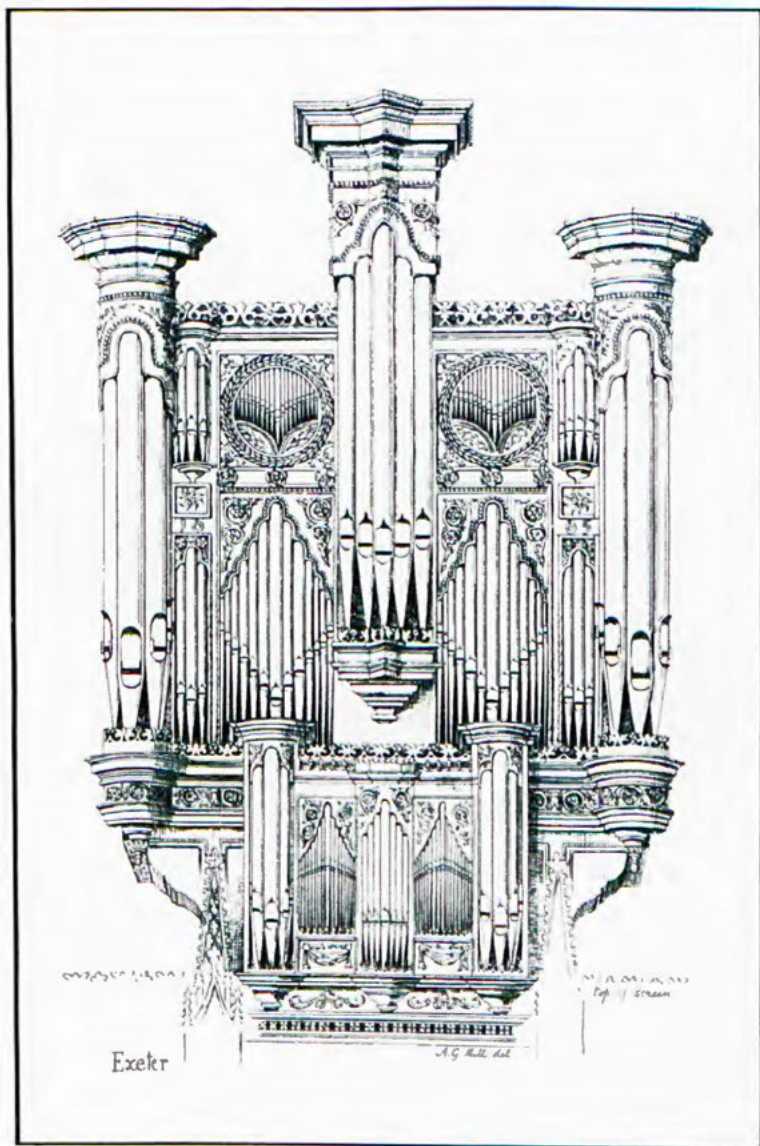


# BIOS Reporter

P431/413



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# 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

It is with some (understandable) pride that we embark upon the third volume of the BIOS Reporter. Following last year's precedent, we feel that this may not be an unsuitable moment to look both backwards and forwards, to see how BIOS has progressed, and how it may be progress in the future.

Last year saw what proved to be three successful conferences - at Dorking (by courtesy of Lady Jeans) on the English Chamber Organ, at Gloucester on the Destruction of the English Organ (focusing our attentions upon the problems alluded to later in this issue, of redundant organs), and our annual residential conference, held on this occasion, in Manchester. For the success of these events thanks are due to many people - speakers and organizers - as well as to those members who supported us by attending. Our first Journal appeared at the beginning of last year, and seems to have been well-received in most quarters; we hope that our members feel it sets the right tone for the future, and adequately reflects the areas with which we should concern ourselves. Some progress was made in the re-siting of redundant organs (notably the Hill from Sydenham) and BIOS actually intervened to take custody of the Salisbury U. R. C. organ (John Gray, 1815) which would otherwise almost certainly have been broken up. Membership of the society rose again, and we now have about 330 members.

All this is encouraging, and we hope to be able to report similarly favourably this time next year; details of this year's residential conference go out with this issue of the Reporter, and we hope that members will be able to join us in Newcastle in July.

But there remain many problems. The difficulties of running a nation-wide society, with all that that implies about arranging committee meetings for members from all parts of the country, are considerable, and the burden of work is at present falling upon some four people. The larger the society becomes (which is a good thing) the more difficult it becomes to get publications out on time - simply because the same number of people are having to cope with an increased work load. Certain important aspects of the work we set ourselves are not being attended to because there is a shortage of labourers. For this reason, the Council wishes to appeal for an Assistant Secretary - someone who is prepared to take on the undeniably tedious job of addressing envelopes to send out the Reporter, and sticking stamps on them. Similarly, if anyone has access to an electric typewriter, and would be willing to take on the job of typing the Reporter once a quarter, the Secretary would be very glad to hear from them. In general, we would welcome ideas for day conferences, and offers to organise them (a surprisingly time-consuming job). We have already taken soundings for someone able to take over responsibility for monitoring redundancies, and hope to be able to announce an appointment soon. Also, the Editor of this journal would be grateful for much more material from members for possible publication: the pages are here, so please use them!

At the moment, BIOS is a little like a child which has, as they used to say, outgrown its strength. It needs rather more administrative muscle. With the cooperation of our members, it should not be impossible to find this. Please, try to think whether there is any way in which you feel you can help - and if there is, get in touch with the Secretary.

# REDUNDANT ORGANS

## S. Columba's Gaelic Church, Greenock

Built by Forster & Andrews in 1892; said to be unaltered and in reasonably good condition; built in console.

Specification Great 8 (Double Open - Fifteenth, Trumpet; no mixture) Swell 10 (Celeste, Mixture II, 2x8' reeds) Choir 5 (to Flautino 2') Pedal 2x16'

Action Tracker to manuals, pneumatic to pedals

Casework/Dimensions No details given

Contact Mr. D. McDougall, [REDACTED] d

## S. Stephen's, Wandsworth

Built by Bevington, c. 1880. Rebuilt by John Whiteley in 1928 as large 3 manual, with 51 speaking stops. Overhauled and re-actioned by Rushworth & Dreaper in 1955, but without any tonal alterations. Said to be "fine tonally". Church is being declared redundant, and it is hoped that contents can be cleared in the coming summer.

Specification Great 16 (Double Open, 3xOpen Diaps, Mixture IV, reeds 16.8.4) Swell 16 (6x8' flues, Mixture III, 16.8.8.8.4 reeds, incl Vox Humana) Choir 9 (Piccolo 2', 2x8' orchestral reeds) Pedal 11 (incl. 16.8 reeds)

Action "electric" (? electro-pneumatic)

Casework Handsome case in polished mahogany, some carving; display pipes stencilled in gilt & colours.

Dimensions 10' wide (sic) approx 16' high 16' deep

Contact Mrs. Hilary Aggett, [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] [REDACTED]

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## CONFERENCE

Following the great success of our residential conference held in Manchester last summer, it has been decided to hold another residential conference this year. The venue is Newcastle-on-Tyne, and we are most grateful for Dr. Donald Wright's good offices in organising the programme and the bookings.

Details, and a booking form are being distributed with this issue of the Reporter and it is hoped that many members will find themselves able to fill in the booking form and join us at Newcastle in July. The main business of the conference will be a reasonably detailed study of two modern organs, both placed in a liturgical location; one organ is by a British builder, and one by a foreign builder; one is in an Anglican church, and one in a Roman Catholic church. We are fortunate to have secured the services of Gillian Weir and Peter Le Huray, respectively to demonstrate and discuss the Hexham and Wallsend organs. Since the enclosed prospectus of the conference was produced, we have received acceptances of our invitation to take part in the seminar on the English Cathedral organ from Dr. Francis Jackson of York Minster, and Jonathan Bielby of Wakefield Cathedral. We therefore have every expectation that this will prove a stimulating and memorable conference, and express the hope that members will turn out in force to support the society on this occasion.



# TWO VICTORIAN ORGANS

\*\* The Editor is always glad to receive material from anybody concerning the fate of historic British organs. The following article by Mr. Shepherd is included, first, because of the intrinsic merit of the organs discussed, and, secondly, because it describes the all-too-typically insecure situation in which many fine Victorian organs now find themselves. Further contributions, whether by those in business as organ builders, or others, will be most welcome.

The two organs are situated about two miles apart in South London churches, one at Stockwell Baptist Church, and the other at S. Paul's Church, Battersea. In both cases the organs had laid unused for several years, and may well have been scrapped.

The first and more interesting organ, at Stockwell Baptist Chapel, was built in c. 1865 by the fine South London firm of A. Hunter. The building itself is a fairly typical large nonconformist chapel of the period, seating originally about one thousand worshippers. The interior has a curving iron fronted gallery right round the building, with the organ in the gallery behind the pulpit in a free standing position. The acoustics are quite helpful. The appearance of the organ harmonises with the building as it has a simple Victorian classical case. The layout is also classical in style, the Swell being above and behind the Great, with the Pedal stop being arranged in sides at each end of the manual soundboards. The action is tracker throughout.

Juvenile arsonists set fire to the church in 1973. Fortunately, the damage to the church - though substantial, was not irreparable. The organ escaped with only slight damage, namely, blistering of the paintwork, slight warping of the drawstop slides, slight worsening of the runnings in the soundboards, and some soot in the Great pipework, etc. However, there was doubt as to the future of the building, and although we submitted an estimate for cleaning and checking the organ, no action was taken.

We next saw the organ, as a result of personal enquiry, some  $4\frac{1}{2}$  years later. Following a request to see the organ, we were taken into the building, but discovered that when re-wiring had taken place, the organ blower and lights had not been connected up. I found that we could run a temporary lead to a point and get the blower going. The church members were overjoyed to hear the organ and to know it would play. Unfortunately, the architect responsible for the refurbishing after the fire had had a "brilliant" idea, namely, to erect a sort of marquee hanging from a steel bar fixed to the ceiling, with the velarium material fitting over the gallery front. The idea of this was to save the cost of having to decorate the upper part of the building above gallery level. The organ was thought past doing anything with.

Although, ideally, several thousand pounds should have been spent on restoring

\* Whilst we are very happy to include articles by organ builders, it must be pointed out that such inclusion should not be interpreted as a commendation of any particular builder's work, with which the Council of BIOS may not, in any case, be acquainted. - Editor

and cleaning the organ, rather than let the organ lie dormant and forgotten above the velarium tent, I said that we would be willing to spend a few days cleaning the worst of the dust from the pipe flues, repairing action breakages, adjusting the action, and regulating and re-tuning the pipes, if the congregation would get the blower and console lights wired up. This they gladly consented to do, and we spent 4½ days getting the instrument back into reasonable playing order. The velarium tent was lifted up some inches near the console, and the organ is now used again for services.

Like all the best Victorian organs this instrument has a comparatively gentle, yet carrying tone. Unfortunately, at some stage in the organ's history, the two upper ranks of the Great four rank mixture were removed, but the full ensembles remain surprisingly full and bright. The trebles are very slightly flutey, and the choruses a little less ringing in tone than two other Hunters of similar period, at S. Alphege's, Burnt Oak, Hendon, and Christ Church, North Brixton. The flutes are of stopped metal from mid. c on the 8's, and throughout, on the 4's. The Clarinet is a typical English Cremona. The Pedal Open Diapason is a gentle, though pervading stop, quite unlike the later Open Woods.

<u>Great</u>		<u>Swell</u>		<u>Pedal</u>	
Double Open Diap.	16	Double Diap. Treble	16	Pedal Diapason	16
Open Diapason	8	Double Diap. Bass	16		
Stopped Diapason	8	Open Diapason	8	<u>Couplers</u>	
Dulciana	8	Stopped Diapason	8	Swell to Great	
Principal	4	Principal	4	Swell to Pedal	
Flute	4	Mixture	(now)II	Great to Pedal	
Twelfth	2 $\frac{2}{3}$	Horn	8		
Fifteenth	2	Oboe	8	3 comps to Swell	
Mixture	(now)II	Clarion	4	3 comps to Great	
Trumpet	8			Kick stick Swell Pedal	
Clarionet (c)	8				

Compasses: C - g''' and C - f'                      Straight and flat pedal board

Original Mixture Compositions:

<u>Great</u> : C-f	19.22.26.29	<u>Swell</u> : C-c'	15.19.22
fs-b'	15.19.22.26	c's-g'''	8.12.15
c'-g'''	1.8.12.15		

The second organ is in S. Paul's Battersea, and was built by Henry Jones, c. 1875. We first saw this instrument several years ago, at which time the church (a typical Victorian Gothic building) was disused; there was talk of its being used as a community centre and the organ being bricked up in its transept gallery, or else broken up and sold in parts. We heard no more until eighteen months ago, when the Vicar contacted us. The church had been made into a community centre, but part of the building had been retained for worship, together with the organ. The job we were asked to do was to tune the organ and check it for the opening celebrations. However, we were shocked when we arrived, to see that during the building operations a lot of damage had been done to the interior of the organ.

The building itself was virtually unrecognisable inside. Only the first bay of the nave plus the area under the organ gallery and the apsidal chancel area can be used for worship. The chancel area is shut off when not in use. The first bay of the nave, however, also doubles as a small hall. Above this is the varnished organ gallery front with folding double doors completely obscuring the organ from

sight, other than when it is being used during services. Unfortunately, even with these doors open there is less than half the original area for the tone to get out (9' long, by 4'9" high) as there is a false ceiling, lined with acoustic tiles which are so beloved of architects.

In the process of reconstructing the building, the front pipes of the organ had been removed, and the contractors stood ladders on the Great rack-boards, badly damaging dozens of pipes, and causing plaster and dust to drop into pipes. The front pipes had been replaced upside down, and looked like rockets ready for firing. I told the Vicar that we would need to take the badly crushed and bent pipes away to repair, and spend several days on cleaning the pipe flues and repairing action breakages. After spending several days in our workshop repairing and soldering the pipes we fitted them back and cleaned the vital parts of the Great pipes and Swell trebles, regulating and tuning the organ.

The only major alterations which the organ has sustained in its history are the unfortunate removal of the upper rank of the Great Mixture, and the addition of tuning slides. The Swell Mixture seems never, despite its stop knob, to have had more than two ranks, and nor does it appear that the Great "Sesquialtera" ever incorporated a tierce. The Great Harmonic Flute runs into the Principal bass below tenor c, as is common in Henry Jones organs.

<u>Great</u>		<u>Swell</u>		<u>Pedal</u>	
Open Diapason	8	Double Diapason	16	Open Diap. (wd)	16
Stopped Diap. (c'-g''' op.)	8	Open Diapason	8	Bourdon (wd)	16
Gamba	8	Lieblich Gedackt	8	Violoncello (wd)	8
Dulciana	8	Keraulophon	8		
Principal	4	Principal	4	<u>Couplers</u>	
Flute (harmonic)	4	Mixture (19.22)	II	Swell to Great	
Fifteenth	2	Cornopean	8	Swell to Pedal	
Sesquialtera (now 15.19) III		Hautboy (c)	8	Great to Pedal	
Trumpet	8				
Cremona (c)	8	Kick stick Swell Pedal; kick stick to Sw. Trem.			
Compasses: C - g''' and C - e'		Straight & Flat Pedal Board			
Tracker action throughout		3/2 composition pedals to Great/Swell			

In the case of both these instruments, Stockwell and Battersea, ideally, several thousand pounds could have been spent upon restoration work, but we were able to make the organs usable for a comparatively small sum. Neither church would have bothered with their organ if they had had to find large sums of money to renovate it.

John Shepherd

## CARNEGIE

The following statement has been issued by the Carnegie Trustees, and will be of interest to all our members.

"The Trustees of the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust have agreed to consider a limited number of applications from local authorities which cooperate with a vol-

untary society in their concern for the restoration of a fine organ.

"Prior to the formation of the Trust, in 1913 Andrew Carnegie had provided personal grants to many congregations for the installation of church organs. The Trustees continued this work until 1915 when 3,800 organs had been provided with total grant of £600,000.

"For a number of reasons the Trustees are unable to assist with organs in churches but because of their interest in the value and use of fine instruments for the benefit of the public they wish to assist an aspect of the country's musical heritage, namely fine organs in civic buildings.

"Two grants have been promised so far. The first of £10,000 is to the Binns organ in the Town Hall, Rochdale. The second of £12,000 is to the even more famous Willis organ in St. George's Hall, Liverpool. Both are outstanding organs used regularly but requiring substantial restoration to enable better use for the benefit of the public especially for events such as Music Festivals.

"The normal conditions to be agreed with any application are:

- (a) that a local voluntary society is concerned with a public authority about the upkeep and use of the organ;
- (b) that an independent expert report agreed by the Trust indicates the need and value of complete restoration;
- (c) that bona-fide advanced students under supervision can practise on the instrument.

Enquiries from interested groups should be made of Mr. Geoffrey Lord, Secretary, the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust, Comely Park House, Dunfermline, Fife."

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## BRIEFLY . . . . .

Our congratulations are due to Jim Berron and David Wickens, both of whom have recently taken on responsibilities as diocesan organ advisers.

An appeal has been launched for the restoration of the organ in Thorney Abbey. This instrument was built originally by Flight (1790) and rebuilt by Robson in 1840. In 1888, it was recast again by Hill & Son, who added the present fine case, leaving it as a two manual and pedal organ, with 18 stops. It is generally regarded as being a very fine instrument - hardly altered since Hill's work - and we hope to see the necessary £14,000 raised, for its "faithful restoration". Contributions should be sent to Major General Ian Gill, Director - Thorney Abbey Appeal Fund (Organ), Thorney, Cambs.

The Scottish Churches Architectural Heritage Trust has been formed under the chairmanship of Magnus Magnusson to work for the preservation of Scottish church buildings which are threatened by lack of funds or concern. We have already contacted the Trust, and offered to assist in any way we can, should they find themselves faced with organ problems of one sort or another.



## NOTES & QUERIES

Whilst looking for the origin of the 1684 Wymondham Harris-Glasspoole organ (Reporter Vol. 1, 4 and Vol. 2, 1) I found that somewhere near the turn of the century an old organ, which had been taken down and stored by Rector Scott of Orford when the west gallery was removed during the usual 'restoration' of the church, was sold 'for a very small sum' by his successor. Since then, successive rectors have been trying to find out about it and where it went, without result. From my original informant came a note written in 1944 by someone who had seen it. "The old case was made of oak and the front gold pipes in good order... well made and good carving... it is most deplorable that such a fine case should be almost given away." On being shown Freeman's book on organ cases he had picked out Enfield and S. Botolph Aldgate as being "something like" Orford. This is a bit contradictory! But as Aldgate is a Harris, I wrote to the Rector of Orford to ask whether 1684 had any significance there, and was there any picture? From a kind reply via the organist I gather that nothing has yet come to light about the organ; but an inscription survives - "This organ and gallery were erected at the sole expense of the Rt. Hon. Francis, Earl of Hertford. 1772." So - unless the organ came from elsewhere in 1772, we have not stumbled upon the source of the Glasspoole instrument, and it is to be hoped that we may be able to unearth something for Orford.

As regards these East Anglian queries, it is just possible that the papers and photographs collected by the late John Rayson the tenth, organ builder of Ipswich, might contain some clues if we could only find out where they went.

A picture is enquired for of the Jordan organ in S. Antholin, Watling Street destroyed in 1875. Hilary Davidson is anxious to trace any descendants of John Gibson (1815-1892) brother-in-law of G. F. Bodley, who was Rector of Kings Stanley 1858-1886, where he designed the organ and supervised its construction in the rectory stable loft by Liddiatt, the local carpenter, who was thus launched on his organ-building career.

Various other enquiries about builders have come in - can anyone help? Mr. Acton of Nottingham is believed to have purchased an historic organ second-hand in 1842. Who was he, and what did he do with this old Swarbrick from Stratford-on-Avon? Other builders enquired about include Thomas Matthews of London; James Newth of Dusley (Berkeley, 1838); Hadfield & Earee (Ampfield) of 199 Hackney Road, and T. Jennings (Salford, Beds) of the same address; R. Ryecroft; E. Kendall of Kensington; William Sprague of Finsbury Pavement; all more or less early nineteenth century: three Bristol men, Lane (Chepstow 1820); S. Palmer (Miston 1880); and Keeler: Thomas Chanatt (Fradswell, 1869); G. Hawkins of Newton Abbot; and E. R. Tyrrell of S. Ives, Cambs.

I found a John Keeler 1831 at Chepstow Roman Catholic in 1945; the late A. R. Davies, Canon of S. Albans, told me that at his first incumbency of Comberton, near Cambridge, a war-memorial organ was installed by Tyrrell in 1920, and that Hilton was also by him; Kendall was "near the Church, Kensington" and made a chamber organ now in S. Paul's Cathedral. Otherwise, I cannot say anything about those listed.

It is noticeable that the queries are usually about small or unknown men. This is

natural, for there is something to work on with the better-known ones, but nothing at all with the others, some of whom come to light with small organs of good quality and some with near-rubbish. However, there are numerous tangled problems about the famous ones.

For example, the Englands. There were three - John, George, and George Pike. George and John were almost certainly brothers, and such an indeterminate phrase as "the elder England" might refer to either, though it is always assumed to mean George - probably because, until recently, John had slipped from notice (1). George Pike has been assumed to be the son of George. But by his own evidence this is not so. He built an organ in 1791 for the Adelphi Chapel. This chapel was moved to Hackney Road, opposite the hospital, and the organ rebuilt by Eagles. The building ultimately became a cinema, and when the organ was dismantled a trade card was found and came into the possession of Noel Mander. It reads "son and successor and late partner to John England."

This information has been made public on numerous occasions in the last two decades, and is noted in Sumner (2), but not all writers have yet caught up with it. More problems follow. George is said by Grove, by H. & R. (3), and by Freeman (1) to have been apprentice and son-in-law to Bridge, himself said by Rimbault (4) to have been apprenticed to Renatus Harris. G. P. has been claimed to be Bridge's grandson; but unless this is an assumption from the idea that he was George's son, which seems most likely, it can only have been true if it were John who married Miss Bridge - unless there was a double wedding! But an old cutting, source unknown, apparently quoting from an unspecified nineteenth century account of the Great Yarmouth organ, says that G. P. E. was grandson of Jordan.

I suppose this could have been an assumption; when he worked on it in 1812 he might have remembered that his grandfather built it in 1732. The consortium Byfield, Jordan, & Bridge seems to have been involved (5) but the actual contract was signed by Jordan, and the local press spoke of it as by "Messieurs Jordan and Harris" (6). But it could be fact. We know that G. P.'s mother was Miss Pike. Could her mother have been a Jordan? The again, a writer in the Christian Remembrancer in 1834, with reference to S. Stephen Walbrook, says that "England" was apprentice to Shrider, presumably the elder, and this is repeated in the Musical Journal in 1841 (7). To add to the melange, Jordan Junior and the Shriders were in some sort of partnership (8) from about 1727 till Jordan's death, as, apparently, was Jordan Junior with John Harris 1732-1741 - for example, an estimate was not accepted at S. Helen Bishopgate from "Abra Jordan John Harris & Co." signed "A. Jordan & Comp." and dated from Budge Row "March ye 2 1741" (9). To add further complications, John Harris and John Byfield were said to be in partnership 1724-1743, and in 1742, Jordan and Bridge worked together at Exeter (10).

Some links were doubtless temporary and ad hoc; some overlap confusingly; and church accounts sometimes only enter the partner who dealt with them on the business side, which can mislead. It is clear that a lot of sorting out needs to be done. To return to the Englands, the tangles do not cease with G. P. E.'s death. On his plate at Midsomer Norton Methodist W. A. A. Nicholls claims to be "son-in-law and successor to the late Mr. G. P. England." James Butler, another of G. P.'s men, having started on his own in 1821, claimed to have taken over from Nicholls in 1823 (11). J. W. Walker was apprentice to Nicholls, says Grove, and successor



him. It has also been claimed that Walker was apprenticed to England. George Parsons on his trade card inside the organ at the Finnish Chapel in Cardiff, calls himself "Conductor of the Business of the late celebrated Mr. G. P. England for 14 years" (12).

But enough, before we become totally obfuscated. And as we started with Renatus Harris, let us end with him. The late A. G. Hoar in 1934 visited Wood Street Congregational, Barnet, and was told that a recent organist, Mr. C. W. Harris, was a descendant of Renatus.

B. B. Edmonds

#### Notes

- (1) Organ XX pp.137-9
- (2) 4th edition, p.177
- (3) H. & R. 1877 p.154
- (4) op. cit. p.144
- (5) Pearce Notes p.88
- (6) Norwich Gazette 8.December 1733
- (7) Vol. I, p.163
- (8) Musical News 11 July 1903; 27 Feb 1909, re Westminster Abbey; Organ II pp137-8
- (9) Cox, J. E. Annals of St. Helen's Bishopgate (1876) pp152-155
- (10) Cathedral Chapter Act Book No. 10
- (11) Musical Standard 2 Feb 1863 (obituary): All Hallows the Great, Vestry Minutes 1786-1833 p.465 (1827).
- (12) ex inf R.U.Gill, organ builder, Cardiff, in 1954

## TIBIA PLENA

It will always remain a matter of debate what BIOS' attitude should be towards the preservation of organs which have a place in the annals of English organ building, but have lost all but a curiosity value as musical instruments. Possibly, the ideal solution would be the establishment of a museum where such curiosities could be preserved. One such curiosity has become redundant recently with the closure of a church in Stourport. It is a two manual and pedal organ by Robert Hope-Jones (no date given, but presumably c. 1895), said to be largely untouched. Our informant comments, "it sounds terrible but has a certain local notoriety." Fortunately, there seems no cause for BIOS to decide whether it ought to take an interest in re-housing the instrument, because a local institution seems likely to take it on. The specification is as follows:

<u>Great</u>		<u>Swell</u>		<u>Pedal</u>	
Rohr Gedect	16	Lieblich Gedect	8	Tibia Profunda	16
Tibia Plena	8	Viol D'Orchestre	8	Double (Great)	16
Open Diapason	8	Echo Salicional	8	Diaphonic Horn	16
Hohl Flute	8	Vox Angelica	8		
Viol D'Amore	8	Gemshorn	4	Sw-Gt sub/uni/octave	
Principal	4	Cornocean	8	Sw sub/octave	
Super Octave	4 (?2)			3 comp. peds each to Gt/Sw	



## 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 oversea and continental schools of organ building in Britain.