

James or Jacob Hassenius, a clock- and watchmaker in London and Moscow

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This article examines the life and works of a Russian-born clockmaker, James (or Jacob) Hassenius, who lived and worked in London from around 1682 to 1698 and who, following the visit of Peter the Great to London in that year, then left England to work for the Tsar in Moscow as a clock- and watchmaker. Several London longcase and bracket clocks and at least two watches, all signed 'Jacobus Hassenius', are known to survive. As a result of some research papers written by a former colleague of the curator of clocks at The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg, we are now able to trace what became of James Hassenius once he left England. The known clocks and watches signed by Hassenius while working in London are briefly catalogued in the Appendix to this article.

Introduction

Among the several superlative clocks offered at Bonhams Fine Clocks auction held in London in November 2022 was a good late seventeenth-century ebony table clock with pull quarter repeat signed by Jacob Hassenius;¹ a month-going striking longcase signed by Hassenius formed part of the collection of the late Frank Garrett which was dispersed at auction in 1926,² and of which his friend, the famous horologist and author Herbert Cescinsky wrote at the time: '...there is not one example [in the Frank Garrett Collection] which is second-rate and many are almost unique;³ clocks signed by Hassenius were

exhibited at the Grosvenor House Art & Antiques Fair on at least three separate occasions;⁴ and more recently, clocks signed by Hassenius have been discussed and illustrated in several modern horological reference books.⁵

So who was James (or Jacob) Hassenius and what more do we know about this clockmaker? In truth, not much – at least not until he left England for Russia in 1698 and thereafter, as I will explore in this essay.

Hassenius – family background

Hassenius was born in Russia and his Russian name spelling was Yakov Andreivitch

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1. Lot 106, New Bond Street, London, 30 November 2022 (see Appendix).
2. Lot XVI in the catalogue of The Anderson Galleries New York auction sale, 16 February 1926 (see Appendix).
3. Foreword to the Frank Garrett Collection auction sale catalogue, February 1926.
4. Namely, at the 1958 Fair, exhibited by Garrard (*Horological Journal* 100 (July 1958), 429); at the 1972 Fair, exhibited again by Garrard (*Illustrated London News* (1 June 1972), 69) and at the 1992 Fair, exhibited by Anthony Woodburn (*Clocks Magazine* 14, 12 (May 1992), 7).
5. D. Radage, W. Meinen and L. Radage, *Charles Gretton. Clock and Watchmaking Through the Golden Age* (Vancouver BC: Three O'clock Publishing, 2016), pp. 270–71, 279–81, 285–86, and p. 308; Sunny Dzik, *Engraving on English Table Clocks, Art on a Canvas of Brass 1660–1800* (Oxford: Wild Boar Publications, 2019), pp. 77, 81–83, 146 and p. 193. Fig 6.14; Sunny Dzik with Roger Still, Technical Consultant, *Beneath The Dial, English Clock Pull Repeat Striking 1675–1725* (Oxford: Wild Boar Publications, 2023), pp. 185–6, and pp. 565–569.

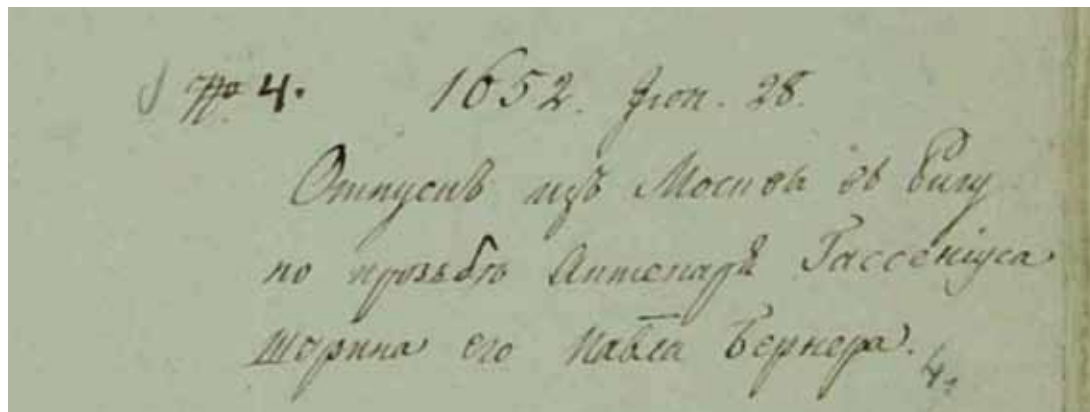


Fig. 1. Entry in the Register of Foreign Immigrants to Russia for the year 1652 for the ‘pharmacist Gassenius’. Image: Russian State Archival Papers.

Gassenius.⁶ According to material in the Russian State archives,⁷ Hassenius’s father, Andrei Gassenius, was an apothecary whose own father came to Russia from Holland during the rule of Mikhail Fedorovich in 1616 and worked as a court pharmacist.⁸ Andrei Gassenius is recorded as living in Moscow in 1652 (Fig. 1).⁹

Hassenius’s blood relatives lived in Moscow. His brother, Pyotr (Peter) Andreivitch Gassenius, served as a colonel in the Imperial Army, later becoming a general and leading his own infantry regiment which from 1705

was named after him.¹⁰ After Pyotr Gassenius’s death, his widow is said to have provided food and lodgings to young Army Corp Cadets less prosperous than herself.¹¹ Both Peter’s son (Pyotr Gassenius Jnr) and grandson also became Russian officers.

Hassenius also had two sisters, living in Moscow. One married ‘the foreigner’ Thomas Ivanovitch Kellerman (also referred to in Russian State archive papers as ‘the Moscow guest’).¹² They had a son, A.T. Kellerman, who later became a doctor.¹³ His other sister became the third wife of a famous court

6. Known as James, Jacob or Jacobus Hassenius when living in London, in Russia he was known as Yakov A. Gassenius) Яков Андреевич Гассениус – his family surname was spelt ‘Gassenius’, the letter ‘G’ in Russian frequently being substituted for the English letter ‘H’ in this period of history. In this essay I refer to the clockmaker by his English names ‘James Hassenius’ (or just ‘Hassenius’) and to those members of his family or relatives living in Russia by their spelt surname ‘Gassenius’.

7. Russian State Archival Papers (the full title in Russian being: Российский государственный архив древних актов. For purely practical reasons, I have abbreviated the many references in this essay to the Russian State Archival Papers to just the initials ‘RGADA’ without inclusion of any of the complicated folio references or full citation details.

8. Gassenius, the apothecary, is referred to in J. Hamel, *Early English Voyages to Northern Russia* (London: Richard Bentley, 1857), p. 355 [“*Godseiuus,*” an apothecary, whose true name was Hassenius].

9. RGADA: Andrei Gassenius is named in the Register of Foreign Immigrants to Russia comprised in the Russian State Archival Papers (Дела о выездах иностранцев в Россию), p. 59 (see Fig. 1).

10. Central State Military Historical Archives (CSVIA), folio 490; P. Zezulinsky, *The Genealogy of the Thirty Fourth Infantry Regiment of Peter the Great* (Moscow, 1915), pp. 46–47; Essay by Vladimir Velikanov, *Russian Army at Grodno, January – March 1706* (2008).

11. For example, to one Nikolai Choglokov, who was either a relative or protégé and who enrolled in the Army Corps in the same year as Peter Gassenius jnr (Igor Fedyukin, *Nobility and Schooling in Russia 1700–1760*, National Research University Higher School of Economics, Moscow: 2014).

12. Thomas Kellerman came from Livonia (in an area that is now part of Latvia) and later became an envoy influential at the Moscow Court (Eve Levin, ‘The Administration of Western Medicine in Seventeenth-Century Russia’, a chapter in *Modernizing Moscow: Reform and Social Change in Seventeenth-Century Russia*, edited by Jarmo Kotilaine and Marshall Poe (London: Routledge, 2003), pp. 363–389).

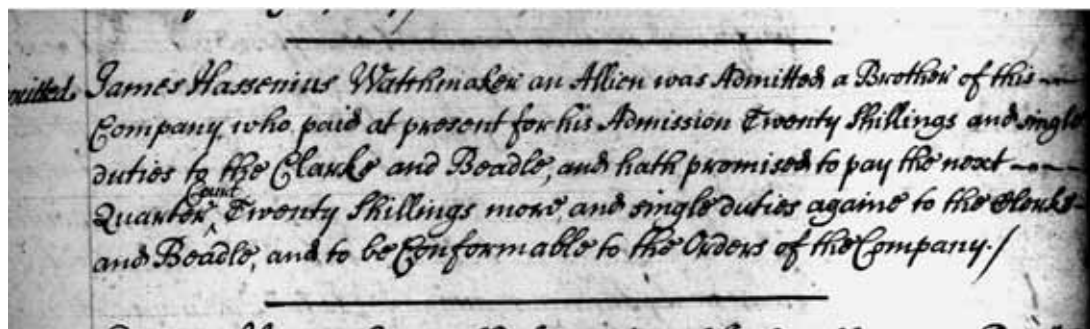


Fig. 2. Clockmakers' Company Court Minute, dated 15 January 1682. As can be seen, not only was Hassenius described in the Court record 'an Alien' but he was admitted 'a Brother'. The relevance of this is explained in the text. Membership was by redemption and cost him 40 shillings in total, payable by two instalments. Image by the author and courtesy of Guildhall Library.

doctor, L.A. Blumentrost-Senior.

It is possible that the Dutch merchant, Pytro Matveev Hassenius, who had dealings in Russia at the end of the seventeenth century, was a relative;¹⁴ similarly, the wife of the Dutch merchant K. Kannegieter, whose maiden name was Hassenius.¹⁵

Hassenius – life in England

It is not known when Hassenius came to England and at what age. It is possible he came to England when he was young, since it was quite fashionable and not at all uncommon among well-to-do 'Moscow foreigners' for their children to be sent abroad to receive an education and a trade. All that can be said with confidence is that he must have been in England by January 1682/1683,¹⁶ which is

when he was admitted to the Clockmakers Company as an alien (Fig. 2).¹⁷

Being an alien or 'stranger,' Hassenius was precluded from becoming a freeman of the Company and denied many of the trading rights and privileges accorded to admitted freemen, instead being subjected to several trade restrictions. The Charter of Incorporation of the Clockmakers Company granted in 1631 provided:

...AND our pleasure is that no alien or stranger whatsoever, born out of our dominions, not naturalised or denized, (saving such as are already allowed of by us), shall attempt to work in any place whatsoever, either chamber, house or any other place or places whatsoever,

13. Eve Levin, 'The Administration of Western Medicine'. Hassenius's nephew worked at the Apothecary Court in Moscow. He was well-educated, studied medicine at all the best centres of excellence in Europe at the time, including at Oxford and was well-read.

14. 'Pytro Matveev Gassenius' is recorded as having traded in Archangel during the years 1632–1671 (N. N. Repin, *Dutch Merchants trading in Arkhangelsk in the Second Half of the XVII century* (St Petersburg, 2003), p. 33).

15. V. A. Kovrigina, see note 30.

16. Under the Julian calendar which was operative at the time, the date did not advance by a year until 25 March rather than on 1 January as under our present Gregorian calendar. The Julian calendar was not replaced by the Gregorian calendar in England until 1752 so a date recorded pre-1752 in the month of January under the Julian calendar would equate to a date occurring in January of the following year if recorded under our present (Gregorian calendar) system. Some commentaries therefore refer to both years in these cases (for example 1682/3).

17. Admission is recorded in the Minute Books for the Quarter Court meeting of the Clockmakers' Company held on 15 January 1682. (CC Court Records: MS02710 vol 2 (CLC/L/CD/B/001/MS02710/002)). See Fig. 2. Also, Octavius Morgan, *List of Members of The Clockmakers' Company London From The Period Of Their Incorporation in 1631 to the Year 1732* (London: J. Mueller, 1848) p. 205, and F. J. Britten, *Old Clocks and Their Makers. An Historical and Descriptive Account of the Different Styles of Clocks of the Past in England and Abroad with a list of over Eleven Thousand Makers* (London: Batsford, fourth edition, 1919) p. 485.

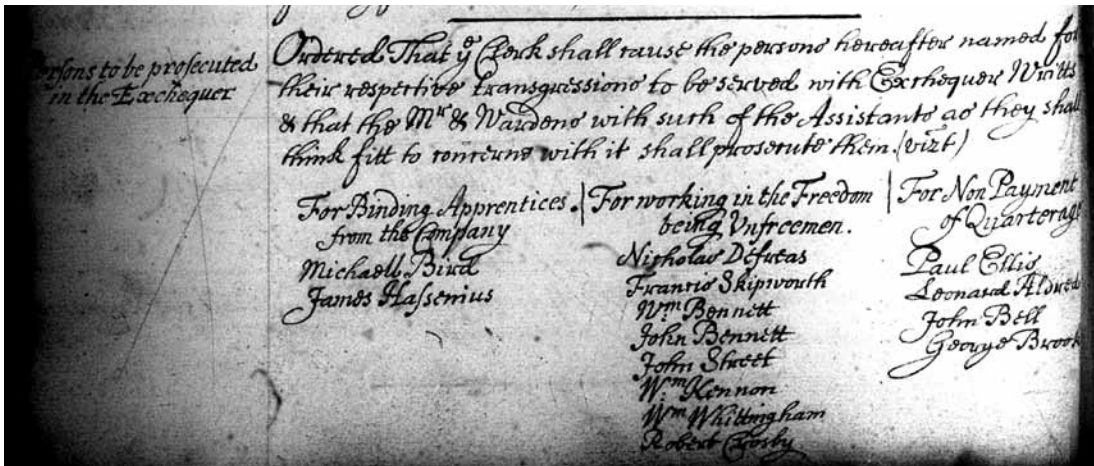


Fig. 3. Clockmakers' Company Court Minute, dated 6 April 1683. The entry reads: 'Ordered That your Clerk shall cause the persons hereinafter named for their respective transgressions to be served with Exchequer Writts and that the Master and Wardens with such of the Assistants as they shall think fit to [concur (?)] with it shall prosecute them.' Hassenius is named in the left hand column, with one other, under the transgression heading: 'For binding Apprentices from the Company.' Image by the author and courtesy of Guildhall Library.

within the limits and circuits of this our royal grant, either privileged or not privileged, saving only to or with an allowed and professed Clockmaker.

And under the Bye-Laws or Ordinances of the Clockmakers Company:

...if any ..alien or stranger whatsoever, coming from beyond the seas or otherwise, shall work in a ...place.. within the city of London..or within ten miles compass and being not conformable and yielding obedience in all respects to the government of this society.. then it shall be lawful for the Master, Wardens and Assistants..to seize all ..working tools ..until he or they .. shall be conformable herein.¹⁸

Nor do we know where Hassenius initially lived or with whom: bearing in mind that

being a foreigner or alien carried distinct disadvantages as noted, he would have benefitted from having had a contact – a relative perhaps – who was able to take in and look after the young Russian, offering him shelter and possibly the means to acquire a training.

It is also unknown where Hassenius learned his trade. As stated in the caption to Fig. 2, not only was Hassenius regarded as an alien, but his admission to the Clockmakers Company was as 'a Brother'. All that can be said with certainty, therefore, is that he must have been trained elsewhere and not through a Clockmaker Company apprenticeship, since that precluded him from becoming a full member (or freeman) of the Company; his was the lesser status of 'Brother.' There is no surviving record of Hassenius having been apprenticed to a freeman of the Blacksmiths Company,¹⁹ which would have been the most common (but of course by no means the only)

18. Reg 38 of Ordinance of the Clockmakers' Company passed on 11 August 1632. (S. Atkins and W. Overall, *Some Account of the Worshipful Company of Clockmakers of the City of London* (privately printed, 1881), p. 16). Some of these restrictions were later relaxed and under an Order of the Court of Assistants passed on 29 September 1719, it was decreed that: '...French Watchmakers and other Foreigners be informed that they may be admitted into the Freedom of this Company, but none may be admitted unless at a summonsed Court.' (source: Atkins and Overall, *Some Account*, p. 115 citing CC Journal II).

19. The records of the Blacksmiths Company are incomplete and there are gaps for what could be relevant years, so it cannot be stated definitively that Hassenius was not trained formally as a blacksmith.

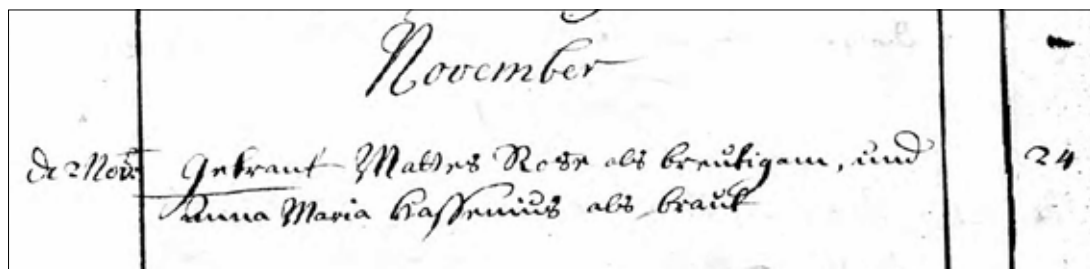


Fig. 4. Registry entry recording marriage of Anna Maria Hassenius to Mattes Rose on 2 November 1704. Image: Westminster Archives, Non-Conformist and Non-Parochial Register of Baptisms, Marriages and Burials 1694-1771.

alternative means of learning the trade in this period.

Being admitted a Brother and not as a freeman was also disadvantageous. Brothers were not entitled to take on apprentices themselves, as the Company could not be sure of the way that they were taught and the way they might teach an apprentice. They were therefore obliged to take their apprentices 'through' a freeman of the Company, the freeman being tasked to ensure the training and work was undertaken to an appropriate standard.²⁰ This explains why in April 1685 Hassenius was threatened with prosecution for the 'transgression' of not taking his apprentices through the Company (Fig. 3),²¹ and soon after this, on 4 May 1685, he took Samuel Bryan through Daniel Stevens (CC admitted 1661).²²

It is probable that by the time Hassenius joined the Clockmakers Company in 1682 or shortly after, he was living in Aldworth, Berkshire since this is where his first daughter, Anna Maria, was baptised in March 1684.²³

Anne is named in the register as the mother of Anna Maria and 'Jacobus Hassenius' as the father and husband of Anne, but there is no record of their marriage in that parish or elsewhere in the county of Berkshire;²⁴ I have not been able to ascertain where Jacob and Anne married or when.

It is however likely that Hassenius and his wife moved to London soon after Anna Maria was born in 1684 since they had a second child, Susana, who was baptised at St Margaret's Parish in April 1685.²⁵ It is not known what became of Susana, or of Hassenius's wife, Anne.²⁶ Anna Maria, on the other hand, married subsequently, in November 1704, to Mattes Rose (Fig. 4), the ceremony being held at the German Lutheran Church of Savoy in central London.²⁷

Hassenius was by then based in the Parish of St Margaret's in Westminster. At least one surviving bracket clock of his is signed on the backplate *Jacobus Hassenius At Wight Hall* (Fig. 5) and another is signed *Jacobus Hassenius near Whitehall, London* (Fig. 6).

20. Reg 51 of the Ordinances of the Clockmakers' Company adopted on 11 August 1632. See also note 18.

21. See Fig. 3.

22. Entry for the Court Meeting held on 4 May 1685 reads: '...Samuel Bryan put himself as Apprentice onto Daniel Stevens for seven years from this date. To serve James Hassenius.' (CC Court Records: MS02710 vol 2); Brian Loomes, *Clockmakers of Britain 1286-1700* (Derbyshire: Mayfield Books, 2014), p. 249; Atkins, *The Company of Clockmakers Register of Apprentices* (privately printed, 1931), p. 43

23. Aldworth Parish Register of Births and Christenings.

24. Personal correspondence with the Archives Dept, Berkshire Records Office.

25. St Margaret's Register of Baptisms, Westminster Archives.

26. There is no entry in either the various Berkshire Parish Registers or in the National Burial indexes of any burial of persons named Anne Hassenius or Susana Hassenius. It is not known what became of Anna Maria and her husband Mattes Rose after their marriage in 1704.

27. Westminster Archives, Non-Conformist and Non-Parochial Register of Baptisms, Marriages and Burials 1694-1771. See Fig. 4.



Fig. 5. Backplate of clock signed *Jacobus Hassenius At Wight Hall*. Image: copyright Warner Meinen and reproduced courtesy of Dennis Radage (*Charles Gretton, Through the Golden Age*).



Fig. 6. Backplate of clock illustrated in Fig. 14. The backplate is signed *Jacobus Hassenius near Whitehall, London*. Image: courtesy of Bonhams.

So far as is known, all other extant clocks of Hassenius are signed on the backplate *Jacobus Hassenius Londini*, such as the one illustrated in Fig. 7. In the Appendix, I have listed all of the clocks and watches currently known to exist, all of which, it may be presumed, were made and sold while Hassenius worked as watch- and clockmaker in London between the years 1683 and 1698. Hassenius remained in the Parish of St Margaret's until he left England in 1698. As Brian Loomes notes in his book *Clockmakers of Britain 1286–1700*,²⁸ Hassenius paid quarterage until 1697 but did not sign the Oath of Allegiance in 1697.²⁹

The Grand Embassy tour of Peter the Great

In 1698, Tsar Peter the Great visited England as part of his grand diplomatic mission, known as The Grand Embassy, arriving in London from the Dutch Republic on 11 January 1698.

Although the primary purpose of the Grand Embassy was to strengthen Russia's alliance with a number of European countries against the Ottoman Empire, he sought to hire foreign specialists in a number of skills for Russian service, especially shipbuilding. He was partially successful in this endeavour, taking with him, when he left England in April 1698, at least sixty master craftsmen.

Doubt is often expressed as to whether or not Hassenius left with the Tsar but as a result of extensive research undertaken by the Russian academic and historian Ms Valeria A.

28. 2014 edition, p. 249.

29. Loomes, *Clockmakers of Britain*, p. 249. This may be because he was already planning to leave the country but more likely because as a Russian born foreigner or stranger – indeed, labelled an 'alien' by the Clockmakers Company as mentioned – who, despite living in this country for at least twenty-five years, did not seek naturalisation or denization, he probably considered that he in fact owed the English monarch no allegiance at all.



Fig. 7. Backplate of clock illustrated in Fig. 13. The backplate is signed *Jacobus Hassenius Londini*. Image: courtesy of Carter Marsh.

Kovrigina, and two Russian papers written by her,³⁰ we are now able to dispel much of this doubt and state with certainty that Hassenius did indeed return to Russia in 1698 following the Grand Embassy visit and that he subsequently worked in Moscow for the Imperial Court as a clockmaker and repairer. Much of what follows is extrapolated from an informally translated English version of Ms Kovrigina's two scholarly papers.

Having Russian parentage and Russian being Hassenius's mother tongue, Hassenius was easily able to establish contact with the Grand Embassy during the visit to London. There was much interest among Russian court nobility in clocks and watches produced in England and relatives of those who accompanied Peter the Great on his trip to England wrote to them asking to '...pick up some London made clocks and watches...' ³¹ And so, included among other purchases made, '...two watches – one a chain watch and the other a living room clock' were on 19 April 1698 purchased from Hassenius by the Grand Embassy for £23 sterling.

Furthermore, as is frequently referred to, in May 1698 Hassenius received a warrant from the Treasury to the Customs Commissioners to:

...export to Muscovy for the use of his Imperial Majesty the Czar of Muscovy

thirteen clocks, three large or long clocks, a great table clock and some tools his majesty bought in the Strand....³²

Meanwhile, in anticipation of leaving for Russia, arrangements had to be made to unwind his business affairs, and not least to find a placement for his apprentice at the time, Ralph Morten. And so it was that in February 1698, at the Middlesex Sessions, an order was made:

... for the discharge of Ralph Morten, apprenticed to James Hassenius of St Margaret's Westminster, watchmaker. The said Apprentice was previously bound to William Speakman of the City of London, clockmaker...³³

Thus, Ralph Morten (or perhaps Moreton) was taken back by William Speakman to whom, as stated in the Order, he was previously bound, in fact in December 1696 for a period of seven years.³⁴

Hassenius was hired to serve the Tsar by Fyodor Golovin (1650–1710), a Count of high nobility and immense wealth, who was tasked by Peter the Great to help organise the Grand Embassy and accompanied the tour.³⁵ Under his agreement with Golovin, made when they met in London, Hassenius was accepted into service as a clockmaker working for the Tsar

30. The two papers written by V. A. Kovrigina are:

(i) 'ИНОЗЕМЕЦ Я. А. ГАССЕНИУС И ЕГО ВКЛАД В ЧАСОВОЕ ДЕЛО МОСКВЫ (КОНЕЦ XVII – НАЧАЛО XVIII ВВ)' (translated as: The Foreigner J. A. Gassenius and his Contribution to Moscow Clockmaking, late Seventeenth to early Eighteenth Century), Abstract of paper delivered to the Conference of the Central Museum of Ancient Russian Culture and Arts, Moscow, October 2006, pp. 31–33

(ii) 'О часовом мастере, приглашенном из Лондона Великим посольством' (loosely translated as: About the Clockmaker invited from London by the Grand Embassy), M. V. Lomonosov faculty of The Moscow State University, circa 2010. So far as I am aware, this essay has not been published but a copy was kindly supplied to me by Mikhail Guryev, then Curator of Clocks at The State Heritage Museum, St Petersburg.

31. RGADA.

32. Calendar of Treasury Books, Volume 13 (October 1697–August 1698).

33. Middlesex County Records 1698, p. 67. Calendar of Sessions Book 1689–1709.

34. Atkins, *The Company of Clockmakers and their Apprentices*, p. 203 (name here is spelt Moreton). The fact that there existed this connection between Hassenius and Speakman has in turn led to speculation as to whether there was a working trade relationship between Speakman and Hassenius, given also the identified similarity of the movements of some of the clocks of both makers (see further Dzik and Stills, *Beneath the Dial*, pp. 565–569). The same conundrum is postulated as to whether a working relationship ever existed between Hassenius and Charles Gretton and for similar reasons (see further Radage, Meinen and Radage, *Charles Gretton*, pp 285–286). But if so, who made for whom? (cf the review of this work by Sir George White in *Antiquarian Horology*, 37, 3 (September 2016) pp. 384–385; these themes are explored further in the Epilogue to Dzik and Still, *Beneath the Dial*, pp. 565–569.

by Royal Decree, starting employment effective 1 April 1698, at an annual salary of 150 roubles plus 20 roubles for his travel and moving expenses.³⁶ Half of the annual salary of 150 roubles was paid to him in advance.

Hassenius was entrusted with the delivery to Russia of the clocks bought by Peter the Great and his first task was to supervise safe transportation of all these items to Russia.

... Hassenius transported the clocks along the Thames from Deptford by boat where he packed them in specially ordered boxes in his yard, then took them to London Customs and after completing all formalities, loaded them onto the ship. He accompanied the valuable cargo to Arkhangelsk,³⁷ oversaw disembarkation and handed it over to the Russians there.³⁸

Hassenius was thus not aboard the group of ships with the other hired craftsmen which sailed directly back to Archangelsk either from London or Amsterdam, nor did he accompany the Tsar back to Russia;³⁹ instead he made his way back to Russia separately with the clocks, arriving around the beginning of August 1698. Once he arrived in Moscow, he 'presented himself in Moscow'⁴⁰ and started work in the State Department known as 'the Armoury Chamber.'

Life in Russia

Hassenius was hired to work initially on the construction of a new musical turret clock that was to be built, on the instructions of Peter the Great, for the Spassky Tower in the Kremlin. The musical clock was to be based on one that the Tsar had seen when he visited Amsterdam, and formed part of his programme of modernisation and reinvention of Russia. This commissioned work was to be undertaken jointly with another clockmaker, Joakim (or Yoakim) Garnol, who was of French nationality but living in Amsterdam and had also been hired to Russian service by Golovin, in Amsterdam, on 20 February 1698. Garnol was engaged, initially for a term of three years, to '...manufacture big clocks with bells, that would be dancing, and to teach Russian students this craft.'⁴¹ So it seems Hassenius and Garnol were also expected to teach the craft of clockmaking to Russian students.

The previous clock on the Spassky Tower had been installed in 1624 by the English clockmaker Christopher Galloway.⁴² It has been described thus:⁴³

...This clock had two identical dials, one facing the Red Square and the other facing the Kremlin. Each dial was more than 5 metres in diameter with a blue dial symbolising the sky, depicting silver stars, the moon and the month. Around

35. F. A. Golovin subsequently served Peter the Great as his first Chancellor of the Russian Empire (1699–1706), a civil position of the highest rank, power and prestige.

36. This was not a huge amount of money. By comparison, Joseph Nye (Noy), Master Shipbuilder to Peter the Great, and Richard Cozens, another English shipbuilder, were each paid annual wages of about 1,000 roubles and Nye later received a pension of around 500 roubles a year (Edward J Phillips, *The Founding of Russia's Navy, Peter the Great and the Azov Fleet, 1688–1714* (London: Greenwood Press, 1995))

37. Known in the West as Archangel, the Russian port city through which nearly all of Russia's trade with the West took place prior to the founding of St Petersburg in 1712.

38. V. A. Kovrigina, *The Foreigner J. A. Gassenius and his Contribution to Moscow Clockmaking*, p. 32.

39. The Tsar left England in April 1698; his next stop on the Grand Embassy was Austria, first passing back through the Netherlands for a second time.

40. RGADA.

41. RGADA.

42. For more information on Christopher Galloway and the history of Russian clocks in the Kremlin, see the two-part article by Jeremy Howard, 'Clocks in the Kremlin', *Horological Journal*, 141, 8 (August 1999), p.275 and 141, 9 (Sept 1999), p.297. Also worth reading is the short article by Robert Fayle, 'Christopher Galloway, Clockmaker', *Horological Journal*, 134, 1 (July 1991), pp.16–17.

43. A. E. Lebedev, Уходящие часы (loosely translated: the Care and Upkeep of Clocks), *Russian Review* (2008).

Gast oder Gatus (Hast?), Jakob, Steinschneider und Goldschmied. 1621—32. Arbeitet 1624 die Reichskrone, 1627 ein Diadem, eine Schüssel und Goldbleche für ein Heiligenbild im Troizki-Kloster, 1629 einen Bogenköcher für den Zaren, 1632 einen Säbel für den Zaren, 1633 eine Krone.
Gassenius, Jakob, Uhrmacher. 1701.
Gelmar (wohl Helmar oder Helmer), Paul, Deutscher, Goldschmied. Arbeitet mit anderen 1632 an einem Säbel und 1637 einen Thron.

Fig. 8. Entry for Hassenius as clockmaker in 1701 in the *Sitzungsberichte der Gesellschaft für Geschichte und Altertumskunde der Ostseeprovinzen Russlands* (see note 45). Image: courtesy of active.org; public domain licence.

the circumference were 17 Arabic gold-plated numbers and the same number of church-Slavic letters, also denoting numbers. At the time, the day was divided into two unequal parts – night and daytime hours. Since the longest day of the year lasted 17 hours, the dial had 17 divisions. It rotated under a stationary image of the sun with rays, one of which was an arrow and showed an hour. The mechanism was complicated and required continual adjustment, which was assigned to appointed Russian clockmakers. The job was not only skilful but honourable and a huge responsibility. Clockmakers selected for the task had to promise not to play cards, trade wine or tobacco, fraternise with known thieves and pledged to save the clock and not damage it.⁴⁴

By 1700, and having been rebuilt twice in the intervening years following two catastrophic fires in 1626 and in 1654, the 1624 clock was deemed beyond repair and by decree from Peter the Great was to be replaced by the new clock, in the Dutch style with musical chimes, and with the modern (German) custom of a dial with 12 divisions, reflecting the start of a new era and also abandonment of the old

Byzantine calendar that was abolished with effect from New Year's day 1700.

To facilitate work on construction of the new clock, Garnol and Hassenius were given access to premises owned by Golovin, and several Russian blacksmiths and other workers were seconded to the project to assist. Being a Russian speaker, Hassenius had no need of an interpreter (unlike Garnol). However, among those seconded to work under Hassenius and Garnol was a Dutch blacksmith by the name of Charlo Terry (or perhaps Terii?). Although, as is mentioned above, Hassenius's grandfather was Dutch, it is not recorded whether Hassenius spoke any Dutch.

In March 1699, and seemingly on his own initiative, Hassenius undertook repairs to the courtyard belonging to Golovin that housed the State clock workshop and repair facilities. Although he was reimbursed from funds of the Armoury Chamber, he was admonished by Golovin for having undertaken this work without prior authorisation and given orders never to do so again.

It seems that, several months on, neither Hassenius nor Garnol had been paid the balance of their agreed salary, for in October 1699 Hassenius was forced to petition the Armoury Chamber for the money that was owing.

44. See also Howard, 'Clocks in the Kremlin'.

Hassenius is listed as working in Moscow in 1701 (Fig. 8).⁴⁵ In that same year, Hassenius is recorded as having supervised the transfer of the Armoury Chamber's clock-making facilities to new and larger premises, using staff from the Armoury Chamber.⁴⁶ This included moving finished parts of large turret clocks, instruments and other equipment. He was also charged with the responsibility of supervising work on adapting the new premises to the needs of clockmaking.

As well as working on the new turret clock, both Hassenius and Garnol were required to undertake a variety of urgent tasks for the Tsar, such as the repair of pocket watches and domestic clocks sent to him by the Armoury Chamber, making new pocket watches 'from steel flat and rectangular', using 'anvils with a nose ... big and small' and 'strings thick and thin'.⁴⁷

It seems that in February 1702 Hassenius was let go and expelled from the Armoury Chamber. So Garnol was left to supervise completing work on the new turret clock alone, but for a variety of reasons including lack of labour there was little progress achieved. By 1703 work on the new turret clock was still not finished.

In the meantime, Peter the Great had decided to buy instead two ready-made tower clocks from Amsterdam, bringing them, disassembled, to Moscow and reassembling them onsite with the use of Dutch craftsmen that were hired for the purpose.⁴⁸ It was proposed that Hassenius should be re-hired to work on this and he is believed to have done so.⁴⁹

The new clock was eventually ready in 1706 and was set going at 9am on 9 December that year, its music playing at noon. It continued working until 1737 when it was seriously damaged by fire and eventually taken down. It was not until 1763 that Catherine II, following discovery of the 'English chiming clock' that had been made by Christopher Galloway nearly 150 years previously and which had been subsequently dismantled and stored, ordered the English clock to be reinstated and its chimes restored. This finally occurred towards the end of 1770.⁵⁰

Where did Hassenius live?

It is thought Hassenius lived in the newly established 'German suburb' in Moscow, a separate district some three miles from the Kremlin, built in around 1652 and set up to house the foreigners living in Moscow. It was called 'German suburb' because most Russians could not distinguish between different foreign languages, so to them all foreigners were German.⁵¹

These 'foreigners' were encouraged to live separate lives by ordinary Moscovites who viewed them with suspicion and as possessing potentially corrupting influences – what were referred to as 'the crafty ways of the West'.⁵² This small district was far from being a ghetto, however. While the residents were isolated from Russian culture, the German suburb thrived because those within it were easily able to maintain their own culture; the area consisted of broad avenues lined with brick

45. *Sitzungsberichte der Gesellschaft für Geschichte und Altertumskunde der Ostseeprovinzen Russlands* (Proceedings of the Society for History and Archaeology of the Baltic Sea Provinces of Russia), (Riga: Druck von W. F. Häcker, 1904), p. 61; see Fig. 8. Hassenius is also named in the list compiled by Valentin L. Chenakal in 1971: Chenakal, *Watchmakers and Clockmakers in Russia 1400–1850* (English translation by W. F. Ryan) (London: Antiquarian Horological Society, 1972), p. 22. The entry reads: 'GASSENIUS, Yarkov. Moscow, 1701–2.'

46 and 47. RGADA.

48. This is thought to be the two clocks intended for the Trinity Tower in the Kremlin and the Spassky Tower that were commissioned from Jan Luebs and Christopher Brandt and were eventually installed by Joachim Gamault of France who had been hired from Holland specifically to introduce 'modern time' to Russia. (Howard, 'Clocks in the Kremlin', p. 279).

49. Howard, 'Clocks in the Kremlin'.

50. Howard, 'Clocks in the Kremlin'.

51. Robert K. Massie, *Peter the Great, His Life and World* (Knopf) (1980), p. 110. Or else these foreigners were called 'Nemoy,' meaning 'dumb' in Russian, because the foreigners couldn't speak or comprehend the Russian language!

52. Geoffrey A. Hosking, *Russia: People and Empire 1552–1917* (Cambridge: CUP, 1997), p. 76.

buildings with European style windows. Carriages made in Paris and England drove along the streets, re-creating a mini-European town in the centre of Moscow. Peter the Great was intrigued by these foreigners and fascinated by their culture and, much to the irritation of the local Moscovites, he came to spend much time in the district, drinking and conversing with its inhabitants, developing his curiosity and his love of learning.

The last recorded mention of Hassenius in the Russian archives is in 1715, when the clockmaker is recorded as having appeared as a witness in a litigation case that involved a family dispute between the widow of Hassenius's nephew, one Anna Snow (who had been married to Dr A. T. Kellerman), and a certain I. I. Kellerman.⁵³

Another claim to fame: the public lottery

Aside from his work as master clockmaker both in England until 1698 and thereafter in Russia, the name of Yakov Gassenius is in Russia also associated with the first public lottery in that country, since he is acknowledged to have been the first person to introduce this enterprise into Russia. This first lottery was held in November 1700,⁵⁴ with the permission and active encouragement of the Tsar. Advertisements were posted

around the city for what was called a 'foreign lottery.' The advertisement read:

To the whole World,
Yakov Andreii Gassenius, clockmaker, announces that in the courtyard of Ivan Golovin, near the address of Andreii Artomanov, a happy event will be taking place – what in foreign countries is called a lottery.⁵⁵ All hunters and huntresses are free to experience this happiness.

The poster went on to explain that in return for the purchase of a ticket for 1 hryvnia (= 10 kopeks), one lucky winner would win 1000 hryvnia; there were other prizes but of lesser value.

People began to gather near the poster and would listen closely to whoever was literate and could read out loud what was written.

An audience was assembled on the day of the draw in the courtyard of the clock workshop facilities of Hassenius and Garnol owned by Golovin, and two boys were selected to pull out the winning ticket from a wooden box. Hassenius kept a percentage of the takings (1 kopek per hryvnia) for himself.

Public lotteries had become a regular and highly successful feature of English government finance during the time Hassenius lived in England and were regarded as an

53. RGADA. Dr Kellerman had a considerable collection of learned books, five of which Hassenius bought from Anna Snow following her husband's death and several others were sold to pay for his funeral. Anna Snow must have returned to England with the remaining unsold books since, intriguingly, it has come to light that eighteen of these were donated to the Library of Sion College, Lambeth Palace, and those identified have now been catalogued and are the subject of a fascinating article written recently by the Sion College Library Cataloguer (Ted Simonds, 'E libris Dris Kellerman: On the Library of Dr Kellerman,' *Sion College Library Blog, A Monument of Fame* (online, March 2023)).

54. *Записки Желябужского с 1682 по 2 июля 1709* (I. A. Zhelyabushky Diaries 1682–1709), entry for November 17 1699, ref 320. The text of the advertisement was reproduced in full by Zhelyabushky in his Daily Notes for this date.

55. This new form of entertainment became known generally by its English name 'lottery' and is referred to as being one of the first examples of a foreign language word being imported into the Russian lexicon. (Levashov, *The Dawn of Russian Neography* (НА ЗАРЕ РУССКОЙ НЕОГРАФИИ), Institute of Linguistic Research of the Russian Academy of Science).

56. The first English lottery authorised by Act of Parliament took place in 1694 to fund the 'Million Adventure' of that year – 10000 tickets sold at £10 a time to support the Nine Years War against Louis XIV of France. However, many earlier lotteries were run for the purpose of financing private or public enterprises, some of which were authorised by Royal Proclamation or Letters Patent under the Great Seal of England, for example in 1566–69 to provide funds for improving English harbours, and lotteries in 1612 and again in 1614 for financing the settlement of Virginia, which livery companies were encouraged to support (Margarette Lincoln, *London and the Seventeenth Century* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2021), p. 45). See also R. D. Richards, 'The Lottery in the History of English Government Finance', *The Economic Journal*, 44, Supplement 1 (January 1934), pp. 57–76.

entirely socially acceptable means of raising funds for both State and public causes.⁵⁶ As Ann McBroom mentions in her recent scholarly article on Daniel Quare in this journal,⁵⁷ one such lottery, which took place in 1695 in order to raise funds for the establishment of two new Royal Academies, involved three clockmakers, Tompion, Quare and John Marshall (Quare's former apprentice), all of whom agreed to serve as 'undertakers', responsible for securing premises for the draw and underwriting some of the costs.

The fact that such distinguished clockmakers were involved in this enterprise leads one to speculate whether other clockmakers too were involved in the staging of public lotteries during this period and whether Hassenius might have been one of these. Certainly Hassenius would have been able to see first-hand just how popular and remunerative these events were and to learn enough about how to stage them to enable him to take the idea with him to Moscow and replicate the model in its entirety, in his case and in the event successfully so. It is tempting to believe that it was no coincidence that one of Tompion's and Quare's responsibilities as undertaker during the 1695 lottery was to find premises for the hosting of that event, and that Russia's first lottery was held in the workshop facilities of two clockmakers, Hassenius and Garnol.

And finally, a curiosity

It is said that when Peter the Great left London on 21 April 1698 and headed to the Netherlands, in addition to his enlarged entourage of craftsmen and other workers,⁵⁸ the Tsar made sure to take with him all of his various purchases: instruments, books,

weapons, maps and several 'curiosities'.

Among these curiosities was 'a small monkey' and according to Russian records,⁵⁹ this monkey was 'bought from watchmaker Yakov Gassenius' for a consideration of 11 guineas.

Perhaps it is this monkey that acquired some fame when, reportedly, it appeared in a spectacular show that took place on 30 October 1698 in the courtyard of Count Fyodor Golovin, parodying the processional arrival of the Great Ambassadors at the Vienna Court, with all participants (including the Tsar) dressed in German costume. The procession moved towards the city palace of Prince Romodonovsky, who had organised the fete, at which point he was ceremoniously presented with the monkey instead of a present.⁶⁰

Acknowledgements

As mentioned at the start of this paper, much of the Russian-based information included in this article is largely extrapolated from the two papers by Ms Valeria A. Kovrigina referenced in the earlier footnotes. Without her extensive and scholarly research and identification of the Russian archival material examined by her (much of which I have not been able to access as a primary source), large parts of this article would not have been possible. I must also thank my former colleague, Ms. Ekaterina Dedova, for kindly providing an English translation of these papers.

My thanks also to Mikhail Guyrev, formerly Curator of Clocks at the State Hermitage Museum St Petersburg, who kindly alerted me to the existence of Ms Kovrigina's second paper and supplied a copy, as well to those indicated as having given permission for the reproduction of their images.

57. Ann McBroom, 'Daniel Quare (1648–1724): Yorkshireman, activist, Quaker horologist and businessman,' *Antiquarian Horology* 44, 1 (March 2023), 65–81; pp. 66–67.

58. As well as the sixty or so specialists of different trades mentioned earlier, the Tsar's entourage included four chamberlains, three interpreters, a cook, a priest, six trumpeters, and seventy soldiers 'as tall as their monarch.'

59. Irina and Dmitri Guzevitch, *Tsar Peter's First European Tour: An Analytical Biography* (St Petersburg, 2008).

60. S. Shokolev, *Birth of an Empire* (Рождение империи), (Moscow, 1997).

See the following pages for a list of extant clocks and watches signed by Hassenius, as well as photos of six of these.

Appendix – List of extant clocks and watches signed by Hassenius (in no particular order)

	Summary Description	Comments
1	Eight day striking longcase, signed <i>Jacobus Hassenius, London</i> . Date aperture. Oak case veneered with walnut and inlaid with scroll marqueterie. Height 7 ft 10 inches	Note the misspelling of the name. Illustrated in Cescinsky & Webster, <i>English Domestic Clocks</i> , Chancery House Publishing Co Ltd (1913), fig 168, p.169 and also p.347 (illustrated here - fig 9)
2	Month Striking longcase. Slivered hour-ring; day of month aperture. Walnut inlaid case. Spiral pillars to hood. 12 inch dial. Signed <i>Jacobus Hassenius London</i> . Height 7ft 1 inch	Owned by Frank Garrett and sold by The Anderson Galleries, 16 February 1926 (lot XVI) (illustrated here - fig 10)
3	Watch with dial signed <i>HASSENIVS LONDON</i> on the dial and <i>Jacobus Hassenius London 220</i> on the movement	Described in letters from W.Watkins Old dated 21 October 1856 and 27 October 1865 forming part of Octavius Morgan's bequest to the British Museum (illustrated here - fig 11). See further David Thompson, 'Octavius Morgan, Horological Collector, Part Seven', <i>Antiquarian Horology</i> , 29, 05 (Sept 2006), 629-644, p.640
4	Silver and tortoiseshell pair case pocket watch No 289, circa 1698. Dial and movement signed <i>HASSENIVS LONDON</i> . Incomplete fusee verge movement with missing balance cock. Polished and numbered silver case stamped IM (John Willoughby), outer tortoiseshell case	Sold Bonhams, 4 December 2013 (lot 43) (illustrated here - fig 12)
5	Ebony basket-topped striking bracket clock, signed on the backplate (only) <i>Jacobus Hassenius, Londini</i> surmounted by a twin-dolphin handle on the pierced basket and four cast tapering finials. Decorated date aperture. 7 inch square dial. Height 14 1/2 inches.	Sold Bonhams, 7 July 2009 (lot 122). Illustrated in Dzik's online digital image library, accompanying the book <i>Engraving on English Table Clocks</i> , Reference H3-1. Also illustrated in Brian Loomes, <i>Clockmakers of Britain</i> fig.133, p279. Sold again in 2011 by Millington Adams (with altered back-cock and brass button feet added), at which time it was described as having restored verge escapement but lacking quarter pull repeat mechanism.
6	Ebony case bracket clock, with strike, calendar and pull quarter repeat. Height: 14 inch	Exhibited by Garrard at Grosvenor House Antique Fair 1972 and illustrated in <i>Illustrated London News</i> (1 June 1972)
7	Ebony case 8 day bracket clock with silver mounts, spandrels and hands and velvet dial, calendar date and pull quarter repeat on three bells. Height 14 inches. Signed on dial <i>Jac Hassenius London</i> and on backplate <i>Jacobus Hassenius Londini</i>	Exhibited by Anthony Woodburn at Grosvenor House Antique Fair 1992 and illustrated in <i>Clocks Magazine</i> (May 1992). Also illustrated in Dzik, <i>Engraving on English Table Clocks</i> (p.82) under reference H3-2 (illustrated here - fig 13 and also fig 7) Note the Huguenot influence (velvet dial and silver mounts etc) which has led some commentators to believe, mistakenly, that Hassenius was Dutch by birth.
8	Veneered bracket clock with basket top and pull quarter repeat. Signed on backplate <i>Jacobus Hassenius At Wight Hall</i>	This clock is extensively discussed and is illustrated in Dzik/Still, <i>Beneath the Dial</i> (p.185-6) and in the chapter entitled Epilogue (pp. 565-569). It is also examined and discussed in Radage, Meinen and Radage, <i>Charles Gretton</i> , (backplate is illustrated in fig 6)
9	Ebony Table Clock with pull quarter repeat, chamfered date aperture and signed on backplate (only) <i>Jacobus Hassenius near Whitehall, London</i> . 6 inch square dial. Brass button feet. Height: 12 inches	Sold Bonhams, 30 November 2022 (lot 106) (illustrated in figs 6 and 14)
10	Twin fusee Ebony Table Clock, signed on backplate <i>Jacobus Hassenius Londini</i>	This clock is illustrated under reference H3-4 in Dzik's online digital image library accompanying the book <i>Engraving on English Table Clocks</i> , and is also cited in the online supplement
11	Ebonised bracket clock, surmounted by twin-dolphin handle on the caddy top, signed on the dial <i>J. Hassenius Londini</i> and on the backplate <i>Jacobus Hassenius, Londini</i> . 6.5 inch square dial. Striking on a single bell. Height 31 cm (c12 ¼ inches)	Sold Halls of Shewsbury, 21 September 2022

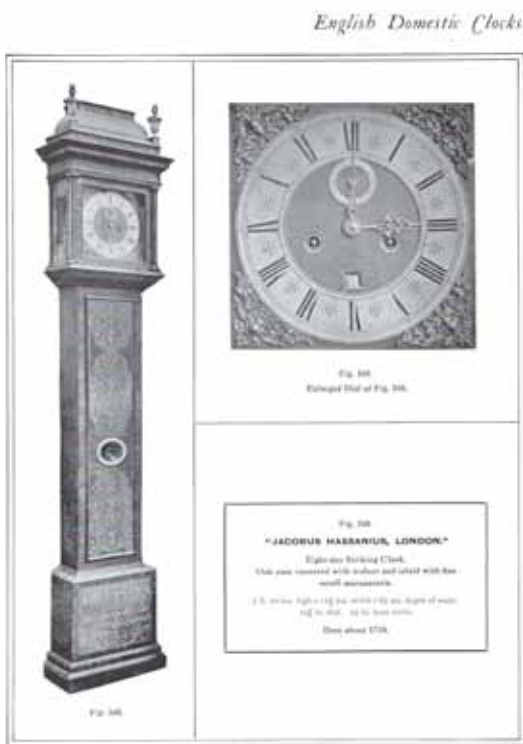


Fig. 9. The walnut-veneered longcase clock signed *Jacobus Hassenius, London* described in the Appendix as item 1. Image: Cescinsky, *English Domestic Clocks* (1913), p. 169.



Fig. 11. Item 3 in the Appendix: Letter dated 21 October 1865 from W. Watkins Old describing watch with dial signed HASSENIUS LONDON and a finely drawn pen-and-ink sketch of it, comprised in the horological collection of Octavius Morgan now housed at the British Museum. The movement is signed *Jacobus Hassenius, London 220*. Image; taken by the author with permission of the British Museum.

Fig. 10 (below). Catalogue photograph and text description of lot XVI in the Anderson Galleries, New York sale of the Frank Garrett Collection, 1926, being the month-striking walnut-veneered longcase described as item 2 in the Appendix. Image: courtesy of INHA digital library; public domain open licence.

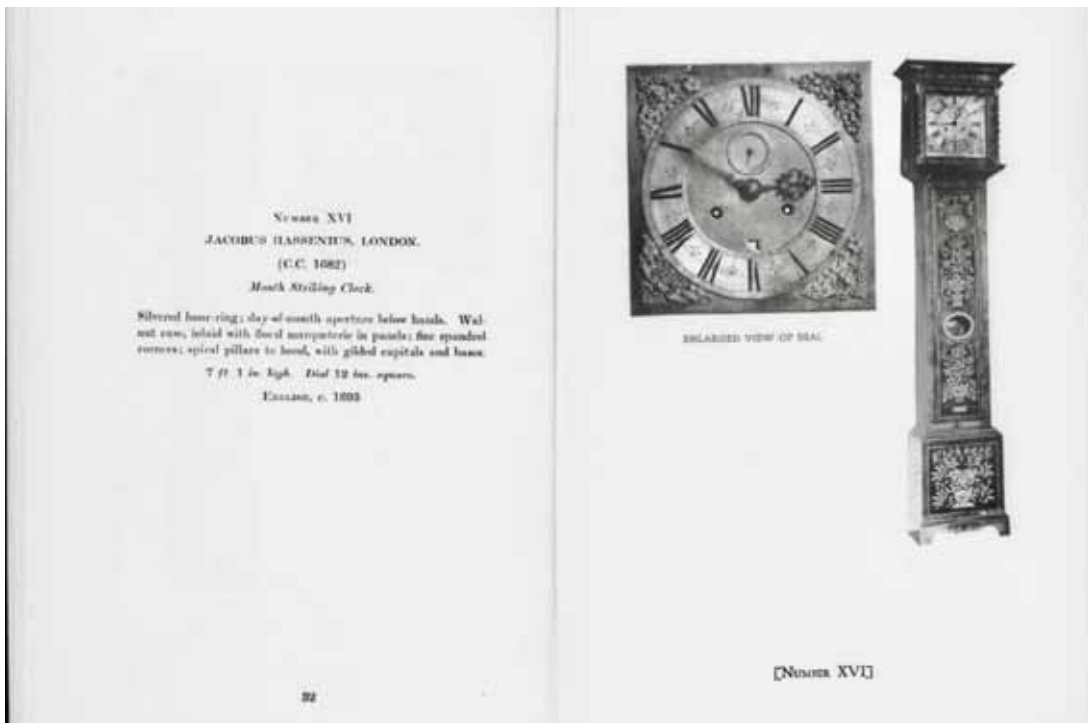




Fig. 12. Appendix, item 4: Watch signed and numbered 289, sold at Bonhams, London December 2013. Image: courtesy of Bonhams.



Fig. 13. Appendix, item 7: Bracket Clock with silver mounts and velvet dial signed Jacobus Hassenius Londini. The backplate is illustrated in Fig. 7 above. Image: courtesy of Carter Marsh.



Fig. 14. Bracket clock sold at Bonhams, London November 2022 (Appendix, item 9). The backplate, signed *Jacobus Hassenius near Whitehall London*, is illustrated in Fig. 6. Image: courtesy of Bonhams.