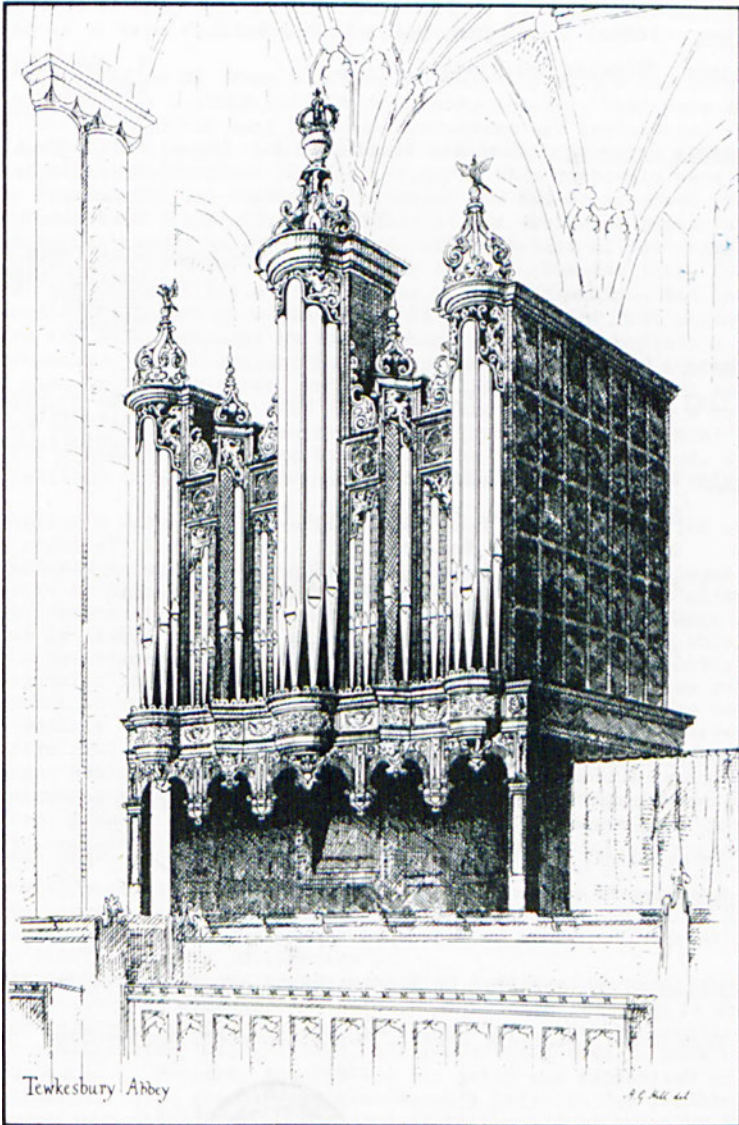


BIOS Reporter



Volume one, no. 3 (July 1977)

The British Institute of Organ Studies (BIOS)

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The BIOS Reporter is edited by Nicholas Thistlethwaite, who will be pleased to receive suitable material for inclusion, and suggestions concerning its form; correspondence arising from the Notes and Queries column should be sent to the Reverend B,B.Edmonds, at:

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[Redacted]



Editorial

In our last issue we commenced a discussion of the working of the Faculty procaedure in the Church of England as it effects work on organs. Despite deficiencies in the system (upon some of which we commented) a recent Judgement in the court of the Chancellor of Southwark diocese has encouraged us to hope that matters are improving.

Briefly, the organ in St. Mary's Balham was built by Hill & Son in 1872; subsequent work this century left it reasonably intact. Last year the organist took it into his head that the instrument was inadequate, and acquired a Nicholson organ with a view to "the cannibalisation of that organ in order to reconstruct the Hill organ". When proposals were submitted to it, the DAC was unable to recommend the course proposed (being, in the Chancellor's judgement, unconvinced of the merits of producing so ambitious an instrument as was envisaged, and uncertain of the organ builder's capacity to carry through so big a job). Despite this, four members of the church filed a petition for grant of faculty. But then, before consideration had been given to this petition, the Hill organ was dismantled and work commenced on the original scheme for conflating the two instruments. This continued in spite of a warning issued in the Chancellor's name by the Registrar, and only concluded when the Court asked the Archdeacon to intervene. The case was heard in the form of a consideration of two petitions for faculties: the first from the original petitioners for a faculty permitting the work to go ahead; the second, a counter petition from the Archdeacon for the restoration of the Hill.

The Chancellor's Judgement established important points which BIOS will not lose sight of:

1. Work undertaken without a faculty "is illegal and remains illegal for all time; it is impossible to legalise retrospectively what has already been done (presumably the parties remain responsible at law for work done).
2. Someone is liable to answer at law for such illegalities; in this case it was the petitioners who sought a confirmatory faculty; presumably the basic responsibility lies with those deemed to be trustees of the goods of the church in question (the churchwardens?) - "...they are the temporary custodians of that property and they have no authority whatever on their own to deal with it in any way at all..."
5. The organ builder has the obligation of checking that his employers are acting within the law: "...any contractor, whether organ builder, stone-mason, plumber or electrician, who (carries out) work in a Church has placed upon him the obligation to ascertain that those who are engaging him have lawful authority to do so..." The organ builder involved at Balham (a Mr. Winn) was warned by the Chancellor that the Archdeacon was at leave to have his name added to those of the petitioners as parties in any further action which he chose to initiate, making him "jointly and severally liable with the petitioners".
4. No "enthusiast" may hope to get away with ignoring the legal processes and presenting the diocesan authorities with a fait accompli. The Chancellor referred to the "drastic situation" into which the petitioners' "flagrant law-breaking" had got them, and recommended them to look at the Malicious Damage to Property Act (1871); his point was emphasised by the final Judgement, which granted the Archdeacon's petition for restoration of the organ, and directed that the cost of this would be borne by the four petitioners.

Important precedents are established here, which BIOS will publicise.

English Organ Archive

The third major collection of material to be deposited at Keele is of a similar nature to the two collections mentioned in previous articles, but is notable in that the earliest material is significantly earlier in date than any surviving in the archives of Jardine & Co., or Vm. Hill & Son and Norman and Beard, Ltd. This collection comprises the office and shop books, and various other material from the firm which, when it closed its doors four years ago, was known as Gray and Davison.

It had been known by this name since 1838, when Frederick Davison ended a brief partnership with William Hill (the firm had been known as "Hill and Davison" for a matter of months) and married a daughter of John Gray, Hill's chief rival at the time. John Gray seems to have taken control of the business in 1820, upon the death of William Gray (it may be significant that the earliest books date from this year) who was himself a survivor of an earlier partnership "Robert and William Gray, Organ, Harpsichord 4 Piano-Forte takers". It is not clear when the business was established; the date 1774 is sometimes mentioned in connection with the name (solus) of Robert Gray; a claim has also been made for foundation c.1750 by Tobias Gray.

The collection comprises:

Account and Order Books	1821-1945	10 volumes)	
do	do	1865-1890	2 volumes) Liverpool Branch
Shop Books	1840-1928	16 volumes)	
Trading Accounts	1903-1944	2 volumes	
Order Books	1891-1927	2 volumes	
General Accounts	1918-1939	1 volume)	
Tuning Accounts	1899-1905	1 volume	
Tuning Registers	1914-1933	9 volumei	
Wood pipes book	1886-1901	1 volume	
Metal pipes book	1887- 1901	1 volume	



There is, in addition, a collection of technical drawings, ease designs, etc. which has yet to join the main collection at Keele.

Those who recall the work of the firm this century and its comparatively modest place in twentieth century British organ building will be less excited by the survival of these records than those who are aware of the enormous prestige which was associated with the name of "Gray and Davison" in the middle years of the last century. The Gray firm flourished in the post-War boom of the 1820's (the firm's profit in 182b was £995* a year in which work totalling £3*597 was undertaken; stock was valued at over £3,000) and was second only to Hill's in taking up the 'German System' style of instrument which was favoured by progressive organists in the 40's and 50's. As Hill had a forceful advocate in Dr. Gauntlett, so Gray and Davison had persuasive friends in Henry Smart and George Cooper; in the 50*s they built a succession of important instruments (vast by the standards of the day) under Smart'e influence. They were mostly concert organs - Glasgow City Hall (1853)» Newcastle Town Hall (1858), Birmingham Music Hall (1856), Leeds Town Hall (1859)* Crystal Palace (1857)* Dr. Wesley originally selected them to build the organ for St. George's Hall Liverpool - but there were church organs as well: at Oxford, Windsor, and Eton. The quality of their work at this date can still be detected in the ailing Great Exhibition organ, now at St. Ann's, Limehouse. Our thanks are due to our Chairman, Michael Gillingham, for giving BIOS custody of this firm's recorde.

Saved!

Toxteth

It was my pleasure recently to visit St. Peter's, Wallingford - a church which, though redundant, is being maintained by the Redundant Churches Fund on account of its architectural qualities. I saw there the organ from St. James' Toxteth, Liverpool (possibly by Bewsher and Fleetwood) which was saved by our Treasurer, John Bowles (Secretary of the RCF). Victor Saville is now in the process of making tracker action for the pedals and placing the organ in the old organ chamber at St. Peter's. The rest of the action - presumed to be original - is being restored.

The organ dates from c.1840; subsequent alterations include cutting back the original GC compass to C on the Great, and the addition of 12 pipes on the left side of the Swell box to complete the tenor C Swell. The Great specification has been slightly altered (perhaps by the substitution of a Dulciana, Harmonic Flute, and Gamba) and the cutting down of the original Pedal Pipes to fit a C Pedal compass (bottom C scales 410 x 390 mm!) appears to be the only other change.

The case is a robust Greek revival creation and will fit neatly into its new home.

Action Tracker Compasses C-f¹¹ and C-f

Specification (manual registers as arranged on soundboard)

<u>Great</u> (from front to back)	<u>Swell</u>
Open Diapason	Oboe
Harmonic Flute	Cornopean
Stopped Diapason Treble	Principal
Stopped Diapason Bass	Stopped Diapason
Principal	Open Diapason
Dulciana	Double Diapason
Gamba	
Fifteenth	<u>Pedal</u>
Sesquialtera III	Open Diapason
Trumpet	

Nicholas Plumley

Bristol

Hope Chapel, Hotwells, Bristol was built at the joint expense of Lady Henrietta Hope and Lady Glenorchy to combat "the dissipation and folly which reigned triumphant in Hotwells Spa amongst all ranks". It was opened for worship in 1768, being governed by a body of trustees until a Protestant dissenting sect established itself at the Chapel in the 1820's. It was about this time that a secondhand organ was introduced.

The Chapel recently became redundant, but being listed Grade 2 by the DOB a planning application to demolish was refused. Now, a local "coordinating committee" has been formed, and has obtained permission to convert the Chapel into a community centre. Although the metal pipes of the organ were stolen last year, it is intended to retain the instrument; I quote

from a letter received from the Beverend David Stancliffe:

"...(the organ) is basically a late eighteenth century instrument, almost certainly built in Bath and moved to Hope Chapel in the early nineteenth century. It has a fine Gothick case, and still retains its original wooden pipes, stop jamba and soundboards so that although it has been altered and enlarged, it is possible to reconstruct accurately its original specification. . .The Community Association are very keen to retain an organ in the Chapel for several reasons. Firstly the chapel could be used as a small concert hall (there being no other comparable hall in the area)... Secondly the Hotwells Music Workshop, a group of about 80 people meeting weekly to play music would welcome the availability of an organ, and thirdly it would be easily accessible for practice, unlike most church organs..."

Mr. Stancliffe goes on to say that the possibility of either (a) restoring the original specification (with new metal pipework) or (b) fitting a suitable redundant organ into the Hope Chapel case, is good. Whilst regretting the removal of the metal pipework, we can only be grateful that much of the organ has survived, and that there is a good chance of the organ and its music playing a prominent part in the cultural life of the area.

Nicholas Thistlethwaite

Notes and Queries

Where the Mansion House now stands was the church of St. Mary, Woolchurch Haw. This was not rebuilt after the Great Fire but the parish was united with bit. Mary Woolnoth, retaining its own churchwardens. From their accounts (1672-1826) we learn that Woolchurch paid its share of payments for Woolnoth organ. The Gerard Smiths in turn looked after it until 1761, when we read "1762-3 Paid Messrs Smith and Byfield for Tuning the Organ £1. 12. 0." The next year (1763-4) "Mr. Smith" is mentioned solus and the next name mentioned is "Mr. England" (1788). Turning to the Woolnoth Accounts and Minutes, however, we find "1764-5 April 10th paid Mr. John Hyfield for the use of Mr. Smith a years Salary for Tuning the Organ £4." and George England took over in 1765, in which year Gerard died (1). Does anyone know any further evidence of partnership between Smith and Byfield; and did Byfield succeed to the business, as he certainly did to some of the contracts?

Fitzroy Chapel is enquired about - this did not become St. John Fitzroy Square, but St. Saviour Fitzroy Square, closed long ago. Organ Lincoln-Walker, fate not known to me; St. John Fitzroy Square was a west-gallery Hobson with mahogany case, moved to nave and still there in 1940 - fate not known to me, but an earlier organ migrated to Sutton. While in the area, note that there was an organ in the Literary and Scientific Institution, Fitzroy Square (2).

Culliford Rolfe and Barrow - 1797. The earlier Barrow I mentioned repaired the Winchester College Chapel organ in 1637 and there was a Thomas Rolfe who in 1531 was "payd...for gluying the bellys of the organs ij d." at Great Dunmow. There may have been organ-building descendants, but Christopher Stevens writes that the firm was mainly concerned with harpsichords, spinets, and pianos, and he does not know of any organ work.

Tolner-Turner. William Cole (3) says that Barnard Turner used the Perse

School, Cambridge as a workshop: "In the schole I saw several of his organs, harpsichords, and spinets, the schole having been neglected there many years". I am indebted to S.J.D.Mitchell, whose history of the school has Just been published, for information here summarised.

An episcopal visitation in 1731 showed only ten boys being educated, and that not in the school premises which had Just been assessed for rates on the grounds of being used for other than educational purposes. They had in fact been let "sometime before that date" (perhaps in 1714"? BBE) to Heinrich Tolner a German immigrant who later anglicised his name to Henry Turner. He used the school hall as workshop and the Usher's house as residence. He was buried in St. Edward's churchyard 9 September 1730, and was succeeded by his son Barnard (sic) who was organist at Christ's and St. John's Colleges. Barnard's two sons took holy orders (one was educated at the Perse and became a Fellow of St. John's) so there was no one left to carry on the family business when he died at his house in Free School Lane in 1776.

Nicholas Trictlethwaite comments that this would seem to confirm an impression that there was a considerable body of foreign organ builders working here in the late seventeenth-early eighteenth centuries; mostly on a smaller scale than the well-known names, "tuning and maintenance, with occasional rebuildings, and the odd harpsichord or two". He mentions John Knopple (St. Nicholas Deptford 1709; St. Alphege Greenwich 1711 ; Canterbury Cathedral 1713) who signed a receipt 10 September 1729 for work at St. James Garlickhythe as "Johann Knoppell"; he wonders how many of them there were, why they came, and what influence they had.

I should imagine that they came for much the same reason as the more well-known men - the demand in England outstripped supply, whereas in Geri any in the early eighteenth century the reverse seems to have been the case. The fame of some should not blind us to the fact that others might be mediocre or even poor. Those with an established reputation would not be likely to come over precipitately; in any case, the influx might be large enough to defeat its own ends.

Organ Guilders enquired about include W.Tarr of Manchester, Hale of Cheltenham, Klltz of Hanway Street - all apparently early-nineteenth century with one so-far known organ each. W.White of Mancetter has a chamber orgm at race Dieu Manor in Leicestershire; and an organ bearing the name of Quentin St. George of Wr.itby was used as a bonfire in Iunmanby churchyard some ten years ago. This three manual instrument may have been a rebuild of the 1850 Forster and Andrews organ brought in 1869 from Alford; the enquirer does not think it merited its fiery fate. K.C.Reiter of Hull, (fl. 1880); Thomas Totvll (late sixteenth century); John Bellamy (late nineteenth century); and Jaco:us Ball of Duke Street, Grosvenor Square, c.1800, complete the present ration of queries.

I have lists of builders in whom interest has been expressed almost as tall as Salisbury spire. Clearly these cannot be dealt with only in the Reporter and some thought will have to be given to ways and means. Meanwhile, do send them (address inside front cover) but indicate any which are urgent matters of current research. S.A.E. appreciated if personal reply required.

- (1) St. Martin-in-the-Fields, Vestry Minutes 14.5.1765
- (2) Illustrated London News 15.4*184Q
- (3) Brit. Mu8. Add. MS 2882

B.B.Edmonds

Under Threat

Bucknell

The organ which now stands in the chancel of the parish church at Bucknell in Oxfordshire is said to have come from Daventry, and to have been installed at Bucknell in 1912. It is also said that the firm of Sweetland had

something to do with the instrument, though whether as original builders, or as later re-builders is not clear. The case front (a rather poor Gothic, with gilt dummies), the design, and the construction and voicing of the pipes suggests a date of 1810-1820 for the original organ.

A modest rebuilding took place at some unknown date - possibly as late as 1912; an orchestral oboe was introduced (in place of a Hautboy?), a pedal division with a single atop (Bourdon) appeared, and also, possibly, the Flute 4 on the Great Organ (presumably replacing a Seequialtra). The original square shanked stop rods were removed, and by cutting the jambs and placing a new fascia over the old shank-holes, round shanked rods were introduced, with typical late-Victorian ivory-faced heads. Far more important, however, than these alterations are the survivals of the original 'Nag's Head' Swell, and the two original 'shifting movements' - the left hand movement draws on full Great, whilst that on the right takes of the 4' and 2' ranks of the diapason chorus. The swell roller board (with wood arms and rollers) is original, and the single horizontal bellows is probably original. All the diapason registers and the two 8' flutes seem to be original; the metal pipes have short, stocky feet, are made of typical English pipe metal, comparatively small-soled (tenor C of the Principal is 1 5/8ths of an inch), with lightly-nicked languids; the stopped diapasons are wooden, with hexagonal feet in the bass, and hexagonal stopper arms. The compass of the Great is (now) C-f'''; the Swell retains its fiddle G compass. The stop heads appear as follows

(Swell) Left Hand

Orchestral Oboe
Principal
Stop Diapason
Open Diapason
Bourdon (pedal)
Great to Pedal

(Great) Right Hand

Flute
Fifteenth
Principal
Stop Diapason Treble
Stop Diapason Bass
Open Diapason

The future of the organ is threatened by a proposal to introduce an electronic device. I have never heard the organ, because when I visited the church three years ago, the instrument was dismantled by a local amateur, who had been commissioned the "restore" it; it would seem that this work has not benefitted the organ, and it continues to give trouble - hence the proposal to secure a substitute. Perhaps this is another warning of the dangers of attempting to cut corners and costs.

Nicholas Thistlethwaite ***

*** We carried reports in our first issue (Vol. 1, no.1) of the historic organs in Ely Parish Church, and Rolvendon Church. Subsequent to representations being made to the diocesan authorities, work was put in hand at Ely (Norman Hall & Sons of Cambridge) and a much less severe alteration of the organ has resulted than was feared; the removal of one Swell register, and the electrification of the Pedal, unnecessary though both were, seem to be the only serious alterations. Discussion continues at Rolvendon, though since a visit by Michael Gillingham (on behalf of the OAC) and representations by our members, a sympathetic restoration seems probable.

Redundant Organs

Holy Trinity. Sydenham Hill

Built 1866 by Hill A Son; some modest work this century (pedal action, addition of celeste, replacement of 2' with string); maintained recently by Walker's.

Specification Great 10 (Bourdon, 'ix III, Posaune) Swell 10 (reeds at 8.8.4) Choir 6 Pedal 3 (16.16.8)

Action Manuals still tracker, pedal pneumatic

Casework oak panelling on 3 sides; presumably 'pipe rack' (coloured)

Dimensions 12'6" square base, c. 18' high

Contact Mrs. Aggett, [REDACTED]

Oundle URC. Sorthanta

Forster and Andrews, 1875* said to be good tone; "reeds (sic) need doing up".

Specification Great 8.8.8.4.4*2 Swell 8.8.Vox Ang.4.2.0boe Ped. Bourdon

Action no mention - presumably tracker in 1875

Casework no details

Dimensions ditto but said to be "spaciously built"

Contact Major Milton, [REDACTED]

St. Andrew's PRC, Southsea

Built by Norman and Beard for St. Matthew's Gosport, 1888-9; moved to Southsea 1954* Comparison of Order Book (in EOA) with present spec, suggests some work this century.

Specification Great 8.8.8.4*4 (?) .3*2. Swell 16(?) .8.8.8.4.2.111.8.8. Pedal 16.16 (open metal)

Action tracker

Casework no details

Dimensions ditto

Contact Derek Fry, [REDACTED]

Briefly

All members should have received notification with the last issue of the Reporter of the day conference at Christ's Hospital on September 3rd. There is an excellent programme, and the Council hope to meet many BIOS members there who are perhaps only known to us by name as yet. Please contact the membership secretary (address inside front cover) as soon as possible and indicate your intention of attending. The AGM will take place at 5*00 p.m. that day; this should be taken as formal notification of the fact. Please make every effort to support us then.

We have received news of the formation of the Organ Historical Trust of Australia, a society with very similar aims to our own, though having the advantage that it is possible to put preservation orders on churches and their fittings in Australia. Many nineteenth century British organs have survived in Australia (there are now more intact Hill organs in that country than there are in the D.K.) and we hope to enjoy the fullest co-operation with the society. As a preliminary steps, its members will receive each issue of the BIOS Reporter as part of the return for an annual subscription. Details from J.Kenwood, [REDACTED].

Research

We are told that one of the problems of research in the past has been isolation: it has not always been possible to discover who is doing what, or who to contact about a particular area of study. BIOS plans to keep a register of current research, extracts from which can be published from time to time; this is the first installment.

Geoffrey Cox - [REDACTED]

"The Sources of Organ Music in Restoration England". B.Phil. diss., Oxford, in progress 1977

B.B. Edmonds - [REDACTED]

Biographies, business history, and organs of the firm now known as Hill, Norman A Beard (including Snetzler, Elliot, the Hills, Norman and Beard, and firms amalgamated or bought by them)

Organ photography - esp. cases and name plateB

Christopher Kent - [REDACTED]

The history and organs of Brice and Richard Seede.

James Mackenzie - [REDACTED]

Glasgow Organs - listing all pipe organs with details of removals from one place to another, additions, alterations, etc., in order to determine sources of material, original builder, etc. of instruments since altered and bearing another builder's plate.

Glasgow Organ Builders - personnel, work, outlook, etc. Some difficulty in tracing records known to exist prior to purchase by London firm* of goodwill, stock, etc.

T.C. Lewis & Co. - Personnel and associates; work of the firm, mainly in connection with local instruments; Glasgow associates/employees. Lewis A Co. Ltd., their Glasgow work; management of firm after Lewis' "retirement". Work of Glasgow associate, his staff, personal abilities, etc.

Dr. Charles Padgham - [REDACTED]

Organ acoustics - (1) A full scale trial of 5 different organ temperaments: Werkmeister 3, i Comma Mean Tone, 1/5th Comma Mean Tone, English 18th century, and Equal Temperament - (2) A study of the sound spectrum of individual organ stops and of organ pleno: this is a programme of measurement of the sound spectrum of a large number of old and new instruments of various styles in order to assess their differences in acoustical terms, and to correlate this with subjective assessments - (3) A study of the tolerances on tuning of organ pipes of various timbres.

Nicholas Plumley - (addresses inside front cover)

The organs of the Harris and Byfield families and their apprentices: a technical study of English organ building 1660-1770. The thesis will survey the musical and artistic background of the period, with studies of Rhenatus and John Harris, Byfields I, II and (to a certain degree) III, the Abraham Jordans, Richard Bridge, and Thomas Schwarbrook.

♦The Editor will be pleased to receive notices of current research for inclusion in the next installment of the register.

Publications

In recent years there has been a considerable increase in the number of monographs and small, descriptive booklets published, dealing with the history of particular organs. We hope to build up a collection of these in the Archive, and also to keep members informed of what is available. Any publications sent to the Editor will receive a notice and short review in the BIOS Reporter before passing to the Archivist

The Organ of St. Andrew's Parish Church, Chippenham by Christopher Kent, available from the author (address opposite), //6 n.p., incl. postage

A well-written and thoroughly documented history of an important organ. Mr. Kent goes into detail about the installation of the fine Seede organ (1752?) "approved of as the compleate and perfectest thing of its kind by the best of Judges"; he discusses the conservative rebuild by Gray and Davison in 1879» and makes some pertinent criticisms of the most recent rebuild (by Percy Daniel and Co. 1965). The magnificent case and eleven of Seede's ranks survive. 5 illustrations.

The Organs of Bourne Abbey, 1834-1977 by Ian Aiken, available from the author at, JO Stanley Street, Bourne, Lines. 15 n.p. + postage

The organ at Bourne has just undergone a most successful rebuilding by John Budgen (Bishop's, Ipswich branch) and Mr. Aiken's booklet marks its inauguration. A little of John Gray's organ (1834) survived in the same firm's rebuild of 1870; it is this latter instrument which has just been rehabilitated (after various minor alterations this century) and judiciously expanded. Mr. Aiken's booklet covers the history very adequately.

Organ 'Migrations' in the County of Norfolk and the Diocese of Norwich by Ralph Bootman, available from the author at, Mymmswood, Stoke Holy Cross, Norwich, 1.1114 8*J (no price: donations invited for IAC Benevolent Fund) What with the labours of Canon Gordon Paget and, now, Mr. Bootman, the county of Norwich must be one of the best charted tracts of organ country in the land. This is a very valuable work, clearly laid out, and so easily referred to: it makes one realise how much organs move about the countryside^ One slight criticism - Mr. Bootman does not make it plain whether the organs have been altered subsequent to removal to their present homes, (xerox; 30 pp.)

Taunton School Organ by Martin Ellis, available from the author at, Wills West, Taunton School, Taunton, Somerset, TA2 6LT. 70 n.p. incl. postage

Parts of the existing organ arrived at the School in 1881/2 when the old organ from St. Mary Magdalene's, Taunton was purchased. This allows Mr. Ellis to discuss the history of the organ in its former home, which he does very thoroughly; brief curricula vitae of a number of West County builders are provided - Paul Mischeau (sic) of Exeter, John Smith of Bristol, James Ling of Taunton, Henry Dicker of Exeter, John Minns of Taunton, and George Osmond of Taunton: Mr. Ellis has done his work thoroughly, and it is very useful to have these details in print. The history of the School organ, aB rebuilt by Osmond's and Daniel's is carefully documented. (40 pp)

The Organa of the Collegiate Church of St. Mary, Warwick by Geoffrey Holroyde, available from the Church, 25 n.p. + postage

Shortage of space for review ie no reflection on the excellent quality of this booklet which has been available for some years; notable for clarity and some fine, large photographs (e.g. Schwrsbrook's case before Hope-Jones). (28 pages)

M.J.T.

Aims of BIOS

1. To promote objective scholarly research into the history of the Organ and its music in all its aspects, and, in particular, into the history of the Organ and its music in Britain.
2. To conserve the sources and materials for the history of the Organ in Britain, and to make them accessible to scholars.
3. To work for the preservation, and, where necessary, the faithful restoration of historic organs in Britain.
4. To encourage an exchange of scholarship with similar bodies and individuals abroad, and to promote a greater appreciation of historical overseas and continental schools of organ building in Britain.

