

BIOS REPORTER

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THE BRITISH INSTITUTE OF ORGAN STUDIES

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BIOS REPORTER

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Editor: Gordon Curtis, [REDACTED]

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BIOS SUBSCRIPTIONS

The annual subscription is £37 (£32 concessionary, £12 student). Details of membership and subscriptions can be found on page 2.

Cover photos. Front: *St Stephen's, Stockbridge. Henry Willis 1880*

Back: *St Giles Cathedral. Console of organ by Rieger 1992* (Photos: © Alan Taylor) *A report of the Edinburgh OrganFest appears on page 8.*

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BIOS SUBSCRIPTIONS 2017

The BIOS Constitution states that subscriptions shall become due on January 1st in any calendar year. BIOS subscriptions for 2017 are, therefore, due now.

May I thank all those members who have already paid, or who pay at the beginning of January each year, either by Standing Order, by remitting the appropriate amount to the BIOS bank account through either BACS or PayPal (via the BIOS website), or by simply sending me a cheque?

To everyone else, could I at this time, say: Please send your 2017 subscription, and do it NOW! Don't put this aside, having read it, intending to do it tomorrow, next week, next month, or whenever. Get it out of the way NOW; it's easy enough to do! Then you will, with a clear conscience, be able to enjoy your membership of BIOS and its publications for a whole year, knowing that your subscription aids our work and objectives the moment it is received.

Please address any membership queries to the Membership Secretary at the address inside the front cover.

If remitting to the BIOS bank account (NatWest, sort code 52-30-44, account number 05097169), either by BACS or PayPal via the BIOS website, please include a name or a membership number as a reference, so that your payment can be readily identified.

Please make cheques payable to the British Institute of Organ Studies.

If sending money via an overseas bank, you may need two reference numbers for the BIOS account: IBAN: GB64NWBK52304405097169, and BIC: NWBKGB2L

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... and THANK YOU!

David Shepherd
Membership Secretary

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

We have finally reached the end of our 40th anniversary year, the climax of the celebrations being the three-day Conference at Cambridge and the launch of the new book *In Search of Organs*, both of which were fully reported in the last edition of the *Reporter*. BIOS is delighted that the new book has aroused great interest (and admiration) and that the initial level of sales has been most encouraging.

Another very significant and successful event - the OrganFest in Edinburgh - took place at the end of October. OrganFest was founded in 2014 as a joint enterprise between the Royal College of Organists, the Incorporated Association of Organists and BIOS, and the venture was in part intended to help bring our three organisations, each with their individual identity and distinctive role, into a closer working relationship. The first two OrganFests were held in Birmingham, the 2014 event being fronted by the IAO and the 2015 event by the RCO. In 2016 it was our turn to take the lead and we suggested that, rather than always identifying the event with one particular location, it would be good to move it around the country. The organ scene in Edinburgh, Glasgow and in Scotland generally is very vibrant and we have a very good representation of members from 'north of the Border', so it seemed time that we should take note of this by arranging a significant organ event in their part of the world.

An excellent event it was too, opening on the Friday evening with the memorable recital in St Giles Cathedral given by Ullrich Böhme, Organist of St Thomas' Church, Leipzig. This was a relatively rare appearance in our own island by J.S. Bach's current successor. It was most encouraging that, in addition to the pre-booked tickets, the event attracted such a good 'off the street' attendance on the night. There were four events on Saturday at St Stephen's, Stockbridge, St Mary's RC Cathedral, the Reid Hall and Old St Paul's Episcopal Church. For those able to stay on for Sunday morning worship we gathered at St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral to join in their Service, after which Donald Hunt kindly introduced and demonstrated the organ to us.

BIOS can justly feel proud of this year's OrganFest, which as well as being extremely enjoyable and rewarding for the good numbers that attended brought prominence in Scotland to the work of the three organisations that jointly sponsor the venture. Each year it is the host organisation that has the task of planning and arranging the events, locations, and all the logistical requirements (refreshments, designing and printing of programmes etc) and we owe a massive debt of gratitude to Richard Hobson, our Meetings Officer, for taking on this task in addition to all his work for the Cambridge Conference (just one month earlier), and our other events during the course of the year. We are extremely fortunate in having as our Meetings Officer someone who is so efficient and who manages to cope with all the

requirements in such a pleasant and unflappable way. Thank you, Richard!

As we move into 2017 BIOS still has plenty of challenges ahead. During the past two years we have sadly lost quite a number of members through death, many of them very significant figures in the organ world. While we are still attracting new members, and I extend a welcome to those who have just joined and who are listed in this edition, it remains important that we continue to find ways of attracting new members, particularly those from the younger generation.

Thanks to the generosity of the Cadbury Research Library, the Organ Archive continues to flourish and develop. There is still much work to be done in the detailed indexing of the contents and in rationalising storage in the most appropriate and efficient way (particularly drawings), as well as in the development of projects designed to make it easier for researchers to consult the collection online. We continue to be very well served at the Archive by our member Chris Kearn, who devotes an enormous amount of time to this, working as one of the Library's official Volunteers.

In terms of the NPOR, an important hurdle has been passed in that, due to our co-operation with the RCO and the continuing involvement of Mike Sayers, its founder, the hosting of the site has finally been put onto a permanent basis and no longer has to rely on the goodwill of a third party to guarantee it a free home. As Mike gradually reduces his voluntary involvement, the technical services that he has so generously provided over the years have been taken over by the firm that now hosts and manages the site, which again provides reassurance for long-term stability. Now that we have passed that hurdle, and the new NPOR Fund is helping to provide for the additional costs involved in professional hosting, management and technical services, our attention will be increasingly focussing on longer term ambitions for developing the content of the site, whether in simple terms such as increasing the number of photographs of organs included on the Register, or more complex and expensive challenges such as extending the coverage of the Sound Archive or the Directory of British Organ Builders.

In the past year BIOS has put increasing emphasis on its work and role as the Amenity Society for organs. We are not just a society which exists and meets for the enjoyment and benefit of our members. We exist for the Aims that you will find spelt out on the back cover of this, and every edition of the *Reporter*. We are a relatively small and specialised group of people, but what we take very seriously is our obligation as a charity 'To educate the public ...'. Our new members will find that what they have joined is a vibrant organisation, extremely active in the services it offers and provides. Whether through what is found on our Website, the NPOR or in the Archive, through our work in the Listing of historic organs, or our Casework in endeavouring to oppose bad practice in the treatment of historic organs (including

the role of the new Historic Organs at Risk Register), we are an organisation with a reputation for doing things. All of which relies on a number of key people who give generously in terms of time and commitment, as well as through their skills and knowledge. As we enter our fifth decade, and on behalf of our membership, I extend thanks to all of those at the heart of the operation who work so hard to make BIOS what it is today.

Alan Thurlow

LEGACIES

Over the years, BIOS has had cause to be grateful to a number of members, now deceased, who in their generosity have left us a legacy in their Will. Whilst good practice requires that charities cover the expenses of administration out of income provided by subscriptions, legacies often help to make possible the additional work necessary to develop and promote more effectively the aims and objectives of the organisation. For example, having the capital to embark on projects such as the printing of the Leffler book or the recent Freeman book *In Search of Organs*; to work on projects in the Organ Archive such as the digitisation of photographs (which made possible the reproduction of the Freeman photos) or the repair and conservation of historically important documents and drawings; or, looking to the future, having the resources to fund the upgrading of the static Directory of British Organ Builders (which only extends up until 1950) into a 'living' directory, fully up-to-date and technically capable of being updated annually; all such projects rely on the availability of funding in excess of that provided by subscriptions. If you are considering including charitable legacies in your Will, we ask you, please, to think of BIOS.

If you decide to remember BIOS, you may find it helpful to take this text with you to your appointment with your professional adviser. They can then use it to incorporate your specific legal instructions into your Will.

I give the sum of £ (or specify percentage of estate) to the British Institute of Organ Studies, registered address 10 Ridgeway Close, Reigate, Surrey RH2 0HT (registered charity 283936) for its general purposes and I declare that the receipt of the Honorary Treasurer or other proper Officer of the said British Institute of Organ Studies for the time being shall be a full and sufficient discharge for the said legacy.

If you wish your legacy to go for a specific purpose, for example, the maintenance of the National Pipe Organ Register, simply substitute the wording in place of 'its general purposes'.

AT/AM

FROM THE SECRETARY

BIOS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Saturday 29 April 2017 at St George the Martyr, Southwark, Borough High Street,
London SE1 1JA

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the British Institute of Organ Studies will take place on Saturday 29 April 2017 at St George the Martyr, Southwark, Borough High Street, London SE1 1JA at 14.00 hours.

The AGM forms part of the programme for the Day Conference at St George the Martyr, Southwark. All members whose subscriptions have been paid are entitled to attend the AGM (free of charge) and to vote, but the Council hope that many members will wish to include their attendance at the meeting as part of their support for the whole day event.

The following election of officers and ordinary members of Council will be held:

Treasurer
Secretary
Membership Secretary
Meetings Officer
Casework Officer
3 Ordinary Members of Council

Notes: Clause 7.4 of the Constitution states: 'Any two fully paid-up members of the Society shall be at liberty to nominate a member to serve on the Council'. Clause 7.5 states: 'the name of each member nominated under clause 7.4 shall be given to the Secretary not less than seven days before the date fixed for the Annual General Meeting, accompanied by the candidate's consent to serve, if elected'.

Nomination forms for officers and ordinary members of Council are obtainable from the Secretary (address as below).

Melvin Hughes



e-mail: secretary@bios.org.uk

Melvin Hughes
January 2017

Committee and Council meetings

The *Committee for the listing of historic organs* meets next on 10 January 2017. The next submission date for this committee is 4 April for the meeting on 16 May.

BIOS Council will meet next on 21 January 2017.

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

I'm delighted to welcome to BIOS four new members who have joined us since the publication of the *October Reporter*.

Mr Rhys Llywelyn Roberts:

Dr Christopher Storr KSG MA PhD FRSA:

Mrs Sally Wadsworth:

Mr Gerard Verloop:

I also regret to advise the death of Mr Christopher Jackson of Quebec, who joined BIOS in 2015.

David Shepherd.

NEWS

Martin Goetze Memorial Fund

When Martin agreed to stand for the Board of the IBO his main motivation was his increasing concern about the loss of craft skills in the trade, and especially in the skills required for classical organ building. When he was chosen to be President, he wanted to make a training programme one of the goals of his period of office. It would have been a challenging exercise in any case, but it was cruel that he had an accident and was diagnosed with cancer at the start of his second term as President.

When he died last year, his partner Margaret wanted to set up a fund to help young organ builders with their toolkit, to be awarded to the best young organ builder at what it is hoped will be a course in the School of Musical Instrument Making at Newark College. So far we have a bit more than £5,000, none of which has been

allocated yet. Thanks partly to the civil service in Whitehall repeatedly moving the goalposts, and partly because of the inherent difficulty of setting up a scheme in a small and varied industry, the course has not yet been set up, but it is still probable that it will, thanks to the amazing persistence of Geoff MacMahon for the IBO. One of the advantages of Brexit is that the government has suddenly become aware of the necessity of making our industries competitive in the world. Amazing.

If readers wish to contribute, they should send payment via Goetze and Gwynn with cheques payable to 'Martin Goetze Memorial Fund'. The fund is administered from the office of Goetze and Gwynn, with our administrator Emma Hagen looking after the bank account. When the course is up and running, the award will be made through the IBO. If it fails to come about, we will have to find another way to make an annual award within the trade, again through the IBO.

If readers have not come across it yet, I put a portrait of Martin online at <http://www.goetzegwynn.co.uk/martin-goetze/> including his approach to training.

DG

Richard Bridge bursary for organ builders

The Friends of Christ Church Spitalfields will award a grant of up to £2,500 to support a period of workshop training and/or academic research related to any practical aspect of organ building. It is intended to contribute to the cost of travel, subsistence and any fees and may be combined with any other awards for similar purposes.

The annual travel bursary supports and encourages the specialised work of organ building. It was established by the Friends to celebrate the completion in 2015 of the restoration of the 1735 Richard Bridge organ.

Candidates must be aged 18 or over. They should either be based in the UK and wish to study overseas, or be from abroad and want to travel to the UK. Application form from www.christchurchspitalfields.org Closing date 31 March 2017.

MEETING REPORT

OrganFest 2017

The third OrganFest, promoted by BIOS, the RCO and the IAO took place in Edinburgh from 28th – 30th October 2016 in partnership with the Edinburgh Society of Organists.

Spread over three days, the programme opened on the Friday evening with a celebrity recital by Ullrich Böhme, organist of St Thomas' Leipzig, on the 1992 Rieger organ at St Giles' Cathedral. This was a fascinating experience. The programme included music by Buxtehude, J.S.Bach (*Partita O Gott, du frommer Gott*, Dorian Toccata and Fugue and F major Toccata and Fugue), Mendelssohn's Sixth Sonata, Krebs and Reger. The organ is big and bold, though not without more subtle colours appropriate for romantic music, but very much of its time and rather different, I suspect, to the kind of organ Rieger are building today, a mere 25 years later. The playing was very accurate, generally fast and full of energy, and, like the organ, of its time and place – though here we were in East Germany before the wall came down.

Saturday morning began at St Stephen's, Stockbridge, close to the city centre in the New Town, and completed in 1828. Now redundant, the church is privately owned, though used for community events. Its future is uncertain, though the organ is maintained and its importance is recognised with the ESO keeping a close eye on it. Installed by Henry Willis in 1880, it has three manuals and thirty-one stops and is virtually unaltered. The organ is in its original position but a floor has been installed at gallery level so it speaks into a rather smaller space now, and its impact is considerable. City and University Organist John Kitchen made the first of three Saturday appearances in a programme of music by Peace (as played at the opening recital in 1880), Parry, Smart, Sullivan, Cecilia McDowall, Duruflé and Guilmant. The organ is magnificent – a rare (if a little frail) unaltered example of Willis' work with its original actions, soundboards, console and pipework all in place.

We then moved on to the Metropolitan Cathedral for presentations by the various societies involved in the organisation of OrganFest, and a lecture by Dr Alan Thurlow, Chairman of BIOS, on the new Organs at Risk Register, and BIOS' work on listing and protecting historic organs. Lunch was followed by an opportunity to hear the Matthew Copley organ in the Cathedral played by Simon Nieminski. The instrument includes a significant amount of pipework rescued from the 1882 Thomas Wilkinson organ built for the Public Hall, Preston. This organ was an early concern for BIOS, and a paper on it by Gerry Sumner was published in the first BIOS Journal in 1977. It was eventually dismantled and stored before the Public Hall was demolished to make way for a road scheme (one likes to think that might not happen today ...), but a new home for the organ in its original form could not be found. We must be grateful that something of its builder's masterpiece has survived.

The afternoon began in the Reid Hall of Edinburgh University with a concert by the Kellie Consort, directed by Tom Wilkinson with John Kitchen playing the 1978 Ahrend organ, the installation of which was masterminded by the late Peter Williams. Organ Concertos by Stanley and Handel framed the programme with string pieces by Humphrey and Boyce, and organ solos by Purcell, Scheidt and

Michael Praetorius. A break for tea and a walk to Old St Paul's Episcopal Church was followed by the final event of the day – Evensong and Benediction sung by the Old St Paul's Choir directed and accompanied by John Kitchen and Calum Robertson. Another Willis organ (1888), since rebuilt by Henry II and IV and Nicholson accompanied the fine choir in music by Stanford, Kitchen and J.H.Roman.

For those who could stay, the final instalment was the Sunday Eucharist at St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral. The Cathedral Choir was directed by Duncan Ferguson and accompanied by Donald Hunt in music by Mozart and Victoria with the Reger Introduction and Passacaglia in D minor as the voluntary. After the service we were introduced to the fine Willis/Harrison instrument which was further demonstrated in music by Elgar, Bach and Duruflé.

OrganFest has, perhaps, yet to establish itself in the annual calendar of organ events, and fewer than was hoped made the pilgrimage north to sample some of the considerable organ delights of the Scottish capital. However, we were well supported by those who live in Scotland (especially at the Friday evening concert), and all who made it are enormously grateful to the organisers, performers and custodians of the organs for making it possible, particularly John Kitchen, and Michael Harris, Organist of St Giles' Cathedral and President of the Edinburgh Society of Organists.



John Kitchen at the console of the organ in St Stephen's, Stockbridge

(Photo © Alan Taylor)

'THE ONLY ONE OF ITS KIND IN ENGLAND'

WILLIAM MCVICKER

As the restoration of the magnificent 1735 Richard Bridge organ entered its final stages, one puzzling detail remained unsolved. The *Leffler Manuscript* recorded that the Choir Organ included a stop apparently labelled 'Flute to C Faut'. The compiler of the manuscript, Henry Leffler, was said to be 'organist of the Collegiate Church of St Katherine's by the Tower from the close of the eighteenth century to 1819'. He saw the Spitalfields organ in 1804 and recorded the list of stops. But what was this 'Flute to C Faut'? Once restoration was under way it had become clear that the pipes had been located on the Choir Organ soundboard next to the reeds, suggesting that it was a solo stop with a short compass – the pipes only commencing from tenor c (hence 'C Faut').

Much discussion ensued between the organ builder and consultants, who diligently searched through the surviving documentary evidence in order to attempt to put together the jigsaw pieces. Research revealed that there was nothing like this stop known in English organs before the nineteenth century. The organ builders commissioned a set of pipes which were duly installed in the instrument. A good deal of time was spent listening to these pipes and experimenting with the scale and treatment of them to see if a satisfactory answer could be reached. All agreed that we had not found the solution.

Out of the blue, researcher Paul Tindall came across a note in Sir John Hawkins's *General history of the science and practice of music*, a five-volume history of music, published in London in 1776. In volume 2, on page 615, there was a cryptic footnote:

In the organ of Spitalfields church, made by Bridge, is a stop which he improperly, as it would seem, called a Quintadena, the pitch of it being only a fifth above the diapason. However, it is the only one of its kind in England.

After further excited discussion, and in the absence of additional evidence, the consultants and organ builder agreed that this probably referred to the 'Flute to C Faut'.

But what exactly is a quintadena, and what precedents were there for its inclusion in the restoration of the Bridge organ? This type of stop was common in Europe – especially in Dutch organs of a similar (and earlier) period, but, as Hawkins recorded, it was 'the only one of its kind'. It is constructed with the mouth of the pipe deliberately kept low in order to encourage the so-called 'twelfth', the second component in the harmonic series. The result is a tone in which the fundamental note is eroded at the expense of developing this harmonic. There are effectively two

pronounced pitches in the sound of each pipe and the sound is both quirky and intriguing to the ear; as Helmholtz said: 'these narrow pipes let the twelfth be distinctly heard at the same time as the prime tone; and have hence been called Quintaten (quintam tenentes)'. Documentary evidence suggests that the Dutch organ builder 'Father' Bernard Smith had installed such a stop at St Paul's Cathedral in the Chayre Organ in 1695-7. The stop did not survive subsequent rebuilding work.

In *A Complete Treatise on the Organ* (London, 1794, p.5), Jonas Blewitt says that 'There were many other stops used by the ancient builders, which, experience having dictated their bad effect, are now, by the moderns, entirely omitted. Among these, I will just mention that the Quinterdeen was a fifth above the diapasons ...'. This suggests that by the end of the eighteenth century these stops had completely fallen from favour.



Quintadena pipes with soldered tops and tuning ears. Photo: SRB Humphreys © 2016

We can't be certain that this was the stop which Leffler noted in his manuscript – but the evidence suggests that it might well have been. As a result, a new quintadena rank has been commissioned from William Drake Ltd and installed in place of the 'Flute to C Faut'. On Thursday 4 February last year a group assembled in Christ Church to hear the finished pipes and to marvel at this stop's extraordinary contribution to the possible combinations. The curious sound works well as a gentle solo colour and combines well with a remarkable number of stops in the Choir Organ, adding an unusual but balanced nuance to the registrations.

One mystery remains: why might Bridge have included such a Dutch stop in an organ which seems so overtly to point to an otherwise pronouncedly French character? The answer to this is probably that this magnificent instrument was Bridge's magnum opus and the organ builder was probably determined to match the number of ranks in other large organs in England, such as Harris's instrument constructed in 1710 at Salisbury Cathedral. Larger instruments from this period often included fancy stops – why should Richard Bridge have not tried his hand at such an effect, in an organ designed to be filled with an extraordinary range of tonal colours?

This article first appeared in the newsletter of the Friends of Christ Church, Spitalfields, and is reproduced with their permission and after revision by the author.

VINCENT WILLIS – A FAMILY PERSPECTIVE

JOHN BUDGEN

About twenty years ago, John Wildash, a gentlemen living in a village near me, on learning of my connection with the organ trade, entrusted to me a collection of letters from Esther (Tessie), Vincent Willis's eldest daughter. Along with these letters, of which many were of purely domestic interest, Mr Wildash having been a next-door neighbour of the Willis family in Brentford, was an article by Wildash and his brother reprinted from the Old Merchant Taylors' magazine. (This, curiously, gives Vincent Willis's dates as 1858–63, and those of Henry, his younger brother, as 1862–67, as well as attributing to Willis the Ely organ.)

Esther, in a letter of 1978, refers to the 'Litchfield' organ as the first of Willis's more important works, which is surprising considering how much technical grasp is revealed in a lengthy article entitled 'Recollections of my Father'. Apparently she did not know the story of Gloucester for which Willis 'received £500 and was presumptuous enough to marry'. The blame lies with 'our sister-in-law's brother who happens to live nearby and told us so'.

Another item with the letters is a small brochure advertising 'Automatic Pipe Organs, a new type without bellows'. It will be remembered that Tessie had a great reputation for cutting player rolls. Although the brochure is quite detailed, it does not say how the wind pressure is regulated.

The quoted letters give an insight into the differences which arose between Vincent and his father and, worse, between the two brothers.

Clapton, London E5, 14 June '66.

Dear John,

Ida [the next sister] sent me your note drawing attention to the memorial service for our cousin [Henry III] in case we wished to attend, and she asked me to enlighten you on some family history which we could not speak of when your family and ourselves were neighbours in Brentford over fifty years ago. I think you will understand from the following narrative why we would have no wish to attend that service.

Our grandfather, 'Old man' Henry Willis, had an intolerant disposition as shown in the following story: Mr. Thomas Casson, the father of Sir Lewis, had an organ building business in the 1890's entitled the Positive Organ Co., and his son worked with him until he left to begin his acting career. Mr. Casson became friendly with Father and sometimes visited the 'Rotunda' factory in Camden Town, when Father would show him around. The Old Man would keep out of the way on these occasions, and after the visitor had

gone would remark to Father "Vin, I can't think what you see in that man!" Twenty years later old Mr. Casson died while walking with Father to Brentford railway station, after visiting our own organ works nearby.

On nearing 80 years of age the Old Man would come into the Rotunda and would hold up Father's management, his ideas being considered 'too new-fangled'. These delays and uncertainties came at last to have a harmful effect on the business and on Father's health so rather than quarrel he asked to resign from the partnership, mainly in order to take up experimental work, and he left his younger brother Henry [Harry] to carry on for the Old Man.

But Harry was not the practical man that Father was, and under his management, in spite of a well-trained staff, the big organ for the Colston Hall, Bristol, was a 'flop'. One of his sisters, our Aunt Kate, reported the Old Man declaring in exasperation "If I have another two years I'll twist him out and ask Vin to come back". It was Aunt Kate who also told of the fit of exasperation which caused his Father's death when he was recovering from pneumonia.

As you may know, although he had a busy life erecting organs as far apart as North Scotland and Devonshire, Father was a mild little man, 'kindly and reticent' as an obituary described him thirty years later. But this was hopeless to cope with what followed the Old Man's death at the turn of the century. [Vincent had left the firm in 1895.] You may imagine the depth of malice in Harry towards Father. When an old family friend, a Mr. Snelgrove, suggested that the two brothers should work together again, Harry's retort was "Vincent's out, we'll keep him out!". Anyhow, Father could never have worked with him, the burden would have been intolerable. Harry had the firm placed under the protection of Chancery, and Father's share of the capital was immobilised for several years.

With all the means he could realize outside the old firm, Father had already bought the old Wesleyan Chapel in Brentford High Street. But setting it up as an organ factory had left him without a private income. Then came the warning from a legal friend: Old Henry Willis's solicitors with whom Father was still in contact as executor of his Father's estate, and Harry's own solicitors, were under strong suspicion of collusion to bring a legal action against Father if he should advertise for work.

So we had to live on the few orders passed to us privately, mostly for export organ pipes, for which we had to thank Mr. Carlton C. Michell, an American enthusiast, who had settled in a factory in Wakefield to produce his 'Multum in Parvo' chamber organ. The one and only instrument Father erected during these years, assisted by our brothers and a young partner, was a chamber organ for a Mr. Sykes, of 'Greystoke', Canford Cliffs, Bournemouth.

Father was also friendly with Mr. Robert Hunter, and Mr. T.C. Lewis, both with factories in South London. Mr. Lewis knew Mr. Bentley, the architect of Westminster Cathedral. A Mr. Hinton, who wrote books on the organ, often visited our works.

Two brothers and the partner were killed in the 1914 war, and our surviving eldest

brother [Henry Vincent] had to sell the factory. In the last half hour of the sale our cousin arrived, introduced himself, and said he had only just heard of it. After looking round he picked up an organ pipe disdainfully between finger and thumb, and remarked to a friend loud enough for our brother to hear "There's nothing in him!". However, the small exhibition organ, embodying a new principle, was knocked down to him 'for a song'.

Father suffered much with chronic bronchitis in his later years – due to metal dust drawn into the lungs while voicing pipes.

The letter continues with a reference to the mercury cup contacts used at Canterbury, and some details about family finances, concluding with the prospect of moving to be near Ida and Enid in Worthing.

35 Belsize Road, Worthing, BN11 4RE, 27/4/78

Dear John

I have been searching among old papers with no result at all except this brochure about Litchfield Cathedral [mentioned above].

No wonder our Father had nothing to tell us about the organs he attended all over the country while his management existed, until the Old Man's crass intransigence came on to 'upset the boat'.

We lived in direst poverty from then until the 1914 war, with no income, 'legal blockage' by Chancery, and two hostile firms of solicitors making a fat meal on the old firm.

The letter continues with a visit to Shoreditch church where 'Old Henry' played some of the services, but found it had been destroyed in the war. I heard a week ago that St. Giles Cripplegate had received a Willis organ from another church in South London. I have often felt amazed that St. Giles survived in this large area of devastation.

(This is no doubt the fact that two Willis reeds which came from St. Luke's, Old Street were used in the Mander organ.)

The 'Recollections' runs to 18 pages, and the letters to a lot of family news, and do reveal a large number of spinsters in the Willis family. This is perhaps largely because that generation suffered from the loss of young men in the war, which deprived a great deal of women of the opportunity of marriage. But the letters present a sad evidence of what can go wrong in a family and how this can impinge on their finances.

PIÈCE D'ORGUE BWV 572

JAMES DALTON

I learnt this piece at school, having no worries about date and place of composition, source of the music, registration, use of the pedals, language of the title and sections of the work, or anything else that might detract from the impression of the wonderful suspensions and irresistible momentum of the central section.

But now, in this analytical age, one should consider these points and see how they affect one's view of the work. Some of the points mentioned are probably never going to be answered; the first of these is the date of composition. Writers have tended to assign such an exuberant work to Bach's early years, and Schmieder in the BWV dates it from Bach's time at Arnstadt. He is probably right, but no source earlier than 1713 has yet been discovered; this copy was made by Johann Gottfried Walther, Bach's cousin and colleague in Weimar. It has the French title, and the sections have headings in French (including 'gaïement' for 'gravement'). A good number of copies from the eighteenth century survive, but it seems that the title *Fantasia* in G first appeared in the Peters edition of 1844. Actually, 'fantasia' is not such a bad title; it is defined in the Oxford Dictionary of English (2006) as 'a musical composition with a free form and often an improvisatory style'.

Considering the registration, players and writers are broadly agreed that vigorous pleno registrations are desirable, but whether the French titles indicate *plein jeu* or *grand jeu* arrangements is not indicated. What may be implied, through the direction *P.* at bar 176 of the *Gravement*, counting from the beginning where it goes in to six parts, is that until this point the section may be for manuals only. This could be so, and we are told that Bach had extremely large hands; yet the piece is not fugal, and problems of invertibility do not arise. The low B in bar 94 may have crept in during preparation of the piece on a domestic harpsichord.

In the final section, use of the pedals is unavoidable, although not marked, and one presumes that the *Lentement* marking applies to the rate of harmonic change, rather than the manual flourishes. Again, some fairly brilliant registration could be called for, yet it can be refreshing to hear the section with restrained registration. André Marchal played it gently, and I once heard Anton Heiller play similarly, returning to *organo pleno* at the Pedal D at bar 200.

While critical writings on BWV 572 have not been very prolific in the past, there are now new editions and commentaries which can be very valuable. I have been working from the edition of Kenneth Gilbert published by L'Oiseau-Lyre, which contains in the Introduction several references to eg the *Neue Bach Ausgabe* and its *Kritischer Bericht*. And of course now there are even newer editions ...

NEW LIGHT ON THE EARLY DAYS OF WILLIAM HILL

ROBERT PACEY

William Hill was born in Spilsbury, Lincolnshire in 1789, the eighth child of yeomen farmers and it has always been a mystery how or why he became an organ builder and where he learned his trade. Since I have retired and gone back to live in Lincolnshire, not far from Spilsbury, I have been very interested in how and why this boy, who is next heard of in London in about 1815, working for Thomas Elliott, had arrived there. The obituary below gives some clues. Spilsbury at that time was a small market town and the church had no organ until Hill built one there, largely at his own expense, in 1840. The usual obituaries give no help, but the information in the obituary in the local newspaper must have been gathered from someone who knew him in his boyhood or even from a member of the family who still lived there at that time.

The Lincolnshire Chronicle, Friday 23 December 1870

'We have to record the death of a respected native of Spilsbury and schoolfellow of Franklin, Mr William Hill, of the firm of W. Hill and Son, London, organ builders. The youngest son of a large family, he left his native town at an early age for London, and entered the service of Mr. Elliott the successor of the celebrated Snetzler, where his inventive genius as a mechanician and integrity of character were duly appreciated, and eventually led to that world-wide reputation which the house of which he was the honoured head enjoyed. Constantly employed in great works from the organ in York Minster and Birmingham Town Hall 40 years ago, down to the important one now in progress for Melbourne Town Hall, upon which he was engaged with his old artistic fervour until a few weeks ago, his activity was indomitable, while his honourable and straightforward character had endeared him to a large circle of friends and employees who will long lament the loss of so true an artist and a good man. He had just entered his 82nd year.'

His schoolmate, Sir John Franklin the polar explorer is much better documented, with several biographies and newspaper articles, which help to fill in more details and dates for William Hill's early days. John Franklin was a few years older than William, and was born in Spilsbury in 1786 and was sent to Louth Grammar School along with William Hill about 1797. The school was, and still is a very academic, selective Grammar school, and at that time was regularly sending boys to Oxford and Cambridge, mainly sons of local clergy. The boys would both have been boarders, as Louth is 25 miles away from Spilsby on the far side of the wolds. William would have been about ten years old at that time. Two years later his father died. The family owned some land and also leased land from the Duke of Ancaster of Grimsthorpe castle, who owned most of the area, and the Hill family were quite

prosperous and supported William for the next few years. As boarders the boys would have been taken to church in Louth on Sundays, and there was an organ there. It was built by Thomas Haxby of York in 1769. The church is large and the organ stood on a gallery at the west end. The organist's contract required him to pay for repairs and tuning and presumably this would have been done by Haxby until his death in 1796.

A third, swell, manual was added to the Louth organ in 1819 by Alexander Buckingham, who before setting up on his own had worked for Elliott. One wonders if Elliott tuned the organ after Haxby's death in 1796 or if Buckingham did it while working for Elliott, and William Hill, who was obviously interested in music met one or other of them there and showed an interest in organ building. The usual age for apprenticeships was 14 or 16, so we can deduce that William Hill would have left for London sometime around 1803 or 1805.

The Hill family still owned land in Spilsby in the later nineteenth century and there is a stained glass window in the church commemorating William. His organ, twice rebuilt, is still in the church.

NEW LIGHT ON 'FATHER' SMITH AND THE ORGAN OF CHRIST CHURCH, DUBLIN

DOMINIC GWYNN

About ten years ago I followed up a clue handed over by Bernard Edmonds many years ago, and spent a week in the National Archives at Kew, deciphering the scrawl of a Chancery suit, C24/1207/101 Smith v. Aedes Christi. Bernard Smith claimed that he had made an organ, indeed two organs, for the Dean and Chapter of Christ Church Cathedral Dublin, over five years, but that by 1697 it had become obvious that the Dean had become impatient with Smith, or Smith had become impatient with the Dean. A new organ had been ordered from Renatus Harris, and the Dean was trying to recover his advance payments. In the event Smith suffered damage to the two organs while they were set up in the vacant Roman Catholic Chapel in Whitehall Palace, during the fire which destroyed much of the Palace, as the result of an opportunistic riot by an anti-Papist mob. Smith's workmen had only saved the organs from complete destruction by throwing parts out of the windows.

People turned to the court of Chancery because it was an equity court, promising a merciful justice not bound by the strict rules of the common law courts. The procedure was quite different, and involved the gathering of written pleadings and evidence, with a list of questions drawn up by both sides for their own witnesses and neutral men of substance to answer. I was fortunate in finding the Dean's side of the argument at C24 1206 27, including Renatus Harris as one of the witnesses, playing

the innocent. So once the appalling handwriting had been deciphered, and the very repetitious accounts transcribed, mostly to be ignored, the story was interesting. I have used the evidence in a number of ways, including a history of the organs at Christ Church Oxford, which made an offer for one for the organs.

Two years ago I was asked to read an article about Smith's organ for Christ Church Dublin, by Cherryl Duncan, who had found the case in the records of the Court of the Kings Bench, also at Kew. Whereas I had deciphered difficult handwriting, Cherryl had had to translate the Court proceedings from Latin. Since she had already written an article (for the *Journal of the Society of Musicology of Ireland*), and I wasn't intending to focus on this single story, I handed over my transcriptions. Cherryl filled out her article, and did an amazing job of making sense of this excessively long-winded and confusing material. There is overlapping information between the two cases, but a large number of gaps in the story were filled. Neither of the organs went to Oxford (though Smith must have made another identical one at the same time), but to Great St Mary's in Cambridge, and to St Michael Barbados.

At Christopher Hogwood's memorial at St George's Hanover Square, two years ago, I met Cherryl, and we excitedly exchanged notes. Her article is available online: Cherryl Duncan New Light on 'Father' Smith and the Organ of Christ Church, Dublin in the *Journal of the Society of Musicology in Ireland* vol 10 pp23-45 (2014-5) available at:

<http://musicologyireland.com/jsmi/index.php/journal/article/view/127/136>

If people are interested and have difficulty getting access to it, please get in touch with me at dominicgwynn12@gmail.com which is my new e mail address or at 01909 485635.

JOURNAL WATCH

An occasional listing of articles of interest in the wider musical press.

Jürgensen, Frauke (2015) Partial signatures as transmitted in the Buxheim Organ Book and its concordances. *Early Music*, 43, (4), 597-609.

Liern, V. (2015) On the construction and exchangeability of tuning systems. *Journal of Mathematics and Music* 9, (3), 197-213.

Barbieri, P. (2016) Roman claviorgans and 'table organs with a spinetta on top', 1567-1753. *Early Music* 44, (3), 395-416.

Farabegoli, G. (2016) Barbieri's Automatic Electric Organ at Aielli. *Galpin Society Journal* LXIX, 59-71.

REVIEWS

Guidance for reviewers

BIOS Journal and Reporter editors are grateful to BIOS members (and others) who contribute reviews for these publications. To avoid any embarrassment, for example by two reviews of the same publication being produced, reviewers are asked to follow the simple guidance below. It is the decision of the editors of the Journal/Reporter and the Review Editor where a review appears.

- Check with the Review Editor if the title is already under review, and confirm that a review by BIOS is appropriate.
- There is a preference for reviews of say 500 words or so, rather than a longer review article. If a publication strongly recommends itself for a longer piece agree this in advance with the Review Editor.
- Priority will be given to material that is most closely related to the aims of BIOS.
- Each review should include bibliographical data. For books the author's full name, title, date and place of publication, ISBN, extent and retail price. An analogous approach should be taken to printed music and CDs.

Dr Katie Pardee *Publications Officer*

Dr David S Knight *Review Editor* [REDACTED]
email: david.knight@smvl.org.uk

Rocco Rodio: *Libro di Ricercate Napoli 1575*

Editor: Armanda Carideo

Publisher: Il Levante Libreria Editrice TA29

Available from: www.illevante-libreria.it

This is a new modern edition of the *Libro di Ricercate* by Rocco Rodio, of whose birth and death dates no firm information is available, the editor postulating the composer's lifespan as ca. 1530/40 to post 1615 (ie a contemporary of the Venetian Claudio Merulo). This modern edition, which retains the original note values, supersedes the partial edition by Kastner of 1958, which omitted the plainchant settings, and an edition by Tasini in 2007. This collection by Rodio, published some 10 years before the arrival in Naples of the influential de Macque, is considered to

be the first printed edition of keyboard music in score, such a presentation being adopted in the two volumes of pieces published by both Trabaci (1603 and 1615) and Mayone (1603 and 1615) which also included Toccatas, and of the Versetti published by Antonio Valente in 1580 (his *Intavolatura di Cimbalo* of 1576 was published in a number tablature format). It should not be forgotten that the Roman Frescobaldi published only his two books of Toccatas in tablature format.

The volume contains only nine pieces, comprising five Ricercate, three plainchant settings and a piece based on the syllables La mi re fa mi re (also known as *Il Re di Spagna*). The first Ricercata contains three subjects, the second is monothematic, its theme being found in other pieces from Italy as well as Spain, the third Ricercata is polythematic, the fourth works out two subjects, the second appearing as a countersubject in the second bar, and the final Ricercata is monothematic. Length varies from 47 double bars to 92. After progressing mainly in crotchets with a few quaver passages the first Ricercata closes with a burst of semiquaver figures of an ascending fifth passing from part to part and hand to hand. The third Ricercata contains a few semiquaver ornamental figures and the fourth piece is the only one with a triple time section, which closes it. The plainchant settings are on *Iste Confessor*, *Ave Maris Stella* and *Salve Regina*, and each one presents the chant in breves in the tenor, the final piece likewise presents the theme in the tenor.

The edition is clearly printed with six systems to a page, the editorial suggestions in the score being clearly indicated with lozenge-shaped notes. The introduction contains a detailed biography, a description of the source and a critical commentary outlining the editor's transcription policy. As with many of Carideo's editions for this publisher, the volume presents the text in an 'intabulated' form, so that the contrapuntal complexity of the original with its many part crossings is not apparent, the notes being printed as one would play them, and the critical commentary does not list these. Today's player will need to use the pedals in some places where wide intervals, including those readily playable on a short octave instrument, occur (a further performance option would be the harp, mentioned in title pages of several prints). Application of accidentals and of ornaments will require a personal solution. Of great value is the inclusion in this volume of a facsimile of the only known copy of the original print, which will repay consultation. The Ricercate will probably be more attractive to today's players interested in this form, but careful study of the plainchant settings will reveal the composer rising above the merely academic.

John Collins

The Organ at European Courts

Francesco Cera (67:41)

Brilliant Classics 95240 £7.00. Available from <http://www.prestoclassical.co.uk>

For this recording Francesco Cera has chosen a most intriguing instrument, a positive organ dated 1772, which is almost certainly of Neapolitan provenance and was restored in 2012. It is based on 4ft pitch and unusually has both a Principale and a Flauto at this pitch, with the latter borrowing from the Principale for its bottom two octaves. It has only two other stops, a Duodecima at 1½ ft and a Decimaquinta at 1ft. Pitch is A = 412 and the temperament is a modified ¼ comma meantone.

Recorded in the refectory of the Franciscan Convent, Lustra Cilento, the CD contains 22 tracks by 13 composers (two of whom are 'anonymous'), with Italy (nine pieces), Spain (three pieces), Germany (three pieces), England (three pieces) and France (four pieces) being represented. The genres included cover primarily the secular repertoire of dances and variations with three Canzona settings, with one 'learned' contrapuntal piece, a Ricercar by Frescobaldi, being included. The pieces are taken from a mixture of printed and manuscript sources, and cover some 150 years. The earliest piece is taken from Antico's book of Frottole printed in 1517, the latest is from an autograph manuscript source by Bernardo Pasquini in the late seventeenth century.

Most of the tracks, particularly the dances, are on the short side, with the Allemanda and variations by Samuel Scheidt based on the Dutch tune *Brunsmedelijn* being by far the longest, and technically most demanding, weighing in at almost nine minutes. Other longer tracks of around four to five minutes include the Canzon Francesa *Qui la dira* by Andrea Gabrieli, the Ricercar *Quarto sopra mi re a mi* by Frescobaldi, the *Partite di Bergamasca* by Bernardo Pasquini, the *Galliarda in D minor* by Scheidemann and Hugh Aston's *Hornepype*.

The booklet contains an informative background to the small organs to be found in noble mansions and private chapels, many being based on stops of 4ft pitch. Also included is an overview of the secular repertoire of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and a brief note on some, but unfortunately not all, of the pieces performed. There is a full description of the organ with two photos.

As we have come to expect from Francesco Cera, the playing is clearly articulated, with creatively applied ornamentation. The variety of compositional styles from across Europe allied to the imaginative use of what on paper appears a limited tonal palette makes this CD a listening experience which demonstrates the unexpected versatility of the instrument. It is an extremely valuable recording of this type of instrument; if it encourages players to explore the potential of playing pieces which are still sometimes regarded as being exclusively for performance on stringed keyboard instruments on the organ using appropriate colours, it will have achieved much.

John Collins

BOOKING FORM
BRITISH INSTITUTE OF ORGAN STUDIES DAY CONFERENCE

BERNARD EDMONDS RESEARCH CONFERENCE 2017
Barber Institute, University of Birmingham

Saturday 18th February 2017 10.30 for 11.00

Please reserve a place for the BIOS Day Conference in Birmingham for £25.00 (including lunch), or book online on the BIOS website

Cheques should be payable to 'BIOS'.

Please fill in a separate booking form, or photocopy, for each person.

Name

Address

Post Code

tel: (daytime) (evening)

tel: (mobile)

e-mail

Please note any dietary requirements

Acknowledgements will be sent by e-mail. If you do not have an e-mail address, and require an acknowledgement, please send a SAE with your booking form.

Please return this booking form (or a photocopy) to:



BOOKING FORM
BRITISH INSTITUTE OF ORGAN STUDIES DAY CONFERENCE &
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Saturday 29th April 2017 10.30 for 11.00

St George the Martyr, Borough High Street, Southwark, London SE1 1JA

Please reserve a place for the BIOS Day Conference and AGM for £25.00 (including lunch), or book online on the BIOS website.

Cheques should be payable to 'BIOS'.

Please fill in a separate booking form, or photocopy, for each person.

Name

Address

.....

Post Code

tel: (daytime) (evening)

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e-mail

Please note any dietary requirements

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Please return this booking form (or a photocopy) to:



FORTHCOMING BIOS MEETINGS

Saturday February 18th 2017 10.30 for 11.00

**Barber Institute of Fine Arts, University of Birmingham
Bernard Edmonds Research Conference**

Papers to include:

Maximillian Elliott

A 'notorious and well-documented monstrosity': the 1823 rebuild of the York Minster organ by John Ward

David Shuker

The Elusive Reverend Mr Olive, Architect of Samuel Green's Organ Cases at Canterbury and Rochester

John Norman

How electricity gradually replaced pneumatics in key actions.

Saturday April 29th 10.30 for 11.00

**AGM and day conference at St George the Martyr, Borough High Street,
Southwark, London SE1 1JA**

An organ originally built by Jordan in 1720, (his workshop was nearby), many subsequent rebuilds. The church is launching an appeal to restore and reconstruct the organ.

Speakers to include Dominic Gwynn and local historians.

The AGM will take place at 2pm (see separate notice).

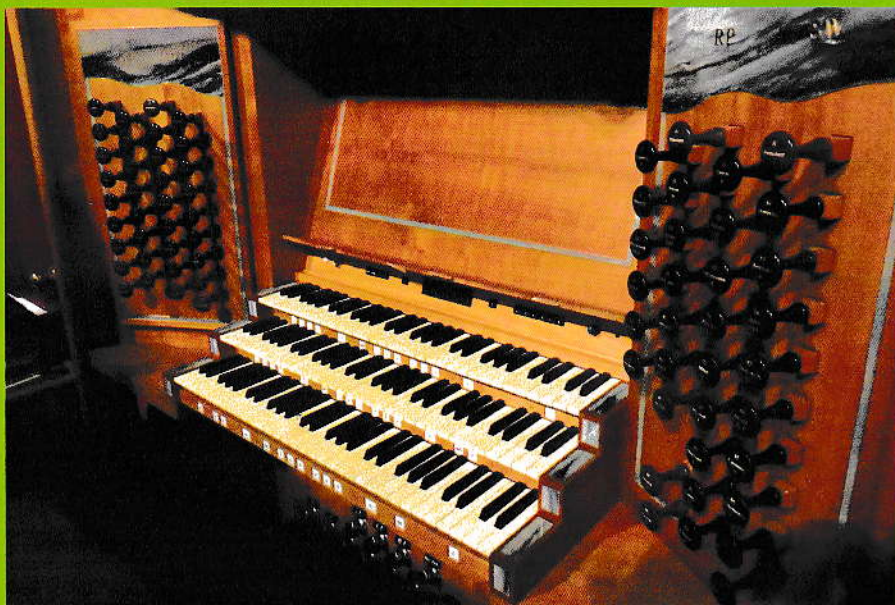
Saturday July 8th 2017 10.30 for 11.00

Day Conference at St Mary's Church, Bleasby, Nottinghamshire

'A most elegant and beautiful instrument' – John Marsh's house organ
'rediscovered'

Further details will be posted on the BIOS website as they become available.
Bookings can be made on-line or on the forms published in the *Reporter*.

The Meetings Officer welcomes proposals for day events at any time.



AIMS OF BIOS

To promote objective, scholarly research into the history of the organ and its music in all its aspects, and, in particular, into the organ and its music in Britain.

To conserve the sources and materials for the history of the organ in Britain, and to make them accessible to scholars.

To work for the preservation, and where necessary, the faithful restoration of historic organs in Britain.

To encourage an exchange of scholarship with similar bodies and individuals abroad, and to promote, in Britain, a greater appreciation of historical overseas schools of organ-building.