

William Flackton

A Pious and Galant Gentleman in Canterbury



MASTER'S THESIS

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William Flackton: A Pious and Galant Gentleman in Canterbury

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Painting on front page: Amateurs of Tye-Wig Music ('Musicians of the Old School') c.1820, by Edward Francis Burney (1760-1848), located at the Tate Britain in London. Oil on canvas. Burney's uncle was the famous Dr. Charles Burney, the musicologist who was a prominent figure in London's musical life around the time that the respective merits of 'old' and 'new' music were debated; the 'old' music being the style of Archangelo Corelli and the 'new' music being the *galant style* introduced by German composers such as J.C. Bach and C.F. Abel. The musicians in this painting wear tye-wigs, which were typically worn in the eighteenth century, but outdated by 1800, and became the symbol of old-fashioned music. This painting portrays the battle between 'modern' and 'traditional' taste in the music world and is full of subtle allusions. The modern is represented by music scores of Beethoven, Mozart and Haydn that have been thrown into the burning fireplace, while traditional taste is epitomized by Handel, whose bust looks down upon a group of musicians dressed appropriately and playing music by his great contemporary A. Corelli. The first violinist is authoritatively stomping his foot in an attempt to keep a pulse in the group, the second violinist is lost in his music because it is turned upside down, the cellist has his bow behind the fingerboard instead of on the strings, the flautist is so busy with his own playing that he doesn't realize that a parrot is lifting his wig off his head, the organist is frightened by the sudden cloud of smoke from the candle blown out by her colleague and last, but not least the violist is tucked away, playing with all his might, so concentrated that his mouth has dropped open and he doesn't realize that his bow is poking into a sleepy, or bored, listener's mouth.

Content

Introduction.....	4
CONTEXT.....	7
Chorister, Bookseller, Composer.....	7
Corellian vs. Galant Style.....	10
Who inspired whom?	11
Why the Tenor?	13
‘A Glorious Chase’	15
ANALYSIS.....	17
Andante.....	18
Allegro.....	21
Minuetto 1mo and 2do.....	26
Conclusion.....	28
Bibliography.....	30

Introduction

William Flackton, the man who composed the first solo sonata especially written for the viola, is not a widely known composer. When discovered by violists in search of idiomatic and elegant baroque solo music, it comes like the joy of receiving a pleasant surprise. A 'quiet achiever', as Luke Agati calls Flackton in the foreword of his small but most helpful biography of the composer, is rather fitting. It is always surprising when violists, specializing in early music, are not familiar with Flackton's Op. 2, which contains three solos for the 'tenor violin' (by which is meant the viola). An exact copy of the first printed edition, which is located in the British Library, is easily found in the comfort of one's home on the website IMSLP.¹ However a simple search of 'viola' in that website leads to a modest list of works written or transcribed for the viola, but excludes Flackton's work. Even in the list of 'original works' it does not appear. Furthermore, when searching 'viola' in a particularly accessible website such as Wikipedia, one would expect Flackton's name to be found between Telemann and Hoffmeister, but unfortunately is not mentioned. Only when 'viola continuo' or 'Flackton' are typed into IMSLP, do the *Six Solos Three for a Violoncello Three for a Tenor* appear as a result. This means that anyone hoping to find new viola music with the use of IMSLP would have to have heard of the composer beforehand. Admittedly, the only way I came to know Flackton was during my first viola lesson in 2013 with the great violist Jane Rogers, who introduced me to the 'sweet and simple' *Sonata VI*, yet at that time not at all simple for me. Sweet it was, thus, it motivated me to learn more about this unknown supplier of delightful viola music.

This is how my research began, prompted by the simple fact that there was practically nothing about Flackton to be found. Through all possible channels available to me at the universities of Utrecht and Amsterdam, and the Conservatory of Amsterdam I could not even find a simple biography. Apart from the entry in the New Grove (Online) and his solos on IMSLP, Flackton seemed barely to have existed. However, one dissertation written in 1991 by George G. Rosenbaum at the University of North Texas, USA, did lead me in the right

¹ <http://imslp.org/>

² Luke Agati, *William Flackton, 1709-1798: Life & Times of a Canterbury Musician* (Faversham:

direction. Subsequently the advice of Margaret Faultless (Prof. Music at Cambridge and the Royal College of Music London) to visit the British Library in London, opened new doors. There I found the very helpful and seemingly only existing biography of William Flackton written by the aforementioned Luke Agati.² When I played Flackton's *Sonata VI* in a group lesson, the teacher Margaret Faultless was surprised by this music unknown to her and excitedly asked the class which composer Flackton's music reminded them of: The answer was 'Antonio Corelli'! After some searching, the specific sonata in which Flackton must have found his inspiration is Corelli's *Op.5 sonata no.1*.

At this point there are two main questions that arise, the first is why he would have written such a piece specifically for the viola. In the preface of his *Six Solos* he gives a surprising, yet not completely clarifying reason for writing the music: 'the solos for a Tenor Violin are intended to shew that Instrument in a more conspicuous Manner, than it has hitherto been accustomed.'³ Flackton himself is said to have played the instrument, alongside the violin and the organ, but considering that the cello sonatas in the *Six Solos* were written for a Sir William Young, Baronet Lieutenant Governor who was an amateur cellist, one would expect the viola sonatas to have been written with a similar player in mind. The second question: Flackton, who was at least two generations younger than Corelli (1653-1713), worked in the period that is known as the Rococo in fine art, the Age of Enlightenment in philosophy and the *Galant Style* in music,⁴ which makes one wonder why he was so inspired by Corelli's style of composing. Even in Flackton's time this style was considered old-fashioned. After comparing the two sonatas it is clear that Flackton has incorporated contemporary figures that are not found in any of Corelli's violin sonatas. Did Flackton as a well-to-do bookseller in Canterbury happen to publish and sell Corelli's music? As pointed out to me by Shunske Sato,⁵ (concertmaster of the Netherlands Bach Society) Flackton uses signs that are seen in Geminiani's treatise *On Playing the Violin* (1751). The noteworthy fact that Flackton thanks 'Mr. Abel' for having checked

² Luke Agati, *William Flackton, 1709-1798: Life & Times of a Canterbury Musician* (Faversham: Faversham Society, 2002).

³ William Flackton, *Six Solos, Three for a Violoncello and Three for a Tenor, Accompanied Either with a Violoncello or Harpsichord*, Opera 2 (London: C.&S. Thompson, 1770), preface. Housed in the British Library, London (shelf mark Music Collections g.271.m.(13.))

⁴ Daniel Hertz, *Music in European Capitals: The Galant Style, 1720-1780* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2003), 3.

⁵ Personal communication with Shunske Sato 5 September 2015.

the manuscript of the *Six Solos* before it went to the press, gives the impression that this could have influenced Flackton to add contemporary motifs and figures in the otherwise Corellian sonatas.

Mister Abel, I later realized, was of course the famous Carl Friedrich Abel who together with Johann Christian Bach, the youngest son of J.S. Bach, held the successful Bach-Abel subscription concerts in London where many important, and still famous today, musicians and composers performed. By looking at the life and works of C.F. Abel, the period in which Flackton lived started to become clear to me. Through a detailed analysis of *Sonata VI*, in which Flackton's sonata is compared to Corelli's violin sonata and the style motifs of C.F. Abel, and through research into the publishers and luthiers who worked with Flackton, an idea of the life of this composer in the period of the Galant style will become clear.

In a time in which the importance of early music as a genre is constantly questioned, due to the fact that nowadays many works of baroque composers have been accepted into the canon of music, it is necessary to stay open to new material, instead of blindly accepting the ideas and theories presented by generations before us. We must reread the treatises and original sources and question them in the same manner that our teachers did before they presented their 'new and exciting' discoveries. In this light I am pleased to share this research, with the approach stated above, about this rather unknown composer who is very worthwhile knowing.

CONTEXT

Chorister, Bookseller, Composer

William Flackton (1709-1798), the oldest son of Catherine Sharp and John Flackton, a bricklayer of St Alphege's parish in Canterbury, lived the long life of 88 years, in which he would outlive his parents, his younger brother and three younger sisters. He received a decent education and showed musical abilities from a young age. Agati suggests he was a pupil at the Kings School from 1717-1722,⁶ which resulted in being admitted as a chorister of the Canterbury Cathedral choir in 1718. Just as the choristers nowadays at Canterbury Cathedral or the Choir of King's College in Cambridge et al. receive a thorough musical education, Flackton surely acquired a firm basis of musical skills there, such as music theory, singing and organ playing, which will have made a big impact on his development and appreciation of music until the end of his life. William's younger brother, John Flackton, would later become William's partner in business. He was also a chorister at the Canterbury Cathedral and it is assumed that he played the horn, albeit not professionally.

In 1730, when Flackton reached the age of 21, he was granted the privilege of freeman in Canterbury. It is possible that he worked as an apprentice to a stationer in the period of 1722-1729 to learn the trade, but this is not documented, nor is there any information about where he would have done so. Agati's hypothesis is that 'Mr Flacsias', who played second violin in Handel's opera orchestra, as stated on a list of instrumentalists in 1727, is in fact William Flackton. If we adopt this idea that he worked as a violinist to earn some extra money and improve his musical skills, then London is a plausible location where he learned the trade of stationer.⁷ As seen in his final testament and will, Flackton did own two violins, one by the famous luthier Mateo Goffriller⁸ and the other by Ditton,⁹ of whose instruments none survive today. This information

⁶ Agati, *William Flackton*, 2.

⁷ Idem.

⁸ Mateo Goffriller was a Venetian luthier who worked from 1685-1735 and was the founder of the classical Venetian school. His instruments are still much loved and very valuable until this day.

⁹ Ditton, whose first name is unknown, worked as luthier in London around 1700-1720.

shows that he played the violin and helps to substantiate the theory stated above.

It is clear from freemens' records that in Flackton's time Canterbury was a prosperous and metropolitan cathedral city, considering there were 165 carpenters, 122 bricklayers and 142 bakers at work in the city. Yet only 6 booksellers at the time are listed, which shows that Flackton successfully filled a gap in the market. He made good use of the local newspaper *The Kentish Post & Canterbury Newsletter* to promote his growing business and later also for his new compositions.¹⁰ One must remember that Canterbury was not as close to London, relatively speaking, as it is today, and held a strong central position between the Channel and London. As a result of this geographical location it would have been on route for most Italian violinists who first travelled to London's music scene. What inspired these Italian violinists to travel to London? Some were encouraged directly by patrons who were in Italy, others came after having been contacted by patrons in London and several travelled to London on their own initiative in order to seek patrons.¹¹ Young English aristocrats were expected to complete their education with a Grand Tour of Italy, in order to learn about the Renaissance and see the remains of antiquity. Fired with enthusiasm they would return, prepared to take on patronage of the Italian style. 'The traditional patronage of London's entrepreneurial musical life'¹² cannot have been unknown to Flackton, whom first and loyal patrons were, not to say the least, the Dean and Chapter of the Canterbury Cathedral to support his business in stationary and bookselling.¹³ With this support and trust in his abilities, Flackton could additionally specialize in the sale of second-hand and antiquarian books, and on occasion could combine this with his interest in music, for instance by publishing a catalogue of musical libraries of deceased collectors.

Alongside his growing business, Flackton, at the age of 26, took on the position of church organist at St. Mary's in Faversham, a market town near Canterbury; a position he would hold from 1735 until 1752. It is during this time

¹⁰ Sarah Gray, "William Flackton, 1709-1798, Canterbury Bookseller and Musician," in *The Mighty Engine: The Printing Press and its Impact*, edited by Peter Isaac and Barry McKay, (Winchester: St Paul's Bibliographies, 2000), 128.

¹¹ Simon McVeigh, "Italian Violinists in Eighteenth-Century London," in *The Eighteenth-Century Diaspora of Italian Music and Musicians*, *Speculum musicae* 8, edited by Reinhard Strohm., (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2001), 152.

¹² McVeigh, *Italian Violinists*, 153.

¹³ Gray, *Canterbury Bookseller*, 122.

that he would have composed his first church compositions, a Morning service and an Evening service, as this was part of church organists' duties.¹⁴ He had a deep interest in sacred music and would later compose works for the Canterbury Cathedral, most of which have sadly been lost. As time passed, Flackton became more and more involved in music: in 1743 his first known secular composition, 'The Chase,' for voice, horn, violins, tenor and basso continuo, was published. The publication was issued by Mr. Walsh in London and sold in Flackton's shop.¹⁵ An interesting fact is that it was the same Mr. Walsh who published Handel's famous Opus 6, containing twelve Concerti Grossi, which were sold by subscription. The Musical Society in of Canterbury, which consisted of amateur musicians and occasional professional players, was listed as one of the subscribers.¹⁶ Flackton and his brother John were probably members and players of this society, which would explain the close connection to Mr. Walsh.

As a man who followed the traditions of the day, Flackton built up a friendly relationship with the Young family of Bridge Place, near Canterbury, who were regular customers of his business and admired his musical talents. Elisabeth Young, her mother and Sir William Young would become the patrons of a few of Flackton's new, mainly secular compositions. In the period from circa 1750 to 1775 contemporaries of Flackton were producing many trio sonatas, generally scored for two treble string instruments with bass accompaniment, of which the Italian compositions of this kind were much loved. In August 1751 Sir William Young sent Flackton a letter from France, during his Grand Tour, apologizing that he was unable to obtain a set of trio sonatas by Carlo Tassarini. It is from this correspondence that we learn that Sir Young was an amateur cellist, as he writes that some improvement in his playing would be heard on his return from Europe.¹⁷

The some twenty-five works by Flackton known to us today were mostly published and sold through his own business, several of which where sold by subscription. In the eighteenth century new compositions would not be printed without the guarantee that they would be favored by the public. In a surviving

¹⁴ Agati, *William Flackton*, 5.

¹⁵ Agati, *William Flackton*, 10. An original copy of 'The Chase' is still to be viewed at the British Library in London.

¹⁶ Agati, *William Flackton*, 9.

¹⁷ Agati, *William Flackton*, 16.

letter, dated 1746, to the London based organist and composer John Travers, Flackton sent a set of songs asking for his critical analysis. Travers, having been well established in the musical life of London, felt positive about these songs and deemed them worthy of being printed.¹⁸

Corellian vs. Galant Style

In the week 30 January-3 February 1770, the Kentish Gazette advertised the new composition *Six Solos, Three for a Violoncello and Three for a Tenor, Accompanied Either with a Violoncello or Harpsichord*. The three sonatas for Tenor are virtually the only compositions by Flackton still played today, albeit only by a handful of viola students and historically informed players. It is certain that the autograph copy of the manuscript was completed on January 13th, as Flackton sent it to Sir William Young asking his patronage and approval. Flackton indicates having made enquiries for works for the viola, but according to Agati some dealers had informed him that none were known to have been written.¹⁹ An explanation as to why Flackton couldn't find sheet music for the viola in England could be due to the fact that English music lovers had a deep appreciation of Corelli's sonatas and concertos, which were programmed in hundreds of concerts throughout the eighteenth century. Not only violinists who could claim to have studied with Corelli could expect special respect, also new compositions written on Corellian principles, of which Flackton's sonata no.6 of his *Six Solos* is an example, sustained the popularity of Corelli's sonatas.²⁰

However, Charles Burney (1726-1814), the English musician, composer and music historian, whose legendary writings on music and musical life of his time are still of aid to us today, wrote that 'the arrival of Giardini, Bach and Abel' around 1750 'brought about a total revolution in our musical taste.'²¹ This would become a shift in taste towards the period, in which Flackton happened to work, known as the Rococo in fine art, the Age of Enlightenment in philosophy and the *Galant Style* in music.²² Where at the Lenten oratorios, amateur clubs and pleasure gardens the Corellian tradition persisted, the new *galant style* ruled at

¹⁸ Agati, *William Flackton*, 11.

¹⁹ Agati, *William Flackton*, 21.

²⁰ McVeigh, *Italian Violinists*, 140.

²¹ McVeigh, *Italian Violinists*, 144.

²² Heartz, *Music in Capitals*, 3.

the fashionable concerts of the West End in London.²³ Johann Mattheson (1681-1764) from Hamburg is the one who introduced the term galant style in music, when he spoke of a lighter type of music being 'einem galanten Stylo' in his writings *Das forschende Orchestre* (1721). Many German critics who came after Mattheson, all agreed that what they called 'galant' music originated from the Italian theatre, from composers who wrote Italian operas around 1720 such as A. Scarlatti, G.F. Handel, A. Vivaldi and G.P. Telemann.²⁴ These are but a handful of the many Italian styled composers who lie at the roots of the galant style. They also contributed to the invention the symphony, the modern sonata (see page 18) and the 'string quartet' formation (two violins, viola and bass).

Who inspired whom?

The English appreciation of the Adagio could be seen as the reason why many difficult violin pieces, by composers such as Tartini and Corelli, were published in Paris and Amsterdam instead of London.²⁵ Abel was occasionally criticized for the simplicity of his compositions. However, Burney considered Abel superior to other musicians and composers especially in his writing and playing of adagios, which could explain why he was so popular in England. According to Agati, Flackton would have known Abel well, because he gave benefit concerts in nearby towns and cities during the summer months and perhaps even in Canterbury, but there are no sources that tell us what their relationship was or what Abel's thoughts were on the *Six Solos*. The fact that he had inspected the solos and must have been positive about them, tells us that Flackton was, at least, a composer whose music was deemed worthy of being heard, or they would surely not have been printed. They are not of the highest compositional level, nor harmonically or technically challenging, but even Abel's compositions were considered easy and elegantly simple. After all, Abel chose to not always be struggling with difficulties and playing with all his might. He would only make his compositions difficult when it suited him and, in Abel's own

²³ McVeigh, *Italian Violinists*, 145.

²⁴ Heartz, *Music in Capitals*, 18.

²⁵ Philip H. Jr. Highfill, Kalman A. Burnim, Edward A. Langhans, *A Biographical Dictionary of Actors, Actresses, Musicians, Dancers, Managers & Other Stage Personnel in London, 1660-1800*, Vol.1, (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1973), 5.

words, 'according to the disposition of [his] audience'.²⁶ Then again, to make both Flackton and Abel's sonatas more virtuosic, a performer with at least Abel's abilities and talent would be necessary.

Clear similarities between the works of the two gentlemen are found in *Minuetto 1mo* of Flackton's Sonata VI and the *Minuet* of Abel's Sonata IV.²⁷ The similarity is striking and immediately raises the question: who actually had inspired whom? In the analysis (see page 27) music examples show the resemblances, but one conclusion is that the famous Abel, who was at the centre of London's concert life for twenty-five years, and who participated in more than 400 public concerts during that time,²⁸ would have been an inspiration to Flackton, instead of vice versa. However Abel's *Six Easy Sonatas* were published one or two years after the publication of Flackton's *Six Solos* in 1770. Furthermore, Abel's D-Major 'Fuga' (WKO 196) in the Drexel Manuscript,²⁹ which was possibly published circa 1770, is so similar to Flackton's Allegro, that it can hardly be a coincidence. It is possible that Abel wrote these pieces long before they were published, but what would the reason have been for this delay? According to Holman there were some upper-class amateurs who played the viola da gamba in the early 1770s, though probably not enough for Abel to publish his gamba works specifically aimed at them.³⁰ Abel would have performed from his manuscript scores, instead of going through the costly act of printing the music.

To come back to the fugue named above, WKO 196, it is based on Corelli's Op.6 No.1 (see page 21 for a comparison between Corelli, Abel and Flackton's fugues) and was probably written for the painter Thomas Gainsborough, who painted two beautiful portraits of Abel, and was also his viol student. Holman suggests that the fugue could have been a joke towards the Corelli enthusiasts, who disliked J.C. Bach and C.F. Abel's galant styled music, to show that they were unquestionably capable of composing in the learned style too.³¹ Abel was educated in the older German style of composers such as J.S. Bach, G.P. Telemann

²⁶ Highfill et al, *Biographical Dictionary of Actors*, 5.

²⁷ C.F. Abel, *Six easy Sonatas for harpsichord or for Viola da Gamba, Violin or German Flute with a Thorough Bass Accompaniment*. J.J. Hummel: Amsterdam ca. 1771.

²⁸ Peter Holman, *Life After Death: The Viola da Gamba in Britain from Purcell to Dolmetsch*, (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2010), 202.

²⁹ Holman, *Life after Death*, 208.

³⁰ Holman, *Life after Death*, 219.

³¹ Holman, *Life after Death*, 208-209.

or H.I.F.Biber, who often used the archaic style of scoring more violas than violins³², which supports the idea that he was capable of composing more than sweet adagios alone. If Flackton was indeed influenced by Abel, as it seems, then it is surprising that Flackton shows no recognition of works by these German composers and is ignorant of the old style from which Abel came. Flackton states in his preface that no interesting viola music existed at the time he wrote his viola sonatas, but the Telemann viola concerto had been written already in c. 1724, so it is remarkable that he didn't know of it.

Why the Tenor?

A question in need of an answer is why Flackton was so interested in the viola. Flackton is quite clear in his preface of the *Six Solos* (Ex.1), what the reason was for writing these pieces, but does not give any information why he was so intrigued by the viola.

Ex.1. Detail of Flackton, *Six Solos*, preface. To be found on imslp.org.

The Solos for a Tenor Violin are intended to shew that Instrument in a more conspicuous Manner, than it has hitherto been accustomed; the Part generally allotted to it being little more than a dull Ripiano, an Accessory or Auxiliary, to fill up or compleat the Harmony in Full Pieces of MUSIC; though it must be allowed, that at some particular Times, it has been permitted to accompany a Song, and likewise to lead in a Fugue; yet even then, it is assisted by one, or more Instruments in the Unisons or Octaves, to prevent, if possible, its being distinguished from any other Instrument; or, if it happens to be heard but in so small a Space as a Bar or two, 'tis quickly overpowered again with a Crowd of Instruments, and lost in Chorus.

Such is the Present State of this Fine Toned Instrument *, owing, in some Measure, to the Want of Solos, and other Pieces of MUSIC, properly adapted to it †.

* The greatest Masters allow the Tenor Violin to have a particular Delicacy of Tone.
† Upon Enquiry at all the Music Shops in London for Tenor Solos, none were to be found, neither was it known by them that any were ever published.

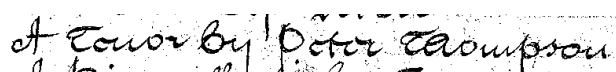
³² Peter Holman, "Mystery Man. Peter Holman Celebrates the 350th Anniversary of the Birth of Heinrich Biber," *The Musical Times* 135, no. 1817 (1994): 439.

It seems that Flackton was not the only one with an opinion of the state of viola playing at that time. Quantz writes in his *On Playing the Flute* (1752) the following:

‘The viola is commonly regarded as of little importance in the musical establishment. The reason may well be that it is often played by persons who are either still beginners in the ensemble or have no particular gifts with which to distinguish themselves on the violin or that the instrument yields all too few advantages to its players, so that able people are not easily persuaded to take it up.’

Agati states that it remains unclear where Flackton’s motivation came from to write for the viola, just as Sarah Gray gives no reason why he might have been fascinated with the instrument. However Agati does give a clue: Flackton bequeathed in his will a viola made by Peter Thompson (Ex.2).³³

Ex.2. Detail of Flackton’s final Will and Testament. Found at The National Archives, England.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "A Violin by Peter Thompson". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored background.

There exists some inconsistency in the information about Thompson. According to *A Biographical Dictionary of Actors*, Peter Thompson (?-1757) was one of several Thompsons who worked as music publishers, music sellers, instrument makers, or musicians based at the West End of St. Paul’s Churchyard in London. He was a violinist and oboist at the St. Paul’s Cathedral and during the period 1746-1757 hung the sign with a violin and an hautboy above his music selling and publishing shop. The business was probably taken over by Peter’s wife and sons, Charles and Samuel, who from 1763 operated as music sellers and publishers at No. 75, St Paul’s Church Yard (Ex.3).³⁴ This is printed at the bottom of the title page of Flackton’s *Six Solos* (published in 1770).

Ex.3. Detail of original title page of Flackton, *Six Solos*.

LONDON. Printed for the AUTHOR and Sold by him in Canterbury, C. and S. Thompson N^o 75 St Paul’s Church Yard, M^r Randall in Catharine Street, M^{rs}

However, another Peter Thompson seems to have existed and is thought to have been another son of the elder Peter. The younger Peter is listed in Doane’s

³³ Agati, *William Flackton*, 21.

³⁴ Highfill et al, *Biographical Dictionary of Actors*, 415.

Musical Directory of 1794 as an instrument maker, which raises the question if it could be possible that the younger Peter Thompson built Flackton's viola.³⁵

The question still remains: why write for the tenor? As the first English composer to have written sonatas specifically for the viola, the importance of the Flackton's pieces cannot be ignored. It is clear that he had a patron in mind for the three cello sonatas in the *Six Solos*, but were the viola sonatas intended for another individual? If so, who? Could it have been for himself? Did he even play the viola? As stated in his will he did own one and since he played the violin it makes perfect sense that he could have also played the viola. Additionally, he had a strong opinion concerning the neglect of solo writing for the viola, as stated in his preface. On the other hand, considering Peter Thompson, either father or son, was the builder of Flackton's viola, and Charles and Samuel Thompson published and sold his viola music, it is plausible that the Thompsons were the inspiration for Flackton to write his viola sonatas.

'A Glorious Chase'

From the 1770's until the end of his life, Flackton continued to be a central figure in Canterbury society. He was a devout Christian who attended services throughout his life and must have been thrilled to compose sacred music that would be played and sung at the Canterbury Cathedral. On 11 April 1785 Flackton drew up his final will and testament. He passed away after a short illness on 5 January 1798, as a happy and wealthy man, as is clearly seen in what he left in his will and testament. He had worked in his shop, Flackton & Co, for over 60 years and had many other interests. Besides being a member of the Canterbury Musical Society, Flackton and a group of six other musicians started meeting regularly to sing glees and catches, which led to the establishment of the 'Canterbury Catch Club' in 1779. A 'catch' was a form of song, popular during the seventeenth and eighteenth century and Flackton composed songs for the club, such as 'A Glorious Chase'.³⁶ The Catch Club was a quite boisterous sort of happening, but on the other hand Flackton took part in the organization of a series of subscription concerts in Canterbury, not only as an organizer but also as a performer and a published composer. These concerts would have had quite a

³⁵ Highfill et al, *Biographical Dictionary of Actors*, 415.

³⁶ A manuscript has survived and is kept in the Canterbury Archives.

different allure to them than the Catch Club meetings. His devoutness of going to church every week and publishing books to teach the children of reverend George Hearne's Sunday School in Canterbury how to read, displays the diversity of his activities. For an individual who had been so prominent, it is surprising that he is not well known today. When it comes to his compositions, however, it is clear why so few still exist. Flackton requested in his will for John Marrable, who had been taken on as partner in Flackton's business in 1774, to dispose his manuscripts in the following manner: 'I give all my manuscripts papers of music to John Marrable, as well as papers and books wherein are any of my compositions ... and on condition that John Marrable will not permit any of it to be printed or published.' Mr. Marrable it seems must have carried out Flackton's will faithfully.³⁷

³⁷ Agati, *William Flackton*, 29.

ANALYSIS

Opera 2 Sonata VI

Sonata VI from the *Six Solos* by William Flackton is the subject of interest for this research. First, it is necessary to examine the meaning of 'sonata'. Many terms have been confused with it depending on the location and time, as compositions titled 'sonata' covered pieces varying from sets of variations or dances scored for different numbers of instruments with keyboard continuo. In Italian the two verbs to describe 'play' are *sonare* (bowing or blowing) and *toccare* ('touching' a keyboard). Just as 'cantata' is the term of a sung piece, similarly the Italians used 'toccata' for a piece played on a keyboard instrument and 'sonata' for a piece played by strings or winds. Pieces with large scoring eventually gave way to duo and trio settings.³⁸ In eighteenth century England 'sonata' was often used to describe a trio setting, whereas 'solo' was preferred for the setting of a string instrument accompanied by basso continuo. This changed due to the reprints issued by Estienne Roger, the successful publisher in Amsterdam, who published beautiful high quality copperplate prints of Corelli's music and many others, 'and almost invariably reconverted 'solo' to 'sonata''.³⁹ This is exactly what we see in Flackton's opus 2, which bears the title '*Six Solos, etc*', whereas the actual music is provided with the heading of Sonata I, Sonata II etcetera (Ex.4).

Ex.4. Detail of Flackton, *Six Solos*, first original copy from 1770.

SONATA VI

Sonata VI comprises three movements, Andante, Allegro and Minuetto *1mo* and *2do* (*primo* and *secondo*). All movements are in the key of G Major, except for the Minuetto *2do*, which is in the parallel minor (G minor).

³⁸ Arnold et al, "sonata." *The Oxford Companion to Music*. Oxford Music Online. Oxford University Press, accessed August 3, 2016, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/opr/t114/e6313>.

³⁹ William S. Newman, *The Sonata in the Baroque Era*, Revised edition, (North Carolina: The University of Carolina Press, 1966), 21.

Andante

The first movement is written in standard binary form without repeat signs. One would expect a repeat sign at the end m. 8, but it seems Flackton decided it was not necessary. Could this have been a printing mistake or the actual wish of the composer? After examining the carefully printed copy, no faults were found. Even though the second part is two measures longer than the first, the movement does not feel out of balance. On the very first note of the tenor line, or 'viola' as the instrument is called nowadays, Flackton placed a sign (Ex.5) that is not commonly seen in printed music.

Ex.5. Flackton, *Six Solos*, Andante, m.2.



It is a slanting dagger that expands slightly. This sign is found in the treatise *The Art of Playing the Violin* written in 1751 by the Italian violinist and composer Francesco Geminiani (1687-1762) and is used to express a crescendo. It also implies that the stress of the note lies not at the start, but towards the end of the note. By placing the emphasis towards the end of the note, the solo line interacts expressively with the harmonic progression. The first four eighth notes in the bass line move on the 1-4-3-2 of the scale; the first two chords in root position and the third and fourth in first inversion. Also it is an expressive mark to help bring out the dissonance. The viola has a dotted quarter note with the slanting dagger, which makes a pleasant dissonance on the third eighth note of the bass, with its resolution on the fourth eighth, after which the melody moves in a three-step motion towards the first beat of m. 2 (Ex.6).

Ex.6. Flackton, Op.2 no.6, m.1-2½.

TENOR

SONATA VI

Andante

Musical notation for the first two measures of the first movement of Sonata VI, Op. 2 no. 6, by Flackton. The score is for Tenor and Bass. The Tenor part is in G major and 3/4 time, marked 'Andante'. The first measure contains a dotted quarter note on G4 with a slanting dagger symbol above it. The second measure contains a quarter note on A4, a quarter note on B4, and a quarter note on C5. The Bass part is in G major and 3/4 time. The first measure contains a dotted quarter note on G2, a quarter note on D3, and a quarter note on G2. The second measure contains a quarter note on F#2, a quarter note on E2, and a quarter note on D2. The score is labeled 'SONATA VI' and 'Andante'.

On the second beat of measure two Flackton again writes an expanding dagger on the tonic (G), a quarter note tied to an eighth note, but now adds a trill on the

tied eighth note to clarify that this is where the stress lies. The trill comes together with a lovely dissonant six-five chord/subdominant in the bass. This occurs twice again in m. 3, and in the same form in the B part. Interestingly, on the last beat of m. 15 the dagger has reversed, starting wide and becoming narrow. Could it be that Flackton made a notation mistake here? So far he does not seem to make errors, but the notes and harmony are exactly the same as the last beat of m. 3 and first beat of m. 4 (Ex.7).

Ex.7. Flackton, *Six Solos*, Andante, mm. 3-4.



In Geminiani's treatise however, both options are shown as a possibility (Ex.8), where the reversed dagger indicates that the stress lies at the beginning of the note after which the player should come away from it. Considering that the reversed dagger here is shown in the progression towards a cadence, it seems logical to come away from the note, so as to make space for rounding off this movement.

Ex.8. Geminiani, Opera IX, Example XX

Swel-ling the Sound (/) Diminishing the Sound (\)

In new editions, such as the Amadeus Verlag⁴⁰ or the edition by the famous British violist Keith Cummings,⁴¹ the dagger is either corrected wrongly or left out entirely. Geminiani, alongside Corelli and Handel, was one of the most famous and influential composers during Flackton's life. The fact that Cummings left out expression signs and made adaptations makes one wonder whether Geminiani's work went out of fashion in Britain. Had Cummings known Geminiani's treatise, then perhaps he would have included Flackton's very expressive marking, the slanted dagger, in his edition. Then again, Cummings does state in the Editor's Note that all dynamics, cadenza's, markings in brackets,

⁴⁰ William Flackton, *Vier Sonaten für Viola und Basso continuo*, edited by Bernhard Päuler (Winterthur: Amadeus Verlag, 1995).

⁴¹ William Flackton, *Sonata In G Major, for Viola and Paino (or Harpsichord)*, revised and edited by Keith Cummings, (London: Schott & Co. LTD.,1941).

and signs that mark beginnings and endings, came from the editor's hands, and not Flackton's.⁴²

In his preface, Flackton states that 'it is hoped' that this publication 'may be productive of other Works of this Kind from more able Hands,' which gives the impression that Flackton was aware of the simplicity of his sonatas in Op. 2.⁴³ Indeed in this first movement of Sonata VI harmonically there is not a lot to discuss: the A section starts in G-Major and moves through A-Major from half of m. 6-7, through a $V \frac{6}{4}$ and V^7/V in order to end in a half cadence (the dominant of G-major). The B section then begins in the dominant key (D-Major), where it remains until m. 13, which moves to the relative minor of G-major (e-minor), back to the initial key of G-major at the end of m. 15. As we can see, Flackton doesn't stray far from G-Major and the movement ends, without any surprises, with a perfect authentic cadence.

Stylistically Flackton makes use of a number of Italian motives, such as the free scales up and down in the viola line in mm. 13-15. In mm. 2-3 of the bass line he employs figures similar to those found in the Adagio of Corelli's Op.5 no.2. Likewise, Flackton's mm. 5-6 of the bass line can be compared to beginning notes of bass line in the Adagio of Corelli's Op.5 no.3. Traces of the *galant style* are apparent by the many grace notes that give the impression of improvisation, the triplets in m. 7 and the Lombard rhythm seen on the last beat of m. 2 and 10 (Ex.9), all similar to motifs in C.F. Abel's writing.

Ex.9. a) Grace notes m. 6. b) Triplets m. 7. c) Lombard rhythm mm. 2, 10.



However, after the last chord and quick *Volti* ('turn' of the page), it becomes clear that it is of special interest to look at the second movement, the Allegro, when discussing the style of this sonata.

⁴² William Flackton, *Sonata In G Major*, revised and edited by Keith Cummings.

⁴³ William Flackton, *Opera 2, Six Solos, Three for a Violoncello and Three for a Tenor, Accompanied Either with a Violoncello or Harpsichord*, (London: C.&S. Thompson, 1770).

Allegro

This movement is a typical fugue made up of subjects, counterpoint, sequences and interludes, though they rarely move out of the main key of G-Major. Anyone acquainted with the music of Arcangelo Corelli, will immediately recognize his style in this movement. When looking at examples 10 to 12, the question arises: Which of Corelli's pieces were the inspiration for Flackton to write the Allegro the way he did? Was it the Allegro of the Concerto Grosso Op.6 no.1, on which Abel based his Fuga WKO 196 (Ex. 11) or was it Corelli's famous violin sonatas? The answer is found in Flackton's Will: He left 130 copies of 'Corellis Solos Op 5th Amsterdam' to John Marrable, his partner at Flackton & Co., as a token of friendship. With this evidence, it is without a doubt that Corelli's Op.5 no.1 (Ex.13) was the direct inspiration for Flackton's Allegro, particularly considering Flackton also played the violin and would have been very familiar with the music.

Ex.10. Corelli's, *Concerto Grosso in D major*, Op.6, no.1, mm.1-5.

Allegro.
Soli.

Ex.11. Abel, WKO 196, Fuga, mm. 1-3.

Ex.12. Flackton, *Six Solos*, Allegro, mm. 1-7.

Allegro

Ex.13. Corelli, Op.5 no.1 Allegro, mm. 1-5.

Allegro

Not only is Flackton's fugue in the same key, and does contain exactly twice the amount of measures (120 in Flackton, 60 in Corelli), it is visually and audibly in the same style and form. Yet, it has been cast in a more modest and perhaps more idiomatic version for the viola, for instance by using simpler arpeggios (Ex.15), by slowing the entire movement down due to the absence of sixteenth notes, and by using double stops instead of chords (which only occur on three beats in this movement in mm. 19 and 67). An interesting point is that Flackton, having written the piece in the age of the Galant style, writes this movement in the style of Corelli, who worked and lived at least two generations before him. However Flackton adds small traces of contemporary motifs that are not to be found in one single Corelli violin sonata. Examples are the writing of triplets in mm. 25 and 27, the use of staccato in mm. 90-92, and the simple arpeggios mentioned above, in mm. 77-87 and mm. 101-108.

Looking at the movement harmonically, the viola starts the subject in the first four measures in the tonic in a lively and cheerful mode. In m. 5 the bass line joins in by playing the subject a fifth lower, in the dominant of G-major, where the viola ends the subject in a perfect cadence but also acts as counterpoint to the subject in the bass. In m. 9 it is the bass that ends the subject in a perfect cadence above which the viola starts an interlude, leading towards a

6 4 6 7 6 7 6 4 6 sequence starting in the second half of m. 14 and
4 2 2

ending in the dominant of m. 18½, after which the G-major chord on the first beat of m. 19 could be understood as a closing chord to the sequence, or as the start of the counterpoint to the subject that has now started in the tonic in the bass line. This subject ends again in a perfect cadence after which the bass line starts a sequence-type interlude.

Suddenly, in m. 25, Flackton does something unexpected in the viola line: he writes a half note with a trill followed by quarter note triplets. To the modern ear of the twenty-first century triplets might seem the most normal type of embellishments, but when searching for this motif in any of Corelli's violin sonatas in Op. 5, they will not be found once.⁴⁴ On the contrary C.F. Abel uses this

⁴⁴ Arcangelo Corelli, *Sonate a Violino e Violone o Cimbalò*, Opera Quinta, (Rome: Gasparo Pietra Santa, ca.1700). Found on imslp.org. See RISM for multiple Library shelfmarks.

motif abundantly in his music. These triplets are a typical example galant style writing; the period in which Flackton wrote this otherwise very Corellian sonata. After this four-measure interlude, the piece progresses for another four measures in a sequence, in which at any time accidentals could have been added: The perfect moment to move towards a modulation, which has not yet occurred in this piece. And then at the end of m. 32, through a stepwise descending line in the viola, the raised dominant leads us right into the start of the subject in the viola line, however this time in the relative key E-minor. It is but a short stay, as after two measures we are drawn into E-Major by raising the third to a G-sharp and by which time a new sequence has begun. Flackton builds these sequences with different motifs presented twice: mm. 35-37 and 38-40, mm. 40 and 41, mm.42 and 43, mm. 43½-45 and 45½-47. On the last beat of m. 47 the C-sharp throws the viola right into a D-Major version of the subject, which is the dominant of G-Major. The tension this time is felt, not only because it finally reached the long expected dominant, but also because it gives the feeling of the need to return to the tonic in the near future. Already on the last beat of the third measure of this subject (m. 50) the tension is intensified by longer dissonant double stops that resolve in m. 53 into another interlude, though still sustaining the tension from m. 54 by using a motif three times in ascending order (Ex.14), followed by a an acceleration in m. 57 after which, at last, the bass line enters in m. 58 with the subject in the tonic, the one we were waiting for.

Ex.14. Flackton, *Six Solos*, mm. 54-60. Top: viola line, bottom: continuo line.



The subject is presented in its whole including the cadence, comprising six measures, after which it immediately starts the subject again in m. 64, only this time in the dominant (just as the bass' first entry does in m. 5) and stays there until after rounding of with a perfect cadence. Again the viola line acts as the counterpoint to the subject. From mm. 69½-75 some rhythmical imitation appears between both lines in preparation of the arpeggio interlude, beginning in m. 77 (Ex.15).

Ex.15. Flackton, *Six Solos*, Allegro, mm. 77-78. Top: viola line, bottom: continuo line.



This interlude differs slightly from the previous examples, as it resembles an episode in a concerto. It remains in the key of G-Major, however it floats around a bit. Tension is created by the interchanging of dissonant 4 and resonant 3 chords per measure. The ground note is placed in the bass line (which rises a perfect fifth every other measure) and the top two notes of the chord are placed in the viola line. Rosenbaum calls this arpeggio passage an 'Alberti bass',⁴⁵ which is not correct. An Alberti bass is an arpeggiated accompaniment, in which the notes are played in order of lowest-highest-middle-highest. This section could be seen as Flackton's version of Corelli's arpeggio section, similar to what Geminiani shows in his treatise (Ex.16): 'Way[s] of Playing Arpeggios on Chords composed of 3 [...] Sounds.'⁴⁶

Ex.16. Geminiani, *Opera IX*, Exempio XXI, 7a



In m. 86 the G-sharp leads us into A-Major (which is the dominant D-Major, which in turn is the dominant of G-major) whilst rounding off the interlude in m. 87 by slowing down the motion to quarter notes in the viola line. Then it is joined by the bass on the last beat of m. 89 until the low D in m. 93, which is the lowest note that viola has come across in this entire movement. This section resembles that of a passage in Corelli's Op. 5 No.2 Vivace, however here Flackton introduces a symbol that again is not found once in Corelli's Op.5: the Staccato. In Baroque music it is a general rule that notes that leap or are separated by a

⁴⁵ George G. Rosenbaum, "Historical and Analytical Aspects of William Flackton's Sonatas for Viola and Keyboard (Opus 2, Nos. 2, 4, 6, 8)," Master's diss. (North Carolina: University of North Texas, 1991), 18.

⁴⁶ Francesco Geminiani, *The Art of Playing on the Violin, Opera IX*, (London: 1751), Example XXI, 8. Compare this to A. Corelli Op.5 no.1 mm. 31-42.

larger interval than a second, should be detached from one another.⁴⁷ For some reason, Flackton here sees the need to mark daggers on these notes. They resemble the sign *Martelé*, a term used from the 1850's onwards to separate and accentuate notes, however this does not apply to Flackton's music. Geminiani has a very clear explanation what this sign is and as to how one should play these daggers. He writes:

. this (|) a Staccato, is where the Bow is taken off the String at every Note,⁴⁸ and which 'expresses Rest, taking Breath, or changing a Word.'⁴⁹

In this staccato section Flackton has written *tasto* under the bass line, which indicates *tasto solo*.⁵⁰ Also at this point the viola and bass line are in unison, and the staccato marking discourages the typical hierarchy of beats in the measure. We should keep in mind that in baroque music these staccato notes should be understood as notes of equal importance. The baroque bow, which probably would have still been used by Flackton, has a heavier frog than tip, hence a stronger sounding down-bow than up-bow, simply due to gravity.⁵¹

A breath is unmistakably implied after the low D of m.93, not only because of the bar rest in the bass line, but because of the physical movement necessary to get the bow from the C string to the D string on the viola (whilst not touching the G-string in between the two). Also this is the largest interval written in the viola line until this point, and it introduces the penultimate subject that enters in *stretto*.⁵² After three entrances of the subject, another arpeggio interlude starts at m. 100½ over a pedal point in the bass line. Next appears one last *tasto*-moment, with the bass and viola in unison, followed by the final introduction of the complete subject in the home key of G-major in m. 112; this time however an octave lower than the very beginning, with the addition of slightly challenging double stops. After the full cadence, the viola stops on a dominant seventh with a fermata to make way for the final and long awaited *Adagio*, in exactly the same manner Corelli ends his Op.5 No.1. Through a, not so

⁴⁷ Judy Tarling, *Baroque String Playing: for ingenious learners*, (St. Albans: Corda Music Publications, 2000), 14.

⁴⁸ Geminiani, *Art of playing*, Example XX, 8.

⁴⁹ Geminiani, *Art of playing*, 7.

⁵⁰ *Tasto* means 'key' and implies that the continuo player should only play the written notes without adding chords.

⁵¹ Tarling, *Baroque String Playing*, 88-90.

⁵² *Stretto* (Italian) in a fugue means: when entry of the answer occurs before subject is completed, overlapping with it. This is a way of increasing excitement, as in a four-part fugue when all four voices enter in *stretto*.

surprising, perfect authentic cadence and with a lovely trill on the dominant, the final note G is reached to conclude this movement.

Minuetto 1mo and 2do

The last movement of the sonata consists of a Minuetto *primo* and *secondo*, the first being fast, indicated by the $\frac{3}{8}$ time signature and in G-Major

and the second in $\frac{3}{4}$ and in G-minor. That Flackton chooses to end his sonata

with a minuet is unusual, as Corelli normally ends his sonatas with an *Allegro* or *Gigue*. Where could this idea have come from? The clue is given by Flackton himself in his preface: Mr. Abel. Could he have not only helped Flackton by checking his manuscript, but also aided Flackton in writing his *Six Solos*? When browsing C.F. Abel's *Six Easy Sonatas*⁵³ it becomes immediately clear: he writes minuets or *tempo di Minuetto* as the last movement of all six sonatas. Furthermore, the *Minuetto* of Abel's Sonata IV is most likely the piece where Flackton found his inspiration.

Below (Ex.17) is a comparison between the first eight measures of C.F. Abel's Minuetto from Sonata IV and W. Flackton's Minuetto 1mo from Sonata VI.

Ex.17. Top: Abel, K144, Minuetto mm. 1-8. Bottom: Flackton, Op.2 no.6, Minuetto, mm. 1-8

The image shows two musical staves. The top staff is Abel's Minuetto, K144, measures 1-8. It is in G major, 3/8 time. The bottom staff is Flackton's Minuetto 1mo, Op.2 no.6, measures 1-8. It is in G minor, 3/8 time. Both pieces feature a similar rhythmic pattern and melodic contour, including a trill on the dominant (F# in Abel's, F in Flackton's) and a perfect authentic cadence.

In both examples are found the same perfect authentic cadence, with the same rhythm, same notes and even the same chords (Ex.18). However, we must take note of the fact that Flackton's *Six Solos* were printed in 1770 and Abel's *Sonatas* in ca. 1772, which bring us back to the question of who inspired whom? A plausible conclusion would be for Flackton, being an amateur composer, to have been inspired by Abel.

⁵³ C.F. Abel, *Six easy Sonatas for Harpsichord or for a Viola da Gamba, Violin or German Flute with a Thorough-Bass Accompaniment*, K144.

Ex.18. a) Abel, K144, Minuetto m.31-32 b) Flackton, Op.2 no.6, Minuetto, m.19-20.



Minuetto 1mo, which has an AABB form, starts with a broken G-major chord in the viola, above a repeated G in the bass. The first three notes (G B D) of the first measure in the viola are slurred and the other three are separate and marked with dots on them. Nowadays there is a difference between a dagger and a dot on a note, as the first mentioned would imply a *marcato*⁵⁴ and the second a *staccato*. But as we have seen in Geminiani's treatise, the dagger is described as the staccato (to simply separate the notes by lifting the bow), but he gives no explanation of a dot. As Flackton uses both dagger and dot, there must be a reason to do so. The slur in eighteenth century music means a decrescendo⁵⁵ and separating and shortening notes gives lightness that will add to a further softening of a musical line. The A section consisting of eight measures, built up of a four-measure statement and four-measure response, ends with a typical half cadence. The B section has the same form, but has four extra measures added, and ends in a perfect authentic cadence. Overall it has a playful air to it and could very well be danced to.

Minuetto 2do has a different character, not only because the change of key, but because Flackton adds to the markings 'Slow' and 'Pia' (indicating piano = soft), both signs that are characteristic for the time in which he lived, yet not for the style in which he writes. The fast movement that was first in the viola line has now been placed in the bass, which gives it a more prominent role. The melody of the viola, written mainly for the lower strings C and G, which darkens and diminishes the strength of sound, is slower than the underlying bass line. Both the A and B section comprise of eight measures, ending first in a half cadence and then a perfect authentic cadence, and after which *D.C. il Primo Minuetto* brings us back to end the entire sonata in a somewhat whimsical manner.

⁵⁴ Marcato: (It.). 'Marked', 'stressed', i.e. emphasizing each note; it often indicates a melody that should be given prominence.

⁵⁵ Tarling, *Baroque String Playing*, 142.

CONCLUSION

Known today primarily by a handful of viola players, William Flackton was not a man who is easily traced. As the first English composer to have written sonatas specifically for the viola, the importance of the Flackton's pieces cannot be ignored. With our modern day search engines on the internet and categorized libraries, it seems ironic that information about a man who had many contacts in the musical scene of London, worked as a publisher, as a composer used the ultimate means to insure ones legacy, and had a prominent role in Canterbury society, is so difficult to trace. True, the three sonatas for viola are not of ground shattering quality, but it has become clear that they surely are worth the attention of viola players interested in historically informed practice.

Starting as a chorister at the Canterbury Cathedral, the foundation of Flackton's love for and skills in music were laid. After receiving the privilege of freeman in Canterbury, Flackton founded his business of stationary and book selling, Flackton & Co., which would become a successful undertaking, and where he would work for nearly sixty years of his long life. Making good use of the local newspapers Flackton promoted all his interests: From new publications of books, to compositions of his own hand, from libraries of deceased music collectors to the promotion of tickets sales for subscription concerts in which he probably partook as a musician. He was a cosmopolitan man with patrons and connections all around Canterbury and London.

In a world that seems smaller today, due to faster means of transportation and communication, it is fascinating how knowledge, musical styles, fashion and even musicians in Flackton's time travelled at such a fast rate from one place to another. Young English aristocratic gentleman who would go on their 'Grand Tour' to Italy, sought and found the next virtuosic violinist of the century, whom they could offer patronage if they were willing to travel to London with them. This keen interest in Italian style started to change slightly at the arrival of the Germans C.F. Abel and J.C. Bach. They brought a sound that belonged to what would become the *Galant style*. A schism between Corellian and Galant led to new compositions with traces of both styles, of which Flackton's viola sonata VI is an example, and offers a glimpse into the musical life in Britain at the time.

Flackton's small oeuvre can be seen as a reflection of the fusion of these two styles. Since no patron of these pieces is mentioned by Flackton, this leaves the question of what or who inspired him to write these pieces for the instrument then known as a Tenor. Having owned a viola built by Peter Thompson, and having Charles and Samuel Thompson as publishers and sellers of his viola music, it is plausible that the Thompsons were the inspiration for Flackton to write his viola sonatas.

Analyzing Flackton's sonata VI in great detail, leads to a complete understanding of Flackton's style of composing all that contains influences of Corelli, Abel and Geminiani. The sonata was looked at through an eyeglass and dissected stylistically and harmonically, movement by movement. Examples from original sources, such as the copy of Flackton's sonata and the treatise by Geminiani, give a better understanding of the differences in music writing and notation in the eighteenth century as opposed to today. At the time of writing these sonatas Flackton hoped for a day where abler hands would create beautiful music specifically for the viola. I'm sure he would have been pleased that composers such as Hoffmeister and Mozart would write wonderful music for this 'Fine Toned' instrument.

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