

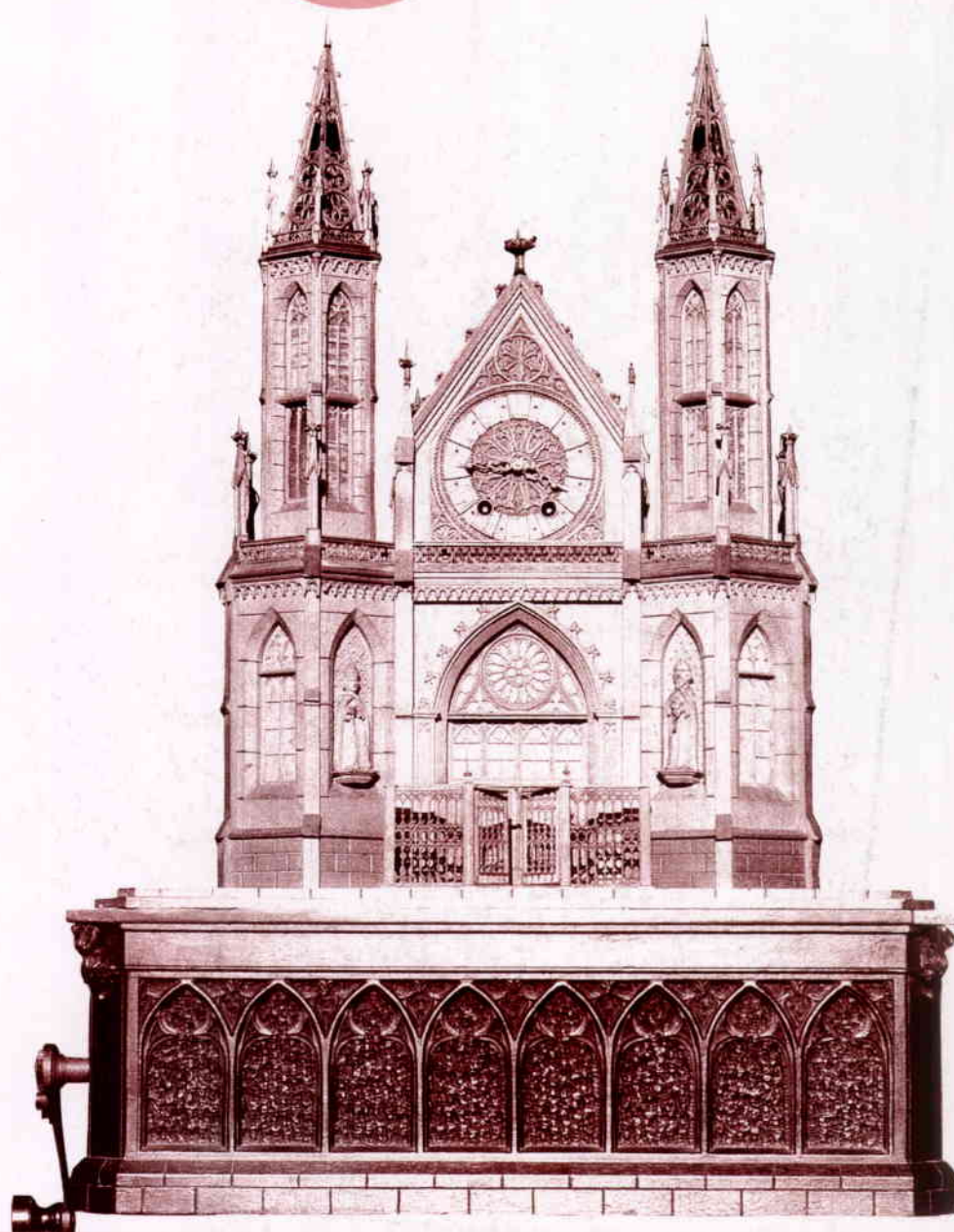
An International Magazine of Mechanical Music

Volume 15 Number 8

Winter 1992

Edited by Graham Whitehead

The Music Box



Inside

A Christmas Reminiscence

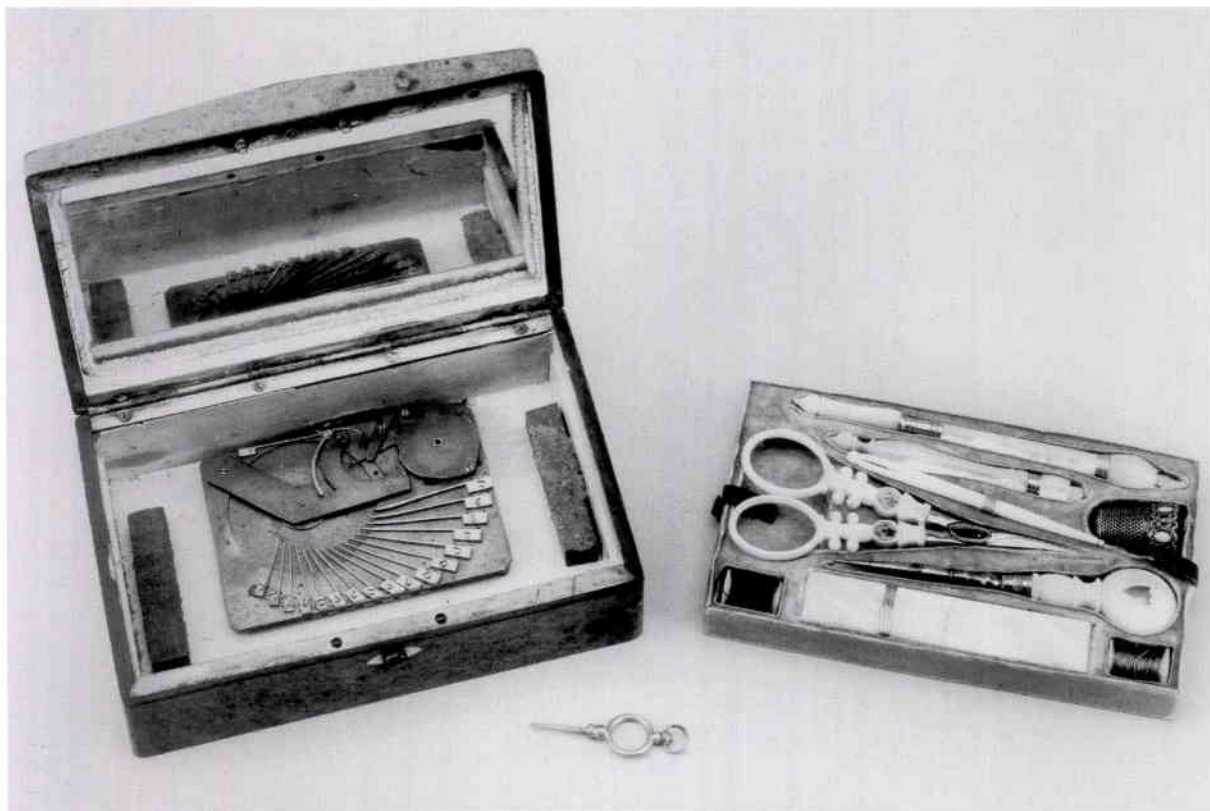
Aeolian Notes

Letters of J. E. T. Clark

Dating Lecoultre

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The Music Box

An International Magazine
of Mechanical Music

The Journal of the
Musical Box Society of
Great Britain.

Volume 15
Number 8
Winter 1992

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The Editor welcomes articles, letters and other contributions for publication in the Journal. The Editor expressly reserves the right to amend or refuse any of the foregoing.

Any contribution is accepted on the understanding that its author is solely responsible for the opinions expressed in it and the publication of such contributions does not necessarily imply that any such opinions therein are those of the Society or its Editor.

The Society and its Editor are unable to accept and hereby disclaim any liability for the consequences of any inaccuracies, errors or omissions in such contributions. No representations, warranties or endorsements of any product or information contained herein are given or intended and full verification of all products and information appearing in this Journal must be sought from the appropriate contributor.

Front Cover:

A Musical Clock, see Collector's Showcase page 256.

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Editor's Notes

Membership fees

At the Musical Box Society of Great Britain AGM held at Regent's College, London on 6th June 1992, members voted on a proposition to increase membership fees to £25 with similar increases for overseas rates, the motion was passed.

Since that meeting, talks have taken place between the printers and the Society and an agreement has been reached that production budgets for Music Box be "pegged" as they are for another 12 months. This situation has been made possible partly by courtesy of Broadgate Printing, but also bearing in mind the effect of the present recession on both our printers and our membership.

That mandate is there for a subscription increase at some future date but meanwhile, for next year at least, subscriptions stay the same.

It would of course be of great help to the Society if members could pay their 1993 subscriptions promptly and a remittance form is enclosed in this copy for your convenience. ■

SOCIETY TOPICS

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

Winter Meeting
Saturday 5th December,
1992, in the
Tuke Common Room,
Regent's College,
Inner Circle,
Regent's Park, London.

Programme:

9.30 onwards - Registration and refreshments.

At the time of going to press, details of the full programme were not finalised but the meeting should include an illustrated talk by F. F. Hill "The Miserable Dumbledores".

We shall also be privileged with a talk and presentation by Paul Kustow of Alexandra Collections and Martin Guare of Garrard's, Crown Jewellers of Regent Street, London, both agents for the Reuge company of Switzerland.

Contact Adrian Little on 051 425 4498 for further details or advance registration. ■

Spring Meeting
26th - 28th March, 1993
The Fownes Resort Hotel,
City Walls Road,
Worcester WR1 2AP
Tel: 0905 613151

The Fownes Resort Hotel is in the heart of the City of Worcester only a stone's throw from the Cathedral and Royal Worcester Porcelain Factory and Museum. The site was once the centre of Worcester's historic glove-making industry and the original Victorian building has been transformed into a modern comfortable hotel with ample parking space.

Hotel package

Dinner, bed and breakfast, Friday 26th and Saturday 27th March 1993:

£80 per person.

Society Dinner only on Saturday night £12 approximately.

There are some ground floor rooms without steps.

A reservation of 30 double/twin rooms has been made. To reserve one of these send £10 per person to the HOTEL using the form enclosed. Anyone requiring a single room please contact the hotel direct.

Be sure to mention the MUSICAL BOX SOCIETY in all correspondence. ■

REPORT ON PAST MEETINGS

Autumn Meeting, Cambridge,
25th - 27th September, 1992

The Autumn Meeting, organised by Alan and Daphne Wyatt, was based at the Gonville Hotel, Cambridge on 25th - 27th September.

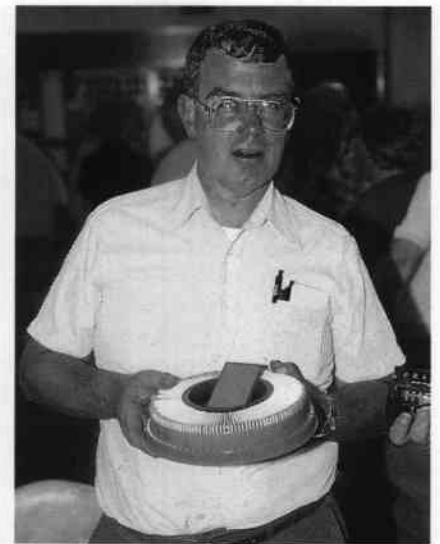
Members arriving Friday afternoon were entertained at the



An international flavour to the Cambridge organ grind by the Polish girls collecting in traditional costume. Picture courtesy of Cambridge Newspapers Ltd.



Robert Finbow's Mechanical Music Museum at Cotton.



Coulson Conn.

home of Alan and Daphne and enjoyed seeing and hearing their varied collection of musical instruments.

Dinner at the Hotel on Friday evening was followed by a sparkling Music Hall entertainment given by the 'Hamlyn's,' a local group of very talented performers. The wonderful costumes, songs and witty chairmanship soon transformed us into a traditional foot tapping, hand clapping, singing audience.

Saturday morning brought the organ grinders to the streets of Cambridge in glorious Autumn sunshine. Twelve organs dotted around the city centre gave a most happy atmosphere and provided much interest for the shoppers as they went about their business. The collection taken supported Medical Aid for Poland. Two Polish girls dressed in traditional costume added colour to the scene as did the many organ grinders with their varied and entertaining dress.

The Mechanical Music Museum of Robert Finbow at Cotton, near Stowmarket, Suffolk provided the venue for Saturday afternoon.

The two and a half hours we spent among this fascinating collection proved all too short. Ted Brown and Roger Booty gave a very interesting demonstration of the many organettes, musical boxes, automata, etc, that this collection houses, followed by performances by the large cinema organ, fairground organs, barrel piano's etc., etc. We are most grateful to Mr Finbow for giving us the opportunity to see and hear this varied collection of instruments, something for everyone.

During the sherry reception, before the Society Dinner we were pleased to welcome Mrs Jean Sell, the local organiser for the Medical Aid for Poland charity. She gave a brief summary of the work of the charity in that every penny collected is used to

buy much needed drugs and medical aids for a children's hospital in Poland. The children had been severely affected by the fall out from the Chernobyl disaster and desperately needed help. Not a penny went in administration or even transport costs, these were all done voluntarily. A loud cheer greeted her announcement that the Flag Day had raised just over £2,500 for which she gave her grateful thanks to the Society.

Following the Society Dinner the President was pleased to welcome members to Cambridge and in particular several members attending a meeting for the first time, also members from America, Australia, Holland and Germany.

Sunday morning we were pleased to have Coulson and Kathleen Conn from America to give us a most entertaining and informative slide presentation of varied and unusual Disc Musical Boxes, many makes and style's we had not had the opportunity to have seen before.

Coulson's presentation was followed by Andrew Armit who gave a



Andrew Armit.

most detailed and fascinating lecture on the production of computer discs from pianola rolls. These disc's to play on the Disklavier piano which he demonstrated live on the Yamaha in the room for us all to hear.

Following lunch on Sunday members reluctantly started to find their way home after a most enjoyable weekend at Cambridge. ■



Joyce and Bobbie Gordon from Aberdeen at Cambridge.

Register News

Following the publication of the excellent article by Anthony Bulleid on dating Rivenc boxes and examining the information so far entered in the Register about this maker, I feel the following conclusions are appropriate:—

1. Ami Rivenc commenced their numbering system at the number 19000.
2. His first tune card was as illustrated in fig (1) and may have been used solely by him. It is unlikely that it was used either by Bremond or Greiner.
3. Around the year 1874 a design change was made to include the winged lion trademark of Rivenc at the top of the card. See fig (2). To date only one box has been located with this pattern of tune card, so it would seem sensible to suggest that the design was changed fairly quickly.
4. A major design change was made shortly afterwards to introduce the well known coloured lithographic card depicting the Brunswick memorial. See fig (3). The first box noted so far with this type of card is serial number 30623.
5. Minor changes seem to have been made after this, the most noticeable being the inclusion of a horseman on top of the statue.
6. On early boxes the serial number is stamped on the flat of the winding lever.
7. In fig (1) type of tune card, the serial number is commonly written on the left hand side of the cartouche and the gamme number is at the extreme right hand side.

If a tune card of type (1) turns up with a serial number under 19000, then other makers might have used this design. May I ask all members to report any findings on this matter.

All boxes noted in the Register previously attributed to Bremond having tune cards as fig(1), fit exactly into the Rivenc numbering sequence. All have serial numbers above 19000. By contrast Bremond had only reached serial number 12000 by 1872, so there is a great disparity between the two numbering systems.

Anthony Bulleid suggests that Rivenc manufactured around one thousand boxes per year. Assuming fifty working weeks in the year and a five day week, this gives a



Figure 1.

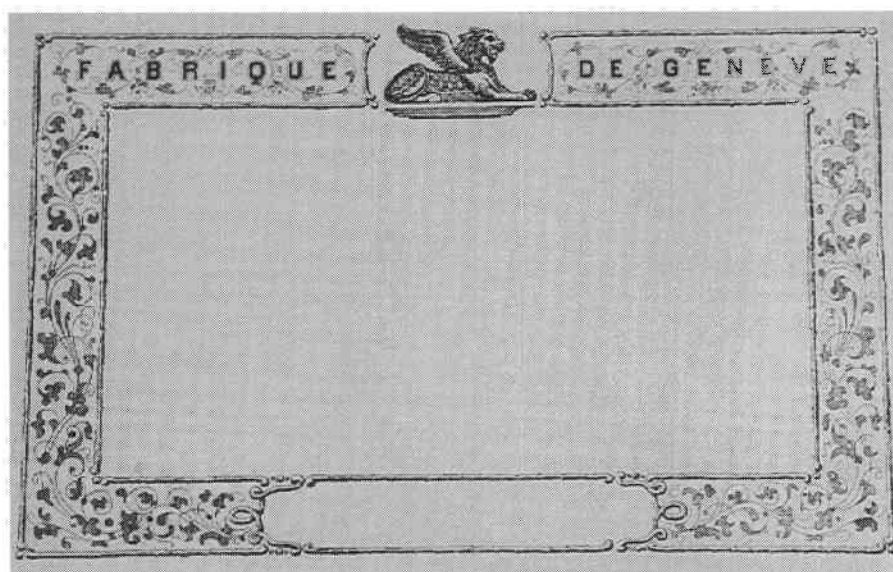


Figure 2.



Figure 3.

production rate of four boxes per day. Information entered in the Register supports this suggestion.

Final Rivenc note. An overseas member submitted an entry for Bremond with a serial number 23475. This box is definitely Ami Rivenc and the date of its latest tune is 1872.

Two areas of weakness have come to light in the Register project. The first is the difficulty in describing the design of tune card and the second is the accurate dating of the latest tune noted on a tune card.

Regarding point one, it ought to be possible to establish some sort of list or illustration sheet on the lines of Mr. Lubbock's and Nancy Fratti's excellent list of reproduction tune cards. Then members could note style of card as per illustrations and numbering given in these lists.

Point two is a much harder task. It would require a determined and hard working individual to undertake the dating of tunes. The task would be arduous, but an authoritative dating list would be invaluable for researchers and historians.

Finally, a series of requests.

1. When sending in details of Nicole boxes, please state the colour of the tune card. If the card is a reproduction, please detail that as well.
2. Only name a box if you are sure of the maker, otherwise list as unknown.
3. When listing unknown makers, list any marks or letters that may prove significant in future research. Comments like, "Could be Paillard" can be helpful.
4. Note if your box is key, crank, lever or ratchet winding.

5. Can anyone send me a clear photograph of the ratchet winding lever used by Nicole? There seem to have been at least two patterns.
6. Having commenced a Register of cylinder boxes, have we an enterprising member who would do the same thing for the disc boxes? I feel they should be recorded in the same manner as the cylinder machines. Disc machines could be given a Register number and a prefix R.D. A card index system and a small computer or word processor are essential.
7. Please make every effort to send in a return for the Register. There are times when I feel rather like a prophet in the wilderness calling out and none there be that answered!

The Musical Box Register

AUBERT & SONS

Aubert & Sons were based in Geneva

Name	T/C * = Yes	S/N	G/N	Comments	Reg/No.
Aubert & Sons	*	3634	0	6 air. Snuffbox type	R-2065
Aubert & Sons	—	5113	0	2 air. Snuffbox	R-1987

and noted as makers of snuffboxes. These boxes usually have Aubert's name deeply etched into the comb

within a rectangular depression.

6/92. v. 1.

BADEL

Badel is one of the musical box manufacturers mentioned in The History of the Musical Box by Alfred Chapuis. Both Graham Webb and Ord Hume record him in their books as working around 1826.

Up to mid 1992 only one box has been noted in the Register. This box has "Badel a Geneve" stamped on the bedplate and has features usually associated with Henriot. The high serial number suggests that

Badel made many boxes, so such a low survival rate seems strange.

The features on the Badel box are so similar to Henriot movements, a strong claim can be made that Badel made boxes for Henriot. Consider also that in the early books on musical boxes, Henriot is never mentioned as a manufacturer and he did not enter his products in any exhibition of the period.

Taking this evidence into consideration and combining the two

sets of serial numbers, then a much more reasonable survival rate is indicated. Both Badel and Henriot serial numbers do join without any obvious clashing.

In the future when more information is to hand, we may discover for certain that boxes carrying the Henriot name were manufactured by Badel and that Henriot was an agent rather than a manufacturer.

6/92. v. 1.

Name	T/C * = Yes	S/N	G/N	Comments	Reg/No.
Badel	—	15116	0	8 air. Keywind	R-1417

BAKER TROLL

Baker Troll was based in Geneva and was a maker of good quality boxes. He was later listed as George Baker & Co (late Baker Troll).

It is not known when Samuel Troll and George Baker combined their activities, or when exactly Troll left the partnership. Troll commenced work in Geneva around the year 1868 and by 1873 George Baker was working there.

Baker Troll boxes are of good quality. He is noted for producing large ornate movements many of which were nickel plated. The cases are good quality and are usually veneered with a figured or a burr wood. Lids often have this feature rather than the more usual inlay.

The B.T. monogram is to be found on the left hand corner of tune sheets and also embossed in gold on the leather lifters for glass lids. The T is between a normal and a reversed B.

Baker seems to have been the only manufacturer to have used the word tunes rather than airs on the tune cards. He also used the English spelling of harmony.

He made a large number of sublime harmony boxes, some with piccolo and zither additions and also interchangeable machines. He is credited with making an improved revolver box that also had interchangeable cylinders. The firm had an agent based in London.

Name	T/C * = Yes	S/N	G/N	Comments	Reg/No.
Baker Troll	*	6773	0	6 air. Quator. 10 bell L/W	R-1468
Baker Troll	—	10765	0	6 air. S/H Pic. Inter 6 bell	R-2161
Baker Troll	—	13180	0	10 air. S/Harmony +6 bell	R-48

Baker Troll	—	13849	0	8 air. L/wind.	R-1469
Baker Troll	—	13890	0	10 air. Harp Harmony Pico	R-1717
Baker Troll	—	14018	0	8 air Harp Piccolo	R-49
Baker Troll	—	14886	0	6 air. Tremolo Zither	R-1841
Baker Troll	—	15079	0	6 air	R-50
Baker Troll	—	15473	0	? air	R-51
Baker Troll	*	15476	0	6 air Sublime Harmony	R-52
Baker Troll	*	15546	0	12 air. Sublime Harmony	R-53
Baker Troll	—	15620	0	8 air S/Harmony Tremolo	R-54
Baker Troll	—	15644	0	8 air. Inter (3 cyl) L/W	R-1470
Baker Troll	—	15714	0	8 air Interchange S/H	R-55
Baker Troll	—	15737	0	6 air. S/H Inter. L/Wind	R-1376
Baker Troll	*	15807	0	6 air. L/wind	R-1471
Baker Troll	—	15976	0	6 air. Lever wind	R-2115

GEORGE BENDON

Based in St. Croix, Bendon was almost certainly an agent for musical boxes rather than a manufacturer.

He traded from 36 & 37 Ely Place in London and had a warehouse at 1, Charterhouse Street.

and his design of tune card unmistakable. It is not known who made the movements for Bendon

Bendon boxes are of good quality

6/92 v. 1.

Name	T/C * = Yes	S/N	G/N	Comments	Reg/No.
Bendon G.	—	1365	0	8 air Forte-piano	R-56
Bendon G.	—	1441	0	12 air. Alternate tip	R-1718
Bendon G.	—	1837	0	8 air. L/wind	R-57
Bendon G.	*	2701	0	8 air. Harp Eolienne	R-58
Bendon G.	*	2723	0	6 air Mandolin Guitar	R-59
Bendon G.	—	2767	0	12 air Symphonie piccolo	R-60
Bendon G.	*	3128	0	8 air Mandolin Guitar	R-61
Bendon G.	*	4021	0	8 air	R-62
Bendon G.	—	6144	0	10 air Drum 6 bell+Castanet	R-63
Bendon G.	*	6594	0	6 air 14 note Organ box	R-64
Bendon G.	*	6890	0	8 air. Mando Express. L/W	R-2088
Bendon G.	—	8819	0	10 air 6 bell box	R-65
Bendon G.	—	16491	0	I/change Overture+Table	R-66
Bendon G.	—	18070	0	8 air. 9 bells	R-1842
Bendon G.	*	18263	0	12 air. Orchestral	R-1620
Bendon G.	—	20214	0	8 air 9 bell box	R-67
Bendon G.	*	20530	0	Interchangeable 6 cyls	R-68
Bendon G.	*	20669	0	12 air 9 bell box	R-69
Bendon G.	*	21232	0	10 air Mandolin	R-70
Bendon G.	—	26690	0	8 air. 9 bell box	R-1479
Bendon G.	—	27298	0	8 air. Harp Harmonique	R-1236
Bendon G.	*	41002	0	10 air 8 bells	R-1621
Bendon G.	—	41353	0	6 air Orchest Interchangeable	R-71
Bendon G.	—	42588	1425	12 air. L/wind	R-1751
Bendon G.	*	43925	2136	12 air. 6 bell L/wind	R-1907
Bendon G.	*	44821	2507	8 air. L/wind	R-72
Bendon G.	*	44889	338	8 air 18 note organ	R-73
Bendon G.	*	45317	370	8 air 18 note Vox Celeste	R-74
Bendon G.	—	45600	0	8 air. 6 bell box	R-1719

BERENS BLUMBERG

Based in Geneva and in London, Berens Blumberg were agents for musical boxes made by Lecoultré. In the year 1861, their London address was 33, St. Paul's Churchyard.

B.B. & Cie is often to be found marked on tune cards, but on other boxes the name Berens Blumberg is stamped in full on the brass bedplate. All the boxes listed below have the name Berens Blumberg or B.B. & Cie stamped either on the bedplate

or on the comb. At this stage in the development of the Register, boxes bearing the initials B.B. & C. or B.B. & Cie on tune cards along with other Lecoultré marks have been listed under Lecoultré.

6/92. v. 1.

Name	T/C * = Yes	S/N	G/N	Comments	Reg/No.
Berens Blumberg	—	13265	0	6 air	R-75
Berens Blumberg	—	13555	0	4 air	R-76
Berens Blumberg	—	19071	0	4 air	R-364
Berens Blumberg	—	20017	0	6 air. Keywind	R-77
Berens Blumberg	*	20469	3255	4 air. Keywind	R-2047
Berens Blumberg	—	20877	0	8 air. Keywind	R-365
Berens Blumberg	—	21392	0	6 overtures in 2 parts	R-1889
Berens Blumberg	—	21890	0	6 overture box	R-78
Berens Blumberg	—	21995	0	? air	R-1309
Berens Blumberg	*	22079	0	4 air. Keywind	R-79
Berens Blumberg	*	22654	4056	6 air. Keywind	R-80
Berens Blumberg	—	22708	0	8 air Keywind	R-369
Berens Blumberg	—	23125	0	? air. Keywind	R-2049
Berens Blumberg	—	23387	0	6 air Keywind	R-371

Organ Grinders chat

by Geoff Alford



HANNOVER ORGAN FESTIVAL is, I believe that I am right in saying, the longest lived event of this nature and when I heard that Peter Schuhknecht, its organiser, had put his large and valuable collection up for sale, I was concerned that it would also spell the demise of the organ festival. I was greatly relieved, therefore, to receive an attractive card enclosing the programme for this year's Drehorgelfest. The festival took place early in May for many years which had the advantage that it didn't clash with any other event, though Hannover at that time of year can be exceedingly cold. In more recent years the date had to be changed to the first weekend in July. Unfortunately it now clashes with the Berlin organ festival and other events. Clearly Peter Schuhknecht has not lost his lifelong passion for the hobby and Reg Mayes, who visited Hannover this summer, tells me that the collection has so far not been sold. It is always a great shame when a collection such as this, which has been built up over many years, is broken up. Unfortunately the opportunities which arise, for permanent preservation such as the purchase of the Jan Brauers Collection by the Karlsruhe Museums Service, are extremely rare.

THE FRENCH ORGAN FESTIVAL SCENE I referred to not so long ago as being confined to very few events. That situation has rapidly changed and this year the French Society AAIMM published a list of no fewer than ten festivals. I am told that the largest of these, at Les Gets, attracts between two and three hundred organs. It is also one of the longest-lived events, this year being the fifth. The problem associated with taking part in one of these French events is, in many cases, distance, for most of the festivals take place in the extreme south of the country. Unless one is holidaying in the south the easiest to reach are at Ile Tudy, Nantes and Beaumont. I was talking recently to someone who has taken part in a number of French festivals who was most effusive over the amount of support given by the local French authorities – plenty of good food,

overnight accommodation and help with travelling expenses. I don't think that local authorities in this country are permitted to be as generous as that!

TRAVELLING ABROAD TO FESTIVALS is an activity which is not followed by many, in fact, apart from Leslie Brown and myself I don't know of anyone else who takes his organ across the water. So I was glad to hear that Geoff Todd and his wife attended no less than three this Spring – two in the north of Holland and one in France. He and Joan have super pearly outfits which went down extremely well and marked them out among the grinding fraternity present. I hope that more will be prepared to devote the time, effort and money to doing this. We can always do with more ambassadors abroad. Just after this I was taking part in a festival in Heidenheim, a fairly modest-sized event with perhaps 40 or so organs. There is a lot to be said for the smaller events as they tend to be friendly and sociable. I don't know how you prevent the 'clickiness' which tends to build up at some festivals, with the result that some feel frozen out. Linz festival took place at the same time as Heidenheim, but whilst the Berlin Organ Friends Club is involved with the first, it is the German Organ Friends Club which is involved at Linz. As a result you will also find electronic instruments at the latter. Linz is an ideal location for a festival – a Rhine tourist town with plenty of shops and a ferry crossing point. Last but not least there is the mechanical music museum and I have never understood why there is no special visit to the collection made at this time. There is such a wealth of instruments in the collection, all



Ian Alderman with 20 note trumpet organ, Ashorne Hall.

in good playing condition, and it is impossible to see and hear more than a select few during the regular guided tour. I am fortunate in having been present when this museum has been thrown open to a society which has permitted me to hear many more of the collection than the ordinary visitor, a most enjoyable experience. The same will apply to any museum housing a substantial number of exhibits, such as Bruchsal.

THE 42 NOTE BRUNS VIOLINOPAN organ made a distinct impression in Britain when Big Balbo brought his latest acquisition to Llandrindod, just as it has impressed on the Continent. The main sticking point when you are talking of an organ of this size and quality is the price of course which, though not excessive, is a lot to find for the ordinary person.



Waltz time at Heidenheim organ festival.

Balbo's organ, whilst stiff, is smooth in its turning action. In Heidenheim I also had the chance to turn Dr. Wiemann's 42er Bruns and found it appreciably easier. According to the owner that had been achieved, so I understood, by shortening slightly the arm to the bellows. Clearly when one is dealing with a one man building firm prices of organs can be expected to be somewhat higher than with a larger firm, but Bruns organs are not particularly expensive, especially bearing in mind the reputation he has built up since leaving the Hofbauer organ firm. Organ models tend to be built in batches of five and are usually all sold before production has commenced. Current production is supposed to centre around a 33 note trumpet organ with possibly a further batch of 45 keyless organs to follow.

ASSEN which is in the extreme north of Holland, has an annual organ event which I can thoroughly recommend, having enjoyed it very much last year. It is a totally different experience to normal festivals and attracts an astonishing number of enthusiasts. This year Britain was represented by Geoff and Joan Todd who took their Trueman organ over to take part. I was very sad to learn, on their return, that the Stichting will have to move from their present premises and they are earnestly seeking support to obtain alternative accommodation. It is a great pity, for the present location is little short of perfect. The accommodation provides space for all the larger Dutch street organs in one room, with a second room where the smaller organs can be played. There are excellent bar and kitchen facilities and a smaller room which can be used for meetings or special displays. To find somewhere that can provide all this must surely be an impossibility. In addition, there is plenty of space for cars to park, both within the grounds and outside, and that is something which must be rare in Holland! I am sure everyone will wish our friends of the Assen Stichting every success in their search for premises. It has become the leading venue for mechanical organs in Holland, attracting numerous foreign visitors and so is worthy of local support.

MUSIC COPYRIGHT. In the last Chat column I referred to the proposed levy on sources of mechanical music by the Mechanical Copyright Protection Society. Now, five of our suppliers of mechanical music (book, roll and 'chip') have announced that appropriate music will, in future, be subject to a levy of 10 per cent plus VAT on the cost.



Buergermeister meets Tante Tilly and donkey at Heidenheim.

One can fully appreciate that small businesses have little option but to succumb to pressure from MCPS following the Copyright Act coming into force. Big business in the electronics world have the resources to protect their investment in mechanical recordings on disc and tape. Our Government has, on numerous occasions, promised to support and protect the small businessman but in yet another area we see home business being put in an uncompetitive position compared with overseas. The cash sum involved to the holders of copyright must be extremely small and, I would have thought, too expensive to be worth collecting. This partly accounts, no doubt, for the levy being set so high. For a roll of music this could put £5 on the price. There are a number of questions that the customer, that is the organ grinder, needs answering. Unlike in Germany, roll music is priced by metre. If some music is copyright and some not, how can there be a fixed price unless the levy is added on to the price in a blanket manner. It seems to me that as usual the customer will lose out. Of course the scheme is bound to be open to evasion for it would be impossible to ascertain when a book, roll or chip was arranged and produced. So it will always be possible to claim that music lacking a stamp was produced prior to the 16th April 1992, or was supplied from Holland! Once again the answer to this iniquitous levy is in the hands of the organ owner. If he refuses to purchase music on which this levy has been placed so that little official copyright music is bought, the whole thing will eventually fall into disuse. People in the organ industry tell me that it is hard enough to compete with

foreign business so the sooner this levy is killed off the better. Music arrangers have enough problems with pirating without having to contend with Government legislation adding to the problem. Owners of 20 note roll organs will be little affected because most of their music originates on the Continent, but owners of book organs will be hit very hard because virtually all their music is home grown.

It is important that arrangers and composers should reap the proper reward for their work, and I suspect that arrangers frequently do not. One hears that composers often sell their work to publishers and one is left to wonder how much of the small sums collected by the MCPS will filter down to these composers. I have been told that music copyright runs out after fifty years. If this is correct then virtually all the 20 note roll music from German sources and comprising largely of folk, march and operetta music, must be out of copyright. Possibly other countries will follow suit and bring in similar legislation to Britain in which case the picture will change, though I think it unlikely that this will happen. All you have to do is change the tune a little and give it a different name – a comparatively simple matter. To quote but one example, the well-known folk tune *The Wild Rover* has been re-arranged a little in Germany where it has had considerable popularity under the title *On the North Sea Coast*.

VOIGT ORGELBAU. Jan van Dinteren is probably the best known Dutchman in British organ circles because of his organ ownership, active participation in the Dutch

society KDV and in events abroad, and, perhaps most important, his informed articles in various magazines. His recent article in the latest issue of the GSM journal sheds much new light on the history of this old-established firm. I have never connected the name of Voigt with hand-turned organs, not least because I have never seen one. However the history of the company shows that its founder, Friedrich Christian Voigt, who formed the business in 1832, was involved in the repair of these as well as its main work of church organ building. That work on smaller mechanical instruments continued until the last War is indicated by a photo of the works taken pre-War. This shows a street organ centre ground flanked by fair organs. The late Wilhelm Voigt was the fourth generation of the organ family firm, which looks set to continue into the 5th and 6th generations through son Heinz Voigt and grandson Andreas Voigt. If there are no street organs bearing the name of Voigt around today, it does not necessarily mean that the company didn't build any at all. After all, comparatively few Ruth, Bruder and Gavioli street organs exist today though each company must have produced them in quantity in the 19th century.

The BERLIN ORGAN FESTIVAL was attended by a sizeable British contingent last July, a number of whom had not seen a continental event previously. All have reported that they had a fantastic time and paid tribute to the efforts of Christa Niemuth in particular who went out of her way to ensure that they had a good time. I have come to prefer organ festivals in more modest sized towns to large cities where so much walking is usually involved. However, Berlin is probably different to any other large city. It is the spiritual home of the street organ and many generations of Berliners can still remember with affection the old organ grinder playing in the apartment block squares. Nowhere else will the parading organs receive such applause as in Berlin. So we can never have the kind of festival which compares with Berlin. But for the new emerging breed of organ grinder in Britain I don't think that will matter too much. They seem on the whole to be happy with quite small informal events and get tremendous pleasure from the amount they can collect for charity. Weston-super-Mare Council, which formerly banned street organs from playing on their streets had a change of heart this year, possibly assisted by the effect of the recession on tourist business. At all events, it

appears that organ grinders were made most welcome and all enjoyed themselves. As a bonus, substantial sums were collected for local charities.

DENNIS CHAPPELL is an organ restorer who has built up a considerable amount of knowledge over a number of years, with experience of a variety of organ builders' products. Now a youthful 72, I recently enjoyed a long conversation with him and our gossip ranged far and wide. At one stage we were talking about reed pipes and how they are prone to sound seriously off-key with sudden temperature changes. Dennis made the point that reeds do not go off key, but actually the non reed pipework, so giving that impression. The fact remains, however, that in this situation the embarrassed organ owner has little option but to disconnect his reed pipes. Two extreme instances come to mind, both occasions when the weather had turned very warm and in each case it was metal pipes that appeared to give trouble. In one case it was Dennis's own very enjoyable 84 key Mortier and in the other it was the trumpets on Ron Bowyer's Bruder. It is significant that in both cases metal pipes were involved? Even I am aware that metal absorbs heat more rapidly than wood and has a different expansion rate, even when no direct heat is applied and this factor must surely have significance. A question mark also seems to hang over the use of blowers, though opinion among organ owners varies, some say that blowers tend to generate warm air which can affect the organ's playing. Certainly, as a rule of thumb, I think that the old builders knew what they were doing and there was

usually good reason for the way it was done. When I bought my first trumpet organ I was a little concerned that I might experience the problem of pipes sounding off-key, but that has not been my experience to date. Fortunately, perhaps, the reeds in street organs are usually fitted in wooden pipes. Also few street organs have blowers, the only exception being, I believe, the 49 note Pell Harmonist organ. Of course, street organs have the advantage of mobility and on hot sunny days owners can favour the shady side of the street, or at least ensure that the pipework is not exposed to the sun's damaging rays.

ORGAN FESTIVALS 1993. We are approaching the end of the 1992 season at the time of writing so it is appropriate to start thinking of next year's opportunities. WALDKIRCH International Organ Festival takes place only every three years and June 18/20 1993 sees only the 3rd event. It is a very historic centre and the festival attracts numerous good organs which were built in the Black Forest so is well worth a visit. Here at home Llandrindod will take place as usual over the August Bank Holiday weekend, and repeat organ events are planned for Weston-super-Mare and Aberystwyth. A one-off event is in the early planning stages for the weekend of May 21/23 1993 with the unusual title of The Mayor of Hereford's International Invitation Organ Celebration. The main effort of this event will be to attract organ owners from as many different countries as possible and already several Continental enthusiasts have agreed to participate. Whilst organ numbers will be limited it is hoped that many others will come to enjoy an eventful weekend. ■



Edi Hofmann does a brisk trade in music rolls at Heidenheim.



A Christmas Reminiscence

Many years ago whilst visiting the picturesque county of Dorset one crisp Christmas holiday, I came to one of the small market towns that are so much a feature of that county. There in the centre was a pleasing Georgian church and not far away was an antique shop to match.

Older members of the Society might remember the days when it was possible to come across such shops with two or three musical boxes placed nonchalantly in the window. This was one such shop.

Two of the exhibits were key wind boxes and were rather expensive at thirty five pounds each. Inside, prices seemed to be much more reasonable. In among

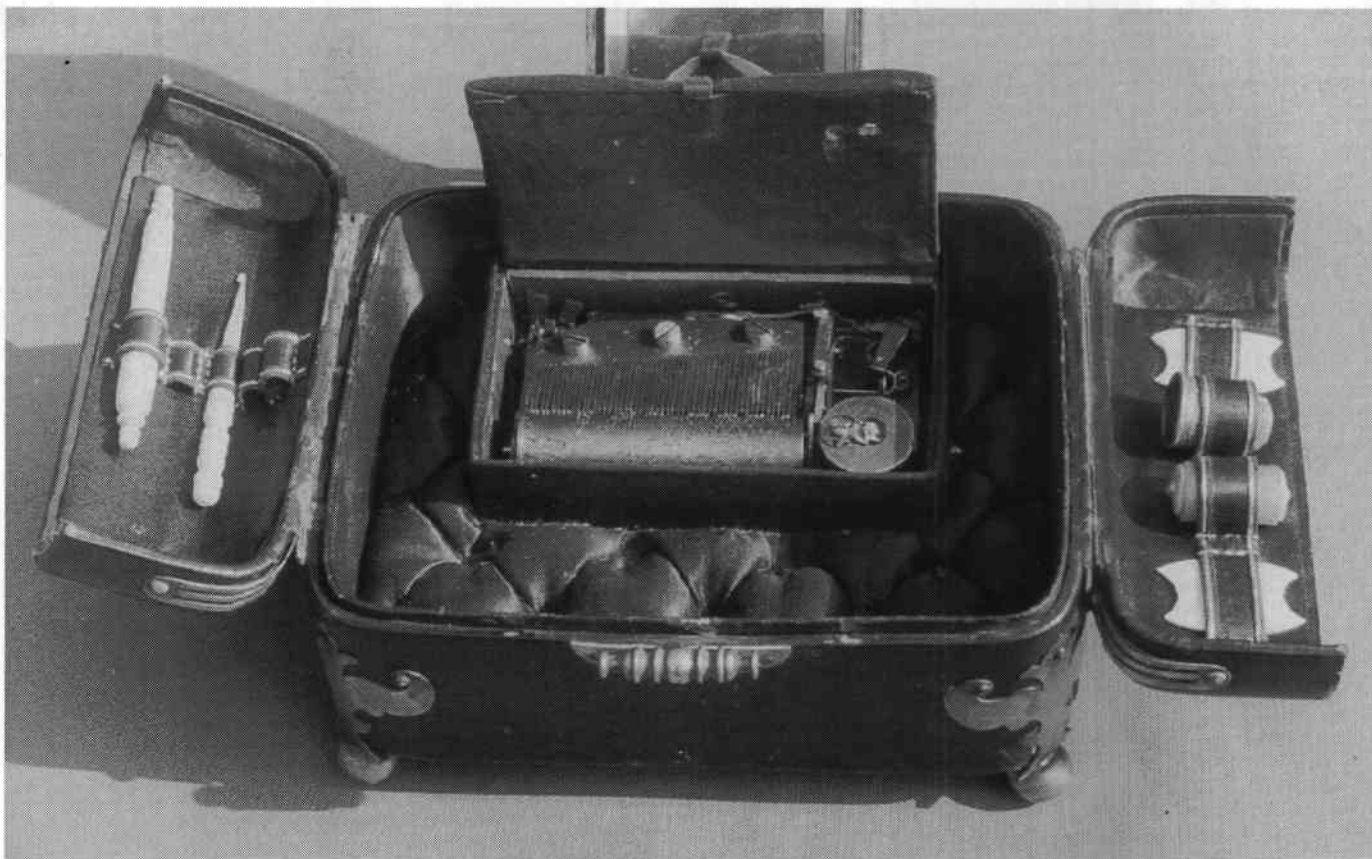


the usual selection of clocks, tables and chairs there was a corner cabinet that held quite a selection of small musical boxes.

Among the display was a four air snuffbox contained in a damaged composition case. This at £1.15.0 (or £1-75 for those who have never known real money), seemed reasonable. There were two other unusual boxes that were slightly more expensive, necessitating an outlay of £5 or above.

The work casket and the jewel case illustrated here were two items that were in that corner cabinet. Both





were very unusual and even to this day, I have seen no other like them. I hope they have survived and are being well looked after.

The owner of the shop proved to be an amiable person. Over the years, I came to know him quite well. He knew when the holidays were due again and tried to increase his stock to coincide with my visit. Sometimes I bought the odd item and very occasionally I sold a box to him. If memory serves me right, I don't think I actually "won" a deal though!

One unusual aspect of this dealer was his genuine fondness of musical boxes. He did not object to me spending an inordinate amount of time examining all his stock. Often discussions went on until closing time and beyond. He took a great deal of trouble setting up boxes for photography and was quite upset if a customer came in and distracted proceedings.

The sewing case was in black leather. The centre portion of the lid had to be raised before the two side lids could be opened. Inside was a blue silk quilted lining with a central mirror to the lid.

The two air movement played Home Sweet Home and Auld Lang Syne. The original lithographic tune card being stuck on under the case. Around the edges of the tune card were roses and leaves and the cartouche at the bottom stated proudly that it was number 73. I suspect the movement might have been made by L'Epee or marketed through Thibouville Lamy.

The second unusual item to be found in that cabinet was the red plush covered jewel casket. This had been made by J. Cuendet and his small card was placed under the box. Interestingly, the base was covered in leather in much the same way as a leather book cover is produced. On to this was stuck the card.

The two airs were Nanon. Waltzer No. 4 and Titania aus Afrikareise. The serial number was 28846.

The inner lid lifted out to reveal a space for housing necklaces and the like, whilst at the rear, suitably covered up, was the movement. The raising of the lid operated the movement.

Alas, the shop is now no more. What was once an Aladdin's cave has become a Building Society offering no more than seven and a half per cent on five hundred pounds or more.

"Repin."



Some "Aeolian" Notes

by Hendrik H. Strengers

In Volume 15, Number 6 of *The Music Box* (Summer 1992) is an interesting report of Richard Cole on "The Aeolian Pipe Organ." I'll try to give some additions to the statements, reported on page 173 of the above mentioned bulletin.

According to Harvey Roehl (*Player Piano Treasury*, page 5) The Aeolian was brought out in 1883, although Ord-Hume states in his *Barrel Organ book* (page 429), that the empire was formed in 1887 by W. B. Tremaine from the original Mechanical Orguinette Company. David Bowers (*Encyclopaedia*, page 309) reports: "The Aeolian Company traces its beginning to 1878 (some accounts say 1876) when the Mechanical Orguinette Company was founded . . . The Aeolian Company was organised in 1887 as an outgrowth of the Mechanical Orguinette Company (founded in 1878) which sold reed organs operated by a perforated music roll."

It is quite clear that exact dates, relating to this Company are difficult to find. Richard Cole mentions that "Aeolian started trading around 1878 in New York with small, hand-cranked organettes. They soon produced a 46-note reed organ and about 17 years later, in 1895, produced an enlarged instrument, the Aeolian Grand, which was operated by a 58-note music roll . . . The first Aeolian pipe organ was built in the closing years of the nineteenth



Aeolian Grand

century, and the first models used the 58-note style music roll.

In 1850 a man named C. C. Bender Sr. founded a piano business in Leiden. Before that he was the technical leader of a piano factory at Rotterdam (probably Rijken) and within a few years the business flourished. A branch office was established at Amsterdam (Damrak 74/6) in about 1894. C. C. Bender Sr. died in 1878 and his eldest son, then 23



AEOLIAN GRAND.

The Aeolian Grand bears to the other styles of Aeolians the same relation that the grand piano does to the square or upright. It has a greater compass, a larger variety of tone effects, and is more powerful than any of the other styles. It has a six octave key-board. C scale. Two sets of reeds in the Treble and two sets in the Bass.

STOP SPECIFICATION KEY-BOARD ACTION.

TREBLE.	BASS.
MELODIA, 8 ft.	DIAPASON, 8 ft.
CLARABELLA, 8 ft.	VIOLA, 4 ft.

STOP SPECIFICATION AEOLIAN ACTION.

There are in the Aeolian action five sets of reeds in the Treble and six sets in the Bass. Seventeen stops, Crescendo Swell and Grand Organ Swell. The variety of stops and the characteristic quality of each affords opportunities for producing instrumental effects that are remarkably realistic. The different stops are:

TREBLE.	BASS.
CLARION (Clarinet).	CORNO-INGLESE (French Horn).
SERAPHONE (Fagotte).	GAMBA (Viola de Gamba).
VOX CELESTE (Flute and Oboe comb.).	HAUTBOY (Cornet).
CREMONA (Violin).	CELLO (Violoncello).
FLAUTINA (Piccolo).	PRINCIPAL (Violin and Flute combined).
DULCET TREBLE (Flute).	DULCET BASS (Cello).
	SUB-BASS (Trombone).
	BOURDON (Sub-Bass).

AUXILIARIES.

VOX-HUMANA (A delicate tremolo effecting all the sets of reeds).
 CRESCENDO SWELL (Gives full power to stops drawn).
 GRAND ORGAN SWELL (Opens all the sets of reeds).
 TEMPO (Controls the movement of the music sheet).
 RE-ROLL (Reverses the movement of the music sheet).

DIMENSIONS.

Length 64 inches, height 59 inches, width 28½ inches.
 Weight, boxed, 685 lbs.

CASES.

The case of the Grand is of an elaborate design, doubly veneered throughout and perfectly finished. Solid wood to match the veneers is used in the mouldings and hand carvings; continuous nickel hinges are used in the fall; the back is so adjusted that it can be removed for shipment, and is well finished. These cases will be supplied in all different finishings of the choicest varieties of veneers.

PRICE, SEVEN-HUNDRED AND FIFTY DOLLARS.

years old, became the new manager. The second and fourth son came later in the business, while the third son went to the United States and established a business in the same branch at Buffalo. The Bender firm became an official agent of the Aeolian Company in the Netherlands. So they issued a 78 page Aeolian catalogue in 1894. The front cover mentions proudly: "Aeolian Catalogue. Represented in Holland by C. C. Bender, Leiden & Amsterdam." At the time of this catalogue the Aeolian Company had its headquarters in New York, 18 West Twenty-Third Street, and branch offices in London, 225 Regent Street; Paris, 1 Rue Blanche and Melbourne, 226 Collins Street. The catalogue gives a general description of the Aeolian organs and contents chapters like "how to play the Aeolian, how the Aeolian is made, how the music is prepared." There are descriptions and illustrations of the following Aeolian styles: 1500 (US\$ 500,=), 1250 (US\$ 300,=), 750 (US\$ 230,=) and 1450 (US\$ 250,=), the Colonial (US\$ 600,=), the *Aeolian Grand* (US\$ 750,=). And there is a chapter about *Aeolian Pipe Organs*.

So I think that we now have clear evidence that the Aeolian Grand and the first Aeolian Pipe Organs were made already in 1894 (not 1895). I hope I have lifted one corner of the historical veil around the starting point of the production of these instruments. Finally I can show you a corner of the Bender business in Amsterdam in 1902, where you can see an Aeolian "Colonial" at the left. ■

AEOLIAN PIPE ORGANS.

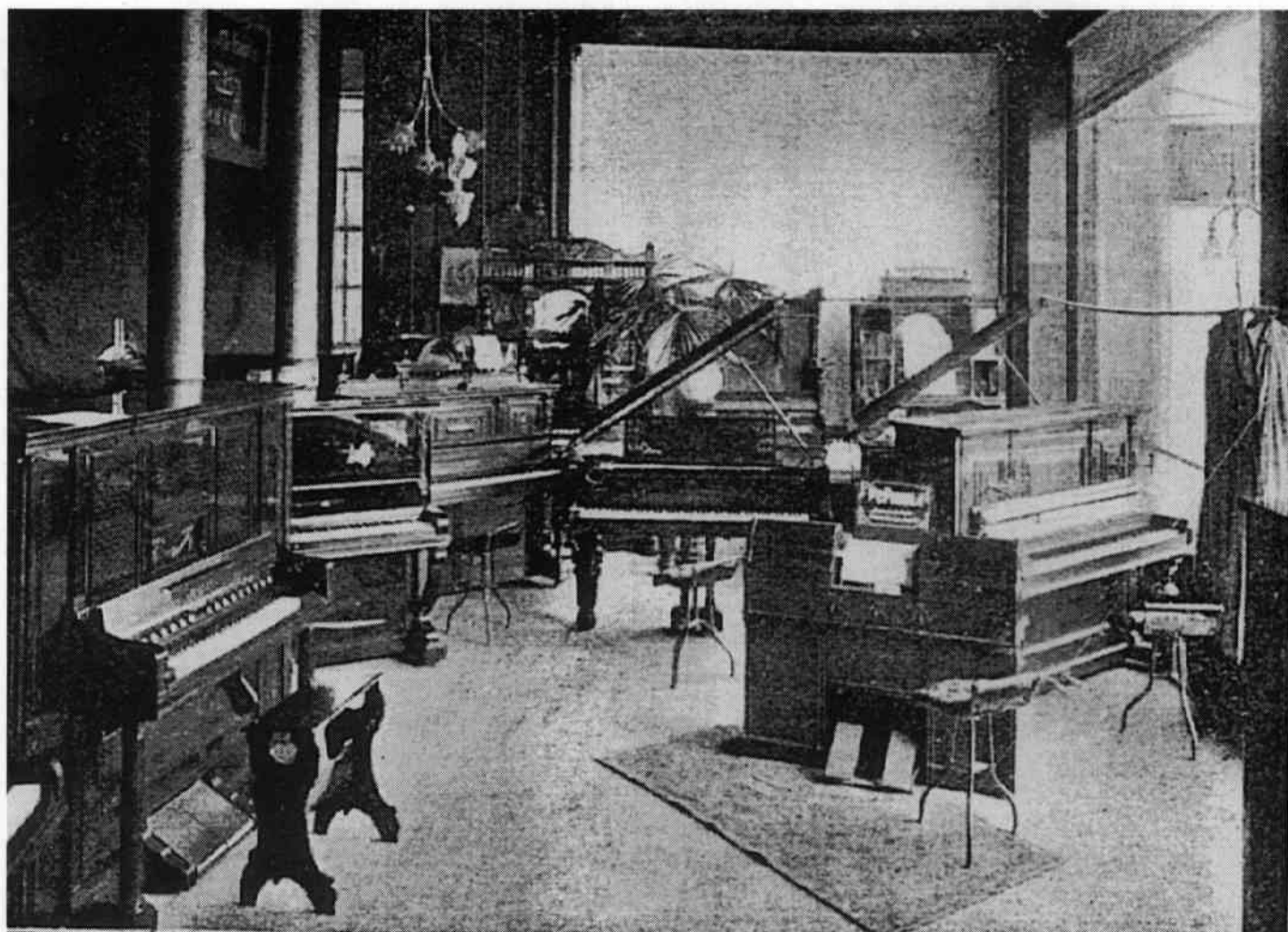
We have recently completed arrangements with the FARRAND & VOTEY ORGAN COMPANY of Detroit, Mich., to supply Aeolian actions for pipe organs of their manufacture.

The FARRAND & VOTEY ORGAN COMPANY has recently bought out GRANVILLE WOOD & SON of Northville, Mich., and FRANK ROOSEVELT of New York, both large manufacturers. The former supplied organs to many of the large churches in the West, and ROOSEVELT was widely known all over the world as one of the most progressive and successful of modern pipe organ builders.

The combination of these three Companies into one large concern has resulted in the establishment of the most complete and extensive pipe organ manufactory in this country and in some respects in the world.

The advantages of the Aeolian have been set forth in detail in the early chapters of this book. The merits of the pipe organ are too well known to need explanation, we will only add that all the improvements of pneumatics and electricity that enter into the construction of pipe organs as they are built to-day, combine to make the instruments of the FARRAND & VOTEY ORGAN COMPANY superior to those of any other manufacturer in this country and particularly adapted for use in connection with the Aeolian.

PRICES AND SPECIFICATIONS WILL BE
FURNISHED UPON APPLICATION.



Bender Showroom (1902) with Aeolian "Colonial" (left).

A Roll of Change

A computer controlled roll-playing machine has been designed and built to allow real-time performance of rolls. Originally in 1980 a 65 note machine was built, but over the last 5 years a purpose-built computer and associated instrumentation of the electro-mechanics has been constructed.

The resulting setup is pictured in Figure 1. Here the roll machine mechanics is seen to be controlled electronically, with 'local' controls to allow the user to over-ride the computer. In normal operation the local electronics obeys the situation defined by the Dual computer.

The 'Dual computer' is central to the scheme and consists of two independent computers (programmed separately) but which have a region of true shared memory together with the ability to interrupt each other. The machines are termed 'left' and 'right' with the latter responsible for reading optical sensors from the read-head and for deriving the steerage necessary to track the roll (i.e. to keep the holes in the roll in line with the sensors

by Andrew Armit

upon the head). The right machine supplies the left machine with the state (on/off) of the many sensors.

The left machine determines the meanings of the on and off sensors against some particular roll format – e.g. 65 or 88 note and can issue controls to a synthesiser etc. to reproduce the music. To do this the computer has to simulate pneumatic delays etc. In the figure the Yamaha Disklavier is shown as the output device. This mechanical piano includes solenoid drives for each note and can be driven via the standard MIDI interface.

The front panel of the roll machine contains a whole bunch of sliders, switches, push buttons and light emitting diodes. These all connect to the Dual computer – and their meaning is thus exactly as programmed. In a typical arrangement there are sliders for speed control, bass and treble volumes, accent levels (and other things). Push buttons allow reset, new roll, roll

format declaration, play, stop, re-roll.

It is important to understand that the roll machine operates in real-time – so we may play a roll while hearing it at that time, with full facility to adjust speed, contrasts etc., etc., as it plays. As a side-effect of performing a paper roll the Dual computer saves its record of the hole positions. This record can be passed to the ATARI computer, which is not involved in the real-time performance, but forms the source of programs which are down-loaded to the Dual computer and the 'file-store' of rolls. Thus once a paper roll has been played it can be transferred to a library upon the ATARI – from which it can be returned to the Dual computer for re-performance later.

The information within the stored version of the roll is independent of any particular performance, because it stores the position of holes, and not a particular interpretation of these.

The machine arrangement has resulted from a series of trials. The entrails are depicted in part in Figure

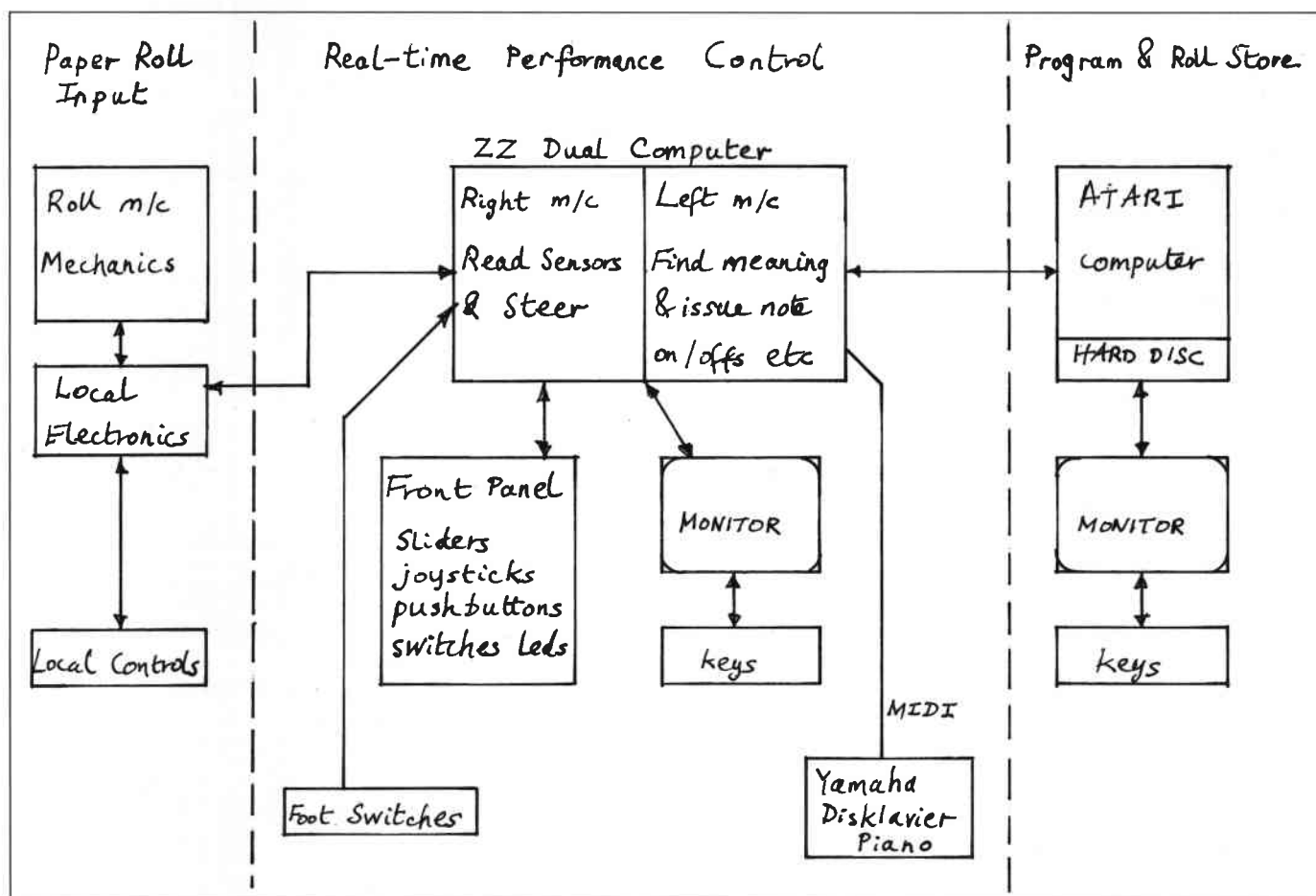


Figure 1. Roll Machine Hardware Scheme.

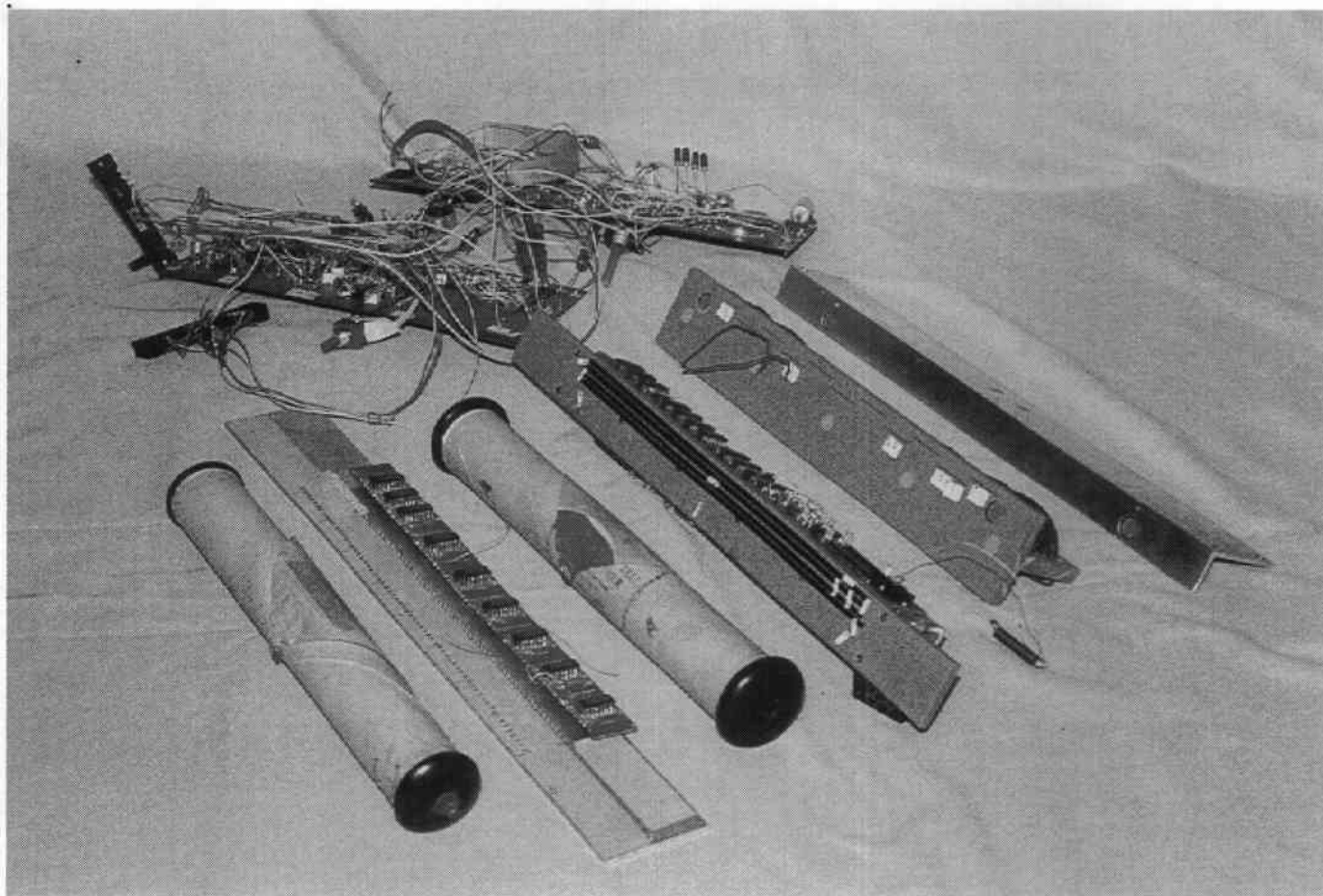


Figure 2. Read Heads and Electronics.

2. At the left is a 65 note roll, and next to this is the original 65 note read-head. This had a single row of 65 optical sensors which were multiplexed by the 9 chips on the circuit board in order to be read in sequential batches of 8 by the computer.

Next is the 88 note roll and then the 65/88 note read-head. This has much more electronics and includes a staggered pair of sensor rows for each of the 65 and 88 note hole spacings. This head is tracked by various means, including a closed loop analog method based upon the quantity of light reaching pairs of large sensors partially obscured by the edges of the paper roll. The electronics was smart enough to detect damaged edges and ignore that edge temporarily – and the electronics is shown at the rear in Figure 2.

It was the experience with this head that made me realise the essential madness of steering the roll from the edges – just exactly the part of the roll that gets damaged. From this time the quest was to steer the roll from the holes. Figure 3 shows a hole in a roll, and the two small circles indicate light sensors. If the sum of the light reaching the

sensor pair is above a certain threshold we may determine that a hole is found in the roll. We may subtract the light reaching the left from the right and so gain a correction signal for roll or head positioning. Of course the idea is to obtain such steerage from every hole determined open at any time (but not the others!).

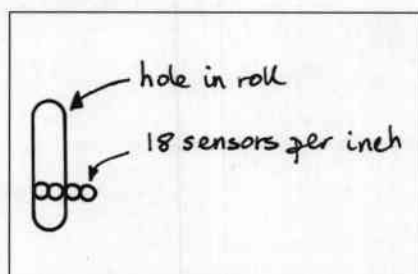


Figure 3. Hole Based Steerage.

Returning to Figure 2, the fibre-optic read-head is shown. The use of fibre-optics allowed the $\frac{1}{18}$ inch sensor spacing to be achieved. The 100 chip analog multiplexor and balance extraction circuits are not shown! The fibre-optic head did not produce good results in all circumstances, and when I had recovered my temper I realised that the idea was correct, but that the implementation was too complex. It

was this that led to my designing the Dual computer, awarding a complete processor (about 1 million instructions per second) to the job of sensor state extraction and steerage. In this way the rolls track without regard for the edges, which can be in any state of decay or folded over etc.

The prototype machine results from an interest bordering upon mania, but has allowed me to achieve various aims – not least using my ability to design computers and programs to solve a specific real-time control problem. To gain a more 'exportable' result of all this, I have produced a first 54 minute floppy disc (HDP 001 F) for the Yamaha Disklavier containing 'happy pianola roll music'. The product has 20 titles and is boxed etc. with proper Mechanical Copyright Protection Society licence. You can send for details, and then the disk, and thus enjoy the results of my labours – as recently demonstrated in Cambridge to a meeting of Musical Box Society of Great Britain (MBSGB) at which I spoke upon 'A Roll of Change'.

Details from: Andrew Armit, 21 Greenside, Waterbeach, Cambridge CB5 9HW. ■



The following are extracts taken from a series of letters the late J. E. T. Clark sent to a former member of the Musical Box Society. The extracts have been selected for their importance. All quotations are verbatim.

John Clark was a link with the later days of the musical box industry and he held very distinct views. Some of these we now know to be incorrect. Comments regarding Nicole blue tune cards are an example.

These few inconsistencies are no reason to be critical of his efforts. Without his work and his book, I doubt if the Musical Box Society would be as rich as it is today.

Each letter is dated. Extra notes have been added here and there to clarify extracts where necessary.

25/1/1957

This is a letter on general topics. He stated that a spending limit of £10 to buy a musical box would miss the really good instruments such as Nicole boxes that play overtures. Plated cylinders are not older than circa 1888.

"There is always damper trouble in interchangeable boxes; the dampers get knocked out of position when inexperienced people change a cylinder."

Later in the letter he offered a 3 overture Nicole box for £25. Also offered a drum & bell box.

" - the drum keeps proper time with the music, which is rare."

30/1/1957

A letter dealing with repairs to a disc box plus the following anecdote:-

" - Yes there are some very fine musical boxes playing sacred music but they are rare & therefore not cheap. When Billy Graham was over here he sent his manager to me to see and hear the instruments I had for sale, but as I had not one that played sacred music, he did not purchase. However he did obtain one or two such boxes during his stay."

20/2/1957

In this letter were notes on Junod and Paillard. Both quotations are worthy of comment.

"The trade mark is easy now I can see it large. It is Alfred Junod. In his glory so far as making good musical boxes about 1887. He made the Duplex musical box in 1887. The letter J. stood for I. sometimes with people who were out to impress."

In his last paragraph of this letter he states:-

" - C. P. G. on the Paillard is the mark or one of the marks of the Swiss chamber of commerce."

26/2/1957

Letter reporting finishing work on a comb. Giving details of obtaining a 15.5" Regina. Could easily get one from America

1/3/1957

Noting repairs to a 15.5" Polyphon.

4/3/1957

Giving a list of 19 3/4" Polyphon discs he had for sale. Noted also the following comment:-

" - Paul Lochman was very enterprising and he made machines in many sizes."

1/5/1957

Letter stating he had completed repairs to a Polyphon. Cost £2.

11/5/1957

Notes on various disc machines. A mention regarding the No. 5 Polyphon:-

" - I shall never know who invented the fancy name for this Polyphon, but in the 1902 catalogue it is the number 5 and is called the "Roberts" Polyphon Automata. The South African war was still on hence the name Roberts after Lord Roberts. The price was £45 with 10 tunes."

Later in the same letter Clark stated one of his prejudices which has no foundation in fact:-

"Now your latest Nicole box No. 35805. To start with this is the right period, but I do not like the blue card. All those with blue cards are slightly - only very slightly - inferior quality. If you had never heard a better one you would pronounce them ideal."

9/6/1957

Bill for £3 for putting in 2 new teeth and 1 tip plus attention to pins and register.

17/6/1957

Offered a mint condition Nicole 6 air 6 bell box for £40. He also offered some disc machines for sale. He was given details of a box that was thought to be a Nicole with the serial No. 16295.

19/6/1957

Comments regarding the Nicole No. 16295.

" - I find it difficult to believe it can be a genuine Nicole all things considered: It is a great pity the tune sheet is missing or that the tunes are not known to you. The tunes are sure to "date" it. When you bring it here, I will test the tuning of the comb with the master Nicole comb I have. As you say it must be at least 120 years old, but the glass lid must have been a later date. It is out of the question to trace its origin? In years gone I have done wonderful things along these lines."

Details of a Nicole programme as listed in Cox Savory & Co. catalogue of January 1852 is also mentioned in the letter. He mentioned a stock number of 1041 and that Nicole 16295 had a stock number of 1025.

26/6/1957

Letter continuing the interest in Nicole 16295. He explained stock numbers given in previous correspondence relate to Nicole's stock numbers and not Cox Savory. Clark was not able to say if it indicated the number of boxes made or sold up to a certain date. He wanted to mention this box in the 3rd edition of his book.

*" - I am now much inclined to think the box is Nicole. The deciding factor of course will be the names of the airs. If only one tune is recognised, it may determine the date of manufacture. It is almost sure to be prior to 1815 if the movement is removed from underneath **instead** of the usual method of lifting out from the top of the case. For some unknown reason to me, a strip of wood in front inside the case is a sign that the movement is taken out from underneath. It **could not** be lifted out from the top."*

17/7/1957

Letter having repaired the early Nicole.

"It sounds quite good and I am convinced it is a Nicole but has been converted from a key wind to a ratchet. The glass lid may have been added. I find it is tuned to the master comb so that leaves no doubt as to its being a Nicole."

27/7/1957

Informing owner of Nicole that he has identified tune No. 5.

"I have been informed tune No. 5 on your small Nicole is "Hath thy home in fair Provence." It is from La Traviata. The Italian title is "Di Provenza il mar."

3/8/1957

Letter continuing the saga of the Nicole box.

"Yes I know Traviata was not composed until 1853. I can only think the cylinder has been changed unless of course my judgement as to its age is wrong. I am still of the opinion that the set up of the cylinder is early."

We now know that this particular box was made by L'Epee. It is interesting that the comb had the same tuning as a Nicole. Either L'Epee had knowledge of the exact tuning required or Nicole supplied a comb. Who knows?

Note in another part of the letter when talking about Mojon Manger.

"Their boxes made in the 1893-4 period were not soft and the set up was brilliant and jumpy or music hall like, even the operatic music was treated this way."

20/8/1957

General letter on the topic of a Lecoultre clock.

29/8/1957

General letter on musical clocks and asking for 5 shillings for repairs to an escapement.

6/9/1957

Letter on musical clocks and in particular a Japy Freres musical clock. Two quotes as follows:-

" - I have met with some really good boxes with L. F. Geneva on the escapement. I cannot be sure if it was intended as a trade mark for Lecoultre. Rochat the maker of singing birds of good quality and in gold cases always put F. R. intended to mean Rochat Freres."

16/9/1957

Letter bemoaning the fact that his publishers were not keen to take up the 3rd edition of his book.

"I will try to look out one of the minstrel programmes for you to see with the Chas Blamphin songs named and the singer. I am almost sure he composed and sang his own songs."

17/9/1957

Letter discussing the use of Xylamon to get rid of wood worm. Also comments on bracket clocks.

"Now in the trade it is always correct to engrave the back plate of a bracket clock and the pendulum if the case has a glass door at the back. This engraving is seen or is intended to be seen if the clock stands on a shelf with a mirror behind, or on a table in a room in such a position that all sides of the case is seen; in the middle of a drawing room - in Victorian rooms of course."

19/9/1957

Letter commenting on various purchases made by the writer of the letter. Snuff box at £15. Kapt at £7.

2/11/1957

General letter on several topics to do with disc machines plus the following:-

" - The zither screwed on the front is the sign of a good musical box and I find that practically all the best makers used that method. I

am with you in that I dislike the zither, but it seems they were popular at one period."

31/2/1958

General letter:-

" - I am able to help you with regard to the composer Chas Blamphin. When we first came to London - way back in 1887 - I was taken to several minstrel shows. These were not real negroes of course, but white men with black faces. Chas Blamphin was the composer of many of their songs - I still have some of the programmes - in fact I believe he used to sing some of them himself. I don't think your musical box goes so far back as 1877. However it may do and I have no idea when Blamphin started to compose.

Langdorff was a good maker."

5/2/1958

Noted in a letter.

" - Yes I have seen the spring drums and even the escapement with a zig-zag pattern stamped on - or is it acid chased? etched?

Now are you sure this is the original train? If the spindle is extended it may be from an organ or even a dancing doll, although in the latter case it is usually an eccentric cam on the next spindle that works the doll."

16/3/1958

Letter including following:-

"I have looked over my old programmes and find in one dated 1884 - before I can remember - one Charles Blamphin did the words and music of the following songs which he sang himself in the Moore and Burgess Minstrels:- The Sweethearts Kiss, Heavenly Voices, Nellies Reply.

Some years later in a programme of 1900 - I remember this - I find:-

Your Sweethearts & Mine lads. This was sung and composed by one Joseph Blamphin in the Mohawk Minstrels. I remember being taken to see this programme but was too young to recall individual artists. Joseph was most probably the son of Charles."

28/3/1958

Letter mainly talking about disc machines, but including the following:-

" - Rip Van Winkle was produced at the Gaiety Theatre London in 1881 and revived several times consequently. I expect some of the tunes became popular. I have seen the waltz from it on several cylinder programmes of about the 1886-1890 period. The "Gay Tom" is surely the "Gay Tom-Tit" from Gilbert and Sullivan. This was very popular in the 1889-1900 period. It is a cake walk song or to be exact it was a song and dance.

"For old times sake" is a popular music hall song of the 1897 period, but I cannot remember it before. The Great Physician. Unless this is another name for one of George Robey's songs, - My wife's a lady doctor. I should know if I heard it. I seem to think there is a sacred song of this title."

29/3/1958

Short letter detailing the following:-

" - It occurs to me that the tune "The Gay Tom Tit" is from Sidney Jones musical plays and not from Gilbert and Sullivan. I suggest "The Geisha" & "The Great Physician" is in a Nicole Freres Sacred programme of about 1900."

8/5/1958

Sundry comments contained in general correspondence. Those concerning tuning, management and pilfering are interesting.

" - No, Paillard musical boxes were never strident. Some of their combs were a little too loud and the actual tuning very common place, although the setting up would cause that if not skilfully performed. I have found most Paillard forte-piano boxes quite good also some but not all of their 3 comb - all the same length - boxes were good. Others were indifferent. The firm changed management so often.

In all my 50 years experience I have never met with a glass lid with a lock! I wonder if this is an after addition? Another thing: I have not seen the end plates of a cylinder plated and the cylinder remain brass. I understand the cylinders were plated before the pins were put in, so this one may have been overlooked. There are other reasons. Pilfering went on at the P.V.F. factory at one period, this cylinder may have been "sneaked" out. For musical quality, silver or nickel plated cylinders is not a good idea."

12/5/1958

Contained in a 4 page letter. Perhaps all knowledgeable people would like to comment on the contents of the following paragraph!

*"The kind of steel that these old combs were made of is no longer made, in any case one does not make new teeth they are **always cut from an old comb**. Of course I get contradictions from those too clever people on the subject of using old teeth. I can answer for it that in all the factories in Switzerland, if they damaged a comb that had been already fitted to a new movement, they did not make a new comb. They repaired it and with the teeth cut from an old comb. I know this to be correct and have had many such combs through my hands over the years."*

Collector's Showcase

Musical Clock

Not inappropriate for the Christmas season is this fine musical clock. Clocks in the form of a cathedral are not uncommon, but this example is decidedly unusual. Collectors will be familiar with the large and elaborately detailed Swiss chalet musical boxes, sometimes containing a clock. This is the same type of work, made entirely of carved fruitwood, and with detail of such fragility that it is surprising that it has survived with very little damage. Perhaps this is partly due to the existence of a contemporary but unoriginal glazed cover.

The piece stands 32"/80cm high overall and 21½"/54cm wide. The clock is linked to a musical move-

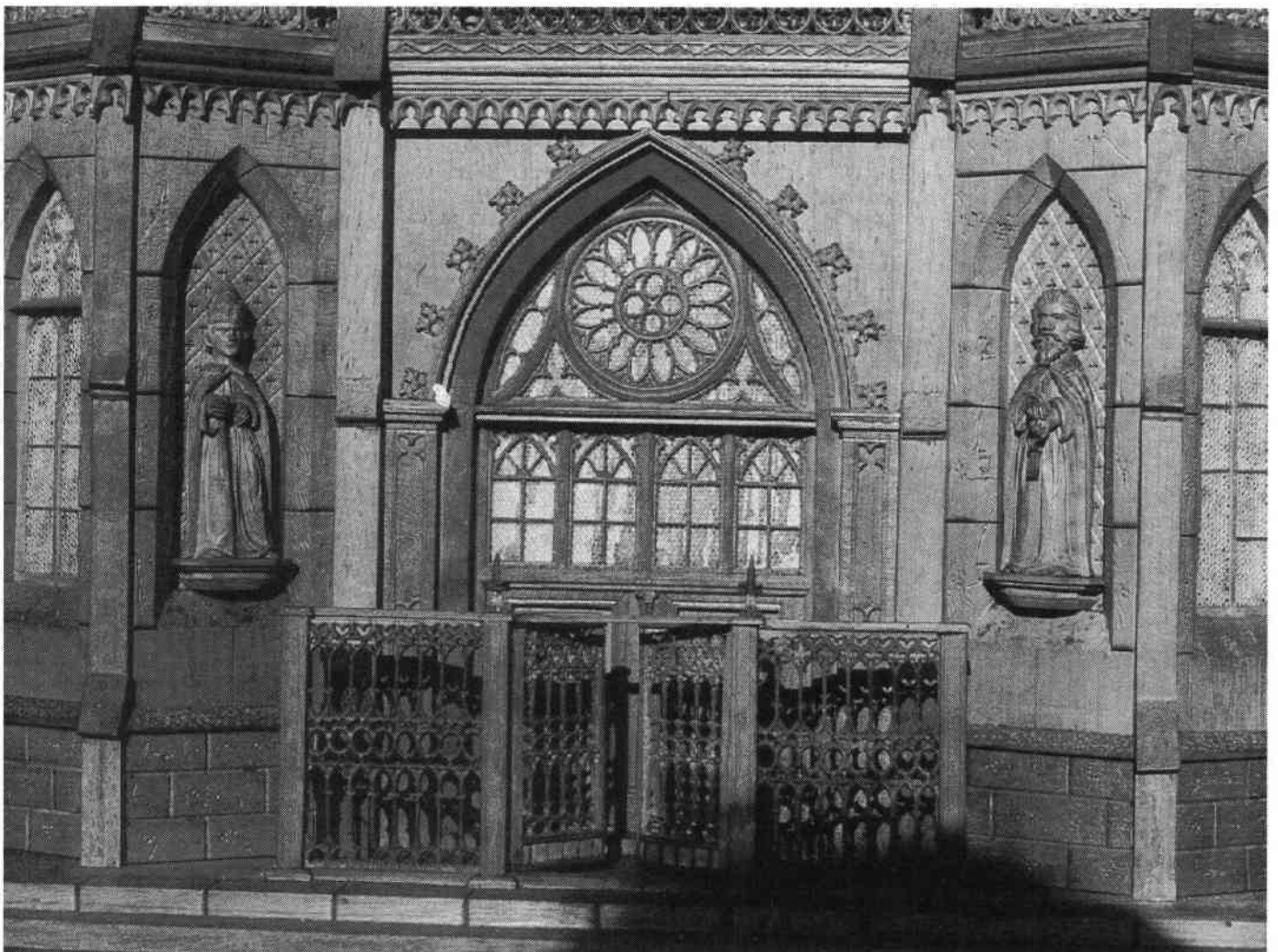
ment in the base, playing automatically on the hour, or independently via the three control levers on the right hand side, each of which is engraved with its function. The movement is a four air Organocleide with a 13"/33cm cylinder and 184 teeth. A large portion of the comb has teeth tuned in groups of nine. As one might expect, the programme is of a sacred nature, the slow melodies being ideal for an Organocleide (mandoline bass), and sounding superb.

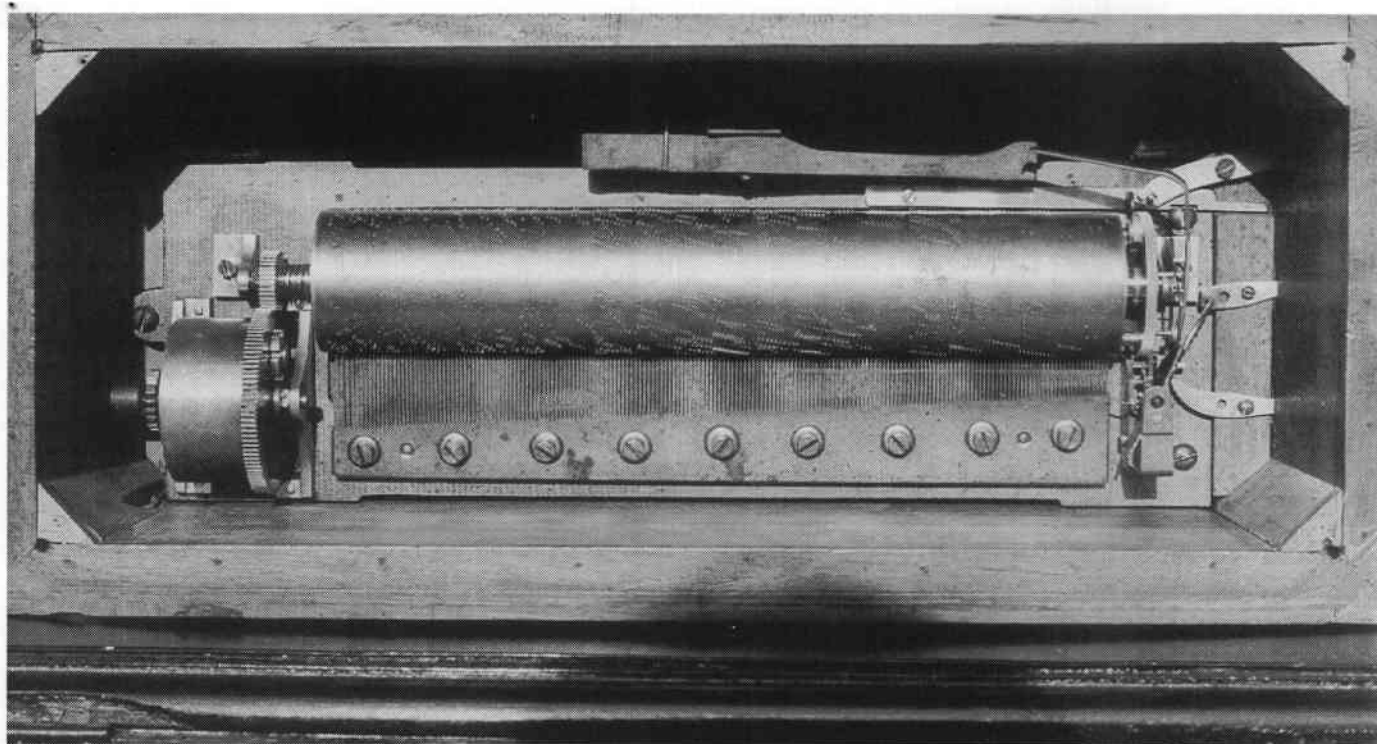
1. Old 100th psalm
2. See the Conquering Hero comes. Handel
3. O Come all ye faithful
4. Austrian Hymn. Haydn



There is no indication of the maker, but the cylinder wheel is inscribed 'Groux 1873', probably the person responsible for adapting the movement to the clock.

One can speculate as to whether this piece was a special commission or, as with the large chalets, a stock item for the better class shops of the Alpine resorts.





Jules Béhemoth, the first elephant automaton.

Following the Robot Walking Elephant in our last edition comes this reminder of another such creature – this one from the land of fantasy.

Automata in Fiction

Here is an abbreviated description of Béhemoth, the steam elephant, as given by Jules Verne in his 1880 novel *The Demon of Cawnpore* . . .

"The huge animal, twenty feet high and thirty feet long, advanced steadily and with a certain mystery of movement. His trunk, curved like a cornucopia, was uplifted high in the air. On his back was a highly ornamented howdah with lens-shaped glasses for windows.

This elephant drew after him a train consisting of two enormous cars, moving bungalows in fact. His huge feet were raised and set down with mechanical regularity, and he changed his pace from a walk to a trot without any signal from a mahout."

Verne goes on to describe how a fabulously wealthy rajah ordered this movable "steam house," and gives a long technical description. The engine provided 150 horse power, and with grooved wheels in the feet the elephant could climb gradients up to one in eight. Its huge bulk enabled it to float in water for river crossings and the moving feet then provided a paddle-wheel drive.

Musical Box Oddments

by H. A. V. Bulleid

Number 55

Jules Massenet (1842-1912) was the most prolific and renowned French composer of the 1875 to 1900 period. He joined the Paris Conservatoire at age 11; by 1863 he was working with the orchestra at the Opera besides playing in cafes and teaching the piano, and after a good start in composing he achieved his first major success in 1872.

Massenet, whose character was said to be dominated by tactfulness and the desire to please, composed about forty operas; seven musical dramas; incidental music for over a dozen plays including *Michael Strogoff* in 1880; three ballets; numerous songs and part songs and items of sacred music.

These Massenet operas are the most likely to be seen on tune sheets . . .

Don César de Bazan	1872
Le roi de Lahore	1877
Manon	1884
Le Cid (the Chief)	1885
Werther	1892
Thaïs	1894
Sapho	1897

An oddment from Langdorff

Langdorff serial 25110, made in about 1892, is one of their larger *rechange* boxes with six nickel-plated 8-air cylinders 19½ inches long by 3⅜ diameter (50 by 8.5 cms). Its burr walnut case is 42" (107 cms) wide and stands on a matching table with a drawer for five cylinders. This set-up helps the bass volume, and being a sublime harmonie movement with nine bells it gives a formidable performance. Its 48 tunes are mainly operatic, dating up to 1890. They are listed on a large Ami Rivenc tune sheet, which is undoubtedly the original; but you could tell even without looking at Langdorff's harp mark on the governor that it could not be by Rivenc with serial 25110 and 1890 tunes because Rivenc numbers

were then around 40,000. All this seems to show that the makers didn't worry enough about tune sheets.

Three overtures

There was a strong demand for musical boxes playing overtures in the 1830-1870 period; it was met by a range of boxes, most playing from three to six overtures and some of the two-per-turn type playing a mix of overtures and normal length tunes.

Adverts in *The Times* always offered overtures, sometimes adding an example such as, in 1839, "three overtures, £14 14s." This almost certainly referred to Nicole boxes of the type shown in Fig. 1, the well-known and very attractive movements with cylinders 9⅞" by 2⅞" diameter (23 by 7.3 cm). They originally came in close-fitting plain cases but by 1846 the case size was increased to 17½ by 7¾ inches (44 by 20 cm) and the lid marquetry included patterns in the four corners, which became an accepted feature of overture boxes, as shown in Fig. 2.

Though a bit weak at the bass end, whose sound radiation is hindered by the small case size, these boxes give really excellent 100-second performances of many famous overtures. They are small treasures.

Other makers produced similar and equally good boxes, but I think only one maker consistently offered three-overture boxes using a standard 13 inch cylinder six air arrangement and playing each overture on two revs. of the cylinder – in fact, ½-per-turn. The several boxes I have seen of this type are all by F. Lecoultre, Geneva, as shown in Fig. 3. The slight bad news about them is that you cannot repeat an individual overture, and that there is a 2½ second pause at half time; the good news is that the overtures last a full 2½ minutes and have superior volume including improved bass. These F. Lecoultre boxes also provided the exception to the rule that early overture box lids have corner patterns – they have plain lids with four lines of stringing.

Nicole 24239 shown in Fig. 1 has 170 comb teeth, with 440Hz *a* teeth numbers 56 and 57, relative stiffness 98. It was made in 1846.

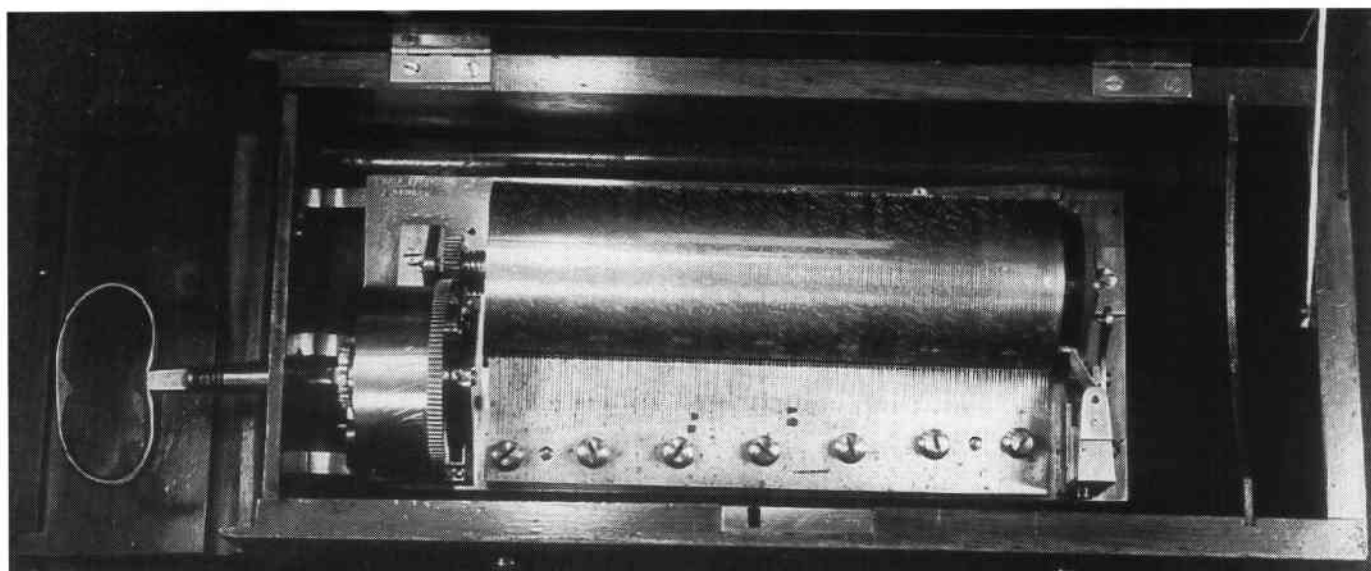


Fig. 1. Typical Nicole 3-overture box, serial 24239, made in 1846, with 170-tooth comb; dots show *a* teeth 440Hz nos. 56 and 57 and 880Hz nos. 87-89. The first thirty bass end tune tracks are widened to allow adequate tooth width.

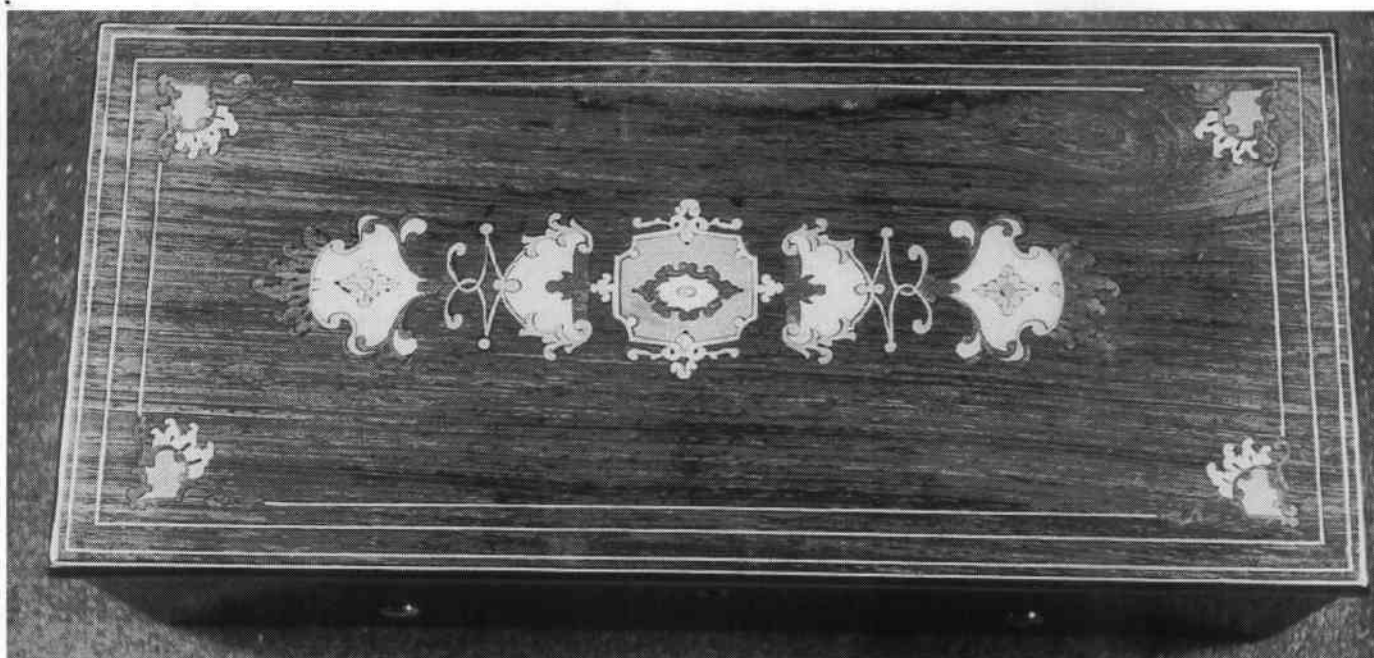


Fig. 2. Lid of Nicole 24239 with overture style inlay added at corners.

F. Lecoultré 21392 shown in Fig. 3 has 135 teeth, α teeth numbers 46 and 47, relative stiffness 160. It was made about 1849. Both cylinders are pinned to play at .09" (2.3 mm) per second. Both these boxes have 1843 operas as their latest tunes; *Bohemian Girl* on Nicole and *Don Pasquale* on Lecoultré. It was quite common to have one recent and two earlier successes on overture boxes.

The $\frac{1}{2}$ -per-turn arrangement

It must have been decided by F. Lecoultré, probably with the support of their agent Berens, Blumberg & Co., that good quality three-overture boxes could be made with only 135 comb teeth and the cost further reduced by using standard 13" (33 cm) blanks. This involved reducing the track widths from the normal .017" to .016" (.432 to .406 mm). All that could be done to minimise the effect of the $2\frac{1}{2}$ second pause at mid tune was to arrange the music for a "natural break" at that point, as often successfully achieved on part-overture boxes; but here the break in *Zampa* sounds a bit like a mistake.

In every other respect serial 21392 is fully satis-

factory. Its gamme number is 3526, scribed on bass lead and cylinder end cap. The blank code numbers on the bedplate are 21 for cylinder details and 27 for spring and governor. The agent's initials are stamped as usual below the serial number, see Fig. 4, and they would certainly have been on the original tune sheet, the type shown in my book page 111. Unfortunately this had been replaced by the John Manger tune sheet shown in Fig. 5.

I must admit I felt quite bemused when I first saw this tune sheet. It suggested that either the cylinder pricker had gone crazy or there was something wrong with the snail cam which a repairer had been unable to put right; it turned out to be the latter, see Fig. 6. What should have been the lowest step of the cam was only .032" (= two tunes) below the top step. The box had then been set up for step 2 to play tune 1, so it played the two parts of *Norma* and of *Zampa* and part 1 of *Don P* before dropping back to part 1 of *Zampa* (not part 2 as stated in Fig. 5). It was easy enough to correct, by reducing step 1 to .016" below step 2, though this meant going .003" below the level of the cam teeth. I speculated without success on

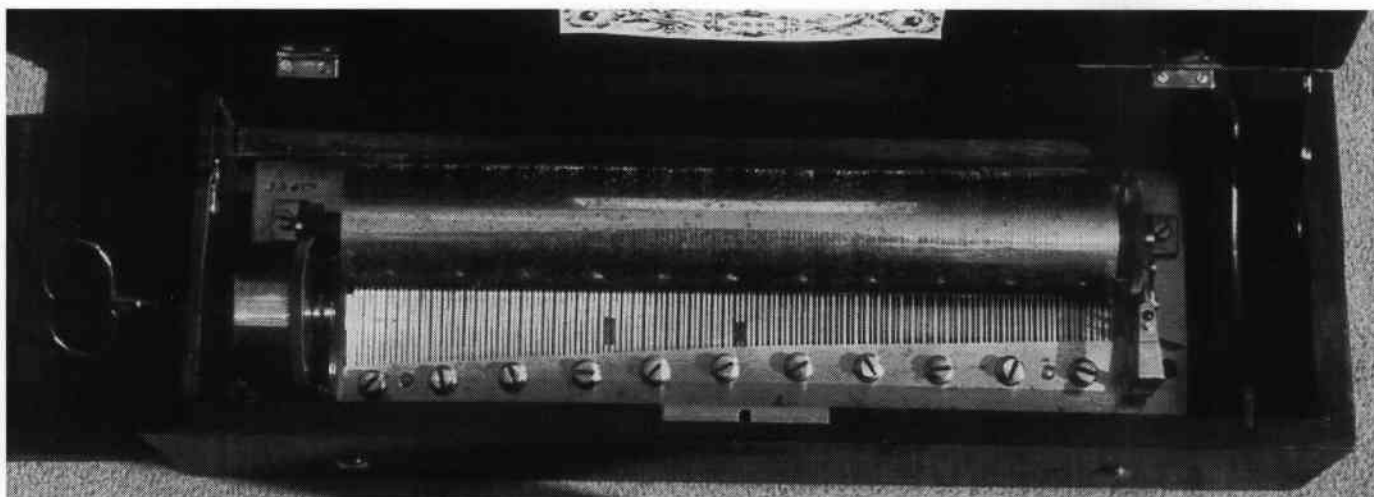


Fig. 3. Typical F. Lecoultré $\frac{1}{2}$ -per-turn 3-overture box, serial 21392, made in 1849, with 135-tooth comb, α teeth marked, 440Hz nos. 46 and 47; 880Hz, nos. 69 and 70.

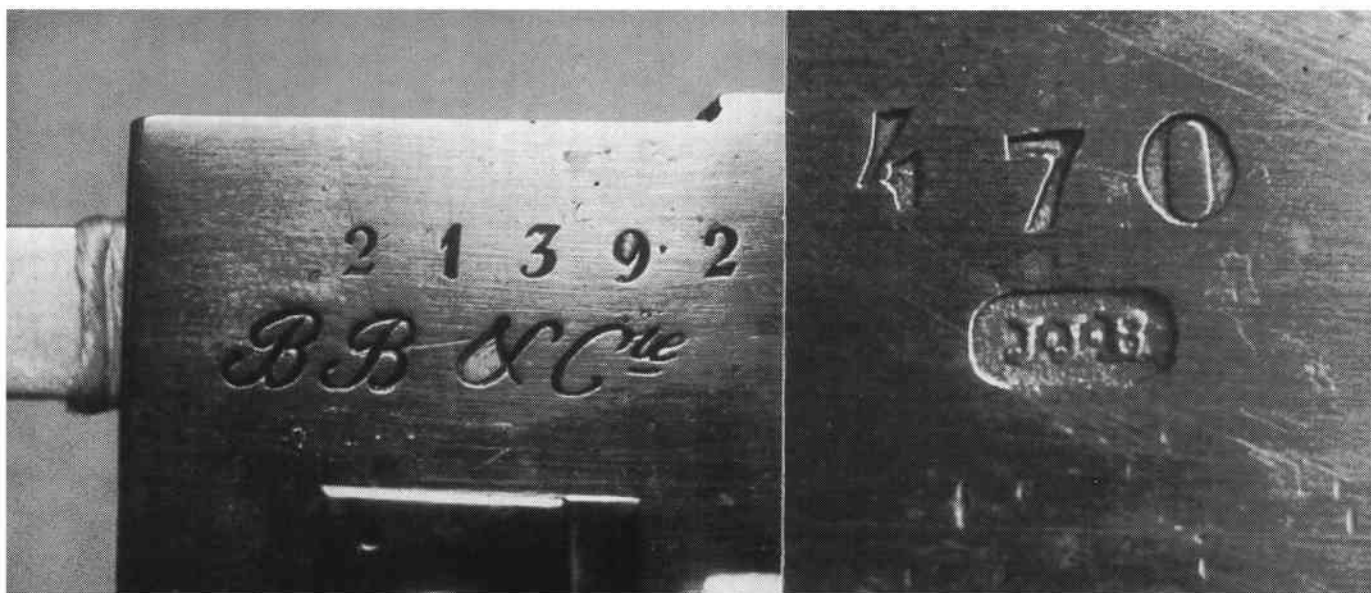


Fig. 4. The 470 with J.J.B. mark on serial 21392 (enlarged); and the common style of B B & Cie. (Binding string on tune change control lever prevents rattle).

what could have gone wrong during manufacture (and inspection!) of that cam, and how anyone could calmly re-fit it in such condition: it certainly was not the movement's original cam – there was wear on the cylinder pins of the missing tune and, more significantly, its steps were .017" whereas the original cam must have had .016" steps to suit its cylinder.

Early restorations

I am sure Lecoultré 21392 had already paid at least two visits to repairers. A number, 4179, stamped on the great wheel and on both cylinder end caps was the clue that it had been professionally re-pinned; the pins had suffered no subsequent damage but were not raked, as Lecoultré would have left them. The cement in the cylinder was adequate and uniform.

Also, more interestingly, serial 21392 had received the attentions of the mysterious repairer J.J.B. whose stamp, in oval measuring only 7 mm, is on the bedplate under the comb with an adjoining number 470, see Fig. 4. This same J.J.B. stamp is found with number 1246 on Langdorff serial 2293, with 213 on Nicole serial 31848, and with 525 on Ducommun Girod serial 22386 – shown on page 108 of Vol. 12. These four boxes were made between 1848 and 1852, so the J.J.B. mark quite likely belongs to the 1860 to 1870 or later period. I have only seen it on brass bedplates; further sightings would be welcome.

With so many and varied blank tune sheets apparently always available, it is impossible to say who inscribed the tune sheet of Fig. 5, and whether they were responsible for losing tune six. What irony, that they altered 5 to 6 airs in the top cartouche and yet sent it out playing only five.

Lecoultré dating

Guided by the writings of Pierre Germain and David Tallis, and with extensive information about Lecoultré boxes from many helpers, I offer my attempt at Lecoultré dating in Fig. 7. Some basic assumptions are needed to get the project off the ground, and I list them so that they can be accepted or challenged.

They are . . .

1. That with two exceptions all Lecoultré boxes made at Geneva and Le Brassus belong to one set of serial numbers.
2. That the main exception is David Lecoultré of Le Brassus who worked on his own, or later with his son, until he joined up as Lecoultré Freres, Le Brassus, in 1850.
3. The other exception is Henri Lecoultré of Geneva who started in 1822 and was in partnership with J. F. Granger, 1840-1844.

Assumption (1) was regarded as "almost certain" by Pierre Germain in 1977. I have further supported it by establishing that the gamme numbers of all LF and LB and FL and B.B. & C. boxes keep in step with these serial numbers. Interestingly, the Lecoultrés used up gamme numbers almost four times faster than Nicole.

Assumption (2) is based on lower serial numbers of D. Lecoultré boxes and the fact that D. Lecoultré in Le Brassus and F. L. Lecoultré in Geneva both started about 1810 and with the less effective state of postal communication before about 1850 it would have been impracticable to share a set of serial numbers even if they had so desired.

Assumption (3) is the least certain, based on Lecoultré and Granger boxes having low serial numbers despite being made between 1840 and 1844. It is most unlikely that Lecoultré would have started a new set of serials when he took Granger into partnership. Conversely, D. Lecoultré on changing to Lecoultré Freres, Le Brassus in 1850 (they exhibited in London, 1851), would have a strong motive in joining the common Lecoultré serial numbers, particularly with Berens, Blumberg being their common agent.

There is an intriguing variety of tune sheet types and bedplate and comb markings on these Lecoultré Freres boxes, including of course the famed "rampant puppy," but they do not present any obstacles to the serial numbers used for dating in Fig. 7.

The accompanying table gives the fixes used in

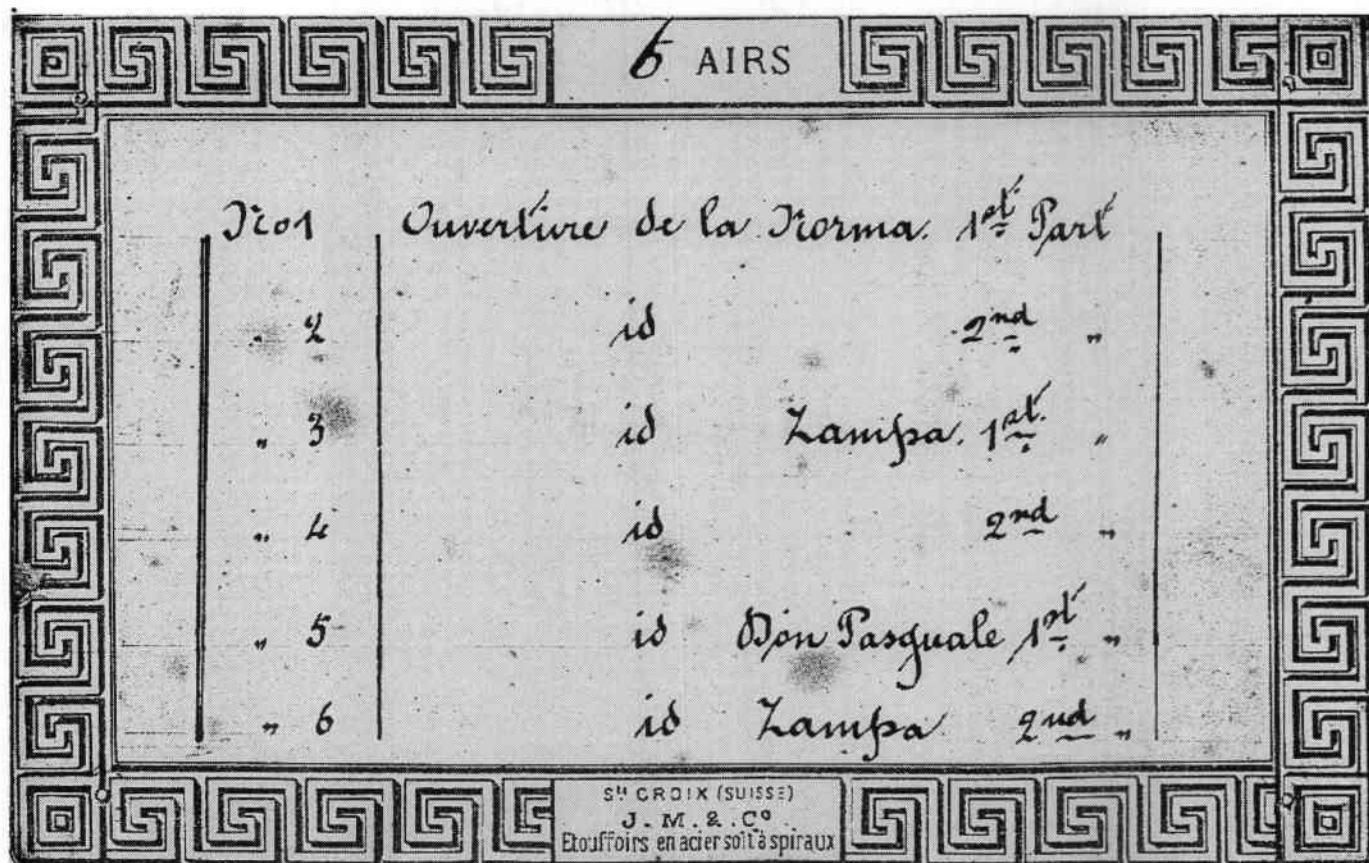


Fig. 5. The replacement tune sheet found on Lecoultre 21392. John Manger & Co., associated with Mojon, Manger, was an importer of several makes of musical boxes, including Cuendet and Ullmann.

plotting Fig. 7. They include dates written by the maker inside the cases. Popular non-operatic tunes before 1870 are usually very difficult to trace, let alone to date, which hinders the dating of early musical boxes such as Lecoultres. More examples will permit refinement of the Fig. 7 line, but quite likely it is already accurate to within two years.

A late Henri Capt.

Accurate dating of musical box manufacture is valuable in many ways, including the settling of doubtful attributions like Langdorff 25110 mentioned above, and dealing with boxes having unexpectedly early tunes. A good example is Lecoultre serial 29277, gamme 6385, 16" (41 cm) cylinder, 8 airs. The comb is stamped with the usual LF/Gve mark and the bedplate has the "rampant puppy" mark. Inside bottom of case painted 1857. It only has one tune later than 1823 and that is the *Last Rose*, 1847. Its impressive tune tablet, which implies that it was made by Hy. Capt of Geneva with serial number 6385, is shown in Fig. 8.

Another Lecoultre box made for Capt is serial 22133, about 1850, again with "rampant puppy" and engraved brass tune plaque. Its 17" by 5" diameter (42 by 13 cm) cylinder plays three overtures at 3½ minutes each and four more tunes at 2-per-turn. It does seem very unlikely that Capt made any cartel boxes.

Jules Cuendet catalogue

While visiting relatives in the Ste. Croix region last July, and incidentally finding the Baud and CIMA museums well attended, Roland Fisher secured a

reprint of Jules Cuendet's sales catalogue. Though undated it was probably issued in 1894 or soon after – it quotes their interchangeable cylinder patent no. 561766 of July 14, 1893.

The cover features their J C with anchor trade mark; founded at Auberson in 1828; New York office at 21 John Street. The preamble explains their repair service and gives tips on buying musical boxes, pointing out that quality depends on the number of comb teeth, and adds "some makers put a very small movement, generally of inferior quality, in a very large case, leading the buyer to think that quality depends on the case size. Instead, we strive to place good movements in fine cases."

There are 45 models of manivelles and tabatieres and 74 models of large boxes in most varieties, cylinders ranging from 3 to 16 pouces (3¼ to 17 inches, 8 to 43 cms). Finally there is a selection of the usual items "with music" and an illustrated list of spares which is almost identical with the list in Arthur Junod's catalogue. Tune sheets are shown in



Fig. 6. Rogue replacement snail cam on Lecoultre 21392.

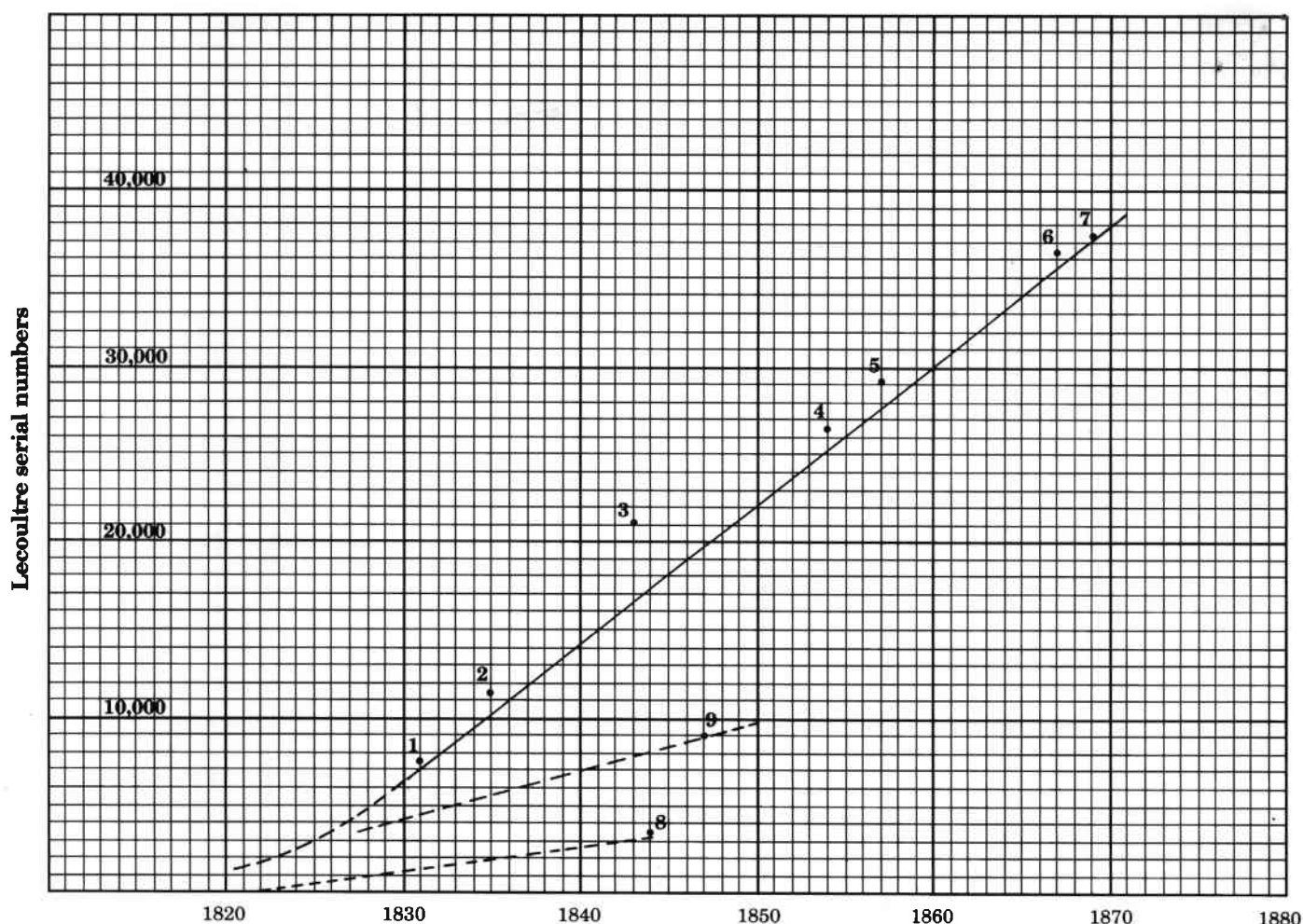


Fig. 7. Dating chart for Lecoultrés, Geneva and Le Brassus. The line is a plot of serial number against one year after the date of its latest tune. Main fixes are given in the accompanying table. The uncertain period up to 1830 is shown dotted. Production ceased in 1871-72. Highest reported serial number 38834. Last known advertisement, by C. Lecoultré, is in the 1870 Geneva directory. For dotted lines 8 and 9 see table.

Table of Lecoultré dating fixes for Fig. 7.

Item	Serial	Latest tune	Markings
1	7326	1831	Blue bordered tune sheet as Ord-Hume 37. External control levers.
2	11484	1835	L F and B B & C on tune sheet.
3	21392	1843	B B & Cie on bedplate.
4	26980	—	Brass plate engraved C. F. Lecoultré 1854.
5	29277	1847	LF/Gve on comb. Year 1857 written in red stain inside case.
6	36766	1867	LF/Gve on comb. LF (in script) and B B & C on tune sheet.
7	37453	1869	Diamond-shape Geneva tune sheet.
8	3493	1835	Lecoultré & Granger on comb.
9	9325	1847	D. Lecoultré on comb. D. Lecoultré tune sheet as Ord-Hume 38 (Vol. 2, page 204).

These nine fixes, shown in Fig. 7, are already well supported but more examples would be useful confirmation, particularly for the two "exceptions" which I have tentatively included:—

Item 8 was probably made near the end of the Lecoultré & Granger partnership and links with the starting date, 1822, of H. Lecoultré in Geneva.

Item 9 was made towards the end of David Lecoultré's independent period which started at Le Brassus about 1812 and ended in 1850.

Items 4 and 5 are plotted at the manufacturing dates given.

To help with more data (serial number plus all tunes) please contact the Editor or, better still, the Register — details were on page 116 of Vol. 15, Winter 1991.



Fig. 8. Fancy-shaped engraved tune plate on F. Lecoultré serial 29277 gamme 6385, made in 1857 and sold by Henri Capt who was listed as a Maker in the 1860 Geneva directory. Tunes 2, 3, 4, 6 and 8 were composed before 1800; tune 5, 1823; tune 7 untraced; and tune 1, already ten years old but perennially popular, in 1847. This photo and a lot of data supplied by Patrick McCrossan.

some of the musical box illustrations, and two are reproduced in Fig. 9. Unfortunately these designs are neither exclusive to Cuendet nor the only ones seen on Cuendet boxes; for example the "terrace at right" design is seen on a Billon-Haller interchangeable in Vol. 4, page 93. The Cuendet interchangeables are "Simplex" with 6-air or 3-air 5 pouce cylinders and "Star" with 6-air 12 and 16 pouce cylinders; there are several models including glass-fronted slot machine, with list of extra cylinders sent on request. Extra for double springs. Also on offer is a glass-fronted 13 inch cylinder box with dancing figures and automaton background.

Two Cuendet boxes, one an interchangeable, were described in Vol. 14, page 82, and their Works Ledger for the period April 1890 to May 1891 in Vol. 13, page 172. This showed that their output was mainly of boxes with cylinders less than six inches. Serial numbers reached 4335 during May 1891 but I expect their output rate increased soon after with the apparently huge demand for small boxes in the mid 1890s.

I hope Fig. 9 will help towards recognising more Cuendet boxes – thereby getting a respectable number reported to the Register.

Period morsel

Warners 1939 film *The Old Maid* directed by Edmund Goulding is certainly more noted for its acting competition between Bette Davis and Miriam Hopkins than for its musical box, briefly glimpsed and looking like a modest 1890 job, probably 6 inch cylinder 6 airs and lacking its tune sheet.

The wedding rehearsal sequence starts with close-up of the wedding invitation, unseen orchestra playing Wagner's wedding march: picture and sound mix simultaneously to the musical box playing the

same tune. At once the camera tracks back to a general view of the wedding preparations and the young bride, Jane Bryan, rushes to the musical box saying "Oh that thing, it's like me, it's getting old too quickly" and winds it up energetically. It continues to be heard till drowned by dialogue.

The film story dates the musical box at about 1865 and places it in an affluent Southern household, so the box shown is too late, too modest, and unlikely to have lost its tune sheet. But in 1939 there was no Musical Box Society and apparently no one else to advise on period accuracy. ■



Fig. 9. Cuendet tune sheets as illustrated in their catalogue, tops cut off by glass lids. Both were high class multi-colour lithographs with distinctive designs: one features an elevated terrace at the right (top picture) and the other a pair of unusual four-post columns.

In last month's Journal a letter appeared from a Society member complaining about a fellow member. The Committee wishes to make it known that the Society, either through its Committee members or its Journal, should not be used as a vehicle in which to air complaints. It is not, nor has it ever been, the Committee's desire to become involved in complaints among members. The letter which appeared in a limited number of copies of the previous Journal was included in error. All adequate steps have been undertaken by the Society to ensure that there is no repetition in the future.

Mr. D. Gregory writes from Devon:-

In the Ducommun Girod dating chart mark "B" denotes serial number 28001 which is stated to have 1849 tunes.

I have had in my possession for some 20 years, a fine 8 air key wind musical box by Ducommun Girod which has the serial no. 28001 on the tune sheet and "28001 Ducommun Girod" stamped on the left hand back corner of the polished brass bed plate.

The box is 17 $\frac{1}{4}$ " long, 5" deep and 7" wide. The cylinder is 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ " long and the comb 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ " long. The case is veneered in rosewood with the lid featuring a large Boule work design in brown and red tortoiseshell.

I am curious to know how this same serial number came to be on the chart. The case and tune sheet have never been out of my possession since purchased locally – although the *movement* was repaired by Keith Harding in 1977. I had always thought the box to be dated about 1855 because of its Jenny Lind associations (in addition to the Jenny

... Is there another Ducommun Girod with the same serial no. as mine? I enclose full details of the tune sheet.

For your information, I did have in my possession until a year or two ago another Ducommun key wind box – serial no. 30725.

This again was an 8 air movement
and I enclose details of the full tunes.

The case was in plain fruitwood without inlay of any kind and the lid fastened with brass hooks and eyes.

The bedplate was stamped in the top left hand corner "30725 Ducommun Girod" and the number 647 was stamped on the bedplate under the comb slightly to the right of centre. Again the cylinder was 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ " long.

Although this box is no longer in

my possession the details may be of use for the Register.

N.B. Cylinder sizes quoted exclude Great Wheel.

Editors Note: I contacted Anthony Bulleid and his comments appear below.

"I got the data on box 28001 from the Register. I am quite sure there is no other Ducommun Girod with this number. How the data reached the Register is not known, as source information is destroyed to protect owner's security as explained on page 116 of Vol. 15.

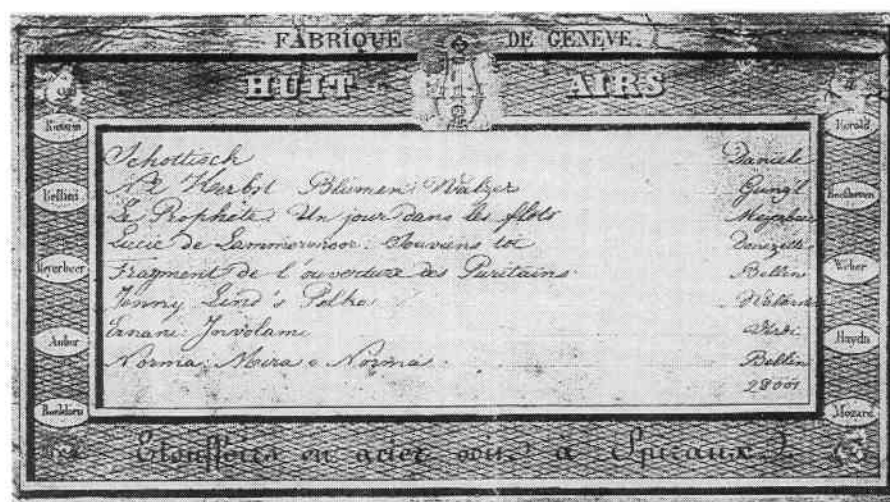
My chart dates 28001 at 1852, a good agreement with the owner's estimate of 1855. I could not trace the Jenny Lind Polka but considered I was safe in assuming that it came before her retirement from the operatic stage which was in 1849. The tune sheets were good to see. I think they always had oak leaves at the right side of the lyre.



Ducommun Girod 8 air cylinder box No. 30725, circa 1859?

Note slight differences in tune sheets:—

1. Herold & Rossini transposed from left to right.
2. Harp in trademark only has 3 strings on 28001.
3. Laurel? leaves round Harp on this sheet - whereas 28001 has what looks like Dandelion "clocks" round the Harp.



Ducommun Girod 8 air cylinder box No. 28001, circa 1855?

"We are in desperate need of this data, particularly at present for Conchon and Troll boxes. It is disappointing when owners of these important boxes cannot be bothered to send this hard-to-get information to the Registrar". ■

Anything to buy or sell?

Redwood Publishing write from 101 Bayham Street, London NW1 0AG:

BBC Homes & Antiques magazine may be able to help! It's a new monthly magazine for anyone who enjoys watching the BBC's *Antiques Roadshow* or doing some home decorating.

As part of the magazine, we are running a section called Collector's Circle where people can offer things for sale, or look for items they need, perhaps to complete a collection or to add to their home. This is a free service – all they have to do is fill out a form and return it to our offices.

We can accept anything of beauty or value, rarity or eccentricity. Things like period furniture, old prints, cast iron baths, Agas, Art Deco trimmings and modern collectables, BUT EACH ITEM MUST BE PRICED BELOW £500.

If you need further details, contact Maria Butler on 071-331 8000, ext. 1096, or fax 071-331 8166. ■

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April Cottage,
24 The Slade,
Clophill,
Bedford MK45 4B2.

Subscription rates appear on Page 266 and also on the Subscription Form enclosed for your convenience.

Enlarged museum with video room

Claude P. Marchal writes from Switzerland:–

Our Museum after 14 months of works has been enlarged, and orchestrions that were in the CIMA of Sainte-Croix are back here, after being restored. We have now a video room, with a Panasonic system that handles all tapes, including the

super VHS to be projected on our 2m x 1.5m screen. We are looking for fine tapes on mechanical music collections and museums, especially on automatons.

Our next goal is to have our own tape made for both our collections; in Paris and Bulle, Switzerland. ■

Hereford's International organ celebration

Geoff Alford writes from The Mayor's Parlour, Town Hall, Hereford HR1 2PJ:–

For over a decade my wife Peggy and I have attended or taken part in numerous organ events on mainland Europe, mostly in the former Western Germany. The remembered list of seventeen towns and cities surprised even myself, especially as we have returned to some as often as three times! Through these meetings we have made many organ friends whose friendliness and hospitality has added immeasurably to our enjoyment and provided us with countless happy memories.

On May 19th 1993 I expect to receive the honour of becoming the 612th Mayor of Hereford. This will

provide us with a unique, once in a lifetime opportunity to express our appreciation by welcoming those of our organ friends who are able to come in my year in office and be hosted by the First Citizen of this ancient city.

My aim will be to make this Britain's most memorable organ event which will be remembered for years to come and a full programme has already been planned which, I hope, will be enjoyed by all. I would like all those taking part to wear some form of national costume – from any period – and display national or regional emblems.

Anyone who is seriously interested in taking part should write to me at the above address.

The Mayor of Hereford's International Invitation Organ Celebration

Friday, May 21st - Sunday, May 23rd, 1993

Friday 21st May	Mid-day	Informal pre-festival get together with organ music at Kenchester Water Gardens, Lyde.
	Evening	Gathering of entrants and others at Hereford Leisure Pool Club room, Bishop's Meadow for an enjoyable evening with meal. Organs playing around the central area during the day on a busking basis.
Saturday 22nd May	10.00am	Organs gather in High Town to be welcomed by the 612th Mayor of Hereford.
	12.00	Official party visits the Mayor's Parlour in the Town Hall for drinks with the Mayor followed by a meal in the Assembly Hall as guests of the City.
	18.30pm	'Trip into the Blue.' We travel to a mystery destination for an evening of enjoyment. Organs playing at central locations during the day. Collections may only be made in aid of the Mayor's Charities on this day.
Sunday	10.00am	Morning concert in the High Town area.
	11.30am	Presentation of commemorative certificates at the Old House, High Town. Coffee and biscuits. Organ playing may continue until 16.30pm.

The above programme is provisional and may be subject to modification. ■

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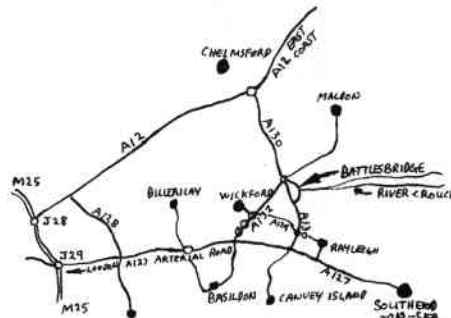
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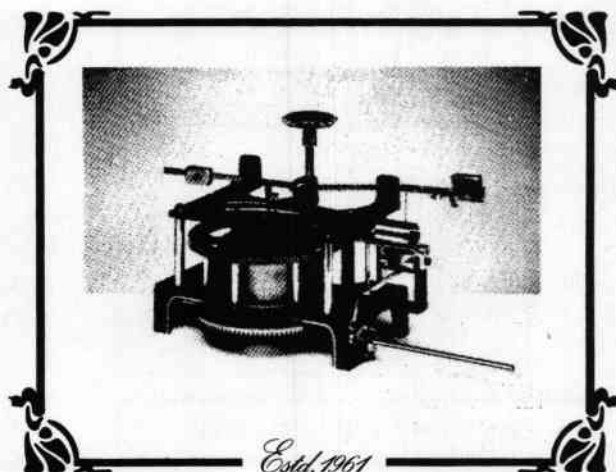
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Musical Box Society of Great Britain

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7th April; 7th July;
7th October; 7th February

Editorial copy **must** be submitted at least

8 days prior to above dates.

Posting of magazine:
27th February; 27th April;
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The Editor and the Committee of the Musical Box Society of Great Britain wish all its members a Happy Christmas and a Melodious New Year.



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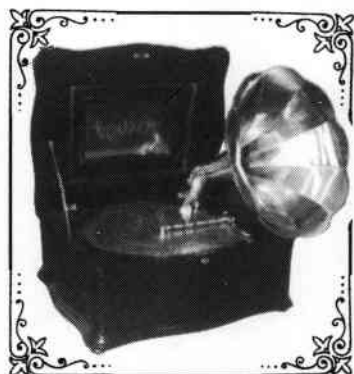
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