‘My Lo: of Essex measure’ (Dulwich manuscript), later called ‘the Earle of Essex’. Up to 1571 the title was held by William Parr, who died without heir, when Queen Elizabeth granted it to Walter Devereux, 1st Earl of Essex in a new creation of 1572. From 1594 the dance of Source C would probably be considered to reference Walter Devereux, and the dances of Sources D to H would apparently reference Robert Devereux, 2nd Earl of Essex, the favourite of Queen Elizabeth. Is the switch from ‘Lord’ to ‘Earl’ in the title significant? The life of William Parr (1513–1571), brother to Katharine Parr, sixth wife of Henry VIII, was embroiled in the changing policies of the Tudor monarchs from Henry VIII to Elizabeth. Parr was created Earl of Essex in 1543, then Marquess of Northampton in 1547 by Edward VI, lost all titles under Mary Tudor, and was restored to them in 1559 by Elizabeth.40 As marquess is a higher rank than earl in the English peerage, did this mean he was commonly called ‘Lord of Essex’, ‘lord’ being a general honorific for marquesses, earls and barons? William Parr had studied voice and the virginals, and patronised the Bassano family of court musicians: the dance and its tune may have been composed by himself or by a court musician in his honour.41 The first concordance to the tune of the Earl of Essex measure as given in Source H is Tintelore d’Angleterre of 1559.42 The evidence is circumstantial but it might favour Parr as the Lord or Earl of Essex for whom or by whom the tune and dance were devised in circulation from 1559.

The Bodleian catalogue for Source A gives a date of c.1570 for the Gunter commonplace book. Payne proposes that the dance list was written earlier than 1570.43 Lincoln’s Inn hosted a special Candlemas revel in 1568: a possible stimulus for Gunter to note the measures.44 The best guess for dating Gunter’s note of the dances is between 1567 (the second masque) and 1570 (the commonplace book). It follows that the Dulwich College manuscript falls between 1570 and 1594 (Source B).

The content of the Dulwich College manuscript is certainly congruent with the paper on which it is written and the handwriting with which it is recorded in indicating a period of composition c. 1570–c. 1590. The record of the tunes for three of the new dances in the Mulliner book accords with this dating. This places it in a chronological order between Source A and Source C as Source B.

The Old Measures

Even within the dance vocabulary, the word ‘measure’ has several meanings, but here we are only concerned with ‘measure’ as a term for an English dance with a fixed choreography to a specific tune, current c. 1560–c. 1680. One group of such dances was known as ‘the old measures’: a label made very clear by Source C, the Taunton manuscript of 1594. The term is used again in Source D, where the same dances are listed first, followed by several others, while the list of Source F is called ‘a copey of the oulde measures’. The same list is found in Sources G and H of c. 1672. From this evidence, we can see that all eight sources present this list in exactly the same order (albeit interspersed with other
The masks revels (social dancing) of Oberon eyewitness made a similar observation concerning the processional Franco-German allemande. A Spanish Palace in 1584 by couples in columns but with significant differences: ‘the partners advanced a few paces, stepped back again, separated, changed their places, but in the right moment everybody found his partner again’. Only the differences: ‘the partners advanced a few paces, stepped back again, separated, changed their places, but in the right moment everybody found his partner again’. Only the highest in rank took part, and afterwards the young people danced galliards. His description evokes the figuring of The Black Allman: elementary patterning added to a well known dance. It is likely that The Black Allman was not an addition to the Old Measures from Source B onwards, but an alternative name for The New cyclia allemaine of Source A. Ward has pointed out that a broadside ballad of 1570 calls for ‘the newe tune of the Blakke Almaine upon Scissillia’, linking the two titles. The choreographies of the two dances are very similar, the small differences could be due to changes across time, and that of The New cyclia allemaine fits perfectly well to the tune we know as The Blakke Almaine.

The Old Measures, and the others in the same vein, were vernacular to English dance practice. The measures are adaptations of French genres, particularly the almain, in constructing set step sequences to a particular tune, moving through simple figures going forwards, backwards, changing places and alternation between partners. As stated in Arbeau, the allemande in France was a simple processional form: ‘qu’il ny a guieres de diversitez de mouvemens’ (‘there are no variations in the movements’). The French form of the almain was close to the German dance. Lupold von Wedel recognised a dance in the German fashion at Greenwich Palace in 1584 by couples in columns but with significant differences: ‘the partners advanced a few paces, stepped back again, separated, changed their places, but in the right moment everybody found his partner again’. Only the highest in rank took part, and afterwards the young people danced galliards. His description evokes the figuring of The Black Allman: elementary patterning added to a processional Franco-German allemande. A Spanish eyewitness made a similar observation concerning the masque revels (social dancing) of Oberon in 1611: ‘y danzaron Una danza ynglesa que llaman las mesuras que es como pabana’ (‘they danced an English dance called the measures resembling a pavan’). Corantoes and galliards followed. However, it should be noted that the Pavin (passing measures or quadran) is not truly an English measure, but exactly the same as the French form as described by Arbeau. The pavans in Sources A and B predate Arbeau’s information by two decades, which may account for the reprynce back rather than the double back as given from Source C onwards. Arbeau states: ‘La pavane est facile à danser, car il n’y a que deux simples & un double, en marchant & savanceant. Et deux simples & un double en reculant & desmarchant’ (‘The pavane is easy to dance, as there are only two singles and one double, going forward and advancing. And two singles and one double going backward and retreating’). The second pair of singles must be danced in place, that is sideways, if any progression is to be made overall. He adds that it could also be danced going forwards only and not retreating. Arbeau records that this pavane opens all grand occasions when it is also known as le grand bal. Such a practice is recorded in many French documents, for example the opening of the ball following Le Ballet Comique de la Royne of 1581, when the royal and noble women dancers led out the noble men ‘pour danser le grand Bal’. The shift from calling this dance simply ‘pavay’ (Source A) to ‘The Passing measure pavyon’ (Source B: The Dulwich College manuscript) then ‘The Quadr Pavin’ (Source C) thereafter suggests that any tune will suit this dance, whereas the other choreographies are matched to specific tunes. I suggest the longevity of the pavane can be attributed to its functionality as an opening grand procession for all participants, whether skilled dancers (for whom it mobilises the limbs) or not, the play of forward momentum with small retreat creating a magnificent, dignified and almost mesmerising spectacle.

**New Measures**

The Dulwich College manuscript (Source B) confirms that the Cicilia Pavyon was included for a time, then dropped. The tune was still in circulation in 1584, for the ballad ‘Heart, what makes thee thus to be’ in A Handefull of pleasant delites but is now lost to us. The Dulwich manuscript extends the life of the pavane as a dance, which Ward (1993) considers in decline between Source A and Source C. Not only does Source B include the two pavans of Source A, but the four ‘new’ measures include the basic figure of the pavane.

The four additional dances, in Dulwich College Ms Source B are in the same vein of straightforward dances in pairs, probably danced by several couples at the same time, as the Old Measures, and also the other dances in Source A: lorayne Allemayne, Brownwycythe, The newe allmayne, The longe pavian; Source D: The Ladye Laytons Measures, The Measures of Heaven and Earth, Basillina; Sources G and H: Argulius. The manuscript reinforces the pattern that new dances on familiar tunes came into usage and then fell away, leaving a core of eight that persisted as The Old Measures.

Ward considers that the English measures evolved from the basse dance mesures. While acknowledging that vestiges of the older basse dance are apparent (the term ‘measure’, the addition of ‘le basse’ to Turculoney in Source A and the use of reprynce, presumably the ‘reprise’ of the basse dance), from a choreographic perspective these dances differ significantly. As the Dulwich College dances and their music demonstrate, the choreographic units of the dances fit the strains of the music, as do all the measures which can be matched to their tunes. The mesures of a fifteen century basse dance were set to a tenor of the required length, providing a pulse for the stepping but no relationship
between choreographic structure and musical structure. Furthermore, basse dance *mesures* comprise sequences of steps in formulaic patterns, punctuated by branles, a structure completely absent from the measures. Basse dances travel forwards only, whereas the measures have rudimentary figuring. The measures are a new form of dance for England in the sixteenth century, and any direct connection with basse dance structure is speculative, in the absence of any surviving transitional choreographies.

**The Measures at Court and at the Inns of Court**

Sources A, C, D list other dances from the court and international repertoire ranging from those modest in skill such as *The Spaniolletta* to the virtuoso, improvised dances for one couple alone such as the galliard. The Nyne Muses of Source A is unique: often considered a masque dance, I have proposed that it was another form of the English measure. These three sources therefore demonstrate the same division as at court revels of commencing with the easy measures danced in company, followed by the more demanding and fashionable dances of the international court repertoire; the division was dubbed the Solemn Revels and the Post-Revels. The records of Jacobean masques indicate repertoire; the division was dubbed the Solemn Revels and the Post-Revels. The records of Jacobean masques indicate the custom in the revels (the social centrepiece of a masque) of dancing measures followed by the challenging improvised dances. Very little useful evidence exists for the Caroline masques. They are called ‘the ordinary measures’ and ‘the common measures’ at Whitehall in 1604, ‘the solemn revels’ in 1613, and otherwise simply ‘the measures’. In Browne’s text for *The Inner Temple Masque* of 1615 performed by the gentlemen of the Inner Temple, he states that they danced ‘the old measures’. It may be significant that the sole use of the term ‘the old measures’ occurs for a masque performed at one of the Inns of Court. The English measures were common to the court and the Inns of Court, but no record links the specific group of eight dances comprising ‘the old measures’ to the court itself.

**Whose lists?**

The fact that the author of the Dulwich College manuscript is unknown raises the question anew of whether the group of eight manuscripts comprises a repertoire specifically and exclusively belonging to the Inns. Only Sources G and H are firmly linked to an Inn: Butler Buggins being the Master of the Revels for Inner Temple in 1672, 1674 and 1675, although there is no record for his admission.

Edward Gunter is most likely to be the author of Source A, being admitted to Lincoln’s Inn in 1563 and called to the bar in 1574. At Candlemas 1568, Lincoln’s Inn hosted the gentlemen of the Middle Temple to dance at their revels before Edward Manners, Earl of Rutland, a likely occasion for a date of composition. Elias Ashmole 1617–1692 was the author of Source F, entitled ‘A copye of the olde measures’ while he notes that ‘Rowland Osborne taught me to dance these measures’. Although admitted to the Middle Temple in November 1660, recorded in November 1657 when he was forty, Ashmole was studying law in London from 1633 at the age of sixteen, and practiced from the age of twenty-one. The single sheet of paper listing the Old Measures is said to be in either a childish hand or roughly noted. As Wilson notes, the list is likely to have dated from c. 1630: on arriving in London from Lichfield, Ashmole sought to master dances common to the revels of the Inns.

Despite efforts to make links between the Old Measures and dancing at the Inns of Court, it must be admitted that two (Sources B and E) cannot be linked at all and three (Sources C, D & F) can only be linked speculatively while one (Source A) has a clear connection to the Inns of Court, and two (Sources G and H) have undoubted association. It is worth noting here that the domestic records of the four Inns are also incomplete.

**Customary dancing at the Inns of Court**

From a dance historian’s perspective, Ward’s proposal that the Old Measures represent the London dancing masters’ curriculum is problematic. No doubt novices of any age were taught old and new measures but whether a pupil would need to write such simple dances down to remember them is unlikely, particularly in an age when people were much more confident in relying on their memories. It is more likely that the sequence for each dance and the order in which they were danced had a high significance.

Dancing on the Grand Days of Hallowmas (1st November) and Candlemas (2nd February) in the presence of the Judges, as well as at Christmas in general and other feasts had been an important part of life at the Inns of Court since the fifteenth century. The principal aspect of the revels was the dancing of all men of the Inn together, benchers, barristers and gentlemen students, and attendance was compulsory. Sir Robert Brewood, writing 1634–38, describes the organisation of the dancing at Grays Inn during his membership from 1607, indicative of the practices of all four Inns. Two Readers were appointed for a year at a time, whose duties included ceremonial leadership as well as responsibilities for education and management of the Inn. When directing the dancing one (dubbed ‘the ancient’) stood at the Bar of the hall, bearing a white staff and the other stood at the Cupboard in the hall, bearing a white rod. When the music began, the Master of the Revels was called twice.
At the second call, the ancient, with his white staff in his hand, advanceth forward, and begins to lead the measures, followed first by the Barristers, then the Gentlemen under the Bar, all according to their several antiquities: and when one measure is ended, the Reader at the Cupboard calls for another, and so on in order.

These measures were wont to be trulied danced, it being accounted a shame for an Inns of Court man not to have learned to dance, especially the measures, but now their dancing is turned into bare walking.

When the last measure is dancing, the Reader at the Cupboard, calls to one of the Gentlemen of the Barre, as he is walking, or dancing with the rest, to give the Lords, His Majesty’s Judges, a song, who forthwith begins the first line of any Psalmie, such as he takes best. After which, all the rest of the Company follow and sing with him.

Likewise besides the solemn Revels or Measures aforesaid, they were wont to be commonly entertained either with post Revels, performed by the better Sorte of the younger Gentlemen of the Society, with Galliards, Corantos and other dances, or else with Stage plaies… But these post Revels of late years have been disused, both here, and in the other Inns of Court, to the great impairment of their honour and reputation.

The office of Reader at Gray’s Inn was only held for one year, so a succession of barristers had to be familiar with the order and choreography of the measures: a responsibility that would lead to the need for an aide-memoire. As Brerewood states, dancing the Post-Revels of galliards and corantoes had stopped in the mid-1630s, which may be attributed to shifting fashions in the ballroom, but the customary measures, on the other hand, are being kept up, even if only walked.

The Inns of Court persisted in maintaining the practice of dancing the measures in the face of all kinds of opposition and resistance. Although the measures were wont to be trulied danced, it being accounted a shame for an Inns of Court man not to have learned to dance, especially the measures, but now their dancing is turned into bare walking.

At the Restoration, the practice of dancing attracted the patronage of the king, and was known in London sufficiently well for Shadwell to make a joke about it in The Virtuoso first performed in 1676. As a satire on the new experimental science of the Royal Society, Sir Nicholas Gimcrack tests three tarantulas’ appreciation of music by playing them ‘a grave Pavin, or Almain, at which the black Tarantula only moved, it danced to it with a kind of grave motion, much like the Benchers at the Revels’.

So highly valued was the customary social dancing of the Inns of Court that the senior lawyers insisted on the maintenance of the custom into the eighteenth century. On 25th November 1704, the Inner Temple Bench ordered ‘that the ancient exercise of dancing be revived, and that it begin the first Saturday in next term’. They attempted to enforce a fine for not dancing but soon dropped the order. At Lincoln’s Inn in November 1706 musicians were paid ‘for the gentlemen to dance’ and ten years’ later special arrangements were made for guests to view ‘the usual entertainment of musick and dancing’.

The Dulwich College Manuscript is an addition to the series of manuscripts recording sixteenth and seventeenth century dances, all of which include the sequence of eight identified as the Old Measures. While measures formed part of the contemporary dance repertoire of sixteenth century London, by the 1590s they had become a traditional practice at all four Inns of Court. We deduce that the maintenance of the custom into the eighteenth century. On 25th November 1704, the Inner Temple Bench ordered ‘that the ancient exercise of dancing be revived, and that it begin the first Saturday in next term’. They attempted to enforce a fine for not dancing but soon dropped the order. At Lincoln’s Inn in November 1706 musicians were paid ‘for the gentlemen to dance’ and ten years’ later special arrangements were made for guests to view ‘the usual entertainment of musick and dancing’.

Conclusion

The Dulwich College Manuscript is an addition to the series of manuscripts recording sixteenth and seventeenth century dances, all of which include the sequence of eight identified as the Old Measures. While measures formed part of the contemporary dance repertoire of sixteenth century London, by the 1590s they had become a traditional practice at all four Inns of Court. We deduce that the maintenance of the custom into the eighteenth century. On 25th November 1704, the Inner Temple Bench ordered ‘that the ancient exercise of dancing be revived, and that it begin the first Saturday in next term’. They attempted to enforce a fine for not dancing but soon dropped the order. At Lincoln’s Inn in November 1706 musicians were paid ‘for the gentlemen to dance’ and ten years’ later special arrangements were made for guests to view ‘the usual entertainment of musick and dancing’.

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musicians played the correct tunes, found it expedient to write the Old Measures down. The person most likely to need a handy list would be the man in charge of the dancing at a revel. This might be a young gentleman elected Master of the Revels, a barrister chosen as Reader or someone deputised to manage this aspect of a revel. Butler Buggins is evidently such a man, noting down 'The old measures of the Inner Temple London as they were first begun and taught by Robert Holeman a dancing master before 1640 and continu’d ever since in the Inner-Temple Hall’77. Such a requirement explains the survival of manuscripts by a variety of individuals and with links to different Inns.

Customary practice in education and social life had an important function in maintaining the principle of the Inns as societies living in commons, as the Inns had no legal charter unlike universities. As Baker notes ‘By a combination of trust, agency, contract and custom…the inns of court preserved the medieval concept of a fellowship or community without recourse to incorporation’78. This helps to explain the significance of the custom of dancing and its continuation in the face of resistance and passing fashion. Dancing, therefore, was a highly-valued practice of the legal community. From the records of the honourable societies of the Inns of Court, and associated documents, a more extensive history of dancing at the Inns could be written. Meanwhile, this exploration of the dancing of the old measures at the Inns of Court provides a context for understanding the anonymous and undated Dulwich College Manuscript.

References
3 Freeman & Freeman, 1, 460.
5 Freeman & Freeman 2004.
6 Freeman & Freeman 2004, 1, 343.
7 Freeman & Freeman 2004a.
8 Freeman & Freeman 2004, 1, 344.
9 Freeman & Freeman 2004, 2, 1002, 1004.
11 Freeman & Freeman 2004, vol 2, 1360; 1031–1032.
15 Wilson, D. Dancing in the Inns of Court. Historical Dance, 2, (5) 1986/7, 3–16
24 Stevens 1951, 15; Stafford Smith, J. Musica Antiqua: a Selection of Music of this and other Countries from the Commencement of the Twelfth to the Beginning of the Eighteenth Century. Preston, London, 1812, 1, 38.
25 Flynn, 347–349
The identity of the Old Measures was first stated by Cunningham (1965) as seven, omitting The Black Allman as it was not in Source A, and he had no knowledge of Sources B and C; now considered as eight by all commentators since.

Ward, 1957, 163, n. 38


Stokes & Brainard 1992, 3 have misread Arbeau re the French pavane and Ward 1993, 4 does not link English and French practice of the pavane and continues to identify the English record as a ‘measure’.

Arbeau 1596, 28v; my translation.

Arbeau, 1596, 29v.


Payne 2003, 14.

Wilson 1987, 8.


Ward 1993 goes on to identify the old measures as the ritual dances of the Inns, 6–9.

Brewood, R. The Middle Temple. Middle Temple: Loft MS103.

Brewood, 15–17.


Hopwood 1903, 69–70.

Hopwood 1903, 69.

Hopwood 1903, 163.

Shadwell, T. The Virtuoso. London: Herringman, London, 1676, act 3, iii. While the allusion might have been enjoyed by the Restoration audiences, modern editors of the play do not understand it at all, concluding the bench must be a pub bench, not a senior lawyer: Nicolson, M.H. (ed.) Shadwell: The Virtuoso, Edward Arnold, London, 1966.

Walker, J.D. (ed.) The Records of the Honorable Society
Appendix 1. The eight manuscripts of English measures

The summary below provides a guide to the 8 known sources for the purposes of this article. Full transcripts for A, D – H are available in Wilson and Payne, and C in Payne.


A 1568–1570 GB-Ob, MS Rawlinson Poet. 108, fols. 10r – 11r (also known as the Gunter ms)
The old measures, and lorayne Allemayne, Brownswycke, The newe allemayne, The longe pavian, The new cycillia allemaine, Cycyliya pavyan, Caranto (or Quanto) dyspayne and The nyne muses

B c. 1570–90 Dulwich College MSS, 2nd Series XCIV, fol. 28
The old measures, and Cicilia Pavyon, La down Sella, La Bonetta, Lasche Mysa and Lapassarella

C 1594 Taunton, Somerset Record Office, DD/WO 55/7, Item 36 (also known as the Willoughby ms)
The olde Measures, and The Galliard

D c. 1609 GB-OB, MS Douce 280, fols 66(a)v – 66(b)v

E c. 1611–1621 GB-Lbl, MS Harley 367, fols 178r – 9v
The old measures

F c. 1630 GB-Ob, MS Rawlinson D864, fols 199r-v
The old measures (on fols 203r- 204v Coranto Dance with diagram and The First Corantt with diagram)

(also known as Buggins ms.)
The old measures, details of the revels ceremony, and dances Sinke a pace, Argulius measure

H c. 1672 GB-Lem, MS 1119, fols 1r – 2v
The old measures, details of the revels ceremony, and dances Tricatees, Argulius and An Holy Dance. Also tunes for The House Measure, Essex Measure, The Black Almain and Argulius

Appendix 2. The old measures

The spellings are varied across the 8 manuscripts, here given as in B Dulwich. The dances are essentially the same in choreography, allowing for variants in the informal note by each scribe, and changes across time.

The Passing measure pavyon
Turculoney
My Lo: of Essex measure
Tynterneall
The old Allmayne
The Queenes allmane
Cycilia Allemane
The Black Allman
Appendix 3. Reconstructions of the New Measures

La down Sella [La Damselle]

Dance

La down Sella
Dulwich College MS. XCIVf.28

Music

La doune cella
Melody line by Paul Kent
Repeat scheme: AABBCD
Tune repeated as many times as wished

For several couples, one behind the other, travelling forwards.

A
Honour to the presence, honour to partner

A1
1 – 6 2 doubles forward L, R; 2 singles sideways L, R;
7 - 10 L double forward, R reprise back

A2
Repeat the above

B1 + B2
2 singles forward L, R; L double casting off to face the other way.
2 singles forward R, L; R double casting off to face forward again.

C1 + C2
2 singles forward L, R; L double forwards;
2 singles sideways R, L; R double backwards (the pavyon)

D1 + D2
4 quick sideways steps diagonally forwards L (‘travis’);
R reprise back. Repeat

Steps
Called an almain in Farnaby’s Canzonet, which suggests the single and double finishing with a raised foot. It is suggested that the reprise is performed as one step diagonally backwards in the time of a double. The ‘travis’ can be four sideways steps (slips) in the time of a double step. The reprise and travis are best done finishing with closing both feet. By using opposite feet throughout (man leading with L, woman leading with R), the dance becomes more sociable.

La doune cella

![La doune cella notation]

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Page 38 Historical Dance Volume 4, Number 3, 2018
La Bonetta [La Bonnette]

DANCE
La bonetta
Dulwich College MS. XCIVf.28

MUSIC
La bounette
Melody line by Paul Kent
Repeat scheme: AABBC
Tune repeated as many times as wished

For several couples, one behind the other, travelling forwards

A
Honour to the presence, honour to partner

A1
2 singles forward L, R; L double forwards;
2 singles sideways R, L; R reprise (the pavyon).

A2
Repeat the above

B1
2 doubles forward L, R; 2 singles sideways L, R; L reprise back

B2
2 doubles forward R, L; 2 singles sideways R, L; R reprise back

C1
L double forwards; 6 paces forwards starting with the R foot;
R single sideways, L reprise back.

C2
R double forwards; 6 paces forwards starting with the L foot;
L single sideways, R reprise back.

STEPS
There is no information on the steps, but closed singles and doubles as in the pavyon will fit.
‘6 forward’ probably means six walking steps, 2 to each bar.

La bounette
Lasche Mysa [La Chemise]

**Dance**

Lasche Mysa  
Dulwich College MS. XCIV/f.28

**Music**

La shy myze  
Melody line by Paul Kent  
Repeat scheme: AABBCDDD  
Tune repeated as many times as wished

For several couples, one behind the other, travelling forwards

**A**

Honour to the presence in 4 bars, short honour to partner in 2 bars

**A1**

2 doubles forward L, R; 2 singles sideways L, R

**A2**

Repeat the above

**B1 + B2**

2 singles L, R forwards, L double forwards;  
2 singles R, L sideways, R reprise (the pavyon)

**C1**

Giving both hands to partner, L double crossing into partner’s place, then R double crossing home

**C2**

Letting go hands, L double sideways left, R double sideways right

**D1 + D2**

2 singles sideways L, R; L double to turn single left;  
2 singles sideways R, L; R double to turn single right

**Steps**

Called an almain in Farnaby’s Canzonet, almain steps will suit the dance, perhaps also for the pavyon figure.

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La shy myze

![Musical notation for La shy myze](image-url)