Matthew Holmes was responsible for compiling the largest body of surviving English lute, bandora and cittern music, together with music for 'consort-of-six'. His interest in consort music seems to have begun around 1588 when he became precentor and a singing man at Christ Church, Oxford, and associated with another singing man, Richard Reade, whose interest in the form led him to compose numerous pieces. (Lyle Nordstrom, *Journal of the Lute Society of America*, 1972)

The expression 'consort-of-six' as used here refers to that special grouping of instruments (treble viol or violin, flute or recorder, bass viol, lute, cittern and bandora) which was a favourite of Queen Elizabeth I and is represented by four major sources: printed publications by Thomas Morley (The First Booke of Consort Lessons, 1599 & 1611) and Philip Rosseter (Lessons for Consort, 1609) and manuscript collections: The Walsingham Consorts c.1588 and The Matthew Holmes Consorts c.1588 – ?1597 (often known as 'The Cambridge Consort Books').

The term 'Consort' originally denoted any music whereby different families of instruments come together in a group, but in the 20th century a non-historical distinction was made between 'whole' consorts of like instruments and 'broken' consorts of different families.

Holmes’ consort music was written out in the following manuscripts which are in the possession of Cambridge University Library:

- Dd.3.18 Mainly lute duet trebles and consort lute parts.
- Dd.14.24 Cittern solos and consort parts.
- Dd.5.20 Bass consort parts and an inserted section of lyra viol tablature and music for division viol, including a number of divisions on consort lesson bass parts, including 'James’s Galliard' and Dowland’s ‘Lachrimae’)
- Dd.5.21 Mainly recorder consort parts but with two pages of parts for 'treble violan'. (the smallest size of violin used at the time), mistakenly copied by Holmes into his recorder book.

The main 'treble violan’ book and the bandora book, which we can assume would have originally existed, are not extant.

The Matthew Holmes consort books are, nevertheless, one of the richest sources of Elizabethan consort music, particularly by virtue of having the largest number of fine lute parts to accompany consorts in this and other collections, such as Thomas Morley’s *The First Booke of Consort Lessons* (1599 & 1611) for which the lute book is missing. The set is also interesting in that treble violan (treble violin) and recorder are specified rather than the more usual treble viol and flute.

For a fuller introduction and list of sources for the individual pieces, see the introduction in the Score.

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Variations from the source

The Lute part

The list below shows tablature (tab) as appears in the source and which was considered to require alteration. The tablature letters start at the top course and work downwards. A course which is not notated is shown by a hyphen.

1. The French kings maske
   IG

2. Alfonsoes paven
   no change

3. La Bergera galliarde
   no change

4. Nightingale
   3rd section
   semibreve rest missing from start of section

5. Complainte or Fortune
   version 1
   2nd section, 1st time
   bar 7 first quaver f h a - - tab

6. Primiero
   1st section
   1st time
   bar 5 4th crotchet - - - b - - tab
   2nd section
   2nd time
   bar 1 2nd minim c a - c - tab
   3rd section
   2nd time
   bar 6 last semiquaver - e - - - - tab

7. Duncombs galliarde
   no change

8. Tarletons jigg
   no change

9. Long paven
   IG

10. Dowlands round Battell galliarde
    1st section
    bar 3 3rd minim c a c b - - tab

11. Katherine Darcies galliarde
    IG

12. The Jewes Daunce
    bar 13
    2nd minim consists of crotchet followed by two quavers

13. De la Tromba paven
    no change

14. James Galliarde
    2nd section
    1st time
    bars 5 - 7

   3rd section
   2nd time
   bar 5 5th crotchet d a - c - - tab
   bar 7 first time no rhythm signs

15. The Sprytes songe
    IG

16. Reades first paven
    3rd section
    2nd time
    4th minim beat: 3rd and 4th semiquaver - c - - then - a - - - tab

17. Reades second paven
    1st section
    1st time
    4th minim beat: 3rd quaver - d - - - tab
    2nd section
    1st time
    bar 2

   1st time
   bar 3
   1st quaver - a - - - a tab

   2nd time
   bar 2

   2nd time
   bar 3
   5th quaver beat - d - - - - tab

   2nd time
   b naturals on top course are all flat in source.

18. Reades galliarde
    2nd section
    2nd time

18a. Reades galliarde
    no change

19. Dowlands first galliarde
    IG

20. Nutmigs and ginger
    no change
1. The French kings maske
2. Alfonsoes paven

Alfonso Ferrabosco
3. La Bergera galliarde
4. Nightingale
6. Primiero

\[\text{Música musical con notas y tablados}\]
8. Tarletons jigg
15. The Sprytes Songe
17. Reades second paven

Richard Reade
20. Nutmigs and ginger