

BIOS REPORTER

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THE BRITISH INSTITUTE OF ORGAN STUDIES

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BIOS REPORTER

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BIOS SUBSCRIPTIONS

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Front cover: *Chelsea Old Church. Organ by William Drake Ltd, 2019.* (Photo: William Drake Ltd). See inside back cover for details of forthcoming BIOS visit.

Back cover: *All SS. Coleford, Glos. Console showing candle brackets and charring of impost above. Organ by Sweetland, 1901.* (Photo: Editor). See p. 10.

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FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Although writing this just a week into the new year I am conscious that by the time it reaches members it will be towards the middle of February, so it's a little late to be sending new year greetings. Nevertheless, I know we all hope that 2023 will prove to be the year in which life finally returns to something like normal. The experience of coping with the restrictions necessitated by the pandemic probably means that 'normal' may well not be an exact resumption of what took place before Covid: the experience of holding on-line events and meetings by Zoom, or one of its alternatives, is almost certainly likely to bring changes to the way in which we operate in the future.

For charities such as ours, holding administrative meetings online has brought with it the financial benefit of not having to reimburse costs of travel, as well as savings to the members in terms of the travel time needed to get to and from the venue. But are virtual meetings really a replacement for face-to-face encounters? I was particularly struck by this question at the most recent meeting of the BIOS Listing Committee. After a long succession of Zoom meetings, the one we planned to hold in London in January would have been the first occasion in three years when we could all enjoy being together for a 'real' session. It would also have been the first opportunity for us to greet in person our most recently appointed member - Owen Woods of Harrison & Harrison (who has kindly agreed to join the group as the replacement for the sadly missed David Frostick). In the event, however, the January rail strikes made travel impossible, so at a late stage we had to resort to yet another meeting by Zoom. It struck me at the time what a wide geographical spread is present at these meetings: Chairman John Rowntree (Berkshire), Administrator Jeffrey Williams (Cornwall), Dominic Gwynn (Somerset), Andrew Hayden (Norfolk), Matthew Hynes (Ayrshire), Colin Menzies (London) David Wood (Yorkshire), Owen Woods (County Durham), and myself (Sussex). The saving in terms of travel expenses was thus considerable, but was the meeting and were the deliberations as good as being all together in the same room? Certainly not in my book. Decisions will need to be made for the future. Perhaps the answer will be to alternate online and real meetings, or to have one real meeting per year plus two by Zoom. One way or another, Covid has forced us all to take stock of the situation and adapt the way we work accordingly. Maybe that is not a bad thing, but it's not a replacement.

New year is the time when BIOS subscriptions fall due. That most members decide to continue supporting BIOS and renew promptly is in no small measure due to the efficient and sterling work carried out by David Shepherd, our long-serving Membership Secretary, who works so devotedly to issue reminders and chase up late payers. The ability to renew online via our website and PayPal, which many members now use as their preferred method of payment, may also have helped to make renewal an easier process. Whatever the case, we remain grateful that so many

of you continue to support us year by year. We have to remember, however, that David is due to retire as Membership Secretary when his present term of office comes to an end and, as yet, there is no sign of a replacement. Equally, though with more immediate urgency, we need to recruit a new NPOR Fund Manager to replace Tim Gray when he steps down later this year. As mentioned in the last issue, these administrative tasks can largely be undertaken from the comfort of your home and on your own computer. If you think you may be interested in becoming more involved with BIOS as an organisation please don't be reticent in contacting us to find out more about what is involved in either of the posts.

I've mentioned before that one of the things that really impressed me about BIOS in its early days was the way in which those in the lead grasped the nettle and got on with achieving things rather than just running an organisation. Publications (the quarterly *Reporter* and the annual *Journal*) were the first public face of the new body, setting a very high standard in terms of content, printing and production. Thanks to the succession of talented Editors and, in the case of the *Journal*, the eagle eye of John Brennan, standards have been maintained over all these years. Volume 46 of the *Journal*, which came through our letterboxes in the run-up to Christmas, was as good as ever, with its wide variety of articles covering the history of individual organ builders and organ firms, as well as particular organs, the repertoire of organ music, and periods and styles of organ design and construction. This year's edition, Volume 46, was John Brennan's swansong in terms of design and oversight of production, John having been responsible for every *Journal* since the very first. We thank him most warmly for his advice, help and practical input over nearly half a century, which has done so much to promote the public perception of BIOS as a serious professional and academic body. What could be more appropriate for John's last volume than to have as Editor our President, Dr Nicholas Thistlethwaite. Nicholas, a founder member of BIOS, has remained actively involved ever since, serving as Secretary and Editor of the *Reporter* from 1976-86 and Chairman from 1993-97.

With our AGM scheduled to take place in April, this will be the last column I write for the *Reporter* before I step down as Chairman. It has been a real honour to serve in that capacity for the past twelve years, and I like to think that we have managed to keep alive the pioneering spirit that was always present in earlier years. New initiatives have included the establishment of the Historic Organs at Risk Register and the setting up of the dedicated NPOR Fund to help us meet the increased costs that have come with the necessary professional hosting and management of its associated website. The fulfilling of our charitable requirement to 'educate the public' is being greatly enhanced through the expansion of our publications enterprise, the Nicholson book and the shortly to appear Walker book providing models for further ventures in the future. Underpinning these products, the establishment and operation of the BIOS Webstore through our own website provides the means for us to process orders and handle sales, and gives us a

framework for the expansion of the initiative in due course.

Working with the Council and those who contribute in so many ways to the running of BIOS has been a constant pleasure. I hope that members realise how lucky we are to have such an able and dedicated team. So many are involved that it would be invidious to mention individual names. However, I can't close without making special mention of our outstanding Secretary, Melvin Hughes, and Treasurer, Adrian Mumford who are the beating heart of the day-to-day operation of BIOS and work so tirelessly and efficiently on your behalf to ensure that everything is taken care of. I extend my thanks and gratitude to all of the above and to the many more who contribute in different ways (the NPOR and DBOB team of Editors, for example) as well as to you, our members, for the support and encouragement that you have given me in my role as Chairman. It has been a wonderful and deeply enriching experience, a memory I will always treasure.

Alan Thurlow

FROM THE SECRETARY

BIOS Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the British Institute of Organ Studies will take place on Saturday 22 April 2023 at Chelsea Old Church, 64 Cheyne Walk, London SW3 5LT at 14.00 hours.

The AGM forms part of the programme for the Day Conference at Chelsea Old Church. All members whose subscriptions have been paid are entitled to attend the AGM (free of charge) and to vote, but the Council hopes that many members will wish to include their attendance at the meeting as part of their support for the whole day event.

Elections

The following election of officers and ordinary members of Council will be held:

Chairman

Publications Officer

Casework Officer

3 Ordinary Members of Council

Clause 7.4 of the Constitution states: 'Any two fully paid-up members of the Society shall be at liberty to nominate a member to serve on the Council'. Clause 7.5 states: 'the name of each member nominated under clause 7.4 shall be given to the Secretary not less than seven days before the date fixed for the Annual General Meeting, accompanied by the candidate's consent to serve, if elected'.

Nomination forms for officers and ordinary members of Council are obtainable from the Secretary, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] e-mail: secretary@bios.org.uk

BIOS Council (February 2023)

BIOS Council met on Saturday 14 January 2023. Ten members of Council were present. Nicholas Thistlethwaite (President) and John Norman (Webmaster) were also in attendance.

Council received Reports and from them noted the following:

Terms of Reference had been prepared for BIOS Sub-Committees which would be published in the Annual Report.

Discussions were continuing on the possibility of producing a BIOS 50th Anniversary Publication (2026).

A further appeal for volunteers would be placed in the Chairman's column of the forthcoming *BIOS Reporter* viz a new NPOR Fund Coordinator in 2023 and a new Membership Secretary in 2024.

The Accounts for 2022 were accepted by Council and would now be independently examined.

The Barber Institute was unavailable for the annual Research Conference because of planned building works but it was now expected that the Conference would take place in the Organ Studio of the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire.

Back issues of *BIOS Reporter* up to 2010 were now available online through the Website.

There had been increases in costs – printing and postage – for both *BIOS Journal* and *BIOS Reporter*.

Nine organs had been scoped for Casework advice.

3 new applications for Listing were approved.

Income to the NPOR Fund from all sources covered expenditure for the year.

Advertisements promoting the Nicholson book were continuing in Organ Magazines; the Walker book would feature once it was published.

A short film 'Organ Stops' on the work of the new Charity Pipe up for Organs founded by BIOS Member, Martin Renshaw, was broadcast on BBC4 on Christmas Eve. The Charity and the Documentary were to be commended for raising awareness of the fate of organs in the UK.

The Cadbury Research Library was open providing access to the British Organ Archive but still subject to restricted hours

A link would be provided from the BIOS Website to the Scottish online project called Sowne of Organe which was similar to HOSA.

BIOS Council meets next on Saturday 13 May 2023.

Melvin Hughes

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

I am delighted to welcome the following new members to BIOS:

Wendy Waldoock, LRAM, ARCM,

Zsombor Toth,

Daniel Davies,

James Hall,

Prof. Tobias Willi,

Christopher Holman,

We regret to note the recent death of Dr David Roderick Dibbs, of Shirley, Croydon, a BIOS member since 1983.

Please note the following changes to the 2021 Membership List:

Arnold Mahon's address is now:

Dr John Willmet's qualifications should read: BA, MA, MA(Div), MMus, MTh, PhD, FRCO, LRAM,

Dr Nigel Holdsworth,

Michael Bacon's address is now:

Simon Williams' new address is:

Robin Walker of Canterbury CT2 8HX has a new email address:

Dr Ron Fletcher's full list of qualifications is now: Ph.D, Hon.F.Univ/Pestalozzi, MA (Music & Liturgy), F.Dip.ASMC, B.Ed (Honoris causa), B.Ed (Hons), CertEd., CertBKn. CSS(RSCM), CertHE(SEN), CertHE(Th & Min), DipCLA, ATh, FGCM, ARCM, SrrFNMSM, FLCM, FVCM, FNCM, AFNCollM, FNSCM, FCAM, FNFCM, DipCompNMSM, L.Musicol.ASMC, L.Comp.ASMC, LMusLCM, AMusLCM, FFSC, FGLO, HonFFLM, FMCM, FGMS, FNFCM, FASC, FIGOC, FHCO, FSCO, MRR.

My grateful thanks to those members who have already paid their 2023 Subscription on time, or who have amended their Standing Order amount.

Subscription amounts are: £37 (£32 concessionary, £12 student under 30). For those outside the UK, rates are £10 higher respectively, to reflect the additional postage costs of publications. As always, you can pay in one of four ways: i) by Standing Order (as many hundreds of members do), ii) by direct transfer into the BIOS bank

account, whose details are: NatWest; sort code: 52-30-44 account number: 05097169 account name: The British Institute of Organ Studies – Registered Charity, iii) via the BIOS website: <http://www.bios.org.uk> using PayPal and iv) by sending me a cheque to my address given on the inside front cover. Please ‘Gift Aid’ your subscription if you are able, and are not already doing so.

David Shepherd

COMMITTEE FOR THE LISTING OF HISTORIC ORGANS

Grade I organs are of exceptional interest

Grade II* organs are particularly important and of more than special interest

Grade II organs are of special interest, warranting every effort to preserve them

The following organs were awarded Historic Organ Certificates at the BIOS Council meeting on 14th January 2023.

Location	Builders and Date	Comments	Grade
Great Warley, Essex St Mary the Virgin	Norman & Beard c.1902	A representative example of the firm's work housed in an unusual Art Nouveau case.	II*
Higham, Lancashire St John the Evangelist	Wordsworth & Maskell 1871	Possibly the only unaltered example of the firm's work in the area.	II
Eaton Constantine, Shropshire St Mary	Henry Millar 1762 Daniel Gray 1862	Believed to be the sole survivor of this provincial organ builder, Conscientiously restored in 1988.	II

Future Submission Dates:

Friday, 24 March 09:00 for meeting of Listing Committee on Thursday, 4 May 2023

Friday, 11 August 09:00 for meeting of Listing Committee on Thursday, 21 September 2023

Jeffrey Williams

NEWS FROM MEMBERS

As a result of relocation, BIOS member **Tony Boden** has the following publications that he will be happy to donate without charge to a good home: *BIOS Journals* (complete run from No.1); *BIOS Reporter* (complete run from No.1); *RCO Year Book* (1959-2005); *RCO Journal* (1993-2010); *RCO Newsletter* (1990-present); *The Organ Year Book* ed. Peter Williams (Nos 1-19, 1970-1988). The books could be collected by arrangement either from Market Drayton or Southampton. If interested, please telephone Tony Boden on 01630 653416.

MEETING REPORT

The making of the English organ... A study day.

Saturday 5 November 2022, St Swithun, Worcester

The survival of the Georgian church of St Swithun in the centre of Worcester was a close run thing – redevelopment of the city centre in the 1960s led to the loss of the nearby Public Hall. The church stands on the site of a medieval church and the current structure, dating from 1734, encases the earlier tower. The eighteenth-century congregation came from the prosperous merchant classes and there were close connections with the cathedral – Elias Isaac, who was cathedral organist from 1747 until his death in 1793, is named in surviving church records as organist at St Swithun – although it is likely that he made use of deputies, including his daughter Ann (1758-1817) who was his successor for a very short period between 1793 and 1794.

Nothing is known about the first organ at St Swithun but it appears to have been replaced by an instrument supplied by Ann Isaac, under an annuity arrangement. The churchwardens were very unhappy with the organ provided and the arrangement was terminated. A new organ was ordered from Robert and William Gray and installed in 1796 – this third organ is still in the church (see NPOR N03625 for specifications and other details) and provided a focus for the study day. The early wealth of the church is evidenced by the presence of numerous memorials to city merchants. However by the mid-nineteenth-century the parish had declined substantially in prosperity and, in consequence, the interior furnishings have survived largely intact – notably the organ and eighteenth-century box pews (**Tim Bridges**). By the 1840s the 1796 Gray organ was beginning to look out-of-date and the churchwardens turned to newly-arrived organ builder John Nicholson to enlarge and improve the organ. Nicholson had arrived in Worcester from Rochdale around 1840 along with his father Richard and set up his workshop a few minutes' walk away from St Swithun's. Documentary evidence for the early years of the Nicholson business is fragmentary and this presented significant challenges for **Jim Berrow** in gathering material for his recently published account of the early years of the enterprise (*The Making of an English Organ Builder: John Nicholson of Worcester* BIOS [2022], ISBN 9780995541917). Copies of Berrow's earlier account of the organs and organists at St Swithun (*The Organs and Organists of St Swithun's Church Worcester* Positif Press [2013], ISBN 9780906894538) were given to each delegate through the generosity of the Friends of St Swithun – the church now being in the care of the Churches Conservation Trust.

Publication of the Nicholson book by BIOS represents a significant step forward for the organisation as it approaches its fiftieth anniversary and other books on British organ builders and related topics are in preparation or planned (**Alan Thurlow** and **Katie Pardee**). Nicholson's modest enlargement of the Gray organ in 1844 without

subsequent major interventions until the restoration work by Goetze and Gwynn in 2009-10 means that the 1796 organ remains largely as installed. This delicate fusion of a typical late-eighteenth century English organ (G-compass single manual) with an instrument expanded to conform to early-Victorian requirements (tenor C Swell and pedals) allowed curator and organist of St Swithun's **Andrew McCrea** to demonstrate a repertoire of works ranging from John Stanley to Battison Haynes (1859-1900) that could be convincingly played on the present organ.

The close links between St Swithun's and Worcester Cathedral provided the context for a broader look at organ history in Worcester. Trials and errors in commissioning a new organ for the Cathedral in the 1660s are recorded in various surviving documents (**Dominic Gwynn**). Despite the involvement of various Gentlemen of the Chapel Royal, organ builders George Dallam and Thomas Harris, and Nathaniel Tomkins, son of Thomas who had been organist at the Cathedral for fifty years until 1646, the resulting organ soon seemed out-of-date. As 2022 was the 450th anniversary of the birth of Thomas Tomkins (1572-1646) the study day closed with a recital by **Christopher Allsop** and **Nicholas Freestone** of a selection of Tomkins' keyboard compositions, including a *Fancy for two to play* which is one of the earliest known English keyboard duets.

David Shuker



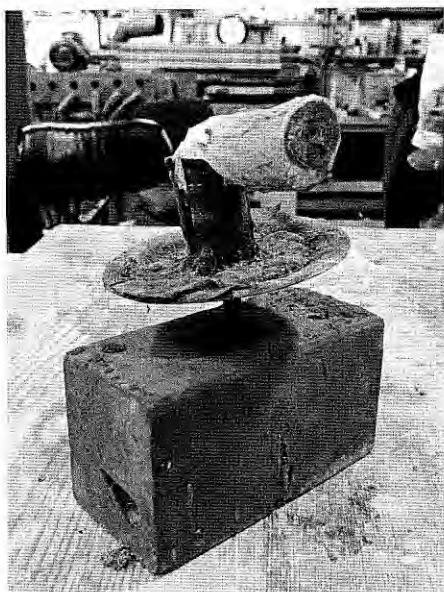
BIOS at St Swithun's (Photo: David Shuker)

WORKING WITH CANDLE LIGHT AND THE DANGER OF FIRE

DOMINIC GWYNN

We have become so dependent on working with electric light that the techniques of working without have been lost. How organ builders managed with inadequate lighting has interested me for years, but without ever accumulating enough information to write about it. This picture of a makeshift candlestick and squashed candle will have to do, complemented by two not very clear pictures of the soot circles that betray the use of a candle.

The candle stick was found in the bellows of the Samuel Renn organ at Great Budworth. The last time the bellows was re-leathered was in 1886, by a worker from the Manchester firm of Alexander Young. That would be the earliest that this candle could have been left, but it could also have been the result of a later repair. It is very dark inside an organ, and even the rather inadequate light from a candle would have made the difference. It looks as if the candle was left inside inadvertently, and the leaf screwed back into place, bending a candle possibly softened from being warm, though one hopes, not alight.

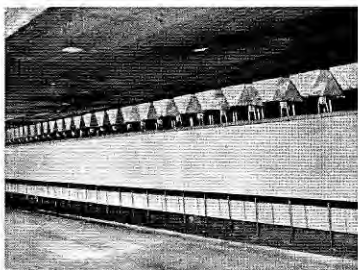


Organ builder's candle found at Great Budworth
(Photo: Dominic Gwynn)

There must have been a constant awareness of the danger of fire, and there must have been drills to make sure that candles, oil lamps, braziers and stoves were extinguished when the workshop or organ was left, even for a short time. But organ builders have to work in very confined spaces inside an organ, and we become familiar with those patches of soot that show that an organ builder has had to work at close quarters, with their candle close to a surface above. The most frequent place is in front of a pallet box when it is set back from the bar fame.

The most extreme that I remember is in front of the pallet box of the Swell organ at Wynnstay, the Williams Wynn organ now at Cardiff Museum and Art Gallery in Cathays Park. It is a Snetzler organ built in 1774, but moved to Wynnstay in 1864,

and rebuilt by Gray & Davison. The Swell was at the end of a long brick tunnel, close to the floor, and getting to the faceboard and a ciphering pallet would have meant lying down and pressing one's cheek to the passage board, with a short stub of candle right next to one's face.



Shrewsbury, All SS candle marks
(Photos: Dominic Gwynn)

One does not expect the candle to make a burn mark bad enough to leave cracks in the wood, but that can be found in the Peter Conacher organ made for Capel Soar in Merthyr Tydfil in 1890, under the Great stop action trundle frame. There are soot patches all over the organ.

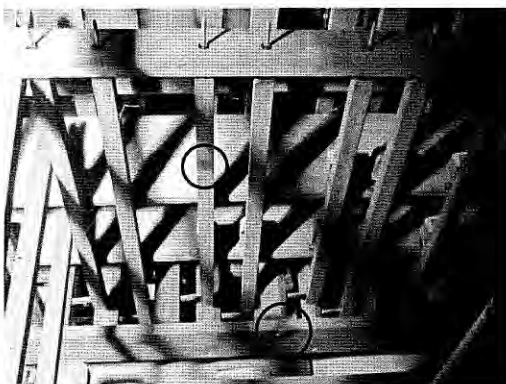
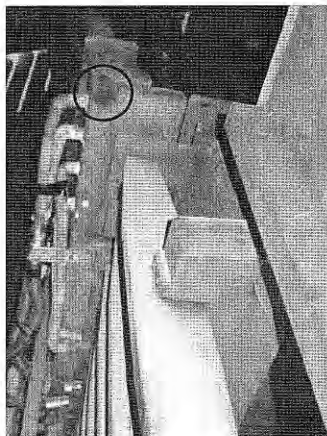
Peter Conacher's 'Springwood Manufactory' was damaged by fire in 1910, recorded with a pencil inscription inside the Capel Soar organ. But it is on the whole surprising how rarely the researcher finds records of fire damage, either to workshops or to organs.

A very obvious example of candle damage is shown on the back cover of this issue where scorch marks made by candles intended to illuminate the music desk can be clearly seen on the impost at All SS, Staunton, Glos.

The largest number of patches that I remember is in front of the pallet box on the Great organ in the 1876 John Nicholson organ at All Saints Shrewsbury (illustrated, rather obliquely). The pallets must have given some anxiety, perhaps because dirt was left in the channels and shaken around during transport (more common than one would imagine), or perhaps there had been a change in environmental conditions from the workshop to the church.

Merthyr Tydfil,
Capel Soar.

Smoke marks
(right) and scorch
marks (below)



ENGLISH RESTORATION ORGAN COMPOSITIONS: SOME IMPLICATIONS FOR TEMPERAMENT AND CONSTRUCTION

RICHARD E OVERILL

During background research in preparation for a lecture-recital on the English organ *stylus phantasticus* the musical treatment by English Restoration organ composers of notes that would sound noticeably out-of-tune in most shades of mean-tone temperament was investigated statistically. The results of this analysis may be interpreted as indicating specific characteristics of the instruments for which they were composed.

It has long been recognised that the English composers of Verses or Voluntaries for organ during the period of the reigns of Charles II, James II and William III were not only influenced by the immediately preceding Civil Wars and Commonwealth period but were also subject to continental influences in both compositional style and organ construction.

In terms of compositional styles both Charles II and James II are known to have favoured French and Italianate music, as evidenced by the employment of organists Giovanni Battista Draghi, Giovanni Sebenico, brothers Bartolemeo and Vincenzo Albrici, and Gianbattista Cazale at the various court chapels.^{1,2} Meanwhile, Renatus Harris and his father Thomas who was apprenticed to Thomas Dallam immigrated from Brittany around 1660 and Bernard Smith moved to England from Germany via the Netherlands around 1667, both establishing their respective organ building businesses.

The outcome of this creative confluence can be found in the *stylus phantasticus* of seventeenth-century English organ music, characterised by harmonically angular motifs, dissonance, chromaticism, manual flourishes, extravagant ornamentation, French *notes inégales* (predominantly *couler*), together with Italianate elevation toccata (*durezza e ligature*) and canzona forms.

The dataset under consideration here comprises the following English organ composers (ordered here by date of death) and their published organ works:

- JL: John Luge (c.1587–c.1647), 3 Voluntaries (ed. Susi Jeans and John Steele)
BC: Benjamin Cosyn (c.1580–1653), 4 Voluntaries (ed. John Steele / Geoffrey Cox)
RP: Richard Portman (?–c.1655), Verse for ye Double Organ (ed. Geoffrey Cox)
AB: Albertus Bryne (c.1621–1668), Voluntary in A; Ground in A (ed. Terence Charlston)
CG: Christopher Gibbons (1615–1676), 7 Verses / Voluntaries (ed. John Caldwell)
ML: Matthew Locke (c.1622–1677), 7 Voluntaries from *Melothesia*, 1673 (ed. Gordon Philips); Voluntary in A (ed. Geoffrey Cox)
JH: John Hingeston (c.1610–1683), Voluntary in A (ed. Robin Langley)

HP: Henry Purcell (1659–1695), 6 Voluntaries (ed. Hugh McLean)
 BR: Benjamin Rogers (1614–1698), 2 Voluntaries (ed. Susi Jeans / Richard Rastall)
 JB: John Blow (1649–1708), 33 Voluntaries / Verses (ed. Watkins Shaw / Barry Cooper)
 WC: William Croft (1678–1727), 13 Voluntaries (ed. Richard Platt); Voluntary in A (ed. Robin Langley / Geoffrey Cox)

Note that the first three composers in the list are strictly pre-Restoration and are included here for comparison with those who were (also) active post-Restoration. We have studied the musical treatment by each of the above composers of notes that would sound noticeably out-of-tune in most shades of mean-tone temperament, specifically D[#], A[#] and E[#]. For each composition we have enumerated the occurrences of D[#], A[#] and E[#], and classified each occurrence as either ‘plain’ or ‘masked’. It is taken to be ‘plain’ if it appears in a major or minor triad (either in its root position or in an inversion), whereas it is classified as ‘masked’ if it appears ornamented, or as a passing note, or in a diminished 5th, dominant 7th, diminished 7th, or minor 9th chord.

The rationale for the above classification scheme is that a noticeably out-of-tune note can be masked by ornamentation, or if it rapidly transitions to another note, or if its harmonic context does not permit its poor temperament to be perceived aurally. However, in the harmonic context of a persistent triad there is no realistic possibility of effectively masking its out-of-tune character. Using the dataset and classification scheme outlined above yields the table of results below.

Name	Comps.	Plain D [#]	Plain A [#]	Plain E [#]	Masked D [#]	Masked A [#]	Masked E [#]
JL	1/3	2	0	0	3	0	0
BC	1/4	2	0	0	2	0	0
RP	1	3	0	0	0	0	0
AB	1/2	3	0	0	0	0	0
CG	4/7	6	0	0	1	0	0
ML	4/8	0	1	0	6	2	0
JH	1	3	0	0	0	0	0
HP	3/6	3	2	4	6	0	4
BR	1/2	3	0	0	0	0	0
JB	18/33	18	0	1	68	0	0
WC	7/13	31	20	3	23	12	3

In the table above, the totals for Christopher Gibbons exclude the later additional endings for two of the voluntaries (No. 1 in A and No. 2 in D); the totals for John Blow include the second section of the *Voluntary on the Old 100th Psalm Tune*; the totals for Henry Purcell include the first section of the *Voluntary on the Old 100th Psalm Tune*; the totals for William Croft exclude doubled octaves; the symbols *m*

and n in the second column indicate that m of the composer's n organ compositions contain potentially out-of-tune notes.

From the results in the table, a number of tentative conclusions may be drawn. John Hingeston, Christopher Gibbons and Albertus Bryne probably composed for organs with split D's in the middle octaves since they were content to use plain D's, while Matthew Locke probably composed for organs tuned in mean-tone as he invariably masks D's. Locke is known to have operated in the Netherlands during part of the Commonwealth period and in 1672 he described appreciatively the compositions of Frescobaldi, Froberger and Chambonnières.³ Froberger himself is known to have visited England around 1652,⁴ and possibly again around 1662 if Mattheson's account is to be believed,⁵ so it is likely that he met Locke (as well as Christopher Gibbons) and introduced him to some of his teacher Frescobaldi's keyboard music, amongst others.

The table also indicates that John Blow probably composed both for organs with split D's in the middle octaves (6 voluntaries), and also for organs tuned in some shade of mean-tone (8 voluntaries). Only his Voluntary 18 uses three enharmonic note pairs (D#/E^b, G#/A^b, F#/G^b). Recall that both John Blow and Henry Purcell performed for Bernard Smith versus Renatus Harris in the famous 'battle of the organs' at the Temple Church, London in 1684 - 5;⁶ Smith's organ had split D's and G's on both the Great and Chaire manuals, which would have been nicely exploited in John Blow's Voluntary 18 and in the first section of the *Voluntary on the Old 100th Psalm Tune* attributed to Henry Purcell. However, in this latter piece Purcell uses both plain and masked forms of D# and E# suggesting that it was intended for an instrument that employed a form of extended mean-tone temperament which rendered the triads around D# and E# at least tolerable to the ear.

While the data for William Croft is quite similar to that for Henry Purcell, it is strikingly dissimilar to that for John Blow, in that Croft combines the use of both plain and masked forms of one or more of the notes D#, A# and E# in six of his 13 voluntaries. This finding could be interpreted as implying that these pieces were primarily intended for organs employing a form of extended mean-tone temperament. However, an alternative explanation is also possible: while there appears to be no compelling evidence that Equal Temperament was employed in English organs before about 1700, the concept was familiar to some of the natural philosophers in their communications with the Royal Society. In particular, the remark by the Oxford mathematician John Wallis⁷ that

it is found necessary (if I do not mistake the practise) so to order the 13 Pipes (containing 12 Intervals which they call Hemitones) as that their sounds ... be in Continual Proportion (each to its next following, in one and the same Proportion) ... which, all together, shall compleat that of an Octave or Dia-pason, as 2 to 1. Whereby it comes to pass, that each pipe doth not express its proper Sound, but very near it, yet somewhat varying from it, Which they call Bearing

was instigated by a prior discussion with Renatus Harris and clearly refers to equal temperament.⁸ It is thus at least possible that at least six of Croft's voluntaries may have been intended for an instrument using equal temperament or something very close to it.

In this context, it should be noted that a much earlier work, John Bull's *Ut, Re, Mi, Fa, Sol, La* (Fitzwilliam Virginal Book no.LI), which visits all keys with up to five sharps and up to five flats, has been proposed as a work for the archicembalo with 31 notes per octave,⁹ while Nicholas Carleton's *A Verse of Four Parts*, which modulates through 20 different keys,¹⁰ may have been intended for viol consort by analogy with Alfonso Ferrabosco's four-part fancy in the same MS.¹¹

Finally, while the Revd. Arthur Bedford marked the death of John Blow as the start of the transition to the more anodyne organ compositions of the eighteenth century,¹² the data presented here suggests that it would not be unreasonable to extend his dictum to include the verses or voluntaries of William Croft in the canon of the English *stylus phantasticus*.

The author wishes to thank Dalibor Miklavčič, (Ljubljana University Academy of Music) for both suggesting this investigation and for his encouragement.

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⁴ Buelow, George, 'Johann Jakob Froberger' in *The New Grove North European Baroque Masters*, Macmillan (1985) 153-157.

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¹² Bedford, Arthur, *The great abuse of musick* (1708) 225.

THE POSITIVE ORGAN COMPANY AND THE INSTRUMENT AT ERYHOLME IN NORTH YORKSHIRE

JOHN WHEELER

This investigation began with the recording of the church of St Mary the Virgin at Eryholme in North Yorkshire by members of the Church Recording Society, a body set up to continue the work previously done by NADFAS (the National Association of Decorative and Fine Art Societies, now renamed The Arts Society). The organ in that church was made by the Positive Organ Company (POCo).¹ Investigation into the history of the instrument led to finding out more about the relationship between the Opus Number, which is often found on a label on the POCo organs, and the date of manufacture.

At the time when the investigation began, this instrument was not listed in the NPOR, at least not at Eryholme.² However, it did have a manufacturer's label bearing the opus number (780) and this led to the discovery that the organ had already been recorded as once being in the church of St Cuthbert in Marton-in-Cleveland, about 20 miles away.³ This information had been copied from the notebooks compiled by D. Holt, now in the British Organ Archive,⁴ and dates from 1937. The NPOR entry for this organ said that the instrument had been 'destroyed or broken up' and a footnote suggested that it had been removed 'in the early days of electronics'.

The POCo organ is known to have come to Eryholme around 1951 as it bears a plate stating that it was donated by the then vicar and installed by the parishioners in his memory. Unfortunately there is no surviving faculty for its introduction. At the Marton end there is no traceable record of this organ being there apart from the Holt notebook. However there are two pieces of circumstantial evidence. One is that in late 1949 there was a faculty issued for the removal of an unspecified organ,⁵ the date of this relating well to the introduction at Eryholme c.1951. The other is a plan of Marton church, made for a re-ordering in 1928, which shows the footprint of an organ exactly matching that of the Eryholme instrument.⁶ Although the intention was for the organ to be relocated within the church, that was not the main purpose of re-ordering and there are no further details mentioned.

Following the 1949 removal of the POCo organ at Marton, another organ was introduced there. This was not the instrument that is there now, which is an Allen electronic introduced in 1979 and now itself needing to be replaced, but another pipe organ. According to the faculty papers still at the church, the introduction of the Allen was to replace a pipe organ made by Blackett and Howden, a Newcastle firm founded c.1893. Records of the work of Blackett and Howden are sparse: they operated until around 1960 but the present author has been unable to find reference to dated new organs after the end of the 1920s.⁷ Whilst it is possible that they might

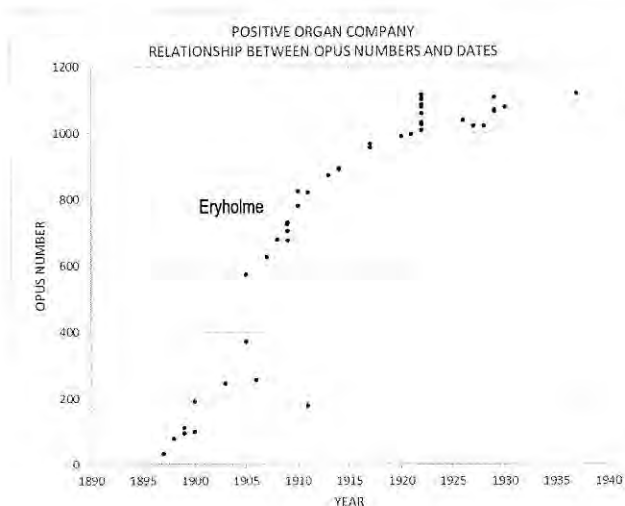
have built a new organ at the start of the 1950s, it is much more likely that this instrument had come from somewhere else: 30 years would have been a very short life for a pipe organ if it had been from newly built. Indeed it is not impossible that the organ was not built by Blackett and Howden but only moved and re-erected by them. The fate of that organ, which seems to have left no record of any kind,⁸ appears to be that it remained in the church for some time after 1979 but was finally removed in the first decade of the twenty-first-century when it was discovered to be so full of woodworm that, according to parish tradition, the only wood that could be salvaged from it was just enough to make a compost bin for a parishioner. There is, though, a record of the presentation of that organ still in the church: a brass plaque mounted on the wall adjacent to where the organ once stood, recording that it was given to the church in memory of a member of the Winterschladen family who lived in Marton.

The plaque on the organ now at Eryholme records, as mentioned above, its introduction in 1951 in memory of the incumbent at the time. Marks on the woodwork indicate that this replaced an earlier plaque which might have provided a record of its introduction at Marton. Enquiries at both churches have not found this missing plaque and it has probably been scrapped.

One thinks it should be possible to relate the Positive Organ Company opus number to the date of manufacture. One of the records in the NPOR⁹ mentions an 'opus list' but without a reference it has not been possible to find it. There was also a short discussion on the subject in 2010 in the online Mander Organ Builders' Forum but it came to no general conclusions.¹⁰ These instruments are small and very easily moved; in fact there is a record of the Carl Rosa Opera Company taking one on tour with them, in 'four huge packing cases'.¹¹ They were used as house organs as well as in schools, halls and churches, and as secondary instruments in larger places of worship. Transfer between one place and another seems to have been common and probably undocumented. Furthermore the instruments suited churches which were often in small communities and because of their inherent limitations they were not inaugurated with a celebrity recital. All of these factors meant that the acquisition of such an instrument never reached the notice of a newspaper nor, it would appear judging by the lack of faculties, the diocesan authorities. It is also worth noting that the instruments made by this firm could be bought from intermediaries, even Harrods, so there could well be an inherent lack of traceability in their early history as well as a delay between manufacture and bringing into use.

The Eryholme instrument was still at Marton in 1937 when Holt gave its date of manufacture as 1910, with no suggestion that it might have been only an estimate. At that time the full history of the organ was probably known and Holt is recognised as a reliable recorder¹² so this is probably the right date for the instrument. However, this information came late in the investigation and some work had already been done on the dating of POCo organs in general.

There are about 400 organs by the POC_o listed in the NPOR. Many of these had been destroyed or just gone missing when they were entered in the database and many will have disappeared since. Often there is no date, or the date is speculative, and not all have opus numbers. About 40 appear in church records by NADFAS which sometimes add missing information. Four more with linked dates and opus numbers are mentioned in the Mander forum website. Taking all this data together, just over forty organs have been identified where there is an apparently reliable date and a corresponding opus number. These have been plotted on the graph below and, considering the sparsity of reliable data, a remarkably smooth curve has resulted. The 1910 date for the Eryholme organ is entirely consistent with this.



The company was founded in 1898 and survived until the start of WWII so not surprisingly the curve fits these dates. There are some points well off the graph around 1905 – 10. The one furthest from the line is that of Laggan.¹³ This has an opus number 179, which would appear to fit around 1900, but it has an apparently secure date of 1911 for its introduction into Laggan parish church.

The NPOR quotes the church guide book in stating that the organ was donated by Andrew Carnegie which suggests a new, rather than second-hand, organ and a reliable date but the opus number certainly looks well out of place.

The cluster of opus numbers associated with 1922 can be more easily explained. Following a company reorganisation in that year the company changed its name to the Positive Organ Company (1922) Ltd and this is what subsequently appeared on the name plates. It is quite likely that a recorder, hungry for a date to put in the record, assumed this to be the date of the organ itself. All the opus numbers listed for 1922 would easily fit the subsequent years.

It is worth observing that there are POC_o organs which do not have opus numbers in their recorded data. It has not been possible to visit more than a tiny proportion of the surviving instruments but it is clear from that sample and from a few

photographs that some of the POCO organs do not have the type of nameplate that was used to display the opus number. So missing opus numbers in the records may not be an omission on the part of the recorder.

The Eryholme organ is very typical of the POCO's output. It has nine stops, some of which play on only half the compass, and two blanked positions representing two stops that were listed in the 1937 notebook but have since been removed. The tremulant and transposing device are not working and there are some problems with other functions of the instrument. The blowing is now electric, replacing the original mechanical blowing which had foot-pedals operated by the player as well as the alternative of a hand lever at the side for operation by an assistant. Both mechanical blowing arrangements were removed long ago. The Casson patent pneumatic action was a clever idea but difficult and expensive to keep in working order. That, and the short harmonium-like compass which is characteristic of these organs, cause problems but the organ has a pleasant tone and is said to be quite usable for congregational purposes in the small parish church at Eryholme.

The assistance received from Richard Hird (organs adviser to the Durham DAC), Michael Boulton (organist at Eryholme and Croft), the Rev. Caroline Taylor (Vicar of Marton St Cuthbert) and all the holders of archive material, is gratefully acknowledged.

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¹ The present company of this name is unrelated to the earlier one although they have a useful history of their namesake on their website at <https://www.thepositiveorgancompany.co.uk/history/>. More information is available from Wikipedia at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Positive_Organ_Company

² This omission has now been remedied. NPOR reference H01074.

³ NPOR reference G00271.

⁴ Cadbury Research Library, Birmingham University. British Organ Archive: D. Holt notebooks Vol. 6, 486.

⁵ York Diocesan Records, Borthwick Institute, York, FAC/1949/144.

⁶ Teesside Archives parish church records: PR/MAC(2), Section 5, Item 4.

⁷ Apart from the usual newspaper sources there is useful information about this company and its work on the website of the Heaton History Group at <https://heatonhistorygroup.org/tag/william-charlton-blackett/>

⁸ Enquiries in all the likely places have failed to find a photograph of the interior of Marton St Cuthbert that shows any organ at any date.

⁹ Ickwell Green in Bedfordshire, NPOR reference R01496.

¹⁰ <https://mander-organs-forum.invisionzone.com/topic/2979-positive-organ-company/#comment-55435> accessed August 2022.

¹¹ British Newspaper Archive, *Belper News*, 2 February 1906.

¹² R. D. Hird, personal communication.

FURTHER NOTES ON THE ORGAN IN ST NICHOLAS, NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE

NICHOLAS THISTLETHWAITE

Paul Tindall drew attention in the previous issue of the *BIOS Reporter* (November 2022) to the frustratingly incomplete history of the organ said to have been provided by Renatus Harris in c.1676 for St Nicholas's Church, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, now Newcastle Cathedral. Having attempted to research this myself in the early 1980s I share Paul's frustration, but can add at least a little to his account.

The lack of documentary evidence is due in part to the fact that the organs and organists of the ancient parish churches of Newcastle were partly funded until the reforms of the nineteenth century by the city's Common Council. As a result, the relevant documentation has been dispersed or destroyed, unlike the neat series of churchwardens' accounts and vestry minutes that can often be found elsewhere. However, the Common Council records include the minute book of the committee appointed to oversee 'Repairs of St Nicholas Church' (1783-1787), and these cast some light on work undertaken by the organ-builder John Donaldson in 1784-5.¹

Since the Restoration (1660) and probably earlier, most services in St Nicholas's had been conducted in the nave where the large pulpit crowned with its tester, the minister's and clerk's reading desks, the 'brazen eagle' (lectern), the gallery for the grammar school children, and the Corporation pew were all located; there were stalls in the chancel, but these were probably only used on those rare occasions when the Sacrament was administered following the morning service. Nave and chancel were separated by the screen on which the organ (facing west) stood, as shown in the engraving by Ralph Waters (1783) which illustrated Paul's article.²

By 1783, the church was so dilapidated that extensive repairs and a radical re-ordering were put in hand. The nave was cleared of pulpit, reading desks and pews, and reserved solely for burials. Henceforth all the services took place in the (lengthy) chancel. A new wooden screen was provided under the western arch of the crossing, and the organ was turned through 180-degrees to face east. It is this programme of work that is recorded in the minute-book referred to earlier.³

On 27 January 1783 the committee resolved to ask 'Mr Donaldson' to attend the next meeting. At that meeting it was decided 'That the Organ Gallery be of such Dimensions as to admit of Three Pews deep, in the Front of the Organist's Seat; and that the Organ be removed as soon as the New Gallery is ready for its reception'.⁴ Donaldson attended again on 1 June and presented his proposals:

Mr Donaldson informed the Committee that the Bellows of the Organ must be new leathered; the Sound Board of the Choir Organ is decayed, & the Movement in very bad order; The Trumpet Stop wants to be stayed; the greatest part of the lowest Octave, in the

Open Diapason wants new voicing; Several of the Front Pipes have been injured by the Sheet with which the Organ has been covered, & must have new feet; Many of the Front Conveyances must be new, as must the Trackers & Movers of the Great Organ; and the Swell has too many Movements. He said that a Vox humana, tho' not absolutely necessary, wou'd be a great Improvement to the Organ, & make the Instrument perfect; and he cou'd put it into the place where the twelfth Treble & 15th now stand which are never used.⁵

The minutes have no more to say about the organ apart from recording a squabble about who would meet the cost. On 26 October 1786 'Mr Mayor' was requested to lay before the Common Council the account for the Organ Gallery. Early the following year (11 January 1787) the Mayor reported 'that the Corporation will not pay the Debt contracted by removing the Organ & building the New Gallery'. This must have been an unexpected blow. The committee resolved to appeal to the 'original subscribers' (who had presumably already demonstrated their generosity) for a further £250 after which the record falls silent.⁶

The specification of the organ was recorded in the Leffler Notebook in the early-1800s, and presumably represents the instrument as left by Donaldson in 1786. It was as follows.⁷

Three sets of keys: Great and Choir, GG (long octaves) to D. Swell, Fiddle G to D.

[Great]		[Swell]	
Open Diapason	53 pipes	Open Diapason	32 pipes
Stopped Diapason	53 pipes	Stopped Diapason	32 pipes
Principal	53 pipes	Cornet, III Ranks	96 pipes
Twelfth	53 pipes	Trumpet	32 pipes
Fifteenth	53 pipes	Hautboy	32 pipes
Sesquialtera (No. 1)	53 pipes	[Choir]	
Sesquialtera (No. 2)	53 pipes		
Sesquialtera (No. 3)	159 pipes		
Tierce	53 pipes		
Trumpet	53 pipes		
Cornet (from D) V ranks	115 pipes	Open Diapason	53 pipes
		Stopped Diapason	53 pipes
		Principal	53 pipes
		Flute	53 pipes
		Twelfth (Treble)	25 pipes
		Fifteenth (Bass)	28 pipes

Leffler provided an explanation for the separate drawstops provided for the Sesquialtera:

The Tierce & Sesq^a. 1 & 2 are a regular Sesquialtera of three ranks – divided to make a great shew of stops. The Tierce only runs up to Middle C then becomes a 12th. Sesq^a 1 runs to Middle C as a Larigot then breaks into a fifteenth. Sesq^a 2 runs as a 22nd up to Middle C then becomes a Tierce, & Sesq^a 3 is really a Mixture of 3 ranks ...

The design of the Great mixturework probably went back to the original Harris organ. Despite the nomenclature, Sesquialtera no. 3 may have been a quint mixture (see below). The provision of a treble Twelfth (but no Fifteenth above middle c) on the Choir is another curious feature whose musical use remains obscure. Evidently Donaldson's suggestion that these two registers should be replaced with a Vox Humana to 'make the Instrument perfect' had fallen on deaf ears.

Despite their reluctance to pay for the work on the organ in 1786, it is interesting to discover that the Common Council of Newcastle made regular payments towards the costs of organists, organ blowers and the instruments themselves. The picture is not entirely clear but payments were made to the other ancient parishes (All Saints, St Andrew and St John the Baptist) as well as St Nicholas's from at least the late-seventeenth century until the early part of the nineteenth. The Council also paid the stipends of ministers and lecturers attached to these churches. It all made work for John Donaldson, amongst others, who, as well as the work at St Nicholas's, was paid £315 for a new organ for St Andrew's in 1785 and for repairing the organ in St John's at a cost of £132 in the same year. In 1789, he received £203 for improving the old organ in All Saints (probably including the provision of the handsome new case) and moving it to the new church designed by David Stephenson. It is likely that the Common Council contributed to the cost of all these instruments, as well as the salaries of their players.⁸ There is some scattered evidence that other civic corporations in towns and cities inclined to support the Established Church and untroubled by vociferous nonconformists felt able to subsidise church music but it would be good to know more – perhaps a small research project for someone?

In Newcastle, it is certain that the Common Council contributed £300 to the new organ for St Nicholas's 'about the year 1686'.⁹ Although the organ-builder is not named there can be little doubt that it was Renatus Harris. It is surely significant that (as Henry Leffler observed) the two case fronts strongly resemble the Harris cases at St Sepulchre's and St Andrew's Holborn in the City of London.

Further confirmation comes from surviving pipework. As noted by Paul Tindall, the 'insides' of the St Nicholas's organ were sold to Holy Trinity, Stockton on Tees in 1881 when T.C. Lewis provided the first section of a new instrument housed in the enlarged Harris case. Harrison & Harrison incorporated pipework from the Newcastle organ in a rebuilt instrument in Holy Trinity which also included parts of the existing organ in the church built by James Nicholson in 1851. In 1908, Harrison undertook a further major rebuild resulting in a 3-manual instrument with 40 stops.

In 1982 the church closed. At the suggestion of Dr Donald Wright and Richard Hird, joint organ advisers to the Diocese of Durham, BIOS was invited to make a survey of the instrument to establish how much pipework survived from the Newcastle organ. This was undertaken by the present writer assisted by Dr Wright. It was concluded that eleven registers retained pipework pre-dating 1820. Of these, the Octave Quint, Super Octave and Sesquialtera III on the Great included pipes with markings that have been found in other organs built by Renatus Harris; on the Swell, the second and third ranks of the Mixture had the same markings. Illustrations of this style of pipe markings, of which the most distinctive feature is the use of 'jagged' tails for the sharps, can be found in David Wickens's invaluable BIOS research paper on the subject which includes a set of Harris markings from New College, Oxford (1713).¹⁰ The other pre-1820 pipes surviving at Stockton on

Tees had markings in calligraphy typical of the second half of the eighteenth-century. However, none corresponded to the Snetzler markings recorded by Wickens¹¹ or the Donaldson markings recorded by Stephen Bicknell from the Holywell Music Room in Oxford.¹² They are therefore no help in disentangling the history of the Newcastle organ post-Harris.

The surviving pipework was insufficient to reveal much about the overall design of Harris's instrument. The most coherent survivals were the two ranks from the Swell Mixture (approximately 100 pipes in all). The metal was dark and heavy, and there were sharp vertical creases above and below the mouths; the languids were quite thick with steep bevells. A number of pipes were marked 'furniture', 'fur' or 'furn', others 'returne' – indicating, presumably, a break in the composition. They may have been part of a Great mixture once – perhaps the 3-rank Sesquialtera which may have been named Furniture originally.

Attempts to find a home for the Stockton organ were unsuccessful, and the option of incorporating the historic pipework in an otherwise new instrument had to be abandoned because of the many alterations that had been made to the pipes over the years. In 1985, the diocese leased the church to a Greek Orthodox congregation, leaving the organ in situ. A few years later, the building was gutted by fire. Although damaged, the instrument was not destroyed, and some of the historic pipework was saved by BIOS and is now in the care of Goetze & Gwynn.

References

¹ Newcastle Common Council records, MS EP86/120. When the writer consulted these records 40 years ago they were at the Northumberland Record Office in Melton Park, North Gosforth. This has since closed, and the holdings have been divided between Tyne & Wear Archives (Newcastle) and Northumberland Archives (Ashington). In the short time available whilst preparing this article it has proved impossible to confirm their present whereabouts.

² Welford, Richard, *A Descriptive and Historical Account of the Monuments & Tombstones in the Church of St Nicholas, Newcastle-upon-Tyne* (London, 1880), 7ff.

³ See endnote 1: MS EP86/120, Repairs of St Nicholas Church (1783-1787); entries for 26 February 1783; 19 March 1783; 1 May 1783.

⁴ M 18/44, 10 February 1784.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 1 June 1784.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 26 October 1786; 11 January 1787.

⁷ *The Leffler Manuscript*, facsimile with introduction by Peter Williams (BIOS, 2010), 49.

⁸ Mackenzie, Eneas, *A Descriptive and Historical Account of the Town and City of Newcastle upon Tyne* (Newcastle, 1827), vol. 1, 328, 346, 312.

⁹ Brand, John, *The History and Antiquities of the Town and County of the Town [sic] of Newcastle upon Tyne* (London, 1789), 268.

¹⁰ Wickens, David, *Pipe Markings* 2 (BIOS, 1994), 3-6, 9.

¹¹ Wickens, David, *Pipe Markings* (BIOS, 1990), 5-7.

¹² Bicknell, Stephen, 'The Donaldson organ in the Holywell Music Room, Oxford', *BIOS Journal*, 11 (1987), 32-49.

REVIEWS

BBC Radio 4 *Start the Week* and **BBC4** *Organ Stops: Saving the King of Instruments*

You wait ages for media interest in the organ to come along, then two programmes arrive at once – well, with only a day between them. BBC Radio 4's *Start the Week* on Boxing Day concentrated on the theme of the 'awesome'. Tom Sutcliffe's contributors were a psychologist who had found the answer to happiness – unsurprisingly his new book was part of the deal; mind-opening was the cosmologist who found awe, among other places, in the galaxies and everyday events. The third member of the panel was Anna Lapwood, organist and conductor.

Her enthusiasm is infectious and statistics were sprayed everywhere – organs are huge, pipes are huge, the number of stops is huge (though we were sensibly told that less can mean more!) – how big and how many led to discussion on the precise number of pipes in the Albert Hall instrument. If all the organists in the world were laid end to end ... not really, but it felt like it. This is a world of 'pulsating energy', where you could 'feel the wonder vibrating through the music'. Over on her recommended, selfie-YouTube platform, she shares a noisy Albert Hall gig with Bonobo and his band, 'your ego could completely disappear ... in a state of flow ... from fizzy to total still energy'. All in all, a short course in transcendence, though some of it may require ear-defenders. I was left wondering how many Bonobos could fit inside a Double Open Wood and whether it would still float. Yes, it gets us and a non-specialist community talking, but does it trivialise and narrow interest in the organ as a serious musical instrument? Fragments were played from the Saint Saëns 'Organ' Symphony – but the much-lauded lower notes were lost on my kitchen radio and the possibility of drowning out the full orchestra appeared to be the ultimate object of the exercise – awesome.

Meanwhile, on Christmas Eve, a full hour was devoted to *Organ Stops: Saving the King of Instruments*, an independent production for BBC4. Again, loads of enthusiasm, but a long way from the previous orchard of 32' blooms and that sub-acoustic, mind-bending 64'. The message was tempered with the depressing news that organs are an endangered species, especially as most of them are housed in churches and chapels which are also unloved. There was diversity galore, a little of almost everything – the sixteenth-century survivor at Knole House; Dominic Gwynn and the Trinity College, Dublin relic; an enthusiastic amateur in pursuit of vintage eBay bargains; an electronic instrument sales operation (Hauptwerk was happily omitted); even an attempt at emulating a John Cage prepared piano, with the part-drawn stops of a perfectly good organ (Willis 1877) made to sound like a severe case of Covid intubation. Not the best or the most original that the avant garde could offer.

The core of the programme featured Martin Renshaw, a white knight with a white van, dedicated to saving worthwhile British organs, often destined for France, though we confusingly heard that France suffers a 'lack of organ culture' and had none in the nineteenth-century! Martin visited three northern Methodist chapels, all in close proximity. Was this a coincidence or does he have an arrangement with the Methodists? It would have been helpful to know this denomination's policies on chapel closures. (As a side issue, what happens to the war memorials we fleetingly saw? Are they also unloved enough to go to the

skip?) The church in Winston, Co. Durham, featured the most interesting organ historically, complete with a flamboyant case (the NPOR ambiguously suggests that it may be by Holt or Gray & Davison, from the 1860s, for Walworth Castle). The programme was short on detail and omitted that this instrument was itself a transplant from 1950, now removed to what was described as 'organ purgatory', presumably without its II* HOC. We can only hope that it did (or might) find an organic paradise and an owner who appreciates its qualities. There was no mention of the efforts of the IBO and its professional services in the field, nor of BIOS (through the Historic Listing scheme or the Heritage Organs at Risk register) to ensure the care and a future for such instruments.

Two visits to East Stanley Methodist Chapel (Nelson of Durham, 1921) saw the organ trashed, probably by scrap-metal merchants, who crudely sawed off the stopknobs as trophies and took the pipes, 'for spare parts' according to the local lay preacher!

The Nelson (1905) instrument from Catchgate Methodist church became the star of the show and we followed its transfer to one-time St Paul's, Clapton, now owned by a Seventh Day Adventist congregation and home to the East London School of Music and its charismatic leader Fiona Pacquette. Her optimism was contagious (shared with members of the congregation, who saw the instrument as an evangelising tool to draw in the local community): 'You know, that [organ] will draw crowds. It will do – people will walk past and hear this monster – where's that sound coming from? That's what I will like to see.' Personally, if BBC4 have commissions to spare and the programme's producer has the interest, I would propel them towards Ms Pacquette and her work with young people. Nicholas Morris (Director of Music at Queens' College Chapel, Cambridge) made a brief appearance, here playing a fragment of Buxtehude; why did the producers use so much recorded background organ music, with no association with the instruments concerned, when his talent was to hand?

The Clapton church, by Henry Cowell Boyes (1890-1), is listed grade II and we did not learn what happened to its original instrument. The principal internal feature, at the east end of the chancel, is a large painting of Christ in Majesty by Eva Allen Andrews (1898-1900). The centre of this mural is now covered by the organ and it is difficult to believe that listed building consent would have been granted for this. An enthusiasm for organ survival should not come at the expense of another art form, nor avoid statutory requirements.

My top-tip to the team, when next handling heavy soundboards and 16' pipes, would be to use appropriate platforms and ladders and observe some minimal safety precautions. Organs are heavy (and delicate) objects and professional safeguards are not for nothing. While I celebrate the BBC's rare interest, the danger of such programmes, given the popularity of the *Repair Shop* genre, is that they might encourage those with good intentions, along with a 'have a go' attitude and an absence of properly equipped workshops, to take on work beyond their skills and adversely seal the fate of good instruments that deserve better. There is much for all of us to gain, if we can harness the enthusiasm shown in this programme and link it with our existing institutions. The result could even be awesome.

Jim Berrow

Marco Antonio Cavazzoni: Recerchari Mottetti Canzoni Libro Primo (1523)
Editor: Liuwe Tamminga.

Publisher: Il Levante Libreria Editrice TA23 available through the publisher
<https://www.illevante-libreria.it/> 25 Euros

In addition to composers whose birth or death anniversaries can be commemorated this year (particularly William Byrd, d.1623), there are a few important publications the anniversaries of which are worthy of being commemorated. This slim volume of eight pieces composed by Marco Antonio Cavazzoni, c.1485 - after 1569, is amongst them, being published in Venice in 1523. The second printed volume of keyboard pieces in Italy, it is extremely important in the history of keyboard music since its two *Ricercari* are the first published compositions (others exist in manuscripts) destined for the organ (although also playable on stringed keyboard instruments, as mentioned in the preface) that are not related to previously existing vocal models.

The volume starts with two *Ricercars* of 127 and 150 double bars respectively, not imitative as later examples of the form, but, like early lute compositions, closer to a *Toccata* with homophonic writing including six-note chords, and running passages, sometimes in two voices, against held chords producing some delightful dissonances. Each is followed by a Marian Motet, *Salve Virgo* and *O Stella Maris* of 73 and 120 bars respectively, *O Stella Maris* containing 18 bars in triple time towards the end. The Motets generally proceed in two or three part texture with more imitative passages, and in slower note values. They are in the same key as the preceding *Ricercar*, raising the possibility that they were intended to be played as a pair.

These are followed by four intabulations of songs, including *Perdone moi sie folie*, *Madame vous aves mon cuor*, *Plus ne regres* and *Lautre yor per un matin* of 82, 89, 66 and 100 double bars respectively; unfortunately no details of the originals are given in the introduction and they appear to be unknown. They contain more passages in two voices, but there are similarities between them and the *Ricercars* in the thick chords against running quavers. These sound very well on a 4' Principal and Flute. All of the pieces in the volume feature scale passages, and written out trills in quavers with a varied number of repercussions. The pieces are presented in the original note values, a welcome point, but notes are beamed together where appropriate rather than individually as in the original.

The edition by Liuwe Tamminga, the Dutch musicologist and specialist in the early Italian repertoire who very sadly died in 2021 at the age of 68, contains an introduction placing the work in its historical context, a detailed critical commentary and a facsimile of the original print, well worth studying to look at forms of accidentals amongst others. Unfortunately it does not contain any helpful notes on registration or on the implications of the occurrence of notes above top A up to F, lacking on Italian Renaissance organs (and harpsichords) and possible contemporary interpretation. The volume also contains the majestic *toccata-like Recercada* found in the manuscript at Castell Arquato, and a facsimile of this dramatically imposing piece. The printing of this portrait format volume is very clear. The pieces are well worth the study required and should take their place in recitals this year.

BOOKING FORM

THE BRITISH INSTITUTE OF ORGAN STUDIES

BERNARD EDMONDS RESEARCH CONFERENCE 2023 Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

Saturday 25 February 2023 10.30 for 11.00

There are two ways to reserve a place for the BIOS Day Conference in Birmingham for £35.00 (including lunch):

- a) By returning the form below to the Meetings Officer by post, accompanied by a cheque made payable to BIOS
- b) By returning the form to the Meetings Officer by email and paying by BACS.

Account: BIOS; sort code: 52-30-44; ac no: 05097169. Please identify the payment as Birmingham, and highlight option b before returning your form.

Please fill out a separate form for each person.

Name (including title)

Address

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Tel:(daytime and/or mobile) Tel:(evening)

e-mail:

Please note any dietary requirements

Acknowledgements will be sent by e-mail. If you do not have an e-mail address, and require an acknowledgement, please send a SAE with your booking form.

Please return this booking form (or a photocopy) to:



BOOKING FORM
BRITISH INSTITUTE OF ORGAN STUDIES
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING & DAY CONFERENCE 2023

Saturday 22 April 2023 10.30 for 11.00

Chelsea Old Church, Cheyne Walk, London SW3 5LT

Please reserve a place for the BIOS Day Conference and AGM for £35.00 (including lunch), or book online on the BIOS website. There are three ways to book :

- a) Online via the BIOS website
- b) By returning the form below to the Meetings Officer by post, accompanied by a cheque made payable to BIOS
- c) By returning the form to the Meetings Officer by email and paying by BACS.
Account: BIOS; sort code: 52-30-44; ac no: 05097169, please identify the payment as AGM, and highlight option C before returning your form.

Please fill out a separate form for each person.

Name (including title)

Address

..... Post Code

Tel:(daytime and/or mobile) Tel:(evening)

e-mail:

Please note any dietary requirements

Acknowledgements will be sent by e-mail. If you do not have an e-mail address, and require an acknowledgement, please send a SAE with your booking form.

Please return this booking form (or a photocopy) to:



FUTURE MEETINGS

Saturday 25 February 2023 at 10.30 for 11.00

BERNARD EDMONDS RESEARCH CONFERENCE 2023

The Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, 200, Jennens Road, Birmingham B4 7XR

The 'Barber' conference will take place this year in the Organ Studio of the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire where Flentrop recently completed a new organ in the style of Arp Schnitger. We are most grateful to Daniel Moulton, Head of Organ Studies (and BIOS member) for making this possible. We should be able to return to the Barber Institute next year, but a connection with the Conservatoire is something we welcome and hope to maintain. The Conservatoire is in the city centre within walking distance of Moor Street and New Street stations. Directions and location can be found on the Conservatoire website under 'About Us'.

We understand there is rail disruption that weekend between Euston and Birmingham, but there is a good service from Marylebone on the Chiltern line for those coming from or through London.

At the time of writing there is room for one more paper. Please contact the Meetings Officer if you have something to offer.

The programme will include:

Martin Renshaw	The Pugins, father and son, and the organ.
Dr David Shuker	'This unpleasant business is now settled': The trials and tribulations of women organists in early Victorian England.
John Norman	The cut-up of pipes in voicing and how it has affected the overall result in an instrument.
Dr Matteo Malagoli	British organ building in St Mark's Venice and William George Trice.
Melvin Hughes	Organs and Organists in 20 th Century English Literature, 1900-1960.
Dr Leonard Sanderman	The influences of Sir Joseph Barnby on English organ building.

An introduction to, and music on the new Flentrop organ.

Saturday 22 April 2023 at 10.30 for 11.00

DAY CONFERENCE AND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Chelsea Old Church, 64, Cheyne Walk, London SW3 5LT

The AGM will be at 2pm.

William Drake Ltd. completed a new three manual organ for Chelsea Old Church in 2019. The day will include an introduction to the new instrument, a demonstration, and will close with a recital by Christopher Herrick.

All members may attend the AGM at 2pm without payment, but it would be helpful to know in advance if you are coming just for the AGM. The charge of £35 for the whole programme covers coffee on arrival, lunch and tea.

Richard Hobson



AIMS OF BIOS

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.

To conserve the sources and materials for the history of the organ in Britain, and to make them accessible to scholars.

To work for the preservation and, where necessary, the faithful restoration of historic organs in Britain and to encourage their use and appreciation.

To encourage an exchange of scholarship with similar bodies and individuals abroad, and to promote, in Britain, a greater appreciation of historical overseas schools of organ-building.