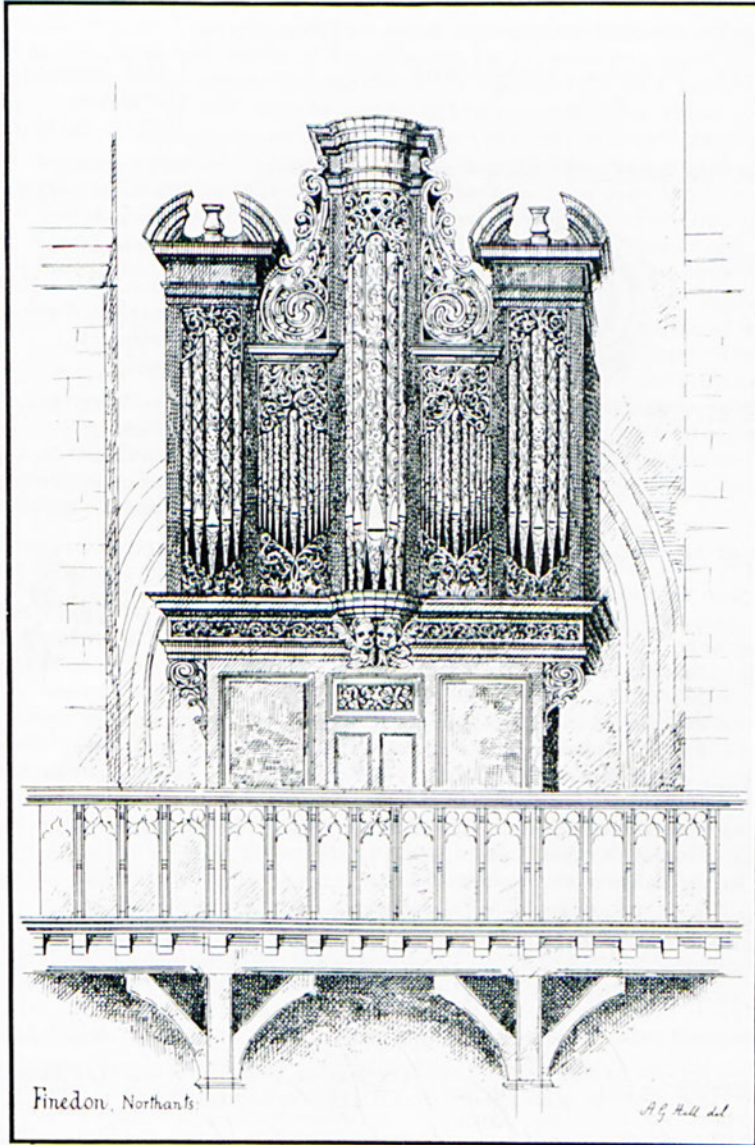


# BIOS Reporter



Volume two, no. 4 (October 1978)

The British Institute of Organ Studies (BIOS)

# 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 the form of the publication; correspondence arising from the Notes and Queries column should be sent to the Rev. B. B. Edmonds, at:

The Reporter is produced by John Brennan of Positif Press

to whom the Council extends its thanks.

The BIOS Journal is under the general editorship of the Council; any enquiries or offers of material should be directed to the Secretary.

# EDITORIAL

The faculty of hearing is one which we tend to take for granted. Not simply, that is, in the sense that we do not appreciate it until deprived of it, but also, in the sense that we frequently fail to make proper use of it. A person who is used to the noise and bustle of the city can learn again to relish his powers of hearing when left alone in the depths of the countryside on a calm summer's evening. At first, he will only be aware of the great silence which surrounds him; then, after a little, he will begin to discover that this is deception into which his ears - long used to only the crudest of sounds, and out of practice in the detection of subtle murmurings upon the breeze - have led him. Gradually, a whole unthought world of aural discovery opens up for him, and, rather as the gourmet savours each mouthful of a subtly blended meal, so he comes again to relish the subtle delicacies which the faculty of hearing offers.

Ironically, musicians all too often have a lesson to learn from this, and, more particularly, organists are not guiltless of the charge of failing to listen. How many times have we heard an organist who is, perhaps, an accomplished executant, able to play with a technical assurance which leaves most of us disheartened when we reflect upon our own efforts, but who so obviously fails to listen to the effect which he is producing? The indulgent provision of thumb pistons in recent years has struck a cruel blow at the art of individual registration, but the trouble runs deeper than this.

At the root of the problem lies the fact that modern technology has - perhaps unwittingly - deprived the organist of that direct control over his instrument which is vital to any music-making. The facility of rapidly changing registrations by means of pistons, and the facility of playing arpeggio passages with a lightness of touch more typical of the piano, are comparatively crude degrees of 'control' when stood alongside the facility of directly controlling the flow of wind into the pipe, so as to control articulation. The organist who is able to sit at his keyboards, draw the 8' Open Diapason, and, by means of a mechanical connection between key and pallet, explore the range of effects offered by what are - in effect - 58 or 61 individual musical instruments, has an intimate relationship with his organ which is denied to the organist who must toil away on a crude pneumatic or electrical action. Under such circumstances, the organist can use his ears to divine the most subtle variations of tone - can listen as the sound is composed by the pipe.

We must learn a lesson from this concerning our investigation of organs at BIOS conferences. We must offer every facility for people to listen. So, it is important to have full details of registrations employed when instruments are demonstrated. And it is important that ample time should be allowed for such a demonstration before the session assumes a more informal character. Music should be chosen which displays the instrument, rather than the player (though the two are not irreconcilable). We shall pay special attention to these matters in the future, so that we get the most out of our visits to particular instruments.

# REDUNDANT ORGANS

S. Peter, Ifield

Organ by Alfred Kirkland, 113 Cottenham Road, London N. Original organ apparently c. 1870 but moved to the present church c. 1890. Now "buried" on the north side of the Chancel. To be displaced by an electronic.

Specification Great 7 (up to a fifteenth) Swell 9 (mixture and 2 reeds)  
Pedal 3

Action T racker

Casework No details given

Dimensions ground plan approx 10<sup>1</sup> x 10<sup>1</sup> ; no note of height

Contact Nick Plumley (addresses inside front cover)

Finnart Church, Madeira Street, Greenock

Built by August Gern in 1883. Re-sited in 1934 at west end of church, but the tonal work is said to be unaltered. Original console survives, and case-work (latter slightly altered).

Specification Great 7 (15th, Clarionet) Swell 7 (one reed) Pedal 3

Action Tubular Pneumatic

Casework No details given

Dimensions No details

Contact Mr. A. E. Shearer, [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

## REVIEWS

BIOS exchanges material with the Danish Organ Society (Det danske Orgelselskab) and consequently we receive the Society's

publication Orglet. The Society seems to have very similar aims to BIOS, giving (we gather) high priority to the listing of historic organs in Denmark. Orglet is an excellently produced journal of between 60 and 70 pages; the standard of production is high, not dissimilar from our own BIOS Journal, though advertisements are carried, and the review section is more extensive. The articles concern both historical and contemporary instruments; although your editor cannot read Danish, there are summaries in English and German and these, considered with the photographs and diagrams, suggest that the scholarship is of a high order. Further details (in English') are available from - Stud, polyt. Karsten Olsen, [REDACTED].

de Mixtuur, a Dutch organ publication, is of a slightly different character. Each issue (3 a year) consists of about 30 pages; the printing and layout are good. Your editor misses the English summaries which both Orglet and the Organ Yearbook (for articles in foreign languages) offer, but suspects that these would not be easy to construct, given the character of de Mixtuur - it seems to concentrate upon documenting the history of particular instruments, and the work (job-lists, etc.) of particular builders. It is interesting to see how seriously the Dutch are now treating organs of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, applying to them the same critical standards of conservation which have been applied to the organs of earlier years. Details from our member, Gerard Verloop, Vincent van Goghlaan [REDACTED].

# LISTING

Since the second issue of the Reporter for 1978 (April, 1978) further offers of assistance with particular areas have been received -

Glasgow	James Mackenzie
Coventry Diocese	Geoffrey Holroyde
Coasts of Scotland	Michael Macdonald
Gloucester Diocese	Roy Williamson
Cheshire	Stephen Young
Lichfield Diocese	Richard Hobson

It has been suggested to me that the proposed procedures for listing organs are rather cumbersome and complicated. I realise that they imply a lot of work and I am trying to work out how to simplify them. Suggestions would be welcome. During the remainder of the year I shall be inviting various members to assume responsibility for work in designated areas - may I be forgiven in advance for presuming on members' spare time!

I am also working on how we could produce some record cards at a reasonable price on the lines originally suggested.

Freddie Symonds, the General Secretary of the Organ Club, wrote to suggest that a working party should be set up to work on the Club's card index of organs in the Organ Club Library at the R. C. O. This is certainly a very good idea, and will be of considerable assistance to those involved in local listings. How this could be started and co-ordinated is a subject for our early consideration.

In the meantime, please do not hesitate to write offering suggestions or help. This is a monumental task and is going to take a long time. It is, however, the second of our Aims in part, and should be regarded as a real priority.

In the issue referred to above, mention was made of "certain specified builders" whose work should be considered sufficiently important to be listed automatically. No suggestions have been forthcoming except in one instance, and so - although I do, of course, remain open to further suggestions - I shall be so bold as to put forward my own list as follows: -

Organs should be listed automatically if dating from before 1890; organs by the following specified builders, post-dating 1890, and pre-dating 1914 (or even later ?) should also be listed automatically:

Bishop - Forster & Andrews - Harrison Harrison - Gray & Davison - Hill & Son - Hope-Jones - Hunter - T. C. Lewis, and Lewis & Co. - Henry Jones - William Thynne - Walker - Willis - Binns - Taylor of Leicester

In general, I remain open to offers of assistance with the job of Listing: however limited in scope, offers will be welcome, and I would urge all members of BIOS to think how they might help, and make a personal contribution to this very important task.

Nicholas Plumley

# CONFERENCES

It was a fortunate chance which took BIOS to Manchester, and to Ashburne Hall (one of the University halls of residence) for the 1978 residential conference: both the accomodation and the food were excellent (not always the case on conferences) and our Archivist, Michael Sayer, had done a noble job in making arrangements and planning an interesting programme. If the sun did not shine very much (though it managed to illumine our visit to Adlington - albeit, without much conviction) we scarcely had time to notice. A company of about 50 BIOS members assembled, and the social intercourse and informal conversations were not the least satisfying aspects of the conference.

The proceedings commenced with two thorough investigations of particular areas of English organ history. David Wickens spoke (appropriately) about the history of organ building in Manchester and district, and drew some interesting comparisons between trends in Lancashire and Yorkshire during the mid-nineteenth century; Gerry Sumner then gave a fascinating account of his researches into the elusive connection between J. C. Bishop and the Lancashire Roman Catholics during the early nineteenth century. Following dinner, the conference assembled in S. Philip's, Salford, to hear a recital by Paul Derrett on the Samuel Renn organ - an interesting attempt to demonstrate the versatility of an early English organ. The highlight of the next day's programme was an extended visit to Adlington Hall, to see and hear the early organ there, restored some years ago by Noel Mander. We were indebted to Charles Legh, Esquire, for his ready hospitality, and it would also be appropriate here to record our thanks to John Mander, who devoted much valuable time to preparing the Adlington and Salford organs for our visits (and also, his own new organ at Mellor). At Adlington Michael Gillingham and Cecil Clutton discussed the mysterious origins of the organ, and Geoffrey Cox first lectured on English organ music of the seventeenth century, and then gave a masterly demonstration of both organ and music. The evening was spent in somewhat lighter vein, with an entertainment devised by Jim Berrow, of the Organ on Film. The two remaining lectures of the conference were delivered by John Rowntree and Gordon Thorne. John Rowntree gave a lucid account of the policy of the Roman Catholic Organ Advisory Group, and included some excellent illustrations of what has been achieved by this body in recent years. Gordon Thorne's lecture tended to illustrate the rather different problems faced by the Church of England, with special reference to the diocese of Manchester. The Annual General Meeting of the society followed. The conference closed after lunch, with members scattering, either to their homes, or to investigate further organs in and around Manchester.

A day conference was held in Gloucester, on Saturday, September 16th, under the title of 'The Loss of the English Organ'. The morning was spent in S. Mary de Lode Church where stands a small 2 manual and pedal tracker organ of uncertain date, rescued from the redundant church of S. Nicholas, Gloucester. John Bowles, John Coulson, and Michael Gillingham talked about the instrument, and Cecil Adams contributed an excellent, short recital. The afternoon was spent in the handsome, medieval Parliament Room, in College Green. Bill Drake and Mrs. Hilary Aggett contributed short papers to a symposium on Redundant Organs, and the Reverend B. B. Edmonds arranged an informal slide-show, illustrating English organs lost in the last hundred years. About 50 members were present.

# A.G.M

The Annual General Meeting of BIOS took place on Thursday, July 27th. at Ashburne Hall, University of Manchester. Two particular matters arising from this meeting should be reported to our members; complete Minutes will, of course, be sent to all members before the next AGM.

Honorary Membership of BIOS The Council responded to a proposal put before them by one of our members, and laid a motion before the meeting that honorary membership of the society should be offered to Canon Gordon Paget, as a token of our esteem, and as a small recognition of the very great service which he has done, in saving and re-locating worthy English organs. The motion was approved unanimously, and with enthusiasm. The Secretary therefore wrote forthwith to Canon Paget, and is delighted to be able to report that Canon Paget has accepted our invitation . In his reply, Canon Paget writes . . . I regard it as a great honour and have very much pleasure in accepting. I think that I can claim to be the first person ever to have tackled one whole diocese and county to record every organ in it, and I am very glad that others are beginning to do the same elsewhere. If it is not undertaken now, soon there will be very few remaining to record at the present rate of destruction. . . ”

Membership Subscription With regret, the Council had to request the meeting to authorise a rise in the annual subscription. In the past (and this will inevitably continue to be the case) the greater part of the subscription (90%) has been expended upon producing and posting our two publications, the Reporter, and the Journal. Printing costs have risen, and the society will find itself in financial difficulties unless the subscription rate rises. The Council believes that our publications are a very valuable part of our work, both in terms of keeping in touch with members, and as making a positive contribution to scholarship. The meeting discussed the situation, and unanimously endorsed a proposal that the ordinary subscription should rise to £7 per annum. It was, however, felt important that the special subscription rate of £3. 50 for students and senior citizens should remain unaltered.

## BRIEFLY

The Editor's profuse apologies are due to readers, for having, in the previous issue's 'Under Threat' feature, confused S. Peter, Newbold, Rochdale, with S. Edmund, Falinge, Rochdale. The Hill organ alluded to is actually in the Falinge church; the Newbold church houses a contemporary tracker instrument by Gray & Davison, apparently little altered. The Editor's thanks are due to a number of members who spotted the error.

The society's thanks are due to William Hill & Son, and Norman & Beard Ltd, , for the donation of a framed photograph of William Hill - this presided over the society's AGM, with, it was felt, benevolent interest. For this, and for committing to our custody the largest extant collection of organ builders' records, the society remains most grateful to Hill, Norman & Beard.

The Membership Secretary will not acknowledge receipt of subscription renewals unless specifically requested so to do.

# FILMS

Following several requests, Jim Berrow has submitted the following details of the 3 films which were shown at the Manchester conference. It was felt that local organists' associations might welcome the opportunity to arrange to have these films shown at their meetings. The approximate hire fee, and the agency to which enquiries should be directed are indicated in each case.

AC/161 <u>Un Grand Seize Pieds</u> (1969)	B & W	18 minutes
No commentary - just music	£1. 70	
A demonstration of the Cliquot organ in Poitiers Cathedral - some fine interior photography	Institut Francais du Royaume Uni, Queensbury Place, South Kensington, London SW7	

300-7020-1 <u>The Compenius Organ in Denmark</u> (1954)	B & W	12 minutes
English commentary		£3.80 + VAT

The music of Buxtehude is played on the 1610 Esaias Compenius organ in Frederiksborg Castle.	Danish Embassy, but bookings to be made through: Guild Sound & Vision Ltd. , Woodston House, Oundle Road, Peterborough PE2 9PZ
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<u>Organs made in Czechslovakia</u> (c. 1960)	B & W	18 minutes
English commentary		£1. 50

A short history with especial emphasis on the 19th century debasement of the instrument and an even worse example of a modern East European organ in Moscow. Good value !	Educational &: Television Films Ltd. , 247A Upper Street, London N1 1RU
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834 D41 <u>The Organ (Part 1)</u> (1968)	colour	18-  minutes
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834 D42 <u>The Organ (Part 2)</u> (1968)	colour	22 minutes
	approx. £3.50 each	

Two educational films in which Simon Preston uses the organ of Westminster Abbey to demonstrate in part one, the basic mechanism and control of the instrument.

In part two there is a further demonstration and a visit to Harrison's Durham works - intended for a young audience, and the presentation now very dated.

The Educational Foundation for Visual Aids,  
National Audio-Visual Aids Library,  
Paxton Place,  
Gipsy Road,  
London SE27,

Those who enjoyed seeing the first 3 films at our Manchester conference will be glad to hear that a similar feature is planned for the 1979 conference.



# Notes and Queries

The arrival of the John Holt reed organ papers in the Archive brings back memories of my sitting, as a small boy, between old John Holt and my father in the choir of Harborne Wesleyan Chapel. John was known as 'Mr Dunlop<sup>1</sup> to us, from resemblance to a well-known advertisement, and his son as 'John Willy'. Another son, long before, had left his father and gone to Rushworth and Dreaper, but this was rather a sore point and not referred to. The products were very artistic and musical; one for the old '5 IT' broadcasting station was demonstrated in the factory by Gilbert Mills, and other ones went to Dr. Conway and Dr. Sydenham Holmes; the magnum opus was a large four manual made in earlier days which turned up out of the blue when a new owner asked for a visit. Old John went along, found only a minor fault, and when asked for an estimate remarked 'Give me a bit of firewood and I'll do it now' '. The stop-list I cannot trace, but John told me that the original purchaser wanted the console designed on the lines of that then in Westminster Abbey.

Archives. 'Musical Directory for the year 1794, a curious and perhaps unique little book, in the Library of the Sacred Harmonic Society' (1) contained much interesting information including a list of contemporary organ builders. This library came into the possession of the Royal College of Music, but 25 years ago I was informed that there was no trace or record of this book and it must at some point have been lost or borrowed. I have now found that this, or another copy, was in the possession of J. T. Lightwood some fifty or so years ago and may indeed have been his property. Any clues ?

Mitchell of Exeter . The enquirer has been misled (2). I do not know the source of Sumner's statement that this was the real name of Paul Micheau, but this was not so. Neither was he a native of Germany who came to England about 1780 (3). He was in fact baptised at Barnstaple 23 October, 1734, son of Stephen and Eleanor Micheau, of Flemish descent; and he died 12 November 1824 aged 90 in Paul Street, Exeter. A portrait of him existed at Exeter but so far it has eluded my efforts to trace it. He repaired Tiverton 1776 (4), Ottertun (5), Exeter Cathedral (6), and his other work included S. Mary Major and S. Mary at Arches at Exeter, and Etwall in Derbyshire (3); he also enlarged the Crang organ at Barnstaple. I suspect it was he, and not 'Loosemore of Exeter' (who had been dead a century), who was paid £350 for the organ at Dartmouth in 1782 (7) which is still there as to the case, if not much else.

Other builders enquired about include Bradbury of Manchester, Martin of Nottingham (both early nineteenth century); Ambrose of Sudbury (Suffolk) fl. 1820-1874, who was also an organist and gave lessons to a boy named Ebenezer Prout who used to walk over from his home at Halstead; Solomon Wise, who did some work for Bishop; Dix of Whitby; and Henry John Corrie who took an organ over to Boston, U.S.A. and decided to remain there as an organ builder, specialising in voicing. Someone asks, too, who was the original builder of S. Nicholas, Durham.

In Volume One, No. 4 (October, 1977), an enquiry was reported concerning Eccles in Kent, said by Sumner to be by Smith, from New College Oxford, rebuilt by Norman & Beard (sic) in 1953. I now have a voluminous file about this, with much correspondence. Sumner's sources I do not know, but the

information is not accurate, and at least two organs are confused. In 'Freeman Rowntree' (10) references on pages 75, 166, and 186 should be consulted. The story in summary begins in 1288 when oak Gothic folding gates were made for Balliol College. In 1860 the old Balliol buildings were pulled down and the gates were acquired by the Reverend Dr. Thomas Harding Newman and installed at his house at Nelmes, near Upminster. Dr. Newman had been a fellow of Magdalen College and was a noted eccentric (11). In 1926 the gates were bought by the Georgian gallery in King Street, Westminster, and restored to original; they were then bought by a group of Balliol men and given back to the college. When this was reported in the 'Times' Mr. L. B. Page wrote to say that Dr. Newman had also acquired a chamber organ 'by Father Smith, if I remember rightly' from an Oxford College.

In the many letters from descendants and acquaintances which are before me, the following points emerge. Did Dr. Newman get it from Balliol at the same time as the gates? Or, did he get it from his own college? In either case, what was its history? His niece, Mrs. Croker, was insistent that it came from Magdalen, but her daughter pointed out that it might have come from his rooms there. Point as yet unresolved, and the only Smith evidence so far is Mr. Page's reminiscence.

One thing is sure - it is not the New College organ; for the organ was given by Mr. B. Harding Newman (who inherited Nelmes) to Canon Grant of the Gravesend area, who later became Vicar of Aylesford and placed the organ in the Mission Church at Eccles. Investigation shows that Cyril Fletcher Grant was at Gravesend 1874-5 and moved to Aylesford as curate in 1876, becoming Vicar in 1878. The Mission Church would be (as usual) the curate's pigeon, so we have an approximate date for the installation. Grant also installed the Forster and Andrews at Aylesford in 1879. He was a Balliol man: could this be of any significance? A later Vicar wrote that the local tradition was that the Eccles organ was once the property of King Charles II at Hampton Court - a clear spin-off from the Magdalen organ history. His organist gave the specification as it was after a rebuild in 1900. Apparently a twelfth was added then, and a Great Gamba moved to the Swell in place of a Vox Humana. New keys were introduced - the old naturals were white - the whole scheme was under the aegis of one Arthur Goodwin. The gilt front pipes, originally dummies, had at some date, thought to be pre-Eccles, been made part of the Great Organ. About 1920 the pipes were silvered, and the case painted black. A drawing of the organ was appended to this information. When Miss Helen Croker saw this, she commented 'How dreadful of them to have taken away the pictures of angels and spoil the case; they seem to have made so many alterations to the stops'. The rebuild was by Walmsley of Maidstone, whose successors, Harvey of Maidstone, tended it for many years. When it was at Nelmes it was tuned but twice, by Forster & Andrews. Now it is in Kelmscott in Western Australia. Selah.

Notes and Queries gratefully received; s.a.e appreciated.

B. B. Edmonds

N. B. Corrections to July article: line 8, for GG read C; line 18, 'trap' for 'track' (apologies - Ed. ).

## Notes

- (1) Hopkins & Rimbault, 3rd. Edition (1877) p. 156
- (2) Sumner The Organ 4th. Edition, p. 168
- (3) Hopkins & Rimbault, p. 155
- (4) Harding, History of Tiverton (1843), pp. 90, 135
- (5) Brushfield, T. N. The Churchwardens' Accounts of East Budleigh (1894) p. 363 (reference is to the former Otterton Church)
- (6) Chapter Act Book 14 March, 1767; 27 September 1768; 8 February and 19 July 1783. Also agreement by Mr Paul Michaeu 'to make the Great Pipes speak'.
- (7) Musical Opinion, October 1887 p.21
- (8) Organs and Organists of Salisbury Cathedral (1972)
- (9) Musical Opinion, March 1924 p. 611
- (10) Father Smith (1977)
- (11) Times 25 August, 1926; viz. also 18 August

## RECORDS

We were recently delighted to welcome  
Klaas Bolt into membership of BIOS.

Mr. Bolt is, of course, one of the organists at Haarlem, and is widely known and respected for his work, both as a player and as an organ consultant. He has sent details of a project which he has launched to disseminate important recordings of historic Dutch organs. Mr. Bolt points out that such recordings are frequently produced as 'fund-raisers' by the local church and are not commercially available. From time to time, he proposes to make a selection from the available records, and will then forward a list of recommended recordings to those interested; the records may then be ordered through him. It is worth recording Mr. Bolt's criteria for including a record in his lists;

1. The organ must be historically important and possess, on the whole, an authentic sound.
2. The pieces selected by the performer for recording and the performance practice employed must be appropriate to the instrument.
3. The recording must meet just standards of quality.
4. Adequate information concerning the history and disposition of the organ, as well as registrations employed for the recording, must be given.

We might wish that some English recording companies would pay more attention to these matters. Further information from - Klaas Bolt, Lambrecht van Dalelaan 29, 2015 ER HAARLEM, Netherlands.

News of another project comes from G.A. C. de Graaf in Spain. Mr. de Graaf's work in attempting to rescue the historic Iberian organs from destruction and desecration is well known, and he now announces the publication of a complete catalogue of Spanish organs. This will appear in installments, two in a year, each giving details of some 40 organs. Payment is to be by an annual subscription. For further details, write to: - De Graaf Musicalia, Calle Mayor 49, La Almunia de Dona Godina, Spain.

# 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.

