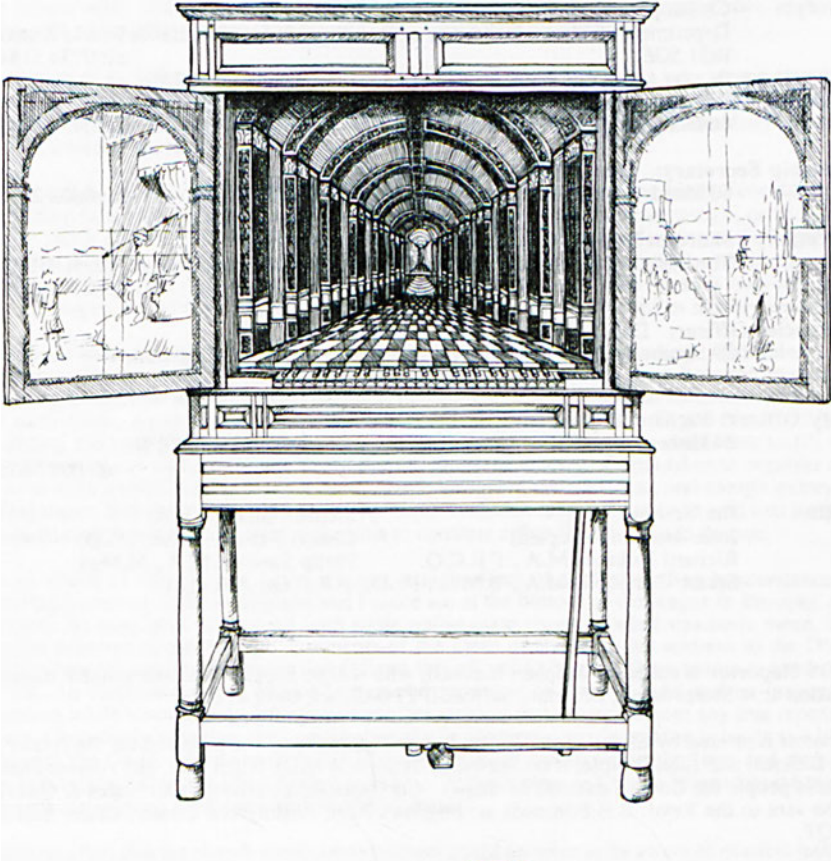


# BIOS REPORTER



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**Volume Thirteen, No. 4 (October 1989)**

# BIOS

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# Editorial

We seem to be surrounded by reminders that Church Music is under seige. Or is it not in fact a battle? Are the diputes and difficulties that arise from time to time rather the kind of fractious squabbles that inevitably arise at a time of conspicuous decline? I do not think that one could argue that the core of sacred music in the British Isles - the choral foundations of our Cathedrals and Collegiate churches - is in a poor state: indeed standards remain as gloriously high as ever. But as soon as one steps outside this senior elite one becomes more acutely aware of the problems.

The closure of St. Michael's College Tenbury a couple of years ago was a very strong statement of the way in which the aspirations of the Victorian choral revival seem to be fading away, even though events elsewhere - such as the healthy growth of choir and choir school at Tewkesbury - go a small way to alleviating the loss.

But much more telling, perhaps, are the day to day problems of running any kind of consistent music programme in a Parish Church, whether it stands in a grand city or town parish, or in a country village. Those BIOS and DAC members who attended the London Conference at the beginning of September were forcibly reminded of the kind of impasse that can be reached during the introductory talk by the vicar of St. Andrew's Stoke Newington, where the fine 1888 organ is now idle through lack of an organist, and the air of Victorian optimism and confidence it inspires is sadly unfulfilled.

The current issue of the RSCM magazine *Church Music* also highlights a range of problems. Harry Bramma writes sensitively about the kinds of disagreements that can arise between musician and clergy, especially now at a time when liturgical fashion and musical tradition seem to be rather at odds with each other. Anne Marsden-Thomas introduces National Leam-the-Organ Year 1990, again illustrating the now near-desperate need for new and enthusiastic young musicians to fill vacant posts. However, we all know in our hearts that the immense amount of time taken to organise church music on even a small scall is rewarded with barely adequate remuneration, and though money is not the first reason that anyone should become involved in church music, it has to be said that for many a little more cash would at least make it possible to continue rather than give up in despair.

Though much of this decline is, in a sense, a side-effect of declining church attendance in an increasingly secular society (England and France are at the bottom of the league in Europe), church musicians do now have to contend with some unfortunate views of what standards mean. If Paul Hale has reported accurately the comments of the Dean of Ripon in his address to the Diocesan Advisers (see the conference report that follows this editorial) then the Dean seems to be skating on thin ice. An electronic organ cannot be a useful purveyor of 'new sounds' and an inspiration to composers while it remains an imitation of another musical instrument without any true repertoire of its own. Objectively speaking, the creative impulse in electronic music making belongs to a line that starts with the *Ondes Martenot* of the 1930s and descends to today's synthesisers and multi-track recording systems. Perhaps it is a further indication of the decline in Church Music that it has no real *avant-garde* exploring these more arcane developments?

I sometimes feel that the church music establishment could do more to be aware of musical taste in the world outside. Though for many the Anglican tradition is essentially based on a Victorian and Edwardian repertoire, one has to be aware of the extent to which this repertoire is at odds with current movements in music at large in order to use that tradition effectively in today's context. For example, in the general field of classical music audiences are dwindling at song and piano recitals, at concerts given by string quartets, and the importance of the orchestral tradition seems to be on the wane. Today's concert-goers support early music, both choral and instrumental, and at the other end of the spectrum many advanced works of the early 20th century have become popular classics. Neither field of interest is reflected fully in church music circles; perhaps if it was there would be a stronger antidote to the guitar and tambourine movement, which seems to represent a level of banality that sinks below anything on offer in the worlds of either classical or popular music.

# Reports

London - 30th August - 2nd September 1989  
**Diocesan Advisers Conference and BIOS Conference**

**1: 30th & 31st August - Paul Hale**

Saint Andrew's Courthouse adjacent to St. Andrew's Holbom was the characterful setting for this year's annual conference of Diocesan Organ Advisers to which BIOS members had been invited. Its theme was Hopkins & Rimbault - then and now.

After a typically erudite yet amusing introductory talk by Michael Gillingham, Ian Bell (N.P.Mander Ltd.) and Mark Venning (Harrison & Harrison Ltd.) talked about their attitudes to the restoration and recreation of the nineteenth century organ. Both clearly felt a sympathy for these organs, their musical characteristics and the quality of their construction. Mr. Bell described the approach of his company to the rebuilding or restoration of various instruments over the last few years, musing that while N.P.Mander Ltd. seem to be approached over the restoration of the tubular pneumatic action of several large organs, he remained unconvinced of the desirability of this approach. Mr. Venning waxed lyrical about the unspoiled West Country organs of his youth and described aspects of his firm's recent work in dealing with organs of this period (and embracing Westminster Cathedral from a later period).

After questions BIOS members retired and DAC advisers were talked to by the new Chairman of Council for the Care of Churches, the Dean of Ripon. His talk is not really to be reported here; suffice it to say that he encouraged us to be open to the need of the less musical members of the Church as well as emphasising his devotion to fine church music. He seemed, however, to imply that electronic organs were worthy of serious consideration as they could produce "new sounds" which we should seek out, as Messiaen produced "new sounds" from the pipe organ in his organ works. I leave comment on his point of view to others.

Thursday was mainly concerned with visits to four astonishing Victorian churches, each containing an unaltered organ from the 'Hopkins and Rimbault' period. The trip clearly illustrated that a mechanical action organ will still be functioning well past its first century of life, and that many a parish with such a great Victorian edifice is today struggling not just to raise money to restore the organ but to keep the church open at all.

Alfred Champniss and Richard Hobson ably demonstrated three of the organs which were by Speechly (1871) at St. Mark's Dalston, Walker (1888) at St. Andrew Stoke Newington, Hill (1883) at St. John's Brownswood Park, and Willis (1884, in 1792 case by Green) at St. Benet Fink, Tottenham. Their tonal qualities were somewhat obscured by their state of health (the Willis and Walker least so), but all, one felt, would restore beautifully. Having an hour to spare we abandoned our nineteenth century ears, entered the soaring church of St. Alban, Holbom, where Michael Fleming improvised upon the Compton - their last large pipe organ and until recently quite the loudest organ in London.

Back then to St. Andrew's Holbom where the 18th century case once in the Foundling Hospital has been restored and fitted up with a new Mander organ designed by Ian Bell and Michael Gillingham. The attempt was to produce a vigorous and characterful organ in the Hopkins and Rimbault ethos but without the constraints imposed by copying any particular builder or organ. Christopher Deamley gave the first recital on the new organ in honour of Cecil Clutton's 80th birthday, playing a typically unusual and characterful programme.

The instrument is undoubtedly one of great musicality, warmth, fullness, projection yet subtlety, versatility, and quality. All present would agree that these attributes were manifestly evident in the recital. Undoubtedly this is an organ which everyone should hear as it represents a direction in British organ building which many will applaud and whose general principles could be sensibly applied to new organs throughout the land.

## **2: 1st & 2nd September - Relf Clark**

Friday morning's lectures, by Michael Gillingham ("The source and development of Victorian case design") and the - since the previous day - octogenarian Cecil Clutton ("Hopkins and Rimbault into the Twentieth century"), were masterly, memorable expositions. That afternoon, at Shadwell, St Paul (Elliot 1820) and Limehouse, St. Anne (Gray & Davison 1851) Stephen Bicknell lectured and Andrew Benson-Wilson demonstrated (with programmes respectively of William Russell and Henry Smart). Again the instruments' mechanical condition, and need of tuning, to some extent dampened one's enjoyment. The AGM, held in the crypt of St. Anne's, and chaired by Donald Wright, followed tea (gratefully consumed) and included the conferment on Michael Gillingham of honorary membership of BIOS.

On the Saturday, Stephen Bicknell lectured on and Adrian Gunning played the truly remarkable Father Willis at St. Dominic's Priory, Haverstock Hill; and at St. John's Hyde Park Crescent, Nicholas Thistlethwaite lectured on William Hill - whose somewhat altered instrument of 1865 Alfred Chammiss then demonstrated. Brief talks by Colin Menzies on the buildings themselves preceded both lectures. A comparison of Hill and Willis, led by Messrs. Thistlethwaite and Bicknell, brought the day's proceedings, and the conference, to an end.

Thanks go to everyone named above; to the other BIOS members and DOAs who played a part, especially Donald Findlay; and to our hosts at the churches visited, for their most generous hospitality.

# **Conferences**

## **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.

# Treasurer's Annual Report 1989

Richard Hird

Those of you who heard these details at the AGM and others not interested in administrative matters may skip to the next item, but maybe shouldn't.

At the financial year end, 30th June, BIOS had £9940 in General Funds, i.e. available for normal day to day expenditure on activities, administration, publications etc. However this figure gives a false impression, since soon afterwards a third of the amount went to pay for an overdue Journal 12. A convenient portion is kept in a bank current account, but the remainder now works while it waits to be spent, making interest (currently 11.25%) in a Business Reserve Account. The financial year 1988-89 in effect broke even but, because there is an adequate projected balance and knowing the administrative burden involved, the AGM accepted that subscriptions remain unchanged.

The Archive Account, comprising moneys accumulated for the most part from Trusts, stands at £8404. In the past year £1650 was spent on practical assistance in sorting, cataloguing and seeking to conserve the Archive at Birmingham. Expenditure was however offset in some measure by interest earned at 12.4%, totalling £1056, from a Building Society.

The Endowment Fund on the other hand is members' and well-wishers' donations, held to generate reserve income which could be called on for special projects or purchases. Receipts from a handful of new donations and interest in the Building Society raised the level of this fund by £986 to £7414.

Financially 1988-89 was an uneventful year. So much more could be achieved given more resources, but we must learn to walk efficiently before expecting to run. Every member can contribute to keeping BIOS on a sound financial footing by paying the correct amount of subscription promptly or by standing order, by covenanting that subscription if you are a taxpayer (so that a £15 subscription is worth £20 to BIOS - do please ask me for a covenant form) and by contributing by a one-off donation or perhaps regularly to add to the capital in the Endowment Fund. However small, we shall attempt to put every contribution to best use; large donations - or ideas for sources for large donations - perhaps for specific projects or purposes, would be highly welcome!

I am available at the end of a telephone line for complaints, queries or suggestions.

## "Inside Churches"

The National Association of Decorative and Fine Arts Societies has brought out a book for the guidance of its members who are engaged in the very worthwhile task of church recording called "Inside Churches". The foreword acknowledges help from various contributors including our member Patrick Moule, referring to his membership of BIOS. The reference to BIOS was unauthorised and inappropriate since Patrick Moule did not make his contribution at the request of or on behalf of BIOS. Worse, unauthorised excisions, transpositions and alterations by the publisher, a Mrs. Greenwood of Capability Publishing, have rendered the relevant section misleading and unhelpful and it now has the appearance of ignorance, carelessness and lack of grammatical command. Both BIOS and Patrick Moule have disassociated themselves from the publication. Fortunately the unaltered text of the article is being made available and the next edition will, it is hoped, appear without such malign intentions.

# The Thomas Elliot organ in Scone Palace

Most members will have heard of - indeed many may have visited and perhaps played - the G compass organ of two manuals and 15 stops built by Thomas Elliot in 1813 in Scone Palace, the seat of the Earl of Mansfield a few miles north of Perth. This quite remarkable instrument survives in its original form - other than for the installation of an electric blower in 1969. It has been gently and lovingly attended over the years, even by such worthies as Mr. A. Buckingham of "travels" fame and is clearly an organ of considerable significance. Its history is well documented and the details of this together with an account of the instrument as a whole may be expected eventually to be the subject of a subsequent article elsewhere. Some cleaning and repairs were undertaken in 1975 - but while it is still playable, the organ has for some time been in need of conservative restoration.

The advice of BIOS was first sought on the matter in 1987. A working party was appointed by Council, the members of which visited the palace, surveyed the instrument and made a report which, after approval by Council, was sent to the palace. After impressing the enormous importance historically of the organ, the principal recommendation of this document was that a small number of organ builders who had experience in the art of conservation and restoration of instruments of this calibre should be asked for their views on the "work which should be undertaken in order to ensure the long term preservation of the organ and to put it into reliable playing order for the foreseeable future".

Nothing positive was heard from the palace until May of this year when our advice was further asked in respect of getting costings for this work - and we are now able to report that a number of organ builders have been requested to visit and have in fact made submissions for the restoration of the organ. It seems that the view taken by all parties was that a point is being reached where serious damage will be suffered in many parts of the organ if remedial action is not taken within the foreseeable future. In consequence it is hardly surprising that the proposals are currently being considered by the palace authorities - and we have hopes of being able to report further action soon.

Donald Wright

# The Shire Hall, Worcester, Organ

David Wickens

An expression commonly used in my early schooling was "I shall tell you once and once only". If ideas fall like seeds into the earth of one's memory, this one took root and has secretly governed my meagre supply of information to the world. This is clearly a misapplication of its intent, for it was meant in the context of discipline and not in that of learning. For long I thought it adequate to state a fact or opinion only once for it to be crystallised for permanent view. I marvelled at scholars who repeated the same thing over and over again in both their speaking and their writing. I now see that this repetition is a necessary method of propagating ideas if the ideas are to be widely broadcast. This preamble is partly a cautionary tale: if you have something to say, say it more than once; it also introduces a subject I first wrote about some fifteen years ago (The Organ, Vol.52, No.210: 'A remarkable Worcester Organ'). In recent times at least three major publications have references which indicate that my findings remain widely unknown.

Mention is often made of the organ which, according to Hopkins and Rimbault (1st edition), Nicholson built for the Shire Hall, Worcester, in 1844. The stop-list is full of Hill-isms of the early 1840s (Wald Flute, Suabe Flute, Cornopean, Echo Comet) and the Keraulophon of Gray & Davison's introduction in 1843; but there are also items which are demonstrably later than 1844: 4ft Gemshorn (Hill 1847); Harmonic Flute (brought to this country by Ducroquet in 1851); and the Sforzando coupler (also Hill 1847). These anachronisms were sufficient to invite investigation, with the following results.

The organ was actually built in 1854, not 1844. The date in H&R is a typographical error. The organ

was built for the Music Hall, Worcester, not the Shire Hall. The Shire Hall never contained an organ. H&R gives 'Shire Hall' by confusion with Shire Hall, Gloucester, whose Nicholson organ is also listed.

The Music Hall was opened as such in 1852, having formerly been the Corn Exchange (see T.C.Turberville, 'Worcestershire in the Nineteenth Century' (1952)). The organ was built in 1854 and was opened on 29th November, though it had been used, incomplete, as early as 6th April in a performance of Handel's 'Messiah'. A full account of the organ is given in Berrow's Worcester Journal, 3rd November 1854, with a stop-list which contains some anomalies (such as an 8ft Fifteenth on the Pedal Organ) not untypical of newspaper accounts of organs. There is no doubt whatsoever that this is the organ to which H&R refers. Some of the differences in nomenclature are explained by supposing that the H&R stop-list derived from C.W.Osborne, of Hawford, a subscriber to the 1st edition of H&R, and who, according to the Worcester Journal, had a hand in the design of the organ having gained many of his ideas from visiting organs on the continent. The Worcester Journal stop-list was taken, in all probability, from the stop-knobs, with their slightly more English nomenclature, and duly processed through the journalistic mincing machine in course of which the Pedal Organ got mashed up, losing an Open Diapason and its reed, and ending up with an 8ft Fifteenth.

This notable organ was destroyed - or at least damaged severely - in a storm. Nicholson produced a replacement using all that was valuable of the remains of the first instrument. This was opened on 29th December, 1879, and was reported in the Worcester Journal. It was smaller (40 speaking stops, including 3 prepared for, as against 52) and contained no surprises other than an Orchestral Oboe, as well as an ordinary Oboe, on the Swell.

The Music Hall with this, its second, organ was destroyed by fire in 1881. A new hall was built, called the Public Hall. Nicholson built a new 4 manual organ for this, which was opened on 31st July, 1884. It had an unremarkable stop-list (49 speaking stops) with a plethora of unison ranks.

I have not pursued the subsequent career of this organ except to ascertain that the Public Hall was demolished after World War II and the organ removed. The important point is: for 'Shire Hall, Worcester, 1844' read 'Music Hall, Worcester, 1854'.

## Hill organ for St. Agnes', Moseley

The parish church of St. Agnes', Moseley, Birmingham plans to replace its present organ with the instrument formerly in St. Mark's Church, Leicester. Built by Hill as a two manual instrument in 1870, it received a third manual in 1904. At the same time it was removed from a south organ chamber and divided in north and south cases, designed by A.G.Hill, on a new west gallery. A new tubular-pneumatic action was provided. The organ survives unaltered, and it is intended to erect it on the west gallery at St. Agnes, keeping the pneumatic action, the Hill cases, and the 1904 tonal scheme. An appeal for funds is under way - a total sum of £30,000 is needed - and we are happy to draw this interesting and admirable project to our readers' attention. Further information from - and donations to - Dr. Alan Seymour, [REDACTED].

## Hill Organ Transplant

The 1880 Hill organ from Stone. Bucks, displaced there by an electronic device, was dedicated in its new home at Yetminster church, Dorset, on October 5th. The organ is situated on the west gallery of the church, and with the addition of a new Fifteenth, the synoptic specification is now 8.8.8.4.4.2 + 16. The work has been carried out by John Budgen (now working independently).



# A Visit to Bruges

Donald Wright

This is a splendid town, worthy of a visit on several counts. It is of sufficiently small size to be easily studied on foot - or, if one feels inclined, by horse-drawn carriage. One passes along its quaint streets lined by interesting buildings from one magnificent square to another, all lined with splendidly preserved examples of architecture from almost all of the past eight centuries. A wide selection of good cafés and eating houses tempts one to pause and, at leisure, take in not merely the sights but also the gastronomic delights which abound. Alternatively one can simply watch the world go by and listen at quarter-hour intervals to the gentle tones and varied repertoire of the 47 bell carillon in the Belfry of the Town Hall. In addition, it is worth mentioning that a trip by canal boat is restful, instructive and very rewarding in many ways.

Opportunity was not available for a comprehensive study of the churches in Bruges or of the organs they contained. However brief calls at the Cathedral of Saint Sauveur and the Church of Notre Dame revealed in both the presence of magnificent cases \* a guess would place them as of 17th century origin. It was therefore a little disappointing to observe a 3 manual detached stop-key console at some distance below the instrument in the former and a collection of completely incongruous pipework added on at the back of the latter. Neither observation particularly inspired one's confidence.

The main reason for this offering is however to place on record a visit to the Orgelmuseum in the Vrijdagmarkt of the't Zand Square in Bruges. This was quite remarkable and the contents must represent one of the largest collections of mechanical musical instruments in Europe. There were large and complex fairground organs by Marengi, Arburo, Mortier and Veerbeek, a "Dansorgel" also by Mortier and smaller ones by other builders, including one by Gavioli and a "Harmonipan" by Frati of Berlin. Street organs, orchestrions, harmoniums, American organs, mechanical and electrical pianos, and musical boxes of enormous variety and size were also featured in the collection. Some 85% of the exhibits are in full working order and others are undergoing conservative restoration. Demonstrations of the instruments are a feature of the visit and members visiting Bruges are recommended to spare some time to see this very interesting collection.

## Publications

The British Organ by Cecil Clutton & Austin Niland (2nd revised edition, 1982). Copies of this well known and indispensable work, originally published at £29.50 and later selling at £35.00, are now available for only £9.95, post free, having been remastered by the publisher. The book can be ordered from N.F.Brookes, 12a [REDACTED]. Please send your payment with order.

The Organs of Cheltenham by Roy Williamson. Hardback, 120pp, illustrated with line drawings. Available from: Images, Lloyds Bank Chambers, 18 High Street, Upton-upon-Severn, Worcs WR8 OHW. Price £9.50 + £1.00 p&p. The publisher describes the work as follows: "this book identifies all the pipe organs which have stood in Cheltenham churches, chapels, public buildings and private residences since 1791 ... The information on each organ includes the builder's name, date of erection, specification and history from initial erection to the present day ... Thorough research of local newspapers, parish records and organ builders' ledgers have produced a wealth of detail which not only makes this book a work of reference but also presents a picture of how the pipe organ has been regarded and used in a typical English provincial town."

# Index to the Reporter - Volumes 1-10

Printed at last, the ready reference booklet we believe several of you have been awaiting, and which we hope many more in receipt of the **Reporter** will be anxious to purchase - a comprehensive index to Volumes 1-10 (1977 to 1986) of the **Reporter**. The content has been prepared voluntarily and with admirable devotion and application by BIOS member Mark Jameson. The booklet is A5 size, to sit neatly with your **Reporters**, 47 pp, with a tasteful beige card cover of matching design.

Do make certain of your copy now. Orders please to Richard Hird, Hon. Treasurer (address inside front cover of this **Reporter**) with cheque for £2.50 to cover costs, payable to BIOS. Please include a self addressed 6" x 9" (or larger) envelope with 22p stamp (second class post) for return mailing within Great Britain others please contact re mailing cost).

## New Recording

**Charles Toumermire 1870-1939: L'Orgue Mystique (Extracts)** - Adrian Gunning at the organ of Coventry Cathedral.  
Libra LRCD 155 (CD; cassette available)

Selected Comparisons:

- (1) Georges Devallée; Rennes - Ste. Clothilde, Paris - St. Semin, Toulouse. Arion ARN 436026 (4 disc set)
- (2) Pierre Moreau; Notre Dame de Paris. Classique SEL 30155/75 (2 discs)
- (3) Devallée, Segond et al; Orléans Cathedral. Erato ERA 9328 (2 disc boxed set)

This recording was made to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the death of Charles Toumemire. In over twenty years of record collecting it is the first British disc entirely devoted to the composer to have come to the attention of this writer. The neglect of Toumemire remains one of the extraordinary phenomena of 20th century music, particularly amongst organists and organ lovers, where so much music contemporary with that of Toumemire, but of little merit, has become standard repertoire.

Toumermire's career is roughly divisible into three: the early years up until the first world war, with music in many genres, much of it indebted to his revered teacher Cesar Franck; the second period up until the mid-twenties in which organ composition was largely ignored in favour of orchestral output. Most of his symphonies were well received at the time but, like the greater bulk of Toumermire's vast output are largely forgotten today. Finally the period up to his death, in which the fully matured composer emerged, bringing forth a blossoming of extraordinarily original works for organ and other media. It is from this latter period that *L'Orgue Mystique* originates, a vast cycle of 251 pieces arranged in 51 suites. Each suite is appropriate to a Sunday or other festival in the Catholic liturgical year, and a musical commentary or paraphrase is made upon the the words and plainsong used traditionally, but in a variety of ingenious new forms, mixing ancient modes with modern polyphony and a daring new use of tone colours.

Comparison of this performance with previous French recordings, all now of doubtful availability, is valuable. First, the choice of recording venue, which might have been considered inappropriate, turns out to be entirely successful, even though all the French recordings use ostensibly more idiomatic instruments. Here the Coventry Cathedral organ is revealed for what it is: a notable instrument by any standards, and a masterpiece of post-war eclecticism. The French, who often have a higher regard for British organs than we do, will love it. The *fonds* combinations are authentic, and all the characteristic solo stops perfectly appropriate. And even if full organ lacks the *éclat* of its French counterparts, it is much clearer - and in tune. Mercifully, too, we are spared over-use of full organ at the end of each loud piece, and this restraint is a general feature of the performances.

Of the recordings listed, only the Erato set presents complete suites - six of them - and all the other versions lose something by presenting seemingly disconnected selections. Of the remainder, the Arion set is at least chronological; the others follow no particular order, although apparently Toumemire approved this treatment for recital purposes. The new recording has several advantages over the others. There is very little duplication of previously recorded pieces and a general avoiding of those few pieces which have become better known. This is obviously valuable for collectors of Toumemire's music. It also benefits from modern recording techniques, which make the Classique and particularly the Erato offerings seem very inadequate. Also worthy of note are David Gammie's excellent programme notes which are a model of succinct erudition without rhetoric. However, there is no indication of the division of the fifty-one suites into cycles, nor mention of any opus numbers! The registrations of each piece are hinted at, but no organ specification is given anyway, so further detail would have been superfluous.

Some of Toumemire's music is very difficult indeed to play. He has an almost perverse obsession in using quite bizarre notation on many staves, often with parts reversed. At first listening one is rewarded on occasion with music that matches in difficulty that which the performer had in playing it; and yet many of Toumemire's most exotic and exquisite effects are produced by the simplest of means, both in the many quiet movements and in the most grandiose of postludes. The overall picture of *L'Orgue Mystique* remains one of ethereal and serene beauty, quite unlike the output of any other composer, and in those radiant postludes an ecstatic glory which can have an overwhelming emotional effect. All bear hallmarks which make Toumemire's music absolutely characteristic and unmistakable.

It would be easy to make a virtuosic mincemeat of much of *L'Orgue Mystique* by treating it in the conventional French Romantic way, and many isolated recordings of better known Toumemire pieces suffer this fate. Adrian Gunning entirely avoids this by adopting slow or even very slow tempi almost throughout, but coupled with an extraordinary attention to phrasing, rubato, and dynamics which make all the performances hold the listener's attention. On two occasions this is taken to extremes. The conclusion of the *Alleluia* No.2 from Suite No.30 is undeniably grand but fails to excite in the way Pierre Moreau's performance does. Similarly the *Postlude* in Suite No.24 is too careful to achieve the exuberance that Flor Peeters, the original dedicatee of the suite, managed in a long-deleted recording at Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral. On the other hand the aging Moreau has a technique hardly up to the demands of the music: although there are wonderful atmospheric moments, much of the tension in his performances derives from wondering whether he will get to the end. Gunning and Devallée share an assured technique, but the former's greater attention to detail makes some of the quietest and most obscure moments elating and ravishing; on the other hand, Devallée achieves a greater *éclat* and sense of gloriousness in some of the louder pieces.

To pick particularly satisfying parts from Gunning's accounts is difficult as there are many of them, but a few are worthy of note: the exquisite moulding of melodic line in the *Offertoire* from Suite No.28; the heart-warming highlighting of the accompaniment to the Cromome solo in the *Communion* from Suite No.36, by careful swell pedal control, which is quite ravishing. The build up from pianissimo to full organ in the *Alleluia* from Suite No.29 is nothing short of devastating. Contrasting flutes and mutations in the *Offertoire* from Suite No.8 produce an effect over other-worldliness. And finally, the well-known *Fantaisie sur le Te Deum et Guirlandes Alleluïatiques* from Suite No.51 is given an account which is both virtuosic and exciting without degenerating into the lametable cacophony so often heard.

The recording balances clarity through being close, with an ample sense of the acoustic, in a satisfactory way. Owners of wide ranging speakers might be upset by a good deal of recorded rumble, but all enthusiasts will enjoy the enormous dynamic range.

This disc cannot be too highly recommended, not just because it is the only easily available recording of any of *L'Orgue Mystique* but because it covers some new ground, with an individual yet idiomatic approach. It must surely represent an essential purchase for all lovers of the organ, whilst to those familiar with Toumemire already, it makes a very valuable addition to, if not replacement for, previous recordings.

Peter Rickinson

# All Saints Church, Wollahra, Sydney

The Sydney Organ Journal Vol.20 No.2 (April-May 1989) carries a report on the restoration of the Forster & Andrews organ at All Saints Wollahra, Sydney, Australia, written by Ray Holland. Information given here is drawn from this article.

The organ was installed in 1883, and, as with many instruments, there are rival claims for its design from, in this case, E.J.Hopkins and the organist of the church, Thomas Sharp. Whoever was in fact responsible, the stoplist seems not untypical of Forster & Andrews usual practice.

## Great Organ

Bourdon	16
Open Diapason	8
Gamba	8
Gedact	8
Principal	4
Flûte Harmonique	4
Twelfth	2h
Fifteenth	2
Mixture	V
Posaune	8

## Pedal Organ

Open Diapason	16
Bourdon	16
Principal	8
Trombone	16

## Couplers

Swell to Great
Swell to Octave
Swell to Suboctave
Swell to Choir
Swell to Pedal
Great to Pedal
Choir to Pedal

## Swell Organ

Double Diapason	16
Open Diapason	8
Stopped Diapason	8
Gamba	8
Voix Celestes [c 13]	8
Principal	4
Gedact Flote	4
Fifteenth	2
Mixture	IV
Cornopean	8
Oboe	8

## Choir Organ

Lieblich Gedact	8
Dulciana	8
Flauto Traverso	4
Flautina Hannonique	2
Como di Bassetto	8

Compass: 58/30

3 composition pedals to Swell  
 4 composition pedals to Great  
 Great to Pedal reversible pedal  
 Mechanical action with Barker Lever to Great

The organ has survived for slightly over a hundred years, escaping all threats of rebuilding and modernisation, until it has finally been found possible to restore it carefully, reversing one or two minor changes. The work has been carried out by Pitchford and Garside, and the organ was rededicated by Bishop John Reid on 30th April.

This courageous and sensitive restoration is a further example of the extent to which the best of Australian organ preservation sets a model within the general sphere of English-oriented organ culture that we find difficult to match in the British Isles. The BIOS/DAC visits to churches in North London, described elsewhere in this issue, painted a tragically different picture of the present state and future prospects of a number of similar instruments.

On a sad note, a 2 manual Forster & Andrews of 1876 in the nearby Uniting Church, Wollahra, was destroyed by fire in January 1989. Such unfortunate events only focus attention all the more on surviving instruments.

Stephen Bicknell

# Redundant Organs

## Greater Manchester

Gray & Davison 1878

Disposition Gt 16.8.8.8.4.4.2.III.8. Sw 16.8.8.8.4.II.8.8.

Ch 8.8.4.2.8. Ped 16.16.8.

Action Mechanical; pedal pneumatic

Dimensions h 19' 2", w 14' 6", d 16' 6" (console 2' above floor)

## West Yorkshire

Alexander Young 1892

Disposition Gt 8.8.8.8.4.4.8. Sw 16.8.8.8.4.II.8.8. Ped 16.8.

Action Mechanical

Casework Pitch pine; spotted metal front, French mouths

Dimensions h 14' 2", w 12' 6", d 8' 6"

## Hertfordshire

(supplied by) Chappell & Co.

Disposition 8.8.8.4. Ped pulldowns, 24 notes. Total enclosure.

Action Mechanical

Dimensions h 12', w 6', d 6' 6"

## Kent

Dalladay 1924; Compton 1962

Disposition Gt 16.8.8.8.4.4.2. Sw 8.8.8.8.4.2.8. Ped 32(Acoustic).16.8.

Action Mechanical; pedal pneumatic

Dimensions h 18', w 9', d 8'

Essex

Walker 1981

Disposition Gt 5 stops (to 1'); Sw 5 stops (to Mix); Ped 16.8.4.

Action Mechanical

Other organs currently available:

Hants: 3m Willis 1929; pneumatic; Gt 12, Sw 12, Ch 8, Ped 6 (18' x 20' x 18')

Avon: 2m Vowles 1897/Daniel 1970; electric; Gt 8, Sw 11, Ped 6; divided case to remain

London: 4m Compton 1926/1951, 20 units extended to 96 stops; ex Liberal Jewish Synagogue; now in store with organ builder.

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

A list of redundant organs which feature in the redundancies register up to the end of 1987, with their fates, is now available. It will be updated each year. If you want a copy send five 2nd class postage stamps (to the Redundancies Officer); one stamp will be used for return postage, the others are to cover costs more conveniently than a cheque for so small an amount).

# Notes and Queries

Bernard Edmonds

'A great deal of nonsense has been talked about the "wanton destruction of instruments of good repute", etc. I never had the pleasure of hearing the old Worcester organs, but I have heard a great many large instruments by the same builders.... Even if the Worcester instruments were not worse than those (by the same builder) that I have heard, and if Mr. Hope-Jones's new diaphones, flutes, diapasons, and reeds - not to mention action - are as described, one cannot wonder that the authorities, having heard of the latter, decided to discard their old instruments (except a few of the softer stops) and entrust the reconstruction to Mr. Hope-Jones. It is to be devoutly wished that other cathedrals - such as York and Ely, for example, and some of the large college chapels here possessing instruments of the same class - could follow the example of Worcester'.(1)

Cycling from Watford to Edinburgh, on a circuitous route to take in as many interesting organs as possible, I had turned my wheels in the direction of St Bees to hear the Willis and, more important, to renew acquaintance with Colonel Dixon, to whom the organ world is so much indebted, and who died a few months later.

A welcome was laid on; the vicar confided that the Colonel was giving a new stop, 'something loud and trumpetty I expect' (a 32ft reed!); the distinguished organist confided that it was not the easiest of instruments to use for its primary purpose, and after playing it to me for half an hour, left me to it.

How right he was! Here was a splendid instrument of the highest grade and impressive in so many ways, with which somehow I could not feel entirely happy. Better judges than I would probably shoot me down. When the Colonel asked me my reaction to the organ, I told him I was very impressed, and left it at that. We had a long and friendly discussion, in the course of which I remarked that my own preferences were more for the Hill style.

I had quite evidently said the wrong thing! The matter was summarily dismissed. It was over 20 years before I came across the letter quoted above. It was the first of a number in the musical periodicals (though Hope-Jones ceased to figure) reaching a climax of uncharitable rudeness which moved the hitherto patient Dr. Hill to a dignified remonstrance.(2) Why this public spleen, so uncharacteristic of the man, should be reserved only for hostility to the Hill firm, has puzzled me ever since.

I prefer to remember him as a generous, good and helpful friend, with many positive contributions to music and the organ. Nevertheless, because of some enquiries I have received, and a number of confidential letters I have been shown, I refer to it as a clue to why some happenings in the organ world took the course they did, and to explain in part some, at any rate, of the misleading omissions in his interpretation of organ history.(3)

When **All Saints Notting Hill** was blitzed, a vestry was fitted out as a chapel, and there I came across a chamber organ, property of the vicar, Fr. J.H.C.Twisaday, who had obtained it from **Percy Daniel** in 1945. The stops were solid wood, working through jambs faced with brass, on which their names were engraved, together with '1772. **Ley, maker**'. The stops included 'Principle', 'Cornett' and 'Sixquartan'; the keyboard, with extra G at bass end, slid in, and there was an excellent case. Some added toe pedals had been removed as out of period and after so sojourning in Freeman's collection are now in Blakey's museum at Brierfield. I do not know whence the organ came, and Freeman does not mention it, or Ley, at all. After restoration by **Mander** it went to **St. Silas Pentonville**.

Nothing seems to be known about Ley, but since then I have recorded more of his instruments. There is 'Jonas Ley, 1772' at **Jesus Church, Enfield**; some years ago there was a 1786 Ley in **Osmond's** works; one, for many years at **Llangibby Church** in Monmouthshire, '**Jonas Ley London 1778**', went in 1945 to the **National Museum of Wales, Cardiff**. His complete address is given on the one he supplied to **Dr. Peter Martin of Pulborough**: '**Jonas Ley, Organ Builder, Queen's Court, Little Turnstile, Holborn, 1777**', which is now in **Lower**

**School, Eton.** (4) Any information about him and his organs will be welcome.

So far as I know, the constituent firms of **Hill, Norman & Beard** include the following: **William Hill & Son, Norman & Beard Ltd**, including the **Electric Organ Company** (Robert Hope-Jones); **Cedric Arnold, Williamson & Hyatt; Bevington & Sons**, including **Bates of Ludgate Hill; Blackett & Howden; George B. Brooksby** of Glasgow; **Church Organ Co**, Salisbury (D.E.L. Salwey); **Forster & Andrews; K.R.Gates** of Brighton; **Gray & Davison**, including **Eustace Ingram** (senior) with **G.M.Holdich (Holdich & Ingram)**, and **Robson; Alfred Kirkland**, including **Booth** of Wakefield and **Bryceson; W.H.Laycock** of Stoke on Trent; **J.C.Lee** of Coventry; **T.W. & W.Lewis** of Bristol; **H.W.Balsar Ludwig** of Banbury; **W.N.Middleton** of Norwich; **J. & A. Mirlees** of Glasgow; **Arthur Richardson**. Should one include **'Paddy' Benson**? He was not George (**George Benson** was of Combbrook Street **Manchester**) but on the evidence of the only organ I know built on his own account, **Bramerton** in Norfolk, he was **R.Benson**, Builder, Norwich 1919.

I give this list in connection with several specific queries, including 'What happened to Lee and Ludwig?'. They were taken over in 1940 and 1937 respectively. **W.N.Middleton** was apprenticed to N & B in 1883, started business in Southampton (was he part of **Middleton & Oswick**?) some 25 years later, moved to Norwich 1919, and retired when his works were blitzed around 1940. Richardson I know nothing about. **Hope-Jones**, after business troubles, sought the hospitality of Norman & Beard for his **Electric Organ Company** of Birkenhead, and sold out to them in 1899, leaving their employ in 1901. I am sure the list could be extended; some of the above have only been discovered by chance, and no doubt there are clues still to be found. The records of most of the firms are lost. (5)

Some interest is expressed in 'firsts'. It is always risky to claim a first for anything, it will usually be found that Tubal Cain got there earlier, but I will stick my neck out in some answers. Placing the main reed on the choir (cum solo) manual - an early example was by Ouseley and Willis at the **Sheldonian** in **Oxford** in 1877. But possibly they got the idea from Parratt and Hill just up the road at **St. Giles**, 1875. That may have been more Hill than Parratt, for in the organ for 'a church in Duncan Terrace, London' and ultimately bought in 1875 for **St. Philip Neri, Arundel**, he had done much the same thing. In any case, **John Nicholson of Worcester**, had beaten them all with an Ophicleide on his part-solo-choir manual in 1861 at **Manchester Cathedral**, an organ which migrated to **Holy Trinity, Bolton**. The transfer of reed chorus from one manual to another was done by **Bryceson & Morten** at **Ss. Peter & Paul, Cork**, in 1876 but an even earlier example was by **Gray & Davison** in 1853 at **Glasgow City Hall**. As regards 61-note compass, I cannot help much; the earliest I know of was in the fine **Robson** at **Buxton Road Chapel, Huddersfield**; I await comments from Tubal Cain.

It is interesting that more enquiries are made about builders than about individual organs. The old G compass one-manual for long at **Cratfield**, Suffolk, has an old faded label inside addressed to **W.R.James Esqr, Ridge, Seaton Junction** (which?) and I am asked if this supplies any clue as to its history. The G compass one-manual just removed to **Chappel URC** from **Coggeshall** (Wesleyan) Methodist, both Essex, was formerly in **Springfield Road Methodist, Chelmsford**, and its history and maker are sought. It has spotted metal pipes and a good early 19th century case with gilded wood dummies, a wooden stopped diapason labelled **Clarabella**, and the short compass stops break at fiddle g. **Wesley Church, Smethwick** is said to have an **Avery 1799**, from a London house via **Spon Lane**. Sorry, I know it not; but in **Waterloo Road Methodist, Smethwick**, is the **Hill 1908** house organ made for Sir Joseph Beecham's house, **Evansville**, at **Huyton**. Removed to Hill's works in 1919, it came here in 1921. When he moved to Huyton, his old house was incorporated into the factory and he used to play on an organ left behind there, later moved to the Town Hall for the use of the parish church when that had been burnt down, and then to **St. Andrew's Church** there (**St. Helen's**)(6) where it remained until 1960. Of that I know nothing.

(1) **Musical Opinion** 11/96 p. 94

(2) **Organist & Choirmaster** 1907

(3) e.g. **The Organ** Vol.I

(4) **Thistlethwaite Organs of Eton**, Supplement

(5) **BIOS Reporter** Vol.I No.2 p.4 (6) **Anne Francis A Guinea a Box** (Hale 1968) p.139.

## 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 by Thomas Wright in Junstanton Hall, Norfolk, and now at Smithfield, Virginia, U.S.A.*

