

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the will, dated 6 and 8 May 1577 and proved 25 May 1577, of Jasper Bassano, one of the Bassano family who were the Queen's musicians and who were referred to by Oxford's page, Orazio Cuoco, in his testimony before the Venetian Inquisition. For the Bassano family, see the *ODNB* entry for Alvise Bassano (d.1554). For Orazio Cuoco's testimony before the Inquisition, see Archivio di Stato di Venezia, Savi all'Eresia, Santo Uffizio. b. 41 on this website.

The testator states that he was born in Bassano del Grappa ('native in Bassanie under the state of the city of Venice'). He was the last surviving brother of the five brothers who came to the court of Henry VIII in 1539 as musicians and instrument makers under the patronage of Sir Henry Knyvet(d.1546):

*The earliest English patron of the Bassanos was Sir Henry Knyvett of the Privy Chamber, a Norfolk gentleman who sponsored their journey to England with an advance of £40.*

See Selfridge-Field, Eleanor, *Venetian Instrumentalists in England: A Bassano Chronicle (1536-1660)*, (Florence: Leo S. Olschki Editore, 1979), p. 207.

For Sir Henry Knyvet, grandfather of Oxford's mistress, Anne Vavasour, and father of Sir Thomas Knyvet (1546 – 27 July 1622), who fought with Oxford over the 'quarrel of Anne Vavasour', see the *ODNB* article on Sir Henry Knyvet, and his will, TNA PROB 11/32/4.

The five Bassano brothers had numerous descendants in London, such that, according to Selfridge-Field, *supra*, p. 211:

*In 1577, when there were only 166 Italians resident in London, the Bassanos have to have constituted a significant subconstituency.*

Referring to the testator's brother, Anthony Bassano (d.1574), Selfridge-Field, *supra*, p. 211, speculates that Shakespeare may have known the Bassanos:

*Admittedly the names "Bassanio" and "Antonio", used for the Venetian traders in The Merchant of Venice (1595), provide an interesting, if accidental, tribute to the original head of the English lineage.*

For the will of the testator's brother, Anthony Bassano (d.1574), see TNA PROB 11/56/512. For the will of the testator's brother, Baptista Bassano (d.1576), see TNA PROB 11/58/261.

In the will below the testator mentions his daughter, Barbara, and his son-in-law, Innocent Locatelle, whom he describes as a 'merchant of Venice'. Certificates of residence show the latter to have been liable for taxation in the city of London until at least 1603 under the variant surnames 'Lucatell, Lucatella, Lucatelli, Lucotella, Luketelo

and Luscatelli'. See, for example, TNA E 115/242/25. The testator's son-in-law, Innocent Locatelle, was also sued in Chancery during the reign of James I by 'Edward Worth, Lucy Worth his wife, Francis Rogers and Susan Rogers his wife (daughters of Innocent Lucatale and Barbara Lucatale)'. See TNA C 2/JasI/W4/46.

For the Bassano family, see also Woods, Susanne, *Lanyer: A Renaissance Woman Poet*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 1-9 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=PHz8zveVvL4C&pg=PA4&lpg=PA4&dq=%22Joseph+Holland%22+%22Angela%22&source=bl&ots=aIFNv3AQZD&sig=qgxZTiSCb66myd6ZrMHYbo8h6PU&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0CDQQ6AEwBmoVChMIgYHMjI3PxxwIVyi-ICh3bbgmL#v=onepage&q=%22Joseph%20Holland%22%20%22Angela%22&f=false>

RM: T{estamentu}m Jasp{er}i Bassany

[f. 156r] In the name of God, Amen. I, Jasper Bassanye, native in Bassanie under the state of the city of Venice and one of the Queen's Majesty's musicians, being of perfect mind and remembrance, the sixth day of this present month of May in the presence of us hereafter named made and declared his last will in manner and form following, that is to say:

He gave and bequeathed to his daughter, Barbarye Bassanye, wife of Innocent Locatelle, merchant of Venice, and their children all his goods, chattels and substance which he had or should have wheresoever it was or should remain at the time of his decease;

And also gave unto the same Barbarie Bassanie, wife of the same Innocent, and to their children all that his house with the appurtenances set and being in Mark Lane in London;

In witness whereof we, Franc{isco}(?) Binson, venecia(?), Mary Croxson, Marie Elingcorte and others which were then and there present hereunto have subscribed with our hands, given th' eight day of May 1577 and in the nineteenth year of the reign of our most dread Sovereign Lady Elizabeth by the grace of God Queen of England, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith etc. Per me Franc{iscum}(?) Benzone. Per me Joh{anne}em Briggs, grocer. Mary Croxson mark. Marie de Hillecorte.

Vicesimo quinto die Mens{is} Maij Anno d{omi}ni Mill{es}imo Quingentesimo Septuagesimo Septimo Emanuit Comissio Innocencio Locottelle et Barbare Locatelle al{ia}s Bassani vxori eiusdem Innocencij ac filie Naturali et l{egi}time p{re}fati Jasperi Bassani defunct{i} h{ab}entis &c Ad Administrand{um} bona Iura & Credita eiusdem iuxta tenorem Testame{n}ti p{re}d{icti} de bene &c Iurat{is}

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[=On the twenty-fifth day of the month of May in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred seventy-seventh a grant issued to Innocent Locatelle and Barbara Locatelle alias Bassani, wife of the same Innocent and natural and legitimate daughter of the forenamed Jasper Bassani, deceased, having etc., to administer the goods, rights & credits of the same according to the tenor of the foresaid testament, sworn to well etc.]