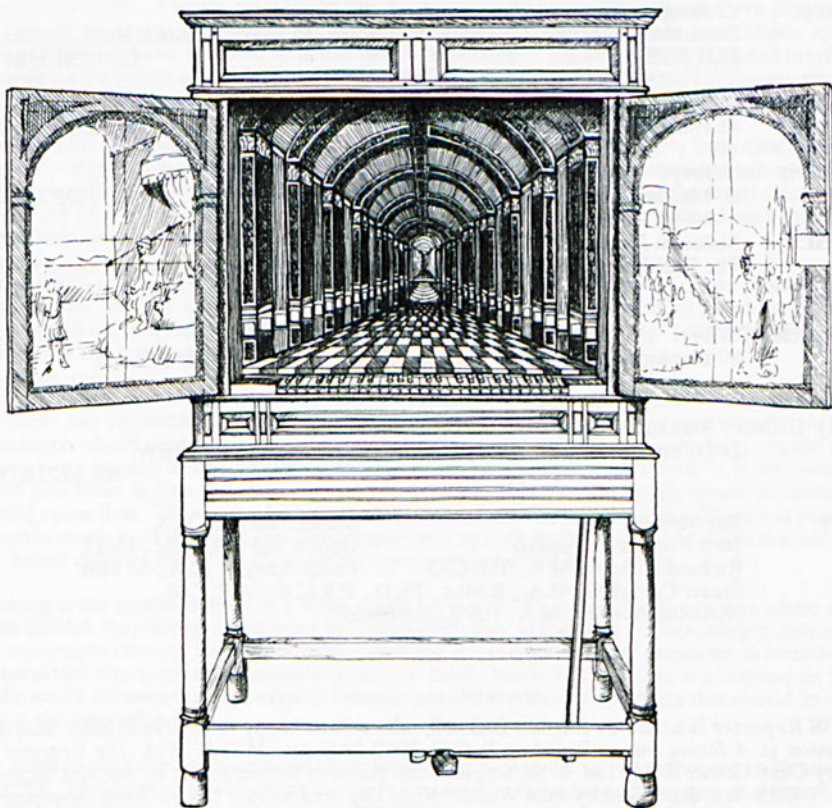


BIOS REPORTER



formerly Huxtable Hall



Stephen Siskell 1988

Volume Thirteen, No. 3 (July 1989)

BIOS

Chairman: Donald Wright, B.Sc., Ph.D.

Secretary: Christopher Kent, M.Mus., F.R.C.O., Ph.D.

Treasurer: Richard Hird, M.A., M.R.T.P.I., L.T.C.L.

Membership Secretary: John Whittle, B.Sc., Ph.D.

Archivist: Malcolm Jones, B.A., Dip.Th., A.L.A.

Redundancies Officer: David Wickens, M.A., A.R.C.O., L.R.A.M.

Publicity Officer: Richard Pople, M.B.E., F.I.P.M., A.R.C.O.

Council: Jim Berrow
John Brennan (co-opted)
Richard Hobson, M.A., F.R.C.O. Philip Sawyer, M.A., M.Mus.
Stuart Campbell, M.A., B.Mus., Ph.D., F.R.C.O., A.R.C.M.
Nicholas Plumley, M.A., F.S.A. (co-opted)
Stephen Bicknell B.A.
Gerald Sumner, B.Sc., Ph.D.

The **BIOS Reporter** is edited by Stephen Bicknell, who will be happy to receive suitable material for inclusion at: [redacted]. The Reporter is printed by Chas. Goater & Son Ltd. in Nottingham, and prepared for the printer by Stephen Bicknell and John Whittle. It is distributed by John Whittle, Nigel Day, and Alistair Dixon. To all these people the Council extends its thanks. Correspondence arising from **Notes & Queries** should be sent to the Revd. B.B.Edmonds at: [redacted] 8QT.

The Annual Subscription to BIOS is £15.00 (ordinary) or £10.00 (students and senior citizens). BIOS publications can be sent by Air Mail to overseas destinations for a further annual premium of £6.00.

Some back issues of the Reporter are available from the Editor, from Volume 4 Number 1 onwards, with some interruptions. These are available at a cost of 25p each plus postage and packing. Please enquire at the address given above for further details. Back issues of the BIOS Journal are available from: The Positif Press, 130 Southfield Road, Oxford OX4 1PA.

Editorial

I apologise for the rather lurid nature of the article that follows this Editorial. Though it contains several words of more than two syllables, it has the air of having been written by someone more at home describing the cost of strawberries in Wimbledon fortnight or the activities of dodgy double-glazing salesmen. It seems quite likely that the story has been simplified, words have been taken out of context, and what might have started as a simple misunderstanding has been blown up into an undignified *brouhaha*. It should be added that the reprinting of the article is not intended to reflect any opinion on the action or words of the parties involved, but simply as a means of drawing attention to an event highlighting current interest in the sale and use of new ivory.

Despite what we have all been told in the last few months, there is a perfectly legitimate trade in new ivory that does not involve elephants killed by poachers. The article reprinted below was followed a day or two later by a letter making just this point. In any case, awareness of the moral dilemma posed by the use of ivory has only recently come upon us; few of us can have realised until this year that organ building could be implicated in a tale concerning a threat to wildlife.

It is certainly interesting, and perhaps salutary, that our attention is suddenly drawn to wider issues of conservation, outside our own rather limited field. It will now be necessary for those involved in organ building, whether as craftsmen, consultants or customers, to make decisions on whether the use of new ivory is justified.

For this writer, at least, the situation is quite clear. New organs do not need ivory: bone keys are excellent and stopknobs or labels can be made of many other high quality natural materials. In the restoration of old organs, all the conventional rules would suggest that only ivory should be used where ivory existed before. However, so long as the very existence of a trade in ivory continues to mean that there is also a certain amount of poaching, then perhaps wider issues of conservation should come first. There must be an overall balance. I am reminded of the brilliant and compelling advertisements used in recent years by campaigners against the fur trade: the fashionable lady with a fur draped casually across her shoulder - leaving a trail of blood in her wake.

Looking at our special interest in a wider context is helpful, for ivory is only one area where we need to be careful. Anyone involved in an industry which uses timber will be increasingly aware of how the continuous demand for raw material, combined with complex social pressures, is contributing in no uncertain way to the de-forestation of parts of South America. The future implications on the state of the world are uncertain, but even an optimist can see that there are dangers that should be checked before the trees are gone.

For generations there has been a certain mystique attached to the use of mahogany in English organ building. This stems originally from its use in casework in the eighteenth century, at a time when the outward appearance of the organ was a spectacular expression of the English love of fine cabinet-making. During the nineteenth century the stability and predictability of mahogany meant that was increasingly used for other components: action parts, soundboard tables and upperboards. This has given the inside of many English organs a certain 'look', still cherished by many builders today.

However, 'mahogany' as it was understood to Chippendale and even to Father Willis is no longer with us. The name is now used to cover reddish coloured hardwoods of many different types; the current French term *bois exotiques* is perhaps a more accurate reflection of their varied origins. All we need to know now is that mahogany comes from the stripping of rain forests.

Europe has its own indigenous hardwoods; also there are other sources of cheap durable timber, such as North America, where many species are grown specially for lumber. We need look no further.

Organ builders will often find it useful to look outside their own world. I would hope that these are two areas where the sensitive craftsman and his patrons will take immediate action.

Church in feud over ivory used on organ

Phil Reeves

The vicar at one of the Church of England's more prosperous establishments has said he would like to slice his archdeacon's throat and "let the blood into the gutters to fructify the drains".

This energetic, if somewhat pagan, outburst is a measure of the current state of emotions at the Church of the Annunciation, near Marble Arch in London, a High Church institution which draws a small but select congregation from places like Wimbledon and Tunbridge Wells.

The point at issue is the recent £40,000 restoration of its 1911 Rothwell organ, which is much valued both by the *cognoscenti* of London's music colleges, who occasionally perform there, and by the church's semi-professional choir.

For despite the sensitivities of the vicar, Father Michael Burgess, church bureaucrats decided they wanted the three keyboards and 35 stops of this rare organ to be restored with ivory.

"I wouldn't want any elephants to be killed just to have ivory keys," Fr. Burgess said, observing in passing that the Church was "being choked to death by bureaucrats".

According to Fr. Burgess, the ivory decree came in the form of a recommendation by the diocesan board, which also promised to get a grant to cover the £2,000 bill.

To add insult to injury, the diocese (London) not only placed the parish in a moral quandary over elephants, it also refused to pay. The cost of the restoration had to be paid by the parish, ivory included.

The decision to block the money came after the recent appointment of a new archdeacon, the Venerable George Cassidy. Archdeacon Cassidy said: "I am led to believe a verbal promise was made by my predecessor but where the money was supposed to come from, I don't know."

He thought it better not to comment on Fr Burgess's views on throat-cutting.

Normal practice for keyboard restorers is to use a mixture of old unworn keys and new ones, so the amount of fresh ivory at the church is unclear.

(This article is reprinted from **The Independent** for 10th June 1989 and appears here by kind permission of The Independent Newspaper Publishing pic)

Reports

East Germany - 3rd-9th April 1989

Some thirty BIOS members spent several April days in search of the sound of Gottfried Silbermann. Eighteenth century organs can seldom be expected to have survived in their original state, and we saw some which reflected changing taste and fortune. Smaller instruments in villages off the beaten track often have most to offer scholarly enquirers, and on this occasion the single-manual instrument in the neglected cemetery chapel of Rotha gave general satisfaction, while the plight of the Nassau congregation prompted the visitors to take a collection in support of local efforts to preserve a revered heritage.

We were fortunate in the resident players who demonstrated the instruments, and nowhere more than at the builder's large early masterpiece in the Cathedral in Frieberg, where Dietrich Wagler performed

music by J.L.Krebs and C16rambault with great skill. The present condition of this instrument following years of careful restoration brought pleasure, whereas the three-manual instrument in the Catholic Court Chapel in Dresden, a very late example of Silbermann's work, gave less indication of its distinctive quality. The Jacobikirche and Petrikirche in Freiberg, the Georgenkirchs in Rotha, and the church in Reinhardtsgrimma contained the other instruments visited. For a short tour, this was a balanced selection of the surviving organs.

A judicious blend of church visits, lectures and tourist activities ensured that our days based in Dresden were sensibly paced and enjoyable. We attended a performance of *Così fan tutte* at the recently re-opened Semper opera house. We heard lectures by Stephen Bicknell, who provoked ideas sufficient for several papers on the organ in the eighteenth century, by Stuart Cambell on Gottfried Silbermann and and J.S.Bach, by Christopher Kent on organist-composers of Silbermann's time and place, and by Roger Pulham on links between the Silbermanns and French organbuilding of their day. Donald Wright presented a lavishly illustrated account of the country most of us were visiting for the first time. He and Anthony Cooke deserve our gratitude for arranging a rewarding study tour, though they assured us that most of the all-important Silbermann programme was contrived by our German guide on our arrival.

BIOS groups can rarely have dwelt in such splendour. We knew we were in first-class accomodation because the portions of food in the hotel restaurants were minuscule. Two lunches taken in country inns showed the health of the German appetite for traditional native cuisine. From inside our five-star Potemkin villages - known as the Hotel Bellevue and, for one night, the Merkur in Leipzig - we saw little of the real world outside, though as we travelled about we could observe the shabby permanently-scaffolded buildings in the towns and by contrast sometimes a largeish farmhouse gleaming with fresh paint. Several mysteries remained, not all involving Gottfried Silbermann.

Stuart Campbell

Northampton - Saturday 13th May 1989
Examining the Historic English Organ 5 - Bellows Systems

Dominic Gwynn's annual seminars on aspects of organ design have now become established as a first-class technical forum. This year was no exception. The menu started with an historical introduction, followed after lunch by an examination of practical theory and a lively discussion on wind systems in the contemporary organ.

Dominic Gwynn began in the 10th century with Wulstan's famous poem about the organ in Winchester Cathedral with

Twelve bellows set out in a row,
While fourteen lie below,
Their alternating blasts supply vast quantities of wind,
Worked by the might of seventy strong men,
Labouring with their arms, running with sweat,
Each urging his companions to force the wind up.'

Aided by handouts of early prints of bellows from the Hydraulis to Dom Bedos, this session set the foundation for the coverage by Martin Renshaw and David Wickens of the important developments in the second half of the eighteenth century. This was the time when the reservoir bellows and the horizontal bellows were pioneered by English builders, though exactly who did what is still not entirely clear.

John Mander's paper on the practical and theoretical aspects covered the many rules of thumb which have been put forward for the calculation of wind consumption and of wind trunk size. Many of the theories proposed over the years have a very thin scientific basis, to say the least, and the discussion revealed that, even today, we still lack a full understanding of the principles of wind-trunk design.

The discussion on contemporary wind systems was led by Stephen Bicknell. It disclosed a fairly

general disappointment with 'schwimmer' regulators, despite their compactness, and an interest in current American experiments with a combination of electric blowing and feeder-bellows. This is a field where organs design is still developing and where there is already much diversity of practice.

John Norman

Fourteen people went on a tour of three organs the following day. Edward Bennett introduced and played the 1790 chamber organ by Robert and William Gray at Burghley House. David Wickens did the same for the 1786 Samuel Green chamber organ at St. Mary, Edith Weston. Martin Goetze gave a magisterial introduction to the organ at St. Nicholas, Stanford on Avon, with the help of his minutely detailed drawings, and we had the opportunity to examine the remains. The Northamptonshire countryside was at its most beautiful, and it was a most enjoyable day.

We were particularly pleased to have fom- members of the International Society of Organbuilders with us for the weekend. I doubt if cooperation between our two societies will take quite this form again, organised at short notice as it was, but it would be nice to think that this might be the first and not the last activity which we share.

Dominic Gwynn

Conferences

London Wednesday 30th August - Saturday 2nd September 1989

In conjunction with the annual conference of the Diocesan Organs Advisers

1. **Hopkins & Rimbault and After: London Organs of the 19th and 20th Centuries**
2. **Culture & Commerce before and after the Great Exhibition**
3. **The Bicentenary of William Hill (b. 1789)**

Organised by Donald Findlay with Donald Wright & Nicholas Thistlethwaite.

Our proposal for a two-day conference in London has grown in scope, thanks to kind assistance from and collaboration with the Diocesan Organs Advisers. While not strictly speaking a residential conference - unfortunately it has not proved possible to arrange group accommodation on this occasion - we hope that many members will be with us, either living within reach of London, or staying with friends or relatives in the area. The programme is full of interest, and it is hoped that it will include visits to the following organs:

Christ Church Spitalfields - Bridge 1735; rebuilt on several occasions, now silent. **St. Benet Fink Tottenham** - Willis 1884 in Samuel Green case. **St. Andrew Stoke Newington** - Walker 1886. **St. John Brownwood Park** - Hill 1883. **St. Martin Ludgate Hill** - Bates 1845. **St. Andrew Holborn** - Mander 1989, in the Victorian manner (recital). **St. Paul Shadwell** - Elliot 1820, possibly incorporating earlier material. **St. Anne Limehouse** - Gray & Davison 1851, from the Great Exhibition. **St. John Hyde Park Crescent** - Hill 1865. **St. Dominic's Priory Haverstock Hill** - Willis 1867 & 1888

Also talks by Ian Bell, Mark Venning, Michael Gillingham, Cecil Clutton, Stephen Bicknell and Nicholas Thistlethwaite (the last named inviting us to celebrate the bicentenary of the birth of William Hill). Further details of this important and exciting event appear on a sheet accompanying this issue of the Reporter, together with an application form.

Portsmouth & Romsey - Postponed to spring 1990

Organised by Nicholas Plumley

Owing to illness the conference has been postponed to take place early next year. It will be centred round two large vintage Walker organs, reflecting aspects of the relatively unfamiliar nineteenth century work of this well-known firm. They are the 1858/1888 organ at Romsey Abbey, designed by Ousley, and the 1891 instrument at St. Mary's Portsea, retaining its unusual Clarion Mixtures on

Great and Swell. Nicholas Plumley will talk about the history of the company. Full details of this conference will appear in due course.

Annual Residential Conference 1990

Glasgow

Organised by Stuart Campbell

Plans for this conference are well in hand, coinciding with Glasgow's nomination as European City of Culture for 1990. Details of this event will be published in due course.

Annual Residential Conference 1991

Eire

Plans are being made for a conference at Maynooth. This will provide an ideal base for visits to many interesting Irish organs.

AGM

The Annual General Meeting of the British Institute of Organ Studies will be held at 5.30 p.m. on Friday 1st September 1989 at St. Anne's Church, Limehouse, London E14. The church is situated on the south side of Commercial Rd., and is near Limehouse station on the Docklands Light Railway.

The Wilkinson organ in Preston Public Hall

Donald Wright

We have much pleasure in announcing that the threat to this magnificent 4 manual 56 stop survival from the last century appears to have been lifted, at least for the time being. Members will recall the campaign valiantly led by Dr. Gerald Sumner for the preservation of this instrument which resulted in the Public Enquiry in 1979 after which the Secretary of State for the Environment placed a preservation order on the organ - but not on the building which contained it. His stated condition that "the organ shall be removed and stored with such care as to ensure its retention for possible re-use elsewhere as appropriate" caused considerable embarrassment to the Lancashire County Council who wished to demolish the hall to make way for a new bypass. It was as the result of the dilemma thus created that the co-operation of BIOS was formally sought in 1986.

Our advice was principally that estimates for the dismantling and storage of the instrument should be obtained from organ builders who had appropriate experience in the field - and when figures for such an exercise were obtained, the L.C.C. agreed to provide a substantial sum to fund the cost of the removal if a suitable new home was found.

In the April 1988 Reporter - as well as in many other outlets in the musical press - at the request of the County Planning Officer, an announcement appeared concerning the availability of the instrument for transfer; at the same time BIOS council members individually approached possible interested parties both at home and overseas. We have to admit however that at that time we had very little hope that this could prove to be a successful venture.

Surprisingly enough there were two requests for the instrument - one from the authorities at a large Catholic church in Preston and the second from the Redundant Churches Fund on behalf of All Souls, Haley Hill, in Halifax. The County Planning Officer once more sought the advice of BIOS requesting from us an assessment of the potential of the two sites. Space here does not permit a full account, but suffice it to say that it was clear that the facilities at the redundant church of All Souls

offered a better opportunity for fulfilling both the spirit and the letter of the requirements of the Secretary of State. This magnificent building - of vast proportions and arguably one of the best creations of Giles Gilbert Scott - is at present empty and unused, its security and future we have been told is assured and it can provide sufficient space for the organ to be conservatively restored as a complete entity in appropriate conditions.

We are delighted to report that the Lancashire County Council accepted our recommendation and agreed to accept the "very welcome offer of the Redundant Churches Fund to rebuild the organ in its entirety and without change in the south transept of All Souls Church in Halifax". We understand that the dismantling and transfer process may begin as early as October of this year. Clearly though the question of the restoration will depend upon the availability of funds to carry it out.

At least the instrument will be saved from the bulldozer, a fate it could well have suffered in Preston - and BIOS can feel a justifiable sense of satisfaction in having been instrumental in saving what could be regarded as one of the most important historic survivals in the country - a veritable coup!

Special Offer

The Organists of the City of London 1666 - 1850 by **Donovan Dawe**. Hardback; 192pp. This important and invaluable work of reference, reviewed in BIOS Journal 8, has now been remaindered by its publisher, and is available from the author for only £4.95 (original price £18.00). Enquiries should be addressed to D.A.Dawe, [REDACTED].

The Westfield College Organ

Gerard Verloop

This organ, advertised for sale in the BIOS Reporter for July 1980 (Vol.4 No.2 p.7) because it was considered too feeble for the chapel of Westfield College, London, went to Holland to a private owner. It is now in the Kooger Kerk in Zuid-Scharwoude (near Alkmaar), a church under supervision of a foundation and often used for cultural purposes, including many concerts.

Much of the instrument's history remained obscure until very recently. The tuning files of Rushworth & Dreaper, who looked after it at Westfield College, mentioned William Pilcher as the builder and gave the date 1844, but without mentioning the source from which this information was derived. On the Bourdon windchest is written in pencil: *W.Pilcher 1850*. It was not clear if this might indicate an addition or alteration, or the original builder's signature. Paper glued on the bellows showed the year 1837, the style of the case, too, seemed to point to c1844. Of the subsequent history very little was known before 1946, when the organ passed from the hands of the original family into the possession of Westfield College.

Through the very generous hospitality of Mr. and Mrs. Louis Carus, the retired Head of Birmingham School of Music and living in Powick near Worcester, I was given the opportunity to investigate further. Before 1946 the organ had been in their family, and an important part of the family archive is stored at their house.

The investigation was most rewarding. To my great surprise it was not only possible to derive some interesting details from account books, letters and diaries, but also three original documents from 1851 were discovered. One of these, a description written by the first owner, gave the specification and other details of the organ when new; the other was a receipt signed by the builder and the third was a sketch drawing of the organ.

The name of the builder appeared to be correct: William Pilcher. He made the organ in 1850-51 for Miss Eleanora Grant Macdowall, who lived with her widowed mother in London, at 65 Baker Street. She paid £145 for the organ - not very much for a two-manual chamber organ of 9 stops in a sizeable

rosewood veneered mahogany case with quite a bit of carving. She wrote in her diary that it was finished on April 20th, 1851.

The organ is relatively well preserved: apart from five or six pipes all the original pipework is still present. About the voicing some doubt seems to be justified. Possibly August Gem changed it slightly in 1898 when he received £5-10-0. It is to be regretted that the original pedalboard is lost: the organ now has a radiating pedalboard of 30 notes, made by Hele in 1899 but in all probability attached to the organ by Rushworth & Dreaper.

Anyone interested in the organ is most welcome to visit it. Just make contact with me (address given below) and you will have ample opportunity to play it and the main organ in the Kooger Kerk, a 24 stop Van Dam instrument of 1881. Both are in excellent condition and are used for specific organ recitals once a month.

Gerard Verloop, [REDACTED]

Miss Macdowall's description of the organ:-

Height - 10 feet 6 inches -
Depth - 3 feet 2 ditto -
Width of Front - 6 feet 4 do. -

Great organ - five octaves -
Swell organ - four octaves - extends to tenor C.
an octave and a half of (german) Foot pedals -
4 Composition Pedals -
A General Venetian Swell
Foot and Hand Blower -

Stops -
Stop Diapason Bass
Stop Diapason Treble
Open Diapason
Principal
Fifteenth
Sesquialtra
Double Diapasons -
Ditto to Great organ -

Swell organ,
Dulciana -
Flute -
Celestina -

There are also Pedal - Key. & Coupler (Stops)

There are 610 Pipes -

they are arranged as compactly as was practical consistent with the perfect action of the Organ, as it was built for an assigned space; but had this not been the case, the instrument might have been half as large again -

The case is most elegant in design, & the materials more beautiful than is usual for the purpose - exquisitely marked rosewood, relieved by delicate carving, and a profusion of gill moulded ornament - the front pipes are gilt.

The organ is powerful, rich, and sweet, and the tone of the "Bourbons" is especially fine - It is in perfect condition - it is also a thoroughly well made instrument, every detail having been completed under the constant and minute inspection of the Owner - the various & complicated machinery consists of 40,000 pieces -

The receipt for the organ:-

April 28th 1851 Miss Macdowall

To Wm Pilcher

For a Rosewood organ with Two Rows of Keys as agreed - £145

Allowed for old Square Piano

15

130

Received account April 28th 1851 the Sum of Eighty Pounds, [signed] Wm. Pilcher

June 14th Received Fifty Pounds being in Full, [signed] Wm. Pilcher

Remembrancer

Continuing our reprints of articles from the **Christian Remembrancer** 1833-36

ORGANO - HISTORICA *Or the History of Cathedral and Parochial Organs*

No. IX. - THE ORGAN AT THE ROYAL HOSPITAL CHAPEL, GREENWICH.

However liberal may have been the praise with which we have bestowed on the organs and organ builders described in our former numbers, we have done it with impartiality; - not considering whether the builders were *English*, or *foreign*.

The instrument we would now analyze, is the workmanship of an English artist, of the name of *Green*. He entered for a short period into partnership with Byfield, and some fine organs of their united workmanship* were produced, bearing their joint names. The one, however, of which we are now treating was built by Green alone, in 1789, and at the cost of 1,000/., exclusive of the case. The organs built by this artist are characterised by a peculiar sweetness and delicacy of tone, entirely original; and, probably, in this respect, he has never been excelled. He was the first who used the Venetian opening to the swells, and who brought to its present perfection the dulciana stop. In several of his organs, two dulcianans are to be found, one in the choir and the other in the swell; and so much was the effect of these admired, that he even ventured, in some of his later instruments, to introduce a third.

We possess more Cathedral and Collegiate organs of this builder's construction than of any other; but, although patronized as he was by his Majesty George III., and long at the head of his profession, this admirable artist scarcely obtained a moderate competency. His zeal for the mechanical improvement of the organ consumed much of his valuable time in experimental labours, which to him produced little or no emolument; and it is painful to know, that a man so eminent in his profession, should not, at his decease, be able to leave even a slender provision for his family. § *** §

* Amongst this number will be found the one at Reading, built 1770, and one at Islington church, built in 1771.

t In the organs at the Chapel Royal, Windsor, and Rochester Cathedral, we find a third *dulciana*, called *dulciana principal*.

t See an account of the number of organs built by this artist, in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, for June, 1814.

§ Mr. Samuel Green, organ-builder to the King, died at Isleworth, Sept. 14, 1796, at the age of 56. He left a wife and two daughters; one of whom is still living, and receives a *pension* of 20/. per ann. by the kindness of His Majesty George III. This is her sole dependence.-*Ed.*

This instrument possesses the following stops:-

GREAT ORGAN.	4 Fifteenth.	
	5 Bassoon.	
1 Stop Diapason.		
2 Open ditto.		295 pipes
3 Ditto ditto.		
4 Principal.		
5 Flute.		
6 Twelfth.		
7 Fifteenth.		
8 Sesquialtra. 3 ranks.		
9 Mixture. 2 ditto.		
10 Trumpet.		
11 Comet.		
		883 pipes.
CHOIR ORGAN.		
	Choir,	480 pipes
	Great organ,	295 ditto
		883 ditto
		—
1 Stop Diapason.		
2 Principal.		
3 Flute.		
	Total number of pipes	1658

The compass of the great and choir organs is from FFF to E in alt, minus the FFF sharp, 59 notes. The swell extends from FF in the bass to E in alt, 48 notes; and then the last octave takes the keys of the choir organ; so that, in appearance, the swell is of the same compass as the other two sets of keys. The scale of open diapasons [sic] is considerably increased in the bass; the FFF, in diameter, measuring about twelve inches. The quality of tone of these diapasons is remarkably fine: the treble part being very pure, and the bass very ponderous. The chorus of the great organ is very rich, but still wants another mixture or furniture stop; and the swell is the most magnificent in England, being (with one exception) of the greatest extent of compass.* It has an octave and a half of German pedals.

This organ, for the first time after its erection, underwent a repair by Mr. James Davis, in 1819. About five years since some mischievous hottentot effected an entrance into it, and filled the pipes with sand and gravel, since which the instrument has never recovered its pristine excellence. The situation in which this organ is placed being so favourable to sound, we would recommend the addition of a double open diapason of wood, as adding greatly to the majesty of the instrument; and also the modern improvements of coupling stops and composition pedals, with a large pair of horizontal bellows, &c.

* There is a new organ, just erected by Mr. Bishop, in the church of St. Edmund the King, Lombard-street, with a swell extending to E in the bass: exactly one note lower than the swell at Greenwich. We shall notice this instrument in a future number.

Dear Sir...

Dear Sir,

I would like to write again on the subject of the preservation of historic organs in Great Britain. The **BIOS Reporter** has thus far come to me by sea mail and I only recently received the January 1989 issue containing a second letter from Mr. Robert Lightband. It is obvious from his second letter that Mr. Lightband has changed his viewpoint. In the January 1988 issue he described small Hill organs with no Great mixture or Pedal reed as being "frustrating to play because of what they don't have". Yet in the second letter we find that Mr. Lightband now advocates no "alteration to the work of such people as Hill, Willis or Snetzler".

Here in Sydney we have a small 3-manual Hill organ of 1910, recently restored with its pneumatic action, cone tuning and original tonal scheme unaltered. It has neither Great mixture nor Pedal reed, yet it is highly regarded by our leading organists and enjoyed for what it is - an Edwardian English organ. Such an instrument would have had little chance of survival in England because eminent organists would have regarded it as limited and unmusical before realising its full potential.

The point about the great organ at Klosterneuburg was not as invalid as Mr. Lightband suggested. Many British organists would find its ancient console, short-octave manuals, large iron stop levers, non-standard pedalboard, flexible winding and unequal temperament totally intolerable. Had it been installed in England there can be no doubt that, at great expense, it would have suffered numerous rebuilds, all undertaken in the name of improvement, and would now have four manuals, a 61/32 compass, electro-pneumatic action, an English full swell and solo Tuba Mirabilis. Whilst judging organs such as Beverley Minster is difficult because of their different pipe vintages, there can be no doubt that had the Cavaille-Coll at Paisley survived it would be a national treasure.

A few years ago I made an extensive tour of Britain and inspected and played many organs. I did not find a single example of a nineteenth century organ which had been restored without tampering. Many Parish Churches I visited in England had rebuilds of nineteenth century organs - instruments which were indeed "violated apparatuses"

In Australia we may not have the ancient ordered landscape of England, nor the heritage of castles and 1000-year-old cathedrals, but we have in contrast a small but important European cultural heritage which we do our best to preserve. The principle difference between the two countries in respect of organs today is that in Australia we are more open to accepting diversity and limitation, whereas in Britain organists still crave uniform eclecticism. It is regrettable that because attitudes are so slow to change in Britain, it seems more than likely that within a few years there will be next to nothing left of the "golden age of English organ-building".

Kelvin Hastie

Redundant Organs

Dyfed

Hill 1910

Disposition: Gt 8.8.8.4.4.8. Sw 8.8.8.8.4.2.8. Ped 16.8.
Action: Mechanical, pedal pneumatic
Casework: Pipe-racks to chancel and north aisle
Dimensions: h 18', w 10', d 8' 6"

London

Hill 1871

Disposition: Gt 8.8.8.8.4.4.3.2.III.8. Sw 16.8.8.4.2.III.8.8. Ped 16.16.
Action: Mechanical; pedal pneumatic
Casework: Pipe-racks to chancel and north aisle
Dimensions: h 16', w 18', d 14'

Shropshire

Hill, undated; moved to present location 1960s
Disposition: Gt 8.8.8.4.4.3.2.II. Sw 8.8.4.2.1.II.8. Ped 16.16.
Action: Mechanical; pedal pneumatic
Casework: Front only
Dimensions: h 14', w 10', d 14' including 2' between Swand Ped

Derbyshire

Ingram 1902; Willis 1905; some Walker 1872 pipework
Disposition: Gt 16.8.8.8.8.8.4.4.3.2.III.8.
Sw 16.8.8.8.8.4.2.III.16.8.8.4.
Ch 8.8.8.8.4.4.2.II.
So 8.8.4.8.8.Tubas 8 & 4.
Ped 32.16.16.16.12.8.8.16.8.
Action: Pneumatic

Berkshire

P.Conacher 1892
Disposition: Gt 8.8.8.8.4.2.8 (CInt). Sw 8.8.8.8.4.2.8.8. Ped 16.
Action: Mechanical
Dimensions: h 15' 6", w 16', d 12'6"

London

Albert C. Pease c.1870
Disposition: Gt 8.8.8.4.2. Sw 8.4.2.8. Ped 16.
Action: Mechanical
Dimensions: h 13' 2" max, w 9' 6", d 6' 10" plus pedalboard

Warwickshire

Anon c.1900
Disposition: Man 8.8.8.4.2. Ped 16.
Action: Mechanical; pedal and 2' added on pneumatics
Dimensions: h 10' 6", w 8' 3", d 4' 6" excluding pedalboard

Gloucestershire

Sweetland 1865
Disposition: Man 8.8.4.4.2. No pedals
Action: Mechanical
Casework: Pipe-rack front

Cambridgeshire

Miller c.1900
Disposition: Gt 8.8.8.4.4.2. Sw 16.8.8.8.8.4.8.8. Ped 16.16.
Action: Mechanical; pedal pneumatic
Casework: Painted pine pipe-rack front
Dimensions" h 20', w 16', d 16'.

For further information and contact addresses, please write to the Redundancies Officer (address inside front cover)

Notes and Queries

Bernard Edmonds

It was in the very early days of the war that 'Officialdom' entered the bus on which I was travelling and inspected all identity cards. Later that day I visited a parishioner and was told 'The invasion has started! They're examining identity cards on the buses!' Many-tongued rumour was indeed running to and fro - a habit it has.

That incident is rather like some organ history. How often does one find someone's guess quoted as fact. A recent example - an elderly organ; visitor A 'It could be a Unowho perhaps'; visitor B 'in that case could the writing on the stop labels be his?'. Report to me by a later visitor 'There's an organ at St. Medusa's-up-the-Creek, they know it's a Unowho because it's his writing on the stop labels'. It wasn't and it wasn't. Other examples, like original testimonials, 'may be examined at our office'.

That was fairly easily dealt with; but distinguishing between guesses propagated as undoubted fact, and accurate information, can be difficult, especially if primary sources are obscure or lacking, and particularly if the statement comes from the past. The root trouble there, I think, is that it is only comparatively recently that the subject has been taken seriously instead of casually by more than a dedicated few. Light-hearted hearsay is still bandied about, but records are nowadays more readily available. Sources should always be noted and, if possible, checked. Some writers have been rather lax about that. It is fatally easy to disseminate organ mythology, and it happens more often than one had thought. I myself.....but we must press on!

The organ factory with 'tall, massive iron fretwork gates' asked about in the last issue may have been **Hill's**. It had a tall archway, as I was told by some who had worked there. It was kept on after the new works had been built 'and we called it the slaughter-house, because there you were on piece-work'. I can't ask them about the gates.

When **Walcker** built a new organ in 1886 for the **German Lutheran Church** in **Alie Street, Whitechapel**, they used the old case by **John England** 1794, and retained it at their 1937 rebuild. I saw it then, and incidentally learned that Dr. Walcker studied his reed design and voicing early this century with **Evenett** of London. Is the case still there? Cases by John are asked about. **J.F.Bentley** cases excite interest. There are ten pages or so about them in his daughter's book (1).

Builders asked about include **Henry Morgan & Son of Wimbledon; Adams & Marshall of Brixton; C.E.Mothersole of Saffron Walden; and E.C.C.Haythorne**, an amateur who built himself an organ. Of Morgan I know only that he restored **St. Andrew Whitehall Park** about 1933. George Adams, after about 20 years with **Walkers**, became foreman with **Lewis**, by 1886 was in business with Marshall (2), by 1888 as **George Adams & Sons**. (I do not know what happened to Marshall; was he **J.W.Marshall** who started up about that time in Wakefield, or his brother who joined him as **Marshall Brothers?**) Adams obtained much material from Lewis; some of his organs were well spoken of, but not many seem to be extant to find out. He built **St. Michael Woolwich**, and a tubular pneumatic organ at **Kent Road Presbyterian, Glasgow** (3).

Mothersole seems to have been a bit of a character. The saying was that in Saffron Walden there was a church, five chapels, and Mr. Mothersole. I do not know whether he actually built any organs, except one 'in conjunction with Bishops' for a local privately-owned hall. He supplied and played the chamber organ 'from a local mansion' now at **Wendens Ambo**. I visited his workshop in West Road in 1947, after his death, in search, not of organs, but of several other items of ecclesiastical furniture in which he dealt.

Haythorne rings a bell, but I cannot tell which. I seem to connect him with Bournemouth. Jim Berrow (4) is anxious for information, and he also asks about **Handley & Dinton** early this century, locality unknown; **Hurry & Co. of Calcutta** ('Hindoo'); and an 'organ person' named **Hobbs** in India and later in London. There is an obituary notice of **J.W.Hinton** in **Musical Opinion** for March 1924, but it tells nothing of how or where he obtained his organ-building skills. Jim would like information please.

The last few organists from 1763 **Universal Director**:

John Stanley. Composer, Organist, and Teacher on the Harpsichord. Hatton Garden.

Richard Ward. Organist and Teacher on the Harpsichord. Budge Row, Cheapside.

John Worgan. Composer and Organist. St. John's Square, Clerkenwell.

John Young. Organist and Violin and one of his Majesty's Band. Red-lion-street, Clerkenwell.

Dr. A.G.Hill bequeathed his notebooks and papers to his family, should they want them, so I was recently informed. What actually happened to them I have not been able to ascertain, as the relevant

solicitor's papers 'have been destroyed'. They might be worth seeking out

I have been asked about a critical passage from **The Organist** 1866 about **Bewsher & Fleetwood** of Liverpool, categorising them as 'Botcher & Firewood'. My experience of unaltered organs by them is limited, but there are several good rebuilds. **W.A.Roberts**, who knew many of their organs, wrote (5) They built many of the church organs hereabouts, and did good work in the old fashioned way; not adventurous, but enduring ... With their honest work ... no-one could find fault'. They worked for at least two cathedrals, and their organ at the old Liverpool Philharmonic Hall had a 5-stop Pedal with a five rank Cymbel and a reed (8ft). So it seems that this was another example of trade jealousy, such as 'Mainly Wrong and Dontknow', 'Brindley and Buster', 'Jerrymander', all aimed at builders who were doing too well for the liking of the opposition.

Of course it was not always name-calling. **Whiteley** of **Chester** in 1876 suffered the displeasure of 'the London builders' in particularly nasty form. More subtle was the treatment of **Taylor of Leicester** between the wars. Even the London builders were not immune from whispering campaigns. Of course this sort of thing is not confined to organs - do you remember about Castrol, Jet Petrol, and Tiptree Jams?

William Allen ('Gulienus') and his son **Charles** ('Carolus') are recorded in Pigot's Directory for 1826, Post Office Directory for 1838, and Trades Directory, with an address 11 Sutton Street, one source saying 1794. This was next door to **Thomas Elliot**, recorded in the 1794 **Musical Directory** at 10 Sutton Street. When **R.W.Davidson** was working on the restoration of an elderly instrument, he found in it a William Allen trade card. The address printed on that was 10 Sutton Street. No shauow of doubt whatever; I checked most carefully because of the Elliot adress. Did he take over from Elliot in 1794? Is there an Elliot connection? The trade card address must be correct, but could all the directories get it wrong for so long?

Charles seems to have taken over about 1830 and a little later **Charles Allen & Co** were at 114 Euston Road. They also worked on pianos, taking out Patent 4431 of 1820 (stringing) and 6140 of 1831 (grooved cast-iron frames).

The editorial note in the last N&Q is interesting. If no really old pipework survives, all connection with the **Harris** organ disappears - except on a 'George Washington's axe' basis - new blade and new handle. As I have now discovered usually reliable sources saying that what **Walker** rebuilt at **St. Michael Blackheath Park** was a **Bishop** organ, the matter is not so well sewn up as I had calculated. I will let you know if and when we 'do get it right!'

By field, Wilcox & Knight have turned up again as builders of an organ in 1763 at **St. Botolph Bishopsgate** (7). Alexander **Congerton** c.1813 was described as organ builder of Southampton Court, **Old St. Paneras**; and in 1840 his son Thomas of Hertford Street, Old St. Paneras. Any information about them or their works will be welcomed by descendants. **Joseph G ration** was working in **Belper** during the second quarter of the 19th century. He lived quite close to the **Wesleyan Chapel**, where tuning and other work is recorded in 1851 and 1852. He may indeed have built the organ, which went in 1873 to **Kilburne Wesleyan Chapel**, being replaced, owing to re-ordering, by **Faulkner Brothers of Manchester**. He is said by Lightwood (8) to have erected the first organ in the **Congregation Chapel**, and the first organ in the **Parish Church** - Spurling says **Snetzler** 1754, but that would have been the old 1683 building not the present 1824 church.

Congratulations and thanks are due to Mark Jameson for producing such a complete Index to The Reporter vols. 1 - 10.

- (1) Winifrede de l'Hôpital **Westminster Cathedral and its Architect** (1919).
- (2) **Musical Opinion** Aug 1888 advt. (3) **Musical Opinion** Aug 1890 p.464.
- (4) 17 Wheeleys Road, Birmingham B15 2LD.
- (5) **The Organ** Vol.X p.130. (6) **Reporter** Vol.5 No.1 p.10.
- (7) Donovan Dawe **Organists of the City of London** 1666-1850 (1983) p.67.
- (8) **Choir** Aug 1931 p.166.

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 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.



The drawing on the cover is by Stephen Bicknell, and shows the mid-seventeenth century English chamber organ, once in Hunstanton Hall, Norfolk, and now at Smithfield, Virginia, U.S.A.