

# ***BIOS REPORTER***

Volume 47 (4)  
November 2023



THE BRITISH INSTITUTE OF ORGAN STUDIES

## **BIOS OFFICERS AND COUNCIL**

|                     |                                                                                                                              |
|---------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Chairman</b>     | Dr Nicholas Thistlethwaite, [REDACTED]<br>[REDACTED] n                                                                       |
| <b>Secretary</b>    | Melvin Hughes, [REDACTED]<br>[REDACTED] e-mail: secretary@bios.org.uk                                                        |
| <b>Treasurer</b>    | Adrian Mumford, [REDACTED]<br>[REDACTED] e-mail: treasurer@bios.org.uk                                                       |
| <b>Casework</b>     | Nigel Stark, [REDACTED]<br>[REDACTED]                                                                                        |
| <b>Meetings</b>     | Richard Hobson, [REDACTED]<br>[REDACTED] n                                                                                   |
| <b>Membership</b>   | David Shepherd, [REDACTED]<br>[REDACTED] e-mail: membership@bios.org.uk                                                      |
| <b>Publications</b> | Dr Katharine Pardee, [REDACTED]<br>[REDACTED] e-mail: publications@bios.org.uk                                               |
| <b>Council</b>      | Christopher Gray (co-opted), Colin Menzies OBE, Dr David Shuker, Paul Tindall, Mark Venning, Jeffrey West, Jeffrey Williams. |

## **BRITISH ORGAN ARCHIVE (BOA)**

Special Collections, Cadbury Research Library, University of Birmingham,  
Edgbaston, Birmingham B15 2TT Tel: 01214 145839;  
e-mail: special-collections@contents.bham.ac.uk  
For details of opening times please see the website  
<https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/facilities/cadbury/index.aspx>

## **COMMITTEE FOR THE LISTING OF HISTORIC ORGANS**

**Co-ordinator** Jeffrey Williams, [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] n

## **HISTORIC ORGANS AT RISK REGISTER (HOARR)**

**Co-ordinator** Jonathan Goodchild, [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

## **NATIONAL PIPE ORGAN REGISTER (NPOR) [www.bios.org.uk/npor.html](http://www.bios.org.uk/npor.html)**

**Database Manager** Andrew Macintosh, Royal College of Organists, PO Box 7328,  
New Milton BH25 9DU  
Tel: 02038 657004; e-mail: npor@bios.org.uk

## **HISTORIC ORGAN SOUND ARCHIVE (HOSA)**

**Curator** Anne Page, [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] e-mail: hosa@bios.org.uk

## THE BRITISH INSTITUTE OF ORGAN STUDIES

Registered Charity No: 283936

<http://www.bios.org.uk>

Honorary President: Dr Nicholas Thistlethwaite

### BIOS REPORTER

Opinions expressed in the *BIOS Reporter* are those of the respective contributors.

The Editor reserves the right to refuse or amend material.

Editor: Gordon Curtis, [REDACTED]

The *Reporter* is printed and distributed by Anchorprint, Syston, Leicestershire. The layout and typesetting are by the Editor. Copy for inclusion in the next edition should be sent to the Editor by post or e-mail by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month prior to publication. Photos should be in .jpg format and sent as separate attachments.

### BIOS SUBSCRIPTIONS

The annual subscription is £37 (£32 concessionary, £12 student). Full details of membership and subscriptions can be obtained from the Membership Secretary.

Front cover: *St Mary's, Catherston Leweston, Dorset*. Organ by Joseph Walker 1857. Ungraded HOC awarded 1998. (NPOR D05153; Photo: Helen Curtis).

Back cover: *St Andrew's, Heddington, Wilts*. A fine mahogany case with excellent carving above the music desk. The origin and builder are unknown (NPOR N10414; Photo: Editor).

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

|                                                                   |     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| From the Chairman                                                 | 86  |
| From the Secretary                                                | 88  |
| Membership matters                                                | 89  |
| Committee for the Listing of Historic Organs                      | 90  |
| Letter to the Editor                                              | 91  |
| News from Members                                                 | 91  |
| Meeting report                                                    | 92  |
| Margaret Glyn's so-called Elizabethan Organ                       | 96  |
| Alas, Smith and Jones: a tangled tale of itinerant organ builders | 98  |
| Reviews                                                           | 103 |
| Future Meetings                                                   | 105 |

## FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Avid readers of the Church Times (there are still a few, in addition to job-hunting clergy) will have been aware for some time of the looming threat to the Church of England's stock of church buildings. This is nothing new, of course. In the nineteenth century, our practical Victorian ancestors thinned out the number of churches in the City of London in response to population movements, and most counties have their tally of abandoned or ruined churches, left high and dry when village communities have evaporated or been moved elsewhere by the landed gentry wishing to improve the view from their grand houses. Along the east coast, mediaeval churches have fallen into the sea, and a good many cheaply-built Georgian and Victorian churches were taken down before they fell down.

Today, however, the threat comes from a decline in church-going and the related decline in the number of clergy on a scale that has not been experienced since the Viking raids of the ninth century. Some describe the threat as 'existential' (a somewhat overused term); it is undoubtedly serious, and not only for the buildings, but also for their contents, including organs.

For example, a report recently appeared suggesting that as many as nineteen of the thirty-one church buildings in the Benefice of Wigan could be closed (Church Times, online, 5 October 2023). The report states that reserves are 'under pressure or exhausted', and that some of the parishes are 'no longer financially viable'. Four of the nineteen have already been named for closure, whilst among those whose future is to be 'reviewed' is St Peter's, Hindley – a name that will immediately shout 'Schulze' to many readers of this page. Edmund Schulze installed a 3-manual, 32-stop organ in the relatively new church in 1873, and although later builders made significant alterations (including conversion to electro-pneumatic action) much of Schulze's organ survives.

Mention of the looming threat to Hindley's famous organ is not to demonise those who have incredibly difficult decisions to make about the future of particular church buildings, often in places where small, elderly congregations have persevered heroically in keeping their under-resourced building in use only (eventually) to have to admit defeat. Nor is it to suggest that the problem is restricted to the Church of England; all the Christian denominations are experiencing decline and issues with their buildings. The purpose in mentioning Hindley is to identify a recognisable example of the type of organ heritage that is at serious risk in the present climate. Fortunately, this is not a uniform picture; in many places, churches are thriving and their congregations are doing valuable work in their communities. But chickens are finally coming home to roost as the over-provision of buildings by our confident Victorian ancestors (especially in the expanding cities of London, the Midlands and the North) becomes unsustainable, and musical and artistic heritage of all sorts is in

danger of being lost or exported. Vigilance is needed, not to rage about the insensitivity of the churches 'who don't care about their heritage' (as some would say), but to recognise the challenges they face, and perhaps even to help identify strategies or solutions that might help to save it.

Here, we must pay tribute to those who are making a contribution to the preservation of church heritage, from the Church Buildings Council to the Churches Conservation Trust; from the many county-based historic churches trusts to the new diocesan trusts, in some places, which are taking on responsibility for 'festival churches' (so-called) where only a handful of services will be held each year; from the Friends of Friendless Churches to local authorities that take the occasional church building under their wing.

But what of the organs? One contribution would be to keep them playing. Perhaps local organists' associations could 'befriend' an organ in a church that has been vested in one of the charitable trusts and arrange to have it played monthly. Maybe BIOS could raise awareness of such instruments through the pages of the Reporter or on our website. And if the point comes at which re-housing is unavoidable to save a worthy instrument, BIOS should continue to do what we have been trying to do since 1976, and make information readily available to potential bona fide clients with a good home to offer.

We have to choose our battles. Sadly, some worthy instruments are going to be lost if the rate of church decline continues or accelerates. When BIOS was founded, we threw up our hands in horror at the thought of redundant pipe organs being exported to mainland Europe; now I, for one, would take a different view, and be grateful to hear that an historic English pipe organ has been saved from the demolition skip, and has found an appreciative new home in Holland, Germany or France. Many of us will have encountered the phenomenon of Dutch church choirs that enthusiastically perform Anglican choral evensongs, and only this week, I met a German organist who has acquired the intact 38-stop Hill organ (1904) from Kilbarchan in Scotland for his church in Germany where it will be meticulously restored; he was in England for what I can only describe as an extended pilgrimage to visit other surviving Hill instruments. It is a sobering thought that it sometimes takes visitors from abroad to help us appreciate our own heritage.

Leaving that thought with my readers, let me end by thanking our Casework Officer, HOAR Co-ordinator, HOCS Committee, and NPOR officers and editors, and all other BIOS members who help us to record and raise the profile of our organ heritage in these challenging times.

Nicholas Thistlethwaite

## FROM THE SECRETARY

### *BIOS Council (October 2023)*

BIOS Council met on Saturday 14 October 2023. Fourteen members of Council were present. The Webmaster and HOSA Curator were in attendance.

Council received Reports and from them agreed/noted the following:

- The Chairman had written to the current owner of Adlington Hall about alerting any purchaser to the significance of the Adlington organ and had received a reply thanking BIOS for the Listing Certificate and confirming that they would pass onto the purchaser their hope that the new owners would care for and appreciate the historical importance of the organ.
- Progress was being made on producing a biographical dictionary of British organ-builders in celebration of the Golden Jubilee of BIOS (2026).
- The Chairman reported some success in finding individuals to cover key vacancies in the organisation. He also discussed plans to involve younger members in BIOS activities not least as a possible means of identifying future Council Officers. He had attended the meeting of organ organisations convened by the Church Buildings Council where there was agreement to develop a 'hub' – a central place of reference that would bring the organisations together.
- Subscriptions were around the level to be expected this year to date but income to the NPOR Fund was less satisfactory since PayPal donations were down and there were fewer donations from Organist Associations. The cost of the Walker book was set soon to be covered by sales. BIOS remained strongly placed to support similar publishing ventures.
- Currently there were 22 members who still had not paid their subscription for this year. As has been the practice in previous years, they had been placed in a 'no publications' category and would not receive *JBios* 47 (2023).
- Recording more organs and covering more parts of the country remained a desirable objective for the Historic Organ Sound Archive. Work would be undertaken to explore whether proposals could be developed in three specific geographical areas.
- Attendance at the recent Conference at Blandford Forum, Winterborne Stickland, Milton Abbey (15 and 16 September 2023) had been disappointing but much good had been done in raising the profile of the organs in Blandford Forum (G.P. England) and Milton Abbey (Gray & Davison) and there was now a feeling in both places that both instruments needed work done to them. The possibility of an Oxford Residential Conference to mark the start of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations was being explored for September 2025.
- The next publication project was Gerald Sumner's manuscript on Cavaillé-Coll in England which was proceeding satisfactorily. Beyond that Council agreed in principle a proposal for a further publication which could feature as part of the BIOS Golden Jubilee celebrations alongside the planned Biographical Dictionary.
- Seven organs had been scoped for Casework advice.

- Three new applications for Listing were approved and two were reassessed following a previous award.
- There were currently eight organs on the Historic Organs at Risk Register (HOARR).
- It was agreed to terminate BIOS's Service Level Agreement with the RCO for hosting of the NPOR and instead enter into a formal Agreement with an IT consultancy company. Council wished to express its gratitude to the RCO for its support and looked forward to maintaining a strong relationship between the two bodies.
- The update of the Directory of British Organ Builders (DBOB) from 1950 to the present was continuing.
- A new advertisement featuring the Walker book would be submitted to forthcoming organ journals.
- The General Synod draft proposals for a revision of the Mission and Pastoral Measure 2023 considered a range of options affecting closed and closing churches but nowhere were the historic contents of such churches mentioned. There was concern that adapting church buildings for community use could lead to the loss of historic furnishings including organs.
- The British Organ Archive was now effectively closed to new accessions and a review of the collection had been carried out to identify duplicated items that could be weeded out, printed books that were readily available elsewhere, and any items that could reasonably be placed in long-term storage off site. Recommendations would be presented to the next JMC meeting.

Council meets next on Saturday 20 January 2024.

Melvin Hughes

## MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

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

Bruce Fletcher, BSc, FIAP, [REDACTED]

Sibley Music Library, Eastman School of Music, [REDACTED]  
Robert Patterson, MA(Cantab.), FRCO, FRSM, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Oberlin College and Conservatory Libraries, Oberlin, [REDACTED]  
Andrew Patton, [REDACTED]

Changes to the 2021 Membership List notified to me since the *August Reporter* will have been incorporated in the new 2023 Membership List mailed with this issue.

My grateful thanks to those members who have paid their 2023 Subscription on time, or who have amended their Standing Order amount. There will be a membership reminder for the 2024 subscription, towards the end of November, for those members who do not have a Standing Order.

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 October 2023.

| Location                                     | Builder and Date  | Comments                                                                                      | Grade |
|----------------------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| St Rumon<br>Ruan Minor, Cornwall<br>TR12 7JL | Brewer & Co 1887  | A fine, unaltered example of the work of this firm and one of few such instruments remaining. | II*   |
| St Anne, Aigburth<br>Liverpool<br>L17 6BH    | Henry Willis 1912 | Retains a number of significant, innovative features together with a preserved tonal scheme.  | II*   |
| St Cybi, Holyhead<br>LL65 1HG                | Whiteley 1881     | A listing for the 1881 Alfred Waterhouse case only.                                           | II    |

### *Future Submission Dates:*

- Friday 09:00 December 1<sup>st</sup> for meeting of Listing Committee to be held on January 11<sup>th</sup> 2024

Jeffrey Williams

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### *The Voicers' Secret Weapon*

Sir,

I am grateful to my talented friend, Andrew Scott, for his views on the 'cut-up' of flue pipes. He is of course right in stressing that wind-pressure is important – the pressure in the pipe foot – not that in the bellows. As he says, it has to go hand in hand with a decision about the cut-up.

Having said that, there is a difference between the tone produced by a pipe with a low cut-up (and lower pressure in the pipe foot) and an otherwise similar pipe with a higher cut up (and a higher wind pressure). The higher cut-up pipe, blown harder, may produce a superficially similar sound. However, it will sound less pleasant at close quarters but will carry better in a spacious environment. The underlying acoustic reason for this effect is the increased absorption of treble sound in a more reverberant venue.

Ignorance of these factors can lead to problems if the voicing technique used is wrong for a particular building. One example was the 54-stop organ built by Holdich for Lichfield Cathedral in 1860. Holdich mostly built instruments for small churches and examination of his organs reveals low cut-ups and modest wind pressures. The Holdich organ for Lichfield was reputed to have been an underpowered disaster, completely replaced only 24 years later by a brand-new Hill (designed by Thomas Hill).

Even Father Willis did not always get it right. Early criticism of his 1871 instrument in the Royal Albert Hall, London, alleged that his Diapasons were far too mild for the building ('like Gambas'), a problem later corrected (with higher wind-pressures) by Andrew's distinguished predecessor, Arthur Harrison.

John Norman  
London

## NEWS FROM MEMBERS

Members will be glad to know that *Andrew Hayden* has produced another calendar in the series *Star Organs of Britain* for 2024. Twelve organs from England and Wales are featured in colour photographs. Calendars, which are in A3 format, will be available mid-November onwards from the BIOS webstore UK Price £22.95, Europe £27.50 incl. P&P. Bulk order discounts are available for UK purchasers. For the Americas and Japan, please enquire at [doubleopen32@uwclub.net](mailto:doubleopen32@uwclub.net).

## MEETING REPORT

### Three Historic Organs in Dorset: 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> September 2023

Amongst some iconic historic British organs the 1794 George Pike England instrument in the parish church in Blandford Dorset stands out. It is one of the very few large organs of the late eighteenth century to have remained in its original location with comparatively few changes to the initial specification. The focus of the extended BIOS study day was to look at the history of the Blandford organ and to consider options for its eventual restoration, as well as taking the opportunity to see and hear several other historic organs nearby.

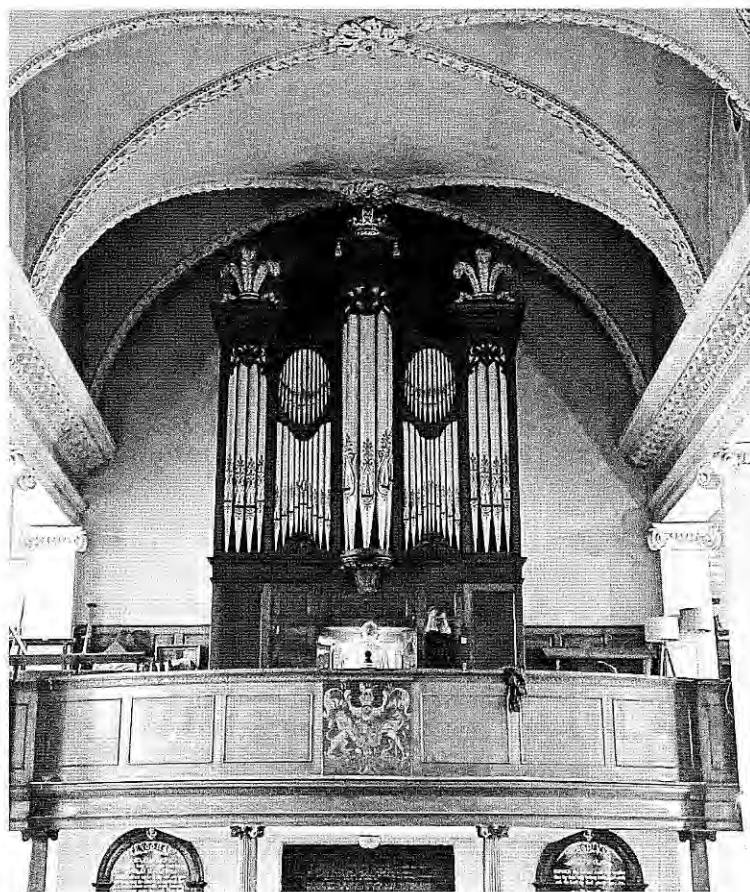
An advance party of BIOS members attended a Friday Morning Subscription Concert on 15<sup>th</sup> September at the English Organ School and Museum in Milborne Port (<http://www.margaretphillips.org.uk/eos.htm>). These monthly concerts make use of the private collection of organs and other keyboard instruments assembled by Margaret Phillips and her late husband, David Hunt. Margaret's recital included works by Bach, Byrd, Mendelssohn, Reger, Willan, Wilby and Jongen played on the 2000 Collins (IIP 20, NPOR K00119), 1865 Telford (IIP 20, NPOR D06570) and c.1700 Italian (1 7, NPOR V00153) organs.

On the Friday evening there was an opportunity to see and hear the 1824 Alexander Buckingham organ (I 10, NPOR D03567) at Winterborne Stickland which, unlike the Blandford organ, has been moved several times since its original installation in St Alkmund Derby in June 1825. It had been restored by Peter Bumstead in 1992 at its then location in the Methodist chapel at Awsworth, Nottinghamshire (for details of the organ up to that date see the article by Peter Bumstead: *BIOS Journal*, 1992, 16, 94-103). The Awsworth chapel subsequently closed and the organ was moved to Winterborne Stickland by Andrew Cooper in 2019. The original date of construction comes from a paper label inside the organ. It appears to be the only organ by Buckingham that survives in largely original state. The organ is



Winterborne Stickland  
(Photo: David Shuker)

now in a very sympathetic acoustic and Margaret Phillips gave a recital of music by Handel, Stanley, Prellieur, Samuel and Charles Wesley, ably assisted by Richard Hobson as a registration assistant given that the shifting movement is currently disconnected and could not be readily reconnected.



SS. Peter & Paul, Blandford Forum. (Photo: David Shuker)

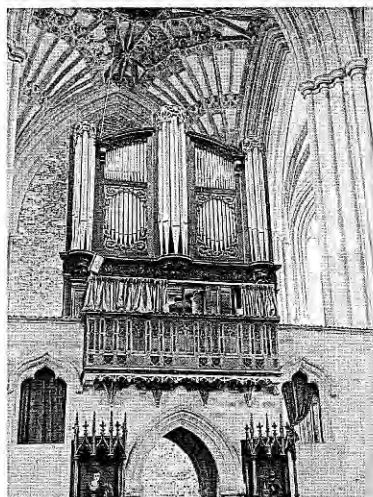
The next morning, in Blandford Forum, delegates gathered in the striking town centre church of St Peter and St Paul built between 1732 and 1739 following a disastrous fire of 1731 when 90% of Blandford's buildings were destroyed. More than fifty years seems to have elapsed before the church acquired an organ. Paul Tindall described the history of the present organ drawing on accounts by Andrew Freeman (*Musical Opinion*, 1927 (May), 801-802) and Betty Matthews (*The Organ*,

1967, 56 (No. 183), 110-115), and his own recent research on the England family of organ builders and Blandford organists. An undated late-eighteenth century proposal by Richard Seede of Bristol for a small two-manual organ costing £230 survives but in 1794 the people of Blandford raised more than double that amount for the three-manual organ built by George Pyke England. It was installed on a suitably strengthened west gallery and opened with two grand concerts on 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> October. The whole event was directed by Joseph Corfe, organist of Salisbury Cathedral, and Richard Kerley, a local musician who became the first organist at Blandford. Among the performers were some notable names: 'Signora Storace' was none other than the soprano Nancy Storace who had sung the role of Susanna for Mozart in the first performance of *The Marriage of Figaro* in 1786; 'Herschell' was almost certainly not William Herschel, who by then had abandoned a successful career in music for an even more successful one in astronomy, but his 'cellist brother Alexander who maintained a busy musical career in nearby Bath. Richard Kerley did not survive long as organist at Blandford and was succeeded in 1796 by Thomas Howell who remained in post until his death in 1821. He was succeeded by his daughter, who became Mrs Oakley in 1823. She, in turn, was succeeded by her daughter, Mrs Edwards, in 1861, and she was still in post in 1891, ending her days in an almshouse in Blandford in 1907. Blandford is surely unique in that several generations of one family provided an unbroken succession of salaried parish organists for almost 100 years. It is also another example of a significant parish church post occupied by women organists for long periods during the nineteenth century (others include Leicester St Martin and Chesterfield St Mary and All SS).

The current state of the organ was described by Richard Hobson as he made the argument for restoring the organ. In the early 1990s David Wickens was able to carry out a thorough study of the Blandford organ and confirmed that much of the original England pipework remained, as well as the magnificent case (*BIOS Journal*, 1992, 16, 70-93). The organ was 'improved and enlarged' by Hill in 1876 but the net effect of this work was to preserve much of England's work. In 1895-6 the organ was moved from the west gallery to an organ chamber on the north side of an extended chancel, which had been created by bodily moving the east end of the church on rollers. The move of the organ appears to have been done by Hill & Son and no significant alterations were made at that stage. By an odd coincidence, a rare BBC recording of the organ being played by Geraint Jones in about 1962, when it was in that position, has recently become available online since the meeting (see <https://www.youtube.com/@ArchiveofRecordedOrganMu-by7li>). In 1970 the organ was moved back to the west gallery by N.P. Mander Ltd where it remains largely in the form that Hill gave it in 1876. David Wickens noted that 'the sound has that restrained, self-effacing quality which seems intrinsic to organs of that period'. In a short recital to conclude the meeting at Blandford, Richard Hobson used pieces by Keeble, Walond and Samuel Wesley to demonstrate the evolution of the G.P. England organ during the Victorian era. He concluded with a March composed by John Henry Wallis in 1873. This piece made use of the additional couplers added by

Hill that rather unsettled the earlier restraint. One could make a convincing case that the Blandford organ is a prime candidate for restoration to something like its 1794 state. However, there are competing priorities and the church building itself is still in want of serious work. Nonetheless, one could argue that the consummate Georgian town of Blandford should eventually also restore and celebrate its consummate Georgian organ.

This fascinating tour of historic Dorset organs ended with a visit to Milton Abbey school. The school estate includes the 14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> century abbey church, which is the only surviving substantial part of the Benedictine abbey, itself founded in 934 AD. The abbey church had been planned to be much larger but was never completed and the current building comprises the chancel and north and south transepts. Notwithstanding, it was sensitively restored by James Wyatt in the eighteenth century and is an inspiring and unforgettable building that is light and spacious. A stone choir screen was built in about 1700. In 1868 Gray and Davison provided a modest organ, having a caseless front of decorated pipes, that was installed in the north choir aisle. In 1978 the organ was moved onto the choir screen and a Rénatus Harris case front from St Mary Lambeth replaced the original pipes. It is hoped to re-install the original front pipes on the west face of the organ when funds permit. On the one hand, the Harris case looks appropriate for an organ on a choir screen, on the other hand, it looks oddly stunted as the tower caps and return cornices are absent. Somewhat worryingly, the G&D front pipes are stored in a corner of the north aisle and one hopes they will not be damaged, or worse, before they can be installed on the organ. The original G&D pipework and mechanical action is intact but the pedal division was extended and electrified in 1978 and, somewhat oddly, the pedal reed was extended to 32' in 1997 (see NPOR N10177). Notwithstanding these visual and technical caveats, the sound of the organ is magnificent in the generous acoustic of the ancient building. Graham Scott, Assistant Musical Director of nearby Bryanston School rounded off the day with a short recital of music by J.S. Bach, Howells, Widor and Duruflé.



Milton Abbey Church  
(Photo: David Shuker)

For the small band of delegates these days in Dorset were a voyage of visual and aural discovery and we are much indebted to Richard Hobson for organising it.

David Shuker

## MARGARET GLYN'S SO-CALLED ELIZABETHAN POSITIVE ORGAN.

DOMINIC GWYNN

Do any of our readers recognize this organ, or are able to shed light on its history after Margaret Glyn's death in 1946? I would be grateful to know.

In 1986 Martin Goetze and I went to Whissonsett Rectory in Norfolk to visit the maverick maker and restorer of early stringed keyboard instruments, Michael Thomas, at his request, to examine a late eighteenth-century 4ft Italian positive organ which then stood in the Museum of Ecclesiastical Art at St Peter Hungate in Norwich, now in store in the Norfolk Museums Collections (accession number NWHCM: 1938.136), according to the Museums' website. Our interest had been stirred, because Martin was restoring another Italian chamber organ for Sheila Lawrence.

Both organs had been imported from a monastery in Lucca in the 1930s by Alec Hodsdon, a pioneer maker and restorer of early keyboard instruments in this country. He told Cecil Clutton that he had imported three Italian chamber organs. Michael Thomas said four, which may reflect Michael's tendency to exaggerate. Even so, they do not include the organ in Andrew Freeman's photograph, taken in 1937, which was described as an Elizabethan positive organ in his list of photographic plates. He must have been alerted to its existence by Cecil Clutton who visited the Italian chamber organ which Martin was restoring and the Elizabethan positive organ, describing the former in an article in *The Organ*, also in 1937. They both belonged to Margaret Glyn, a pioneer editor and performer of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century keyboard music, who lived in Ewell, Surrey.

It would be good to know where this so-called Elizabethan organ is now. I must say that it does not look like an English organ, or at least, it has similarities with Italian and Iberian organs. In which case, Cecil Clutton might have known that himself, or might have been told that it was one of Alec Hodsdon's imports. And as my feeble collection of evidence shows, we know very little about Elizabethan organs. It could even be an Elizabethan import of an Italian table organ, though that seems unlikely. Or it could have been assembled from historic parts for the antique market at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century, like the chamber organ in St David's School in New York, a pot pourri of parts including some intriguing seventeenth century English wooden pipes, keys, etc., a business pursued on an industrial scale by Leopoldo Franciolini (see Wikipedia).

One would feel more confident about its continued existence somewhere if we didn't know the tribulations which the Italian chamber organ endured before its discovery by Matthew Copley and Sheila Lawrence in an antique shop, shorn of its ornaments, in dire condition and filled with tomato plants. It is thanks to Sheila's

devotion and Martin's persistence that this organ exists in playing condition, in Margaret Phillips's English Organ School in Milborne Port Dorset. It is a pleasure to think that it has enjoyed the appreciation of three female advocates of early organ music. In 1937 each would have been referred to, as Cecil Clutton was, as a 'hopeless retrograde'.

The restoration of the Italian chamber organ was written up by Martin. It is available on [https://www.goetzegwynn.co.uk/reports/ Harley Monograph no.3](https://www.goetzegwynn.co.uk/reports/Harley%20Monograph%20no.3). Scroll through to the end for the drawings, technical details, a copy of Cecil Clutton's article and Andrew Freeman's photograph. A short account of Margaret Glyn's interesting life is available on the Epsom and Ewell Museum website <https://eehe.org.uk/?p=33289>. Her brother Gervas took an X-ray photograph of her left hand which is on the previous page <https://eehe.org.uk/?p=33288>.



Margaret Glyn's organ. (Picture copyright 'Cadbury Research Library: Special Collections, University of Birmingham', Andrew Freeman plate number 1452).

## ALAS, SMITH AND JONES: A TANGLED TALE OF ITINERANT ORGAN BUILDERS

PAUL TINDALL

George Smith is, obviously, a very common name. It is frustrating that it should be attached to a number of nineteenth-century organ builders whose careers are particularly difficult to untangle.

One Liverpool *George Smith* has come to light only because his son-in-law, one Robert Hardaker, a 'fire police constable', was killed, aged 44, attending a fire at the Sailors Home in Liverpool in April 1860, and the recollections of a later generation are recorded in 1922.<sup>1</sup> The story related is that Robert Hardaker's wife came from 'a long line of organ builders,' and that her father, George Smith, was 'the inventor of an organ coupler in 1825'. Exactly what that means is unclear, but investigation reveals that Agnes Smith, daughter of George Smith 'organ builder', married Robert Hardaker on 29 December 1845 at St Mary, Edge Hill. Another daughter, Mary, of Haymarket, married William Stephens, pianoforte maker of Park Lane at St Nicholas, Liverpool on 18 December 1837.<sup>2</sup> The fathers of the couple are described as John Stephens, pianoforte maker and George Smith, organ builder: George and Agnes Smith (presumably his wife) are the witnesses. There is no further trace of George, who was presumably working as a journeyman for Bewsher & Fleetwood or some other Liverpool builder, but the younger Agnes appears in the 1861 and 1871 censuses. These reveal her to be born c.1829, and rather unexpectedly, in Stafford.<sup>3</sup>

The life of the organ builder in the nineteenth century could be very challenging. Added to the uncertain nature of building a large and complex machine for customers whose attitude to payment was often whimsical was a market which varied widely from year to year according to the turbulent state of religion. Although labour was cheap, not many builders had sufficient financial backing for business to be on an even footing, and the spectre of bankruptcy (which involved imprisonment) was constantly in view. Few careers demonstrated such misfortune as that of Frederick Wilkie, a German builder hanged at Tyburn in 1771 after he killed a man in a brawl. However, few also were so full of unfortunate incident as those of two unrelated builders, both called George Smith.

*George Smith II*, born Manchester c.1791, Manchester early 1820s?, Birmingham 1824-1826, Manchester and/or Blackburn 1829-32, Penzance 1847-48, Birmingham 1850, Portsmouth 1851, Camberwell by 1854 when he died.

'Mr George Smith of this town (late of Manchester)' built an organ for St Chad's Roman Catholic Chapel in Birmingham, predecessor of the Cathedral, in 1824.<sup>4</sup> He also made organs for Belmont Row Chapel in 1825,<sup>5</sup> and Carrs Lane Chapel in

1826.<sup>6</sup> The announcement of the organ at St Chad's was less than enthusiastic, but that for the Belmont Chapel was much more so, and also mentions an organ for St Michael, Lichfield which was 'universally admired'.

According to the later census, Smith was born in Manchester, but it is impossible to say who his parents were, or how he became an organ builder. It seems certain, however, that he was the George Smith later involved in a court case in Blackburn. In January 1831 the parish church of St Mary's in Blackburn burnt down, and George Smith, 41, master organ builder and men in his employ took parts of the organ to his shop. John Gray (the original builder in 1828) came to inspect the remains in November and alleged that some pipes were missing. When arrested, Smith was 'carrying on business in Manchester.' He was tried at Preston Quarter Sessions the following year with theft, and acquitted:<sup>7</sup> several employees gave evidence, none of whom is known from other contexts. The Revd. Mr. Sharples, catholic priest of Blackburn, who had known Smith for three years, and had bought an organ from him for £170, mentioned in court that 'a gentleman from Birmingham' passing through the town, had been eager to give a good character reference to Smith, which makes it very likely he was the same man, having been in Manchester, Birmingham, and then in Blackburn. He may well have been a Catholic, given the connection with St Chad's, and the fact that he married Clarinda Foster, a widowed dressmaker, at the catholic chapel in Penzance in 1848.<sup>8</sup> A daughter, Mary Agnes, had already been born in Penzance the previous year, and another, Clarinda Ann, was born in Birmingham in 1850. By the time of the 1851 Census<sup>9</sup> the Smiths were living at 103 Portland Terrace, Portsmouth, where he was presumably working as a journeyman or tuner. George Smith died in Camberwell in 1854, and was buried in Norwood Cemetery on the 21st of August. His widow and family were living in Camberwell Grove in 1861.

It is tempting to connect George Smith II's presence in Portsmouth in 1851 to George Smith III, who has aroused interest because of a suspiciously large organ built the same year at St Jude, Southsea. However, this proves to be a coincidence, and they were in fact, different and unconnected George Smiths. The Southsea organ is described by Sperling,<sup>10</sup> and was a two manual organ in up-to-date post-Hill-Gauntlett style with 33 stops, including a big pedal organ, nine reeds and four mixtures. Nigel Browne has discussed this George Smith, because he is later found in Exeter, but further puzzles can be teased out.<sup>11</sup>

The Southsea organ proved, predictably, to be somewhat beyond Smith's capabilities. In 1869, 'Mr Jones, of Southsea, organ builder, formerly connected with the well-known firm of Gray & Davison' carried out a 'thorough repair', which included revoicing and tuning to equal temperament, and placing the Great organ in front, since it had been inexplicably placed behind the Swell originally.<sup>12</sup> Gray & Davison themselves rebuilt it in 1871 for £550,<sup>13</sup> but in 1876 the organ was called a 'sterterous and spasmodic instrument',<sup>14</sup> and further extensive work by Hill took

place in 1877, including additional bellows and pneumatic levers to both Great and Swell.<sup>15</sup> At this point it was said to be 'originally built by a Southsea amateur,' which, as we shall see, was not quite true, and 'radically defective,' which probably was.

'Mr Jones of Southsea' was Pilcher Jones (1828-1887), a younger brother of Henry Jones of Kensington. He was another itinerant character, recorded in Lambeth in 1849/51, York in 1860-62, where he had been Hill's tuner at the Minster and was for a time a master organ builder, Southsea in 1869-71, and advertising in St John's Wood, London from 1880-85. However, if Jones and the Manchester-born George Smith strike us as chancers, their movable and perhaps dubious careers can hardly match that of the other George, alias Sydney Smith, 1826-1881 or later, original builder of the St Jude's, Southsea organ.

**George Smith III**, alias George Valentine Fazackerley Smith, alias George Sidney Smith, alias Sidney Smith. Born London 1826, Plymouth late 1840s?, Portsmouth c.1851-1858, Exeter c.1860-1862, Stockwell c.1871, Aberdeen 1872, Ramsgate 1873-74, Peterborough 1876-78, Oxford 1880?, Stockwell 1881, ?

Although George Smith is not visible in Portsmouth in any organ-building context other than the large organ at St Jude's, he was there for quite a while, three sons being born there between 1852 and 1858. The 1861 Census<sup>16</sup> records him in Exeter, at 10 Lansdowne Terrace, organ builder born in London, aged 36, with his wife Amelia, 30, and children Harry George, 9, Frederic Sherwin, 7, and George, 3, all born in Portsmouth, plus Alfred Howard, aged 1, born in Exeter. Amelia was the daughter of Thomas Birdsall of Plymouth (1805-1871), a pianoforte dealer who came originally from Thorp Arch in Yorkshire. At their marriage on 4 June 1849 at St Andrew, Plymouth, her husband is named as George Valentine Fazackerley Smith: more than one of his children had Fazackerley as a middle name. During his brief career in Aberdeen he claimed to have worked for Hill, so this may be the source of his ambitions at St Jude's. On moving from Portsmouth to Exeter, probably in 1860, he produced a small organ for St Martin's church, but almost immediately struck trouble, in the form of a get-rich-quick scheme. He arranged with a sharebroker, Henry Sanford, to sell shares in a copper mine at Buckfastleigh, on commission. At the ensuing court case,<sup>17</sup> it emerged that although Smith had sold 200 shares to a Major Manford, nephew of a clerical acquaintance, he had done so at 30s each rather than the face value of 20s, and intended to pocket the difference. He was described as 'being in the habit of going through the towns of Devonshire and Cornwall giving lessons in music'. He lost the case and was ordered to pay back the money, so it was clearly time for a change of scene. This may have been London, since in 1871 Smith was living at 17 Gresham Place, Stockwell.<sup>18</sup> He has massaged his identity somewhat, and now describes himself as George S. Smith, Musical Instrument Maker, born in Stafford (!), and he has shaved three years from his age. It is clearly the same man, since his children Harry, Frederick and George

are present, the right age and born in the right places. He is now a widower, Amelia having died in 1869. Almost immediately, Smith found another job in Aberdeen, where the proprietors of the London Pianoforte and Music Saloon, 191 Union Street, made the following confident announcement:<sup>19</sup>

'Selby, Wood & Co. have pleasure in intimating ... that they have secured the services of Mr. George Sydney Smith, of London, a first-class Organ and Pianoforte tuner. Mr G.S. Smith was for several years in the employment of the celebrated firm of Hill & Son, Organ Builders, London; also with Cavaillé-Coll, of Paris, and for some years with Messrs. Erard, Pianoforte Makers.'

What truth there was in this is unknown, but the suspicion is that the mention of Cavaillé-Coll is pure fiction. In any case, after advertisements from September to November 1872, mention of Smith disappears from Aberdeen, and the next time he surfaces is in the unusual surroundings of the Benedictine Abbey of St Augustine in Ramsgate. In December 1873 a new two manual organ was opened in St Augustine's, by E. Sperling of Ramsgate and W.H. Hart of Gravesend. It was built by 'Mr George Smith of London, son of the well-known Bristol organbuilder of that name, very materially assisted in the woodwork and joinery by Father Augustine'.<sup>20</sup> On the opening day, it was not finished, but Smith was hardly alone in that.

Smith's claim to be related to John Smith of Bristol reaches new levels of preposterousness. John Smith junior (died 1860) did indeed have nine sons, a Sidney and George among them, but they died in 1840 and 1857 respectively. As an aside, 'E. Sperling' may be a tactful (or mistaken) reference to John Hanson Sperling, author of the Notebooks. Although Vicar of Westbourne in Sussex, from at least 1870-76 he lived in Royal Crescent, Ramsgate. He is thought to have become a Roman Catholic, and resigned his living in 1871. Smith advertised as an organ-builder in Ramsgate in 1874,<sup>21</sup> and had acquired another wife, Harriet (1847-1918): their son Arthur Sidney was baptised there on the 7 June.

His next move was to Peterborough,<sup>22</sup> where he advertises for a couple of years as 'George Smith, successor to the late George Neale, Pianoforte, Harmonium and Organ tuner etc' in Fitzwilliam Street. Yet another child, Annie Clara, was baptised on the 8 September 1878, but at St John of Jerusalem, South Hackney, for some reason 'from Peterborough'. She was born on the 16 March.

In 1881 we can catch up once more with Smith in the census,<sup>23</sup> but smoke and mirrors intervene. 'Sidney Smith' Musical Instrument Maker, 56, is at 8 Tintern Street, Stockwell, living with his wife, Harriet, and his children, Arthur S.R, Annie C.H. and a newcomer, Claude Albert Fazackerley, born seven months previously in Oxford. All these are the right age and born in the right places, but there is also Frederick S., 27, cabinet maker, born in Portsmouth, and described as 'nephew.' This can be none other than one of the sons from the first marriage. Another

peculiarity is that Sidney claims to have been born in Birmingham.

There is, curiously, another Sidney Smith, organ builder, who was indeed born in Birmingham, but was considerably younger.<sup>24</sup> He also spent some time working in Southsea, so is George alias Sidney Smith trying to pull the wool over someone's eyes by confusing the records? It is not the first time that he claimed a different birthplace, as he did so ten years earlier, again in Stockwell.

And so we seem to have reached the end of the convoluted career of George and/or Sidney Smith. Or have we? A George Smith of the right age was buried in Lambeth in December 1881, but when his widow Harriet turns up in the 1901 census in Wandsworth, she has acquired yet more children: Marian, born in Brighton in 1883, and Ernest, in Durham, in 1888. George probably didn't please many clients, but he certainly populated the planet: some of his children lived on into the 1940s, though, unsurprisingly, none of them appear to have had anything to do with organs.

## References

- <sup>1</sup> *Burnley News*, 8 July 1922
- <sup>2</sup> Liverpool RO, 283NIC/3/19
- <sup>3</sup> She must have married very young: her eldest daughter was born when she was 19.
- <sup>4</sup> *Birmingham Chronicle*, 12 August 1824
- <sup>5</sup> *Ibid*, 7 June 1825
- <sup>6</sup> *Ibid*, 16 March 1826
- <sup>7</sup> Report of the trial in *Preston Chronicle*, 7 July 1832
- <sup>8</sup> *Penzance Gazette*, 22 February 1848
- <sup>9</sup> HO107/1659, f. 842, p. 27
- <sup>10</sup> Volume 2, 122
- <sup>11</sup> Browne, Nigel, *Six Centuries of Organ Building in Devon*, (West Malling, At the Sign of the Pipe 2015), 137-138
- <sup>12</sup> *Hampshire Telegraph*, 13 March 1869, quoted by Browne. There was apparently a Choir division by then.
- <sup>13</sup> RG9/1396, f. 38 p. 19
- <sup>14</sup> BOA, Gray & Davison Ledger Vol. 8A, 103, 113, and Shop Book Vol. 9, 62
- <sup>15</sup> *Hampshire Post and Southsea Observer*, 8 December 1876
- <sup>16</sup> *Idem*, 27 April and 22 June 1877. Hill rebuilt it again in 1912. After the organ became unpopular at St Jude's, it was rebuilt by Nicholson & Co. in 2011 at St Barnabas, Ealing: see the article by Guy Russell and Andrew Moyes in *Organ Building*, Volume 12 (2012).
- <sup>17</sup> *Exeter Flying Post*, 20 August 1862. See Browne, 138
- <sup>18</sup> RG10/687 f. 50, p. 22
- <sup>19</sup> *Aberdeen Journal*, 18 September 1872
- <sup>20</sup> *Thanet Advertiser*, 6 and 13 December 1873
- <sup>21</sup> *Post Office Directory, Kent*, Grange Road
- <sup>22</sup> *Peterborough Standard*, 25 November 1876-25 May 1878
- <sup>23</sup> RG11/624 f. 131 p. 50
- <sup>24</sup> Sydney Smith 1853-1920. Son of a Birmingham gunmaker, married at St Michael Toxteth in 1876, when he was of Chester Street, Liverpool. Moved from Kentish Town to Southsea in 1879, and in 1881 Master Organ Builder there, employing 1 man and 1 boy. In the Cape Colony c.1882, then in 1901 a journeyman back in Birmingham. Died in Johannesburg 1920.

## REVIEWS

### **Manuel Rodrigues Coelho: Flores de Musica II**

**Edited by João Vaz**

Published by Ut Orpheus, Bologna ECHOM6

Available from: [www.utorpheus.com](http://www.utorpheus.com) 59.95 Euros

This is the second of three volumes which will present the complete contents of *Flores de Musica* by Manuel Rodrigues Coelho (c.1555-1635), organist of Elvas, Badajoz and the Chapel Royal, Lisbon, originally published in 1620, and now newly edited by João Vaz, who is well known, at least in Portugal, for his recitals and recordings on historic organs in Portugal and the island groups belonging to Portugal, as well as his involvement in restoration projects, such as on the six organs at Mafra. This deep involvement in the country's heritage makes him the ideal editor for this new edition.

Volume 1 contained the 12 Tentos on Tones 1-4. This volume contains the remaining 12 Tentos, three on each of the fifth to the eighth Tones, plus four *Susanas grosadas* a 4, the five voices of the original Chanson by Orlando de Lassus (*Susanne un jour* was one of the most popular chansons of the time, first published in 1560, with versions for keyboard being found by many German, Italian, Spanish, English and Dutch composers) being reduced to four, which, according to Coelho, is the best arrangement. The Tentos, written for four voices, although there are lengthy passages for just three, are imitative, with much semiquaver figuration against longer note values as the pieces unfold. All are written for the same stops to be used for each hand, with no pieces for stops divided between treble and bass, although these certainly existed at the time. Most begin with a semibreve followed by minims as the subject is developed: the majority of the tentos are plurithematic, and frequently small motifs, sometimes derived from a subject, are also treated imitatively. In numbers 14 and 18 a second subject is introduced from the second beat of the first bar. Number 13 is headed Tento do quinto tom natural por b quadro, ie with B natural, and lacks a key signature: it concludes in F rather than the more usual C for the fifth Tone. Numbers 14 and 15 are headed Segundo/terceiro tento do mesmo tom por bemol, with a key signature of one flat, with much use being made of a B natural. Number 14 concludes in F, and number 15 unusually concludes in D. Numbers 16-18 are entitled Tento do sexto Tom, with a key signature of one flat and ending in F.

Numbers 19-21 are headed Tento do septimo tom natural, without a key signature, and conclude in G rather than in D, usually associated with this tone. Numbers 20-22 are headed Tento do oitavo tom natural and have no key signature, concluding in G rather than in D, which was common in Iberian pieces on this tone. The tentos cover from 159 and 176 bars of numbers 19 and 22 (which progress in crotchets and quavers) to 305 and 308 bars of numbers 20 and 21. Eight of the tentos, numbers 13,

14, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22 and 24 end with a section in triple time, with quavers as the smallest note value in numbers 17, 20, 21 and 22, the others having crotchets as the smallest value; care is needed to find the most appropriate tempo without these sections sounding either too slow or too rushed. A triple time section in quavers occurs between bars 185 to 201 in number 16. Shorter triple time sections of one to three bars occur during numbers 16, 18 and 21. Absent in Coelho's Tentos are the change between 3/2 and 6/4 in the triple time sections and a toccata-like coda in C time after triple time sections, frequently found in Tientos by his Spanish contemporaries. Also found only rarely are dissonances such as augmented fifths and the irregular groupings of quavers such as 3+2+3 also very popular with the Spanish contemporaries, although these are found in the versions of some of Coelho's pieces in the Braga MS as mentioned above, and may represent a performance of those figures with irregular groupings with a 3 over them, in which a normal triplet interpretation is not readily applicable.

Each Susana is in the second Tone with a key signature of one flat, runs to between 115-120 bars and consists of semiquaver passages against held semibreve or minim chords, with brief imitation and repeated motifs, sometimes resulting in false relations and clashes. Even quaver triplets occur in the first and fourth one, and uneven quaver triplets in the last one.

The comprehensive introduction provides substantial information about the sources and corrections made by the editors (the original print has a page of errata, here included as a facsimile), and the graphic characteristics and editorial methods offer very helpful suggestions about possible interpretations of the occasionally haphazard engraving of triplet groups. An informative article by Andre Ferreira gives very useful pointers towards the type of ornamentation which Coelho described as being essential, with an in-depth discussion of the description of ornaments in the Spanish treatise by Tomas de Santa Maria. There is a useful bibliography listing articles (mainly in Portuguese) and other modern editions and anthologies. There is an extremely detailed critical commentary following the music pages. The printing is in a good size font, with up to six systems to the page, and there are a number of facsimiles which show the difficulties encountered when transcribing the pieces into modern notation from the score format of the original. These Tentos and Susanas – based on a sacred theme – offer an interesting range of pieces, many providing technical challenges, but should prove most rewarding to study and master; they offer excellent material for voluntaries and recitals. Volume three, which will include the liturgical pieces, is scheduled to appear next year and is eagerly awaited. João Vaz and his colleagues are to be thanked for their work in providing a much-needed new edition of these important pieces.

John Collins

## CALL FOR PAPERS - RECENT RESEARCH IN ORGAN STUDIES

### BERNARD EDMONDS RESEARCH CONFERENCE 2024

Proposals for papers are invited for the British Institute of Organ Studies Bernard Edmonds Recent Research Conference 2024. The venue and date are still to be confirmed and the conference will be later in the spring than usual. We hope to return to the Barber Institute at the University of Birmingham, but there is still some uncertainty about availability. BIOS Council considers this event to be a significant occasion in the annual programme, fundamental to BIOS's published aims. Its revival last year after a pause of three years was strongly supported by members and guests and we hope for a similar response in 2024 encouraged by a programme of stimulating papers reflecting recent research.

Proposals should present recent research into aspects of organ history, including music and performance. A broad range of subjects is encouraged, and papers on organs and organ builders, including British organ-builders working overseas and organs built in Britain by foreign organ-builders are welcomed alongside papers more broadly based. Papers about organ repertoire, organ playing, composers and performers are also encouraged.

Papers should be around twenty-five minutes in length, and the use of musical and pictorial illustrations is encouraged. Students are encouraged to apply for short slots if they wish to present initial research findings.

Proposals will be reviewed by members of BIOS Council and the authors of successful proposals will be notified as soon as possible.

A summary proposal of 200 words, along with a brief biographical note, should be sent by 1 February 2024 if possible, but enquiries are welcome at any time.

Richard Hobson [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

## **British Institute of Organ Studies**

### **DAY CONFERENCE AT PETERHOUSE, CAMBRIDGE**

**Saturday 16 March, 2024 10.30 for 11.00**

John Snetzler made an organ for Peterhouse, Cambridge in 1765. It was the gift of Horatio Mann, a Fellow Commoner of the College, and stood in the west gallery of the chapel. There were two keyboards (GG, short octaves, to e<sup>3</sup>), a Great Organ and a combined Choir and Echo Organ, and no pedals. The early sources are not entirely consistent in recording the stoplist, but there were probably 17 stops in all; of these, 11 survive in whole or in part, and there are also pipes belonging to the Sexquialtra and 5-rank Cornet stops.

Hill worked on the organ several times in the nineteenth century, culminating in an extensive reconstruction in 1893-4. In 1964, Noel Mander undertook a more far-reaching rebuild, including the use of unit chests with electric action to enlarge the Choir and Pedal Organs, and a new console with a range of modern playing aids.

By the 1990s it had become apparent that the organ would soon require further attention, but it was not until the 2010s that it became possible to consider a major fund-raising campaign. A number of potential contractors were invited to put forward proposals guided by the College's desire to preserve its Snetzler heritage, whilst also providing an instrument able to support the teaching of young organists and the accompaniment of the liturgy.

Eventually, in 2018, a contract was signed with Flentrop Orgelbouw (Zaandam) and Orgelbau Klais (Bonn) for a scheme involving the re-creation of the Snetzler instrument, but with the introduction of a second console with modern playing aids and some additional registers to facilitate the performance of later repertoire. This collaborative project would be led by a joint team drawn from the two workshops.

The work is now nearing completion and the reconstructed organ will be opened by Thomas Trotter in January 2024. Peterhouse has kindly agreed to BIOS holding a conference on Saturday 16 March 2024 at which the organ will be demonstrated and discussed. The programme will include talks by Paul Tindall (on Snetzler), Nicholas Thistlethwaite (on the history of the Peterhouse organ and the current project), and performances/talks by Anne Page and Andrew Reid. The day will end at 4pm.

The conference fee is £40. This includes morning coffee and a sandwich lunch. A booking form will be found opposite. Three free places are available for students currently studying at a university or music academy on a 'first come, first served' basis. Applications should be submitted to the Meetings Officer, Richard Hobson (contact details on the form), with a booking form, brief CV and expression of interest.

**BOOKING FORM**  
**BRITISH INSTITUTE OF ORGAN STUDIES DAY CONFERENCE**

*The Snetzler Organ at Peterhouse, Cambridge*

**Saturday 16 March 2024**  
**Peterhouse, Trumpington Street, Cambridge CB2 1RD**

Please reserve a place for the BIOS Study Day for £40.00.

There are two ways to book a place for this meeting:

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 Peterhouse, and highlight option (b) 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 .....

Note: 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 form.

*Please return this booking form (or a photocopy) by post or email to:*

Richard Hobson,



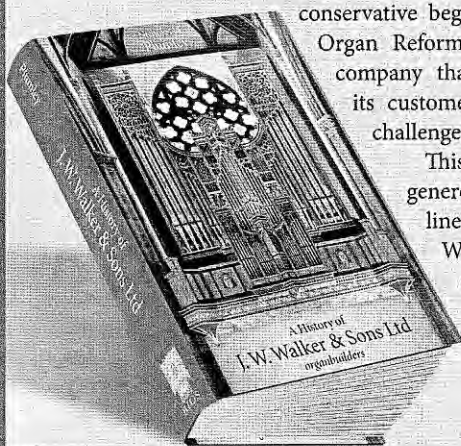
# A History of J. W. Walker & Sons Ltd organbuilders

*Through several generations and beyond*

The story of J. W. Walker & Sons Ltd begins in the late 1820s, when a young Joseph William Walker first set up shop as an organbuilder, and continues to this day, nearly 200 years later. The work of the firm is explored through the different generations of the Walker family in whose hands it flourished, to the innovative work of Robert Pennells, who took over as managing director in 1975, and beyond.

The Walker family history is laid out in comprehensive detail, and the stories of other members of the firm are also told. Many instruments built by the firm are discussed at length, including barrel and chamber organs, as well as instruments exported around the world. Reference is made to the work of other organbuilding firms and the reactions of contemporary organists and critics. From its essentially conservative beginnings through its response to the Organ Reform Movement, Walker's is seen as a company that has responded to the wishes of its customers, at the same time rising to the challenges of the times.

This lucid and readable account is generously illustrated, including charming line drawings of nineteenth century Walker organs by the author and drawings and photographs of much more recent instruments, showing some highly original designs by David Graebe and others.



416pp, 151 illustrations (colour and B&W)

£30 + P&P  
[bios.org.uk/publications](https://www.bios.org.uk/publications)

Nicholas Plumley's book is now available from the BIOS Webstore  
[https://www.bios.org.uk/store/products\\_detail.php?ProductID=96](https://www.bios.org.uk/store/products_detail.php?ProductID=96)

## **The BIOS Lunch 2023**

**Saturday 25th November 12.00 for 12.30**

**The Grosvenor Chapel, South Audley Street, London W1**

All members, wives, husbands, partners and friends are invited to gather again!

Please contact Richard Hobson, meetings officer, as soon as possible if you would like to reserve a place; a menu and payment details will then be sent.

Cost will be £50 for a gourmet three course lunch, including drinks, aperitif and canapés.

Email [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]



### 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.