

The Basset Clarinet: Instruments, Makers, and Patents¹

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Introduction

The basset clarinet is a soprano clarinet pitched in C, B \flat , or A whose range is extended downward to middle C, similar to the basset horn. Basset clarinets were made as early as the 1770s, with lowest notes of middle C and/or D above. Anton Stadler used B \flat and A basset clarinets in three of Mozart's important works: the B \flat basset clarinet obbligato solo to "Parto, parto, ma tu ben mio" from *La Clemenza di Tito* (1791); the A basset clarinet parts in the Quintet for Clarinet and Strings, K581 (1789); and the Concerto for Clarinet and Orchestra, K622 (1791).² There are also several modern works written for the basset clarinet.

The revival of interest in the basset clarinet in 1951, discussed below, encouraged makers to construct basset clarinets using modern Boehm, German, and Oehler key systems, and since the 1970s, to make reconstructions of 18th-century basset clarinets based on written descriptions and an engraving of Anton Stadler's basset clarinet played in 1794 performances.³ During the past 40 years, many of Mozart's works have been beautifully performed and recorded with modern basset clarinets and reconstructions of 18th-century examples.

The idea of a woodwind instrument with an extended range below its normal lowest note began during the 16th century with

¹ I thank the following for information: Margaret Archibald, Nicholas Bucknall, François Camboulive, Francesco Carreras, John Coppen, Joël Dugot, Heike Fricke, Jonathan Goldman, Katherine Hainsworth, Tomoki Hirakata, Eric Hoepflich, Jean Jeltsch, Martin Kirnbauer, Charles Lamb, Mona Lemmel, Colin Lawson, Renato Meucci, Ian Mitchell, Arnold Myers, Nick Planas, Pamela Poulin, Thomas Reil, Gabriele Rossi Rognoni, Pedro Rubio, Hans Rudolf Stalder, Sara Thurlow, and Maurice Vallet.

² Colin Lawson, *Mozart, Clarinet Concerto* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp.25–37, 52–59, 72–83; Albert R. Rice, *The Clarinet in the Classical Period* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), pp.76, 160–65; Eric Hoepflich, *The Clarinet* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), pp.110–13. A few other works are known to have been written for or played on the basset clarinet, such as the 1792 incomplete concerto in D for basset clarinet and orchestra by Franz Xaver Süssmayr, manuscript in the British Library. On 22 and 23 December 1805, Anton Stadler accompanied Madame Campi playing the obbligato part to the aria "Una voce al cor mi parla" in act II of Ferdinando Paer's *Sargino* (1803) on a clarinet of his own invention ("auf einem von ihm selbst erfundenen Clarinett"); see Carl Ferdinand Pohl, *Denkschrift aus Anlass des hundertjährigen Bestehens der Tonkünstler-societät, im Jahre 1862 reorganisirt als "Haydn" Witwen-und Waisen-Versorgungs-Verein der Tonkünstler in Wien* (Vienna: Selbstverlag des "Haydn", 1871), p.67.

³ Pamela Poulin, "Anton Stadler's Basset Clarinet: Recent Discoveries in Riga," *Journal of the American Musical Instrument Society*, xxii (1996), illustrated on pp.115, 121, 124–25.

extended-range tenor and bass crumhorns. A second overlapping key for the right- or left-hand little fingers (R4, L4) extended their lowest note by a major second. The extension of the range provided greater scope for composers.⁴ Other extended-range woodwinds became popular during the 19th century, particularly flutes made by Koch and Ziegler in Vienna.

By 1790, a fully chromatic basset note range (E \flat , D, C \sharp , and C) was devised by Anton Stadler, Mozart's clarinetist, in collaboration with the Viennese Court instrument maker, Theodor Lotz (1746–92).⁵ The touches for notes below E were usually positioned on the back for the right thumb in a pattern similar to that found on contemporary basset horns.⁶ During the 19th century, clarinetists familiar with Mozart's music requested basset clarinets from various makers in Europe. Basset clarinets by Lotz are lost.

This article describes the various designs utilized by makers of extant 18th- and 19th-century basset clarinets, more briefly reviews 20th- and 21st-century basset clarinets, and identifies three patents. The variety of designs used and the quality of workmanship of 18th- and 19th-century makers are remarkable, as are the modern basset clarinets made with Boehm, German, and Oehler systems.

18th-Century Basset Clarinets before Stadler and Lotz

There are six extant 18th-century basset clarinets in A; it can be surmised that they were played in duos or trios and with other wind instruments, such as clarinets d'amour, basset horns, bassoons, or french horns. Preceding the basset clarinet, clarinets d'amour were first made about 1740 and basset horns about 1760.⁷ The early basset clarinets exhibit two shapes: 1) basset horn shape made with either a curved or angled body; 2) alto clarinet shape with a curved brass crook, straight body, and wooden bell.

The first (Table 1, no. 1) is by the Mayrhofer of Passau about 1775. It has a later mouthpiece and barrel; the curved (about 120°) body, probably of boxwood covered with leather and bent by cuts, has an octagonal outer surface. Because of

⁴ Barra Boydell, "Crummhorn," *Grove Music Online*.

⁵ See Lawson, *Mozart, Clarinet Concerto*, pp.25–37, 43–48, 52–59, 84–85; Rice, *The Clarinet in the Classical Period*, pp.71–74, 160–165; Hoeprich, *The Clarinet*, pp.109–16; Melanie Pidocke, "Theodor Lotz: A Biographical and Organological Study," PhD diss., University of Edinburgh, 2011, pp.218–35.

⁶ A useful collection of sketches illustrating basset key touches on the back of several basset horns and one basset clarinet is in Jürgen Eppelsheim, "Bassetthorn-Studien," *Studia Organologica: Festschrift für John Henry van der Meer zu seinem fünfundsiebzigsten Geburtstag* (Tutzing: Hans Schneider, 1987), pp.110–13.

⁷ Albert R. Rice, *From the Clarinet D'Amour to the Contrabass: a History of Large-Size Clarinets, 1740–1860* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp.11, 100.

the shorter length than the basset horn in F, the bore moves diagonally through a leather-covered wooden box or *Buch* and then downward to a brass bell.⁸ It has seven brass keys: speaker (S), A, Ab/Eb, F/C, F#/C#, E/B, and a low C as its lowest note; the F#/C# key was removed at some point. The number and choice of keys are equivalent technically to the popular five-key soprano clarinet's. The maker's stamp on the leather of the side of the box reads: "ANT: et MICH: / MAYRHOFER / INVEN. & ELABO: / PASSAVII."⁹

Two A basset clarinets (Table 1, nos. 2, 3) with a straight alto clarinet shape are stamped "AS", possibly by Anton Schintler of Vienna about 1780. Each has four sections: mouthpiece (missing), long curved brass crook, two stained fruitwood body sections with an integral, slightly flaring wooden bell. Both have seven keys: S, A, two Ab/Eb, F/C, E/B, and C. The two Ab/Eb keys are on either side of the F/C key to give a choice of using the left or right hand lowest. They are equivalent to four-key clarinets made by a few makers of the time. Length (L)=810 mm. Stamped: "1 / AS // 1 / S"; and "2 / AS // 2 / S".¹⁰

The fourth example is anonymous, probably made in Germany about 1785, in a curved basset horn shape, with boxwood body with ivory ferrules, in six sections: blackwood mouthpiece, barrel, left-hand joint, right-hand joint, stock, and clarinet bell. There are eight brass keys: S, A, Ab/Eb, F/C, F#/C#, E/B, D, and C. Originally it had a *corps de rechange* or two upper fingerhole joints for playing in Bb.¹¹ It has a shape similar to curved eight-key basset horns pitched in F. L=710 mm.¹²

⁸ The metal bell with six embossed Passau wolf medallions is illustrated by Josef Saam, *Das Bassetthorn, seine Erfindung und Weiterbildung* (Mainz: B. Schott's Söhne, 1971), p.17; Eppelsheim, "Bassetthorn Studien," pp.86, 110, Skizze 52 (placement of C and E/B keys).

⁹ Nicholas Shackleton, "The Earliest Basset Horns," *Galpin Society Journal*, xl (December 1987), pp.2, 6–7, 15, 19–20; Konrad Ruhland, *Musikinstrumente aus Ostbayern (Niederbayern/Oberpfalz) vom 17.–19. Jh. Begleitheft zur gleichnamigen Sonderausstellung im Stadtmuseum Deggendorf 13. November 1992 bis 31. Januar 1993* (Deggendorf: Stadt Deggendorf, 1992), pp.69, 121. Phillip T. Young, *4900 Historical Woodwind Instruments: An Inventory of 200 Makers in International Collections* (London: T. Bingham, 1993), p.154; Rice, *The Clarinet in the Classical Period*, p.71. In the maker's stamp, a single slash (/) indicates the next line, a double slash (//) indicates a lower placement on the section.

¹⁰ Studied by me in 2012 at the Paris Musée de la musique. I thank Joël Dugot and Jean Jeltsch for their help. Josiane Bran-Ricci, *La clarinette et son histoire: Trois siècles d'évolution et de facture, 28 Juin – 30 Août 1986*, Musée instrumental du Conservatoire national supérieur de musique de Paris, 1986, nos.6–7; attribution by Shackleton, "The Earliest Basset Horns," p.13; Jean Jeltsch, "La clarinette de Mozart," *Crescendo: Le Magazine de la musique ancienne*, no. 34 (July-August 1990), p.17.

¹¹ The *corps de rechange* is reported by César C. Snoeck in *Catalogue de la collection d'instruments de musique anciens ou curieux* (Ghent: J. Vuylsteke, 1894), p.167. This instrument was purchased from Snoeck for the Berlin Hochschule für Musik collection in 1902 and was catalogued as a basset horn in G with no mention of the *corps de rechange*; see Curt Sachs, *Sammlung alter Musikinstrumente bei der Staatlichen Hochschule für Musik zu Berlin: Beschreibender Katalog* (Berlin: J. Bard, 1922), col.299; Werner Breig and Heike Fricke, "Studien zu Mozarts Klarinettenquintett KV 581," *Mozart-Studien*, 15 (2006), p.193.

¹² Shackleton, "The Earliest Basset Horns," p.18; Eppelsheim, "Bassetthorn-Studien," p.106; Jeltsch, "La clarinette de Mozart," p.17; Heike Fricke, *Faszination Klarinette*, eds. C. Restle and H.

The anonymous fifth example, in an angled basset horn form, was probably made in Vienna about 1810. It has a dark stained fruitwood body in seven sections: blackwood mouthpiece, curved barrel, left-hand joint, right-hand joint with an integral knee at top, straight stock, box, and brass bell (missing). There are ten brass keys: S, A, E♭/B♭, C♯/G♯, B/F♯ (addition), A♭/E♯ (missing), F♯/C♯, E/B, D, and C, one of which was a later addition. L=610 mm (without brass bell).¹³

The sixth basset clarinet was made by Franz Strobach in Karlsbad about 1810. It has an angled basset horn shape, and seven boxwood sections with ivory ferrules: blackwood mouthpiece, barrel, left-hand joint, right-hand joint with integral angled knee on the upper section of about 145°, stock joint, curved L-joint at about 105°, and globular bell. It has 13 brass keys, five of which were added on pillars: S, A-B trill (added), A, G♯ (added), E♭/B♭ (added), C♯/G♯ (added), B/F♯ (added), B♭/F, A♭/E♭, F♯/C♯, E/B, D, and C. The maker's stamp is: "(star) / STROBACH / CARLSBAAD / (star)".¹⁴ It exhibits a high level of craftsmanship from a fine maker.

Šebesta and Hoeprich suggest that Anton Stadler's performances in Prague during September and October 1791 on a basset clarinet and basset horn with globular bells influenced Franz Strobach in Karlsbad to manufacture similar instruments.¹⁵ This is a possibility although unverified by additional evidence. Strobach's basset clarinet (no. 6), like his basset horns, has an angled body without the usual basset horn box, and one L-joint that allows the bell to point toward or away from the audience. The bell in the engravings on Stadler's Riga programs points toward the player, producing "a darker and slightly more veiled sound."¹⁶

Fricke (Munich: Prestel, 2004), p.73.

¹³ Studied by me in 2012 at the Musée de la musique; description on Musée de la musique website, <http://mediateque.cite-musique.fr>.

¹⁴ Illustrated by Jeltsch, "La clarinette de Mozart," p.18; Lawson, *Mozart, Clarinet Concerto*, pp.85, 88-89; Robert Šebesta and Eric Hoeprich, "Franz Strobach: Basset Horns and New Biographical Information," *Journal of the American Musical Instrument Society*, xxxvi (2010), pp.58-77, especially 76; Robert Šebesta, "Strobach Basset Horn Production in the Light of New Biographical Discoveries," *Geschichte, Bauweise und Repertoire der Klarinetteninstrumente, Michaelsteiner Konferenzberichte 77* (Augsburg: Wißner Verlag, 2014), pp.113-21, esp. 119.

¹⁵ Šebesta and Hoeprich, "Franz Strobach: Basset Horns and New Biographical Information," pp.60-61, 73; Laurence Libin, "Strobach, Franz," *Grove Dictionary of Musical Instruments* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), vol. 4, p.641.

¹⁶ Šebesta and Hoeprich, "Franz Strobach: Basset Horns and New Biographical Information," p.69.

Lotz's Basset Clarinet Design and Later Copies

None of the first six extant A basset clarinets in Table 1 could have played Mozart's concerto or quintet since they lack a fully chromatic scale of basset notes E \flat , D, C \sharp , and C of Lotz's 1790 design. Lotz was a highly accomplished woodwind maker who produced all types of woodwinds including flutes, oboes, english horns, and contrabassoons. He specialized in basset horns, clarinets, basset clarinets, and bassoons and is thought to have taught several students to construct woodwind instruments, including Griesbacher, Tauber, and Scholl. Lotz also made important advances in construction for clarinets, basset horns, bassoons, contrabassoons, and english horns, as summarized by Piddocke.¹⁷

The earliest basset clarinet made in 1788 by Theodor Lotz for Anton Stadler, with only a low D and C, was described as a "bass clarinet" in the program at the National Hoftheater on 20 February 1788. This was "an instrument of new invention and improved by the court instrument maker Theodor Lotz with two deeper tones than the ordinary clarinet."¹⁸ After a Haydn symphony, Stadler played a concerto on his bass clarinet which we now call a basset clarinet. The third number on the program was an aria by Anfossi sung by Mademoiselle Lux; the fourth number Stadler played was a set of variations. In 1790, Lotz modified and redesigned the basset clarinet to include a chromatic basset range of E \flat , D, C \sharp , and C. The Berlin *Musikalischer Korrespondenz* in 1790 reports Anton Stadler "has refined his instrument and added notes at the bottom, so that E is no longer the lowest tone, but rather the C a third under this. He also negotiates the C \sharp and D \sharp in between, and those with special ease!"¹⁹ Three programs for Stadler's Riga concerts in 1794 feature an engraving of a straight-shaped basset clarinet probably made by Lotz, with a curved barrel, L-joint at the bottom, globular bell pointing toward the player, two ridges defining a center section, and a large resonance hole (fig. 1).²⁰ The globular bell, with or without ridges, pointing toward the player, darkens the tone quality when compared to the tone of a clarinet-type, slightly flaring bell. The program engraving is not sufficiently

¹⁷ Piddocke, "Theodor Lotz: A Biographical and Organological Study," pp.388–97; Melanie Piddocke, "Johann Theodor Lotz," *Grove Dictionary of Musical Instruments* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), vol. 3, pp.311–12.

¹⁸ ". . . der Baß-Klarinet; einem Instrumente von einer neuen Erfindung, und Verfertigung des k.k. Hof=Instrumentenmachers, Theodor Loz; dieses Instrument hat zwey tiefe Töne mehr, als die gewöhnliche Klarinet." See Pamela Poulin, "The Basset Clarinet of Anton Stadler," *College Music Symposium*, 22/2 (Fall 1982), p.72; Colin Lawson, "The Basset Clarinet Revived," *Early Music*, xv/4 (November 1987), p.487.

¹⁹ *Musikalischer Korrespondenz der teutschen Filarmonischen Gesellschaft für das Jahr 1790* no. 29 (10 November 1790), p.146; trans. by David Ross, "A Comprehensive Performance Project in Clarinet Literature with an Organological Study in the Development of the Clarinet in the Eighteenth Century," DMA diss., University of Iowa, 1985, pp.262–63; Arthur J. Ness, "Some Remarks Concerning the Basset Clarinet and Mozart's Concerto in A Major (KV 622)," MA thesis, Harvard University, 1961, p.11.

²⁰ Poulin, "Anton Stadler's Basset Clarinet: Recent Discoveries in Riga," illustrated on pp.115, 121, 124–25.



Fig. 1. Engraving of basset clarinet from Anton Stadler's program of 21 March, 1794 played in Riga. Latvian Fundamental Library, Riga. With permission of Pamela Poulin.

detailed to identify all the keys; it probably had a minimum of nine keys or more. On the list of debts remaining after Lotz's death in 1792 are "2 neu erfundene Pasklarinet" (two newly invented bass clarinets) for which Stadler owed the large sum of 162 gulden. The letters "P" and "B" were interchangeable in 18th-century German, and this name should be interpreted as "Basklarinet".²¹ Although Theodor Lotz sent many instruments to different cities in Europe, the evidence suggests that Stadler's basset clarinet was a unique example and this innovative design spread during Stadler's tour of 1792 to 1794.²²

A contemporary Viennese maker, Friedrich Hammig (ca. 1767–1803), produced an eight-key basset horn in F (St. Petersburg, 16516/1010 A564) with a shape similar to Stadler's basset clarinet's. It includes two L-joints at the end of the body, connected at a 90° angle to a globular bell positioned to the right side.²³ This may be Hammig's basset horn advertised on 12 December 1791 as "a newly invented type of basset horn whose special feature is the depth and power of its tone."²⁴ In the same year, Hammig applied for an imperial privilege as a woodwind maker, granted in 1794.²⁵

²¹ Piddocke cites the Wiener Stadt- und Landesarchiv, Herrschaften Konradswörth 1–90, 2.1.1.103.A1 – Abhandlungen 1 (1744) 1789–1850 in "Theodor Lotz: A Biographical and Organological Study," p.228.

²² Piddocke, "Theodor Lotz: A Biographical and Organological Study," p.225.

²³ Šebesta and Hoepflich, "Franz Strobach: Basset Horns and New Biographical Information," pp.65–66, photo on p.74.

²⁴ *Wiener Zeitung*, 12 December 1791: "eine neue Erfindung von Bassethorn, dessen vorzugliche Eigenschaft die Tiefe und Stärke des Tons ist." See Richard Maunder, "Viennese Wind-Instrument Makers, 1700–1800," *Galpin Society Journal*, li (July 1998), p.182.

²⁵ William Waterhouse, *The New Langwill Dictionary of Wind-Instrument Makers and Inventors* (London: Tony Bingham, 1992), p.160.

The Basset Clarinet during the Late 18th and 19th Centuries

During the late 18th and early 19th centuries, increased interest in the basset clarinet is indicated by more instruments and reports of performances. For example, at Franz Joseph Clement's 28 December 1792 concert at the Mehlgrube Theater in Vienna, Christoph Weisgärber, clarinetist to Princess Lubomirska, performed a concerto of his own composition on a newly invented *basset d'amore*, possibly a basset clarinet.²⁶ On 5 February 1795, Anton Stadler wrote a letter to Daniel Schütte of Bremen to request dates for concerts and to ask the turner Johann Burchard Tietzel of Bremen to construct for him a "new type of clarinet d'amour according to his specification, since it turned out very well."²⁷ It is not known if Tietzel made a second basset clarinet for Stadler with a d'amour bell, but this letter suggests that makers were constructing basset clarinets with a globular or d'amour bell. Basset clarinets by Tietzel have not been found.

Three different types of clarinets were made and advertised by Franz Scholl of Vienna, who was awarded an imperial privilege in 1803. The first was a basset clarinet in B \flat or C:

His clarinets (in B \flat or C) go 2 tones lower, namely to the low C, which always produce a good effect because one has the low tonic note for cadences. Moreover, his clarinets strongly recommend themselves by their good construction, by their pure tuning, and by a new manner by which the keys are mounted.²⁸

In 1803, the clarinetist and basset hornist Johann Georg Heinrich Backofen wrote about the basset clarinet in his general clarinet tutor of about 1803:

²⁶ Reported in the *Wiener Zeitung*, 19 December 1792, p.3424 and the *Wiener Zeitung*, 26 December 1792, p.3495; Mary Sue Morrow, *Concert Life in Haydn's Vienna: Aspects of a Developing Musical and Social Institution* (New York: Pendragon Press, 1989), p.281.

²⁷ ". . . eine neue Art Clarinette d'amour nach seinen Angaben verfertigen, die sehr gut ausfiel." No. 293 Stadler, Anton Eigh. Brief (Ausschnitt) m. U. [Bremen] 5.2.1795. – Aufgezogen, in *Katalog Nr. 308: Musikerautographen* (Tutzing: Hans Schnieder, ca. 1988), p.76. I thank Ingrid Pearson for sending me a copy of this page from the catalogue.

²⁸ "Seine Clarinetten (in B oder C) gehen um 2 Töne tiefer, nämlich bis in des tiefe C, welches da man den tiefen Grundton zur Kadenze hat, immer einen guten Effect macht; seine Clarinetten müssen sich ausserdam durch guten Bau, reine Stimmung, und durch die eine neue Art, wie die Klappen angebracht sind, vorzüglich empfehlen." "Anzeige von verbesserten und neu erfundenen Blasinstrumenten," *Wiener Zeitung*, 2 April 1803, p.1174; reproduced and trans. David Ross, "A Comprehensive Performance Project in Clarinet Literature," pp.269–71. The other Scholl clarinets mentioned in the advertisement suggest a contrabass clarinet and a contra alto clarinet in G; Rice, *From the Clarinet D'Amour to the Contra Bass*, pp.45–46, 261; Pidduck, "Theodor Lotz: A Biographical and Organological Study," pp.200–01. I thank Melanie Pidduck for suggesting the identity of these two instruments.

An even newer and superb invention is this: they are making clarinets now in Vienna, which, like basset horns, have even low D and C; this perfects the clarinet all the more in that it now has (apart from the great advantage obtained by the fundamental tonic C, so lacking in its favourite key of C) three full octaves which every clarinetist can easily play. This is not the case with every wind instrument, for the bassoon also has three octaves, but to have them in one's grasp requires a considerable degree of virtuosity. For now I will pass over the many and great advantages of this and other new inventions, and go into complete detail when they become more common.²⁹

Backofen eliminated mention of the basset clarinet in the 1824 second edition of his clarinet tutor, suggesting that basset clarinets were never to become common, but were used as specialty instruments by virtuosi.³⁰

The clarinetist and basset hornist Vincent Springer had a “new type of clarinet d’amour” in B \flat made for him by Friedrich Peuckert of Breslau. It was reported in March 1806:

Through the invention of the clarinetist Mr. Springer of Amsterdam, I was able to construct completely new B \flat clarinets, which are slightly bent, descend to low C, have an outstandingly beautiful tone and are finished to the highest perfection.³¹

Because of the extension to low C and the slightly bent body, it seems likely that this instrument was a basset clarinet. At Marianne Kirchgessner's

²⁹ “Noch eine neuere und vortreffliche Erfindung ist diese, dass man jetzt in Wien Klarinetten macht, welche, so wie die Bassethörner, noch das tiefe D und C haben, was die Klarinette um so mehr vervollkommt, das sie nun (ausser dem grossen Vortheil, den sie durch den Grundton C erhält, der ihr bisher so sehr in ihrem Favoritton C mangelte) volle 3 Oktaven hat: die jeder Klarinetist sehr leicht blasen kann, was nicht bey jedem Blasinstrument der Fall ist: den auch der Fagott hat 3 Oktaven, aber es gehört schon ein ziemlicher Grad von Virtuosität dazu, um sie ganz in der Gewalt zu haben. Ich will für jetzt die vielen und grossen Vortheile der vorhergehenden und dieser neuern Invention übergehen, und sie dann erst umständlich detailliren; wenn dieser Klarinetten allgemeiner geworden sind.” Johann Georg Heinrich Backofen, *Anweisung zur Klarinette nebst einer kurzen Abhandlung über das Bassett-Horn* (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, ca. 1803; reprint ed., Celle: Moeck Verlag, 1986), p.35, trans. in Susan Carol Kohler, “J.G.H. Backofen's *Anweisung zur Klarinette nebst einer kurzen Abhandlung über das Bassett-Horn*, translation and commentary,” DMA diss., University of Washington, 1997, p.41.

³⁰ Johann Georg Heinrich Backofen, *Anweisung zur Clarinette mit besonderer Hinsicht auf die in neuern Zeiten diesem Instrument beigefügten Klappen nebst einer kurzen Abhandlung über das Basset-Horn. Neue umgearbeitete und vermehrte Ausgabe* (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1824).

³¹ “Durch die Erfindung des Clarinetisten, Herrn Springers, aus Amsterdam, bin ich in Stand gesetzt worden, eine ganz neue Art von B Clarinetten, welche kaum gebogen, bis ins tief C gehen und einen vorzüglich schönen Ton haben, in höchster Vollkommenheit zu liefern,” *Staats- und gelehrte Zeitung des unpartheyischen Hamburger Correspondenten*, no. 35 (1 March 1806), cited by Diethard Riehm, “Zum Problem der Tiefen Klarinetten in Johann Christian Bachs Opern,” *Festschrift Klaus Hortschansky zum 60. Geburtstag*, eds. A. Beer and L. Lütteken (Tutzing: H. Schneider, 1995), p. 218, trans. in Hoepfich, *The Clarinet*, p.122.

Fig. 2. Basset clarinet in C, Johann Benjamin Eisenbrant, Göttingen, ca. 1820, 11 keys. Private collection, The Netherlands. Photo: Eric Hoeprich. With permission of Eric Hoeprich.



concert at the Redoutensaal in Vienna on 23 February 1806, Springer performed a concerto by Johannes Wilhelm Wilms which may have been played on his B \flat basset clarinet.³²

19th-Century Extant and Reported Basset Clarinets

During the 19th century, a few B \flat basset clarinets were made to play the obligato part in the aria “Parto, parto, ma tu ben mio” in Mozart’s *La Clemenza di Tito*. Other B \flat basset clarinets were likely intended for wind bands. These instruments were made in three shapes: 1) straight; 2) bassoon with a wooden U-joint at the bottom; and 3) ophicleide with a metal U-joint.

There are three early-19th-century basset clarinets with a chromatic basset range. The first (Table 1, no. 7) closely resembles Lotz’s basset clarinet constructed for Stadler. It was made by Johann Benjamin Eisenbrant of Göttingen about 1820, in C (fig. 2), of stained boxwood with ivory ferrules. It is made in seven sections: blackwood mouthpiece, ivory curved barrel, left-hand joint, right-hand joint, stock joint, L-shaped lower section, and a bulbous bell with a center section and a resonance hole. The bell can point toward or away from the player. It has 11 keys: S, A-B trill, A, A \flat /E \flat , F \sharp /C \sharp , E/B, E \flat , D, C \sharp , C, and B.³³ The maker’s stamp is: “(lion) / EISENBRANT / GÖTTINGEN / (star)” and the quality of workmanship is very high.³⁴

³² Morrow, *Concert Life in Haydn’s Vienna: Aspects of a Developing Musical and Social Institution*, p.335; Pamela Weston states without further discussion that Springer played a basset clarinet by Peuckert in “Mozart’s 621b Concerto fragment, for Stadler or Springer,” *Clarinet and Saxophone*, 25/2 (Summer 2001), p.25.

³³ Illustrated in Lawson, *Mozart, Clarinet Concerto*, p.46; five basset keys are mentioned by Hoeprich, *The Clarinet*, p.122. I thank Eric Hoeprich for sending a color photo of this instrument which was on loan to him for several years. The half-step extension to low B is used on basset horns by Johann Benjamin Eisenbrant, Friedrich Hammig Junior, Johann Georg Braun, Carl Grevé, and Franz Schöllnast; see Rice, *From the Clarinet D’Amour to the Contra Bass*, pp.103, 145–46, 150, 157–58. I studied the Hammig Junior basset horn in Antwerp in 2015.

³⁴ Illustrated in Lawson, *Mozart, Clarinet Concerto*, p.46.



Fig. 3. (left) Basset clarinet in B-flat, Jacob Georg Larshof, Copenhagen, ca. 1830, 15 keys. With permission, copyright Historisches Museum Basel, 2012.110. Photo: M. Babey.



Fig. 4. (right) Basset clarinet in B-flat, Jacob Georg Larshof, Copenhagen, ca. 1830. Stock joints for a clarinet or a basset clarinet. With permission, copyright Historisches Museum Basel, 2012.110. Photo: M. Babey.

Number 8 was made in a straight shape by Jacob Georg Larshof of Copenhagen about 1830 (figs. 3, 4). It is in B \flat , with stained boxwood body with ivory ferrules and five sections: blackwood mouthpiece, barrel, left-hand joint, right-hand joint-stock, bell. It has 15 brass keys: S, A-B trill, A, G \sharp , f/c (later addition), E \flat /B \flat (R1, later addition), E \flat /B \flat (L3), C \sharp /G \sharp , B/F \sharp (later addition), B \flat /F, A \flat /E \flat , F \sharp /C \sharp , E/B, D, and C. There is a second stock joint with three keys and rollers on the touches of the F \sharp /C \sharp and E/B keys for playing as a normal clarinet.³⁵ The maker's stamp is: "(star) / LARSHOF / (star)".³⁶

Number 9, by Johann Gottlieb Karl Bischoff of Darmstadt about 1840, has a straight shape in stained boxwood with ivory ferrules. In B \flat , it has five sections: ivory mouthpiece, barrel, right-hand joint, left-hand joint-stock, and bell. There are 16 brass keys: S, A-B trill, A, G \sharp , f/c, E \flat /B \flat , C \sharp /G \sharp , B/F \sharp , B \flat /F,

³⁵ I thank Hans Rudolf Stalder for photos and information concerning his clarinet collection.

³⁶ The back of the instrument with its four basset key touches next to each other is illustrated by Jeltsch, "La clarinette de Mozart," p.18; Nicholas Shackleton, "The Development of the Clarinet," ed. C. Lawson, *The Cambridge Companion to the Clarinet* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p.31; Lawson, *Mozart, Clarinet Concerto*, pp.85, 89; Rice, *The Clarinet in the Classical Period*, pp.75-76; Heike Fricke, "Hans Rudolf Stalder's Sammlung historischer Klarinetten," *Robrblatt*, 24/4 (December 2009), pp.221-22. I thank Martin Kirnbauer for information.

Ab/Eb, F#/C#, E/B, E#, D, C#, and C.^{37, 38} Stamped: “B.D.” L=795 mm.³⁹ The quality of craftsmanship is very high.

André Reine Simiot, son of the important Lyonnais woodwind maker Jacques François Simiot (ca. 1769-1844), published an article in August 1867 concerning old wind instruments. At the end of the article he mentions some of the achievements of his father. He states that “his father constructed a flute that descends to C and a clarinet to D. The latter instrument was not adopted by clarinetists.”⁴⁰ Although André Simiot does not provide a date for his father’s flute and basset clarinet, we can assume it was during the 1830s to 1840s.

In 1837, Stefani Guercio of Cefalù, Palermo, constructed a new clarinet (basset clarinet) described as “surpassing the ordinary clarinet in its extension of one octave and two notes, that is, from B [one octave and a half step below middle C] to B [four octaves higher], so that the added range provides greater harmony and perfect execution of music.”⁴¹ Unfortunately this instrument is missing and there is no sketch of it.

During the second half of the 19th century, five makers constructed basset clarinets in ophicleide, straight, and bassoon shapes. Number 10, by Anton Nechwalsky of Vienna about 1860, is in Bb. It is in an ophicleide shape, has a brass body with a thumb hole and finger holes raised from the body, and four sections: blackwood mouthpiece with a nickel-silver tip and inlaid table, nickel-silver barrel, brass body in a U-shape with raised finger holes, and nickel-silver bell. There are 14 keys: S, A-B trill, A, G#, f/c, Eb/Bb, C#/G#, Bb/F, Ab/Eb, F/C, F#/C#, E/B, D, and C. On the back are two rings for a strap and the low D and C keys. Engraved on the bell rim: “A. Nechwalsky in Wien”. L=800 mm.⁴²

³⁷ A sketch of the basset keys is in Eppelsheim, “Bassetthorn-Studien,” p.111, Skizze 64.

³⁸ Karl Benno Heller and Matthias Bleyl, *Musikinstrumente aus dem Hessischen Landesmuseum 16.-19. Jahrhundert*: Hessisches Landesmuseum in Darmstadt, Ausstellung 26.6.1980-31.8.1980 (Darmstadt: Hessisches Landesmuseum, 1980), pp.50-51 (misidentified as a basset horn); Lawson, Mozart, Clarinet Concerto, pp.85, 89; Rice, *The Clarinet in the Classical Period*, p.75.

³⁹ Karl Benno Heller and Matthias Bleyl, *Musikinstrumente aus dem Hessischen Landesmuseum 16.-19. Jahrhundert*: Hessisches Landesmuseum in Darmstadt, Ausstellung 26.6.1980-31.8.1980 (Darmstadt: Hessisches Landesmuseum, 1980), pp.50-51 (misidentified as a basset horn); Lawson, *Mozart, Clarinet Concerto*, pp.85, 89; Rice, *The Clarinet in the Classical Period*, p.75.

⁴⁰ “C’est mon père qui a fait descendre la flute à l’ut et la clarinette au re, invention qui n’a pas été adoptée pour la clarinette.” “Les anciennes musiques d’harmonie,” *Le Semaine musicale*, 3/138 (29 August 1867), pp.[2-3]. I thank Jean Jeltsch for this information.

⁴¹ “. . . sorpasso quello ordinario in estensione per una ottava e due tuoni, cioè da Si basso a Si acuto, sosicché riesce con tali aggiunte più armoniosa e perfetta l’escuzione dei pezzi di musica,” *Effemeridi Scientifiche e Letterarie per le Sicilia*, lv (Palermo, 1837), p.56, cited by Adriano Amore, *Il Clarinetto in Italia nell’Ottocento* (Pesaro: Accademia Italiana del Clarinetto, 2009), p.35.

⁴² I studied this instrument in 2010 and thank Renato Meucci, Francesco Carreras, and Gabriele Rossi Rognoni for their help in enabling access to instruments at the Museo Nazionale, Rome. There are two similarly-constructed ophicleide-shaped brass instruments in the Museo Nazionale:

The next example (Table 1, no. 11), in B \flat , is anonymous but attributed to Angelo Marzoli of Paris about 1860. It is in a straight shape with an African blackwood body, and nickel-silver ferrules and keys with saltspoon-shaped key heads. There are four sections: blackwood mouthpiece, left-hand joint, right-hand joint-stock, and bell. It has simple-system keywork with 16 keys and two rings for R2 and R3: S, A-B trill, A, G \sharp , f/c, E \flat /B \flat , C \sharp /G \sharp , B \flat /F, A \flat /E \flat , F/C, F \sharp /C \sharp (two), E/B (two), D (R4), and C (L4). L=740 mm.⁴³ The attribution to Marzoli is based on this instrument's use of the L4 key for the low C, similar to Marzoli's use of this key on two bass clarinets (Ricco Carbonara collection in Cernusco sul Naviglio, and an anonymous instrument attributed to Marzoli in Paris, Musée de la musique, E.2462). On Boehm-system clarinets, the L4 key is used as an alternate for F/C.

Number 12, by Alessandro Ghirlanda of Verona in 1868, is in B \flat . It is bassoon shaped with a stained rosewood body and nickel-silver ferrules and keys. There are four sections: blackwood mouthpiece, barrel with a bulge for easy grasping, U-shaped body, and brass bell. It has 17 pillar-mounted keys: S, A-B trill, A, G \sharp , f/c, E \flat /B \flat (two touches, L3 and R1), C \sharp /G \sharp , B/F \sharp , B \flat /F, A \flat /E \flat , F/C, F \sharp /C \sharp , E/B (RT), E \flat , D, C \sharp , and C. There are four small, rounded ivory touches arranged vertically for the E \flat and D thumb keys, large, rounded ivory touches arranged horizontally for the C \sharp and C thumb keys, and a large water key on the back near the bottom of the body. Stamp: "A. GHIRLANDA / VERONA / (star)". L=733 mm (without mouthpiece), 800 mm (with mouthpiece). It was named "Clarifonio" and displayed at the Verona exhibition in 1868.⁴⁴

Number 13, by Francesco Chiesara of Venice in 1889, is similar to Ghirlanda's basset clarinet. In B \flat , it is made in bassoon shape with a stained rosewood body and nickel-silver keys and ferrules. It has four sections: blackwood mouthpiece, barrel with a bulge for easy grasping, U-shaped body, and nickel-silver bell facing forward. There is a large water key on the back near the bottom of the U-bend, and two decorative feet on the lower end. There are 15 pillar-mounted keys: S, A-B trill, A, G \sharp , G \sharp (R1, long key), f/c, E \flat /B \flat (L3 and R1, second touch raises same key head), C \sharp /G \sharp (L4 and R1, second touch raises same key head), A \flat /E \flat , (F/C open hole for R4), F \sharp /C \sharp (L4 and RT), E/B, for the right thumb, E \flat , D, C \sharp , and C. The maker's stamp on a German silver oval plate on the front side reads:

a 14-key basset horn in F (no. 3080) and a 15-key bass clarinet in B \flat (no. 3260); both instruments have low-note extensions of D and C.

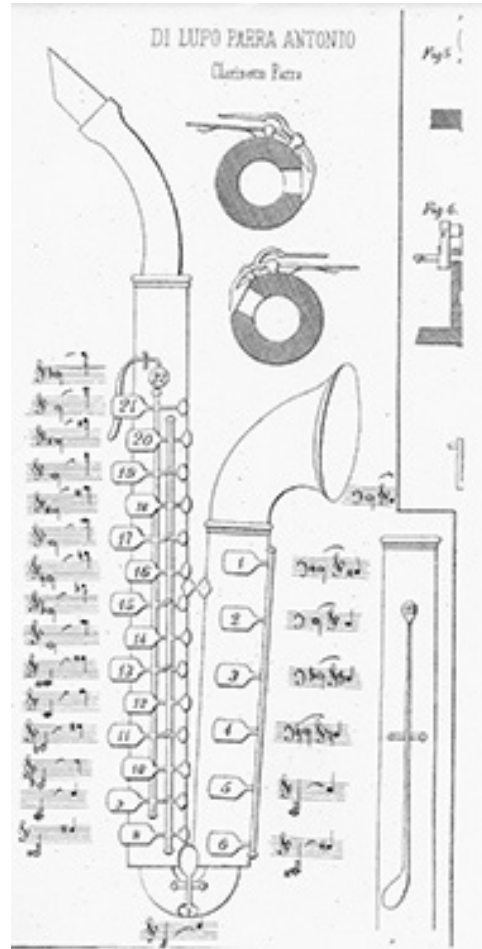
⁴³ I thank Charles Lamb for his help in studying this clarinet during 2014. Pamela Poulin, "The Basset Clarinet of Anton Stadler," pp.81-82; Lawson, "The Basset Clarinet Revived," p.499.

⁴⁴ *Rapporto generale sulla esposizione . . . in Verona nel 1868* (Verona, 1869), pp.180-85; Antonio Carlini, "Le bande musicali nell'Italia dell'ottocento: il modello militare, I rapporti con il teatro e la cultura dell'orchestra negli organici strumentali," *Rivista Italiana di Musicologia*, 30/1 (1995), p.116. I studied this instrument in 2010.

Fig. 5. Antonio di Lupo Parra, San Prospero near Pisa, Italian patent, vol. 18, no. 284, 31 March 1877.

“Fisco CHIESARI / VENEZIA / FECE”; stamp on a lower oval German silver plate on the front side: “Computo 1889 Si□”. L=740 mm.⁴⁵

On 12 April 1877, a basset clarinet called *Clarinetto Parra* was patented in Italy by Antonio di Lupo Parra of San Prospero near Pisa. The body is saxophone shaped and consists of four sections: mouthpiece, curved brass crook, wooden body connected with a brass U-joint to a wooden body, and brass bell (fig. 5). The notes in the chalumeau and clarinet or overblown register are written in the illustration. The lowest note of the extension is C in the bass clef. Parra describes “the new folded clarinet key as a keyboard, with a bell placed above, while the left hand holds the instrument, the right hand plays the keyboard in the same manner as the piano. There are three series of notes, independent of each other that cover several tone holes together, the highest in each series controlling the other keys. The first note series is on the body attached to the bell with finger touches numbered 1 through 6; the corresponding key heads are open. The second series is on the main body, key touches numbered 8 through 20; the third series are the key touches further away from the body numbered 9 through 19; all of the corresponding keyheads are closed. Key touches 21 and 22 are used for one note each, and key 23 is used as a register key. All tonalities may be played using clarinets in C, B \flat , and A.”⁴⁶ An example



⁴⁵ I studied this instrument in 2010.

⁴⁶ “Il nuovo clarinetto è a canna ripiegata, a sistema di chiavi a tastiera, con campana volta in alto; si sostiene con la sola mano sinistra, mentre la destra no ha altro ufficio che di percorrere la tastiera, a somiglianza del piano-forte. . . . In questo strumento sono tre serie di tasti, le une indipendenti dalle altre, ma i tasti sono in ciascuna serie congegnati (per via di cannelli giranti su di un asse comune, ma snodati e a sbraccio libero.) in modo che l’azione del tasto superiore si fa sentire ugualmente sul tasto inferiore, ed ecco come: Le serie sono tre: una nel pezzo della campana, distinta dai numeri 1,2,3,4,5,6; questi tasti stanno aperti. Chiudendo il N. 1 si chiudono anco gli altri tasti; chiudendo il N.2 resta aperto il N. 1 e chiusi gli altri; e così di seguito. Le altre due serie sono distinte, una coi numeri parti dall’ 8 al 20 inclusivi; l’altra dal 9 al 19 inclusivi. Questi tasti stanno sempre chiusi; però aprendo il N. 8, non si apre che questo; aprendo il N. 10 si apre anche il N. 8, e così pure per la serie dei numeri dispari che stanno chiusi ugualmente. Le chiavi del N. 7 sta da sé e si apre volta per volta. Così pure le chiavi N. 21 e 22, le quali non si aprono che per le note alte, acute; di rado per le note naturali di soto al chalumeau o nel registro inferiore. . .

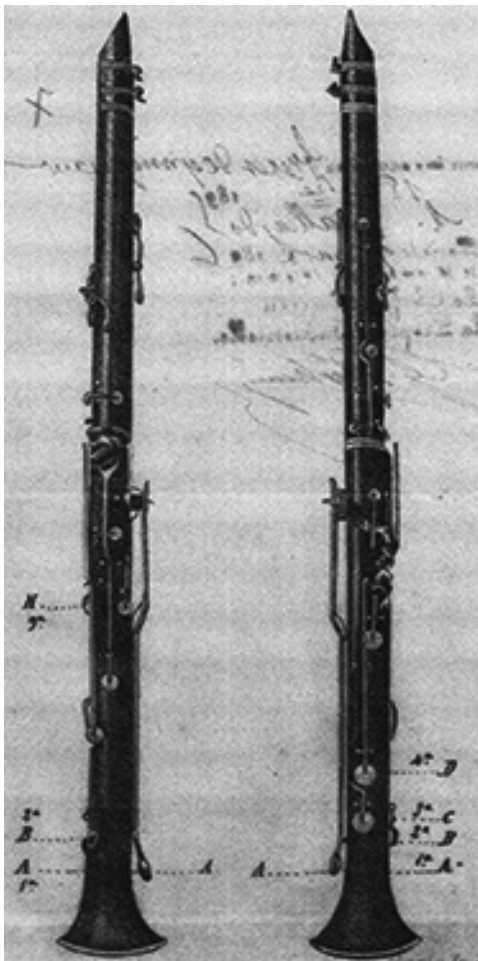


Fig. 6. Basset clarinet in B-flat, Antonio Gallardo Gil, Puerto Principe, Cuba, 1894, 18 keys. French patent, no. 251,796, 18 November 1895.

of Parra's clarinet has not been found.

In 1894, Antonio Gallardo Gil of Puerto Principe, Cuba, took out a Spanish patent for a basset clarinet in B \flat . According to the patent, his aim was to build a clarinet with a full four-octave range by adding four semitones in the low register. According to the patent text, his work was inspired by the achievements of Iwan Müller and Antonio Romero y Andía. He found a turner in Puerto Principe who added an extension to a 14-key clarinet. An example was made and the patent includes photographs of the right and left sides, but the instrument is now missing.⁴⁷ Sketches in a second, French patent show a darkwood clarinet in three sections: mouthpiece, left-hand joint, and right-hand joint-stock-bell (fig. 6). It has simple-system keywork with

half-rings for R2 and R3, and 18 keys: S, A-B trill, A, G, f/c, E \flat /B \flat , C \sharp /G \sharp , B/F \sharp , B \flat /F, A \flat /E \flat , F/C (R4), F/C (R4), F \sharp /C \sharp , E/B (L4), E \flat (R4), D (R4), C \sharp (L4), and C (RT).⁴⁸

. l'uso altresì di tutte quelle tonalità per le quali occorreano tre Clarinetti accordati in tre toni differenti Cisolfaut, Beffa, Alamirè." See Antonio di Lupo Parra, "Descrizione del Nuovo Clarinetto, o Clarinetto Parra," Italian patent, vol. 12, no. 9129, applied for 26 March 1877, certified, vol. 18, no. 284, 31 March 1877. I thank Francesco Carreras for a copy of the patent and a transcription of the handwritten text.

⁴⁷ Antonio Gallardo Gil, "Memoria ha cena de los antecedents del Nuevo Clarinete de diez y ocho llaves, Sistema Gallardo," Spanish patent approved 30 April 1894; clarinet photos were added 21 October 1894, no. 16,019. The instrument was also patented in Paris as a "nouvelle clarinette à 18 clefs, système Gallardo", on 18 November 1895, no. 251,796. The information is slightly abridged in the French patent with a careful sketch of both sides of the clarinet. I thank Pedro Rubio for a copy of both patents and information concerning this clarinet.

⁴⁸ I thank Pedro Rubio for information, his assistance in translating the patent, and interpreting the fingering of the keys.

Table 1
Extant 18th- and 19th-Century Basset Clarinets

Maker/City	Date/Location	Pitch/Keys/Basset Keys	Body Shape
1. Mayrhofer, Anton and Michael; Passau	ca. 1775; Passau, Oberhausmuseum, 3160	A; 7; C	Basset horn; curved
2. "AS" (Anton Schintler?); Vienna?	ca. 1780; Paris, Musée de la musique, E.190	A; 7; C	Alto clarinet; straight
3. "AS" (Anton Schintler?); Vienna?	ca. 1780; Paris, Musée de la musique, E.199	A; 7; C	Alto clarinet; straight
4. Anonymous; Germany?	ca. 1785; Berlin, Musikinstrumenten-Museum, 2886	A; 8; D, C	Basset horn; curved
5. Anonymous; Vienna?	ca. 1810; Paris, Musée de la musique, E.980.2.566	A; 10; D, C	Basset horn; angled
6. Strobach, Franz; Karlsbad	ca. 1810; Hamburg, Museum für Kunst und Geschichte, 1912.1562	A; 13; D, C	Basset horn; angled
7. Eisenbrant, Johann Benjamin; Göttingen	ca. 1820; private collection, The Netherlands	C; 11, E-flat, D, C-sharp, C, B	Lotz shape
8. Larshof, Jacob Georg; Copenhagen	ca. 1830; Basel, Historisches Museum, 2012.110	B-flat; 15; D, C	Straight; with second stock joint
9. Bischoff, Johann Gottlieb Karl; Darmstadt	ca. 1840; Darmstadt, Hessisches Landesmuseum, Kg 61	B-flat; 16; E-flat, D, C-sharp, C	Straight
10. Nechwalsky, Anton; Vienna	ca. 1860; Rome, Museo Nazionale, 3072	B-flat; 14; D, C	Ophicleide
11. Anonymous, attributed to Angelo Marzoli; Paris	ca. 1860; Oxford, Bate Collection, x48	B-flat; 16; D, C	Straight
12. Ghirlanda, Alessandro; Verona	1868; Rome, Museo Nazionale, 3130	B-flat; 17; E-flat, D, C-sharp, C	Bassoon
13. Chiesara, Francesco; Venice	1889; Rome, Museo Nazionale, 3254	B-flat; 15; E-flat, D, C-sharp, C	Bassoon

Table 2
18th- and 19th-Century Basset Clarinets in Reports and Patents

Maker	City/Location	Date/Source	Totality/Keys/ basset notes	Body shape
Unknown	Vienna; Concerto performance	1792, December 19; <i>Wiener Zeitung</i>	Unknown; unknown; unknown	Unknown
Tietzel, Johann Burchard	Bremen	1795, May 2; letter from Anton Stadler to Daniel Schütte in Bremen	Unknown; unknown; unknown	Unknown
Scholl, Franz	Vienna	1803, April 2; <i>Wiener Zeitung</i>	C or B-flat; unknown; low C	Unknown
Peuckert, Friedrich August with Vincent Springer	Breslau	1806, March 1; <i>Hamburgerische Correspondenten</i>	B-flat; unknown; low C	Unknown
Simiot, Jacques-François [reported by André Simiot]	Lyon	[1830s-40s] 1867; <i>Le Semaine Musicale</i>	Unknown; unknown; low D	Unknown
Guercio, Stefano	Cefalú, near Palermo, Sicily	1837; <i>Effemeridi Scientifiche</i>	Unknown; unknown; low B	Unknown (probably bassoon)
Parra, Antonio di Lupo	San Prospero, near Pisa, Italy	1877, April 12; Italian patent, vol. 13, no. 284	C, B-flat, or A; piano keyboard; low C	Saxophone
Gallardo Gil, Antonio	Puerto Principe, Cuba	1894, October 21; Spanish patent, no. 16,019; 1895, October 18, French patent, no. 251,796	B-flat; simple system, 18 keys, two rings for R2, R3; low C	Straight

20th-Century Basset Clarinets

The earliest modern basset clarinet was made in the Oskar Adler shop in Markneukirchen about 1930 (Table 3, no. 1). It is made in C with a blackwood body with nickel-silver keys and ferrules, in five sections: rosewood mouthpiece, body, left-hand joint, right-hand joint-stock, bell. There are 19 German-system keys and five rings for L1, L2, L3, R2, R3. L=643 mm. Stamped on all parts except the barrel and mouthpiece: “ADLER & Co. / Markneukirchen”.⁴⁹ It is

⁴⁹ The back of the instrument showing basset keys is in Fricke, *Faszination Klarinette*, p.113; the front in Enrico Weller, *Der Blasinstrumentenbau im Vogtland von den Anfängen bis zum Beginn des 20. Jahrhunderts: Untersuchungen und Dokumentation zur Geschichte eines Gewerbebezuges der Musikinstrumentenindustrie* (Horb am Neckar: Geiger-Verlag, 2004), pp.167, 305. I thank Heike Fricke for a description of this instrument.

not known if it was made to play specific compositions, as a model, or used as a substitute for a viola.

In 1948, Milan Kostohrýz worked with the Prague woodwind maker Rudolf Trejbal to modify a Selmer full-Boehm A clarinet (Table 3, no. 2) with a curved metal neck and an extension to low C.⁵⁰ It is in A with a blackwood body and nickel-silver keys and ferrules, in five sections: ebonite mouthpiece, curved nickel-silver neck or curved wooden neck, left-hand joint, right-hand joint-stock, bell. It has 21 keys and seven rings for LT, L1, L2, L3, R1, R2, R3.⁵¹ Kostohrýz's student Josef Janouš played this clarinet in Prague on 28 June 1951 at the House of Czechoslovak Artists hall with Dr. Václav Smetana conducting an orchestra in Jiří Kratochvíl's arrangement for basset clarinet of Mozart's concerto.⁵² This was the earliest modern performance of Mozart's concerto in its original form for the basset clarinet. In 1956, at the end of the International Mozart Conference at Villa Bertramka in Prague, Jiří Kratochvíl played the same instrument in Kratochvíl's reconstructed version of Mozart's quintet, with the Czechoslovak Quintet.⁵³

In 1966, an A clarinet by Richard Müller of Bremen was reconstructed by Trejbal for Wilhelm Rey of Münster, a friend of Milan Kostohrýz's.⁵⁴ The instrument (no. 3) has a blackwood body with nickel-silver ferrules and keys in five sections: mouthpiece, curved wooden barrel (also a metal curved neck), left-hand joint, right-hand joint-stock, bell. A spike attaches to the long stock joint to support the clarinet while sitting. There are 22 Oehler-system keys and five rings for L1, L2, R1, R2, R3. The touches for the four basset keys are placed below the thumb rest from E \flat to C in a clockwise direction, with a roller on the C \sharp touch.

⁵⁰ Thomas Graß and Dietrich Demus, "Von Vincent Springer zu Jiří Kratochvíl. Mitteilungen zu Anton Stadlers Inventions-Clarineten und seinem Bassethorn," *Robrblatt*, 21/1 (2006), pp.14-15.

⁵¹ Photograph in Oskar Kroll, *The Clarinet*, rev. D. Riehm, trans. H. Morris, trans. ed. A. Baines (New York: Taplinger, 1968), ill. 27 facing p.81; Graß and Demus, "Von Vincent Springer zu Jiří Kratochvíl," p.14, Abb. 1; p.15, Abb. 2.

⁵² Jiří Kratochvíl, "Betrachtungen über die Urfassung des Konzerts für Klarinette und des Quintetts für Klarinette und Streicher von W.A. Mozart," *Internationale Konferenz über des Leben und Werk Mozarts: Praha 27.-31. Mai 1956: Bericht* (Prague: Verband tschechoslowakischer Komponisten, 1956), p.270; Jiří Kratochvíl, "Otázka původního znění Mozartova Koncertu pro clarinet a Kvintetu pro clarinet a smyčce" ["The question of the original version of Mozart's Concerto for Clarinet and of the Quintet for Clarinet and Strings"], *Hudebni Veda*, 1 (1967), pp.44-70, 174-76, esp. p.174; Franz Giegling, "Übersicht über die bis 1978 nachgebauten Bassettklarinetten" in *Neue Mozart-Ausgabe, Kritischer Bericht, Serie V Konzerte, Werkgruppe 14: Konzerte für ein oder mehrere Streich-, Blas- und Zupfinstrumente und orchester, Band 4: Klarinettenkonzert* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1982), p.d/16.

⁵³ Kratochvíl, "Otázka původního znění Mozartova Koncertu," p.174; Jiří Kratochvíl, "Ist die heute gebräuchliche Fassung des Klarinettenkonzerts und des Klarinettenquintetts von Mozart authentisch?" *Beitäge zur Musikwissenschaft*, 2 (1960), pp.27-34, esp. p.34.

⁵⁴ Graß and Demus, "Von Vincent Springer zu Jiří Kratochvíl," p.15 and photograph, Abb. 3.

In 1967, F. Arthur Uebel of Markneukirchen made a basset clarinet in A for Hans Rudolf Stalder, the principal clarinetist of the Tonhalle Orchestra in Zurich, using a modern African blackwood Boehm-system clarinet. This basset clarinet (no. 4) was made in two designs: straight with a wooden bell, and slightly angled with a metal bell similar to a basset horn.⁵⁵ In June 1968, Stalder performed Mozart's concerto in Augsburg with this basset clarinet using an edition prepared by Ernst Hess.⁵⁶ Stalder also made the first recording of Mozart's concerto with the Uebel A basset clarinet in September 1968 for a long-playing record issued in 1969.⁵⁷

During summer 1968, Kurt Birsak, Salzburg Mozarteum Orchestra's principal clarinetist, studied the Mozart concerto with alterations for the basset clarinet by Ernst Hess; Mozart's quintet; the incomplete Allegro in B \flat from a clarinet quintet, K516c; and aria "Parto, parto, ma tu ben mio" from *La Clemenza di Tito*.⁵⁸ He played B \flat and A German simple-system basset clarinets with bells turned outward, made by Otmar Hammerschmidt in Wattens, Tirol, with alterations suggested by Birsak and Gerhard Croll.⁵⁹

Two B \flat and A Boehm-system basset clarinets (nos. 5, 6) by F. Arthur Uebel, Markneukirchen, 1970-80,⁶⁰ both comprise a blackwood body, nickel-silver ferrules and keys, with five sections: plastic mouthpiece, barrel, left-hand section, right-hand section-stock, bell. Each has 21 keys, six rings for LT, L1, L2, R1, R2, R3, and five black plastic little-finger rollers. On the B \flat basset clarinet, the last four basset tone holes are without keys, as the instrument was unfinished. Except for its size, the A basset clarinet is nearly identical to the B \flat instrument but has the basset keys fitted; the length of the B \flat is 722 mm, the A, 770 mm.⁶¹

In 1968, the English clarinetist Alan Hacker had Edward "Ted" Planas (1924-92) of London make extensions to low C on a B \flat and an A clarinet by

⁵⁵ Giegling, "Übersicht über die bis 1978 nachgebauten Bassettklarinetten," p.d/16.

⁵⁶ Recorded on Schwann Musica Mundi VMS 807, album notes; Graß and Demus, "Von Vincent Springer zu Jiří Kratochvíl," p.16.

⁵⁷ Lawson, *Mozart, Clarinet Concerto*, p.51; Michael Bryant, "The clarinet on record," *The Cambridge Companion to the Clarinet*, p.204.

⁵⁸ Ernst Hess, "Die Ursprüngliche Gestalt des Klarinettenkonzertes KV 622," *Mozart Jahrbuch 1967*, pp.18-30.

⁵⁹ This instrument was built for the Institut für Musikwissenschaft of the Universität Salzburg. It is photographed with a globular bell and a straight bell in Gerhard Croll and Kurt Birsak, "Anton Stadler's 'Bassettklarinetten' und das 'Stadler-Quintett' KV 581, Versuch einer Anwendung," *Oesterreichische Musikzeitschrift*, 24/1 (January 1969), pp.4-5, 7, Abb. 2-4; Mozart, *Klarinettenquintett KV 581; Fragmente KV 580g und 581a, Divertimento Salzburg auf Originalinstrumenten*, Claves 50-8007 (1980), Notes.

⁶⁰ I thank Thomas Reil for help in dating these instruments.

⁶¹ Heike Fricke, *Catalogue of the Sir Nicholas Shackleton Collection, Historic Musical Instruments in the Edinburgh University Collection*, ed. A. Myers (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Collection of Historic Musical Instruments, 2007), pp.559, 707.

E. J. Albert (no. 7).⁶² Hacker later exchanged these instruments for a pair of basset clarinets by the Louis Musical Instrument Co. (1930s) altered by Brian Ackerman, a student of Hacker's. Hacker used an english horn bell instead of a regular clarinet bell to improve the sound quality and intonation.⁶³ Hacker subsequently obtained boxwood B \flat and A clarinets by Thomas Key, London (ca. 1820) which were extended by Ackerman. These instruments were played in performances of Mozart's concerto and the Kegelstatt trio. Hacker and Ackerman reason that although these clarinets by Thomas Key are dated later than Mozart's works, English-made instruments of the early 19th century are more archaic in construction and closer in sound to a Viennese clarinet of 1800.⁶⁴ Later, Hacker used a modern basset clarinet made by Planas but modelled on a 13-key clarinet by Carl Friedrich Dölling of Potsdam.⁶⁵ Planas worked with other makers who made extensions to earlier clarinets. From 1972 until his death he worked with the maker John Coppen, who made five extensions on clarinets to create a basset clarinet. One early extension completed during the 1970s on a simple-system clarinet by E. J. Albert of Brussels (no. 7) is extant.⁶⁶

Examples of B \flat and A Oehler-system basset clarinets (nos. 8 and 9) by Lothar Reidel, Markneukirchen, made during the late 1980s, have a blackwood body, nickel-silver keys and ferrules and four sections: rosewood mouthpiece, left-hand joint, right-hand joint-stock, bell. The B \flat has 22 keys, six rings for LT, L1, L2, L3, R2, R3, a plate (R2), and four black rollers. The A has 22 keys: S, C-D trill, A-B or B \flat -C trill, A, G \sharp , f/c (L2), f/c (R1), E \flat /B \flat (R1), E \flat /B \flat (L3), C/G \sharp , C \sharp /G \sharp (lower touch), B \flat /F (R3), B \flat /F (L4), A \flat /E \flat (R4), A \flat /E \flat (L4), F/C, F \sharp /C \sharp (L4), E/B, E \flat , D, C \sharp , and C. The C \sharp mechanism may be disconnected. The length of the B \flat is 730 mm, the A, 790 mm.⁶⁷

The earliest performer to commission a reconstruction of an historic basset clarinet was the German clarinetist Hans Deinzer. In 1973 Rudolf Tutz of Innsbruck made a pair of boxwood B and A basset clarinets in straight form

⁶² Photograph in Alan Hacker, "Mozart and the Basset Clarinet," *Musical Times*, 110, no. 1514 (April 1969), p.362; Pamela Weston, *Clarinet Virtuosi of the Past* (London: R. Hale, 1971), pl. 4.

⁶³ Simone Weber, "The Renaissance of the Basset Clarinet: An interview with Alan Hacker," *The Clarinet*, 35/2 (March 2008), p.78; Pamela Weston, *Clarinet Virtuosi of Today* (Baldock: Egon Publishers, 1989), p.124.

⁶⁴ Weber, "The Renaissance of the Basset Clarinet," p.79.

⁶⁵ Lawson, *Mozart, Clarinet Concerto*, p.51; illus. in Jack Brymer, *Clarinet* (New York: Schirmer, 1976), pl. 8.

⁶⁶ This instrument was previously owned by Alan Hacker, Ian Mitchell, and Nicholas Bucknall. I thank Sara Thurlow and John Coppen for photos of this instrument.

⁶⁷ Fricke, *Catalogue of the Sir Nicholas Shackleton Collection*, pp.558, 706. Additional Oehler-system basset clarinets are by Püchner, Nauheim, 1980-85, and Herbert Wurlitzer, Neustadt an der Aisch, 1996, owned by Thomas Reil, Uhingen. I thank Reil for this information.

Table 3
Selected 20th Century Basset Clarinets

Maker/City	Date/Location	Tonality/System and Keys/Basset keys
1. Oskar Adler & Co., Markneukirchen	ca. 1930, Berlin, Musikinstrumenten-Museum, no. 5493	C; German, 19; E-flat, D, C-sharp, C
2. Selmer, Paris, reconstructed by Rudolf Trejbal, Prague	1948; Prague Conservatory	A; Boehm, 21; E-flat, D, C-sharp, C
3. Richard Müller, Bremen, reconstructed by Trejbal, Prague	1966, Münster, Wilhelm Rey collection	A; Oehler, 22; E-flat, D, C-sharp, C
4. F. Arthur Uebel, Markneukirchen	1967, Zumikon, Hans Rudolf Stalder collection	A; Boehm, 21?, E-flat, D, C-sharp, C
5. F. Arthur Uebel [G. Rudolf Uebel], Markneukirchen	1970-80, Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Collection of Historic Musical Instruments, 5465.	B-flat; Boehm, 21; E-flat, D, C-sharp, C
6. F. Arthur Uebel [G. Rudolf Uebel], Markneukirchen	1970-80, Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Collection of Historic Musical Instruments, 5392	A; Boehm, 21; E-flat, D, C-sharp, C
7. E. J. Albert, Brussels, by Edward Planas, London	1920s, reconstructed 1970s; London, Sarah Thurlow Collection.	A; Simple-system, 17?; E-flat, D, C-sharp, C
8. Lothar Reidel, Markneukirchen	1980s, Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Collection of Historic Musical Instruments, 5389	B-flat; Oehler, 22; E-flat, D, C-sharp, C
9. Lothar Reidel, Markneukirchen	1980s, Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Collection of Historic Musical Instruments, 5393	A; Oehler, 22, E-flat, D, C-sharp, C

for Deinzer.⁶⁸ He used the A basset clarinet on two recordings of Mozart's concerto, one with the Collegium Aureum in 1973 for EMI, and one of Mozart's quintet for Harmonia Mundi.⁶⁹ Since this time, three designs of reproduction instruments have been used: 1) basset horn; 2) straight; and 3) straight with an L-joint at the bottom and bell pointing toward the player, following Anton Stadler's program engravings.

⁶⁸ Giegling, "Übersicht über die bis 1978 nachgebauten Bassettklarinetten," p.d/16; Weston, *Clarinet Virtuosi of Today*, pp.86-87.

⁶⁹ Nicholas Cox, "Eine Begegnung mit Hans Deinzer. Würdigung eines großen Musikers und Lehrers," *Robrblatt*, 27/3 (September 2012), p.153.

Fig. 7. Basset clarinet in A, Eric Hoeprich, Amsterdam, ca. 1994. Photo: Eric Hoeprich. With permission of Eric Hoeprich.



In 1978, Rudolf Tutz made for Birsak a straight basset clarinet with an early system of keys, similar in appearance to a basset horn with a box, but without an angled knee joint, and a brass bell.⁷⁰ During the 1980s, Birsak used a boxwood basset clarinet made to Birsak's specifications by Tutz, with ivory ferrules and a brass bell turned outward.⁷¹ In 1984, a straight basset clarinet with a curved barrel was made for Antony Pay by Planas and Daniel Bangham.⁷² In May 1985, Eric Hoeprich performed the Mozart concerto using a basset clarinet of his own design.⁷³ The same year Hoeprich, using his basset clarinet, recorded for the Philips label the Mozart concerto and quintet with Frans Brüggen and the Orchestra of the Eighteenth Century. In 1988, Colin Lawson commissioned from Daniel Bangham a basset clarinet in an angular shape similar to the basset clarinet made by Strobach.⁷⁴ After Pamela Poulin's discovery of Stadler's 1794 programs with an engraving of his basset clarinet,⁷⁵ Hoeprich made a basset clarinet based on these engravings and performed and recorded Mozart's concerto (fig. 7). Since that time many other clarinetists have performed and recorded Mozart's concerto and quintet using reproduction and modern basset clarinets.

During the late 20th century, a number of musical works were written for these performers and other clarinetists who became interested in performing on the basset clarinet. Modern Boehm or Oehler-system and period basset clarinet reconstructions were first made by Buffet-Crampon & Cie in Mantes in

⁷⁰ Giegling, "Übersicht über die bis 1978 nachgebauten Bassettklarinetten," p.d/16; Lawson, "The Basset Clarinet Revived," *Early Music*, xv/4 (November 1987), p.497, ill. 4.

⁷¹ Kurt Birsak, *The Clarinet, A Cultural History* (Buchloe: Obermayer, 1994), p.95, pl. 21.

⁷² Lawson, *Mozart, Clarinet Concerto*, p.51; illus. by Lawson, "The Basset Clarinet Revived," p.497.

⁷³ Albert R. Rice, "The Clarinette d'Amour and Basset Horn," *Galpin Society Journal*, xxxix (September 1986), p.111, note 60; Jeltsch, "La clarinette de Mozart," p.21.

⁷⁴ Lawson, *Mozart, Clarinet Concerto*, p.99, note 24.

⁷⁵ Poulin, "Anton Stadler's Basset Clarinet: Recent Discoveries in Riga," pp.110-27.

1980;⁷⁶ they currently offer a basset clarinet in A. The Selmer Company in Paris made basset clarinets by 1984⁷⁷ and currently offers a basset clarinet in A. The Leblanc Company constructed basset clarinets probably beginning in 1984.⁷⁸ The Yamaha Corporation did not offer a production model basset clarinet,⁷⁹ but in 2013, the U.S.-based designer and technician Tomoji Hirakata made a basset lower joint for a Yamaha B \flat clarinet for the American clarinetist David Shifrin to perform the obbligato part in “Parto, parto, ma tu ben mio.”⁸⁰

Other companies that construct modern basset clarinets are Wolfgang Dietz, Neustadt an der Aisch, Oehler system in A; Leitner & Kraus, Neustadt an der Aisch, Reform-Boehm system in B \flat and A; L.A. Ripamonti, Paderno Dugnano, Italy, Boehm system in A; Schwenk & Seggelke, Bamberg, Oehler and Boehm system in B \flat or A; and Herbert Wurlitzer, Neustadt an der Aisch, Oehler system in A. Chadash Clarinets Inc., New York, provides an extension for a basset clarinet in A; Ridenour Clarinet Products, Dallas, Texas, offers an extension for a basset clarinet in A with a Lyrique A clarinet as a set. Ridenour also offers A basset clarinets tuned and matched to Buffet and Yamaha A clarinets, and a complete basset A clarinet; the instruments are made in a factory in Southeast Asia.⁸¹ Basset clarinet reconstructions in B \flat or A based on early instruments are currently available by several makers including Stephen Fox, Richmond Hill, Ontario, Canada; Soren Green, Rotterdam; Agnès Guérout, Paris; Rudolf Tutz, Innsbruck; and Riccardo von Vitorelli, Court St. Etienne, Belgium.

In conclusion, the basset clarinet was in use during the late 18th and throughout the 19th centuries. The interest and scholarship in reconstructing the clarinet parts in Mozart’s concerto and quintet sparked the basset clarinet’s revival in 1951. This led to the first modern clarinets with basset clarinet extensions during the 1950s and 1960s; the first reproduction instruments during the 1970s; and the first modern basset clarinets manufactured by all the major clarinet makers from the 1980s to the present.

⁷⁶ Email from Mona Lemmel and Maurice Vallet, Buffet Group, Mantes.

⁷⁷ Tom Dibley, Arnold Myers and other lenders, *The Historic Clarinet: An Exhibition, mounted at the Edinburgh University Collection of Historic Musical Instruments 9th-30th August 1986, showing the development of the Clarinet in the context of other musical instruments. Handbook. Edinburgh International Festival 1986* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Collection of Historic Musical Instruments, 1986), no. 127: basset clarinet by H. Selmer, 1984 (lent by E. Planas).

⁷⁸ I thank François Camboulive for advice about the Leblanc Company’s production of clarinets.

⁷⁹ Email from Jonathan Goldman, Product Manager, Wind Instruments, Yamaha Corporation of America, 12 January 2015.

⁸⁰ David Shifrin, Yamaha Performing Artist, B \flat Basset Clarinet Project with Tomoji Hirakata, Woodwind technician, <https://vimeo.com/83130288>, accessed 11 March 2015.

⁸¹ Telephone conversation in 2015 with an agent from Ridenour.