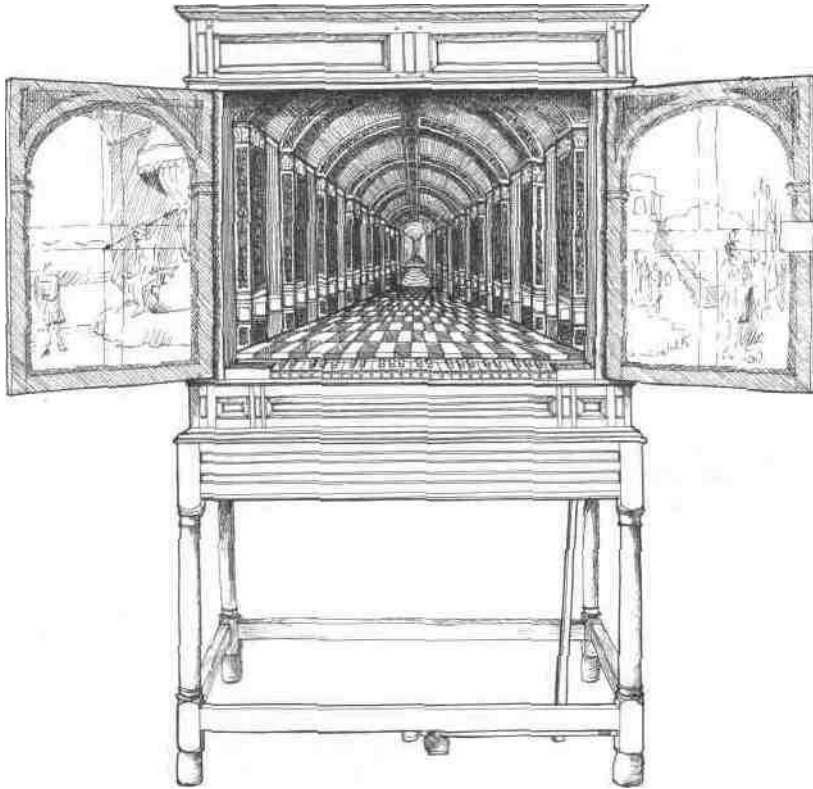


BIOS REPORTER



Volume Thirteen, No. 2 (April 1989)

Editorial

A recent leader in **The Times** was intriguingly headed 'Organ Trade Must Cease'. Startled, I reflected briefly on the security - or otherwise - of my livelihood: but of course the editorial referred to the trade in human organs destined for transplant.

The transplant of pipe organs from donor to recipient seems to be such a simple idea, and can work so well in practice. However, readers of the Reporter will know from David Wickens' very depressing note in the last issue that there is no evidence that anyone is taking the idea seriously. Good old instruments are melted down for scrap, pillaged for pipework for unit organs, mercilessly rebuilt, and only very occasionally restored and rehoused. We cannot point to the same success with relocation that has been so evident in the United States - thanks to the hard work of The Organ Clearing House - and unwanted organs from Britain seem to be finding homes in Holland, Germany, Australia and America more easily than in their country of origin.

With this in mind, it is a great pity to have to report on one organ transplant scheme that seems to be going wrong. In the 1960s a fine eighteenth century case and the remains of an organ were removed from St. George's Great Yarmouth (the chapel of ease to the parish church, St. Nicholas's, and at that time redundant.). The case is one of the handful of ogee-fronted cases produced in the second quarter of the eighteenth century, all of them containing organs built by members of the Byfield, Jordan and Bridge conglomerate. It is a very small case, only eleven feet wide, with 8' D as the largest display pipe, but it is of very high quality, with excellent carving.

It was, of course, to St. John's Smith Square in London that the case went. Restored after bomb damage and turned into a concert hall, this seemed to be the ideal home for a splendid organ case of the appropriate period. Plans were made for the building of a new organ incorporating some eighteenth century pipework, but the project was shelved through lack of funds and the case was erected, empty, on the west gallery.

A little more than two years ago the scheme was revived and estimates called for from a small group of builders. (Your editor assisted in the preparation of one of the unsuccessful schemes, a fact that should perhaps be borne in mind while reading and assessing what he has to say about the project) The final selection was Klais of Bonn - and though this would not be everyone's choice it is no doubt a perfectly reasonable decision.

However, now that the scheme is made public (see **The Organists' Review**, March 1989, p.31) it is time to remark that to force an organ of no less than 53 speaking stops into a case designed for less than twenty is an idea open to ridicule. I believe that it is intended that the Pedal (1 x 32', 4 x 16') will stand below the gallery, but this still leaves Great and Swell (3 x 16', 10 x 8') in the

main case, and a very large Positive (1 x 16', 5 x 8') to be crammed into a case which is shown on the proposal drawing as being about 7'6" wide with a 4-foot front. Someone, somewhere, has taken leave of their senses. Quite apart from asking whether an organ of 53 stops is necessary in this splendid, but not over-large building, this whole affair appears as an unfortunate sequel to the new organs at Trinity College Cambridge and Christ Church Cathedral Oxford. These are certainly good organs, but in both examples old cases have been insensitively treated in order to fit a new instrument inside. At Cambridge only details and colour are misjudged, but at Oxford the proportion and detail of the Father Smith case have been ruined by an insensitive wall of repetitive carving masking the overgrown *Brustwerk*. At Smith Square only a new Positive case is proposed, but can any addition, however brilliant, really be expected to stand happily in front of a peerless original? Is the project not out of scale and sympathy with the case, and, quite possibly, with the building? When the Parish of Great Yarmouth gave the case - and, please note, the remains of the organ

too - to Smith Square, is this quite what they intended should happen? [.....]

There is an obvious solution to the problem. The Great Yarmouth case should return to Great Yarmouth; St. George's is now an arts centre and its future seems secure enough for the time being. It would then be possible to build a new case at Smith Square; though this might not suit the building so perfectly, it would take away so many restrictions and compromises surrounding the proposal. Smith Square certainly deserves to have an excellent organ: its status as one of London's leading concert venues is convincing reason enough. If the idea is to **succeed**, the scheme must be savagely pruned, or the case returned to its original home.

Conferences

London - 1st and 2nd September 1989 William Hill Bicentenary Conference Organised by Nicholas Thistlethwaite and Stephen Bicknell

As this year's residential conference is in Germany, we are planning an additional weekend event nearer home. This will combine celebrations surrounding the 200th anniversary of the birth of William Hill with the East London visit postponed from 1988. We also hope to be joined by the Organ Advisers Conference. We expect to visit organs at St. Paul's Shadwell (Elliot 1820, possibly with earlier material) St. Anne's Limehouse (Gray & Davison 1851) St. John's Hyde Park Crescent (Hill 1865) and St. Dominic's Priory, Haverstock Hill (Willis 1867 & 1888), four instruments which illustrate a sequence of development during the nineteenth century. The AGM will take place on the Saturday. At the time of writing this conference is in the planning stage, and fuller details will appear in the July Reporter.

Portsmouth & Romsey - Saturday 28th October 1989 Organised by Nicholas Plumley

This day conference will be centred round two vintage Walker organs - the 1891 instrument in St. Mary's Portsea and the 1848/1888 organ at Romsey Abbey. Details will appear in the next Reporter.

Annual Residential Conference 1990 **Glasgow Organised by Stuart Campbell**

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

Annual Residential Conference 1991 Eire

In the last issue of the **Reporter** **this conference was advertised** as taking place in 1989. Though postponed, plans **are still proceeding smoothly, and we hope to be at Maynooth in 1991.**

Other events

The Golden Age - Music from Renaissance to Baroque played by Andrew Benson-Wilson

Saturday 15th July at **Pamber Priory**, Hampshire (5m N. of Basingstoke, W of the A430) Music by Byrd, Gibbons, Handel, Bohm and C.P.E.Bach on the 1780 Richard Seede chamber organ in this fine Norman Priory.

Saturday 29th July at St. **Mary's Rotherhithe** (St. Marychurch St., London SE16) Music by Blitheman, Luge, Blow, Handel, Wesley, Walther, Marchand and Balbastre on the 1764 Byfield organ.

Holy Trinity, Stratford-upon-Avon

Nicholas Thistlethwaite

A Consistory Court was recently convened in Holy Trinity Church, Stratford-upon-Avon, to consider a petition for a faculty to make alterations to the organ. BIOS council has been taking an active interest in this case.

The organ was built by William Hill in 1840 and was one of the earliest instruments in this country to have C-compasses and an independent Pedal division- It was removed from the west gallery in 1855 to the north transept, and at some date a Choir division was added. In 1887 a new arrangement was proposed with Swell, Great and some Pedal in a new case on a gallery over the chancel arch, and the remainder of the instrument at floor level in the south transept. When the work was completed in 1889, it had been decided to place only the Great together with the Pedal Open Diapason and reeds in Bodley's case over the chancel arch; the Swell, Choir and remainder of the Pedal were in the transept chamber. Some new pipework was provided at this time, but the principal business was to rearrange the instrument and provide it with a new action. Therein the builders (Hill & Son) laid up trouble for the future. They employed an early form of electric action for the gallery section of the organ, and when it proved unreliable, were obliged to replace it with tubular-pneumatic. This was in 1898. Other changes were made at the same time. For reasons that are not clear, it was decided to exchange Great and Swell, so that Bodley's case now housed only the Swell Organ (it was later joined by a new Great Open Diapason, making three in all). The remainder of the organ now stood in the transept chamber. The tonal scheme was revised and new reeds were provided throughout

No further major work occurred for 65 years. In 1963, the action was converted to electro-pneumatic and a new console was provided. Minor tonal alterations were made (the Swell 16' gave way to a 4' flute, a choir reed to a gemshorn, and the added diapason was redeployed as Pedal upperwork). The Choir box was removed. In other respects. Hill, Norman and Beard did as much as was possible with the limited funds available to restore the mechanical and structural parts of the organ, and to preserve the existing tonal scheme.

In 1988 the P.C.C. of Stratford-upon-Avon submitted a petition for a faculty to rebuild the organ. The scheme envisaged a revision of the organ's layout so as to develop a gallery division intended principally to lead congregational singing and a chamber division designed principally with the needs of choir accompaniment in mind. This was to be achieved by placing the Great Organ minus 4 of its 11 stops in the gallery case, together with a small Swell division and a 4-stop Pedal. There would be some new pipework in each of these divisions. The old Choir Organ (largely unaltered) would remain in the chamber, where it would be joined by the majority of the existing Swell, removed from the gallery. Five stops (the larger ones) of the existing Pedal; Organ would also remain in the chamber. Both sections would be controlled from one console. In all 8 stops from the existing organ would be discarded (Open Diapason, Hohl Flute, Harmonic Flute and Clarion from the Great; Double Trumpet from the

Swell; Dulciana and Vox Humana from the Choir; Violone from the Pedal) and the Great Twelfth would become part of a 2-rank Sesquialtera.

The petition was opposed - hence the Consistory Court. For the petitioners, it was maintained that the existing organ was arranged in such a way as to make it impossible for the player to judge the relative balance of Swell and Great from the console. It was also stated that due to the elevated position of the Swell it was impossible to give the choir adequate support without producing an accompaniment which (to the congregation) overpowered the singers. The two divisions were seldom in tune with one another (again, on account of the position of the Swell) and so were difficult to use in combination. Finally, it was testified that the lower chamber was arranged in such a way as to misdirect the sound and hamper attempts at proper maintenance.

Each of these contentions was disputed by the objectors who wished to see the organ

refurbished without alteration to the existing tonal scheme. It was maintained that any player has difficulties in judging the balance of different parts of his instrument with one another and that this in itself was not a sufficient cause for major rearrangement of an historic instrument. It was claimed that any tuning disparity between the two divisions would also affect the usefulness of the organ if reconstructed as the petitioners wished. It was further claimed that improvements might be made in the layout of the chamber and that in any case the organ produced an adequate body of sound in the nave to lead hearty congregational singing.

In giving judgement, the Chancellor granted a faculty to the petitioners and stipulated that any pipes or other parts of the organ discarded as a result of the alterations should be stored by the parish in such a manner as to preserve them

Remembrancer

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

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

No. Vm. - THE ORGAN AT ST. JOHN'S CHURCH, HACKNEY.

The instrument which we are now about to describe was built by a German of the name of *Schneitzler*,* who settled in this country about the middle of the last century, and built many very superior instruments, of all sizes. The organ which first brought him to notice was that which he built for the church at Lynn Regis, Norfolk, in 1754. In this instrument he introduced two stops, not hitherto used by English organ builders, i.e. the *bourdon*, or double open diapason in the great organ, and the dulciana, in the choir, both made of metal and open pipes.

The organ of which we are now speaking was built for the *old* church at Hackney, where it

originally stood; but, after the erection of the new church, it was removed thither, and underwent an extensive repair by the late Mr. England, in 1796. The compass of the instrument was then extended, by making it long octave; and another open diapason was added to the great organ, with the addition of a *tierce*; and also new sound boards to the great and choir organ, and an entire remodelling of the whole instrument, with a new case of mahogany.

* *Schnetzler* appears to have been the first person who introduced the *dulciana* stop into the English organs. *Green* and *Avery* have both used them in their organs, and, at the present time, scarcely an organ is built without one. **Mr.** Bishop has improved upon them, and, in several instruments, has introduced two *dulcianas* on the same *clavier*, one an octave below the other, and called *double dulciana*. The first one was introduced into an organ built for a new church in Acre Lane, Clapham. about five years since.

excellent, both in quantity and quality, and mixes very finely with the rest of the instrument. The old open diapason, by *Schnetzler*, is of superior tone. The stop diapasons, in the great organ and swell, are metal from middle **C**; and in their tones are very pure. The flute also in the choir organ is of metal, and equally good- Each of these is excellent, either as solo stops, or in chorus. The reed stops throughout the instrument are by no means inferior; and the full organ is grand and majestic, especially when the choir and swell are coupled with it. It has the advantage of standing in a good situation- and in a church favourable to sound. Indeed the instrument is altogether well made, and since the last repair by Mr. Gray, we are compelled to speak of it in unqualified terms of approbation any further addition could be made, we should venture to recommend a *Cremona treble* in the place of the *bassoon*; as such a stop, going all through the instrument, is not in keeping with the instrument (bassoon) that it represents, being a bass instrument The Cremona is a more useful stop. With this alteration we might almost pronounce it perfect

[Editor's note - though *Christian Remembrancer* and Hopkins & Rimbault understood this organ to be by Snetzler, according to Andrew Freeman (The Organ, Nos. 53 & 80) the Snetzler instrument was sold by England to St. James' Church Poole See also Betty Matthews' article in *BIOS Journal 2*. The organ at St. John Hackney, with its remarkable 4 tower case, remained little altered until its tragic destruction by fire in 1955]

Index to the Reporter - Volumes 1-10

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

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

Redundant Organs

Sussex

Willis 1866; some alterations

Disposition: Gt 8.8.8.8.4.4.2.8. Sw 16.8.8.4.2.Mix.8.8. **Ped** 16.16.8.8.

Action: Mechanical

Dimensions: **h 16' 6"**, **w 13'**, **d 13" 3"**

Middlesex

Willis 1882; overhauled 1902 & 1922 Disposition: Gt 16.8.8.8.4.4.2.8.4.

Sw 16.8.8.8.8.4.3.2.8.8.

Ch 8.8.8.4.8. Ped 16.16.8. Action: Mechanical; pedal
pneumatic Dimensions: h 18', w 16', d 14'

Worcestershire

Willis, undated; house organ moved to present location 1873; since electrified

Disposition: Gt 16.8.8.4.2.8.

Sw 8.8.8.8.4.II.8.8.

Ch 8.8.4.2.8.

Ped 16.16.8.8.4. Action:Electro-pneumatic
Casework:Simple, oak **Dimensions:** h 12', w 8', d 12'

Norfolk

Gray & Davison, undated; reconstructed in present location by Hill Norman & Beard 1920

Disposition: Gt 8.8.8.4.4.spare. Sw 8.8.8.4.2.8.spare. Ped 16.8..

Action: Mechanical

Casework: Oak pipe-rack on two adjacent sides

Dimensions: h 20', w 9', d 9'

Berkshire

Nicholson (Worcester), late 19thC

Disposition: Gt 8.8.8.4.4.2. Sw 8.8.8.8.8.4.2.8. Ped 16.8.

Action: Mechanical

Dimensions: h 18', w 11', d 12'

Northampton

P. Conacher, undated

Disposition: Gt 8.8.8.4.4.8. Sw 8.8.8.8.4.2.8. Ped 16.16.8.

Action: Mechanical; pedal pneumatic

Casework: Pine; frontal display

Dimensions: h 7', w 12' 7", d 6'

Derbyshire

Bower & Dunn (Sheffield) 1920

Disposition: Man 8 (unenclosed).8.8.4 (enclosed). Ped 16.

Action: Mechanical

Casework: Plain; metal front; Bourdons on RH side

Buckinghamshire Gray & Davison 1865 - 2m 'of considerable historical importance' details not yet received.

Manchester

Jardine 1870 - virtually unaltered

see BIOS Reporter Vol. 11, no. 1 (Jan 1987) for details

Dimensions: h 18', w 14', d 8' 10"

Other organs currently available (measurements rounded up):

Lothian: 3m Willis 1890/N&B 1901/Compton 195 3; electric; 2m Willis core.

Cambridge: 2m Harrison 1975; Gt 9, Sw 7, Ped 5; mechanical (20'x15'x10')

Cheshire: 3m Wadsworth 1911; Gt 7, Sw 10, Ch 5, Ped 3.

Lancashire: 3m Ainscough 1913; Gt 5, Sw 6, Ch 4, Ped 3; (18'x11'x8')

Berkshire: 2m anon.; Gt 5, Sw 4, Ped 1; mechanical; (9'x5'x7')

Kent: 2m anon.; Gt 6, Sw 5, Ped 1; mechanical; (22'x9'x8')

Sussex: 2m Browne 1905; Gt 5, Sw 5, Ped 1; mechanical; (14'x9'x6')

Glamorgan: 2m Blackett & Howden 1912; Gt 6, Sw 6, Ped 2; pneumatic; (25'x12'x11')

Kent: 3m Walker; Gt 10, Sw 12, Ped 14; electric.

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

Notes & Queries

Bernard Edmonds

"Across the street from where I lived in a London suburb was a pair of tall, massive iron fretwork gates. Beyond them was situated a large organ factory. ... I used to pass that great organ factory and watch the men at their work and study and think out the purposes and uses **of** the various things the mechanics were at work upon".

Joseph Harris Ridges, who wrote that, was bom in **Ealing** in 1827 and died in 1914 in Salt Lake City, whence comes an enquiry as to which organ builder's factory that can have been, and in which **London** suburb it was situated.(1) For Ridges emigrated to **Sydney** in 1853, became a Mormon, built an organ, which he took with him when he and his family left in 1856 for Utah, and placed it in the old **Mormon Tabernacle** at **Salt Lake City**. When the new Tabernacle was built he made a larger organ for that More about Ridges will be found in Rushworth; (2) the present query comes in connection with a forthcoming history of the Tabernacle organs. Any information will be forwarded to, and gratefully received by, BIOS member Barbara Owen.

More organists from **Mortimer's Universal Director** of 1763: (3)

Samuel Tanfield Hawkes. Organist At Dulwich College.

William Hodgson. Organist and Teacher on the Harpsichord and Violin. London Street,
Grenwich.

Samuel Howard. Organist. Norfolk-street in the Strand.

Matthew Hussey. Organist at Newington Butts.

John Jones, Junior, Composer and Organist. Charterhouse.

John Keeble. Organist. Maddox-street, Hanover-square.

Samuel Long. Organist and Teacher on the Harpsichord. Cross-street,
Hatton-garden.

Dr. James Nares. Composer and Organist of his Majesty's Chapel Royal and Master of the
Children. James-street, Westminster.

Once erroneous information gets a hold, it becomes harder and harder to correct it, however often one tries to do it. (4) Once more I have been told that the **Thaxted** organ came from **Bedford Chapel**, the authorities quoted being Harvey, Freeman, Penrose. I knew all three, and can fairly say that Sperling *et al* were not the only enthusiasts to copy one another's notes! The organ came from **St. John's Chapel, Bedford Row**, where Dr. Worgan had been organist (5), and some of its pipes are marked to that effect. In his **Records of British Organ Builders** (6), concerning the Harris organ which proceeded it at St. John's, Freeman says St. John's was 'formerly Bedford Chapel' and describes that building, which was in fact in quite a different locality, and nothing to do with St. John's. This error, however it arose, cropped up every time St. John's was mentioned, hence the Thaxted mistake. The references (4) will give you the right

picture.

In summary, St. John's contained a Harris organ of 1703, which must have come from elsewhere as it was not until 1721 that a group of Whigs began to erect the building (7). Russell supplied a Swell in 1803; and in 1826 it was removed to St. Michael Blackheath Park, rebuilt to C compass with a new case by Walker in 1843, given the fashionable treatment by Rutt about 1910, and rehabilitated by Mander in 1955. [*Editor's note:* The organ may have been moved to Blackheath by Nicbolls. The Walker records confirm alterations and improvements at various dates in and after 1843. Mander believed that some 18th century pipework survived, but it is difficult to be certain- The gothic case is surely from 1826.] H.C.Lincoln built the new organ in St. John's- now at Thaited. where it went on the closure of St. John's about 1855. Do get it right! A recent very expensive publication trips up badly of Bedford Chapel fixation, in spite of giving reference to the Reporter. *lam Satis.*

Reporter Vol.XH No.4 p.14: **John Lowe emigrated to** about 1800, not 1900. The January **Organ** contains an article about him **and his work**. There seems no evidence of any connection of J.R.C.Crabb with Wales, but I am told that he was related to the Exeter uilder.

Tubular pneumatic action came in many forms, but rather a puzzling one is attributed to Edwin Smith of Blackburn, in 1896 at the primitive Methodist Chapel there (8). It is described as his patent pneumatic valve which does not depend on a puff of wind to operate it; simply closing the end of the tube and shutting off atmospheric communication makes the pipe speak promptly'. Of course the description may be misleadingly incomplete, but as it stands it would seem as though he had inverted the usual exhaust action and made it bleed-hole-on and exhaust-off. If so there would surely be a lot of wind-leakage-How else could it have worked according to the description? Any ideas? Has anyone met a Smith action?

Query about pedalboards - so far as I know radiating pedals were introduced by **Effiot & Hill** at **York** in 1829, and by **Bruce** of **Edinburgh** at **Mitcham** in 1834; concave ones were by Schule at the 1851 Exhibition, at it was at S.S.Wesley's suggestion when examining the organ that Willis combined the two ideas in the Wesley-Willis board. Other builders no doubt took it up, but the only notes I have to hand are **Hill** in the Nave Organ at **York** (1863) which also had angled jambs (9).

A communication just to hand refers to some printed statements that 'according to Edmonds' in Organ Club Handbook No.6 page 49 one Wright, who installed an organ at Fulham in 1730, was an ancestor of the Flights; and this I too have seen quoted. In fact the reference says ancestor of the Robsons, and this information came via Hinton (10) from C.S.Robson, whose great-grandfather Wright was. On the same page in Hinton, by the way, he refers to the death of John Robson causing the leadership in the barrel-organ field to pass to Imhof and Mukle. This is the reverse mistake - John Flight was meant incidentally the

said Pulham barrel organ has not been traced, and does not appear in the Parish Church records.

A reply comes about the organ case at **Algarkirk** enquired about last time. According to Pevsner (as usual, nothing about the organ case, though the arch in which it is placed is noted), **R.C.Carpenter** did the restoration work 1850-54. Although he died in 1856, and **Bryceson & Morten** put the organ there in 1876, Dr. Pacey tells me that from external evidence it seems that the case was to Carpenter's design.

There was the usual number of queries which I could not answer. I have been told that I am 'the baffled enquirer's last hope'. But, alas!, I am no magician. Seeking an answer for one, I came across the following by chance: 'Windsor. Decembr 15, 1674. Mr Smyth to be pd 110 /. for making ye organ at Windsor on ye Privy Sealy Dormt. done.'(ll) I do not think I have seen this before. Some other interesting information turned up, but I find that it had all been docketed by Freeman in his Records of British Organ Builders First Series (12).

James Watt is not usually thought of as an organ builder. An old cutting of about 1935 mentions an organ which he built for his home in 1762 and disposed of when he moved to Birmingham in 1776. After sundry peregrinations it arrived in the **Kelvingrove Museum** at **Glasgow**. We also learn that he followed this up with a larger one for a Masonic Lodge, but at the moment I have no particulars of either.

(1) **He** lived variously in Paddington and Kensington and was married at St. **Pancras**.

(2) Historic Organs of New South Wales (1988)

(3) **BIOS Reporter** XII 2 p. 10; XIII 1 p. 10.

(4) e.g. **BIOS Reporter** I 2 p.9; III 2 pp.8-9; XI 3 p. 10.

(5) Pearce Notes p.89 (6) **Musical Opinion** Oct 1924 p.61

(7) **London's** Proprietary Chapels, Church Family Newspaper 17/10/1919

(X) **Marical Opinion** July 1897 p.673

P) Hcftes and Rimbault **The Organ** 1877 p.541

(10) **Of Construction** 3rd edition p. 154 (11) BLAdd.Mss.28077p.176.

(12) **Dictionary of Organs and Organists** 2nd edition (Mate 1921)