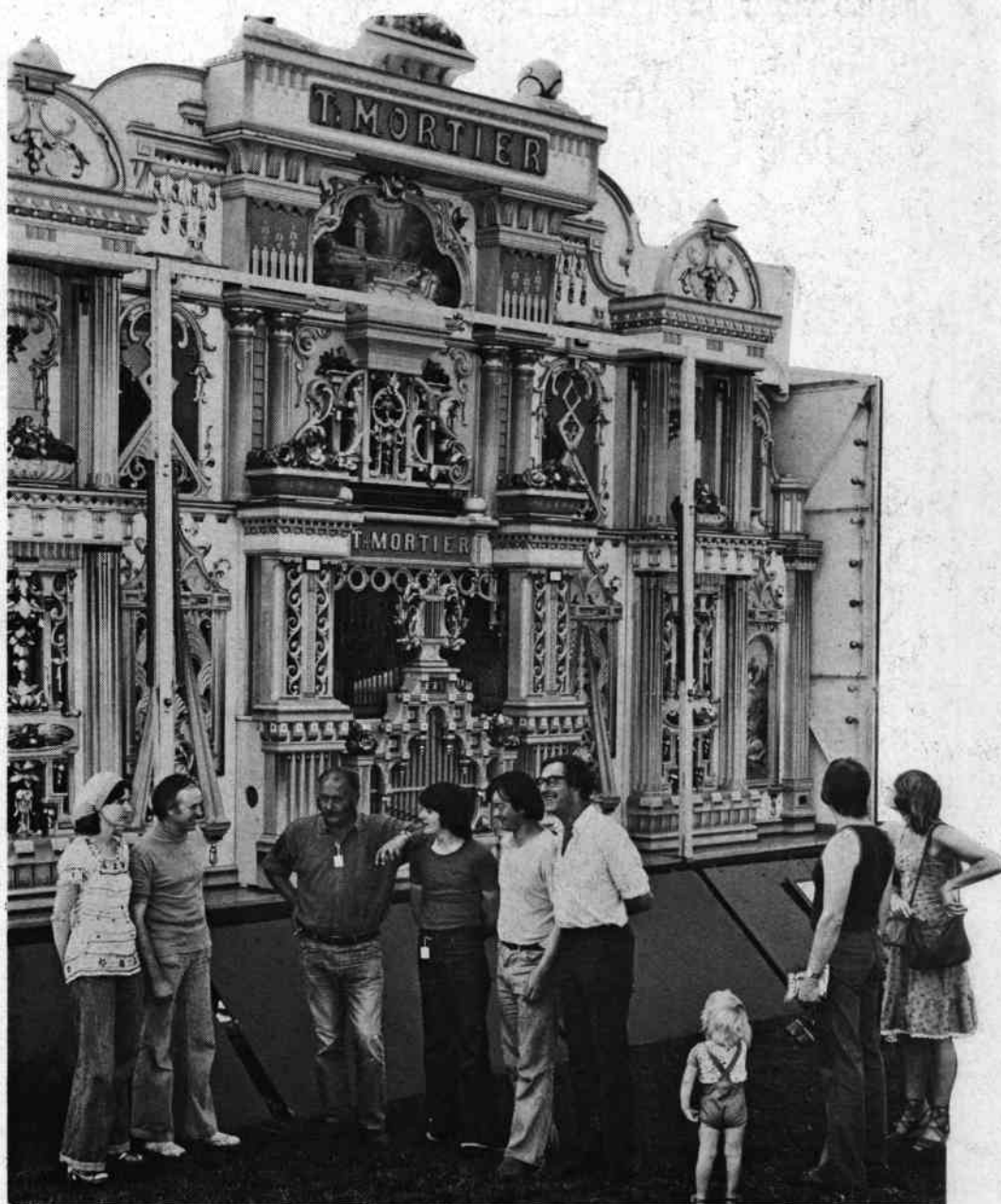


# THE MUSIC BOX

an international magazine of mechanical music

THE JOURNAL OF THE MUSICAL BOX SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN

Volume 10 Number 2 Summer 1981



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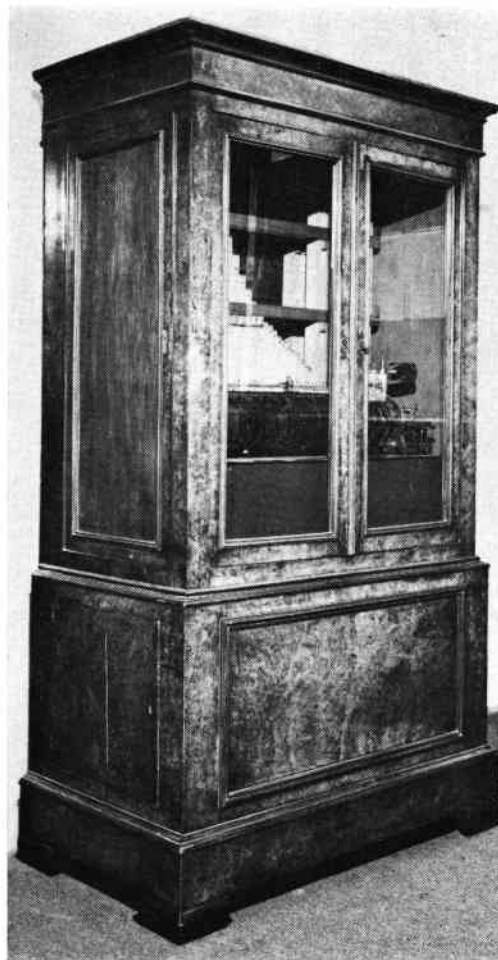
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# THE MUSIC BOX

an international magazine of mechanical music

THE JOURNAL OF THE MUSICAL BOX SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN

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Bill Nevard, The Armoury, West Gergholt, Colchester, Essex.

## Photographs

A CONTRIBUTOR sends a letter, an article, and photographs in one envelope to the Editor. Quite rightly he expects his photographs back.

The Editor extracts the letter and puts in on the IN file. The article and photographs go to the Printers. Here, the article goes to the letterpress or litho department, and the photos go to the firm who make the blocks. Letter, article and photographs are now in 3 different places.

Sometimes the Editor receives galley proofs of the article first, sometimes he receives the proof pictures of the blocks first. He therefore receives back from the printers the article and photographs at different times.

Most professional writers, in their own interests, write their name and address on the back of all pictures sent to Editors. They also send a s.a.e. I do this myself when I send work to a publisher or Editor. This makes life easier for the Editorial staff.

You don't HAVE to mark all your pictures, and you don't HAVE to enclose a s.a.e. for their return. I will do my solo best to see that all material is returned.

But, in my own interests I name all my material. You may now consider that it is in your interest to mark all your material.

On my desk are TWENTY SEVEN photographs belonging to members of MBSGB. Not ONE picture bears a name and address on the back. I have to laboriously sort them out.

You see what I mean?

## CONTENTS

PLEA FROM THE COMMITTEE ... ..	50	MORTIER, LITTLE GIRL, GARDEN OF SLEEP ...	71
MARK HAMBURG and MECHANICAL MUSIC Arthur W J G Ord-Hume	51	J E T CLARK MANUSCRIPT ORIGINAL ... ..	72
MUSICAL BOX ODDMENTS H A V Bulleid	56	Sent in by Alan Ridsdill	
INTRODUCTION TO ROBIN TIMMS ... ..	58	THE FERNIHOUGH COLLECTION ... ..	73
ARRANGING MUSIC FOR POLYPHON Robin Timms	59	Sent in by H A V Bulleid	
FORTHCOMING EVENTS ... ..	61	NEW MEMBERS ... ..	81
JOHN POWELL WRITES ... ..	62	ALAN and DAPHNE WYATT on TV ... ..	82
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR ... ..	63	ANDERSSON'S TABLE ORGAN ... ..	85
R TIMMS; PICTURES and REFERENCE ... ..	65	Bill Lindwall	
		SOCIETY AFFAIRS (incl. "DE KLUISBERG") ...	89
		CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS ... ..	96

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# PLEA FROM THE COMMITTEE

## PLEASE THINK BEFORE YOU COMPLAIN

### Committee Membership

ONE of the doubtful privileges of being elected to the Committee of the Musical Box Society of Great Britain is that one soon realises the difficulties and problems in running and administering a Society of our size with voluntary help.

Many of those who criticise the actions of Committee and, with the best intentions, make helpful suggestions have obviously not seriously thought about the work involved in implementing their proposals.

### Membership Cards

One suggestion, and a very excellent one, is that this Society should issue Membership Cards and that these cards should be forwarded to the members upon receipt of their subscriptions. Many Societies do this, and the majority of our members would surely appreciate this courtesy. However, what would it cost and who would do it?

The last occasion when we posted something to every member, apart from the Journal, was when we mailed the advices and agenda of the 1980 Annual General Meeting. The cost of the postage alone was £143.10p. Since then, the cost of postage has increased considerably, there would be the additional cost of the cards themselves and the envelopes. To pay the actual costs we should either have to raise subscriptions or curtail one or other of the services already offered to members as our tight budgeting has no hidden surplus to cover such additional expenditure.

### Postage

The labour of making out over 1,000 cards, addressing over 1,000 envelopes and posting them with the correct postage all over the world would be prodigious. There is only one person who could effectively do it, namely the Subscriptions Secretary, who already voluntarily undertakes a tremendous burden of work and cannot reasonably be expected to do more.

### Choice of Hotels

Another constant cause for complaint is the registration fees charged for our meetings, it frequently, but erroneously, being supposed that it is the Committee's choice of first-class hotels that results in a high registration fee, indeed some of the members seem to believe there should be no registration fee at all.



JON GRESHAM

President  
and  
Chairman of the Committee



### No Spartans

Arthur W J G Ord-Hume, on page 175 of Volume 8, the Christmas 1977 issue of our Journal, admirably summarised many of the factors influencing the Committee's choice. However, mindful of a persistent demand from some of the membership for more economic facilities, in arranging the accommodation for the Leeds Barrel Organ Festival in September last year, an outstanding bargain was offered at a University Hall of Residence. The membership were not attracted by these facilities, the attendance being very disappointing and several who attended the function chose to make alternative accommodation arrangements, a far higher proportion than those who seek cheaper accommodation when our functions are being held in first-class hotels. The Committee is therefore forced to conclude that those who call for cheap but spartan accommodation are in the minority.

### Meeting fees

But the charges levied on the Society for the hire of rooms and the provision of coffee and tea are not the only expenses to be met by the registration fee. It is a principle, frequently explained in the past, that our meetings must be self-supporting and not a charge on our general funds, in other words all the meeting expenses must be met by those attending the meeting. It would be unfair to fund the expenses of meetings in the United Kingdom out of the subscriptions of our overseas members, who are unable to attend them.

### Coffee and Tea

One of the costs involved in organising a meeting is that of posting a notice of the meeting to all our European members. The cost of mailing such a notice is approximately £100 therefore if fifty people attend that meeting the registration fee must include a charge of £2 on each registrant merely to cover the cost of issuing the notices. In other words, if our room and refreshments were provided absolutely free, we should still have to charge a registration fee of £2.

Thus, those who claim that a registration fee of £4 means that they are being charged £2 for their morning coffee and £2 for their afternoon tea are talking arrant nonsense.

### Use of the Journal

The registration fee, whatever it is, must be a minor expense compared with the others involved in attending a meeting, like travelling expenses and, frequently, overnight expenses so the Committee find it hard to believe that asking these modest amounts reduces attendances.

In order to contain our costs it has been proposed that when possible notices of meetings will be included in the Journal, or posted with it, rather than being sent as a separate mailing. No doubt many members will complain that they have not received a separate notice of the meetings but your Committee proposes taking this action in an attempt to contain costs.

### Help required

In any Society there are always two small minority groups, those that do the voluntary work and another that complains about the way the work is done — which they would never do themselves. Constructive criticism is always welcome, but would that those who made suggestions thought for a moment of the work and expense involved in carrying out some of their suggestions.

# Mark Hambourg & Mechanical Contrivances

Arthur W J G Ord-Hume

THE Russian pianist Mark Hambourg was one of the most distinguished keyboard performers of an age when distinguished pianists proliferated.

Born at Bogutchar on the first day of June in 1879, the infant Hambourg was destined to be one of that now-rare breed of circus-type performing artists—the child prodigy. He was playing with dexterity and being patted on the head by well-meaning ladies from a very early age.

However, what concerns us here is his involvement with mechanical music, in particular as he did cut piano rolls and also, most usefully, he left behind him what appears to have been a large-ly autobiographical biography, although it is doubtful if he himself actually wrote it despite the presence of his name upon the title page. This was published in 1931.

It was in 1899 that he came to London to stay in Upper Bedford Place. Here he began his formal musical training, later completed in Vienna. His love for London, however, never waned and it was later to be his permanent home, number 27 Cumberland Terrace in Regent's Park becoming his base.

The first mention of a piano-playing device comes as early as 1898 when he went to America and stayed at the Hotel Martin, forerunner of the Cafe Martin.

"One of my fellow guests in the Hotel Martin was Anna Held, the musical comedy actress, reputed to have the finest bare back in the world. She complained to the manager that I started practising too early in the morning, and disturbed her slumbers. As her habit was to stay up all night giving parties and dancing in her apartment which certainly disturbed me, I was indignant at her daring to complain of my noise. But the creature hired a pianola and made it play exactly the same pieces of music that I was working at, and with devilish ingenuity she would put on this wretched instrument whenever I started to practise.

This nearly drove me distracted, and I was perforce obliged to stop playing. Eventually, however, through the good offices of Mr Martin, we made a truce with each other, and I agreed not to start so early, and she not to remain so late."

The merits of the reproducing piano are highlighted, however, in Hambourg's tale of the Scottish-born pianist Eugen d'Albert whose parents were French. D'Albert was a pupil of Liszt with whom he studied at Weimar and made his London debut in 1880. Hambourg admired his playing, in particular his interpretation of Beethoven.

"Still, d'Albert with all his immense qualities was an inaccurate performer, and he also lacked the personal romance which stimulates public interest and produces phenomenal reputations. Perhaps this was the reason why he never had the success in England which his extraordinary talent merited."

D'Albert married the famed reproducing roll pianist, Teresa Carreño, in 1892. A South American by birth, she had been D'Albert's pupil and remained his wife until their divorce in 1895. Hambourg wrote in his memoirs:

"I heard the two of them give a recital, in which each played a sonata on their own, and I preferred her performance to his."

And yet D'Albert became a fine performer on Ampico, no doubt living proof in perforated paper of the prowess and ability of the roll editors and musical correctors!

Hambourg indeed had something to say on the sheer technical correctness of the player. In pondering on styles of piano execution and exactness, he said:

"Perhaps accuracy of notes is more marked in the efficient pianist of today, because it is held in the highest esteem as a quality. What the Germans call 'American' playing, which implies exactitude and high speed, excites much admiration amongst our present concert public. The taste for it has arisen through the advent of music machines, with their impeccable

execution, which creates a demand for absolute exactitude even in the human music-maker. But this is only a fashion due to particular conditions, and does not prove any genuinely higher standard of general proficiency in pianism."

Although he travelled widely, taking his two concert pianos around the world with him, Hambourg settled upon London as his home and it was here that he met and passed many a musical hour with friends from all over Europe, pianists and otherwise. In the early years of this century, he could usually be found in the old Gambrinus in Regent Street drinking a gallon of the Pilsener beer for which older readers will recall this long-defunct house was renowned. Here among the regular patrons he would meet Hans Richter, Frank Bridge and others. A friend with whom he had a good deal of correspondence was Josef Holbrooke. Croydon-born Holbrooke is best remembered today for three rather insignificant but amusing sets of variations—"Three Blind Mice", "The Girl I Left Behind Me", and "Auld Lang Syne"—yet he also composed some very fine settings of poetry and a deal of orchestral music. He was also fond of writing abusive postcards to those dramatic critics who wrote less than charitable things about his music and on one celebrated occasion (March, 1917) he did not turn up at a Bournemouth concert at which he was to play some of his own piano music because, according to impresario Dan Godfrey, "his name had not been printed in big enough type on the posters" (see some interesting correspondence on this in *Musical Times* for 28 April, and 2 and 16 June, 1917).

Holbrooke, whose catalogues includes an early symphony for saxophone, died largely forgotten in 1958, embittered and eccentric to the last. But he did leave behind some Duo-Art rolls. He wrote to Hambourg, unfortunately omitting the year but seemingly dating from around 1910, the following:

Motor Club  
Coventry St,  
W  
Feb 12

Dear Hambourg  
Before I returned from New York I played 20 of my piano pieces into the new Duo-Art Pianola — *because* they said they never heard any British piano music at any of the recitals. Even Grainger only plays his own trifles! Now I'll wager you have none in your 4 recitals coming? Why is it? You used to play one or some of my Etudes magnificently — but like all our pianists — you only (?) once or twice. It is a pity.

Sincerely yours,  
Holbrooke

During the early 1900s, Hambourg used to offer a prize for the best piano composition submitted to him. His journal relates that he finally had to abandon this cause "because one of the composers I had to deal with was so sensitive. He wrote at such colossal length that his work, to be at all manageable at a miscellaneous pianoforte recital, such as mine, had to be cut. This he could not tolerate at all . . ." One wonders whether

that man was the luckless Holbrooke!

Significantly, none of Holbrooke's 20 pieces appear in the American 1927 Duo-Art catalogue, although the London one of 1932 — the last full one to be issued — lists some nine rolls of his music. Three titles also exist in the 1910 Themodist and Metrostyle Pianola Catalogue, the number rising to seven in subsequent issues through to the mid 1920s.

When in New York, Hambourg used to lunch at Pagari's restaurant just off Fifth Avenue with his friend, the youthful Bernard Neuer who was later to become managing director of the American Piano Company — Ampico.

Between pianist activities and travelling, Mark Hambourg found time to comment on a wide variety of subjects, one of them being the Low Countries' penchant for bells. He wrote:

"In 1907, just before my marriage, I toured Holland for the first time and found the Dutch musical public critical and undemonstrative. They must be fond of music as, even at the provincial towns where I stayed, I was kept awake most nights by the playing of the carillons from

the tower of the Town Hall or Church. In one town especially that infernal invention of bells would play every quarter of an hour throughout the nights, at least so it seemed to me, and it was the Russian folk song, "Krassnii Sarafan", which generally disturbed my slumbers. Why the people found this tune so soothing during the night hours I never discovered; I know I thought it exasperating."

He was especially critical of the demands made by both the wireless and the gramophone but not short-sighted that he could not see that automatic instruments possessed some merits as far as the composer was concerned.

"Distinguished composers have begun to write works entirely for the mechanical instruments. Saint-Saëns, for instance, wrote one or two compositions for the Aeolian automatic organ where he doubtless found a wider scope for new combinations of harmonies than the limitations of the hand-played instruments allowed. Stravinsky has produced works for the "Pleyela", a French mechanical piano, which are daring in conception if not harmoniously beautiful. Com-



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binations' have also been tried with a human orchestra and a mechanically played piano. I remember Mikisch conducting at a concert of this kind, where he directed the orchestra and the pianola played the solo part of a concerto. This performance took place at the Queen's Hall, and I fancy the result was adequate, but not one which took the public fancy."

Mark Hambourg's memoirs comment extensively on the implications of mechanical reproduction.

"People who dislike machines in any form", he writes, "declare that great music loses its message when reproduced mechanically." One feels that he would wish to identify himself with this group of non-mechanists as he continues:

"Those who dislike machines assert that anything is better if done by hand. No one will deny that in the trade-world hand-made articles are still superior and more durable than machine-made ones. Hand-made clothes are better than machine-sewn ones, hand-washed clothes are certainly to be preferred to those who brave the perils of the steam laundry. Yet steam laundries and machine-made clothes have come to stay and are advantageous to mankind; probably only cranks would demand their abolition. Whether an indifferent human orchestra is preferable to a mechanical one is a debatable point. In a theatre, for instance, what can the verdict be? I have noticed one curious fact about machine-made music in the theatre, and that is that a mechanical orchestra is much more difficult to listen to than a human one. It may play the most glorious music, the *Liebestod* from *Tristan and Isolde*, for instance, or Beethoven's *Leonora Overture No 3*, but as likely as not, people will talk on right through the piece without being aware at all of what is being played. Whereas, however ineptly a human orchestra played, a musician's attention would at once be arrested by its presenting one of the masterpieces of music.

"I find pianolas difficult to listen to, though I appreciate the pleasure they give to enthusiasts who love the illusion that they are really playing the piano admirably on their own initiative by tramping their feet up and down. But the reason it is tantalizing for a musician to listen

to a pianola for long is because of its precision, its unerring correctness. This deadly accuracy, so foreign to the frailty of mere man, imparts an atmosphere of artificiality to all music made by electrical machines. This is so much the case that some artists, when playing for them, ask to have any mistakes they happen to make during the performance left on the reproducing roll, so that the results may appear more natural. Usually, when a performer plays for recording on the perforated rolls of a pianola the procedure is for an operator to sit like a regular *Beckmesser* beside the piano, marking off on a slate any wrong note that is played. It is then altered and rectified on the finished roll. One of these official correctors confided in me that his task was often difficult when he had to erase faults in works of great technical display. He told me too about a famous pianist who was asked to perform Chopin's *Study in Thirds*, and doubted whether he had a sufficiently reliable finger technique to make a good performance. So he was persuaded to play only the upper notes of the Third passages, whilst the lower ones were afterwards cut into the roll by the operators who stood by. My informant told me that the piece thus recorded came out admirably on the pianola; all the laboriously difficult progressions of double notes sounded as smooth and easy as one could wish. Such an elimination of technical problems by the reproducing machines, as the one just cited (and there are others just as sweeping), has created an unnatural situation for the performer, since feats of virtuosity no longer astonish those who hear them on mechanical instruments. This is because they only see a machine playing and hardly connect the performance in their minds with the human element. So, while astounding technical agility produced on any instrument by human hands always stimulates wonder and admiration for the mastery of execution shown, such effects seem perfectly simple on the machine, for whom it is no more difficult to play one note than a thousand. This annihilation by the machines of the significance of technique is of some artistic interest in so far as it may lower the standard of artists, for whom technical proficiency is at present an essential vehicle for the

presentation of every aesthetic idea.

"On the gramophone, mechanical perfection does not obtain in at all the same degree. A gramophone record once made cannot be rectified, which most artists know to their cost. Who has not experienced the worry of a record having to be made over and over again for the sake of some unfortunate slip, and what a comfort it would be if only the operator could correct that slip on the soft wax in the way that pianola rolls are doctored, instead of having to scrap the whole thing. Perhaps when reels of film are adapted for musical recording, as it is rumoured they are going to be, it will be possible to cut out the mistakes made and to piece in the corrections.

"I have met several strange mechanical instruments as well as the more usual pianolas and gramophones, none of which have, however, gained the popularity of the latter. One of these was a mechanical violin which I saw in Leipzig. It was a most ingenious instrument consisting of four fiddles and a circular bow fixed into a cabinet, whilst underneath them was fitted the recording roll. The machine tuned itself, as worked electrically, and played the most difficult violin music with perfect ease. It was however bulky and expensive, which perhaps prevented it from becoming an entire success. I have not yet met a mechanical 'cello or double bass, but the homely accordion exists in machine blown form, and I believe that it can play a Beethoven Symphony or a Wagner Overture with the utmost gusto. I am now told that even mechanical mouth organs have arrived on the market. I cannot quite figure out how these last are worked, but I feel sure that they will enlarge the musical vision of the school-room."

In the above lengthy extract, Mark Hambourg hints at the strong belief in the late 1920s that future sound recording techniques would use optical recording on motion-picture film. What, one wonders, would he make of today's recording studio with the ability to record-edit multiple tapes within milliseconds!

His reference to the Hupfeld Phonoliszt is equally interesting, although his reference to four violins more than likely demonstrates the long-standing optical

deception of three violins spaced radially at 90° and the ability of the human eye to expect symmetry to extend into areas unseen.

For a man who was not over-enthusiastic about the "mechanical interpretation" of music, Mark Hambourg's playing is preserved for us on all three main reproducing systems.

For Ampico, he recorded the following:

Liszt: Etude in D flat (55574H)  
Chopin: Etude, Opus 10 No 5 in G ("Black Keys" Etude) (55502H)

Bach-Gounod: Ave Maria (491G)

Schutt: Canzonetta, Opus 28 No 2 (60331F)

Chaminade: Lisonjera, La (The Flatterer) (55684E)

Handel: Largo (50094F)

Gottschalk: The Last Hope, Opus 16 (60163H)

Arranged by Keeney: Nearer My God to Thee (56433G)

MacDowell: Witches' Dance, Opus 17, No 2 (59164F)

His repertoire on Welte is smaller, comprising just three works:

Chopin: Mazurka, Opus 17, No 4 in A minor (931)

Rubinstein: Le Bal, Valse de Concert, A flat (934)

Liszt: Polonaise, E major (936)  
For Duo-Art he made four rolls as follows:

Henselt: Ave Maria Etude, Opus 5, No 4 (59088)

Tchaikovski: Chanson Triste, Opus 40, No 2 (59579)

Rubinstein: Nocturne, Opus 75, No 8 (56540)

Leschetizky: The Spring (La Source), Etude, Opus 36, No 4 (56999)

Mark Hambourg lived right through into the hi-fi and magnetic tape era, and died at Cambridge on 26 August 1960. Nowhere, though, does he leave us a detailed description of days in the roll-recording studio and he remained aloof to mechanical music.

From all this, what price those extensive advertisements of times past when pianists of great eminence assured magazine readers that, despite their talents, they preferred to sit and pedal their free-in-return-for-the-use-of-their-names pianolas! Although he is somewhat unsympathetic to the instruments of mechanical music, he is no more harsh than was Mozart when he was asked to write for

mechanical organ. And look (or listen) to what the outcome of that exercise was!

Perhaps it is not too churlish of me to choose to end with a quotation from a notice published, presumably with Mark Hambourg's agreement, in *The Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News* back in 1901. The subject is the Pianotist, a singularly poor mechanically-operated piano player of the pre-pneumatic, kicking-shoe type. I quote from part of an extensive eulogy:

"In the opinion of some of the greatest artists and musicians who have seen this invention, it is considered artistically superior to anything of its kind, and such artists and musicians as Adelina Patti (Baroness Caderstrom), Mark Hambourg (the great pianist), Henry J Wood (conductor Queen's Hall Orchestra), Wilhelm Ganz, Tito Mattei, Landon Ronald and many others, have not hesitated to put such opinions to paper over their signatures."

Perhaps times were hard and he needed money to eat . . .

(Bibliography, p57).



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# MUSICAL BOX ODDMENTS

by H A V Bulleid

THE nonchalance of musical box manufacturers about crediting composers on the tune sheets reached a peak with tunes by the Strauss family. No attempt was made to identify the four composers involved; they were all simply listed, if at all, as Strauss.

The following notes will help in sorting them out, though complete sorting is severely hindered because tune sheets often carry colloquial French translations of the original idiomatic German titles, and furthermore the same title was sometimes used by more than one of these four composers. A further complication was caused by some minor composers jumping on to the band-wagon by adopting the pseudonym 'Strauss.'

## Johann Baptist Strauss

Strauss I, the father, was born in Vienna in 1804 and became famous both for his compositions and for his orchestra which toured world-wide. He and Joseph Lanner were the first of the Vienna Waltz composers — Lanner leading by a year or two. By 1825 they were already famous and in 1830 Chopin, on a visit to Paris, wrote "Lanner, Strauss and their waltzes dominate everything." They maintained their popularity by a vast output mainly of waltzes and polkas to suit dance-mad Vienna, where tunes were a hit today and forgotten tomorrow. Their life was extremely hectic under the continual strain of composing, rehearsing and conducting — often with encores demanded far into the night. Some of the "magic of the Viennese Waltzes" is said to be due to the second beat of the accompaniment being played a fraction early; whether any musical box tune arrangers achieved this I do not know.

Strauss I married Anna Streim in 1825 and they had six children of whom Johann II, Josef and Eduard were the first, second and sixth. One hears it claimed that they inherited the musical genius of their father. But then, how strange that it appeared in all the sons of Anna Strauss but in none of Strauss's seven children by Emilie Trampusch.

In 1837 Strauss I took his orchestra and his waltzes for the

first time to Paris and was greeted with acclaim by a distinguished first night audience which included Adam, Auber, Berlioz, Halévy, Cherubini and Meyerbeer.

In October 1844 his eldest son, Johann Strauss II, had a triumphal first concert in Vienna, his orchestra playing the overture of Auber's *Dumb Girl of Portici*, then some of his own compositions, and finally his father's most popular waltz, *Lorelei-Rhein-Klänge*. This first concert with its great local drama — Strauss I did not want his son to become a musician, and the final waltz was played as a peace-offering — seems to have launched the obviously talented son as THE Strauss. His brother Josef qualified as an architect and engineer but took over the conducting of the Strauss II orchestra in a crisis and with unexpected success; he is generally regarded as the most gifted of the three brothers. Young Eduard was an effective conductor but the least talented composer.

Here are the family vital statistics and earliest composing dates which are sometimes a useful clue on a tune sheet —

Name	Born	Died	Started Composing	Highest opus No.
Johann Strauss I	1804	1849	1820	251
Johann Strauss II	1825	1899	1843	479
Josef Strauss	1827	1870	1853	283
Eduard Strauss	1835	1916	1859	300

Some of their compositions were in collaboration. Some were never given opus numbers. Many were quadrilles and other arrangements from current operas, duly credited in their titles; this causes ambiguities on musical box tune sheets because if, for example, a tune is simply given as *Giroflé Girofla* it could be either an air from Lecocq's opera or a waltz Opus 123 by Eduard Strauss.

In the following lists of a few of their compositions found on musical boxes I have included opus numbers because these give an

idea of the tune's date. Tunes by Strauss I are on lever-wound boxes, and I think I am right in saying that tunes by the other three are extremely rare on key-wind. But all four are to be found on discs.

- By Johann Strauss I . . .
- Philomélen waltz op 82
  - Palm-Zweige waltz op 122 (Branches du Palmier)
  - Elektrische-Funken waltz op 125 (L'Étincelle)
  - Lorelei-Rhein-Klänge waltz op 154
  - Radetzky March op 228
- By Johann Strauss II . . .
- Lebenswecker waltz op 232
  - Morgenblätter waltz op 279
  - Juristenball polka op 280
  - Telegramm waltz op 318
  - Leichtes Blut polka op 319

Some of his most famous waltzes including *The Blue Danube* (op 314, 1867) and *Tales from the Vienna Woods* (op 325, 1867) are not easily condensed into one minute and are therefore a bit disappointing on musical boxes and, it is worth noting, extremely disappointing to Strauss enthusiasts. I have listed above a few less famous pieces that go well, and in particular the *Lebenswecker* waltz has a stirring second movement, well arranged by Nicole and others on mandolin boxes.

Johann Strauss also wrote an opera *Ritter Pasman* (1892) and sixteen operettas including . . .

- Indigo 1871
- Die Fledermaus 1874
- The Gipsy Baron 1885
- Waldmeister 1895

And in collaboration with Josef he wrote the *Pizzicato Polka* (1869).

- By Josef Strauss . . .
- Elfen polka op 74
  - Wiener Leben polka op 218
  - Sphärenklänge waltz op 235 (Music of the spheres)
  - Vélocipède polka op 259 (Bicycle)
  - Ohne Sorgen polka op 271 (Care free)

- By Eduard Strauss . . .
- Bahn Frei! polka op 45 (Fast Track)
  - Doctrinen waltz op 79
  - Liebeszauber mazurka op 84 (Love's charm)

A complete list (in German) of all the Strauss compositions is available in the Central Music Library, Buckingham Palace Road, London SW1. Favourites are featured every year on New Year's Day in a traditional gala concert in Vienna, usually shown by the BBC with some help from the Johann Strauss Society of Great Britain. Some less well-known items are included among the perennial favourites, the 1981 concert giving the *Waldmeister* overture and *Leichtes Blut*.

Unfortunately the name Strauss on a tune sheet is not certain to belong to a member of the famous family. Sundry minor musicians adopted the name during its first heyday. In particular Isaac Strauss (born Strasbourg 1806, died Paris 1888) composed numerous waltzes and polkas which he sometimes signed 'J Strauss' or simply 'Strauss.' He was a professor at the Paris Conservatoire and he followed Musard as Musical Director of the Court Balls in 1852.

I usually seek a reliable second opinion before writing this column. For the Strauss notes I was helped by David Tallis.

#### Comb tooth setting

Sometimes a run or other accident strains a comb tooth so that it is no longer in perfect alignment with its neighbours. This adversely affects both the playing of the tooth and the appearance of the comb. The old horological manuals gave the following remedial advice . . .

Place the top of the comb on a steel stake or anvil, face downwards, and to elevate a tooth tap the under-surface gently with the hardened peen of a hammer so as to stretch it. In the same way, if a tooth is to be turned to the right, stretch the left edge. If a tooth is to be depressed, an expert will bend it with a smart blow of the hammer on the middle of the underside while it rests on the anvil, but this is risky and will often result in a broken tooth. It is better to stretch the upper surface of the tooth with light taps, even though the marks show.

The cautionary note is apt, because anyone applying this sort of smart blow is liable to end up far more depressed than the tooth. It is only excusable if the striker knows the hardening and tempering history of the tooth in question.

I have obtained the same result more easily and with far less risk

by simply bending the tooth back to its correct position. My method is to clamp the comb very securely and arrange a dial-gauge (or any reasonably fine measuring device) at the tooth tip. Then I deflect the tooth say a tenth of an inch and note that on release it returns to its original position. I then increase the amount of applied deflection, in steps of about 0".02, until some permanent set is obtained. Then I reduce the steps to 0".01 till enough permanent set has been applied to place the tooth exactly in its correct position.

How safe is all this? I acquired a broken bass tooth from a Henriot comb; it had fractured at the root so it was practically intact. With the broken end gripped in a smooth-jawed vise I found that a deflection of over 0".20 was needed before any permanent set occurred. To achieve a permanent set of 0".005 the deflection needed was 0".26. This test re-assured me, and of course it was more severe than if the tooth had still been on the comb, as about a tenth of an inch of its length was inoperable, being held in the vise. This tooth was very hard at the tip and right under the lead platform, but tempered towards the root where it carried the usual transverse file marks on its underside and where it would accept the small set needed. But any sharp blow near the hard part would inevitably cause it to break.

#### Tune Sheet Troubles

Tune sheets were the great silent sufferers of cylinder musical boxes. Instruction leaflets were stuffed behind them; fidgetty fingers jabbed them pointing to the tunes; sundry scribblers sometimes disfigured them; energetic dusters probably flicked them; oil somehow got on them; and their pins corroded messily. No wonder they became loose and slid around, — only to be transfixed by the peg of the lock plate and then finally freed by friction with the glass lid. When at last they became detached why did no one ever slide the sad but still useful remains under the mechanism? One *never* so finds them. If loose, apparently always lost.

Re-fixing them seems to have been beyond the powers of early owners; and of later re-fixers I must say my heart sinks when I see that a generous helping of Sellotape has been applied. Why? Because in a few years, when it has aged and dirtied along the edges, someone will be horrified at the

effect and will peel it off again, and in so doing will neatly remove all the writing and printing it covered, — leaving an admittedly clean but absolutely bare track.

Surprisingly few people seem to be aware that this disaster can be averted by soaking the relevant parts of the tune sheet in surgical spirit (as used similarly for removing traces of stickers from car windows). Allow a few minutes for the adhesive on the Sellotape to dissolve — the spirit can only get to it from the back — and then very gently peel off the tape. If done carefully the tune sheet surface will be practically unaffected, though if the tape has been on for a long time a track of dirt along each side may need a bit of gentle scraping or rubbing.

H A V Bulleid  
March 10th, 1981



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(Arthur W J G Ord-Hume)

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# INTRODUCTION TO ROBIN TIMM'S ARTICLE

Robin Timms has to assume that we have some elementary knowledge of the rudiments of music when he writes of the difficult, and almost esoteric, skill required in transferring manuscript music to a pattern suitable for use in arrangements for the polyphon.

Any school textbook on the rudiments of music will give sufficient information on note values, key signatures, time signatures, scales, ornamentation etc..

With this knowledge at hand it is only necessary to appreciate the simplest forms of music arranging to begin to better understand Robin's article.

Two of the most frequently used forms of arrangements are (a) by chord progression (as in the 4-part harmony of a normal hymn tune) and (b) a flowing accompaniment to the melody of a song.

In the first form of arrangement mechanical music can embellish the chord progression with intricate ornamentation unplayable by the human hand.

The second form was brought to a particularly high level of perfection by Schubert, who was able to make the song and its accompaniment a veritable duet for piano and voice.

When Gounod heard Bach's music in the first of "The Forty Eight" preludes and fugues, he also "heard" a melody and this duet has given us the famous Bach-Gounod "Ave Maria".

The Schubert "Ave Maria", arguably more beautiful and certainly just as famous in the song repertoire, is the work of one man, that genius of song writers, operas, and the haunting "Unfinished Symphony", Franz Schubert.

In his article Robin refers to p 177, volume 6, of *The Music Box*. Not everyone will have a copy of this 1973 article so it is reproduced on page 66. Notice Robin's ornamentation in bars 2, 3, and 4 of "God Save the King" . . . or the American title of "My Country 'tis of Thee". Same tune. It would not be possible for a pianist to play this "a tempo". Only mechanically can the demi-semiquavers be played at the speed required by the (disputed in this case) composer, Henry Carey (1685-1743?). 1685 was a good year for composers. It included Bach, Handel, and Domenico Scarlatti.

With basic musical rudiments in mind we can, perhaps, gain a deeper understanding of Robin

Timm's unique article, MAKING A MUSICAL ARRANGEMENT FOR THE POLYPHON.

The first is by chord progression.

A-bide with me fast falls the even-tide

The second is when the chord is broken into an arpeggio, played in the bass, with the melody played above. This is known as the Alberti Bass method.

A-bide with me fast falls the even-tide

Gounod used Bach's first Prelude (of 'The Forty Eight') as accompaniment for 'Ave Maria'. Bach was born in 1685, Gounod in 1818. This is a classic example of a melody appearing over an arpeggio-like bass. [C major trans. E<sup>b</sup>]

Ave Ma-ri-

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# ARRANGING MUSIC FOR THE POLYPHON

Robin Timms

Christopher Robin visits  
Arcady

## CHAPTER 1

In which we introduce the subject of arranging music for the polyphon

"Let's sing all the duets," said Christopher Robin.

We had just returned from the music library and having staved off the ravages of a healthy appetite with a "little something", as Pooh would say, withdrew into the music room to peruse the score of *The Arcadians*.

We did *Charming Weather*, Christopher Robin taking the part of Eileen and I that of Jack. Then he said, "Let's see if there are any other duets," and turned to a number entitled *Half past two*.

"But we don't know it," I protested.

"Well, let's learn it."

So we did, and it turned out to be great fun — especially the rapid alternation of parts where Jack is suggesting various days of the week for a meeting and Eileen replying by detailing her engagements:—

"On Monday . I must go shopping,  
On Tuesday . . I've calls to pay.  
On Wednesday . . I'm asked out  
to luncheon,  
On Thursday . . . I'm booked all  
day,  
On Friday . . . I've heaps of  
appointments  
That somehow I must get  
through;  
But I've nothing much to do on  
Saturday,  
So I'll meet you at half past  
two!"

Let's arrange the music  
for our Polyphon

Christopher Robin thought the whole thing would sound attractive on the Polyphon, and I had to agree. And so it came about that during the next few days I found myself putting hundreds of tiny dots on to manuscript paper; and by Christopher Robin's next visit (at half past two on Saturday, of course) the arrangement was well underway.

After we had laboured over the script for most of the afternoon Christopher Robin suggested, "We ought to write an article about it".

"All right; but I shouldn't think many people will read it," said I.

"Do you think they'll understand?" asked he.

"Understand what?"

"How we did the arrangement."

"I shouldn't think so."

"Then didn't we ought to tell them?"

"Perhaps . . . but don't you think you should stop asking so many questions?"

"Why?"

"Because it's time for tea."

How the music is  
arranged

## CHAPTER 2 Preliminaries

IN THIS chapter I want to bring you to the point at which it is possible to sit down with a sheet of manuscript paper and prepare to write a new arrangement for Polyphon. Before this can be done with confidence, a few facts and figures must be ascertained.

### DURATION

Time a disc. I work on the basis of 50 seconds for an 11in Polyphon disc, one minute for 15½in, and 1½ minutes for 19½in. You now need to plan that length of music, or a second or two less allowing for the gap between the end and beginning of the tune.

If the tune you want to arrange is not the right length, there are various ways of making it fit. If for example the tune is too short, it could perhaps be slowed down, or part of it could be repeated. Alternatively, an introduction or tail-piece could be included. For example, with the folksong *She's like the Swallow*, I found that a short introduction followed by two verses was just right. Where all or part of a tune is repeated, the arrangement can be varied. With *The Water of Tyne* I composed an

For illustrations please  
refer to page 65

introduction of some eight bars based on the opening of the melody, followed by the tune played through once. With *Arrowing*, there was room for a short introduction followed by a verse and chorus, plus a further chorus, differently arranged.

Deciding what to  
leave out

But with a small disc, the tune may at first appear too long. What then? Well, first of all, can it stand being taken a little quicker without it being spoilt? Or can part be omitted without ruining the music? For example, an introduction can be omitted, or perhaps part of a tune which is repeated, or simply part which is less interesting. In Tchaikovsky's *None but the Weary Heart* for instance, I had to be ruthless and cut out the purely instrumental bars between the lines of the song. As these generally repeated fragments of the melody, nothing essential was lost. With *Somewhere over the Rainbow* I had to omit the entire verse and go straight to the chorus (the bit everybody knows!) and even then there was room only for the second half of a complete chorus, plus a short introduction. But once again this made a satisfying précis, including the best ideas in the tune. I still could not tell you how the verse goes!

In the last resort however, if you cannot make a satisfying version of the tune to fit the length of the disc, try arranging something else: there is no point in arranging something which you are not going to enjoy because it is much too fast or ruinously truncated. But with discs of medium size or more, it is seldom necessary to abandon an arrangement for this reason. Certainly the original Polyphon arrangers do not seem to have been daunted; though with very small discs they sometimes had to be cruel to the music.

## Tuning scale

You must write out the tuning scale of the instrument you are arranging for starting at the bass. I always write it in the actual key in which the instrument is tuned — D flat for 11in. Polyphon (some machines are in E flat), A for 15½in (some are in G—especially duplex models) and B flat for 19¾in. But having worked out the basic scale, it can be transposed into any key you like—for example, the key of the tune you want to arrange. I prefer not to transpose the tuning scale because I like to hear in my mind, while working on an arrangement, the actual sound of the instrument. This is helpful in giving the music the correct harmonic density; also it helps one to find one's way around the comb more readily than if the tuning scale was transposed for each arrangement.

## Knowing the instrument

Before arranging anything for a particular instrument you need to be thoroughly familiar with that instrument and to understand how the original arrangers produced the pleasing results which have made you want to increase the instrument's repertoire. Not that you will want merely to copy the style of the old discs; you are no doubt anxious not only to arrange fresh tunes, but to explore new possibilities of harmony, rhythm, and ornamentation.

I commend two ways of getting to know an instrument well. One is to listen to a fair selection of discs of as many different types of music as possible. Listen intently and hear all that is going on. How is the melody treated? What embellishments are used, and to what effect? What are the harmonic possibilities? How are the bass notes used? Are there any apparent limitations imposed by the musical comb, and how have the arrangers tried to overcome these?

## Polyphon's potential

If there is no existing music for the instrument (as was the case with the *Ariphon*) you will have to rely on your knowledge of instruments of approximately similar scope, and armed with the tuning scale and a few other vital statistics explore from scratch the instrument's potential.

Musical score for JACK and EILEEN. The top staff is for JACK and the bottom for EILEEN. Lyrics: "On Fri-day I've heaps of ap-point-ments, That some-how I must get"

Musical score for EILEEN and BOTH. The top staff is for EILEEN and the bottom for BOTH. Lyrics: "Through, But I've nothing much to do on Sa-tur-day, So I'll"

Musical score for "meet you at half-past two!".

A few bars from the score of The Arcadians



## Harmonic density and ornamentation

The other way of getting to know the instrument is by writing out in musical notation exactly what a disc is playing. A few bars should be enough to get the general idea of harmonic density, use of bass notes, and characteristic ornamentation. An example for 11in Polyphon will be found on page 177 of Volume 6. In order to "read" the music from the disc I drew on a piece of white card a series of concentric circles each 1/12in apart (1/16in for large Polyphons). Each band represented the position of a tooth on the musical comb. I coloured the bands with colours representing the notes of the

## Use of colour

scale. When the disc was placed face down exactly in position, the colours showing through indicated which note each projection represented. I lined up the chords with a piece of cotton coming from the centre of the card. (In point of fact, a line joining the notes of a chord does not go exactly through the centre; it is slightly offset.)

## Repetition of Notes

It is important to know how frequently each note can be used. I work on the assumption that there must be at least ¼in between two projections for the same tooth, this being measured for

The same, arranged for 11 in. Polyphon



example from striking point to striking point. I calculate how this distance relates to the music to be arranged as follows. First I estimate how many degrees of the disc each bar of music will occupy. For example, if there are 16 bars, 21 degrees is about right:  $21 \times 16 = 336$ , and this leaves  $24^\circ$  for the blank space between the end and beginning of the tune which, again, is about right. I then draw an angle of  $21^\circ$ , or whatever is appropriate, on tracing paper and place this on the cardboard representation of a disc mentioned above, the apex of the angle being at the centre. I then open a pair of dividers at  $\frac{1}{4}$  in and find the point where the two arms of the angle are this distance apart. I make a note of which tooth on the comb this corresponds to.

#### Careful measurement

This is repeated with the dividers open at  $\frac{1}{2}$  in,  $\frac{3}{4}$  in, 1 in etc till the highest note on the disc is passed. I now know that at a certain point on the comb notes can be played once in a bar ( $\frac{1}{4}$  in), twice ( $\frac{1}{2}$  in), and so on. If there are four beats

in a bar for example, this means that at  $\frac{1}{4}$  in a note may be played every 4 beats, at  $\frac{1}{2}$  in every 2 beats, at  $\frac{3}{4}$  in every  $1\frac{1}{2}$  beats, at 1 in every 1 beat etc. A sliding scale would be ideal, but I find the above sufficient guide, and estimate the intermediate positions with a bit of intelligent guesswork. In other words, I am not clever enough to work out a sliding scale to show the exact possibility of repetition of every note on the comb.

#### Closing remarks

I scarcely realized what I was letting myself in for when I took up Christopher Robin's challenge of explaining the art of disc arrangement. If you have digested the above by the time the next instalment appears, I will attempt to deal with the most creative part of the operation — the actual musical arrangement.

Just wait till Christopher Robin comes round at half past two next Saturday — he can jolly well type this lot!

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING** of the Musical Box Society of Great Britain, (and **SUMMER CONVENTION**), in London, 6th JUNE, 1981. At the Kensington Close Hotel, Wrights Lane, Kensington W8 5SP. Tel: 01 937 8170.

**MASSED BANDS DISPLAY.** Major B A Carleston MBE sends us the following information. On June 9th, 10th, and 11th at 6.30 p.m. there will be a Massed Bands Display Beating Retreat on Horse Guards Parade by the Regiments of The Queen's Division. Seats are £3, £2.50, and standing is 50p. Tickets can be obtained from: The Ticket Centre, 1b Bridge Street (opposite Big Ben), Westminster, London SW 1A 2JR. Tel. 01 839 6815 and 01 839 6732. SAE is requested.

Members of the Royal Family will be present. There will be a total of about 700 musicians.

**SATURDAY SEMINAR.** This was mooted in Volume 10, Number 1, and the response has led to the first such Seminar being arranged, and the date is JUNE 27th. The Host and Hostess are John and Kay Mansfield, and the place is at Pulborough, Sussex. Further details can be obtained from the Editor. This meeting is intended for beginners. However, John's knowledge is extensive and even the most experienced Music Box collector will find something new and intensely interesting in this new venture.

## AUTUMN MEETING

Saturday, 5 September 1981, Cambridge  
This year's Autumn meeting will be held in Cambridge on Saturday, 5 September 1981, at the **Blue Boar Hotel** (part of the Trust House group), Trinity Street, Cambridge CB2 1TG (Tel: 0223 63121).

Since Cambridge is the second most popular tourist city the hotel must have **FINAL NUMBERS BY MID MARCH**. The Blue Boar is now, of course, full. Alternative accommodation must be made at other hotels.

A special rate of £45 per person was negotiated for the weekend, which included all meals on Saturday and breakfast on Sunday. This autumn meeting looks like being one of the most gay and happy ever, so *do* turn up, if only for the Saturday.

The activities of the weekend will include practical workshops, a visit to an interesting collection of instruments, a gala dinner on Saturday evening followed by a full Olde Tyme Music Hall show with a guided tour of the Colleges on Sunday.

Members having portable organs or barrel pianos are invited to bring them along and play in the streets of the city centre on Saturday morning in support of the Muscular Dystrophy flag day.

**REGIONAL MEETING**, March/April 1982, **ARUNDEL**, Sussex. Meeting Organiser: **JOHN MANSFIELD**. John Mansfield and Hilary Kay have been to Arundel and further details of this meeting will be given in the next issue of the Journal.

For Overseas meetings see page 62.

## OVERSEAS MEETINGS AND FESTIVALS

**OVERSEAS MEETINGS AND FESTIVALS.** July 17-19 or 24-26, 1981, (dates to be confirmed). Second Swiss Barrel Organ Festival, Thun, Switzerland.

From KRING VAN DRAAIORGEL-VRIENDEN (KDV) comes the following information :-

**SATURDAY 15 and SUNDAY 16 AUGUST — DEN HELDER** (prov Noord Holland). Two days this year with several famous street and fair organs in play in the top of this province.

**SATURDAY 22 and SUNDAY 23 AUGUST — HELLEVOETSLUIS** (prov Zuid Holland). Steam and diesel trams, Steam engines (one or more to come from England) and the 87-key Gavioli De Schelm will be on exhibition.

## AMERICA

September 10-13, 1981. Musical Box Society International. Annual Meeting, Dearborn, Michigan, USA.

September 3-6, 1982. Musical Box Society International. Annual Meeting, San Francisco, California, USA.

This is the total of information we have at time of going to Press. Next deadline date for copy is August 15, 1981. The Christmas deadline date is October 15.

Convention and event organisers are invited to send in dates for regular publication in "The Music Box" to aid members throughout the world in planning their participation. (Ed).

**From Henry A. Waelti, of Switzerland, comes the following:** (see p 94).

THE shopping centre at Feldkirch, Austria, opened its amenities for a meeting of organ grinders. Thirty one groups attended, with thirty nine barrel organs between them. This international gathering of organ grinders included the famous Mrs Blomeier with her little donkey, Mr and Mrs Wolf from Berlin. Mr and Mrs Raffin from Ueberlingen in Germany, a jovial party from France, with most of the remainder coming from Switzerland.

This was the first meeting of its kind in Austria and it was important because the country is not yet mechanical music minded. The success of the meeting will go a long way towards rectifying this.

Feldkirch is a picturesque old city near the border of Liechtenstein and Switzerland, and was an ideal choice for this meeting. There were many arcades providing shelter in the case of rain, and marvellous acoustics for the solo barrel organ. Several people remarked that the city centre was not unlike that of Berne, in Switzerland. Fortunately the weather was fine.

In addition to 'monkey organs' there were two Big-Band organs. These attracted large crowds and Austrian Television was there to tape, film, and telecast the activities.

In one corner of Leonhards Square, quite late at night, two Swiss barrel-organists were attempting to play 'stereo' by grinding similar music simultaneously. When they got it right an admiring crowd gave them a great cheer.

On the way home the next day the Customs Officials let the organ grinders through with a minimum of fuss, no doubt charmed by the Sunday Serenade of a good humoured organ grinder.

In response to my request at Lincoln, John Powell writes the following: — — — — —



UNLIKE many of our more eminent members, I am a very ordinary one but do claim a common love of mechanical music and associated devices. My initiation came during July '74 when wandering the streets of Leeds in search of a weight driven Vienna needed to fill a vacant wall space. The afternoon ended by taking home a springwound Vienna with a one tune musical movement, an eight tune cylinder box of unknown origin having a complete comb but requiring gear work on the spring barrel and governor and what was by now an afterthought, the weight driven Vienna. Three weeks later a 15½in upright penny-in-the-slot Polyphon came from the same source after the order for a long awaited new lathe was cancelled and the money put to better use.

I am a mechanical engineer by profession employed in the electricity supply industry and by inclination have been a model engineer for many years hence my home workshop and related interest in the repair and restoration of these pieces. Having acquired a box, it wasn't long before GRAHAM WEBB'S book on cylinder boxes found shelfroom and the reference found to the Musical Box Society of Great Britain and enrolment was swift and the friendly welcome shown by the then President and Secretary was extremely gratifying. Attendance at meetings

followed and new and valued friendship with many members has evolved.

My interest in cylinder boxes has been maintained and they make up the major part of the collection although this includes a whistling bird, the odd disc machine, an organette and a barrel organ. Early enthusiasm in addition to excessive optimism led to the acquisition of several badly damaged movements forsaken by the wise but considered by me to be worthy of the considerable repair time needed. Some of these boxes are slowly moving towards completion but some still await the development of repair procedures. I have spent some time playing with comb tuning with, I believe, some results which have been applied to tuning new comb teeth. The cylinder repinning operation has at last been mastered after several traumatic experiences during the grinding operation when the cylinder lost more pins than the original runs which caused the damage in the first place. I have not yet tried making an endless screw due partly to my inability to find suitable grinding wheels. I would be glad if anyone could put me in touch with a suitable supply of say 3in to 4in diameter 0.05 to 0.1in thick fine grit wheels.

The two pieces I most enjoy playing are a Flight and Robson chamber barrel organ and a Raymond-Nicole 3 air cylinder box. The organ is a sixteen key, one wood and three metal ranks of pipes with the addition of a triangle and a two beater circular drum. The case is in Gothic style mahogany with the three original barrels and the music is a lively mixture of popular and light classical. Its history is unknown except that it spent the last half of its life in the billiard room of a Yorkshire country house. The Raymond-Nicole movement plays two arrangements of overtures *Freischütz* and *William Tell* and the third tune is called *Hailstone Chorus*. The movement is numbered 135 but it appears to be in a much later case. There is a small engraved tunesheet but not having found any trace of a *Hailstone Chorus*, wonder whether this is fictitious. I would be glad if anyone can confirm the existence of this piece of music.



## Letters to the Editor

LETTERS from members have been mainly complimentary and I do not intend to publish them. Views from outside the Society can be a guide to the quality of the Journal.

SCOTT Smith happened to be in this office when the magazine arrived so I passed it over to him for professional observation, since he was until recently an editor himself. "This is a very satisfying publication, attractively produced with an attractive lot of advertisements and an editorial content that keeps you reading" . . . Next time you are in the Club you will see it on view in the showcase.

The Librarian (Alec Harrison),  
The London Press Club.

HEARTY congratulations on your Editorship of The Music Box. It is a beautiful production.

The Secretary (Marjorie Harris),  
London Writer Circle.

WHAT a lovely magazine it is.

Nancy Thayer (Novelist),  
Massachusetts, U.S.A.

LET me congratulate you for your first issue of The Music Box. The magazine is appreciated by all the members of our Society. I am pleased to notice that our new editor does not lack dry humour (of the kind we think is typically British) either.

Henry A. Wälti, Rainweg 21,  
CH 3068 Utzigen, Switzerland.

SOME of our members spotted the odd spelling mistake. Ooh dear, they *were* annoyed. You can tell that by their letter.

DEAR cer, Wot harebull spellin in the jounul. We counted free mastikes. Oo reeds the pruffs? Dint 'e go to skule like wot we gud spelers did? We never mike mastikes!

GUD SPELERS RULE. O.Q?  
The 'atchit Mob, Brixton.

**BRIAM ORAM** is one of several who has brought the Windsor Great Park Jamboree to my attention. It is on 4th July, and that alone makes it an international Festival occasion. The Youth Action Section are hoping to raise a goodly sum for The British Cancer Campaign for Research. There will be mechanical organs, a Gavioli coin-operated barrel-piano, and more . . . much more. Not only will many MBSGB members be present but also numerous film and television stars. So . . . Roll up! Roll up! for all the fun of the Fair!

**ARTHUR HEAP**, our advertising manager, sends the following information. **GEOFF WORRALL**, of Sheffield, who regularly advertises in the Classified column under

M.I.M. Supplies, reports that he no longer supplies organ reeds. He has sold his stock to Jas. H. Blakey and Sons Ltd., Burnley Road Showrooms, Brierfield, Lancashire, an organisation which is now a central organ component firm.

Arthur Heap points out that the advertising rates in TMB are very reasonable. Full page £38, Half page £20, Quarter page £12, and there are discounts for long runs of consecutive insertions. Special rates are charged for the outside and inside cover. In the classified section the rates per word are half what is charged for non-members. (See Classified page for full details of charges).

By the same post (15 April 1981) as Arthur's letter came one from our printers informing us that because of rising costs, especially paper, there will be a 12% increase in the cost of producing the journal.

### SEEN IN AUSTRALIA — — —

Anthony Bulleid sends these notes after visiting his daughter in South Australia . . .

AUSTRALIANS tend to feel rather bereft of musical boxes, but in Adelaide I came across several items worthy of note . . .

A fine Conchon interchangeable, with eight 6-air 13in cylinders tired in a glass-fronted display cabinet supporting the box, the whole ebonised with silvered trimmings.

A hidden drum and bells box by Karrer et Cie, Geneva, with 17½in cylinder and, unusually, 10 drum strikers and 18 strikers for the nine bells.

A large and mellow box by S Troll, the comb divided in two 8in lengths each with zither and a central 9-tooth comb for the nine showy engraved bells. Its tunes included a much-above-average version of *The Blue Danube* from which the arranger had wisely deleted the whole of the introduction. The large case was typical of those associated with Baker-Troll and "late Baker-Troll" boxes, beefy-looking with burr-walnut veneer and a larger than normal ebonised area around the lid.

The earliest box I saw had a plain fruitwood case with the three control levers exposed; it played eight airs, two-per-turn, and the fine comb was twice stamped F Lecoultré. Another very early cylinder movement was on a bracket clock dated 1715. It played

on 12 bells, each bell having two strikers. The names of the twelve tunes played were engraved on the brass clock face and included *The Lancers*, *Haste to the Wedding*, *Caledonian Lass*, and *Mozart's Waltz*. I include the last named tune having in mind that the famous Mozart was born in 1756.

Multiple-disc machines are rare, but I was informed by a "reliable source" that a clock incorporating a triple-disc movement had recently been sold in Adelaide to someone in Perth, Western Australia. After the 1,700 mile journey from Adelaide to Perth I am sorry to report that I failed to trace this exceptional item; but I had a good look round member **TOM FERNIHOUGH'S** collection noting in particular his large roomful of phonographs, several desirable automata and a fine singing bird box. Among the cylinder musical boxes was an unusual Nicole, serial 44247 (date 1874) playing twelve airs, two-per-turn, with six bells; and another Nicole, serial 52235, with 15in interchangeable cylinders playing on six bells, drum and castanet. These figure among the 145 illustrations in the Catalogue of the Fernihough Collection, a few copies of which I brought back and lodged with our Editor and our Archivist.

At Guildford, 8 miles from Perth (which proves that distances are shorter in Australia though this is denied locally) one finds the Halls Museum, containing about 20,000 items of mainly domestic bygonés dating back to about 1840. There are four cylinder musical boxes, all of about 1880 vintage. The largest is a Paillard with 16in cylinder playing 12 airs with drum and six bells and the best is a 6-air, 9-bell box with 11in cylinder. There was also a nice organ box but it played too slowly—in contrast to the other boxes which all played too fast and had other minor defects which seem to be inseparable from museum displays and which were lamented by the very helpful museum staff.

The scarcity of musical boxes in Australia keeps local prices high and one hears regrets about meagre restoration facilities; but there were encouraging signs of craftsmen moving in to remedy this, and doubtless facilities are already better in Melbourne and Sydney where they always reckon to be in the lead.

See pages 73—80

# John Cowderoy Antiques



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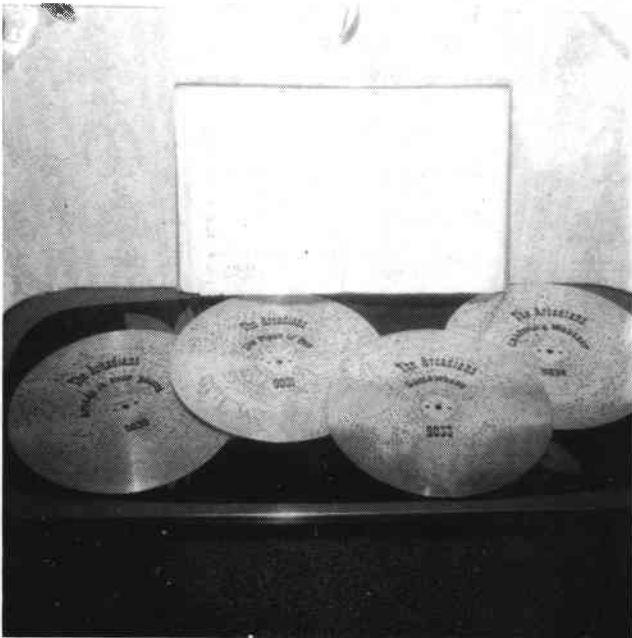
*The Arcadians*, by Lionel Monckton (1861 - 1924), was first produced in London, 1909, with Dan Rolyat, Alfred Lester, Nelson Keys, Phyllis Dare, Cicely Courtneidge and Harry Welchman. Some of the best-loved tunes are: Pipes of Pan, Half past two, Come back to Arcady, Charming Weather, My motter, Somewhere, Arcady is ever young, and Bring me a rose.



Robin Timms.



Duets from *The Arcadians*.



A selection of new arrangements from *The Arcadians*.



Robin's friend, young enthusiast Timothy Leach, plays one of the arrangements: *Love with everlasting love*, No. 9025.

It is said that the Arcadians lived in the Grecian Peloponnesus Mountains "Since before the moon was created".



## FROM PIANO SCORE TO DISC OR CYLINDER

by Robin Timms

**A**N important respect in which a musical box differs from some other forms of mechanical music is that it exists as an instrument in its own right. A mechanical organ or player piano for example attempts to reproduce what a human performer might play on a non-mechanical instrument. At best it does this very well; indeed its success is judged by the extent to which it creates an illusion, to its own self-effacement. The musical box however in its purest form does not pretend to imitate other instruments; it exists in its own right as a highly individual form of art, and needs no apology for that.

The purpose of this article is to show by means of a little detailed analysis of a few bars of music something of how the musical box comes to possess its highly individual character.

Taking the first three phrases of *God Save the Queen* (this tune will be familiar to most musical box collectors!) we will put ourselves in the place of one of the original music arrangers and set the music up for a medium sized box with 54 notes. The form of the music which we shall be working towards is the actual arrangement used for the 11" Polyphon.

First we take a hymn book from the shelf and turn up the *National Anthem*, where we find something like this:



The double bar lines indicate the ends of the phrases.

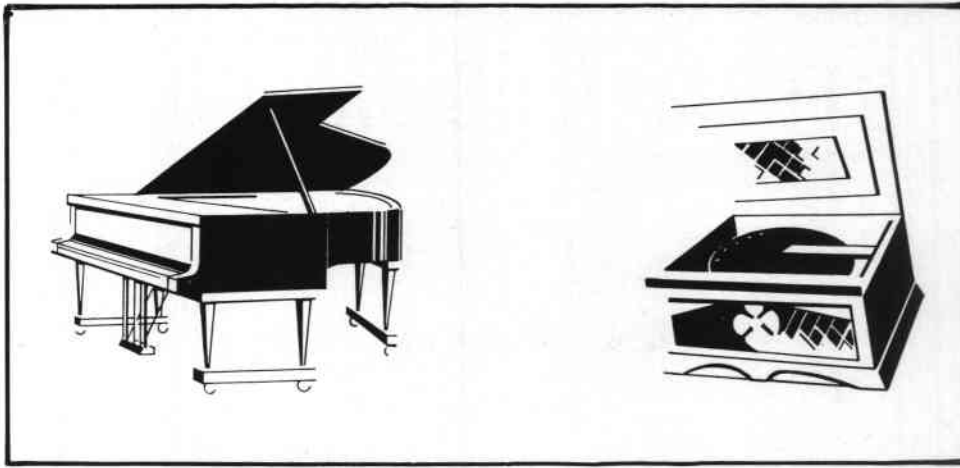
The music as it stands can be played on piano or organ, though it is primarily intended for singing in four part harmony. It was usual for musical box arrangers to work from the piano score - but this is only the beginning of the exercise, because the piano and the musical box are poles apart and an arrangement which suits the one is useless for the other.

Consider some of the differences between the two instruments. The piano has 88 notes; our

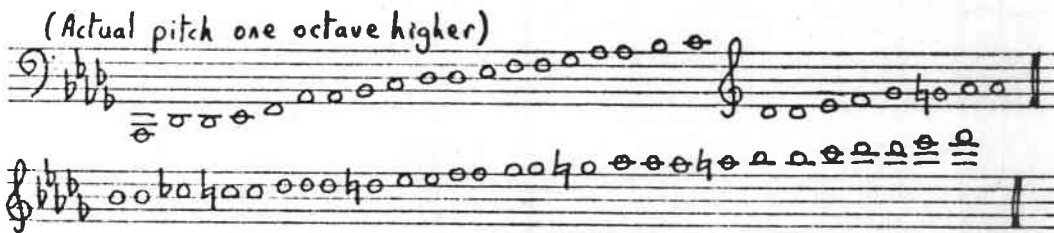
musical box only 36 *different* notes. The piano uses all the notes of the chromatic scale throughout its 7¼ octaves; our musical box which spans 4¼ octaves uses in general only the notes of the diatonic scale, with an occasional accidental inserted in certain octaves. One note of the chromatic scale, the sharpened supertonic, does not appear at all; while in the bass octave only four notes are used - dominant, tonic, supertonic and mediant. The piano can be played with equal facility in any key; our musical box can use only one basic key, with occasional excursions into the relative minor and the key of the dominant. With the piano it is possible to control the duration of a single note or chord and, very important, to

accentuate a single note, chord or melodic line thereby giving shape and meaning to the music as a whole. With the musical box each tooth is plucked in the same way on each occasion, and therefore the note always has the same volume and duration. With the piano it is possible to repeat a single note rapidly: to achieve this on a musical box, it is necessary to have two, three or four teeth tuned to the same note.

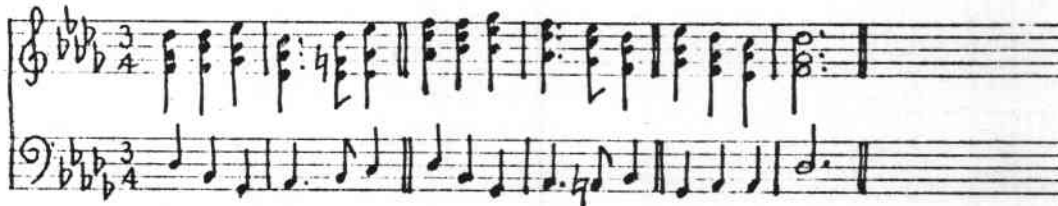
But the music arranger is not daunted by the apparent limitations of his instrument; on the contrary, he is going to make virtues of necessities.



Having before us the score of *God Save the Queen*, we now need to work out the tuning scale of the musical comb. It proves to be as follows:

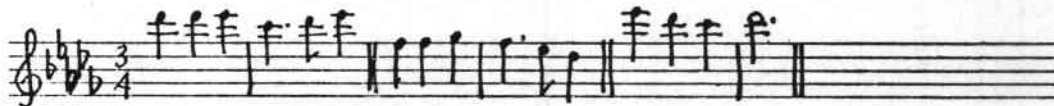


We compare the score with the tuning scale only to find that hardly any of the notes in the score are available. We must transpose the music into the key in which our comb is tuned.



Still we have barely started; for to transcribe this on to disc or cylinder, even though many of the notes are now available, would be to fail to recognize the character and spirit of the instrument with which we are dealing: it would sound very thin and dull.

We will consider the melody first. It is usual to place the melody in the highest available octave, so that it is prominent, and sings out above the rest of the music. In the first phrase this works out very conveniently, but in the second phrase the highest note, G flat, takes us beyond the highest note on the comb, so that it is necessary to jump down an octave. To do this just for one note would sound strange, so we bring the whole phrase down an octave. The third phrase can go back into the higher octave.



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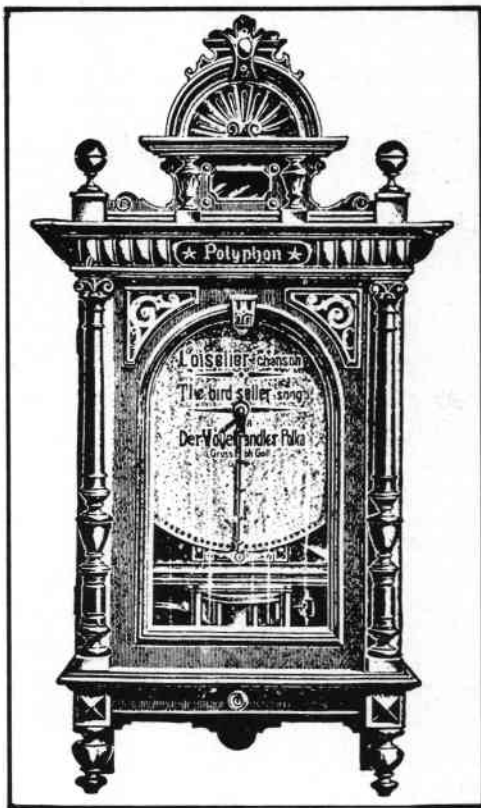


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We shall now consider in more detail the treatment of the melody in a bar-by-bar analysis, but first, to avoid superfluous musical examples, here for reference is what our musical box will

finally play. Square note heads indicate that two teeth tuned to the same note are plucked simultaneously. It should also be noted that the music sounds an octave higher than written.

The musical notation is presented in three systems, each with a treble and bass staff. The key signature is two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 3/4. The notation includes notes, rests, and square note heads indicating simultaneous plucking of two teeth. The piece is in 3/4 time and has a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat).



#### Bar 1

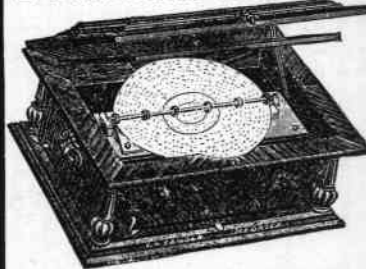
The melody can often be made more prominent by being duplicated in the octave below, and even in the octave below that. The melody in the top octave reads D flat, D flat, E flat. It so happens that there are two D flats on the comb in this octave so that one can be used for the first melodic note and the other for the second, without fear of using the same tooth in too rapid succession - that is to say, in the case of a disc box, before the star wheel is again in the correct position. In the octave below there are three D flats and two E flats. We therefore use two of the D flats in the first chord, being on the strong beat of the bar, and the other on the second. On the third beat of the bar we make use of both the E flats. To strengthen the melodic line further we have D flat, D flat, E flat two octaves below the top note also. Thus, corresponding to three notes in the piano score, we have eleven projections on the disc.

Because the melody is fairly slow moving, the notes of the top octave of each chord are spread to give an *arpeggiando* effect, so that the sound is kept alive and we do not just have a series of chunky chords which quickly die away.

#### Bar 2

The first melodic note has to last a beat and a half. As the sound of a single plucking of the tooth will not last that long, we repeat the note, again in the highest octave, on the second beat of the bar. It is not also repeated in the lower octaves, because we do not want to make it too prominent here, merely to give a sustaining effect. The harmonies will move with the following note of the tune, as in the piano score. Returning to the long first note of the bar, we fill up the first beat, having struck the melodic C, with a run of demisemiquavers which lead naturally to the repetition of the C at the beginning of the second beat. The melodic D flat, lasting but half a beat, needs no ornamentation. The E flat on the third beat however does call for some simple elaboration. In the highest octave there is only one E flat, so that no trill is possible here. In the octave below however there are two E flats and two Fs so that a rapid trill is possible to keep the sound alive using the melodic note, E flat, and the note above. However, having played each of these four teeth, F, E flat, F, E flat, in rapid succession, we cannot use them again till the next beat. Hence the rest at the end of the bar in this part of the music.

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#### Bar 3

Because of the absence of a very high G flat, the melody has to be brought down an octave. To cover up the change and make use of the higher notes on the comb where possible we shall make use of upward runs in demisemiquavers. In the case of the two melodic Fs we can conveniently run up the scale to the higher F, the top note of the comb, using the eight notes of the scale in sequence to give us the needed eight demisemiquavers. As the final note of the run is also F, this will further serve to bring out the melody. On the third beat we cannot run upwards to a higher G flat, but we can go up as far as F flat and then fall back using the notes of the E flat minor chord indicated by the harmony to the G flat on which we started. All three melodic notes in this bar are emphasised by making use of both adjacent teeth which are tuned to them. Corresponding to the three melodic notes in this bar of the music, there are no fewer than 27 projections on the disc - a real field day for the arranger! It is in ways like this that he not only overcomes apparent limitations, but goes beyond this to create a new and subtle form of art.

#### Bar 4

We start on F again, but this time the note is to last a beat and a half. As with the C in bar 2, we repeat the F on the second beat of the bar, but this time we can run up to it with eight demisemiquavers and then remain in the higher octave. Whereas the upward runs from F in the previous bar finished on F, in this case we want F to come at the beginning of the second beat, not at the end of the first. This can be achieved by inserting an extra note, G natural, in the run of eight so that the last of the demisemiquavers is E flat, not F. On the last beat of this bar the melodic D flat is kept alive by being played in rapid succession with the D flats an octave below. (There are two D flats available in the highest octave).

#### Bars 5 & 6

As in bar 1, the melody appears in three octaves, the top octave being played *arpeggiando* and two teeth being plucked simultaneously in the second octave.

Scarcely less important than a carefully considered melodic line is a sound bass. In the case of a disc, bass teeth can be plucked a second time less rapidly than teeth near the top of the comb. However, the bass is slower moving, and presum-

ably this is why the bass notes are nearest the centre of a disc. It needs to be remembered too that the duration of sound of the bass notes is greater than that of the treble.

#### Bar 1

Just as we placed the melody in the highest available octave, so we place the bass as low as possible. Thus we get off to a good start with a low D flat on the first beat of the bar. Next we use the lowest available B flat; but on the third beat we used a low E flat in place of the G flat in the transposed piano score. This is because there is no really low G flat available. This produces a super-tonic chord in the root position instead of in the first inversion, which is preferable to a first inversion chord lacking a really low bass note.

#### Bars 2 & 3

The bass line is kept alive matching the busy treble by moving in quavers instead of crotchets. The low A flat is repeated at the octave on the second beat of bar 2, and the quaver movement is maintained in bar 3 with a descending figure which starts in the middle register and is taken over by the bass.

#### Bar 4

The quaver movement is continued in the tenor register during the one and a half beats of the low A flat. This should be followed by an A natural, but no such note is available in the bass, and even if it were, it might not sound effective, but rather smudgy, as the A flat would need to be dampened when the A natural sounded, and the A natural would need to be dampened when the B flat followed it at the distance of half a beat. Since this could not easily be achieved it is perhaps just as well that there are not too many bass notes available which might conflict with one another if sounded in too quick succession. Perhaps this is why a low G flat is omitted from the comb: it would create a dissonant semitonal clash if sounded close to the F. Instead of A natural, then, A flat is used again giving a simple dominant chord instead of a diminished seventh – which some might regard in dubious taste anyway!\*

#### Bars 5 & 6

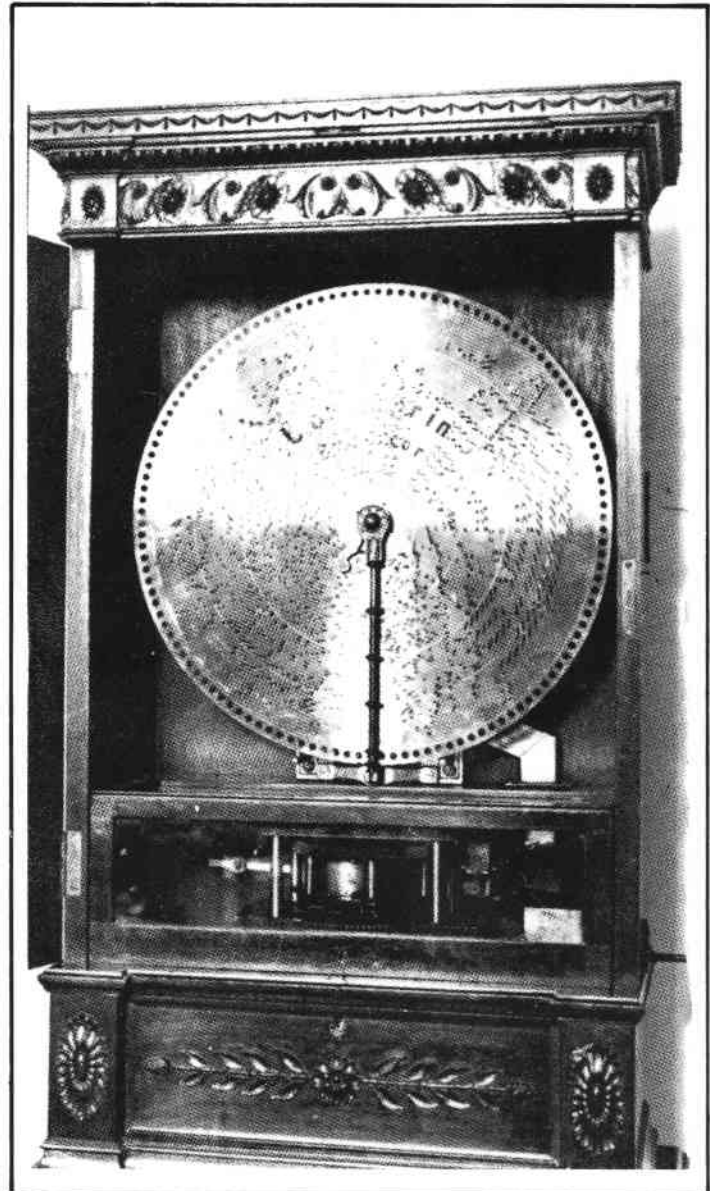
At the beginning of bar 5, E flat replaces G flat as at the end of bar 1; and in bar 6 the single chord is kept alive by quaver movement on the tonic chord which will lead back to a low D flat at the beginning of the next bar. Notice that the final

octave lacks a low F. This is because there is only one tooth for this note, and that has been plucked only a moment ago.

Having established good melodic and bass lines, the rest falls into place without too much difficulty. We need well spaced chords using the notes indicated in the transposed piano score, but modified sometimes where the bass line has been changed. The top octave of certain chords has been marked *arpeggiando*, but there is a slight tendency for all chords to be played in this way, the *arpeggiando* however being so rapid that the ear is scarcely aware of it, except that sometimes a tendency for the lowest note of a chord to anticipate the rest by the slightest fraction is noticeable.

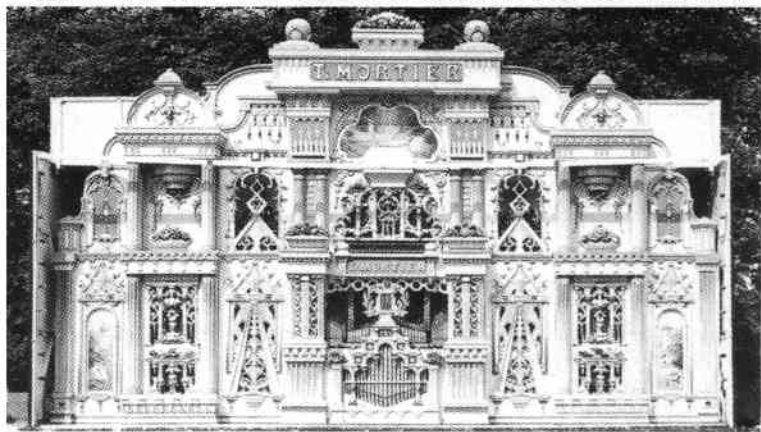
Whereas the piano score contains 64 notes – 16 notes of melody supported by four part harmony – the corresponding bars on the musical box use 203 notes. Trills, runs, arpeggios, ornamental figures, spread chords, repeated notes – a determination to use the full range of the musical comb – these are the ways in which the music arranger not only triumphs over the limitations of his instrument, but creates a distinctive form of musical expression of great subtlety and charm.

ROBIN TIMMS





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**SIDE A**

1. David Barlow March, (Comp. J.K. De Ruyter: Arr. J.K. De Ruyter)
2. Kaiser Waltz, (Comp. Strauss: Arr. Razerberg)
3. Chiquitita, (Comp. Abba: Arr. J.K. De Ruyter)
4. He played his Ukelele as the ship went down, (Arr. Razerberg)
5. Ain't it grand to be bloomin' well dead, (Comp. L. Sorroni: Arr. Razerberg)
6. One day at a day, (Comp. D. Knight: Arr. Tom Meyer)
7. Mill in the Black Forest, (Comp. Eilenberg: Arr. Razerberg)
8. The Entertainer, (Comp. Scott Joplin: Arr. A. Prinsen)
9. Jubilee March, (Comp. Tom Meyer: Arr. Tom Meyer)
10. Dat ene Amsterdam, (Comp. P. Kellen-Bach: Arr. Razerberg)
11. Chim Chim Cheree, (Comp. R.M. & R.B. Sherman: Arr. Razerberg)
12. Spoonful of Sugar, (Comp. R.M. & R.B. Sherman: Arr. Razerberg)
13. Vino, (Comp. J. Santaga/Moring: Arr. Tom Meyer)

Timing 31:35

**SIDE B**

1. Flight of the Bumble Bee, (Comp. Rimsky Korsakoff: Arr. A. Prinsen)
2. Theme from "The Muppets", (Comp. Henson/Pottle: Arr. J.K. De Ruyter)
3. Hands across the Sea, (Comp. Sousa: Arr. Tom Meyer)
4. Temptation Rag, (Comp. Lodge Weslyn: Arr. Tom Meyer)
5. El Gato Montes, (Arr. J.K. De Ruyter)
6. Rock Around the Clock, (Comp. D. Knight/Freedman: Arr. Razerberg)
7. La Mourisque, (Trad.: Arr. Peit Kee/Tom Meyer)
8. Spirou, (Arr. Abel Frans)
9. Putting on the Ritz, (Comp. Berlin: Arr. J.K. De Ruyter)
10. Boogie Woogie Medley: — Harmonica Boogie, Princen Boogie, (Comp. A. Prinsen: Arr. A. Prinsen); Can't Buy Me Love, (Comp. Lennon/McCartney: Arr. A. Prinsen); Just Boogie, (Comp. A. Prinsen: Arr. A. Prinsen)
11. Symphony, (Comp. Alstone: Arr. Abel Frans)
12. Jingle Bells, (Trad.: Arr. A. Prinsen)
13. Mexicana Conga, (Arr. Peersman)
14. De Raspa, (Comp. N. Garcia: Arr. A. Schollaert)
15. God Be With You, (Comp. W.G. Tomer: Arr. Razerberg)

Timing 32:11

40366 CROMER. GARDEN OF SLEEP

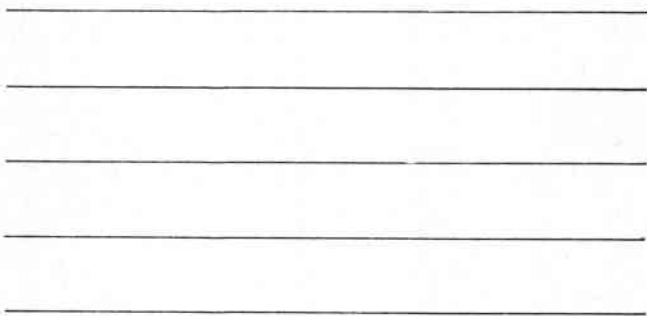


On the grass of the cliff, at the edge of the steep,  
 God planted a garden—a garden of sleep!  
 'Neath the blue of the sky, in the green of the corn,  
 It is there that the regal red poppies are born!  
 Brief days of desire, and long dreams of delight,  
 They are mine when my poppy land cometh in sight.  
 Oh! heart of my heart! where the poppies are born,  
 I am waiting for thee, in the hush of the corn.

In my garden of sleep, where red poppies are spread,  
 I wait for the living, alone with the dead!  
 Where a tower in ruins stood guard o'er the deep,  
 At whose feet were green graves of dear women asleep!  
 Did they love as I love, when they lived by the sea?  
 Did they wait as I wait for the days that may be?  
 Oh! life of my life, on the cliffs by the sea,  
 By the graves in the grass, I am waiting for thee.

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A comb. York.

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I understand from a letter in the Musical Box Society's Bulletin that you require parts for the governors or the escapements of musical boxes. I can repair these. It is not quite clear if Miss Catherine Buckle also requires fittings. Perhaps you will let me know.

Yours faithfully  
John E.T. Clark.

J E T Clark died on October 12, 1965, aged 81, at his home in Bidford-on-Avon, Warwickshire.

This signed bill of 1959 by the Society's first President JOHN E T CLARK was sent in by Founder-member Alan Ridsdill of York.

J E T Clark's book *Musical Boxes* was first published in 1948 by Geo Allen and Unwin Ltd, London. There have been several reprints.

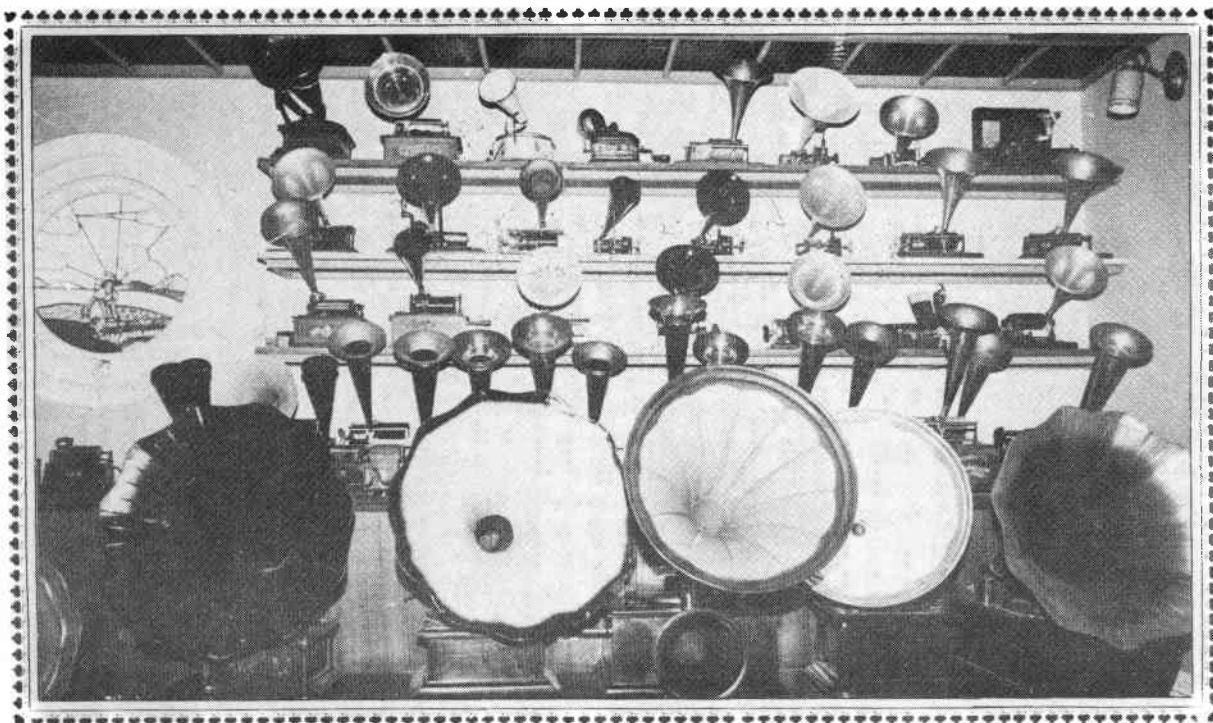
The Editor of the Journal, Arthur Ord-Hume, wrote of John's 1962 appointment as President MBSGB, "...his knowledge and experience in the subject of musical boxes is probably without equal in the British Isles."

**FERNIHOUGH**  
**PHONOGRAPH and MUSIC BOX**  
**COLLECTION**  
(Inspection by Appointment)



Edison Opera (later Concert) phonograph, 1912

T.G. Fernihough, 165 Waratah Place, Dalkeith — Sponsored by Executive Homes 81 2788



From earliest times man has striven to reproduce music automatically, however, only since the eighteenth century has mechanical music and the instruments for reproducing that music really flourished.

The fascination of music boxes is such that more and more people have begun collecting these historic, delicate and beautiful instruments.

In this rare collection of phonographs and music boxes (amongst the finest private collections in Australia) appears a bird musical box Circa 1830 the oldest item in the collection, the glass-domed Automata Museum pieces of mainly French origin plus a roller organ, organette and musical cigar box.

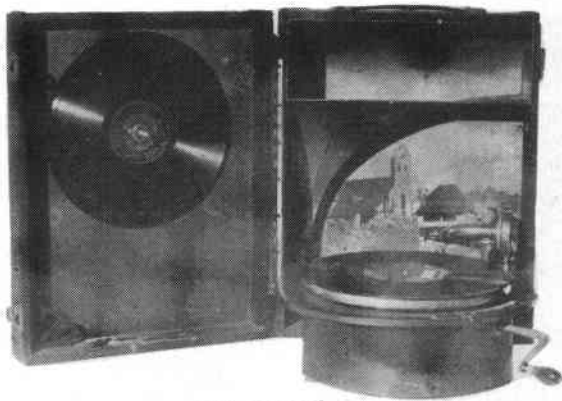
An extremely fine Polyphon Disc music box operated by a penny in a slot is displayed – these instruments were in popular use in taverns and eating houses in the late nineteenth century. Some of the many models of the Edison phonograph are depicted.

Another fascinating item in this collection, is the Puck Phonograph. Designed in 1896 by the German, Bahre, hundreds of thousands of these simple instruments were manufactured and sold for only 3s 6d (in England) bringing the phonograph within the means of everyone.

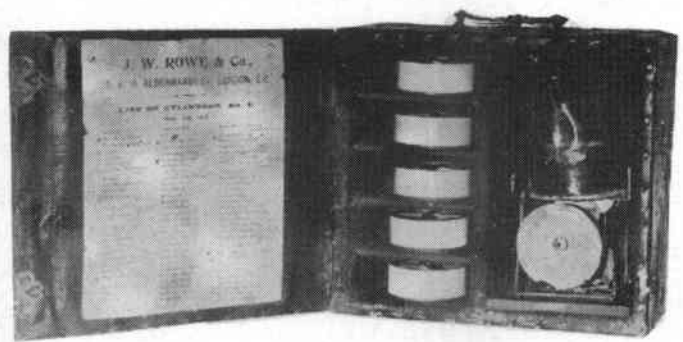
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MR. FERNIHOUGH TRUSTS THAT YOU ENJOY VIEWING THIS DISPLAY OF RARE PHONOGRAPHS AND MUSIC BOXES FROM THE PAST, AND IF YOU KNOW OF AVAILABLE ITEMS WHICH MAY BE OF INTEREST TO HIM IN EXTENDING HIS COLLECTION EVEN FURTHER, SUCH ADVICE WOULD BE WELCOMED.

---



LE SONN "OR  
Picture inlaid wood



LIORET LE MERVEILLEUX



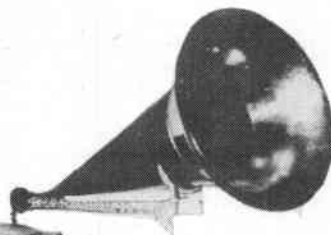
FONEDLUX



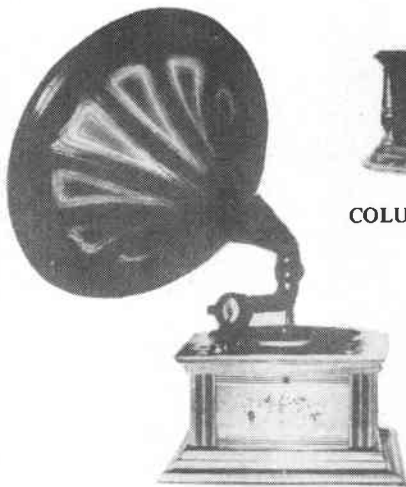
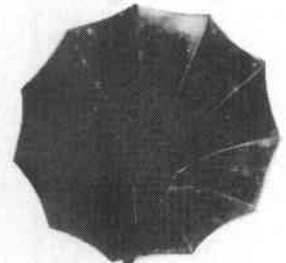
COLUMBIA COIN IN SLOT



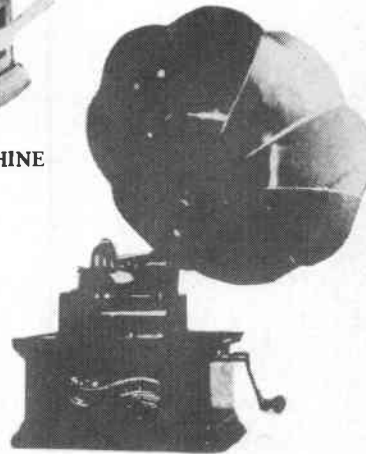
RARE PUCK TYPE MACHINE



COLUMBIA DISC MACHINE



WELL PRESERVED DISC MACHINE



COLUMBIA CROWN



OPERA SCHOOL MODEL



SINGING BIRD PENNY IN  
SLOT 19TH CENTURY.



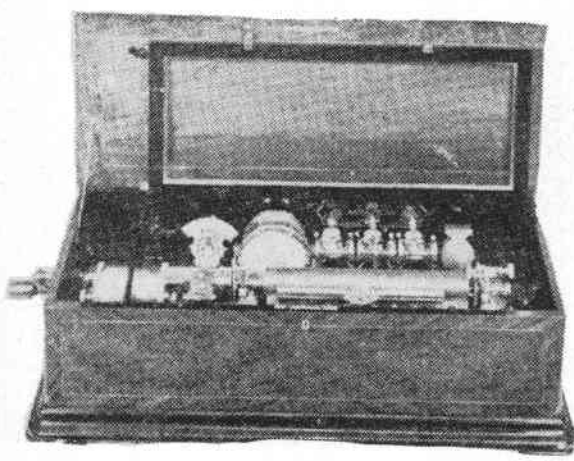
SINGING BIRDS  
7 BIRDS FLY FROM BRANCH TO BRANCH 1847.



SINGING BIRDS  
LATE 19TH CENTURY.



BEAUTIFULLY COLOURED BOAT & FARM AUTOMATION.



NICOLI FRÈRES  
Bells, drums and castinets  
with Chinese bell strikers.



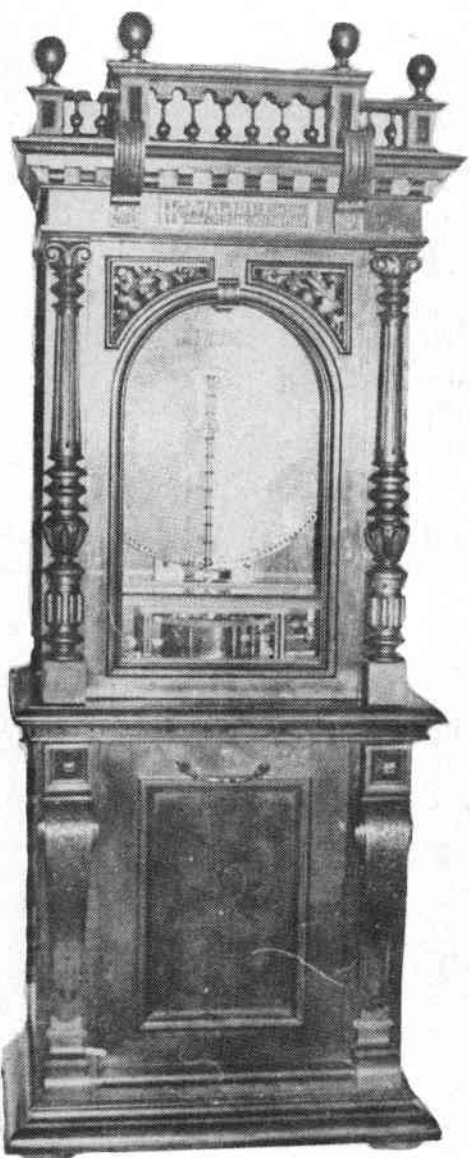
ARIOSA MUSIC BOX



NICOLI FRÈRES WITH BELLS 1881



MIRA MUSIC BOX



RARE KALLIOPE MUSIC BOX



CELESTINA MUSIC BOX



SYMPONION MUSIC BOX 1895



POLYPHON MUSIC BOX



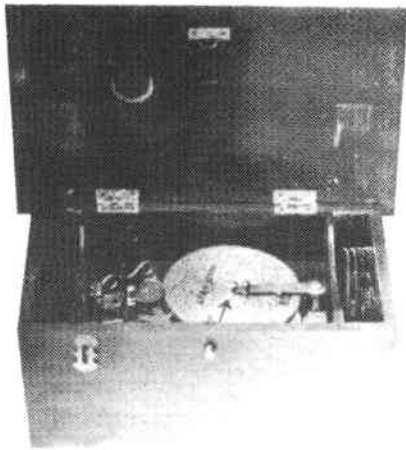
DIAGRAM OF TOP OF BOX LID



**"CHINESE MUSIC" BOX**



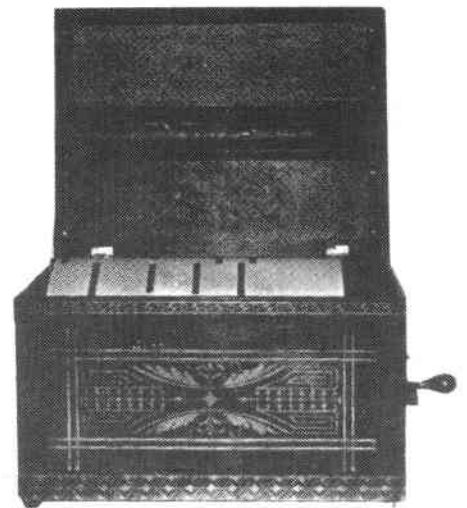
**GEM ROLLER ROGAN**



**DISC MUSIC BOX**



**SINGING BIRDCAGE**



**PAPER ROLLER ORGAN**



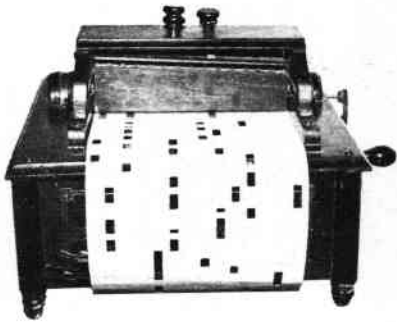
**BOAT AND TRAIN AUTOMATION**



**FARM AUTOMATION**  
Girl pumps, windmill turns, goat moves



RARE MUSIC BOXES OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY



ORCHESTRAL ORGANETTE (1891)



NICOLE FRÈRES MUSICAL BOX



SINGING BIRD MUSICAL BOX (1830)



SYMPHONION MUSIC BOX (1896)



SYMPHONION DISC-PLAYING  
"BRACKET" CLOCK



ROLLER ORGAN (1885)



GLADSTONE ALBUM MUSICAL MOVEMENT



CIGAR BOX



POLYPHON - PENNY IN THE SLOT



The original "His Master's Voice" picture was painted by Francis Barraud in 1889, and this is how the inspiration was born. The artist's brother had a fox terrier, Nipper by name. Nipper was devoted to his master, but indifferent to other people. The brother died and Nipper went to live with the artist – Francis Barraud.

This was in the days of the phonograph, when wax cylinders were used. Barraud noticed how the dog cocked his ears and listened intently whenever the phonograph "talked". Whether one of the voices resembled that of the dog's old master is not known, but the attitude gave Francis Barraud the idea for his picture. He painted a picture of Nipper listening to the phonograph and gave it the title "His Master's Voice".

It was then adopted as the trademark of the Gramophone Company. Almost 70 years later, hundreds of thousands of reproductions of this famous picture have been made in every conceivable form, and it is now as well-known in the remote corners of the earth as in the great city where it originated.

The strong appeal of the picture lies probably in the fidelity of the dog. It is appropriate, therefore, that this quality of fidelity has been the keynote of "His Master's Voice" products ever since – fidelity in the reproduction of the works of great musical artists – fidelity to the public who have relied upon "His Master's Voice" to provide the latest and best in home entertainment.



MONKEY AUTOMATON

Monkey's play violin & cello, heads and eyes move to musical accompaniment. (1860)



BOAT AUTOMATON

Windmill turns, train travels over bridge, and boat rocks – all to musical accompaniment.

## LIST OF MEMBERS

- 1722 Peter Jarvis, Kingston-upon-Thames, England  
 1723 Max Sicard, Bruxelles, Belgium  
 1724 Stanley Burdon, Bath, England  
 1725 Anthony Cragg, Nottingham, England  
 1726 C Van Der Graaf, Amsterdam, Holland  
 1727 H W Townhill, Tickton, E Yorkshire, England  
 1728 Duncan Garlic, Nottingham, England  
 1729 W J Duquemin, Jersey  
 1730 Mr and Mrs Rupert Talbot, Colombo 3, Sri Lanka  
 1731 W F Earle, Ontario, Canada  
 1732 William H Davey, Sechelt BC, Canada  
 1733 C H Doney, Fairlight, NSW, Australia  
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 1754 Mrs Carmelinda Ferrer-Correia, Aveiro, Portugal  
 1755 Edward Nicholas Smith, New Romney, Kent  
 1756 Robert W. M. Kedge, Solihull, England  
 1757 John Phillips, Fontwell, W Sussex, England  
 1758 Leslie C Gage, Edinburgh, Scotland  
 1759 S D Ford, Wareham, Dorset, England

- 1760 Ralph Ruben, Johannesburg, South Africa  
 1761 Daniel Wiles, London W4, England

In response to the request of a number of members full addresses are no longer going to be listed in the Journal. The Committee request that where a member wishes to contact another member for the first time please do so through FRANK VOGEL, 5 Henley Lodge, Selhurst Road, London SE25 5SE, England.

For your information the following members have changed their address since the publication of the last Membership List. If you wish to contact any of these members please do so through Frank Vogel in the first instance.

## CHANGE OF ADDRESS

- 0055 E. M. Bruton, London EC1, England  
 0085 G Webb, Brighton, England  
 0235 A M Sladen, London SW1, England  
 0238 Mrs R Ford, New York, USA  
 0397 J V Knott, Bolton, England  
 0413 D K Tillmanns, Ridgcrest, USA  
 0445 L N Wilson, Aldershot, England  
 0815 Dr J K Baureidel, California, USA  
 0915 Mrs D R Dalton, Croydon, England  
 0973 T W Leveret, Concord, USA  
 1038 J B Benson, Derby, England  
 1119 D Boles, Dublin, Eire  
 1243 C S Mansfield, Liphook, Hants, England (rejoined)  
 1271 A T Black, Aberdeen, Scotland  
 1347 N J A Simons, Derby, England  
 1392 K K Leeseberg, Illinois, USA  
 1479 R Boul, Ontario, Canada  
 1516 A J Bies, Texas, USA  
 1718 Mrs A M Biden, Leicestershire, England

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- 1661 L Finkel, New York, USA  
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# TV's 'BLUE PETER'

*programme presents*

## Daphne and Alan Wyatt

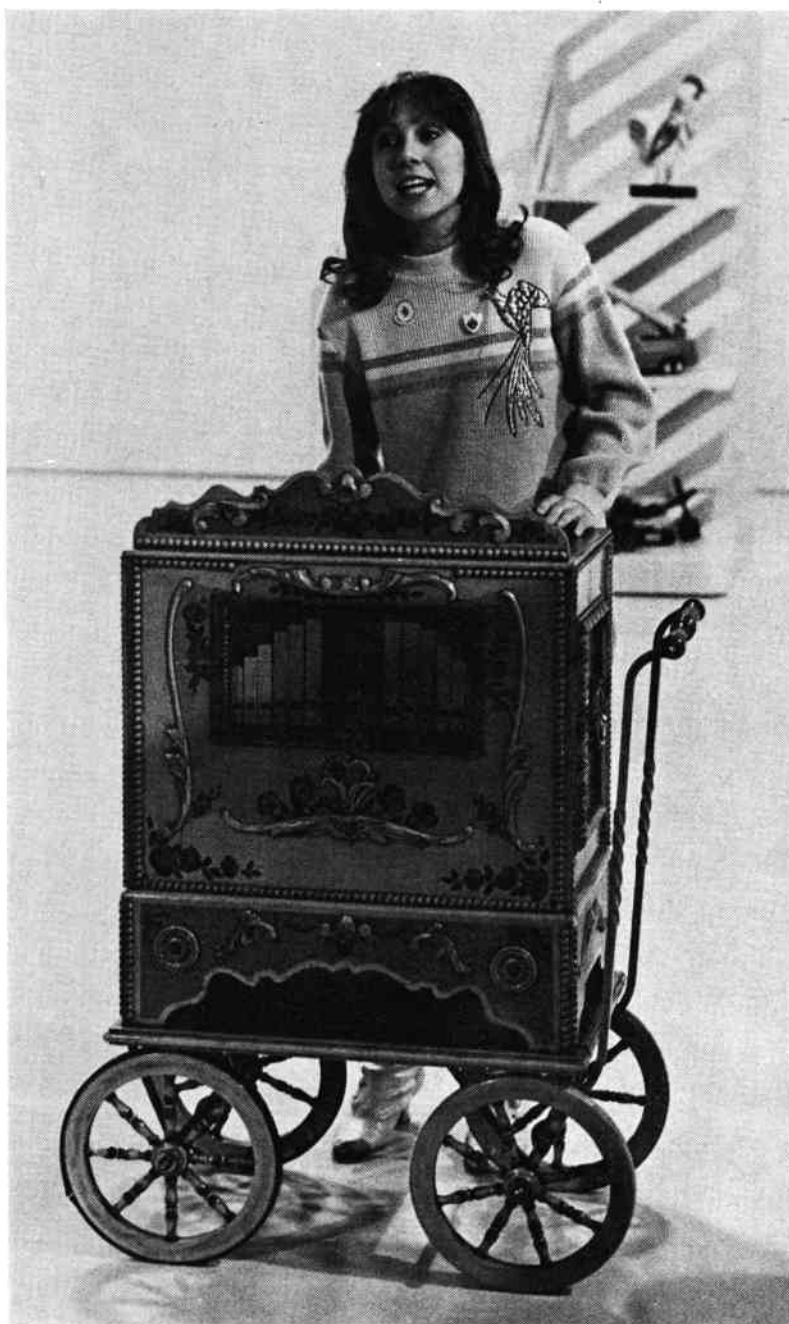
MOVING among the crowds at Leeds at last year's Autumn Festival, and watching the barrel organ players, was Frances Giffard, TV "Blue Peter" programme director. The couple who particularly attracted his attention were **ALAN** and **DAPHNE WYATT**, dressed for the part as "ye olde organ grinder with his good ladie wife".

Thus it was that in February 1981, they, and their barrel organ, appeared on the long-running ever-popular BBC programme, "Blue Peter".

Alan and Daphne bought their Wilhelm Tiedmann 26-note, keyless, perforated paper-roll-playing instrument in May, 1979, when they were in Hannover at the



Alan and Daphne (right) in Hannover. Centre is their friend Mrs Fiona Russell.



The Wyatt Barrell Organ.

annual Barrel Organ Festival held there. About forty members of the MBSGB were present, staying at the Kastens Hotel, and one good friend, **GRAHAM WHITEHEAD**, brought the Wyatt organ safely back to Britain by car. This solved a transport problem which could have been tricky.

The only thing missing in the authenticity of the picture Alan and Daphne presented in Leeds was "the monkey". It is rare nowadays to see these once familiar creatures.

There was a photographer in Brighton last year with one perched in his shoulder. He had hired the creature to attract customers. A hundred years ago barrel organ monkeys were commonplace in London, wearing their little waistcoats and trousers, and sometimes taking a collection in their hats. Most of these little animals came from South Africa so the doll-like clothes they wore not only amused the crowds but kept the monkeys warm in winter.

The barrel organ players themselves came from Italy, but too many came and the supply outstripped demand to the point where organ grinders became something of a public nuisance and gradually the organ-grinder and the London policeman became more than unfriendly towards each other.

Then many of the organ-grinders were exploited. They had to sell their instruments, and then hire them back at ever increasing charges, and they also fell victim to landlords who began to charge higher and higher rents for the most squalid of living quarters.



THE POPISH ORGAN NUISANCE.

MR. PEARSON'S "THE POPISH ORGAN NUISANCE" IS A VERY GOOD AND INTERESTING CARTOON.



The "Roll Monica"  
(Pictures by BBC permission)

Something in common in two long-running television personalities?

Incidentally, in our last issue we reported Keith Harding's appearance in Jimmy Savile's "Jim'll Fix It" TV programme at Christmas. What have Peter Duncan and Jimmy Savile got in common? Clue: they both appeared on the same programme on television, and both won an award. Answer at back of the journal.

Daphne and Alan Wyatt, who live in Landbeach, Cambridge, are organising the Cambridge meeting on Saturday, 5th September. There is to be a gala dinner followed by Olde Tyme Musick Hall . . . and . . . last but not least . . . the Wyatt barrel organ which has appeared on television! Hurrah!

At the turn of the century the organ-grinder had lost his popularity. Magazines carried cartoons with captions such as, "The Popish Organ Nuisance", or, "Clearing the Streets".

How refreshing to find that a friendly couple such as Alan and Daphne can nowadays do so much to restore the popularity of the street barrel organ.



CLEARING THE STREETS.

MR. BASS (Sings) "THERE'S MY THUNDER!"

In the television programme they also produced a "Roll Monica". Most MBSGB members will be familiar with this American invention of the 1920s, the mechanical mouthorgan, but how many have actually seen one? Peter Duncan "played" the instrument in the Blue Peter programme.



Alan Wyatt doing his stuff on BBC television

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# ANDERSSON'S TABLE ORGAN

Bill Lindwall

(edited by Arthur W J G Orde-Hume)

## INTRODUCTION

On pages 330-334 of Volume 8 we published an article by our Swedish member Bill Lindwall on the Andersson Pianoharpa, one of the few survivors of the rare breed of Swedish indigenous automatic musical instruments. Besides owning several examples of this unusual instrument, Bill Lindwall also owns an instrument which he believes to be the incomplete prototype of an organ version of the Pianoharpa which Andersson had been developing.

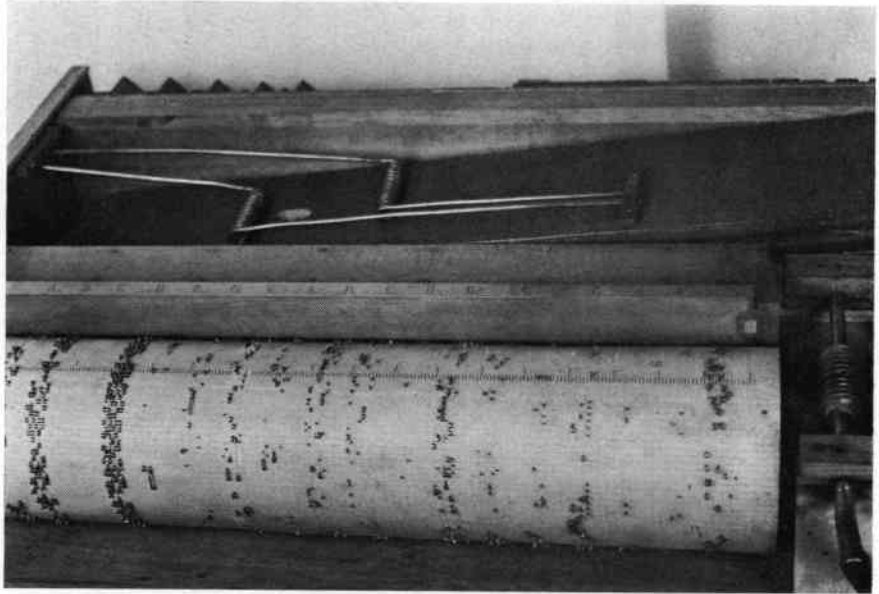
IF YOU refer to my previous articles in *The Music Box*, you will see that I have described both of the main Swedish-designed and built automatic musical instruments, the Nyström Reform-Orgel and the Andersson Pianoharpa.

The Pianoharpa was the invention of I F Nilsson but as I have already published, the development work on the type was the work of the brothers Anders Gustaf and Jones Wilhelm Andersson who lived in a tiny village called Näs-hult outside the small town of Vetlanda in the south of Sweden.

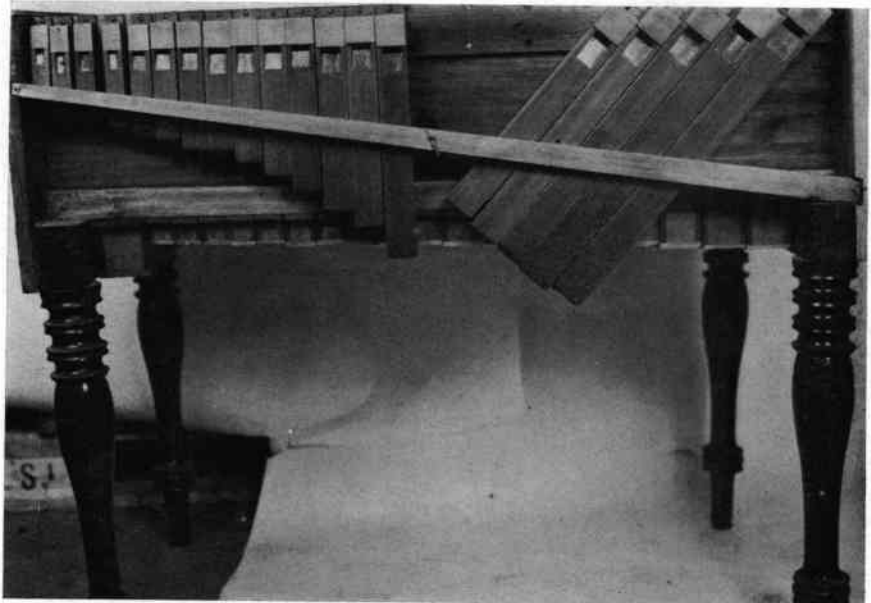
The instrument which the brothers manufactured was essentially somewhat crude and musically not very perfect. There were ten barrels manufactured for the instrument, each offering a choice of a dozen tunes to be played on the compass of 18 notes.

I have in my collection a very unusual instrument which, because of its points of stylistic similarity, I believe to have been an attempt by the Andersson brothers to manufacture a mechanical organ along principles similar to those of the Pianoharpa.

First, a description of the instrument I own. It is in the form of a table standing on four turned wooden legs. It measures 95cm by 57cm and stands 85cm high. Within the table there is a barrel 72cm in length and 15cm in diameter which can be shifted laterally to seven positions for a similar number of tunes. The barrel surface is divided to play 12 tunes on 21 keys.



Detail of the barrel showing the rigid notation marking, the key and tune divisions marked on, the lack of an end-of-tune space, and the tuning rail behind the barrel showing scale.



Pipework on the back of the table. This rank is on a slider chest controlled from a knob on the left side of the case.

There are 39 pipes arranged in two ranks, 19 of these being arranged on a slider chest along the back of the table, the shorter ones being vertically mounted and the five longest being angled. The other 20 pipes are mounted horizontally

under the table, the highest 11 of which are open and the remainder provided with wooden stoppers.

The scale is F, G, A, H, C, D, E, F#, G, A, H, C, D, G#, A, F#, G, A, H. The lowest note, common to both registers, is the mitred pipe, H.

The pipes are interesting in construction. All are made of clear Scandinavian pipe and the back board of the pipe is extended to provide a lip through which a securing screw can be inserted to hold the pipe into position. All of them take wind through their backs. The mouths are cut quite high and the wind sheet across the languid is wide, suggesting that pressures and volumes of air used in playing are larger than those in most mechanical organs intended for use in domestic surroundings.

This instrument came into my possession some time ago and it was obvious to me that it was both a prototype of a new machine and an unfinished one at that. What evidence is there to lead me to attribute it to Andersson? Well, there is quite a lot.

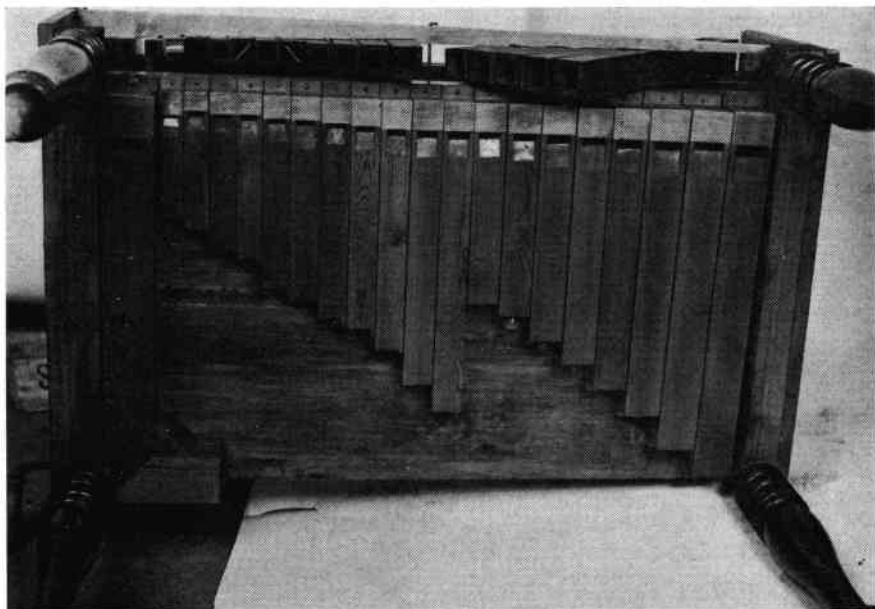
The strongest evidence is provided by the table itself within which the mechanism is hidden. This is very similar to that contrived by Andersson and in this connection I would especially draw your attention to the photographs printed on pages 331 and 332 of Volume 8 of *The Music Box* and ask that you compare the shape of the legs of the Nilsson instrument with those of the Andersson one—and then look at the legs on the instrument pictured here. Note that while Nilsson had a totally different style of decorative turning, the Pianoharpa and the instrument described here have precisely the same shape and pattern of leg.

Next there is the winding handle which, while I agree that it might not be original, appears so and is the same characteristic shape.

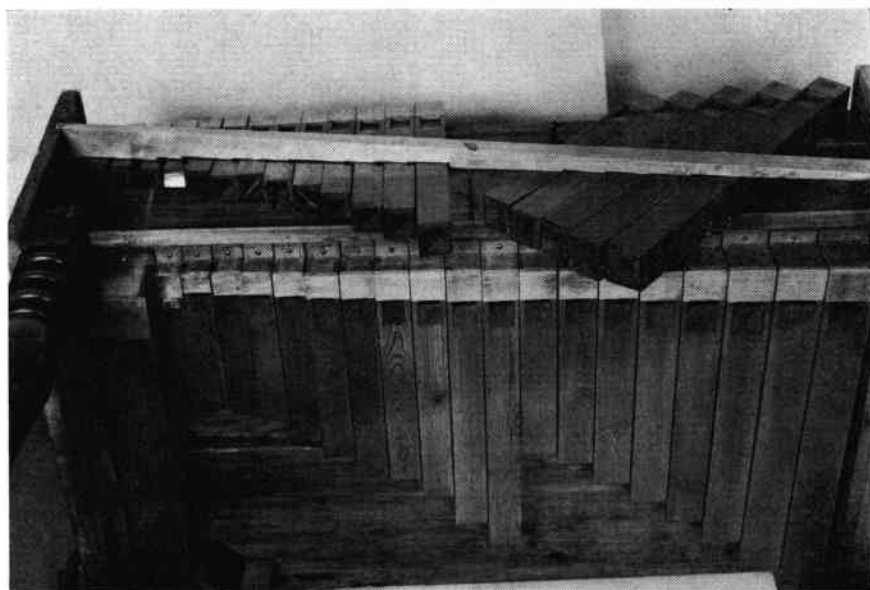
The instruments being imported into Sweden from Germany at this time for local sale all had wooden pipes, so it is not unnatural that the designer and builder of this instrument who had to learn from technologies outside his own country should have looked to Germany for guidance.

The wooden pipes used here are also, I believe, prototype ones hand-made for this instrument. They have a clear and pleasant sound and are robustly made, probably by some local organ-builder in the neighbourhood.

The state of the instrument is more or less as I found it. While the barrel changing mechanism shows positions for seven melodies, only a few are actually pinned and the notes represented by the barrel pinning seem somewhat sparse,



**View on the bottom of the table showing the open and stopped wooden pipework.**



**In this view of the pipework can be seen the method of attaching the pipes with woodscrews through their extended back-boards. Also note the thickness of the wood used for the pipes, not guaranteed to produce the very best singing tone.**

suggesting that the music produced would be somewhat on the thin side. It must also be confessed that several skilled persons here in Sweden have attempted to tune the instrument to play the melodies that are indicated on the barrel, so far without success. It is thus not possible to hear how the instrument actually sounds.

There are many unanswered questions posed by this obviously unique instrument. First there is the rather anomalous situation of

21 key positions marked on the barrel and the notational division of 12 tune positions all culminating in seven tune positions and only 39 pipes. Then there is the absence of any subsequent development, either by way of patent information or of other, more refined specimens.

One is forced to conclude that this instrument, made at a date unknown but no doubt around the time of the Pianoharpa (it might have pre-dated the Pianoharpa but



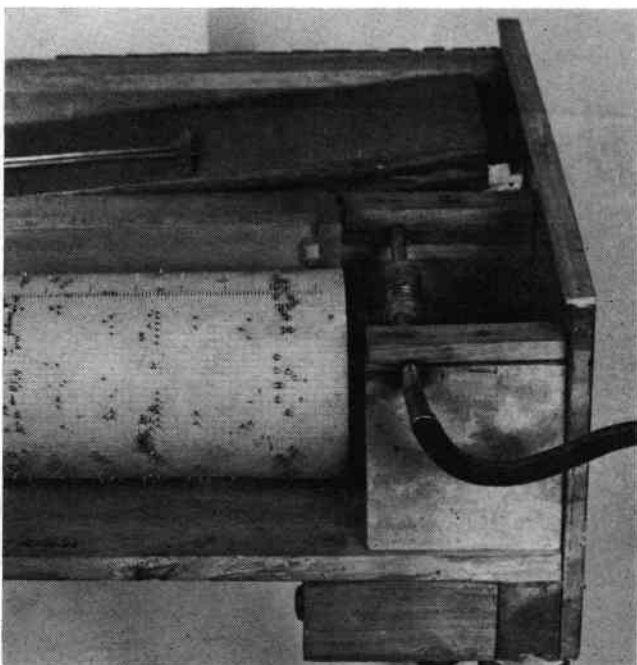
more probably, I feel, followed it) was deemed a failure and was abandoned.

Everybody who is working with the task of finding out the history of mechanical instruments knows the feeling of failure when he fails to find an acceptable solution to a problem. That, however, has to be accepted as we continue our work of writing the history of mechanical musical instruments.

Personally, I feel optimism and hope that I will have the honour to contribute future material to *The Music Box*.



The general appearance of the Andersson table organ.



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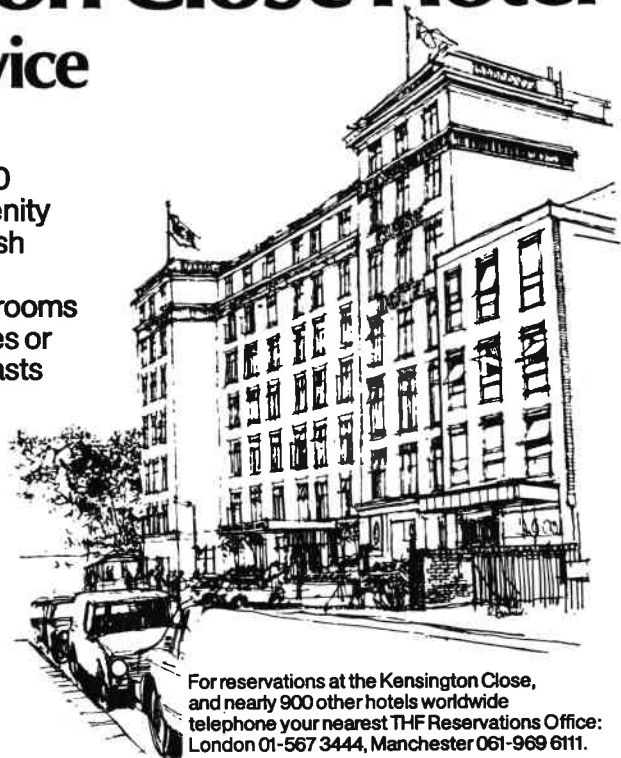
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## Society Affairs

WHEN I was being shown round the Thanet Printing Works in January of this year I met employee **ASHLEY BALDRY**, a musical automata enthusiast and friend of several MBSGB members such as **F. D. WEBB** of Westgate-on-Sea, and **ROGER BURVILLE** of Preston (Canterbury).

Taking up Ashley's invitation to attend a concert organised by The Medway Theatre Trust, my wife, Daphne, and I motored to Margate on the sunny morning of Sunday, 1 March, 1981. The organist Douglas Reeve, resident organist at The Dome, Brighton, was the main attraction. The mighty Compton Theatre Organ rose from the pit at Margate's Dreamland Theatre, the sounds of Douglas's signature tune, *Pack Up Your Troubles*, reverberating throughout the theatre-now-a-bingo-hall. After Offenbach's *Orpheus in the Underworld*, and some songs delightfully sung by the organist's wife, Joyce, the sense of nostalgia was enhanced for the large audience by three selections, *Theatre Organ Impressions*, *Theatre Organ Favourites* and, *Memories of Reginald Foort*.

Who in England, especially of the 1930s, could forget Reginald Foort! There were five Reginalds who broadcast regularly in those now seemingly carefree pre-war days; Reginald Foort, Reginald Dixon, Reginald New, Reginald Porter-Brown, but, who was the fifth Reginald? Can any TMB reader supply the answer? My memory is only 80% active on this score.



The Medway Theatre Organ Trust is very much a sister-society of ours. Their magazine contained an article by our own **JUDITH HOWARD** (on the Willis organ, following the fire at Alexandra Palace). The other magazine Ashley had, *The Key Frame*, carried articles by MBSGB members including **ARTHUR W J G**



Ashley Baldry, with David Burville (2) to his left.

**ORD-HUME, RONALD LEACH, ROGER BURVILLE, JACK TEMPEST and BRIAN ORAM.**

After the concert Daphne and I were entertained at the Ramsgate home of Ashley, his wife **MARY**, and 4 year old daughter **LISA**. An excellent Sunday roast dinner was followed by wine and . . . music. This was performed on a Mormelle player-piano, using a variety of rolls including several Artona Music Rolls. These rolls can be obtained from 14 Vale Square, Ramsgate, Kent. One roll

in particular was dear to my pianistic-heart. It played "in the style of Charlie Kunz". Well, . . . could *anyone*, or *anything* play in the Kunz style? Such delicacy of touch, pedalling, and exquisite dynamics! Remembering very clearly the playing of Charlie Kunz, at the Liverpool Empire and at Cassani's Club in London, I did really wonder if the Mormelle did Charlie justice. Outright jazz piano, pure classical piano . . . yes . . . but Charlie Kunz? . . . it was a brave attempt for a piano roll.



And Lisa Baldry (4) to his right.

Gordon Iles made some excellent arrangements for piano rolls and Steve Race played the piano as he worked with Gordon. Some of the American arrangements Ashley played on his Mormelle were quite excellent. One roll which was particularly exciting was an Artona arrangement of *Tico Tico*. Ashley lent me EMI record SX 6194, *Pianola Playtime* on which Richard Rodgers played some of his own compositions, for "Ampico" (American Piano Company) issued in the 1920s.

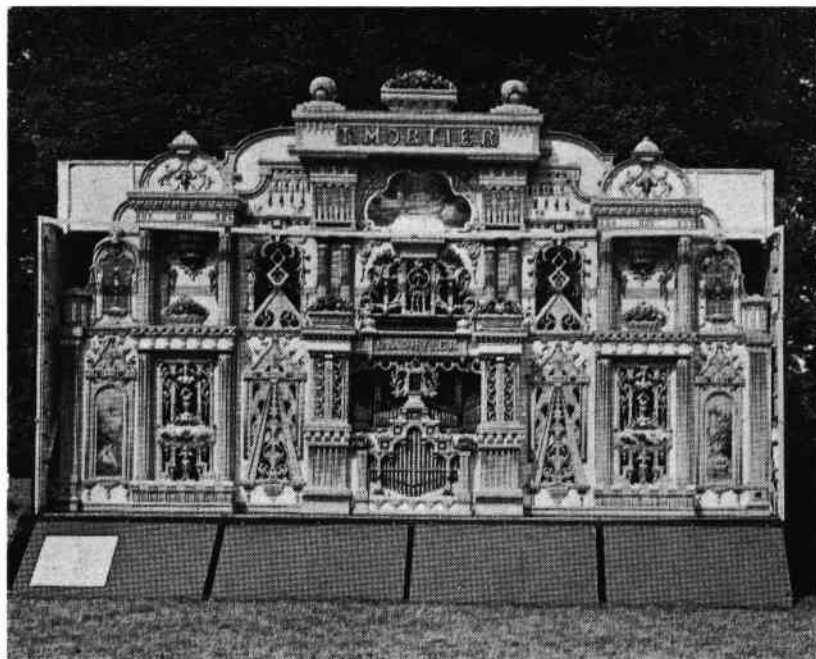
During the afternoon at Ashley's home we were joined by **ROGER BURVILLE**, his wife **PENNY**, and 2 year old son, **DAVID**. More Artona rolls, and Artistyle rolls, were played on the Mormelle piano, and the two children were fascinated. How could the piano keys go up and down without Ashley pressing them? This instrument, incidentally, cost Ashley £10, and he did the restoration work himself.



Roger Burville

The children's interest was sustained until half past five when they reminded us that *The Muppet Show* was due. This took precedence even over **HILARY KAY**'s Sunday appearance with Angela Rippon and Arthur Negus on TV's *The Antique Show*.

The Medway Theatre Organ Trust run quarterly concerts and MBSGB members living in the Thanet area might like to note these dates: Sunday, 7th June, David Shepherd, Sunday, 6th September, Ena Baga, and Sunday, 6th December, direct from Reginald Dixon's old haunt at Blackpool, Phil Kelsall. The concerts begin at 11 am admission is 75p, and refreshments are available in the Dreamland Theatre, Margate.



Roger Burville's "De Kluisberg" Mortier organ

'The Largest', or even, 'One of the Largest' of any species calls for investigation. In Thomas Beecham's book, *A Mingled Chime*, he wrote about the "biggest music box in the world". Thomas had in the garden a super music box, the like of which had never been seen before. One big enough to walk into. It played symphonies of Beethoven and Mozart, preludes, selections from operas by Verdi, Rossini, and Wagner. From this monster machine the boy Beecham grew to understand great music. He played the cylinders until he knew the music by heart. He later wrote, "My father nourished a passion for musical boxes of every description, and the house almost overflowed with them . . . The visitor who hung up his hat on a certain peg of the hall rack, or who absent-mindedly abstracted the wrong umbrella from the stand, would be startled at having provoked into life the cheerful strains of *William Tell* or *Fra Diavolo*. But others were serious and solid affairs, elaborate of build, full of strange devices . . . how I loved them then, and how I lament their absence now!" (*Beecham Stories*, compiled by Harold Atkins and Archie Newman. Futura Publications). The book *A Mingled Chime*, by Thomas Beecham, is published by Hutchinson Publishing Group.

However, his nephew, Derick Beecham, told me over the telephone that there is some exaggeration in the book and that the

cylinders were too heavy for a boy to lift anyway. The music box disappeared when the Beecham Lanchashire house was sold.

When I heard that **ROGER BURVILLE** had "possibly the largest mechanical organ in the country", "the size of two London buses", I decided to visit the Burville home at Preston, near Canterbury, and find out more about this interesting organ.

Many members will, of course, be familiar with Roger's "De Kluisberg" *Mortier* organ, serial number 1023, which was built in Antwerp circa 1926. The firm of Theofiel Mortier built it for a Dance Hall at Kluisberg, near Antwerp, hence its name. The village has now disappeared. Did someone tell me it was for a Nuclear site?

After WW2 the organ was sold to Mr. **G. PERLEE**, the famous Dutch organ builder, and the instrument became an attraction in Amsterdam. The next owner was Englishman **DAVID BARLOW** who brought it to England in 1962. David Barlow was managing director of Wingham (near Canterbury) Engineering Company, and the mighty organ is still housed in a huge black shed by the side of a country lane in Wingham. Many people will drive or walk past never dreaming what is inside that mighty shed.

In 1967, however, David was killed in a tragic road accident, aged only 50. In his will the organ was left to Roger Burville. The

method Roger has adopted to maintain the organ is to form a non-profit-making charitable trust, helped by friends. They use the organ at Festivals and Fairs to raise money for charities, charging only a fee to cover expenses for the upkeep of the organ.

The huge Mortier organ, drawn through the streets by its own powerful lorry, has appeared at Castle Howard, Blackheath, Stratford-on-Avon, Birmingham, Tewksbury, Isle of Wight, Blandford (Dorset), and many other places.

It was through his activities in displaying the Mortier that Roger met the attractive lady who is now his wife, **PENNY BURVILLE**. As Ashley Baldry discovered, young **DAVID BURVILLE** shows his parents' interest in mechanical music.

Roger and Penny Burville, in co-operation with their charitable trust, have produced a stereo cassette which they have labelled "Mortier Magic".

On one side can be heard; *David Barlow March* (composed by J K De Ruyter), *Kaiser Waltz*, and eleven other tunes. On the other side are fifteen tunes including *Flight of the Bumble Bee*, *The Muppets theme*, and *Rock Around the Clock*.

The cassettes can be obtained from; Roger and Penny Burville, One Baytree Cottages, The Street, Preston, near Canterbury, Kent.

MBSGB member **JOHN WEMPE** of Holland, and his friend **PAUL VOOGES**, are the organ engineers. **PAUL RINNE** is the recording engineer, and **BILL ENTWISTLE** the photographer.

Each side lasts for about 30 minutes. They are now on sale, price £3.50 plus 27p postage and packing in UK, and equivalent postage from USA, Europe and Far East. See page 71.

Roger tells me we could do with more information about **MORTIER**. The off-the-cuff story is that Mortier was an inn-keeper whose Gavioli organ greatly pleased his customers. Other inn-keepers hired or bought Gavioli organs from Mortier who gradually became a sort of salesman-cum-repairer. This led to him actually building organs to satisfy the needs of his growing list of customers. Understandably Gavioli himself was furious and won a court case against Mortier for infringement of copyright. However, Mortier pleaded with the court. "What about my business? If I cannot build organs, then make Gavioli

promise to supply me." A court order was made and Gavioli had to supply Mortier with six large instruments a year.

Gavioli could not do this. His factory could hardly keep up with the needs of his own customers.

So, Mortier defied the copyright restrictions imposed by the court, and built organs in the style of Gavioli.

What could Gavioli do?

Nothing; because by not supplying Mortier with six organs per year Gavioli, too, was defying the law.

Gavioli and Mortier therefore had a gentleman's agreement not to sue each other. Mortier then formed an organ-building company.

A lively little story, but, how true and exact is it?

Any MBSGB member having facts, figures and details concerning Mortier please send them to the Editor for publication in the next edition of the journal.

On page 29 of the last edition, VOLUME 10 Number 1, was a photostat copy of *The Watch and Clock Makers' Handbook*, 12th Edition, published in 1920. This was sent in by **DAVID SNELLING** of the Isle of Man. Member **VINCE BOND**, of Romford, Essex, can go even further back. His copy of the Handbook is the 9th Edition, published in 1896. The London address of E & F N Spon was then, 125 Strand, WC, and the New York address of Spon & Chamberlain was 12 Cortlandt Street. Can anyone go further back than that?

Vince also sent me an amusing method on how to exterminate woodworm. Another member sent me a letter on how to exterminate people who write on how to exterminate woodworm. I cannot publish either letter because they were side by side on the table, and they exterminated each other.

One of the pleasures of exhibiting one's barrel organ at public Festivals is the fun in dressing up for the part. (As you will read in the 'Blue Peter' article, it was **DAPHNE** and **ALAN WYATT** all dressed up and grinding away merrily their barrel organ at the Leeds Festival which caught the eye of a BBC television scout).

Member **MICHAEL MILES**, from Rock Cottage, Mountfield near Robertsbridge, sent me a picture of himself dressed for the part of ye olde organ grinder. When I wrote back asking, 'Hello, Hello, Who's your lady friend?' he con-

fessed that the charming person was **DAPHNE PAUN** (Mrs.), adding, "so it can all be quite respectable".



Michael Miles and Daphne Paun, dressed for the part.

Michael also added an interesting vignette into the kind of coincidence which occurs sometimes when strangers meet.

"A recent conversation with a complete stranger (Mr. COX) at an Antiques Fair brought to light the fact that he was seeking an old picture postcard featuring a song called *The Garden of Sleep*. This came as quite a surprise to me as this tune has proved to be a family favourite at Rock Cottage for several years. We have it on 15½" and 19½" Polyphon discs. See page 71.

"It seems such a coincidence that the subject should arise between two total strangers about a song we are both interested in and yet most other people have never heard of."

In his reply to Michael Miles this gentleman, D J Cox, of New Barn, Longfield, Kent, writes, . . . " . . . I wish if I may, at a future date, avail myself of your offer to tape the music of Clement Scott's poem entitled *The Garden of Sleep*".

The **LINCOLN MEETING**, on Saturday, 21 March, was exceedingly well attended.

Those of us not familiar with the flatness of the countryside were a little surprised at the strength of the wind and more than one lady member made reference to the "Wuthering Heights" type of noise in the night. "I almost expected a

voice to cry 'Heathcliff! Heathcliff!', said one guest at Saturday morning breakfast. Could we, perhaps, have Nelly Dean's lullaby to Hareton on disc or cylinder?

"It was far in the night, and the bairnies grat,

The mither beneath the mools heard that!"

Shades of the rusticity of the moors were embalmed in the name of our excellent hotel, Moor Lodge Hotel.

One has only to cross northwards over the Humber to be in Emily Brontë country. "Oh, those bleak winds and bitter northern skies, and impassible roads, . . . the primroses and crocuses were hidden under wintry drifts; the larks were silent, the young leaves of the early trees smitten and dreary, and chill, and dismal, . . ."

Fortunately, Moor Lodge Hotel was warm, bright, gay and thoroughly inviting. And more . . . the March meeting was not only self-supporting financially, it made a profit. Well done the organisers!

**HILARY KAY** had to man the Reception table because **FRANK VOGEL** was gallivanting about in Paris. (He later said he was parading the northern French coastline only, but we saw no sands of Normandy on his boots when he returned).

**GEORGE WORSWICK** was the area organiser and he was also the first to speak, on "Clocks and Watches".

He gave us a timely warning *not* to put our clocks back, because since our 1981 diaries were printed the UK had decided to go Continental and wait until Sunday, March 29 for the extra hour in bed.

George stressed the importance of photographing our small items, and he recommended the use of a "ring flash".

We will all agree on the value of photography, but, using flash? Perhaps some photographer-member would advise on this by writing an article.

For what it is worth, I *never* use flash when photographing important objects, because the flash is almost bound to show on the photograph, and it creates a shadow all its own, anyway. Indeed, George apologised for the flash reflexions on the slide examples he showed.

For small items I use a macron lens, and ordinary room lighting at night when "studio lighting" is not available. The use of a light meter is essential to check the meter readings of the camera mechanism.

By day ordinary sunlight through the window is usually sufficient for quite excellent results.

As photography is so important I hope my comments regarding "flash" will be taken up by one or more of our photographic experts so that we can use the information in the journal.

My macro lens, incidentally, is 55mm f 2.8 Micro-Nikkor, and is used with the body of my Nikon FM camera. A Tamron 28mm f 2.8 wide angle lens is also used with this camera. My Leicaflex camera uses its normal Leica lens, and also 135mm f3.5 telephoto lens. The only time I used flash is when photographing people or incidents where speed is essential and where what is on the picture is more important than the quality of the photography. However, I am



Roger Booty  
(taken with flash)

not an expert on photography and only express my views on this important subject to tempt the experts in our Society to advise us to best advantage.

George Worswick is correct. It is important to photograph our items.

George's interesting talk also emphasised the value of exchanging information gleaned from practical restoration work. Each job of restoration can reveal an original problem, and years of experience can give the restorer an extensive repertoire of answers to particular problems; a unique catalogue of expert knowledge.

This is the sort of information that needs to be passed on to posterity. The journal can be the medium used for this exchange of specialist knowledge.

The second speaker was **ROGER BOOTY**.

His talk began with church barrel organs, especially those in and around his own county of Essex. Readers of the journal will be familiar with Roger's articles (Chelmsford's Black Chapel, St Michael's Fobbing Barrel Organ, F & R Barrel Organ, Church Music and Barrel Organ, John Raymond Rust, The Dumb Organist, Charivari, A Village Carillon, Gavioli Barrel Organ, Mechanical Museum in West Germany . . . at least ten articles spread around the back numbers of TMB. Readers will be hoping for another Booty article in the near future).

When Roger told us that all too often churches are not particularly interested in their barrel organs we can appreciate how important it is for enthusiasts such as he to go around alerting the church authorities to the value they have in their midst. Restoration of these instruments is invariably done by enthusiasts, and Roger gave us as an example an organ in a church near Bishop Stortford. The instrument was built about 1830, and local enthusiasts recently got it working.

The 'mechanical organist' was always on duty, as priests found to their advantage 150 years ago.

Roger Booty also made the philosophic aside, 'Music can be as potent on the masses as politician or priest'.

We were shown slides of one of his holidays in Germany. A recording of a barrel organ supported on a pram included the sound of a little girl's voice. "She's quite a big girl now," Roger informed us, whimsically proceeding with his talk without further activating our imaginations on that score. See page 71.

The final shots reminded some of us that our secretary Frank was enjoying Gallic frolics across the Channel, because Roger Booty showed us pictures of Can-Can girls dancing open-air to the famous Offenbach tune played by the mighty (Gavioli) organ at Thurston's Royal Show.

In the afternoon **ARTHUR W J G ORD-HUME** gave us a bright lecture on mechanical violins.

Arthur's sophisticated equipment was too advanced for the 'gas-driven electric amplifier', so

we had to put up with modified amplification on a shortened lead allowing Arthur no more than ten feet radius to stroll about in.

It was as far back as 1854 that a mechanical bowing system was invented, using a rotating wheel on each string. A 65-note pneumatic violin allowed vibrato, but the instrument was too temperamental for use in bars and cafes, and it was not a commercial success.

In 1926 France produced a sophisticated instrument which had almost perfect bowing, and there was also a violin orchestration but this, too, was temperamental.

In 1910 Germany had self-playing violins. The violins were on top of the piano and bowed by pneumatic motor and belt over the violins. The compass was of 72 notes. The instrument was barrel operated and driven by weight-operated power. In 1929 Germany also experimented with a mechanical violin accompanied by player-piano, drums, cymbals and triangles. When everything was going pell-mell the violin sounded not unlike an alto saxophone, but a later example produced some quite delightful violin playing. One example Arthur had recorded was very effective and musically satisfying; mechanical violin and piano playing *One Day When we were Young*. The dynamics, and even the rubato, were most delicately performed. These were intended as 'fun' instruments for cafes in the 1920s. There was a coin-operated electric player-violin by Conrad, who died in 1948. One mechanical violin needed a live pianist, but this was not a happy partnership, and the mechanical violin was much better accompanied by a mechanical piano. These became very popular and sold all over USA, Britain and Europe.

A Mills double-violin was recorded in 1980, and this sounded good, the example we heard being a snippet from a Verdi opera. Mills also produced a keyboard which could play the violin by use of cables. A whole orchestra of violins could be played from the keyboard.

Hupfeld automatic violins looked not unlike an ordinary player-piano. Three violins were contained in the case above, and a bow rotated round the strings.

Pneumatic violins with pneumatic player-pianos were a sensation at the 1910 Brussels Exhibition. Many of these instruments have been lost to the public be-

cause they were not catalogued. Hundreds were made but Arthur told us that only about 40 are now listed.

On some models it is known that the 1st violin had 16 notes on the E string available, on the 2nd violin 10 notes on the A string, and the 3rd violin could produce 10 notes on the D string. The G string was not used.

Resin was, of course, used on the bows and by varying the speed of the bowing (or wheels rotating in that type of mechanism) it was possible to get an intense pianissimo.

The Lincoln audience greatly appreciated the talk, and whilst I don't know what Paganini would



have thought of the mechanical violin I do know that my violinist wife was most impressed. Her brief chat with Arthur after the talk was partially overheard . . .

"What of the difference in dynamics between the up bow and the down bow?"

"The dynamics are controlled by the spinning of the wheels on the strings."

"What of pizzicato?"

"I liked the rotating bow method best."

"Oh, I thought the spinning wheels produced a lovely violin sound."

"What did you think of the recorded examples?"

"Excellent. I was most impressed."

The queue for coffee and biscuits was disappearing through the door so the expert on the mechanical violin and the expert on the live

violin ceased what I thought could have developed into a very interesting discussion.

The attendance at the Lincoln meeting was a record for the North of England or Midlands. Four Presidents of the MBSGB (Past and Present) were there: **CYRIL DE VERE GREEN**, **Dr. ROBERT BURNETT**, **ARTHUR ORD-HUME**, and **JON GRESHAM**. What was also most encouraging was the host of people who were present for the first time at a MBSGB meeting.

The members had left the hotel for the visits to **ROY ISON**, the Usher Watch Collection, and tour of Lincoln Cathedral. Members exhibiting items had packed up and **Dr. PETER WHITEHEAD** had put the remaining copies of TMB back numbers into his car.

Two members remained, slowly packing up. They looked interesting characters so my wife and I strolled over. One was **JOHN POWELL**, and the other, Founder-member **ALAN RIDSDILL**. A picture of his waterfall clock is shown p94. It has an early two air sectional comb movement in the base, of unknown make, and the watch movement is signed *V Gvys Papegai, Mandion*.

On discovering that Alan was a Founder-member we persuaded him "to speak". He is a modest man. We had to persuade him to talk of his life with the MBSGB. But when we did get the story it was full of interest. Alan, like many of us "old 'uns" suffers from arthritis, and this limits his restoration work. He was employed by The Castle Museum, York, and he was responsible for **THE FIRST MUSIC BOX APPEARING ON TELEVISION . . . 30 years ago . . . 1951**. The Victorian Parlour at the Museum had 3 music boxes, not one working, so the TV people used one of Alan's boxes.

Later, Alan got the Museum boxes working.

Alan previously worked as a scientific instrument maker and his firm Vickers, ran a magazine which included articles on the hobbies of their employees. Alan's music boxes and drums were featured as far back as 1948. He began collecting organs and pianos and needed an old church to keep them in. ("Ah, like Frank Holland. You know Frank, of course?" "Of course I know Frank!")

It was a friend of Alan's mother who gave him his first music box, during WW2. She was shelled out of Dover, then Bath, and when she

moved to York, sure enough York had its biggest raid of the war. At the time York had only one ack-ack gun. Nevertheless, the music box survived all that the German Luftwaffe could hurl at it.

It was nice talking to Alan and his friend John.

Alan was at the first meeting, in 1962.

"There was one London meeting, I remember, when I was photographed with **RITA FORD**, one of our American members."

It is good that members meet each other.

That is why Lincoln was important, and why Cambridge will be, on September 5th and 6th, 1981. Do come along if you possibly can.

There is one other meeting going ahead, and that is The Saturday Seminar mentioned in the last journal. It will take place on June 27, at Washington, near Pulborough, Sussex. We can reveal, though, that there will be at least a dozen present, and that the host and hostess are **JOHN** and **KAY MANSFIELD**.



Alan Ridsdill's Waterfall Clock

A letter from **GEORGE WORSWICK**, the organiser of the Lincoln meeting, has arrived and contains this footnote: "Whilst most of the meeting appears to have been a success, we were quite unprepared for the intense interest that was shown in the visit to the organ of Lincoln Cathedral; regrettably it was too late that day to organise further assistance with the visit. Hence many members left the cathedral without seeing the console, and no one was able to see the organwork in the triforium."

George included another item which is as follows: "Postcards, posters and other illustrations of mechanical music are the subject of research being conducted by the President of the AAIMM, the French mechanical music society. Would members willing to assist in this research please contact **CLAUDE P MARCHAL**, 2 Rue Georges-Leygues, F 75016 Paris, France. If any member of the MBSGB is already doing such work, an exchange of information may be of benefit to both societies."

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Henry Waelte, playing his 20-key Raffin organ, (see p 62).



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Somewhere in the world there has to be a box to fit these magnificent cylinders. There are twenty-seven (27) of them all different, housed in a beautiful veneered cabinet measuring roughly four by five feet. The cabinet carries the BA Bremond escutcheon, and there is no reason to believe that the cylinders are from anything but a Bremond box. The cylinders are from a split-comb, 6-air box with a 28-note organ section between the combs. There was probably at least one percussion section plus bells, although the size of the bell section is difficult to estimate. Nine to twelve bells is a reasonable guess. The cylinders are 4-4

inches (11.2cm) in diameter and 21.3 inches (54.1cm) long between the flanges. Centre to centre distance between the bearings is 25.6 inches (65 cm). The left-hand comb appears to have had 67 teeth, and the right-hand 66 (inclusive of bells and percussion). In addition to the veneered cabinet mentioned above, there the nine transit cases, each holding three cylinders, so that the set can be moved conveniently without damage. Price for the lot is \$8750.00 fob Los Altos, California. A set of Polaroids available on \$10.00 deposit refundable on return of the pictures. RALPH M HEINTZ, PO Box 61898, Sunnyvale, California 94088. (415) 948-5367.

## WANTED

**Fratinola and Pianella Rolls wanted, your price paid, any amount of either type purchased, small or large. Fratinola Rolls the large ones about 13 inches wide. Write to:- Mr J Holmes, Chy-An-Goon, Valley Road, Carbis Bay, St Ives, Cornwall.**

WOULD like to purchase a reproduction gallery for a STYLE 130 SYMPHONIAN 21½" disc music box with bells, or obtain close-up photos and measurements. See Bower's Encyclopedia page 229. Information must be detailed enough to allow accurate reproduction of gallery. Would be most happy to cover any reasonable charges involved. Martin Roenigk, 26 Barton Hill, East Hampton, Connecticut 06424, United States.

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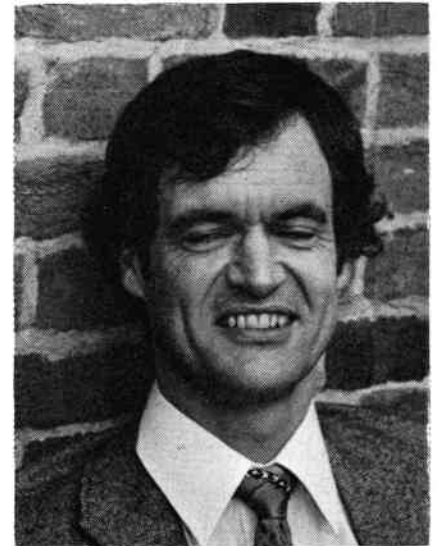
### Dr Peter Whitehead

WE ALL know, to our benefit, how hard doctors work and how busy they are. For Dr Whitehead to attend Committee Meetings meant that he had to employ a locum and travel all the way from Yorksire to London. He has asked us to accept his resignation from the Committee but he has offered to keep the task of handling Back Numbers of the Journal. Please, therefore, continue to send your orders for Back Numbers to Dr Peter Whitehead, 141a Hallgate, Cottingham, East Yorkshire, England.

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Dr. Peter Whitehead

Frank Vogel requests the following information:-

Can any member tell me the present addresses of the following:

MR J BOERLAGE, formerly of Molen-dyke, 136 Krimpen aan de Lek, Holland, and

MR L W TEW-CRAGG, formerly of 7 Goldsdown Road, Brimsdown, Middlesex, England.

Please advise FRANK VOGEL, 5 Henley Lodge, London SE25 5SE, England. Tel. 01 653 3285.

Answer: P83. Peter Duncan and Jimmy Savile ran in the London Marathon.

If you have news for, or ideas about, the magazine, write to or telephone the Editor:



01-291-2076

# Sotheby's Belgravia

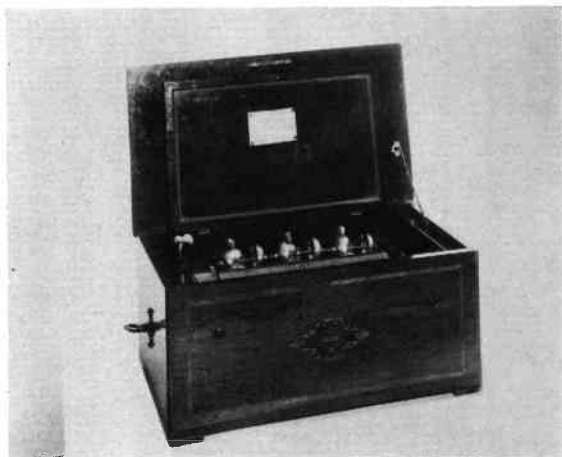
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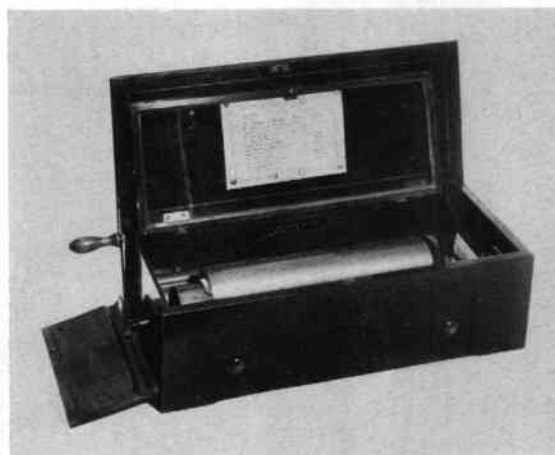
An Organ Celeste Bells-in-Sight cylinder musical box, Swiss, c. 1880, 69 cm wide.



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A 10 $\frac{5}{8}$  inch Symphonion disc musical box, German, late 19th century.



A Nicole Frères Key-wound Piano-Forte Cylinder musical box, Swiss mid 19th century, 55 cm wide.

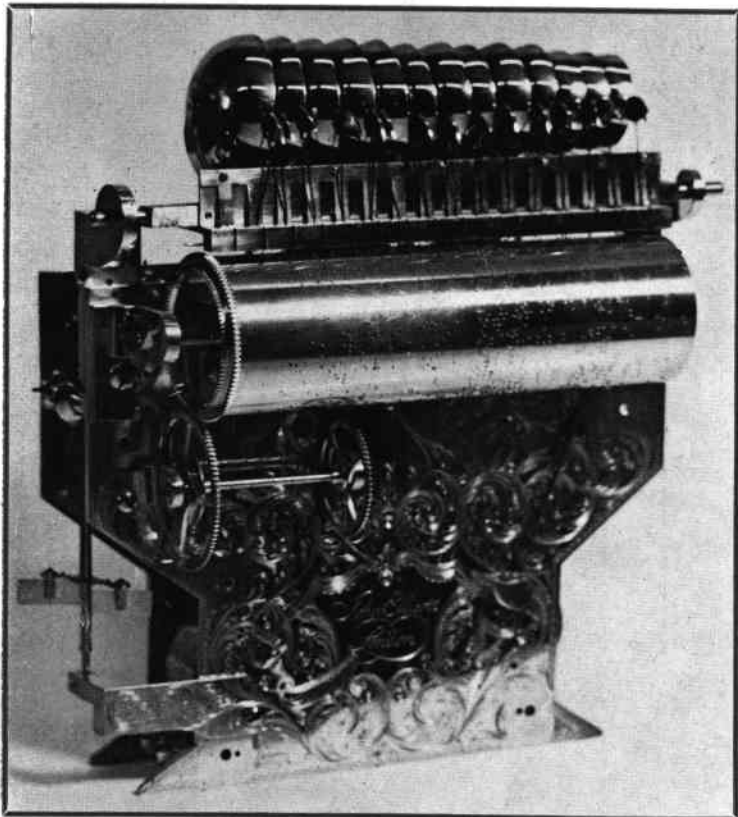
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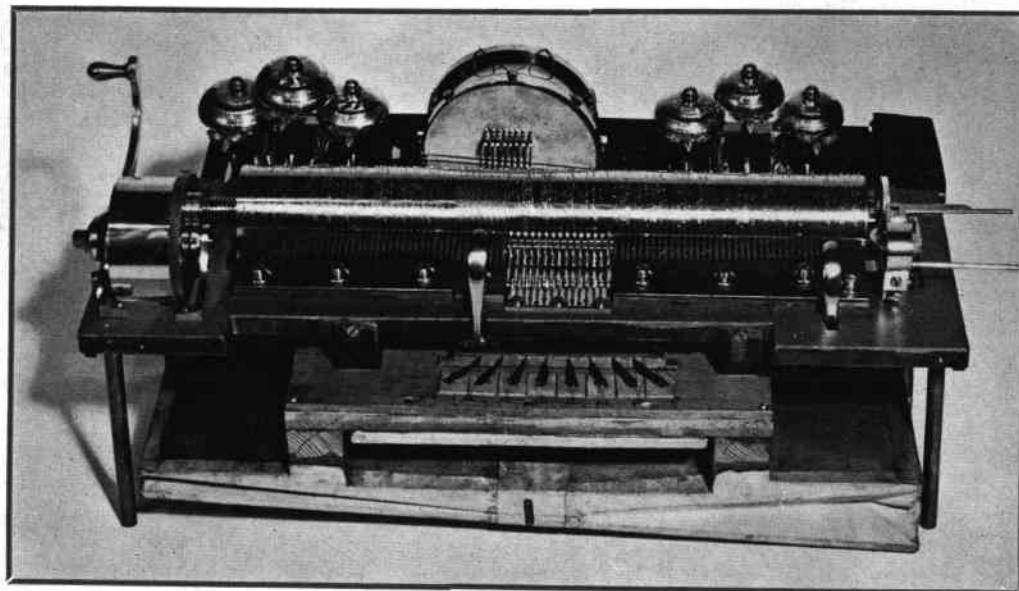
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