

Table 2. References to choirboys at the Dresden court, 1612–46¹

Year	Reference
1612	A Dresden personnel roster includes three <i>Kapellknaben</i> (Fürstenau, <i>Beiträge</i> , 37).
1617	The list of personnel in a small contingent of Dresden musicians sent to Pirna, on the occasion of a visit of Emperor Matthias I to Saxony, includes 2 discantists (<i>Heinrich Schütz Reader</i> , ed. Johnston, 15).
1617	During the Lutheran Centenary celebration held in Dresden in 1617, a description of the Dresden court performers indicates the presence of five discantists (Hoë von Hoënegg, <i>Chur Sächsische Evangelische Jubelfrewde</i> : full citation in n. 21 below).
1625	A survey of the youths present at court includes six regular (“ordinariè”) “Discantisten oder Kleine Knaben,” plus one in reserve (“extraordinariè”). Modest salaries are specified (“90 fl. per year”), and full names are listed for each of the boys (<i>Schriftstücke von Heinrich Schütz</i> , ed. Michael Heinemann, <i>Schütz-Dokumente 1</i> [Cologne: Dohr, 2010], 117–19). ²
1627	A select group of Dresden performers to be sent to the electoral assembly in Mühlhausen includes two discantists (<i>Heinrich Schütz Reader</i> , ed. Johnston, 49).
1629/30	Schütz notes that all “Taffelknaben, oder Discantisten” that serve at table should be assigned to the care of Caspar Kittel (<i>Schriftstücke</i> , ed. Heinemann, 157).
1631	A leaf naming young performers to be sent to the Assembly of Princes held in Leipzig specifies “Sänger-Knaben,” who will be in the care of Caspar Kittel; the boys, four in number, are listed by name, including Matthias Weckmann and Philipp Stolle. On another leaf, two groups are listed, the first (which includes Weckmann and Stolle) identified as four “discantists,” the other as five “Kapellknaben” (<i>Heinrich Schütz Reader</i> , ed. Johnston, 79–81). Weckmann and Stolle later had distinguished careers as performers and composers. The discantists were probably boy singers at an advanced level, the <i>Kapellknaben</i> most likely general choirboys, younger and less experienced. ³
1634	A survey of musicians of the Dresden chapel, deceased, absent, or present, includes among the deceased a category headed “Three Kapellknaben” (<i>D-Dla Loc. 8687/1</i> , fols. 168–69). ⁴
1641	Concerning steps to restore the electoral chapel: to be included were four “Capell oder Sänger Knaben” (Heinemann, <i>Schriftstücke</i> , 214). Concerning the appointment of “Matthes Weckmannen” (Matthias Weckmann): among possible duties, he was to teach “Discantisten oder Singerknaben ... in ein Instrument, Regal oder Positif” (<i>Schriftstücke</i> , ed. Heinemann, 219).
1645	Concerning the restoration of the chapel: Schütz identified three categories, (1) <i>Capellknaben oder Discantisten</i> , (2) <i>Instrumentisten</i> , (3) <i>Vocalisten oder der Sänger</i> (<i>Schriftstücke</i> , ed. Heinemann, 235).
1646	Concerning the reestablishment of the chapel yet again: Schütz proposes here that this should “include six Capellknaben” (with a salary of 60 fl. for each, plus livery; see <i>Schriftstücke</i> , ed. Heinemann, 238–39).

¹ From the entry for 1625 onward, all documents are in Schütz's own hand, except the second leaf from 1631 and the entire document from 1634.

² This extract is taken from a survey prepared by Schütz in 1625 of all of the young performer in Dresden (a "Verzeichnis aller Undt ieden Knaben ... in der Churf.[ürstlichen] Capell"); in the survey he divided the "boys" (*Knaben*) into two groups. The first, the instrumental apprentices, he termed "Grosse Knaben Welche auf aller ley instrumenten lernern" ("Older boys who learn to play all kinds of instruments"), and the second, the choirboys, he termed "Discantisten oder Kleine Knaben" ("discantists or younger [choir]boys"). His meanings were unambiguous but clearly limited to that context. "Grosse Knaben" and "Kleine Knaben" obviously cannot be taken as respective general indicators of instrumentalists and singers. The survey also included a recommendation by Schütz that not only should there be the one boy in reserve, but (after listing the boys in the two categories) "in addition ... also two young choirboys of ten years of age should be accepted [as choirboys] considering that the voices of the older boys will always change" ("hinüber sollen ... noch zwey Kleine Knaben von 10 Jahren, Untterthenigst dargestellet werden ... in ansehung des die eltisten immer abgehen und muteriren..."). In this instance, the 10-year old boys were termed only "Kleine Knaben," and it seems that Schütz reserved the term discantists for older and more accomplished boys.

³ The document also names four instrumental apprentices. The first leaf (*D-Dla* Loc. 8687/1, fol. 103i), in Schütz's hand, is clearly concerned with Dresden performers for the Assembly of Princes in Leipzig. The second leaf (*D-Dla* Loc. 8687/1, fol. 102, now missing), not in Schütz's hand, included four "Discantists" (including Weckmann and Stolle), five "Kapellknaben" (with names not recorded in any other source), and four "Knaben," having the same names as the instrumental apprentices (*Instrumentisten Knaben*) on the other leaf. The first leaf explicitly concerned the young performers needed for the journey to Leipzig; the duplications in the second leaf make it certain that the two leaves are from about the same time, but the purpose of the second is unclear. What is relevant here is the apparent distinction between the three groups: the discantists (probably advanced boy singers), the *Kapellknaben* (probably general choirboys), and the *Knaben* (instrumental apprentices). For discussion of the source see *Schriftstücke*, ed. Heinemann, 167–68; *Heinrich Schütz Reader*, ed. Johnston, 78–81; and Heinrich Schütz, *Gesammelte Briefe und Schriften*, ed. Erich Hermann Müller (Regensburg: Gustav Bosse, 1931; reprint, Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1976), no. 38, 114–15.

⁴ The "Three Kapellknaben" (fol. 168), however, include four lads; a fifth name is included at the end of that list, Gabriel Günther. But while young Gabriel was indeed deceased (the text explicitly states that he was shot), a document from 1627 (see *Heinrich Schütz Reader*, ed. Johnston, 46) indicates that his voice had broken in that year; thus, he could hardly have still been considered a choirboy in 1634. Equally difficult to interpret, the list of names of present "Instrumental apprentices and Kapellknaben" on fol. 169 begins with four names of, apparently, instrumental apprentices. The next boy is identified as having taken the place of the deceased second choirboy, with no mention of a slot, or a name, for a first choirboy. "The place of the third boy," according to the document, was unfilled at the time of writing. But two boys were stated as being supported temporarily in the hopes that funding for both would be made available. The heading of the list of deceased choirboys ("Three Kapellknaben") and the wording "the place of the third boy"—with no formal position being stated for a fourth—would suggest that in 1634 the official number of *Kapellknaben* had been reduced to three.

This document provides startling verification of the grim effects of wartime conditions in Dresden. After years of avoiding overt participation in the war, the elector was finally drawn directly into the conflict in late 1631. The results for Dresden are obvious in the drastic reduction in 1634 of the number of *Kapellknaben* available (compare 1631), as well as the death of Gabriel Günther. On this document, see Joshua Rifkin, "Schütz—Weckmann—Kopenhagen: Zur Frage der zweiten Dänemarkreise," in *Von Isaac bis Bach: Studien zur älteren deutschen Musikgeschichte; Festschrift Martin Just zum 60. Geburtstag*, ed. Frank Heidlberger et al. (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1991), 180–88.