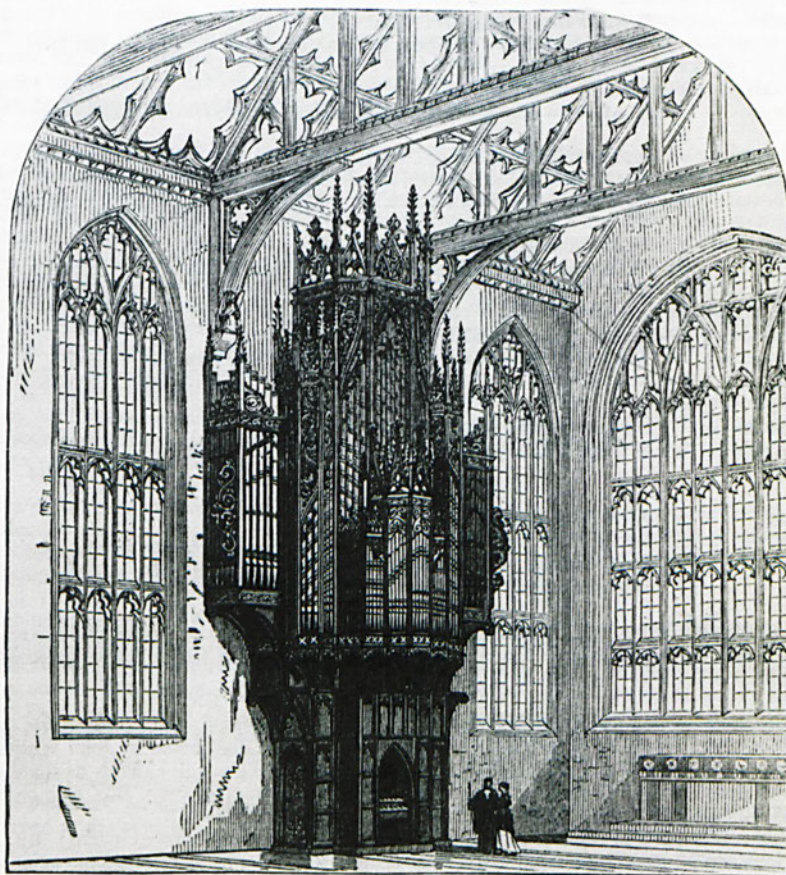


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**BIOS REPORTER**



NEW ORGAN FOR ST. MARY'S CHURCH, NOTTINGHAM.

**Vol. 16, No. 4 (October 1992)**

# BIOS

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The BIOS Reporter is edited by Relf Clark and John Whittle. Suitable material must be sent to Relf Clark c/o [REDACTED]

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The annual subscription to BIOS is £15 (ordinary) or £10 (students and senior citizens). BIOS publications can be sent by Air Mail to overseas destinations for a further annual payment of £6.

Certain back issues of the Reporter are available from the Membership Secretary. These can be obtained at a cost of 30p 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.

Opinions expressed in this publication are those of the respective contributors, and not necessarily those of BIOS.

# Editorial

## Nescit vox missa reverti

The console itself told a story. Stop-names such as "Block Flute" and "Larigot" were not characteristic of the work of the distinguished builder whose name appeared below the music desk; and for anyone ignorant of that builder's work, there was a clue in the somewhat maladroit way in which the stop-heads had been re-engraved. (Why are organ builders sometimes so careless about this, and organists themselves apparently indifferent?) The organist received with good humour the Firm "No thanks" which followed an invitation to try the instrument. He was not responsible for what had happened in the 1970s, and on an earlier occasion had made his unenthusiasm clear. The tuner's book - almost invariably a useful source of information, and sometimes of humour - showed that by as early as 1985, the then organist was grumbling about an "abrasive" mixture. Later, there was an exchange with the tuner over the possibility of putting in a Voix Celeste, a register subtracted in the 1970s. The tuner had promised to look out for one, but none had arrived. The present organist confided that he thought a Dulciana would be useful.

How fashions change! The tonal revisions in the 1970s were the work of a well-known firm; the then Diocesan Organ Adviser, a distinguished musician, had given his apparently enthusiastic support; and many comparable instruments had received similar treatment at that time. Yet now, twenty or so years later, as well as appearing unnecessary, the tonal revisions seemed tasteless and eccentric. In its original condition, the instrument had been distinctive, the product of a collaboration of two highly original minds. It had probably been competent but unexciting, a church organ of between twenty-five and thirty speaking stops, intended to accompany singing and to provide shortish voluntaries before and after services. Analogies with comparable instruments suggest that in spite of these modest aims, any difficulties it had posed with regard to early music or to the repertoire in general were probably more apparent than real. Now, however, the instrument was a curious hybrid, good for nothing in particular, the original conception having been destroyed in a collision of opposing tonal philosophies. It was comforting to think that the alterations were probably reversible, but it would take advocacy of a high order to convince the authorities that the advice given such a relatively short time ago had been wrong.

Are these observations solely to do with fashion, or are they to some extent a reflection of something subtler, of a resurgence of beliefs about the role of a church organ, of an awareness of objective musical truths (about the usefulness of quiet foundation stops, for example) that having nothing to do with fashion? Time will tell.

The episode brought to mind a service that had taken place some years before, at another church, one with a three-manual organ completed a few years before the outbreak of the First World War. That instrument had not escaped tonal revision either, but there the changes were less drastic. The unfashionable ranks in the Swell Mixture had been replaced, and on the Choir Organ a Nazard and Tierce had been substituted for an Open Diapason and Dulciana respectively. The service had been solidly Anglican, with an anthem by S.S. Wesley; and the concluding voluntary was Bonnet's *Variations de Concert*. The Nazard and Tierce had remained mute throughout the proceedings, and to judge from the conscientious organist's list of voluntaries, published monthly in advance, they probably saw little use: he seemed to have arrived at the sensible conclusion that the nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century repertoires were the ones that best suited the instrument, and proceeded accordingly.

Wesley expressly calls for a Choir Open Diapason in *Blessed be the God and Father*, and for a Dulciana in his *Larghetto* in F sharp minor. Well, more often than not a Choir Open Diapason is much like any other medium-scale Open Diapason, and Wesley is only a minor figure, after all. But there is a satisfaction to be had from being able to comply with a composer's exact requirements, even though stops of the same name can differ widely from instrument to instrument; and a Church of England organist can hardly ignore Wesley, however insignificant he may appear in a wider context.



Of course a new organ should have an appropriate complement of solo mutations (and mutations generally, and mixtures), but the idea that a sparkling, all-purpose instrument can be achieved by adding such stops to a typical British church organ of the period, say, 1870 to 1939 is one which experience over and over again has shown to be misconceived, especially where they can only be added by turning out existing ranks. At Eton, and more recently at Southwark, solo mutations added in modern times have been discarded. The recent work to the organ at St. Mary Redcliffe, Bristol saw the restoration of the Swell Mixture to its original composition, or something approaching it. Clearly, whether as a result of fashion or, as suggested earlier, something subtler, the climate of opinion is changing. But still there are those who see no harm in these practices, and who believe that such things can be done in a "sensitive" way (by, for example, preserving pipes and mechanisms made redundant in the process).

When faced with an opportunity of effecting tonal revisions, an organist must be scrupulously honest with himself. A church organ is a church organ, exactly that, and whether good stewardship consists in adding stops which do little more than assist the organist in the pursuit of his hobby is, to say the least, a moot point.

Does anyone else feel uncomfortable whenever the word "electronium" is used, not because of what it signifies, but because of the peculiar resonance of the word itself? Is there not something about it that smacks rather uncomfortably of the schoolboy's practice of inventing comical nick-names? The pipe-versus-electronic argument is a serious and difficult one, and one that every member of BIOS has a duty to address and engage in. It is a duty that will not be discharged by thumbing noses or by resorting to nick-names and slogans. Causes are won by sustained, well-informed argument, not by adopting attitudes of insolent superiority. Let us make it "electronic", which is shorter by one syllable than "electronium", and which has, so to speak, none of the upper partials.

John Cage, William Mathias and Olivier Messiaen have died this year. We do not think of Cage as a composer of organ music, but *4'33"* (1952) was intended for any instrument or combination of instruments, and *Souvenir* (1984) is one of a small number of works expressly written for the organ. Which enterprising organist is going to give an *in memoriam* performance of *4'33"*, or has it been done already?

Relf Clark

## MEETINGS

### Huddersfield Residential Conference

The 1992 residential conference was held at the University of Huddersfield, formerly Huddersfield Polytechnic, and planned and conducted by David Wickens, who brought to bear on the conference arrangements the same meticulous approach which informs his scholarly work. The result was an unqualified success, and in many ways, as far as BIOS conferences are concerned, Huddersfield is likely to be regarded as something of a turning-point. It had as its theme 'Schulze and the Yorkshire organ builders', and instead of featuring a more or less unrelated collection of instruments, dealt almost exclusively with organs relevant to that theme; and since themes tend to benefit from counter-subjects, there was, as a foil to Schulze, 'The Romantic Repertoire'. That a relatively small number of instruments was visited, and that each was demonstrated in detail, gave the conference a relaxed, thoughtful pace. There was none of the rushing about that has tended to characterise recent conferences, and a further measure of the care with which it was planned was that even its interstices were enjoyable, almost invariably filled with refreshments, and allowing delegates time to mingle.

After an introduction by David Wickens, who was at pains to ensure that delegates were aware of the Yorkshire - i.e., one-syllable-pronunciation of "Schulze", the proceedings commenced with The Revd. Bernard Edmonds - Mr. Notes & Queries himself - giving a characteristically witty and erudite paper on Yorkshire organ builders from early times. It was good to have Fr. Edmonds at a BIOS event, and organisers of meetings should try to make more use of him. Dr. Nicholas Thistlethwaite followed Fr. Edmonds with reflections on the Victorian organ, some two years after the publication of his *The making of the Victorian organ*, and he brought

the evening to a pleasant conclusion by conferring upon Dr. Donald Wright honorary membership of the Society.

On Tuesday morning, delegates were welcomed to Doncaster Parish Church by The Revd. John Bird, the Vicar of St. George's, and Magnus Black, organist there since 1957. After a brief introduction by David Wickens, Mr. Black performed the Fantasia in G minor, BWV 542, and for those hearing the Doncaster organ for the first time, the vehemence of the first chord will have left an indelible impression. A rank-by-rank demonstration of the instrument preceded a short recital, of works by Bach (the *Sei gegruset* variations) and Parry (the prelude on Croft's 136th).

A picnic interrupted the journey from Doncaster to Queensbury Parish Church, where David Wickens introduced and Richard Hobson demonstrated the three-manual Isaac Abbott organ of 1884, a fine Victorian church organ, unaltered save for the addition of a Pedal Trombone. The rest of the day was devoted to the counter-subject of the conference, Relf Clark's lecture on transcription preparing the ground for the conference recital, given that evening by Gordon Stewart on the Willis-Harrison organ in Huddersfield Town Hall. Mr. Stewart's programme consisted largely of original works and transcriptions by W.T. Best and Edwin Lemare, with the Vivaldi-Bach G major concerto, and Karg-Elert's arrangement of the aria from Bach's Suite in D major. We are grateful to Mr. Stewart, and wish him and Kirkless Borough Council every success with their series of organ concerts.

Wednesday morning began with a paper from Stephen Bicknell, on nineteenth-century organ building practice. He tackled this daunting topic by taking a number of themes and illustrating them in his characteristically perceptive way by reference to the work of Cavaille-Coll and Willis. It was a stimulating prelude to a visit to the works of P. Conacher & Company Limited, just a short walk from the University. The company's managing director, Mr. John Sinclair Willis, was our host, and we are indebted to him and his staff for providing refreshments, allowing delegates to roam freely over the premises, and being on hand to deal with questions.

The first half of Wednesday afternoon was given over to the demonstration of the organs at Golcar Providence Methodist Church (P. Conacher, 1901) and St. John the Evangelist, Golcar (Binns, 1903). As at Queensbury, the instruments were introduced by David Wickens and demonstrated methodically. At Golcar (pronounced to rhyme with "broker"), the work of demonstration was shared by Richard Hobson and Geoffrey Morgan, who took us through each instrument rank by rank - principals, flutes, strings and reeds - and then gave a short recital. We are most grateful to them, and also to Philip Wood, who suggested the inclusion of these instruments in the conference itinerary (and the inclusion of the Queensbury organ as well).

A symposium on the problems surrounding the renovation or restoration of Romantic organs concluded Wednesday afternoon. Chaired by Dr. Donald Wright, its panel comprised Graham Barber, Mark Venning and Nicholas Thistlethwaite. As usual, opinion was divided over the merits of restoring nineteenth-century pneumatic actions, but the tenor of the symposium was emphatically that tonal alterations were hardly ever justified. The conference dinner, held that evening, was followed by a quiz thoughtfully devised and energetically presented by Jim Berrow, who created an atmosphere of great hilarity.

On Thursday morning, Keith Jarvis and his colleagues talked about their work on organ blowing, and after a presentation by Mike Sayers, on the National Pipe Organ Register, Mr. Jarvis played on the organ at St. Paul's (Wood of Huddersfield, 1977) an exacting programme, of Liszt, Mendelssohn and Reger.

Thus ended a memorable conference. We are grateful to David Wickens for making it so, and grateful to all who contributed. It was a pity that the otherwise magnificently comprehensive stop-lists gave no details of mixture compositions, and a pity that the buildings themselves were not introduced. A short talk on the history of St. George's, Doncaster would have been welcome, for example. But these are trivial criticisms. For at least one delegate, it seemed a pity that the conference had not lasted a whole week and included on an official basis the

Schulze organ at Armley (which in the event was the subject of post-conference self-propelled visits). Does any sanctity attach to beginning on a Monday and finishing at lunchtime on Thursday? The possibility of a conference lasting a whole week is one that should at least be considered.

### **Reading day conference**

20 February 1993

At the time of writing, the arrangements are still receiving finishing touches. Members wishing to attend are therefore requested to send to the Secretary a stamped, addressed envelope bearing the words 'Reading Conference'. They will be sent as soon as possible full details and an application form.

It can be disclosed at this stage, however, that the Secretary will be giving further and better particulars of Reading University's new Organ Historiography course (see elsewhere in this issue), and that papers will be read by Jim Berrow (on John Nicholson) and David Wickens (on the development of organ string tone in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries). Delegates will be able to examine the extensive collection of artefacts, refreshments will be provided at regular intervals, and there is likely to be an evening organ recital on an instrument of especial interest. John Brennan is almost certain to be on hand, offering for sale a wide range of Positif Press publications.

The total cost of the conference is not expected to exceed £15. Members are advised to contact the Secretary as soon as they can, since the demand for places is likely to be exceptionally heavy, and it is almost certain that numbers will have to be restricted.

### **Cambridge Residential Conference 1993**

Dr. Peter le Huray has provided the following note:

Accommodation has been reserved at St Catharine's College from Monday, August 30th to Thursday, September 2nd, 1993. Conference activities will begin on the early evening of August 30th and extend until midday on the 2nd. The main theme will be historic organs in East Anglia. Much has recently been done to preserve and reconstruct interesting organs in the Cambridge area. Particular attention will be paid to the west-gallery "Smith" instruments in the University Church, in Pembroke College Chapel; and in the chapel of Trinity College where the organ built by the firm of Metzler contains much Smith pipework. There are many other local reconstructions of interest, including the new organ at Selwyn College, largely composed of pipework by Holdich. Major architectural alterations at St Luke's (Victoria Road) has led to a complete rebuild of the William Hill organ there. Close to Cambridge is the Henry Cephas Lincoln organ in the beautiful Parish Church at Thaxted which had been built originally for St John's Chapel, Bedford Row, London. The time is approaching for this important instrument to undergo major restoration. The associated problems will be considered by experts on site in open discussion with the help of distinguished players. Thaxted lies in the heart of some beautiful Suffolk and Essex countryside. We plan to see such lovely villages as Clare, Cavendish and Long Melford on our coach outing taking us to Thaxted. Should time allow we may go north-west beyond Cambridge to Godmanchester parish church, where the fine Bryceson organ is also due for thorough refurbishment. Later on in the day, members may wish to consider the problems involved in the restoration of such organs as those in the Chapels of King's College and St. John's College, two major contracts that may have been completed by then. It is to be hoped that members will have the chance to meet many of those who have been engaged in solving these problems. Short recitals will be arranged on one or two of these instruments. Members will also wish to learn more of the important NPOR (National Pipe Organ Register) and of its computerisation, masterminded by Dr. Mike Sayers (Deputy Technical Director, the Cambridge University Computer Laboratories), a major project sponsored by BIOS.



## MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

At the time of putting this issue to bed, there were still some forty-two members who had not yet paid this year's subscription. This is regrettable, for after two requests enclosed with the *Reporter* during the year it now adds extra work onto a busy Membership Secretary in having to chase up defaulters. It has been agreed that the cut-off date for unpaid subscriptions is August 1. If the label used to send you this issue has a red asterisk on it please respond before 15 October. After the AGM on 17 October no further communications will be forwarded to you.

Mark Jameson has asked me to advise members of his new address:



John Whittle

## PUBLICATIONS

### Journals

John Brennan still had a supply of back-numbers and was keen to dispose of it, when your roving reporter saw him at the Grosvenor Chapel on 1 August. Readers with gaps in their collection are advised to telephone John on [REDACTED]

### Reporter

Copy for the January edition must be in the hands of the Assistant Secretary by no later than Friday, 4 December.

In spite of the plea contained in the July edition, the response for material has not been overwhelming. Anything literate and germane to the Society's objectives will be given serious consideration. In particular, it would be good to see the Reporter becoming a forum for a lively exchange of correspondence.

## NEWS

### Philip Sawyer

On 4 August, Philip Sawyer, a member of the Council of BIOS, gave a recital at Westminster Cathedral, as part of the Grand Organ Festival held there annually. The first part of his programme comprised works by Bach, Howells and Vieme, the second half the first London performance of a new work, *The Seven Sacraments of Poussin* by John McLeod (b.1934). The work was commissioned by Philip, with financial support from The Scottish Arts Council, and given its first performance, by him, at Greyfriars Kirk, Edinburgh, on 2 March. The second performance - again, by Philip - was given on 30 March, on the organ in the Kelvingrove Museum and Art Gallery, an instrument that delegates at the 1990 residential conference will remember vividly.

The artist-philosopher Nicolas Poussin (1594-1665) painted the *Seven Sacraments* in Rome, between 1644 and 1648. Thanks to Messrs. Pillans & Wilson, who sponsored the recital, the members of the audience had brochures containing excellent colour reproductions of these beautiful paintings, now on loan to the National Gallery of Scotland.

It was, decidedly, an Event, and we offer our congratulations to Philip, not only for his enterprise but also for his fine playing.

The Grand Organ Festival will have concluded by the time this issue is circulated. Members unfamiliar with the Willis III instrument at Westminster should contact James O'Donnell, Master of Music at Westminster Cathedral, for details of next year's festival.

### **Roger Judd**

We congratulate Mr. Judd, Assistant Organist of St. George's Chapel, Windsor Castle, and a member of BIOS, on the foundation of an organ and trumpets trio, with the trumpeters Mortimer Rhind-Tutt and Crispian Steele-Perkins. The trio's inaugural concert, at St. George's on 27 September, will have taken place by the time this issue appears. Details of its future activities can be obtained from Mr. Judd at [REDACTED]. We wish Mr. Judd and his colleagues every success with their new venture, and hope that the trio's activities will commend the organ to a wider audience.

### **Edmund Schulze**

Anyone wishing to give indirect support to the great instrument at Doncaster Parish Church should consider becoming a Friend of St. George's, Doncaster. Mr. Ray Chapman of [REDACTED] will be pleased to hear from anyone wishing to become a Friend.

Similarly, Graham Barber will be pleased to hear from anyone wishing to give financial support to the restoration of the Armley organ. He can be contacted at [REDACTED]. The target figure of £300,000 seems like an impossibly large sum, but if each of the 5/5 or so members of BIOS were to put aside £10 every week for a year, it would be very nearly within reach. This is not, of course, to suggest that every - or even any - BIOS member can afford to do this, but to look at very large figures in such a way can sometimes be helpful. How many restoration projects have foundered because of the feeling of despair so easily generated by the very mention of a large sum of money?

### **John Compton**

24 February 1993

The Assistant Secretary will give a recital on the organ at Greyfriar's Church, Reading (Compton, 1939) at 7.30 p.m. on Wednesday, 24 February. The church is approximately five minutes' walk from the railway station in Reading. Mechanical alterations were effected in the 1980s, but the tonal scheme and console are unaltered. The programme will consist of music by Bach, Stanford, Vaughan Williams, Britten, Vieme, Mozart, Hollins, Whitlock and Lemare.

## **NPOR**

Dr. Mike Sayers, the Society's Information Technology Officer, will be pleased to supply NPOR forms to any member requiring them. It is possible that as many as 95 per cent of the instruments in Great Britain are still waiting to be put on the Register.

## **TREASURER'S TOILS**

For the benefit of the many members unable to attend the Annual General Meeting, I can briefly summarise the year-end financial position.

Firstly, the two special accounts. The Endowment Fund has not been called on for another



year, but has been earning interest and receives two standing order payments; the Fund stands at £10,581. After last year's concern that a new injection of funds be found for the Archive Account, I am pleased to report the receipt of two grants totalling £4,500, which, after running expenses, leaves a somewhat healthier balance of £5,399 in that account. Other possible sources of funds for Archive activity have yet to respond. Plans for the continued compiling of the associated National Pipe Organ register, and projects for microfilming of organ-builders records not yet in the Archive, are the subject of separate fund-raiding exercises.

On the face of things, BIOS made a loss for the year in the everyday accounts of £2,500, so the amount in hand was reduced to £14,700. If you recall, however, monies for the 1990 and 1991 Journals remained unspent in last year's carry-over, and so comprised the major expenditure in 1991/2. The 1992 Journal is budgeted to be paid out of this year's income, leaving the "real" balance little changed at around £9,000.

Discounting the Journal costs, a third of the year's expenditure was on publishing and distributing the Reporter; £1,260 (42%) was spent on administration and travelling expenses, a greater amount and proportion than last year. Subscriptions again comprised three quarters of income; two years' worth of reclaims was recovered from the Inland Revenue in respect of covenanted subscriptions; with interest rates falling, the Reserve Account earned less interest, even though on greater balances than last year.

I shall be pleased to forward a copy of the audited summary of the Accounts for 1991/2, or any year, to any member who desires them.

Subscriptions were last raised in 1988. BIOS is still paying its way, however, and special grant money is being obtained to fund the Archive and other priority projects. So, on balance, particularly in view of the extraordinary amount of work involved in getting people to change standing orders and covenants, a subscription increase should be deferred for another year.

I would like instead to concentrate on spending time encouraging more members to covenant their subscriptions, and other positive tasks. Three-quarters of you have not yet filled in a covenant form. Would those eligible please think about doing so for 1993? If you pay tax, a covenanted £15 subscription is worth £20 to BIOS, for very little effort on your part. Some people covenant even more each year, jointly as a subscription and to the Endowment Fund. Do not wait for a personal invitation; ask me to send you a covenant form, or for advice if you need it (address and telephone number at the front of this issue).

Richard Hird

## AN UNNECESSARY LOSS

From 1991 until March 1992, the church of All Saints, Churwell, near Leeds, possessed an apparently adequate, neatly-cased organ with mechanical action and two-manuals and pedals. It fell victim to a re-ordering of the church and was summarily scrapped by the local tuner. Because All Saints is a Chapel of Ease, its organ plans needed neither prior discussion with, nor authority from, the DAC.

The organ was built in 1859, by Henry Williams of Cheltenham, for St. Mary's Parish Church, Charlton Kings, with the following specification:

GREAT	C - f3	SWELL	c - f3
Open Diapason	8	Open Diapason	8
Dulciana TC	8	Stpd Diapason	8
Stpd Diapason Bass	8	Principal	4
Clarinet Flute TC	8	Cornopean	8
Principal	4		
Fifteenth	2	PEDAL	C - d1
Sesquiáltera	III	Bourdon	16
COUPLERS		ACCESSORIES	
Swell to Great, Great to Pedal		Three Composition Pedals	

In 1889, Price of Cheltenham replaced the Clarinet Flute, Fifteenth and Sesquiáltera with a Clarabella, Piccolo and Gamba respectively. At the same time, a new concave pedalboard, possibly of 30-note compass, was fitted. The organ was sold to Churwell Mission Church (later to become All Saints) for £80, in November 1901, since when it appears to have undergone little, if any, tonal alteration.

A recent photograph shows the organ to be the double of Williams's 1865 instrument in the Countess of Huntingdon chapel, North Place, Cheltenham. (The latter organ is now the property of Cheltenham Museum, and awaits restoration.) The only visual difference between the two is the later shortening of the Churwell case-front, presumably to fit the limited height available in its gallery position.

As BIOS Redundancies Officer, I am aware of several customers seeking small two-manual mechanical-action organs. The Churwell organ was in good condition and would have served many a discerning congregation. Its disposal and destruction earned All Saints just £100 - precious little to set against the £4,000 they have paid for an electronic which is unlikely to serve them for ninety years.

Roy Williamson

## REDUNDANCIES

### DEVON

Hele & Co.

1875

Action mechanical  
Specification Man 16.8.8.8.8.4.4

Pd 16  
Casework pipe-rack  
Dimensions h 14' w8' d10'

### GLOUCESTERSHIRE

P.Conacher/Noterman etc

1885/1928

Action electro-pneumatic (tubular to Ch)  
Specification Gt 16.8.8.8.4.4.2.8 (Ch)  
Sw 8.8.8.8.4.III.16.8.8  
Ch 8.8.4.8  
Pd 16.16.16

Casework pipe-rack: detached console  
Dimensions h 18' 3" w14' 6" d9' 3"

### GLOUCESTERSHIRE

Casson Positive No. 715

1920s

Action mechanical/pneumatic  
Specification 16.8.8. oct coupler

No casework  
Dimensions h8' 3" w4'7" d2'7"

### KENT

Henry Jones & Sons

1912

Action tubular-pneumatic  
Specification Gt 16.8.8.8.4.4.2.8

Sw 16.8.8.8.4.8 sub/super cplrs  
 Pd 16.16  
 Casework pipe-rack, front pipes painted silver  
 Dimensions h 18' 6" w10' 6" d8'

## NORFOLK

Allen of Bristol  
 1860/70s

Action mechanical  
 Specification Man 8.8b/t.8.4.4.2  
 Pd 16

Casework front of painted pipes in three compartments, one side panelled, other side made up of Bourdons

Dimensions h 12' w8' 6" d3' plus 18" for pedalboard

## WARWICKSHIRE

anon/early 20c

Action mechanical  
 Specification Gt 8.8.8.4.2.8  
 Sw 8.8.8.8.4.8  
 Pd 16

Casework plain: outer towers and intervening flat

Dimensions h cl6' w9' 3" d not known

## WORCESTERSHIRE

Nicholson  
 1909

Action mechanical, pneumatic to pedal  
 Specification Gt 8.8.8.4.4.2.8  
 Sw 16.8.8.8.4.8.8  
 Pd 16.16.16.8

Casework pitch pine, basically pipe-rack

Dimensions h 16' 6" w15' d9' 4"

Urgent relocation sought for previously advertised Vowles in AVON; built 1873 (using old material) and rebuilt 1931.

Action pneumatic  
 Specification Gt 16.8.8.8.8.4.4.22/3.2.IV.8.4  
 Sw 16.8.8.8.8.4.4.2.III. 16.8.8.4  
 Ch 8.8.8.4.4.2.8  
 Pd 32.16.16.16.16.8.8.16.16 (Sw)  
 Casework h20' 6" w16' 9" d 17'

The Redundancies Register "Fates" list, revised up to the end of 1990, is now available. Any member desiring a copy should send five second-class stamps to the Redundancies Officer, to cover postage and copying charges.

## Developments at the University of Reading

### M.Mus. in Organ Historiography

A new graduate course (unique to the United Kingdom) leading to the degree of Master of Music in Organ Historiography has been instituted by the Music Department and will be

available on a full or part-time basis from October 1993. Details of the syllabus will be included in the January issue.

### **Short Courses in Organ Historiography**

A grant has been received under the University Funding Council's scheme for Continuing Education to initiate short courses in Organ Historiography. These will be available during the Academic Year 1993-94. Again, details will be included in the January issue.

### **The Artefacts Collection**

These new courses have accelerated development of the Artefacts Collection. Permanent facilities for study and storage have been secured in the Department of Music, and the work of conversion is currently in progress. The purchase of equipment will be financed from the U.F.C. grant and with interest from the BIOS Endowment Fund. Plans include direct computer links with the N.P.O.R. in Cambridge and eventually with the B.O.A. These facilities will be officially opened by BIOS and the University at the day conference to be held in Reading on 20 February, 1993.

Christopher Kent

## **REVIEW**

*The Performance of Early Organ Music* (32pp.) by Andrew Benson-Wilson, published by Andrew and Christine Benson-Wilson at 3 St. Mary's Court, Eastrop Lane, Basingstoke, Hants RG21 2AT; price £4, post included.

This little book has more to say than many a full-length volume. In fact, if there is any criticism to be levelled at it, it is that the title is too exclusive: *The Performance of Music* might be a better one, as much of what Mr. Benson-Wilson has to say impinges upon the techniques that a singer or any instrumentalist should bring to the art of turning 'dead' notes into live music. Not only that, but the style of the book is so unstuffy that even the most recondite suggestions are made to seem perfectly reasonable.

The author presents a distillation of his own experience with fine teachers throughout Europe, and makes intelligent and practical use of documentary sources from the fourteenth to the nineteenth centuries. He wrote originally for members of the Organ Club, but has completely revised and augmented the original articles; however, as a result, even the part-time organist will have no difficulty in following the text and understanding what the author implies. In fact, I dare say that the generality of organists, still playing 'trackers' of all kinds, will be better placed to do so than the majority of the cathedral players of semi-trained Leviathans, as almost none of the historical subtleties of articulation and fingering can make *these* dance on their tails.

Andrew is refreshingly well aware of other repertoires and current conditions abroad, so apart from organists and organ builders who know how to restore or regulate a mechanical action properly, the main beneficiaries of this booklet should be the cross-channel ferry companies.

Buy this book, if only because you have wondered why old keyboards have 'short keys', or to find out how to influence the speech of pipes through your touch, or why there are only a few original slurs in Bach's organ music, or why Mozart's playing style was 'choppy' (even when not crossing the Channel), or what used to be 'normal' articulation (before Stainer's primer) and how it was achieved. You will also discover why temperaments changed through the centuries, and (perhaps) why you might forget your electric blower and collaborate with an intelligent pumper to produce living sounds from the organ. Above all, buy it to *understand* why we should "Always remember that the organ is a wind instrument. All we are doing is enabling each pipe to breathe and speak" (p. 29).

The connection of the organ and its music with that of other instruments - viol/violin, gamba, 'baroque' oboe and flute - and with other musical expression - German sung-pronunciation, for instance - is constantly, and usefully, being made. Other connections - sensitive wind-

supply and musical rhetoric, or former manners of playing and the arrangement and acoustical conditions of 18th-century churches (altered by the Victorian 'restorers'), or how the actual appearance and notation of original published scores contain implications for their interpretation - might also have been made, but this is only a booklet. However, though the bibliography is invitingly presented, inclusion of publishers' names and prices would have been welcome.

In all this immersion in history, though, the present century and its peculiarly narrow attitudes are not forgotten. So: (in a discussion of 'well-tempered' systems of tuning) "...more remote keys can sound a bit out of tune to ears accustomed to equal temperament" (p. 25), (but, in equal temperament:)...'every note [sic] and interval is out of tune...all keys...sound exactly the same' (p. 26). I hope that the director of a well-known firm of organ builders who expressed the hope that his clients would not bother themselves with anything but equal temperament might read this booklet and be enlightened by it. Come to think of it, I should send him a copy.

Martin Renshaw

## NOTES & QUERIES

The Huddersfield Conference renewed one's acquaintance with the work of Schulze. I must admit that, impressed as I was, I found prolonged doses rather irritating; Doncaster perhaps more than Armley, owing probably to positioning. The 1884 Abbott at Queensbury pleased me; Schulze very well tamed, plus considerable Hill influence. But if I had to choose one to live with, I should be tempted by the Peter Conacher at Providence Methodist at Golcar.

Maley, Young and Oldknow - the bran-tub reveals two letters to H.T.Lilley from E.W.Maley, a builder, of Heme Hill, in 1928. He refers to his father as the organ-builder, but no information except that in the Kodak Magazine for January 1928 a 'series on Church Organs with photos by L.A.H. Horobin L.T.C.L. is now appearing'. Has anyone seen this? At S.Helen Grove, near East Retford, is an organ obtained from elsewhere in 1862, and in connection with work on it, information is sought as to its origin and previous home. Of two manuals, with ten speaking stops, it has large rosewood knobs with ivory insets, there are no hatpins, wooden roller boards have round studs; there are numerous indications of early Father Willis (c.f. Cranbrook, 1855) and the key-cheeks are in his style. Any information most welcome. C.H. Boot of New Barnet - rebuilt S.James there in 1912. Information about him, his connection with C.H.Boot & Co, a well-known firm in Kimberley, South Africa (still?).

Wrigley of Rochdale (Llanfyllin), 19th century. Information sought.

The organ (now rebuilt) at Redbourn in Hertfordshire was reported as having come from the Temple Church via Luton(O). In fact, it originated in 1877, built by Forster & Andrews as a house organ for Edmund Macrory, later QC, of the Middle Temple(2), at his residence in Leinster Square. He was the author of *Notes on the Temple Organ*. In the course of time the organ was enlarged, or perhaps replaced, for his next home in Bayswater. This was later moved to the schoolroom of the City Temple - another case of confusion between different buildings with similar words in their designation.

I do not know where Luton comes in, but by 1885 the organ was in Redbourn church. It was 'rebuilt and encased' by Roy Huntingford, in 1932, as a memorial, with some re-voicing by Bonavia Hunt, and finally completely rebuilt on a new west gallery with a proper case by Arnold, Williamson and Hyatt, in 1962.

Some time ago(3) I quoted from a letter to me in 1948 from a Willis-trained man then in business by himself, concerning his views on the work of the Hill firm and of Father Willis. In a further letter he spoke of Arthur Harrison:

"I have mixed feelings about Harrison's work. I feel his ideals were right, but his ideas not always. Most of his work is too "French polished" for my liking. When he produced power it was often, as you instance, too hard and compact

and glossy. It was in other words too studied. One longed that he would not be quite so refined, but would let himself go and be more virile and emotional".

His further remarks on organ design at that time also deserve quoting:

"We are too complacent about all these modern attempts to improve the organ. The organ is duplexed, and extended, and distorted by high pressure voicing, shorn of its characteristic features (mixtures and mutations), deprived of its pedal organ, loaded with gadgets and vast array of couplers, until in this distorted disguise the real thing, - the organ of classical tradition, is lost to view. Incidentally, it is so much more difficult to create a successful and beautiful organ on traditional lines than to present a host of control gadgets and a collection of stops voiced on modern lines".

I did say that I had an uncomfortable feeling that there was something I ought to have remembered about Orange Street Chapel<sup>1</sup> (\*\*\*\*). There was, as several correspondents have reminded me. Though it was not relevant to the original enquiry as to the possible existence of an organ from an early date, I should have mentioned that the demolition of the building (and disappearance of the organ) in 1913 was ultimately followed by the erection of a smaller chapel in 1929. This contains an organ by Forster & Andrews built in 1897 as a house organ for W. Johnson Galloway, MP, of Portland Place.

Paul Fauch tells me that, when the Huguenots moved out, it became an Episcopalian Proprietary Chapel (5), Toplady ('Rock of Ages') ministering there. In 1787 the congregation elected to follow the Congregational path.

Proprietary Chapels were described by Lord Phillimore, the authority on Ecclesiastical Law, as 'anomalies'. They arose in the earlier years of the 18th century, for various reasons. Originally unconsecrated places of worship, some were efforts to provide accommodation for which the parish churches were insufficient, owing to the growth of population in the metropolis, and ministers of the Church of England were licensed to officiate. Others, like St. John, Bedford Row, were erected for political reasons. Some were gathered around a popular preacher, episcopal or nonconformist, and of these (shades of American television religion!) a number were frankly commercial ventures. Even when they were not, they could be profitable. Dr. Dodd, for example, the great preacher of the 18th century, and hanged in 1777 for forgery, preached once on Sundays for ten years and averaged £1,300 a year. His chapel, S. Peter, Buckingham Palace Road, was originally Charlotte Chapel, Queen Charlotte being its special backer and patron. Later it was attached to S. Peter Eaton Square; in the last century, a number of notabilities were members of the congregation, including Gladstone and his friend Manning, later to become a Cardinal.

In the course of time such chapels either were linked with the parish in which they stood, or embraced nonconformity. Some changed round, some even more than once! Apart from S. Mary, Castle Street, Reading<sup>^</sup>), so far as I know the only remaining Episcopalian Proprietary Chapel still functioning as such is S. John, Downshire Hill, Hampstead. Run independently of diocesan control by their own committees, they are privately owned.

Of interest to us is the fact that the Grosvenor Chapel was originally Proprietary; but most interesting is Holy Trinity, Conduit Street, had it not been demolished a century ago to make room for a shop. James the Second had a large moveable wooden chapel built which he had moved about in the camp at Hounslow Heath, with a view to converting the soldiers to Roman Catholicism. In this was the noted organ attributed to Father Smith<sup>C</sup>). When James fled the country the chapel was erected near what is now New Bond Street. It was later rebuilt in brick. Authorities differ as to whether it was Proprietary, but latterly it was attached to S. Martin-in-the-Fields. The organ, of course, had gone elsewhere.

I cannot claim forgetfulness, but sheer driving without care and attention, for attributing to BIOS the rescue of the pipe organ at Ellesborough. It was done for the Diocesan Advisory set-up by dint of a lot of hard work and painstaking reports by Eric Pask. My apologies to him. He tells me of another Bryceson & Morten at S. Mary, Sullington in Sussex, " a very old church, modern additions by the Normans!" I omitted Bolnhurst in Bedfordshire from my

own list<sup>8</sup>). This has a case, unfortunately bereft of the original decorated front pipes some years ago by a thief. It stood previously in KeysoeW. An interesting organ was built by them in 1876 for SS.Peter & Paul Roman Catholic Cathedral, Cork. The Great reeds, on heavier wind, were placed in the swellbox and transferable to the Swell manual; there were completely separate wind supplies to treble and bass manual soundboards; and the couplers were by hitching pedals<sup>10</sup>). I do not know what survives. The next year a booklet was published, written by A.Morten, *Hints on the Purchase of an Organ*. Then in 1877 Morten left the partnership and joined James Taylor of London. Taylor may have already been in business, judging by 1874 quoted for S.John, Colchester. According to J.W.Warman's somewhat eccentric encyclopedic compilation<sup>11</sup>), the Morten of the partnership was T.H., but in spite of his lofty scorn of the inaccuracies of others - real or imagined - Warman was not always above reproach himself. (There is a marvellous 'howler' of which any schoolboy might be proud, top left column page 101 - it requires no knowledge of Latin to spot!) What is the truth of the matter? From Albany Organ Factory, Redhill Street, Regents Park, went organs for Cliftonville Wesleyan, S.Nicholas Colchester, S.Margaret Ikley all dated 1879; and Alburgh in Norfolk. Then in 1882 the partnership ceased, its stock auctioned in 1883, and Taylor continued on his own. I do not know what happened to Morten. Taylor rebuilt Holy Trinity Margate in 1884, and is credited with the invention of a pedal sound-board for extensions on the Schulze system!<sup>12</sup>). This was described as "a curiously made slider soundboard, with pallets right across it opening parallel and worked by a segment". He made one for Dr. Hayne. Addenda later, perhaps, when my unpacking has organised itself!

If you consult a back-number of a periodical, don't neglect to consult the following numbers for letters and corrections. It is possible to be seriously misled sometimes, if you do not. Someone asks what has happened to the English Department which used to crop up occasionally. I'm afraid it is in hospital at the moment. After enduring shrapnel such as 'superceded' and 'different to' (meaning this differs to that?) and a positive barrage of the adverb 'importantly' when the writers needed the adjective (it's quite simple - the organist strutted importantly into the vestry, but more important, he brought the beer with him) and dodging the people who write 'disinterested' when they mean 'uninterested' - the victim was looking forward to a peaceful convalescence with the help of parliamentary reforms. But it was not to be; severe wounding was caused by a clanger dropped by a leading politician: 'Where does the money come from for education? From you and I!'. Ah me!

#### Notes

- 1) Church Guidebook. *Reporter*, Vol. 6, No. 2, p. 11.
- 2) Elvin Forster & Andrews, *Their Barrel... Organs*, p. 89.
- 3) *Reporter*, Vol. 11, No. 3, p. 11.
- 4) *Reporter*, Vol. 16, No. 3, p. 13.
- 5) *Reporter*, Vol. 1, No. 2, p. 11.  
*Church Family Newspaper*, 17/10/1919, 'London's Proprietary Chapels'.
- 6) *Reporter*, Vol. 12, No. 4, p. 12. No. 1, p. 9.
- 7) Freeman and Rowntree, *Father Smith*, pp. 46, 90.
- 8) *Reporter*, Vol. 16, No. 3, p. 12.
- 9) *Organ Club Handbook*, No. 4 (1947), illustration.
- 10) Hopkins & Rimbault, *The Organ*, (1877), p. 617.
- 11) *The Organ*, etc., p. 176.
- 12) *Musical Opinion* 3/1936, p. 535.



## 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 illustration on the cover is of the organ in St. Mary's Nottingham, and is taken from the Illustrated London News for Saturday 2 December 1871. The organ, by Bishop & Starr, in its case by Scott, was opened in October of that year.*