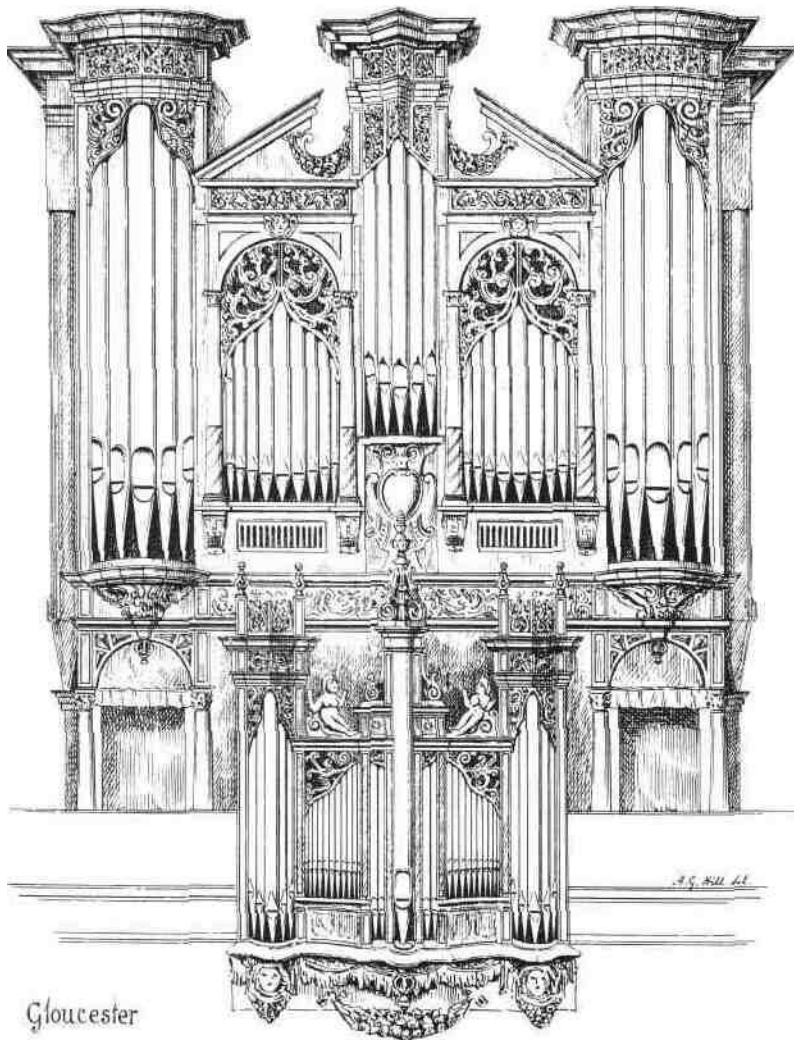


BIOS REPORTER



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Editorial / Conferences

When BIOS was founded, it was the intention that regular meetings of members would take place, usually in the form of day conferences. Not that these meetings were intended to be purely social; it was hoped that each event would have a theme, would give opportunity for discussion, and would have an educational object in mind. As things have worked out, we have held

two or three day-conferences each year, and (with the exception of one year) an annual residential conference. We have tried to hold conferences in different parts of the country so as to attract a wide range of members - though as yet, we have not found our way to Scotland, Wales, or the Home Counties (unless one counts several conferences in London). Inevitably, some conferences have been more successful than others, both in terms of content and support; in general, conferences in the 'provinces' (and residential conferences) have been slightly less well-attended than we had hoped, while London-based events have attracted more substantial support. On the whole we have avoided pure 'organ crawls': not that we haven't listened to particular instruments - very few events *have not* included a recital or demonstration - but we have tried to set the instrument within the context of either the repertoire or its own historical period of organ building.

We hope in the future to keep this educational perspective, and to hold three day-conferences plus a residential conference each year. Probably it would be a good thing if we could advertise events more adequately: We are always glad to welcome non-members to our events, though we feel it is right to charge them more than members of BIOS - perhaps this will encourage them to join the society! It would seem sensible to hold at least one conference each year in London; many members live there, and it is the one place in the country which is relatively accessible to all on a day-return basis.

The Council proposes the following conferences for 1982/5 which we hope will attract maximum support from our members:

Saturday, October 30th, in Cambridge.

Contemporary Organ Building & the Repertoire - Sheila Lawrence and Dr Peter Le Huray will examine two new Cambridge organs in the light of particular areas of the repertoire. The organs are Pembroke College (Mander) and Gonville & Caius (Klais), and the music 17th cent. English and Liszt. Details and form enclosed,

Saturday, March 26th, 1983, at the Royal College of Organists.

Organ, builder, and consultant - following on from our conference on organ building (November, 1980) also held at the R.C.O. we shall examine the role of the organ consultant and the problems and opportunities of the collaboration between builder and consultant,

Saturday. June 18th, 1983, in Peterborough.

A day centred upon the rebuilt Peterborough Cathedral organ, with demonstration of the instrument and talks about its design, rebuilding, and use.

April or July 1983, in Brittany.

In a departure from previous residential conferences we are proposing that next years event should be held in Brittany with the intention of exploring the sights and sounds of the surviving Dallam organs there - perhaps the closest we shall ever come to the English organ of the early 17th century. Preliminary details were circulated with the last *Reporter* including a request to those interested (no commitment at this stage) to notify Stephen Bicknell of which date they would prefer - April or July. It is not too late to reply to this enquiry, but please do so *at once* on the form provided last time.

Finally, we are always glad of suggestions from members for conference events:

Please be in touch with the Secretary if you have any ideas or comments.

Under Threat

1. Edinburgh

On June 15th of this year the congregations of Leith: St Ninian's, and Leith: North and Bonnington (Church of Scotland) united, and St Ninian's Church ceased to be used for worship. The church contains an organ built by Hill in 1897, and as plans for its removal to an other church in the area have now fallen through, there is anxiety about its future. The organ has not been altered, except that the position of the console was changed thirty years ago, and at the same time, a balanced swell pedal was fitted. Clearly the unusual dimensions of the instrument (22 feet wide, 9 feet deep, 25 feet high) will present some problems, but it is earnestly to be hoped that this largely untouched example of the work of one of the best builders of the day, may be preserved intact.

2. North Shields

Earlier this year, the congregation of Holy Trinity, Tynemouth had to leave their church building when it became apparent that structural defects (perhaps originating in War-time bomb damage) rendered the building unsafe. To make the building secure would be an enormous undertaking, and it was finally decided that it should be demolished. The interior of the church is completely stripped of its furnishings - apart from the organ, a distinctly good tracker instrument built by F C Nicholson of Newcastle upon Tyne, c.1870 and hardly altered since.

Like other Nicholson organs of the period, it shows distinct similarities to instruments by T C Lewis, both in the scheme, and in the sound. The choruses have some of Lewis' brightness (the absence of a Great mixture is not as noticeable as one might expect), the chorus reeds are good low-pressure specimens, and the flute and string registers have character. Sadly, beyond a pipe-rack, there is no casing to speak of, and (as with so many instruments) the height may be a problem to prospective purchasers - it is just over 20 feet. Rehousing is urgent, because demolition of the building is expected within weeks.

Redundant Organs

St John the Evangelist, Carl-ton Hill, Brighton.

Probably by Bates with other material from Vauxhall Gardens; rebuilt c.1898 by Morgan & Smith.

Specification

Great 8,8,8,4,4,22/3,2,8 (Clarinet).Swell 8,8,8,8,4,2,8,8.

Pedal 16,16

Action Tracker.

Casework Pine.

Dimensions 12' x 12' x 15' high.

Thorpe Methodist Church, Idle, Bradford.

J.J.Binns 1884. Built as a two manual and pedal. Choir added 1951 by Binns, Fitton & Haley, when the console equipment was replaced.

Specification

Great 16,8,8,8,8,4,4,2²³,2,8.

Swell 16,8,8,8,8,4,III,8,8,8.

Choir 8,8,8,4,8.

Pedal 16,16,8,8.

Action Tubular Pneumatic.

Casework encloses entire organ; highly varnished pitch pine.

Dimensions No details.

Contact G.W.Popple (organist),

St Mark, Bury, Lanes.

Jardine & Co. c.1895, but possibly incorporating earlier material; church shortly to be demolished.

Specification

Great 16,8,8,8,4,4,2,8,4

Swell 16,8,8,8,8,4,2,111,8,8.

Choir 8,8,8,4,8.

Pedal 16,16,8,8.

Action Tracker to the manuals and Pneumatic to the pedals.

Casework No details. Dimensions No details.

Contact S. Ashworth (churchwarden),.....

Wendover Parish Church, Aylesbury, Bucks.

J.W.Walker & Sons, 1869. Dismantled seven years ago for overhaul and never rebuilt. Pedalboard and Great and Pedal roller boards missing. Pipework intact.

Specification

Great 8,8,8,4,4,22/3,2,III.

Swell 16,8,8,4,II,8,8.

Pedal 16.

Action Tracker.

Casework No details. Dimensions No details.

Contact The Revd A. Meynell,

All Saints, Portfield, Chichester.

Small single manual instrument with four stops by the Casson Organ Co. No further details given.

Contact Keys from

Miscellanea (1)

Stephen Bicknell

In the course of attempting to write a history of the organ in Britain before the rise to fame of Smith and Harris, I find that I am accumulating scraps of information which, although not relevant to my own enquiry, are of some interest and ought to be more widely known. This short article will, I hope, be the first of several.

Most readers will know that Father Smith built an organ for Durham Cathedral in 1684-6. On its completion, Smith was not too modest to be able to claim that it was 'so good and sound mad as anny is in the holl worrelt'. He also remarked that his instrument had 'quarter nots, that no organ has but yours and in the Temply that I made', (1) Of this instrument, and its 'quarter nots' more anon. But for now, let us look at the little known rival proposal of Renatus Harris; it was a wasted effort, for by the time it arrived in Durham, the agreement with Smith had already been made.

'Mr Dean

I formerly understood by my ffather that he was in great probality (sic) of haveing the honour to serve your Worship and the Chapter about making a new organ for your Cathedral, but latly I understand you have been dissuaided from him and importun'd to imploy an other who doubtless is a very good artist, But undrstanding from my Lord of St David's ELect (by whose order I send the in clos'd model and proposalls) that no a greement yet is made w'nichhath occasion'd me to implore yor favor in my poore aged ffathers behaife being assur'd he would manifest his thanks by his performance, who I know would be Prov'd as well as glad of the advantage to crowne his experience and labour in making his last masterpiece in so ancient and noble a Ctiaedral (sic) and in the servis of such honorable and reverend masters, And that it may not be obiected because of his age the hasard of his liveing to finish so considerable a work I humbly offer to become his partner and assistant in it and to make good all he shall undertake in your servis, What more I have to desire is that your worship will be pleas'd after you have perus'd these proposalls and draft and compar'd them with Mr Smith's proposalls and moddel not to shew them to our disadvantage, Sr haveing so much trespas'd on your goodness and patience I beg leave to subscribe my seife Reverend Sr your most dutiful servant

Renatus Harris from Snowaill

30th Aug 83 ' (2)

Renatus had first joined hands in business with his father, Thomas in 1674: they appear together in a maintenance agreement at Gloucester Cathedral in that year.(5) This letter shows that by 1685 Thomas Harris was not in the best of health, and it is normally assumed that he died in 1685 or thereabouts. His failing abilities may in part explain why Father Smith was able to gain such a strong foothold in England in the crucial decade 1680-90. However, in this respect the Harris proposal suggests that they may have lost some headway through sheer conservatism:

'Proposalls humbly offered to the Reverend Dean and Chapter by Eenatus Harris of London Organ Maker in behaife of his ffather Thomas Harris and of him seife, for the erecting a new double organ in the Cathedrall of Durham, wch. for matter and form shall exceed any that yet hath been made in England. And we the above menshon'd Thomas and Eenatus for the sume and consideration of six hundred and seventy pounds and the old organ, will make one intier new Great Organ according to the moddel and form of the inclos'd draft wch. shall have a double front and a suitable chair organ, both instruments consisting of these following stops and quantety's of work (viz)

'In the Great Organ two Open Diapasons of good fine mettall, one standing in the East front of the Case and the other shewing in the West, in each of which diapasons as in all other single stops the number of fifty three pipes, beginning att double Ga-mutt and passing gradually up to C-sol-fa in Alt, In each of wch. diapasons as also in any other stop's wch. shall be bought in to the front there shall not either in view or within be one or any false pipes for shew or stop'd pipe or pipes to a peare or speake instead of an open pipe, but

all the stop's that ought to be open shall be soe and speake in its proper and open tone, number of pipes in

The two open Diapasons are	106
3ly one Principall of good mettall in number of pipes	053
4ly one good sound well season'd stop'd Diapason of Wood number	053
5ly one Great Twelfth of good mettall	053
6ly one fifteenth of good mettall number	053
7ly one Tiers of good mettall	053
8ly one flageolet stop of good mettall	053
9ly one furniture of 3 rank's mettall number of pipes in it	159
10ly one double mixture of 2 ranks mettall in number	106
11ly one Cornetts of 5 ranks all of metall speaking intierly of its seife without being mix'd with any other stop's to healp it out in number	120
and 12ly one natural Vox humain wch. stop when play'd on in the Basses will a peare like a mans natural voice and in the middle and upper parts like Women and boys singing in number	<u>053</u>
number of pipes in ye Great Organ	862
In the Chaire Organ one Principal of mettall in front number	053
2ly one Stop'd Diapason of good season'd sound wood in number	053
3ly one flute of good and season'd wood in number	053
4ly One fifteenth of good mettall in number	053
5ly One furniture of two ranks of good mettall in number	<u>106</u>
number of pipes in all	1180

If the Vox humain be left out fifty pounds will be bated in .the price

And if the Cornett forty pounds more
by me Renatus Harris
At London 28th Aug 1683 '(4)

The 'laoddel' or 'draft' has not survived. The old organ which Harris proposed to take in part payment was built by George Dallam in 1662: no details survive. (5) Harris's organ was to cost £30 less than Smith's; the latter's proposal included 54 note compass from FF, but the number of stops was the same.

The Harris scheme has mutations and mixtures 'a la francaise'; but why no reeds apart from the optional Vox Humana? Surely it was the Harrises who had the skill in this field, and who pressed for more reeds to be included in the competing Temple organs? (6) Perhaps they assumed that England's cathedrals were not yet ready for the brash modernity of a rank of Trumpets, or simply doubted that such stops could be adequately maintained at a distance of 300 miles from London.

Notes:

1. Durham Cath. Misc. Charters 5990* 2. *ibid.* 5990*h verso •
3. M. Gillingham in 'Gloucester Cathedral Organ' (1971) p.9
4. 5990*h recto
5. Durham Chapter Acts 1660-88 p.43 6. Freeman & Rowntree 'Father Smith' p.24

Canon Paget celebrates

B B Edmonds

Several members of BIOS were present at Ely Cathedral on Tuesday 8th June to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Ordination of Canon Gordon Paget as priest.

At the invitation of the Dean and Chapter, he celebrated High Mass at the high altar at which he had been ordained in 1922. The Bishop of Ely presided, the Dean preached, and the Deacon and Subdeacon were clergy who had been connected with Canon Paget in their choirboy days. A considerable number of friends from all over the country gathered for the service, and met over refreshments afterwards. The 1662 service (with customary modifications) was sung to plainsong, and Dr Wills accompanied, also playing Bach *Schmucke Dich*, V. Williams 'Lovely', and Vierne's *Carillon de Westminster*. Canon Paget's activities in the organ world are well known; his services to church music include periods as Minor Canon of Norwich and Precentor of Peterborough. It has been said that at any special 'do' at a cathedral you would be almost certain to see him. We offer Canon Paget thanks for many kindnesses, and good wishes for the future.

English Organ Archive

Dr Michael Sayer

The microfilming of the Archive collection is nearly complete, and this, in spite of some staffing changes in the University Library at Keele, gives an opportunity to improve slightly the research service available to BIOS members.

The following arrangements apply from July 1982:

- a) All correspondence with the Hon. Archivist should now be addressed to:-Dr Michael Sayer,
- b) Archive microfilms may be used in the University Library, Keele, without appointment, at any time when the Library is open. In general this means 9.30 am. to 5.00 pm, and to 9 pm. on certain days during Term; to confirm opening times, please telephone Keele University (0782 621111) and ask for the Library archives department. On arrival at the Library, please sign the visitors' book at the reception desk and then contact the archives staff. Archives on microfilm will include those of Hill (1838-1916), Norman & Beard (1879-1916), and Gray & Davison (from 1821). The RCO's Sperling books and the Shapley index of organs in Britain are also on microfilm at Keele.
- c) The handling of books and drawings kept in the Archives strong-room is still by appointment with the Hon. Archivist, but because of University staff reductions we must ask for ample warning. It may also become necessary to make a charge towards the expenses of part-time staff who would not otherwise be in the University on the day requested.

Please don't just turn up at Keele expecting access to the strong-room; there may be nobody present who knows where the Archive material is, or how it is arranged. Otherwise the Archive service remains as before and indexing the collection continues at a steady rate. We are grateful to the British Library for the generous grant that has made this microfilming project possible in a financially difficult time for the University.

Dear Sir....

I must express thanks to Herbert Norman, Frank Mitchell, and Nicholas Thistlethwaite for their letters to the *Reporter* arising out of my *Comments on Pipe Measurements*. I would like to make a few brief points:

1) Frank Mitchell's reference to 'bellying' is a useful reminder that there are many factors to be borne in mind when playing around with pipe scales. I have found, so far, the difference between a 'top of pipe' reading and a 'mid-pipe' reading to be less than 1%; I prefer to measure a pipe in its middle, notwithstanding belly, as pipe tops do suffer a very significant amount of distortion.

2) A diameter measurement (e.g. by calipers) multiplied by .142 *accentuates* any errors in measurement; a circumference measurement (e.g., by scale strip) divided by 3.142 *dimishes* any errors. To re-state Frank Mitchell's comment: scale strips divided by 3.142 "is no problem in these days of pocket calculators".

3) Imperial measurements are a painful nuisance on a pocket calculator: metrics are simple. Final solutions can easily be converted to Imperial for comparison with original documents, etc.

4) In Imperial measurements there is a real danger of rounding off to the nearest 1/15th (or even nearest 1/8th) of an inch; metrics, at worst, get rounded off to the nearest 0.5mm (less than 1/32nd of an inch).

5) I have always found that near-inaccessible pipes are easier to measure with a scale strip threaded round the pipe, or slipped over the top, than with calipers. How many bass pipes have cleanly rounded pipe tops to measure?

6) Nicholas Thistlethwaite has put his finger on an assumption which perhaps needed clarifying viz. gamut S, when Hopkins writes about basic scale dimensions, means 5 1/3-ft G. You run into absurdities if this is not understood.

I hope to have the time to demonstrate the difference between the results of diameter measuring and circumference measuring (and also discuss the various systems of information display) at the Keele conference.

David C. Wickens

Cheadle

The Loosmores

Betty Matthews

Ever since I wrote in *The Organ* No 214 about the Loosmores and Hartland Church, Devon, I have been trying unsuccessfully to get to Barnstaple. My interest stemmed from the fact that Samuel Loosmore was fetched from that place in 1633/4 to repair the Hartland organ and in the following year his son John started a series of visits, at one point bringing his 'tooles'. It seemed obvious that they lived in Barnstaple or at least had a workshop there.

I was in Exeter recently, and although I had only an hour to spare I was able to find in the Library print-transcriptions of the Barnstaple Parish Registers.

In sixty minutes I unearthed the following information. Under 'baptisms' which must be emphasised does not mean birth, I found:-

1613 Precilla daughter of Samuëll Loosmore baptised 29 June.

1616 John son of Samuëll Loosmore baptised 25 August.

1619 George son of Samuëll Loosmore baptised 12 September.

1622 Amey daughter of Samuel Lusmore baptised 13 November.

1625 Samuëll son of Samuëll Lusmore baptised 4 September.

By an extremely successful method of family planning, Samuel Loosmore appears to have kept his children tidily separated by three years, very unusual at this period and for long afterwards. Priscilla died and was buried on 13 July 1615 and a nameless daughter probably Amey, on 4 September 1652. There are no other families of this name, and no more baptisms up to 163?. There are no marriages between 1600 and 1613. There are no baptisms of any Loosmores from 1591 to 1597 when Samuel might have been mentioned. These were the only periods I was able to cover in the time.

In 1640 however we come across Amey, daughter of John Lusmore, baptised 11 October, and in the final minutes, and by a stroke of luck, I found the previous year that on 24 November John Lusmore and Joan Blackwell were married in the church. Amey unfortunately died and was buried on 13 December, barely two months after her baptism. No doubt she was called after John's sister who died in 1632 aged about ten.

Here my time ran out, but from this information we are able to deduce several facts. Firstly that Loosmore can be spelt in a variety of ways. My own spelling is one I use because it is the way the name is written in the Act Books of Exeter Cathedral and on John's tombstone, although in gilt letters on the organ case it is spelt 'Loosmore'. I think this is probably not original, but have no proof. The tombstone incidentally, has been moved from its position on the south side of the organ to the north choir aisle.

We learn that Samuel probably worked in Barnstaple from at least 1613 and that if he was born there it was earlier than 1591. His wife came from some other parish and we do not know her name - possibly Amey or Priscilla. George does not seem old enough to have been the organist of Jesus College, Cambridge in 1635, although he is said to have been born in Devon...

I searched the Barnstaple baptisms from 1600, but it is of course possible that Samuel had other children in other places. John's birth can be put at 1614 as he died '8 April 1681 aged 67, about two years old when brought for baptism.

It is often said that he was born in Bishops Nympton, but I have not seen the registers which may, of course, give the names of earlier children.

Normally at this period the eldest son would take his father's name and as Samuel was the last born perhaps there was another Samuel who died, as there may well have been a Henry who was older than Priscilla and was the organist of King's College, Cambridge from 1627. He is said to be the brother of George; if so, they were, perhaps sons of Samuel Loosmore's brother, and the 'Cambridge' George was not that George baptised in 1619 at Barnstaple.

The small size of Samuel's family and the fact that childbearing normally lasted for about twenty years rather than only twelve as in this case. Bakes ;ne think that he did indeed come from elsewhere and that there are more children than are to be found in the Barnstaple registers

.
For the amount of information produced I consider that this was an hour well spent!

Notes and Queries

B B Edmonds

Do writers always check over what they have written to see that it really conveys what they intended? I have not yet lived down my diocesan circular which stated that "the U.B.C. at X have an excellent old Bishop for disposal", and cracks about mitred reeds were unrestrained, as well as suggestions that they await the result of the vote on Covenanting. Now I have received a note that organs by Messrs Y at two churches in Essex and Kent respectively 'both had a Discus blower'. Where would it have been - half way between? Of course it is quite obvious what was really meant, each had a blower, or both had blowers; but such statements are not always so readily de-codable.

For example, I am told elsewhere that 'both manuals have a battery of heavy-wind reeds'. On the face of it, one battery between them. But somehow I doubt whether that was meant. One cannot tell now, for it was blitzed. No tears for the 'battery', but a plea for accurate language; after all, it could have been something important; Nor should one risk the attentions of a solicitor, as the writer of this gem did: 'After being utterly useless for many years, Mr W has at last put our organ in good order'.

Argent is enquired about, there were two of him, father and son apparently; son was definitely Humphrey, father almost certainly was too. The first reference I find to them is in 1760, (1) but I have not yet been able to check what that tells us. the father died in Cambridge in 1795, and perhaps by then the business was situated there. In earlier days he was in Colchester, where in 1774 he advertised (2) an organ for sale 'to be seen at Mr Argent's, near the King's Mead'.

Possibly this might have been the time of moving to Cambridge, for shortly after this date they are to be found working there; and from 1779 to at least 1812 Junior was paid £7 per annum for 'playing and tuning' the organ at Emmanuel College. (5)

Argent built a new organ in 1760 for a church in Bury St Edmunds; in 1765 he made an organ for Buxhall which later stood in Shetland, where was also the famous Bryceson barrel organ of 1810. The Bryceson remains, but the 'Argent Colchester Fecit' disappeared at about the time of the outbreak of the Hitler war. It had 7 stops and a nag's-head swell; Langwill & Boston (4) say it was a converted barrel organ and had G compass. Repairs were done at Bungay; and in 1774 an organ was made for a private house at West Mailing, which, after sojourning at Ditton Court and Ditton Church may now be seen at Rochester Cathedral. (5)

Lightwood (6) speaks of repairs for 6 guineas in 1705i possibly at Maidstone; apart from this all references after 1774 are to the Cambridge area. Occasional repairs were done at Trinity College, but it is at St John's College where we learn most about the work done. 16 May 1777. 'Agreed that Mr Argent be employed to repair and clean the organ according to the estimate he has given in'. 9 June 1777. 'Agreed that proper music books be purchased for the use of the chapel, and that the pitch of the organ be altered under the direction of £Mr Argent'. 25 March 1778. 'Agreed that Mr Argent's bill of £75-10.10 for repairing the organ, and tuning it to concert pitch be made up to £80, in consideration of the unexpected trouble he has had with it'. 7

At St Neots Argent received in 1782 '10 guineas for repairs to ye organ'. The organ at St Michael, Cambridge, being rather dilapidated was repaired by Argent in 1800. (8) We have already mentioned his Emmanuel College post from 1779 onwards, and perhaps the date of his death may be indicated by

his tunings at Great St Mary's which extended from 1778 to 1829, when he was succeeded by Ling of Cambridge. Any further information would be welcome.

Unusually, there have been numerous replies received recently, several about the 'antheme stop'. Paul Hale has been studying the documents, and by way of photo-copies has been able to give much attention to details. He thinks that one major clue is in the document of 10 June 1672, (9) where the organist, William King, gives 'Account of wt is wanting in ye organ, & wt is to be mended'.

"One of his requirements" says Paul Hale "is 'the fflute or singing stoppe to be wholly voic't & tun'd throughout'. I have always thought that this must refer to the antheme stop, and indeed implies a stop of peculiar construction that it should need such voicing attention so soon after its construction. Looking at the phrase 'in vids', as it appears at first to be, proves interesting as one compares the letters with other words in Dallam's estimate. ... Dallam writes 'w', 'v', and 'u' at times virtually identically, all looking like a strong 'v'; 'i' is undoubtedly 'i'; 'd' is definitely 'd' - it is formed in a peculiar way like all the other 'd's on the page, and unlike any other letter; 's' is, I believe, not 's' at all - quite unlike any other 's' on the page, it is however identical with the 'e' in 'recorder', and is joined to the 'd' in the same way. So we have the word vide, uide or wide, of which 'wide' is the only one which makes sense."

"When we put these facts together with the listing of 'timber for ... the antheme stop?' we perhaps arrive at a stop which was a wide-scaled wooden flute ... of so pure a tone, as its scale implies, that it was supposed not to accompany singing, but to suggest the sound of the voice. Dallam's Great specification lists a 'flute de alman', so it would certainly appear that he was experimenting with more exotic flutes than mere Bourdons. Certainly an experimental wide-scaled wooden flute might not have spoken well, nor remained long in tune, which would explain William King's demands."

Paul would be interested in comments. It seems to me that he has carried out an important bit of original research and probably arrived at the most likely answer. Nothing new under the sun! What would Dallam have thought of more modern examples of such stops, and on heavy wind too? They reached their apotheosis in the 'Cinema Organ', and someone enquires which was the first organ specifically made for the job, as distinct from transplanted Snetzlers and equally unsuitable migrants.

It is always risky to claim a 'first' as such claims are usually wrong. Lesly Bayly in his 1957 'Scrapbook 1900-1910' writes: 'In 1908 appeared the first cinema organ. The orchestra at the Tamworth Picture Palace having gone on strike a Compton organ was installed which would also play a piano from its keyboard and would take pianola rolls.' Confirmation was sought from Comptons and they replied that the instrument was made when Gompton was at Measham, 'Jimmy' Taylor helped to make it, and played it for a time. Mr Hawtin remembered that the basis was a piano already fitted with a player, which was electrified and made to play 3 or 4 ranks of organ pipes controlled by stop keys.

'As you can see, it was an organ of sorts; it could be played from a roll, it was in a Cinema and used for accompanying films, it was built by John Compton in 1908. • Unless there are other claims, I think it must have been one of the earliest, if not the earliest organ to be built specifically for a "picture house".

As regards the great storm reported last time, I can but report what my source said; and like several other people, I cannot think how the font managed to act as stated in Great St Mary's. A word must have been misplaced or misunderstood by the writer. But the gist is there.

- 1) Norwich Mercury 16/8/1760. 2) Ipswich Journal 6/3/1774.
- 3) Emmanuel College Magazine, Lent 1907. 4) Church and Chamber Barrel Organs 1970.
- 5) Wilson English Chamber Organ 1968. 6) ME notes.
- 7) Thomas Baker History of the College of St John ... Cambridge, edited J.S.Vayor 1869. II 1084.
- 8) A Description of some of the Parish Churches of Cambridge Nichols Son S; Bentley c.1810).
- 9) Organ IX 153.

The English reader ... may well heave a sigh of regret. If just one organ by Father Smith, Renatus Harris, or the later Dallams had survived in its original state, what might be done with it now for the revival of the musical tradition of Purcell, Blow and Croft; it is too late. It never occurred to anyone installing a new Cathedral organ to put the old one aside in a disused transept as a memorial of its era. There may still be found specimens of comparatively untouched early work in remote parish churches. Let parsons and churchwardens pause and consider before they allow enthusiastic organists and enterprising builders to scrap them for the up-to-date gift of a generous patron.

'The Times' in a book review, 9 June 1934. B.B.E. adds; Wisdom is not the sole prerogative of the present age!