

Introduction

In 1992, in the library of the French town of Tournus, an anonymous music manuscript was discovered, which for insiders was nothing less than a sensation. For on the basis of concordances with other manuscripts, Jonathan Dunford was able to establish that almost all the pieces in this collection of music for viola da gamba solo were by Sainte-Colombe.¹⁵ Sainte-Colombe has been known to all viol players since Paul Hooreman published a new edition of the *Concerts a deux violes esgales du Sieur de Sainte-Colombe* in 1973.¹⁶ In 1998 François-Pierre Goy made the Tournus collection available in a facsimile edition,¹⁷ but until now there has not been an edition for practical use. With the present edition, we would like to close this lacuna and make our contribution so that Sainte-Colombe's solo music can be played by a larger number of viola da gambists.

Sainte-Colombe had a great influence on the development of French viol music, and is today considered the most important viol player and composer in France before Marin Marais. But who was Sainte-Colombe? In fact, the details of the personal circumstances of this important man are to the present day largely obscure. In the introductions to his facsimile editions **Go-T** and **Go-E**, François-Pierre Goy compiled everything that is known or presumed, so that we can limit ourselves here to a summarization. Sainte-Colombe lived in Paris. His year of his birth is not known. He died between 1692 and 1701. There are a number of reports by contemporaries in which "Monsieur de Sainte-Colombe" is acknowledged as an excellent viol player and teacher. His teacher was Nicolas Hotman (*d* 1663), his most prominent pupils were Jean Rousseau (1644–ca.1699, *Traité de la viole* 1687) and Marin Marais (1656–1728, *Tombeau po^r. M^r. de S^{te}. Colombe* 1701). Thirty-six pieces by a "Mr. de Ste. Colombe, Le fils," including a *Tombeau po^r. M^r. de S^{te}. Colombe le père*, are found in a manuscript in Durham (**D**).¹⁸ These could thus be compositions by a son of our Sainte-Colombe, but this has not been substantiated. The above-mentioned contemporary witnesses mention daughters who played viol, but not a son. In our time, attempts have occasionally been made to identify the gambist Sainte-Colombe with a person documented elsewhere, but questions always remain unanswered. Jonathan Dunford's identification of the gambist as the Parisian citizen Jean de Sainte-Colombe, who is mentioned with his family a number of times in documents, seems the most likely. But evidence that this is our gambist is lacking. If this identification is correct, then "Sainte-Colombe" would be a real name. The name could also point to origins from a country estate, or be a pseudonym. We do not know.

The preserved manuscripts with pieces by Sainte-Colombe have cross connections among themselves, so that the Tournus manuscript (**T**), on which this edition is based, cannot be regarded in isolation. A majority of the pieces in **T** are also present in the two Edinburgh manuscripts (**E**). While **T**, however, was written very consistently and almost error-free by a professional copyist, **E** is in a rather amateurish hand and contains many questionable passages; moreover, the two versions are at times widely divergent.¹⁹ The copyist of **T** also wrote the manuscript of the *Concerts* (**P**), just as carefully and virtually flawless. There are also a series of concordances between **T** and **P**. Only **P** is explicitly attributed to "Sieur de Sainte-Colombe" in its title, while **T** and **E** are in principle anonymous collections, but the mentioned concordances allow no doubt concerning the attribution to Sainte-Colombe.

¹⁵ Introduction to **Go-T**. Concerning the abbreviations, see "Manuscripts and Editions" on page XVI.

¹⁶ **Ho**.

¹⁷ **Go-T**.

¹⁸ Edition in **Du**.

¹⁹ This circumstance led to our decision to publish only the pieces from **T** here (and not all the pieces from **T** and **E**), since otherwise we would have had to provide two versions of all the pieces that appear in both manuscripts, yet without effecting a significant increase in the musical content.

Manuscript **T** contains individual pieces that are arranged according to key, but are otherwise unordered. The sequence of keys – D Major, D Minor, G major, G Minor, C Major – is not coincidental: the three lower strings of the six-string viol are tuned to D, G, and C.²⁰ It is assumed that Sainte-Colombe introduced the seventh string (AA) on the viol in France. This thesis is also supported by the fact that this seventh string is required in most of the pieces in **T**. The pieces in G Minor are exceptions to this: they are written for a six-string viol. The majority of the 143 pieces,²¹ namely ninety-seven, are in D Minor. Twelve pieces are in D Major, thirteen in G Major, five in G Minor, and sixteen in C Major. Most have a title: Allemande (9), Ballet (7), Chaconne (2), Courante (22), Gavotte (12), Gigue (22), La persiliade (1), Menuet (5), Petite pièce (11), Pianelle²² (2), Prélude (31), Sarabande (15), Vielle (1), but three pieces are without title. In our edition, the pieces are in the same order as in manuscript **T**. In addition to the original titles, we have provided them with consecutive numbers in square brackets.²³ These numbers relate to all the pieces in manuscript **T** and are therefore identical to the numberings in the indices in **Go-T**. However, the numbers of the ten pieces not by Sainte-Colombe are absent in our edition. There is only one set of duplicates, however in quite different versions: Courantes [30] and [88]. In our edition, we spell the names of the pieces uniformly according to modern French orthography (as in the indices in **Go-T**).

In his compositions, Sainte-Colombe ignored many rules that we are accustomed to. This especially concerns rhythm. There are long passages or whole pieces without bar lines (see Fig. 1). The bar lines have consciously not been, and should not be, amended here. In these free passages, the player him/herself has to decide where to place emphasis and how to apportion the music in a sensible manner. These free passages are primarily to be found in the *préludes*. In places where a meter is given and there are bar lines, we frequently ascertain that the number of beats is not quite right; there are often a couple small notes too many (see, for example, Fig. 2): the meter is 3/4, yet the second and third measures contain a sixteenth note or two too many. There are likewise passages with too few notes. In these cases, in contrast to the completely free passages, it is expected that the performer maintain the meter as in the surrounding measures and accommodate the “false” number of notes in a musically sensible way.



Figure 1: [4] Beginning. Notation without bar lines.



Figure 2: [6] m. 49f. Too many notes in 3/4 meter.

²⁰ The *Concerts* (**P**) are likewise sorted according to these keys and ordered in this sequence.

²¹ Duplicates are not counted individually. **T** contains a total of 153 pieces, but ten of them are not by Sainte-Colombe. Of the 143 Sainte-Colombe pieces in **T**, sixty-seven have concordances in **E**, and six in **P**.

²² The dance form “pianelle,” which is only found in Sainte-Colombe, is derived from “pianella,” French for “lady’s slipper,” and denotes a fast dance in triple meter. Concerning this, see the Preface to **Ho**, p. XV.

²³ See “Alle Stücke im Manuskript von Tournus *All the Pieces in the Tournus Manuscript*” on page VIII.