

Issue 10, Autumn 2017

# MECHANICAL MUSIC WORLD



## An Unusual Musical Statuette

An Association of Musical Box Collectors Publication

## From the Editors' Desk

The summer has melted into autumn, so we thought you would enjoy the advert on page 13, and our thoughts also turn to indoor activities. Inevitably, restoration of items in our collections come to mind and Paul Bellamy's article about a Teddy bear is a case in point. A challenge and a collaboration saved an unique bear. Chris and Juliet Fynes' orphanage article really appealed to us. What a very sensible and practical answer to the problem of odd movements stuck in a drawer gathering dust, and their music silent.

We welcome a new contributor, John Anderson, with a new scheme he has devised for replacing broken projections on discs. Very ingenious!

It is always interesting to us to have a potted history of firms who make (or have made) musical novelties within our lifetime. We began with Fisher Price, who are probably the most prolific, and now, thanks to Juliet, we have Selcol artefacts to be on the look out for. Attics and basements seem to be diminishing as a new generation emerges, but perhaps somewhere there are still a few trifles to be found?

It was with great sadness that we learned of the death of Paul Bellamy's wife Merry. She was a lovely lady with a ready smile and well known in musical box circles. She attended meetings and hosted some with Paul. A quiet and gentle presence,

a wife, mother and home maker who will be much missed and we send our condolences to Paul and the family. Donations received after the Celebration of Life service amounted to £1600, which Paul is donating to the Department of Brain Sciences at Imperial College, London. The donation will be recorded in the list of honoured donors under the name Merriel Ann Bellamy.

Please do not forget that you are a part of an Association – your views really do matter to us. You can contribute by attending meetings or writing (or emailing) to the Editors and you can benefit from the accumulated wisdom and experience of the group as well as contributing to it.

We wish you a happy and joyful Christmas and a peaceful and fulfilled New Year.



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## Chairman's Report

The problem with writing my report at this time of year is that this is the last magazine before Christmas. I do not like mentioning this before December, but never mind, it happens every year. Last year we gave you a mobile Father Christmas (we still have a few spares for free, you just need to pay P&P).

We have been including articles on the more modern items of mechanical music, including how to repair them, and have had good reports back from our newer members who do not yet own any of the older instruments. To me that is good, as you need to hear a selection of instruments before you commit to spending your money. The price of musical boxes has reached an all-time low. The only ones holding their value are the top quality examples in a specialised market. This is good news for the would-be first time buyer and we have been able to advise several members on their precious first purchase.

The cheaper end of the market includes novelties and children's toys and we will continue to feature these, and how to restore them.

Another theme we are pursuing, that has never been covered in detail, is that of trademarks. As you know, these can be found on movements, cases and tune sheets. They are often easily missed. I have found them on boxes I have had for twenty years or more. They may be almost insignificant parts of a pattern on a tabatière or snuff box tune sheet. We want to record them, as with their help we can identify makers and date boxes. Please send photos of any you have, together with details of the box, to add to our records.

I have included an easy to make Christmas optical toy (a stroboscope) with this edition as my way of wishing you all a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, and to thank you for your continued support of AMBC.

## Officers of the AMBC

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## AMBC Meeting Dates

*Please contact the host to ensure a place is reserved and for needs to be catered for. Include any guests you may be thinking of bringing. Also please advise if a booking has to be cancelled so that places can be offered to others.*

### Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> November

Chanctonbury Ring Christmas Meeting at the Old School, Bucks Green, Guildford Road, Horsham, RH12 3JP. Meet at 10.30 in the canteen. Refreshments and lunch will be provided.

To reserve a place please contact Ted. Tel: 01403 823533.

### Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2018

AMBC has again been invited to exhibit at the British Horological Institute Open Day.

Further details will be given in our next magazine.

### Publication Dates for "Mechanical Music World"

Winter issue 28<sup>th</sup> January; Spring issue 28<sup>th</sup> April; Summer issue 28<sup>th</sup> July; Autumn issue 28<sup>th</sup> October

We need articles and advertisements (unless repeats) to reach the Editors at least one month in advance of these dates. Please allow more time for involved articles with many illustrations.

## Meeting report - 10th September 2017

### Nicole movements, photograph albums and restoration tips.

As always with our meetings, members are asked to bring items of interest. There was a lot to share at our September 10<sup>th</sup> 2017 meeting. The contributions raised a number of questions that others may be able to resolve. Also, there were some simple tips on restoration.

Tony Waddell demonstrated a key-wind music box, serial 22165, 1843, gamme number 69, Fig 1. It is obviously a quality movement of the period with 90 teeth, Fig. 3. The serial number and name stamped on the comb leave no doubt that it is a Nicole movement but the reason for such an unusual tune sheet design may never be explained, Fig. 2. This blue on buff example was published for the first time in a 4<sup>th</sup> supplement to HAV Bulleid's book Musical Box Tune Sheets\*. It bears no relation to the design of any other maker.

The border design, common to many other makers' tune sheets of this period, is formed by a rectangle within a rectangle between which is a pattern, often a foliate design. This one is quite simple, even somewhat crude compared with other examples of the period with a crude image of a lyre in each side border. The entire border was covered in a background of vertically hatched lines.

The eight tunes are written in French in a good cursive hand. They are all waltzes or 'Quadrilles' with one exception, tune 7, a 'Tyrollienne' from the overture William Tell. Thus the movement may well have been purchased in order to accompany dance as well as to be played for entertainment. The top cartouche is used to announce the 8 tunes: 'HUIT AIRS' but the bottom cartouche is empty.

Most simple border-type Nicole Frères tune sheets of the era had an additional box below the bottom border with their name boldly declaring: 'Fabrique de NICOLE FRÈRES' plus the heading of the tune list: 'MUSIQUE de GENÈVE'. Obviously this tune sheet does not conform to others of this Nicole period.

In the bottom right hand corner of the tune list is the serial number 22165. However, it is also written again across the full width of the tune sheet vertically and in bold scrip with the legend G 69, which is the movement's gamme number (the comb's tuning scale). All very strange! One would have thought that the owner of such a lovely musical box would not have wanted the tune sheet used in such a manner. Neither the gamme nor serial numbers were of any interest to the purchaser. They were common on most tune sheets by the maker as a means of tracking the pinned cylinder with its tuned comb during manufacture, each comb being unique to its cylinder.



Fig 1. Tony Waddell with key-wound musical box

Much of the musical repertoire of Tony's musical box has been lost in the mists of time, as have some of the names of composers such as Labitzky. Who was he? The Labitzky family were father, brother and son musicians, Josef (1802-1881), brother Wilhelm and son August (1832- 1903). It is Josef's name that provides some clue as to the purpose of this musical box, probably to accompany dance. A Quadrille is a dance formed by four couples, no doubt a precursor of modern square dancing. Similarly, a 'Tyrolienne' was a form of folk dance from the Tyrol region of Austria, again organized for men and women.



Fig 2. The unusual tune sheet



Fig 3. Tony Waddell's fine quality box

The family lived near Karlsbad, bordering the former Austro-Hungarian Empire. Josef was known as the Bohemian Waltz King. He formed an orchestra that travelled widely. Then, as a violinist, he joined the Marianbad Spa Orchestra. In 1823 he travelled throughout Germany before taking over the Karlsbad Orchestra in 1833. He toured Europe, visited Russia and then London in 1844. He played to royalty in those countries. Some twenty two works were published as a result of his visit to Great Britain, reflecting the music he experienced there.

He retired, handing over to his son who had studied at the Prague Conservatoire. His brother Wilhelm also joined the orchestra in England in the 1850s at a time it was expanding in numbers to meet the prevailing fashion for large orchestras. It remains one of the oldest orchestras in the world and keeps the Labitzky repertoire alive.

Roy Russell was another contributor with another Nicole musical box, Fig 4. By coincidence it was another 8-air, key wind Nicole, serial number 24211, circa 1845 with the same number of comb teeth. Thus it



Fig 4. Roy Russell's Nicole box

was possible to compare its tune sheet, Fig 5, with Fig. 2 which, by strange coincidence, was within just two years of the other.

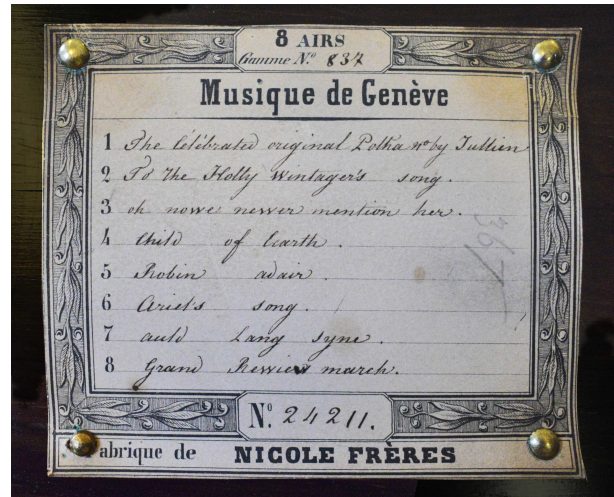


Fig 5. The tune sheet on Roy Russell's box

Roy also demonstrated yet another Nicole, this time a typical tin-cased souvenir version, fig. 6, with the image of Chillon Castle (not shown) on the lid. The castle has a long history and remains to this day one of the most visited sites in Switzerland. Lord Byron visited it and his name is carved on one of its timbers. Despite its small size, and with about fifteen fewer teeth, the musical box performed as well as the larger examples when placed upon the base of an upturned drawer to act as a soundboard.

The comb is clearly stamped F. Nicole and also has FRÈRES NICOLE stamped on the bedplate near to the spring motor. The difference in name is an important clue as to age. The change from FRÈRES NICOLE to NICOLE FRÈRES took place about 1839 to 1840. The serial number indicates the movement was made about 1838/1839.



Fig 6. Roy Russell's Tin-cased Nicole

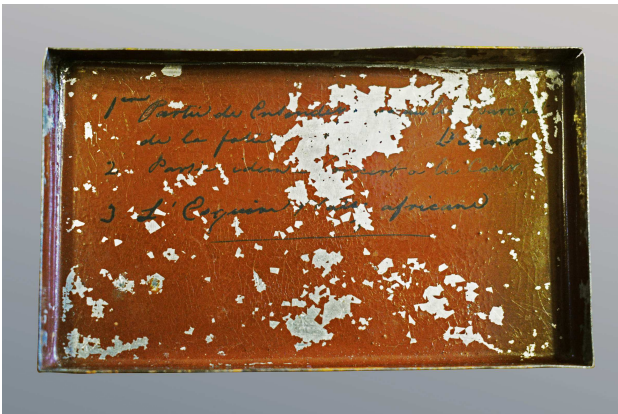


Fig 7. All that is left...

Fig. 7 shows the inside of the lid with the names of three airs written in French. If anyone can help to identify missing script (where the paint has flaked off) Roy will be pleased to know. Sadly, so much text has been lost that interpretation of what is left is left more to the imagination. Even so, airs 1 & 2 appear to be from the same work and the third air has the words that, strangely, seem to be for a Waltz African.

The next item to be shared was a musical photograph album demonstrated by a member who claimed he had given up collecting but who could not resist this example. It was found on the stall of a dealer who wanted to know if the person looking at it with such interest could tell him anything about it! All the pictures are shown in the form of a collage entitled 'A complete family history', because the album was full of family photographs. Inside was written: J. L. Paget, from Alf, April 14<sup>th</sup>, 1896. The binding was in brown embossed leather with perfect gilding to the pattern. The clasp was of superior quality being of the expanding type that allowed for the varying thickness of the album's content because photos in those times were mounted on thick card. The movement's bedplate was stamped JGM & C for the London agent John G Murdock & Co. who used musical movements provided by Thibouville Lamy of Paris\*\*. The actual maker of this movement cannot be confirmed. Lamy was known to use movements made by L'Épée of France but unless there are clear identification marks, the actual maker is pure speculation.

Who the family pictures were seems to be lost in time, the only possible clue being the name Paget and the two airs: Annie Rooney and Comrades. Both were famous music hall songs of the 1870s with chorus: *She's my sweetheart, I'm her beau. She's my Annie, I'm her Joe. Soon we'll marry, never to part, little Annie Rooney is my sweetheart.* The other is in more somber vein: *Comrades, comrades, ever since we were boys, sharing each other's sorrows, sharing each other's joys, comrades when manhood was dawning, facing what ere may betide, when*

*danger threatened my darling old comrade was there by my side.* Thus it was the story of childhood friendship that resulted in both becoming soldiers. Of course, one protects the other in battle and loses his life, a typical heart-rending song of its time.

Not only was the album in almost mint condition with just some foxing to the pages, the movement was in perfect condition. The stall holder was duly informed of its quality, its approximate age and the possible choice of the two tunes, namely romance and military service. Unfortunately, the winding key was missing, that is until the owner produced the sweetest little crank-handled key one could wish for. He was unaware that its home was the leather tab adjacent to the movement – a perfect fit.

As the two of them inspected further, having examined each of the photos and noting there were no torn pages, two items slipped out. One was the full sized sheet headed 'Musical Instructions' with identical printing both sides. The other was the tune sheet, its obverse also printed with the heading: Instructions to Purchasers.

Finally, the stall holder produced the remnants of the original box. All of the sides had parted and been sewn together at the corners with needle and thread. The lid was complete except for most of the side pieces. "How much are you asking" asked the member, having foolishly talked up the price. The answer was quite reasonable and, no longer collecting items, the member walked away. Not for long, though. How often does one come across an item so complete and in such good condition? The cash was procured and the item purchased. The only restoration needed was to the box.

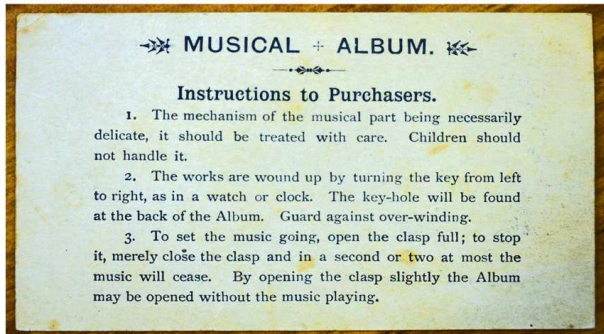
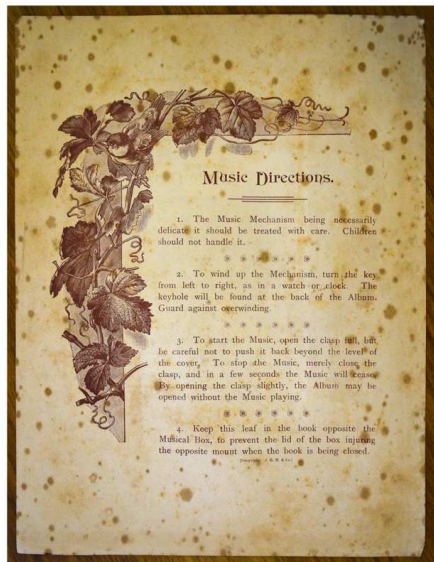
Restoration was the next subject of the meeting. Ted Brown showed how just the smallest amount of oil can



Fig 8. Ted demonstrating oiling procedure



A complete family history



free up a small movement that stubbornly refuses to start, Fig. 8. Movements are often over wound and can seize up without there being any actual damage such as a broken spring. By placing the smallest amount of oil in the right place it may be all that is necessary and it is quite easy to achieve using a small sewing needle dipped into a small file of very light oil.

Most lubricants are too heavy but clock and gun oils are very fine grades and excellent for the purpose. The needle holds just enough and, when held vertical, a small droplet forms at the point. Governor component bearings and those of its endless are easy to reach and, by touching each in turn with the tip of the needle, sufficient oil is transferred.

Other bearings such as the spring motor arbor (its winding shaft) and the cylinder bearings also deserve some lubrication. Many small movements have an adjustable sleeve bearing at the non-drive end, held in place by a small screw. For some, perhaps due to slight traces of rust, these can be the culprit for the non-starting syndrome. These very light oils have the ability to penetrate easily and makes them ideal for not just small movements but any musical movement, whatever its size.

The cardboard box for the musical photograph album mentioned above needed extensive repair. Most cardboard of this period is a form of brown compressed paper. When it gets damp it absorbs moisture and distorts and remains so even when dry. It can easily be ironed flat using a warm iron on a flat surface such as glass or similar clean material such as a kitchen work top. Then moisten the cardboard by sponging with a moist paper kitchen towel. Then use the warm iron to flatten and dry the cardboard. If the edges of the cardboard are frayed use a PVA –type wood glue that dries clear to consolidate the damaged parts. Lay a piece of glass over the glued area and squeeze together by putting sufficient weight on the glass until the glue sets. PVA is an excellent material because it not only dries hard and clear but surplus glue can be sponged away using paper kitchen towel.

Using the same surfaces covered in kitchen ‘cling film’ or similar material and the PVA glue, each side of the box can be re-bonded. Use a small artist’s paint brush to apply the PVA along each edge of the parts to be bonded. The base (or lid) must be weighed down and held flat. The sides can be held in place wedged between building bricks, which can also be used to hold the sides perpendicular to and in tight contact with the base of the box or its lid. Thin strips of stiff card (suspension file card is an ideal material), cut and folded into thin strips, was used to overlay and reinforce each corner.

The album box was covered in black paper. Parts were damaged, exposing the underlying brown cardboard. As

much of the original paper was soaked off the remnants of the sides of the lid and used to patch the exposed parts. A scalpel is an excellent tool to cut and ‘feather’, the edges of the patches, using the PVA glue.

As the box was black, non-black reinforcing strips were painted with black leather dye. This liquid dye dries very quickly and leaves a slight sheen. Finally, the whole external parts of the box and its lid were sealed with a proprietary clear sealing spray stocked by most good art supply stores.

Another quick restoration tip was demonstrated by using the same black leather dye to refresh the surfaces of a small musical box with composition lid. Sometimes these old music box cases lose their intense black colour. The example (not illustrated) looked as fresh as the day it was made simply by coating with the dye and then burnishing with a soft cloth.

Notes:

\*This supplement was published by the former Musical Box Society of Great Britain (MBSGB) which claimed absolute copyright to the work although much of it was contributed by the late Anthony Bulleid and, after his death, by Paul Bellamy. Mrs. Biden, President, was obliged to write in July 2016 to the copyright holder rescinding the claim to Bulleid’s copyright. HAV Bulleid made it clear to his collaborators that all his work (relating to musical boxes) should be freely available for use by others. Paul Bellamy currently holds the Bulleid archive for research purposes in accordance with his wishes.

\*\*Refer to Mechanical Music World Issue 6, page 6 for an extensive account of Musical Photograph albums.

## **A PRETTY NOVELTY**

The cover picture is of a bronzed spelter figure, 10 inches high, of an 18<sup>th</sup> century lady standing next to a Rococo-style sewing box with a jewellery box on top. The detail is very fine. Lifting the lid of the sewing box starts the two-tune snuff box type movement (circa 1880) in the base. It plays “Il Bacio (the kiss) Waltz” and “La Grande Duchesse” (Offenbach). On the tune sheet on the base there is a monogram which is either HP or PH. There are no marks on the movement or signature on the figure or the base.

Lifting the lid also reveals a pot which does not appear to be an inkwell but may have been for pins or small trinkets. Overall it appears very French in style. A nice touch for cat lovers is the cat rubbing itself against one of the legs of the sewing box.

If anyone can help in identifying the monogram or knows of similar figurines with musical movements in the base we would like to hear from you.

## COTTON MUSEUM ON THE MOVE



1. The only three outside organs in the front yard at the first "Organ Enthusiasts Day" in 1987

In 1983 Bob Finbow proudly opened the doors of his "Mechanical Music Museum" to the public for the first time. From the start the open days were Sundays only from June to September, with private parties being accommodated, as required, during the week. The venture took off, much to Bob's pleasure.



Fig 2. Ted Brown and friend with his Gamage

David Ivory was the tour guide for the first two years. For maybe the first ten years the Wurlitzer theatre organ was played automatically via a player David had made, for which he also arranged and cut an endless band of music. This gave two five minute recitals, one during each tour. Later many different organists of all ages have given short recitals as part of the tour. For the third year of opening Bob asked me if I would be willing to take over guide duty once a month. I did not take the job on single-handed but asked if it would be OK if Ted Brown came up with me and we undertook a single tour each. Both Ted and Bob were happy with this and it worked out well. We would arrive on our appointed day, meeting Bob at "The Trowel and Hammer", the local pub in Cotton, and have a meal as thanks from Bob. After a few years David decided to do fewer tours, so Ted and I started going singly. This carried on until Ted moved from Sidcup to Bucks Green and I got married. Since then it has been Toni and I who go up, with Toni on the door taking the entrance fee.

In 1987 Bob started the "Organ Enthusiasts Day" on the first Sunday in October, to be a sort of final

open day for the museum each year. At that time I was helping Tom Atkinson, from Ingatestone in Essex, with his 48 keyless Chiappa organ, "Ceol". We arranged for Ted to come up to Ingatestone with his 20 keyless Gamage organ, which was then loaded into the back of the organ truck for the run up to Cotton. This also continued until Ted moved from Sidcup. I continued to take "Ceol" until Tom sold it to Jonny Ling, who by that time had become one of the museum trustees.

Now after that run through of Ted's and my connections with Cotton, I come to the title at the top of this page, "Cotton Museum on the Move". After 35 years the doors of the present building are to close. The collection is to move eight miles north to join Jonny Ling's collection at Palgrave. With the

"Grange Musical Collection" containing piano orchestrions, dance and street organs, plus other smaller items, the two collections should more than complement each other. Again it will be Sunday opening only for the paying public, plus other times for private groups. However until the new set-up is settled in, and also to see what numbers of the public will visit, Jonny is only planning to open one Sunday a month, but over a longer period, from May to December. So make the effort to visit the 'new' collection to give it the support it deserves.

The address is:

The Grange, Palgrave, Diss, Norfolk, IP22 1AZ

Full details on opening times etc should be in the next magazine.

## Barrel Pianos – a CD review

Two noted experts on the subject of barrel pianos are Richard Kerridge and Keith Hilson. They have produced a CD recording of an interview by Mick Chandler for Angel Radio of Havant. The interview comprises four parts in which Keith is the first to explain how, as a young boy, he discovered his interest in street musicians called organ grinders. He explained that this generic term covered what became his life-long passion, that of the barrel piano.

Richard recalls how he and Keith, a musician, combined to form a collection of these instruments and play them for public entertainment, thereby preserving a dying tradition for a future generation.

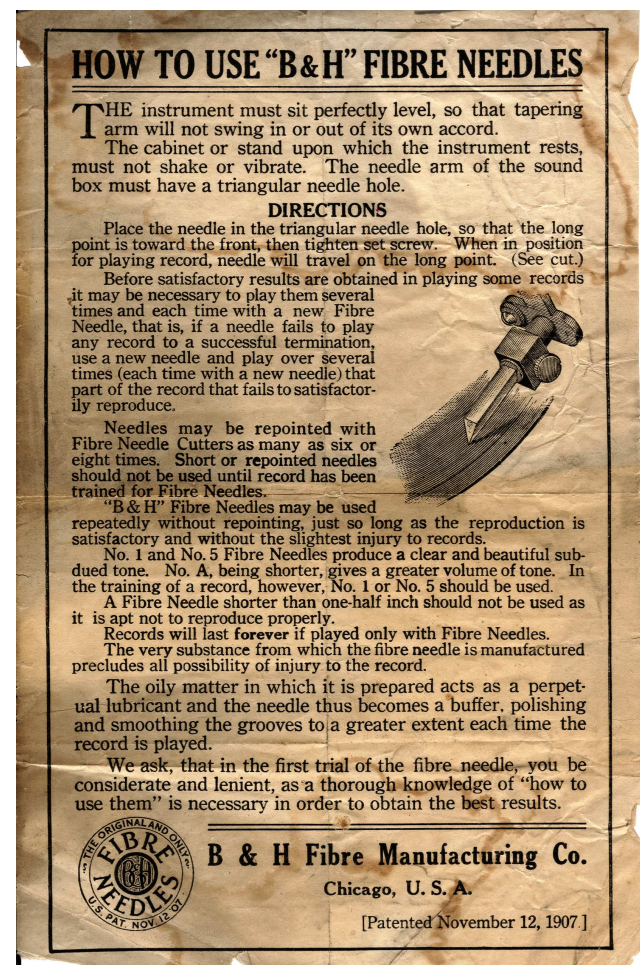
The four interviews cover the entirety of types of barrel piano, from the coin-operated ones powered by a spring motor, the forerunner of the Juke Box as used in cafes and other such places, plus those whose motors were removed and converted to manual operation for street use and those made specifically for street use.

The pair talk about the various makers as well as the agents who hired the machines and describe the way barrels were pinned and then re-pinned to accommodate the latest tunes of the day.

They play a variety of different types, both large and small, including a rare example that was pinned with the tunes of the 60s in the dying days of the street musician that had been so popular in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, part of the fabric of life such as the streets of London.

Keith explained how the barrel organs and pianos were often incorrectly called hurdy-gurdys. He played some music by one of these hand cranked, violin type instruments, which produce an entirely different sound (*and are not automatic - you need to be a musician like Keith to play it!* - Ed). Richard also played a more modern Spanish toy piano called a Faventia.

Keith and Richard's generosity showed no bounds when they distributed copies of their CD free of charge.



Above: Found in a gramophone in the Editors' Collection, circa 1910.

## Muzio Clementi (b. Rome 1752, d. Evesham, Mar 10<sup>th</sup> 1832)

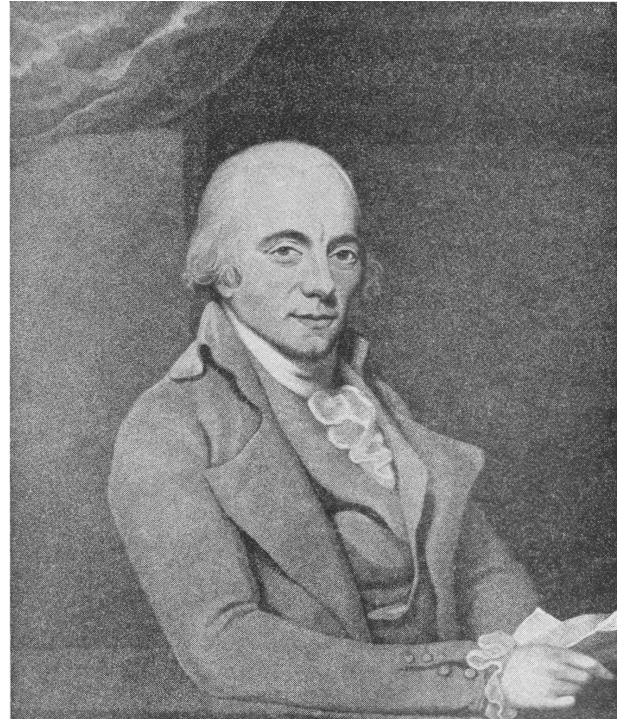
“In 1752 there was born in the family of a skilled silversmith in Rome a boy, Muzio Clementi. His father, of musical turn of mind himself, proudly observed the unusual musical gifts of his son and persuaded Buroni, a choirmaster relation, to teach Muzio the rudiments of music.” So is Muzio introduced into the story of the Collards, the English family who created a fine piano manufacturing business later in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century<sup>1</sup>.

Muzio went on to achieve an international reputation as musician, composer and teacher, welcomed by Kings and Court, moving with easy confidence within the times and circles of those mighty men of music, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven and others. He was also to become a shrewd and courageous business man.

The chronology of Clementi is impressive: at the age of seven he was an efficient student of harmony, at nine a qualified organist and by fourteen had composed several contrapuntal works of considerable size, one of which, a Mass, was publicly performed and appears to have caused a sensation in Rome at the time. At the age of twenty-five he became conductor of the Italian Opera in London, a post he held for three years.

Clementi had been ‘discovered’ by a remarkable British Member of Parliament, Mr Peter Beckford, who had been travelling around Europe seeking suitable candidates for further education in the arts in England. He brought the 15-year-old Clementi to his home in Dorset and made himself responsible for the completion of the boy’s musical education. They lived in Mr Beckford’s fine old Georgian house known as Steepleton House, Iwerne, which stood in a fine timbered park between Blandford and Cranborne Chase. Peter Beckford came from a famous county family and was a cousin of William Beckford, a well-known author. In 1773 Clementi reappeared at the age of 21 fully equipped, and the music critics of the time sought new superlatives for his performances. From 1777 until 1780 he was conductor at the Italian Opera in London, as mentioned above.

By 1781 Muzio desired to enlarge his horizons. He made an onslaught on the cultural capitals of Europe, giving concerts in Paris, Strasbourg, Munich and Vienna. He cultivated the friendship of Haydn in Vienna and, on the instigation of Emperor Joseph II, engaged in a form of musical combat with Mozart. The Emperor enjoyed musical competitions, throwing a few scraps of themes to the participants for competing improvisation. In this case the winner was undecided and Mozart was rather superior about the whole thing, but did, a few years later, incorporate one of Clementi’s improvised themes in the Magic Flute. As far as Clem-



enti was concerned, the competition was excellent publicity and he learned a good deal from it. He also had placed the English Piano in the centre of the Viennese musical map. With the exception of a concert tour to Paris in 1785, Clementi spent his time from 1782 to 1802 in England, busy as a conductor, virtuoso performer and teacher and amassing a considerable fortune.

From 1803 until 1807 he made another tour of Continental Europe. He was intent on popularising the English piano, playing concerts and drumming up business for his firm, Clementi & Co, as musical instrument manufacturers and music publishers. Writing from Vienna in April 1807, he reported to his English partners:

*By a little management, and without committing myself I have at last a compleat (sic) conquest of that haughty beauty Beethoven; who first began at public places to grin and coquet with me, which of course I took care not to discourage; then slid into familiar chat, till meeting him by chance one day in the street – “where do you lodge?” says he, “I have not seen you this long while!” Upon which I gave him my address. Two days after I find on my table his card, brought by himself, from the maid’s description of his lovely form. This will do, thought I. Three days after that, he calls again and finds me home. Conceive then mutual extasy (sic) of such a meeting! I took pretty good care to improve it to our house’s advantage. Therefore as soon as decency*

would allow, after praising very handsomely some of his compositions, "Are you engaged with any publisher in London?" "No," says he. "Suppose then, you prefer me." "With all my heart!" "Done." "What have you ready?" "I'll bring you a list." In short, I agreed with him to take in MS three Quartetts (sic), a Symphony, an Overture, a Concerto for the Violin which is beautiful, and which, at my request, he will adapt for the Pianoforte with and without additional keys; and a Concerto for the Pianoforte. For all which we are to pay him two hundred pounds sterling.... The Symphony (No. 4) and Overture (Coriolanus) are wonderfully fine – so that I think I have made a good bargain. To-day the courier sets off for London via Russia...

He continued his concert tour with considerable success, but was not over impressed by Russians:

Dresden, 1803

Dear Collard

I am alive! But without making long winded apologies for my silence, I shall please you and myself better by proceeding at once to business.

At St Petersburg I found no real lovers of good music except amongst some foreigners, which disgusted one so much that after some few trials, I refused to play unless they paid down 100 ducats when with company, or 100 rubles without; but more of this viva voce. As for the Emperor nothing less than a trumpet could make its way through his obtuse tympanum: and his avarice is a doleful example too willingly followed by his more than half-ruined nobility... Remember once for all that the Russians in general possess good ears for sound though they have none for sense and style.

Nevertheless, Clementi cultivated friendship with Baron Ball, the Court banker, to whom he gave a grand piano. Similarly the Custom House official who cleared his imported goods received similar!

Clementi taught many pupils his art of piano playing. Amongst his principal students were John B Cramer, John Field, Alexander Klengel, Ludwig Berger and later Giacomo Meyerbeer. He left upwards of one hundred sonatas, many for unaccompanied piano, some as duets or trios with violin or flute and 'cello. There were also a duo for two pianos, six duets for four hands along with many other fugues, toccatas etc.

According to Grove<sup>3</sup>, Clementi may be regarded as the originator of the proper treatment of the modern pianoforte, as distinguished from the harpsichord. His example as a player and teacher, together with his compositions, have left a deep and indelible mark upon everything that pertains to the piano. Others have described him as 'the English Chopin'. In view of the chronology, it would be more correct to describe Chopin



Picture 2. Barrel Organ by Clementi & Co.

as 'the French Clementi'!

Longman and Broderip, well-known in the latter part of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century as music publishers, was founded about 1767 when James Longman with others established at the Harp & Crown, 26 Cheapside as J Longman & Co. It was located on the south side of Cheapside, between Friday Street and Mitre Court. Various partnerships and styles occurred over the years and when Francis Fane Broderip joined the firm in 1773 it became known as Longman, Lukey & Broderip. By 1779 Charles Lukey's name was absent and the firm became Longman & Broderip, in which Muzio Clementi had a financial interest. Though the firm prospered, flow of money was always a problem and the firm was declared bankrupt in 1795. Clementi suffered heavy losses, which he was, fortunately, able to sustain. At that time, James Longman's successor, his brother John Longman, formed a partnership with Muzio

## *Mechanical Music World*

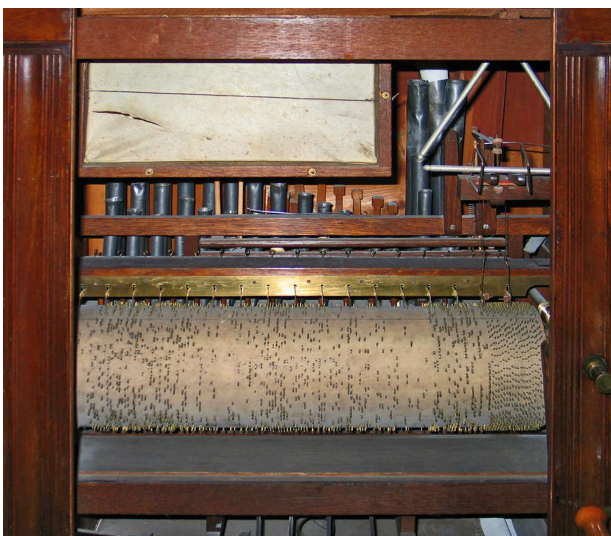
Clementi, whose funding no doubt was of great benefit to the business. Broderip, meanwhile, had joined with Charles Wilkinson Junior as Broderip & Wilkinson at 13 Haymarket.

Clementi too had a succession of partners after John Longman set up on his own in 1802. His firm became known as Clementi & Co, to provide continuity. His firm too prospered, such that in 1807, when the premises were destroyed by fire, the value placed on it was £40,000. One of Clementi's early partners was F W Collard, and by 1823 (by which time another Collard had also joined the firm) it was trading as Clementi, Collard & Collard.

The firm had an extensive range of sheet music and instruments available for sale and also had its own stock of fine timbers, quietly seasoning at its own timber mill, for the construction of its instruments. Clementi often exhorted his partners to only use the best materials for sale to the best musicians.

The Clementi & Co 17-key barrel organ in Picture 2 has four speaking stops plus drum and triangle and probably dates from about 1830\*. It has three original barrels playing secular tunes. The stops are labelled Diapason, Principal, Twelfth and Fifteenth together with Drum and Triangle. The name cartouche (Picture 3) states 'Clementi & Comp<sup>n</sup>, Cheapside, London' and is marked 'PATENT', though exactly what aspect of the instrument is patented is hard to work out, unless it is the tune change device (Picture 5).

\* Judging by the difference in tune sheet style and hand writing (Picture 6), Barrel 3 is somewhat later. At least one of the tunes listed was not published until 1840, by which time Clementi had died (in 1832) and the firm became known as Collard & Collard.



Picture 4. The interior



Picture 3. The name cartouche

The tunes played are:

Barrel 1 – Miss Johnson's Reel, The Honey Moon, Lady Montgomery's Reel, The Highland Cottage, Lord Milton's Hornpipe, The Peruvian Boy, Speed the Plough, Lady G Campbell's Reel, Lord Moira's Reel, Caro Dolce

Barrel 2 – The New Montfiori, Michael, Ap Shinkin, Morgiana, Tekeli\*, Paddy O'Carrol, Lord Cathcart, The Labarinth, A Waltz, The Labarinth (again, but different).

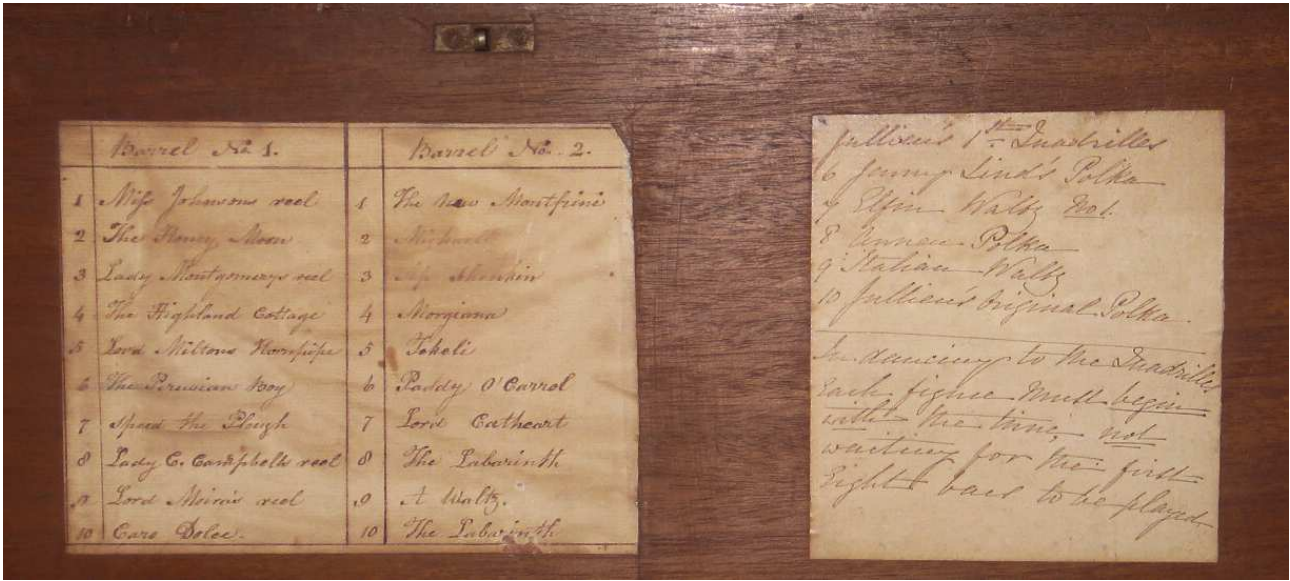
Barrel unnumbered, non-existent but list on organ lid next to the tune lists for barrels 1 & 2 – Jullien's first Quadrilles (1-5), Jenny Lind's Polka\*\*, Elfin Waltz No. 1, Annen Polka, Italian Waltz, Jullien's Original Polka\*\*\*.

Barrel also unnumbered but present in instrument - no tune list except the one attached to the barrel frame - The Morning Star, The Russian Dance, The Persian Dance, Four in Hand, Miss Maxwell's Reel, Bog on the Rocks(?), Sprigs of Laurel, Fly by Night, The Lady of the Lake, Lady Maria Perks (or Parks - may be Parker).

The identifiable and datable tunes on this barrel seem to



Picture 5. The tune change device.



Picture 5. The tune lists - Barrels 1 & 2 on left, unnumbered barrel on right, with instructions on how to dance the quadrilles

be late 18th - early 19th Century ones, so this barrel may well have been supplied with the instrument.

\* Tekeli, or The Siege of Montgat, was a stage melodrama with music by James Hook and libretto by his son, Theodore Hook. It was first performed on November 24<sup>th</sup> 1806.

\*\* Jenny Lind Polka - 1846

\*\*\* The sheet music for Louis Antoine Jullien's Original Polka was published in 1840.

It is interesting that Collard & Collard continued to provide new barrels for the firm's older organs up to about fifteen years later, unless of course it was a third

party provider that did so.

Notes:

1. 'A Short History of a Great House' – 'Presented with the Compliments of COLLARD & COLLARD LTD.' – Published by the courtesy of Mr. Wharton Collard, O.B.E., and Mr. Harry Marcy Collard, January 1938.
2. 'The Music Trade in Georgian England' – edited by Michael Kassler, published by Ashgate Publishing, Farnham, Surrey 2011
3. 'Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians' – 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, published by Macmillan, 1927

**"The Melancholy Days are come"**  
 — and winter with its long, dreary evenings is close at hand. You will have to spend the greater part of your time indoors during the next six months. Why not do all you can to

**Make Your Home Cheerful!**

**BUY A REGINA MUSIC BOX**

(On exhibition and on sale at the leading music dealers.)

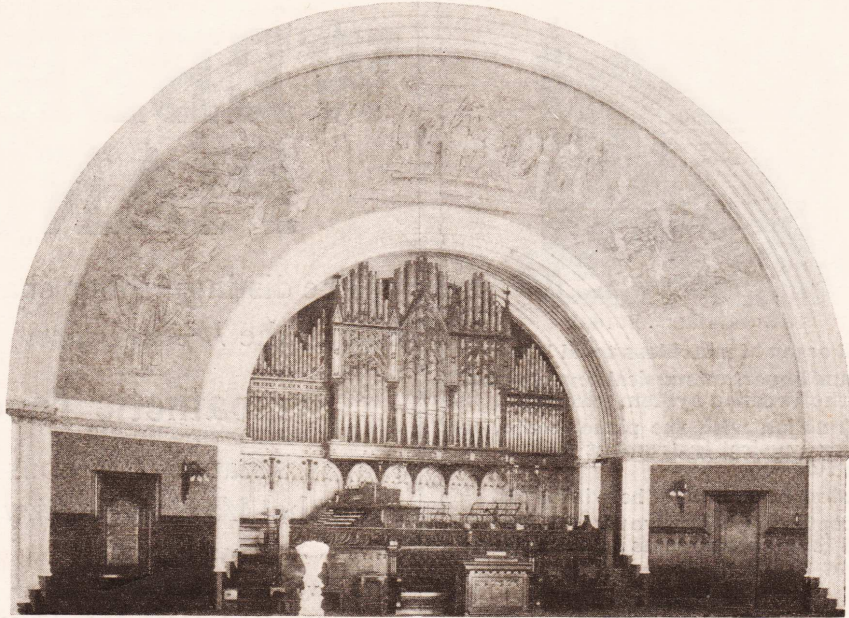
Dullness is unknown in households that own a "Regina," the queen of all music boxes. It is like having a skilled musician always at one's command. **PLAYS 1,000 TUNES** and plays them well. Furnishes music for impromptu dances — amuses the children — soothes the invalid — and is a never-failing source of pleasure to everyone. Runs from 20 to 30 minutes with one winding, is strongly made and does not get out of order. The quality of tone has never before been equalled in a music box. Prices, \$7 to \$70. Descriptive Catalogue Free.

**THE NEW ORCHESTRAL REGINA** — The largest music box ever made — is described in a separate circular that will interest proprietors of Hotels, Winter Resorts and other public places. Tells how to make \$10 a day easily. Circular free upon request.

**REGINA MUSIC BOX CO., RAHWAY, N. J.**

Advertisement from unnamed catalogue dated November 1897.

THE ÆOLIAN 36



ÆOLIAN PIPE ORGAN IN THE LINDELL AVENUE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, ST. LOUIS.

THE ÆOLIAN

THE HOME ORCHESTRA



At no time since the Æolian's first introduction has its popularity been so great and its position in the musical world been so clearly defined and universally recognized.

Each year has brought into the ranks of Æolian converts thousands of sceptics, so that it has become an unusual thing to hear the Æolian referred to by people who are posted on musical subjects except in terms of warm commendation. The old idea that the Æolian, being easy to play, must be mechanical has passed away, and in its place has come an intelligent understanding and true appreciation of the splendid qualities of this ideal home instrument.

Looking backward, it seems hardly possible that only a little over five years ago the Æolian had difficulty in obtaining serious consideration from the musical world. It was repeatedly condemned without a hearing, and only by patient and persistent effort was the

deep-rooted prejudice against what was thought to be a mechanical instrument finally removed and its artistic merit publicly recognized by the acknowledged authorities on music.

When once the merits of the Æolian were properly understood, its reception by the musical public was entirely without precedent. It is to-day used in many of our largest conservatories and recognized as the best instrument to properly illustrate orchestral music.

Musicians have purchased Æolians, not for the pleasure of their families or their friends, but for their own personal entertainment and gratification. Among the celebrated artists to whom we have supplied Æolians are Paderewski, Édouard De Reszke, Campanini, Miss Blauvelt, and Mme. Nordica.

We have before stated that Pope Leo XIII. ordered an Æolian for the Vatican, and that the instrument is in use there to-day. Also, that Queen Victoria purchased one for her castle at Balmoral. These events are unusual, and certainly testify to the Æolian's interesting qualities and artistic worth. It is not necessary, however, to go as far from home as England or Italy to find owners of Æolians whose

*Reproduced from an unnamed advertising catalogue from 1897, in Editors' Collection*

## THE ÆOLIAN 37

patronage is in itself a strong endorsement. Among the prominent people in this country to whom we have supplied Æolians are Ex-President Grover Cleveland, Andrew Carnegie, William Rockefeller, J. Pierpont Morgan, Geo. J. Gould, A. J. Drexel, Jr., W. Seward Webb, Thomas Edison, P. D. Armour, J. A. Armour, J. Malcolm Forbes, E. D. Morgan, and many others equally well-known.

It is possible that the reader may never have seen nor heard an Æolian, and is therefore naturally curious to know what manner of instrument it is. We will try to convey some idea of it in a few words.

In appearance the Parlor Æolian resembles the upright piano. Its tone is orchestral in character, and is varied by "stops." These stops are controlled by the player and are made to represent the violin, flutes, hautboys, clarionets, etc., of the orchestra.

The player does not use a keyboard, as in playing a piano or organ. The notes are sounded by rolls of perforated paper, and the player gives to the music tone-color, tempo, and expression.

Positively no technical skill is necessary. All that is required is the love of music.

Every musical composition of merit from the simplest song to the most difficult overture or symphony can be obtained for the Æolian, and can be played upon it without long, tedious practice by a person who, literally, "cannot

tell one note from another," played, too, with perfect accuracy and correct expression.

The Æolian is, in brief, a parlor orchestra. It brings directly into the home music that is never performed except by the largest and most skilled orchestras.

It is the only practical means by which the average man or woman can become acquainted with all the great musical compositions of the old masters and keep in touch with and enjoy the best music of the present day.

Books describing the Æolian will be sent to any address on application, and the instrument is always gladly played for and explained to all who call at our own warerooms or those of our agents.

The Princess Æolian, price \$75.00, catalogue No. 16.

Other styles, up to \$750.00.

Æolian Orchestrelles, \$1500.00 to \$2500.00. Æolian Pipe Organs and Æolian Pipe Orchestras, \$2500.00 upward.

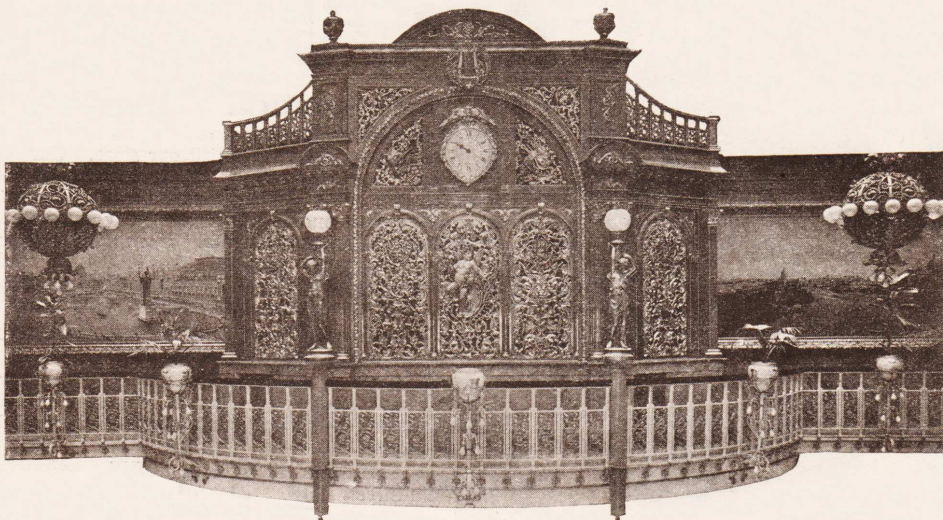
A new piano, the Æriol, played in the same manner as the Æolian.

THE ÆOLIAN COMPANY, 18 West 23d Street, New York.

The M. Steinert & Sons Co., 162 Boylston Street, Boston.

C. J. Heppe & Son, 1117 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia.

Lyon & Healy, Wabash Avenue and Adams Street, Chicago.



ÆOLIAN PIPE ORCHESTRA IN THE GREAT NORTHERN HOTEL, CHICAGO.

Nov. '97.

## SELCOL

by Juliet Fynes

In 1953 Musical and Plastics Industries was formed as a new public holding company for Selmer, the famous manufacturer of brass and woodwind instruments, and Selcol, which made plastic toys and garden furniture.

In the 1950s and 60s, in their Braintree factory, Selcol were making plastic toys and novelties, including daleks, a doll with interchangeable clothes, salt and pepper pots, collapsible beakers and an ashtray with a drunk clinging to a lamppost, to name a few. Mostly, however, Selcol was by way of being the plastics arm of Selmer, making plastic musical instruments, especially guitars but also ukuleles, banjos and drums. Today they are mostly famed for their Beatles memorabilia, guitars and drums, which are highly sought after and command very high prices.

They also manufactured records under the Gala label. These included the Gala Nursery Records and Selcol Nursery Records series which could be played on their Kid-e-Phone toy record player.

They ventured into the mechanical music area with a do-it-yourself programmable toy musical instrument. This instrument, called the Goldentone Carillon, has eight plastic discs mounted side by side to form a barrel. The rim of each disc has holes into which pegs can be inserted and when a handle is turned the barrel rotates causing the pegs to activate hammers which strike the chime bars. This seemed like a good idea as, using the booklet containing instructions for setting up a number of tunes, or inventing ones own, a limitless supply of music was possible. However, fitting the pegs is a laborious business and the small pegs are all too prone to get lost. Perhaps these instruments were not successful and not many were made – or frustration caused them to be discarded. Either way there are very few survivors.\*

Another type of handle-turned musical movement used by Selcol consisted of a wide rubber band with raised bumps which plucked tuned teeth. These movements were incorporated in the “Organ Grinder” toy – a simple cardboard box decorated with Italian views, with a monkey on top that

bounced up and down to the music. The monkey was made of rubber with pipe cleaner arms and legs. They were also used in the rectangular cardboard “Melody Maker” biscuit baskets and a wide range of greetings cards. Very few of the organs or baskets survive, probably due to their flimsy construction and the tendency for the rubber bands to perish. However, the cards still exist in some numbers, though often not working.\*\*

Selcol’s only products with conventional musical movements seem to have been their revolving cigar dispensers. These contained Reuge movements and were made in a variety of coloured plastics. They were started by means of pressing a button on the top causing the music to begin and the six doors to slowly open as the dispenser revolved, revealing a pocket for the cigar (or cigarettes) on the back of each door, then gradually returning to the closed position. Others were activated by a button on the side of the base, some of which also revealed a rotating dancer in the centre.

In addition to musical instruments Selmer also made amplifiers, from 1935, in their premises in Charing Cross Road. With a move to Holborn they added organs to their range. In 1968 the amplifier and organ production took over the Braintree factory which marks the end of Selcol as an independent company. However, they seem to have amalgamated with Fairchild (incorporated in 1963) and Selcol Fairchild continued in production until 1978.

\*Other contemporary manufacturers, such as the Worcester Ware Toy Company of Massachusetts with its Melody Chimes Carillon, made instruments on similar principles to the Goldentone Carillon. All are equally rare nowadays.

\*\* This type of movement was invented by Mattel, the American toy company. Some of the Selcol products are virtually identical to those of Mattel. It is unclear whether they made them under licence from Mattel or simply copied the idea. There is an American Patent on the Mattel products and an English Patent on those of Selcol.



- 1 Beatles Guitar
- 2 Selcol Kid-e-Phone
- 3 Goldtone Carillon
- 4 Band Driven Organ
- 5 Melody Maker Basket
- 6 Three Band Driven Greetings Cards
- 7 Christmas Card showing Band Drive
- 8 Three Children's Greeting Cards
- 9 Cigar Dispensers



## HOMES FOR ORPHANS

Juliet and Chris Fynes find new homes for old movements

There are many more snuff box movements without cases than there are spare cases in which to house them.

We have successfully re-homed three in Victorian papier mâché snuff boxes.

These boxes, unlike most small empty wooden boxes, conform very well to the proportions of the movements, being a lot longer than they are wide and comparatively shallow. They seem to come in several more-or-less standard sizes, the largest ones usually having an internal width of about 9cm which is a comfortable fit for most movements.

They are quite attractive, typically decorated with inlaid mother-of-pearl, pewter or a painted design. If the surface is dull and grubby the application of some hand cream on cotton wool works wonders. As well as being of a suitable size, they are roughly contemporary with the movements, readily available and inexpensive. Ours came respectively from a charity shop, antiques market and eBay, where

there always are a few on offer. We paid from £5 to £20.

Housing the movements will require two bolts screwed upwards through the base of the case matching two tapped holes in the bedplate, similar to the way they are attached in tin boxes. It will be necessary to make up some brass sliders and buttons for the controls mimicking the ones on the thicker composition cases. 10BA cheesehead screws should be a suitable size, tapped and bolted to the brass sliders and sliding through slots in the wall of the case. Shoulder screws would be preferable, should you happen to have any, as these would cause less wear. The buttons can be made from old pieces of mother of pearl, cut to shape and finely turned on the end of a drill. Of course this doesn't begin to compare with a movement properly housed in its original case, but it is a reasonable compromise to keep the orphan clean and protected in a new foster home.



## .... A Tired Little Teddy Bear!

**Paul Bellamy recounts the restoration of a pump-action manivelle.**

How many of us have treasured a Teddy bear? I can remember my bedtime companion, often found tucked in with my bedclothes. That is until Mother deemed that, at the age of 6, he was too worn out and I was too old. I miss him to this day.

There is something compelling about these children's toys. Thousands were made. It was inevitable that both our children and then our grand children had Teddy bears of all shapes and sizes. Unashamedly, in my mature years, I now have three. They are all musical, not the growler type. The most common tune was The Teddy Bears' Picnic.

The song was written in 1932 by Irishman Jimmy Kennedy (1902-1984) of Omagh who was a lyricist. He wrote the music for so many famous works such as 'Red sails in the sunset', 'South of the border down Mexico way', 'Isle of Capri', 'April in Portugal' and many more. The words were written by American composer JK Bratton. The original title was called The Teddy Bear Two-Step. Altogether, Kennedy wrote over 2,000 songs! But who knows much about him today?

He went to Trinity College Dublin before moving to England to become a teacher and later a civil servant. The University of Ulster awarded him the honour of D. Litt (Doctor of Literature). He was also awarded the Order of the British Empire (OBE) in 1984 and he was posthumously inducted into the USA Songwriters Hall of Fame in 1996.

It was inevitable that Teddys had to talk or make some noise in one way or another. Many were fitted with 'growlers', a little reed instrument that operated either when Teddy was squeezed, often to excess, or by means of a weight-operated bellows when turned upside-down. Inevitably, debris from the wood-wool stuffing would eventually silence the creature. Others had simple key-wind cylinder musical movements. The story of this little Teddy bear is different because its cylinder movement was a pump-action device that has never been recorded before.

The subject of this article is a very odd Teddy whose inner workings came to my attention by a most tortuous route via a company called Bear It In Mind\*. In 2006, Julie Tatchell, who lives with husband in the New Forest area of Southampton, was joined by Amanda who lives with her husband and family in the same area. Amanda designs and makes her own Teddy bears. Together they formed Bartie Ventures, thus preserving old bears and creating new ones for another generation.

When a customer brought in this unusual example of a

pump-action musical Teddy, they solicited the help of a musical box restorer. Unfortunately, the small musical movement demanded a new comb and the only person available with a profusion of small musical box parts was Ted Brown\*\*. Ted received it in the state shown in fig. 1. It consists of two wooden plates 7cms in diameter held apart by a large diameter coil spring. The spring's extension is limited by cloth that also protects the movement from the bear's stuffing. The overall height is also 7cms, clearly indicating European manufacture. Not shown is the cardboard disc that has been torn off the top disc where it seals a slot.

The damaged comb gave no sign as to the tune. Worse, the sequence of pins on the cylinder did not correlate with what might have been the Teddy Bears Picnic. So, possibly it might have been the Brahms lullaby? It was impossible to tell as can be seen from fig 2.

The comb was completely shattered with just a few of the 18 teeth in place, none of them in the melody part at the centre of the comb. There was just one tooth at the extreme treble end, one at the extreme bass end with the next one missing followed by just four more bass-end teeth.

Ted had several comb sets for these small movements, complete with their cylinders but none of them were tuned to the scale required for the broken comb. That was when he contacted me for help. As an amateur restorer, I have worked on small 38 to 40 note movements but nothing as small as this. The bits arrived in the post with a plethora of new unused combs in the hope that I could find one to fit that was tuned to the same scale or somewhere near it. Again, no such luck.

Although the new combs were the same basic size their two screw holes did not align with that of the broken one as can be seen by the comb on the right of fig. 2. Fortunately, the teeth of the broken comb were all tuned to the pitch of the modern piano (A above middle C tuned to 440 Hz, a frequency of 440 cycles per second). It was a good start to a long investigation.

Three combs seemed to be the closest pitch of the remaining teeth, which spanned nearly three octaves. On the piano, this was from about G sharp (G#) above middle C to an indeterminate top G or G#. The hardened steel holes of the three combs were extended by means of a diamond-dusted file. However, when the cylinder was turned under finger pressure, none played a recognisable tune. Worse, the cylinder engaged comb teeth for only half a revolution.

Prising off the cylinder end cap revealed the cause,



common to any cylinder musical box left in a hot environment such as a windowsill on a hot day. Pins are tapered and penetrate the cylinder wall just a small amount. They are then held fast by cement made from resin and grit. Normally, it needs little heat to soften the mixture. Not only had all the cement sunk to one side (the bottom, after it last came to rest) but the volatiles had evaporated, leaving the cement as hard as --- well, as hard as cement!

Repeated applications of paint stripper (such as Nitromors) eventually softened the cement until all could be rinsed clear using an old toothbrush. By inserting a round rod the pins were pushed out but to an uncertain height. The cylinder was then mounted centrally in a lathe and, using the cross-slide as a gauge, pins set back to approximately the correct height. Missing pins were replaced using 0.010inch diameter pinning wire. New resin cement was added and melted into place using a hot hair dryer. Finally, the cylinder was reground in the lathe using a hard piece of 1/4inch square grindstone mounted in the cross slide.

The first trial comb produced some sort of unrecognisable sound and rhythm. Fig 2 shows it in position with solder added to the top of some teeth near the tips, making it easier to adjust the pitch of a tooth without removing the comb. Also, instead of using washers a blanking plate made the job of fixing the comb easier. Tuning was achieved by slicing away some solder using a scalpel.

The Teddy Bears' Picnic has a recognisable rhythm: da, da-da-da-da, da, da-da and so on. Similarly, for the Brahms' lullaby: Da da da da - da da - da da - -, etc. No such luck!

Using the remnants of the old comb as a base for seeking the tuning scale gave three possible scales. The unbroken teeth equated to a scale starting with G# of the first octave above middle C on the piano. The next was missing, followed by C, C#, D#, F; then finishing at a doubtful G or G# at the treble end, in the 7<sup>th</sup> piano octave. Any one of the bass-end notes could have been the fundamental (tonic) note of a musical scale, including the missing bass-end tooth. It seemed logical to start by tuning the replacement comb to a scale of G#.

The pattern of pins on the cylinder provided numerous clues. There were two pairs that played adjacent teeth. This meant the two teeth were not only tuned to the same pitch but also that they would be the strong (slightly louder) beat in the music. Also, as two notes play together they form chords, which are harmonic and 'sound nice'.

The pattern of chords, as pinned on the cylinder, gave a clue as to the tuning scale. For example, using the analogy of the scale C (the root or 'tonic' of the C scale)

simple chords are likely to be combinations of C & E, C & G. With these observations in mind, I planned the pitch for each of the 18 teeth of the replacement comb and set about tuning it. Six of the old teeth were used as the benchmark and tuned first.

At last, the semblance of a tune appeared. The famous comedian and virtuoso pianist Les Dawson would have been proud of the result. He could play a well-known melody with all the wrong notes but to humorous effect. Comedian Eric Morecombe, in his brilliant piano performance with conductor Andre Previn and his orchestra, produced a similar result. Previn turned to Morecombe and said: "You are not playing the right notes!" His laconic reply was: "I am playing *all* the right notes, but not necessarily in the right order." That well described the first tuning result of the comb shown in fig. 2 but the rhythm of the mysterious tune started to show. By closely observing teeth released in pairs it was also easy to confirm which of the cylinder pins played chords and which ones played single notes forming the tune.

By playing the tune on the piano (particularly when played in the key of C) it was easy to guess where the tuning mistakes occurred. The revised tune was still unrecognisable but made more musical sense, to which the next comb was tuned. However, extra weight was added on the top of the comb near the tips of the teeth of uncertain pitch by using blobs of solder and then tuning them slightly lower than the estimated pitch. By slowly rotating the cylinder, harmonic pairs were adjusted in situ by shaving off some solder with a sharp-pointed scalpel to raise the pitch.

A tune slowly emerged. The first few bars and the rhythm sounded a bit like the tune of the nursery rhyme: 'Polly put the kettle on' but it was then followed by a bar or so that was different. Thus, the tune could have been either German or Swiss. Another revised scale was planned but then another problem arose; the teeth at the treble end could not be raised further in pitch so the comb had to be scrapped.

A third comb was chosen for the last attempt. This time, I decided to transpose the scale down a full tone (two intervals) to minimise the amount of tuning needed on the latest replacement comb. Finally, the obscure tune emerged. Because the movement is hidden it does not matter if solder is left on the top of the tooth. If the comb had been visible, the solder would be removed and either a lead weight or 'blob' added to the underside and shaved to the same pitch.

#### ***The operating mechanism.***

Figs. 3A & 3B show the unique design of levers and ratchets. It propels the movement in steps in one direction when pressed down or moved up under the action of the large coiled spring. One wonders why an ordinary wind-

up musical movement was not installed because the pump-action has many disadvantages. When the two wooden discs are compressed the ratchet on the arm furthest from the comb engages with the driving wheel (called the great wheel) which, instead of gear-shaped teeth, has ratchet-shaped teeth.

The top links pivot on a nail driven through the top into the disc's slot. The bottom pair pivot on the cylinder axis. The top and bottom links are not directly connected. Instead, each of the forward-facing pawls link pivoted between them, effectively a third link in each arm.

Another serious weakness of the design was that there was nothing to limit how far the discs could be compressed. Also, the great wheel rotates at the rate of compression, an obvious temptation for any child to do it as fast as possible but the result is worse than Les Dawson and Eric Morcombe combined. The result is very jerky.

The mechanism has to be squeezed slowly to make any sense of the tune. On release, the arms lift. The ratchet of the farthest arm slides over the teeth but the ratchet on the arm nearest the comb drives the wheel forward again. It is quite an ingenious mechanism. Unlike most spring-driven movements that stop at the end of a tune, this one can start and finish anywhere.

The maker is unknown but the age of the bear suggests a number of possible Swiss makers, almost certainly from Saint Croix. A favourite could be Thorens, well known for their superior and innovative small movement designs at that time using cast iron bases, but Cuendet, Guissaz, Paillard and even Reuge cannot be ruled out.

#### *Possible causes of failure.*

The loose spring may have eventually worn the cloth that connected the two wooden discs. The tear may have caused the top disc to cant, therefore disrupting the drive mechanism by causing the levers to jam so that instead of driving the cylinder forward, it pushed it in reverse. Also, as the cloth tore, debris could enter the mechanism. Because comb teeth slope upwards and are above the cylinder axis, any movement in reverse will force the teeth to be bent down beyond their limit and break off. To prevent this happening, three modifications were made.

#### *Modifications.*

The amount of compression needed to be limited. Any possibility of the top disc rotating or canting needed to be contained to prevent any chance of reverse cylinder movement. Reverse movement was easily achieved by making and fitting a small ratchet spring, held in place by a screw in the bottom disc, fig. 4. Three wooden,

hollow beech dowels were made and glued to the bottom disc just inside the spring, fig. 5. The height of the hollow dowels limited movement of the top disc and the three together prevented rotation between top and bottom discs. Some powdered graphite lubricant rubbed into the dowels ensured free movement.

Figs. 6A, B & C show the bear undergoing transplant surgery and looking entirely pleased with itself, fig. 6C. The rose colour is entirely original and very unusual. For comparison, two other Teddy bears are shown. Figs 7A & 7B are for an English Teddy bear with conventional wind-up movement that plays The Teddy Bears' Picnic. Figs. 8A & 8B are a Steiff bear that also has a wind-up movement playing the same tune. Fig. 8C is the Steiff's cosy with the rather unnecessary clue that it is an English one, not what it actually is, a German one. Even stranger is the musical notation, which makes no musical sense at all!

\* Bear It In Mind, Hythe, Southampton, UK. T: 07867 787 795, email: info@bearitinmind.com.

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An advertisement from a music trade magazine of about 1930.

# Recalled to Life

Repairing damaged discs

by John Anderson

As Charles Dickens observes at the start of the first chapter of 'A Tale of Two Cities' 'it was the best of times, it was the worst of times...'

That's exactly the feeling you sometimes get when attempting to realign bent or squashed projections on a Polyphon disc.

Carefully applied pressure using long-nosed pliers gives an early flush of success as the projection moves slowly from its squashed-over position to upright; but sometimes it's then followed by a progressively limp feeling of 'too easy' as the projection breaks away from the disc and the carefully arranged note that it once played is unfortunately gone forever.

A method for restoring broken or missing projections to steel discs is described and illustrated by the late Graham Webb in his "Musical Box Handbook" (Volume 2 - Disc Boxes).

Graham suggests using a 3/64" cotter pin, (split pin), one end of which is bent to exact projection shape and then soldered directly on to the cleaned under-surface of the disc itself. The pin is then cut off and filed flush to the upper surface of the disc.

He emphasizes the importance of replacing projections where they form a critical part of the tune, or occur in the middle of a musical run. However, he also acknowledges the fact that some disfiguring of the disc can occur as a result of the soldered repair.

My own alternative method of missing projection reinstatement makes the finished disc look as though it has been fitted with a very beautiful and very expensive gold



Fig 1. Repaired disc - look at just before 12 o'clock position.

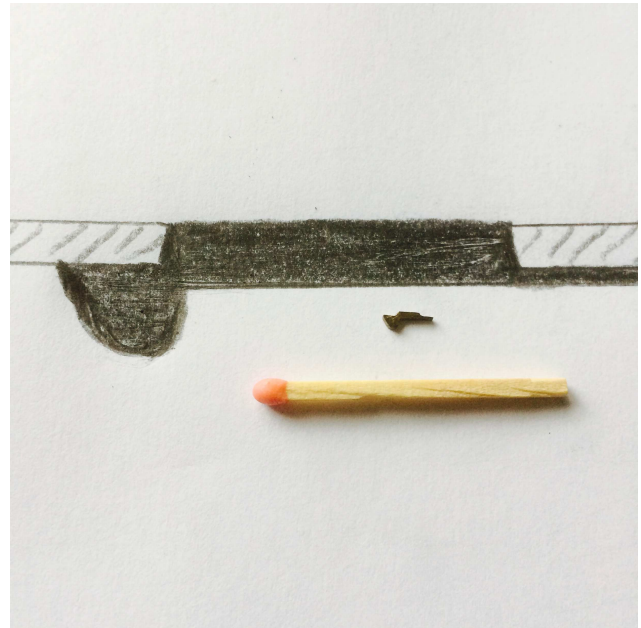


Fig 2. Showing how the profiled tooth fits in the filed-out hole in the steel disc and an actual size tooth insert.

filling, or gold false tooth. See fig 1.

The new tooth is hand filed from brass to fit the prepared hole in the disc exactly, and to the profile shape shown below. See fig 2.


Note that the tooth follows the shape of the other projections on the disc and has in addition a short thin tail that is used to fix the tooth securely to the underside of the disc using a tiny spot of Araldite. See fig 3.

The hand filing is tricky, time consuming and requires good eyesight, but I believe that the end result is satisfying and worthwhile in both terms of the appearance and restoration of a disc box tune that was once incomplete, but is now very properly recalled to life.



Fig 3  
(Rt)

## AMBC Member Joe Berman shares some of his collection



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## Musical Box Music & Composers Part 4

Our fourth look at H A V Bulleid's series of short introductions to composers popular on musical boxes continues with the letter M.

### Metra

For five years, 1872 to 1877, the conductor at the Folies Begère, Paris, was Olivier Metra (1830-1889). For them he composed operettas and ballets, one of them including his most popular tune, *Marche des Volontaires*, about 1875. Best known of his other numerous compositions are the ballet *Yedda*, 1879, and the two waltzes *Les Roses* (1866) and *La vague* (wave) (1869). The volunteers march was very popular on contemporary musical boxes, and with good reason.

### Millöcker

Karl Millöcker (1842-1899) studied at the Vienna Conservatory and started composing short musical pieces while working as Conductor at theatres in Graz, Budapest and Vienna. His first success with a full-length operetta was *Das Verwunschene Schloss* (Magic Castle) in 1878 and this was followed by 14 others including:

- Grafin Dubarry 1879
- Die Jungfrau von Belleville 1881
- The Beggar Student 1882
- Gasparone 1884
- Der Feldprediger 1884
- The Lucky Child 1886
- Poor Jonathan 1890

Several appear on discs. For example, between Polyphon 1013 and 1112 there are seven Millöcker tunes. They are also often seen on tune sheets - by no means always credited.

In the 1880s, Millöcker was established with Strauss and Suppé as the leading trio of Viennese operetta composers. His biggest success in Europe was the *Beggar Student* and in the USA *Poor Jonathan*.

### Musard

Langdorff tune sheets from about 1848 to 1860 with their piano motif included Musard among their featured composers; however, no one recollects any tunes by this Phillipe Musard, born at Tours in 1793. He composed mainly waltzes and quadrilles,

some of which were published in London from 1817 onwards. It was said that a typical Musard melody line employed trombones, cornets, first violins and flutes - not a huge help to musical box tune arrangers. In 1835, he conducted the balls at the Paris Opera and in 1840-41, he conducted the London Promenade Concert at Drury Lane and the Lyceum. He was a less flamboyant showman than Jullien, and was considered by the French to be the doyen of dance composers and popular conductors. He retired in 1852 and is said to have been already forgotten before his death in 1859 - though not, of course, by Langdorff tune sheets.

### Petrella

The Italian composer Errico Petrella (1813-1877) began his musical studies at age eight and soon joined the Naples Conservatory. His teachers included young Bellini. At age 15 he composed an opera, *Rose-Colored Devil*, whose success so irritated the Conservatory that he was expelled. After other clashes he stopped composing until 1851, then he produced about 20 modest successes including:

- Elena di Tolosa 1852
- Marco Visconti 1854
- Jone 1858 La Contessa d'Amalfi 1864
- Caterina Howard 1866
- I Promessi Sposi 1869
- Manfredo 1872

*Jone* or, *The Last Days Of Pompeii*, was produced at La Scala, Milan in January 1858, and was his best known work. Tunes from his other operas are sure to have reached musical box cylinders.

### Planquette

Robert Planquette (1848-1903) was a pianist and composer whose early work included *Le Régiment de Sambre et Meuse* (Polyphon 5371), one of France's most popular military marches in the 1870s. While working as a Cafe-Concert pianist he shot to fame in 1877 with *Les Cloches de Corneville* which had 400 consecutive performances in its first year. The 20 operettas he composed include also:

- Le Chevalier Gaston 1879
- Les Voltigeurs de la 32<sup>me</sup> 1880

(revised as The Old Guard, London) 1887  
Rip Van Winkle 1882  
(revised as Rip Rip) 1884  
NellGwynne 1884  
Surcouf 1887  
(revised as Paul Jones, London) 1889  
Capitaine Therese 1890

*Les Cloches* (bells), *Rip Rip* and *Les Voltigeurs* (light infantry) are often heard on cylinder musical boxes. They figure on 15-inch Polyphons from Nos. 1929 to 1943. The waltz from *Les Cloches* is hard to avoid, and that is the name he gave to his villa on the Normandy coast near Cabourg.

### Ricci

Two Italian composers educated at the Naples Conservatory were the brothers Ricci; Luigi (1805-1859) and Federico (1809-1877). They both composed numerous songs and upwards of 20 operas, a few in collaboration including *Crispino e la comare* (Crispin and the Godmother) in 1850.

Two solo successes by Luigi Ricci were:

Chiara di Rosembergh 1831  
Un Aventura di Scaramuccia 1834

and solo successes by Federico Ricci were:

La Prigione di Edimburgo 1838  
Luigi Rolla 1841  
Corrado d'Altamura 1841  
Une Folie a Rome 1869

This last item was an opera bouffe for Paris, originally composed in Italian as *Carina*.

### Smetana

Despite their popularity and being composed in the

period 1866 -1882, tunes by Smetana are rare on Swiss and French cylinder musical boxes though reasonably represented on disc. This is probably because Smetana opera tunes were slow in emerging from their native Bohemia - now Czechoslovakia.

The early life of Bedrich Smetana (1824-1884) was clouded by continuing political strife; but his musical reputation grew rapidly with his wide range of compositions, helped initially by his friendship with Liszt. He actively fostered the development of Czech music and the National Theatre in Prague where he became the principal conductor. His operas include:

The Bartered Bride 1866  
Dalibor 1868  
Two Widows 1874  
The Kiss 1876  
The Secret 1878  
Libuse 1881  
The Devil's Wall 1882

Three of them get a mention on the tune sheet shown in Fig. 1-33 including the *Bartered Bride*

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which remains an audience-puller today. Tune 4, *The Queen of the Puppets* waltz, is by Josef Bayer (1852-1913), a Vienna-born Austrian violinist, conductor, and composer. He wrote a few run-of-the-mill operettas and made his considerable reputation with ballet music, scoring an international success in 1888 with *Puppenfee* (Fairy Doll) which provides tune No.4 and dates the movement shown in Fig. 1-32 at around 1890.

### Schwartzendorff = Tedesco

It helps in dating musical boxes to spot tunes which are very early and therefore irrelevant - for example *Lillabullero* which sounds like 1890 Music Hall but dates from 1687 and was arranged by Purcell. Often the best clue is the life span of the composer; he may even have died before the musical box era, for example J.P.A. Schwartzendorff (1741-1816). He is tersely referred to as Tedesco (= German) on tune sheets. He settled in France where he found Italian music very popular, so he adopted the name Martini. But the locals were not fooled, and labelled him Martini il Tedesco, which stuck - until PVF and others did without the Martini. He composed several operas and had a big success with *Sappho* in 1794; they all included his popular songs, among which was the "classic" *Plaisir d'amour*.

### Solomon

Composer Edward Solomon (1855-1895) came from a London family of theatre musicians. He was musical director at several theatres in London and New York and he composed numerous comic songs and parlour pieces for piano and several operettas including:

- Billee Taylor 1880
- Claude Duval 1881
- The Vicar of Bray 1882
- Polly 1882
- Pocahontas 1884
- The Red Hussar 1889
- The Nautch Gir 1891

Solomon's operettas were reckoned among the best contemporaries of Sullivan's. Perhaps he is now best remembered by his music for George Grossmith's 1889 song *See Me Dance The Polka*, heard to great effect on sublime harmony boxes by George Baker.

### Thomas

Ambroise Thomas (1811-1896) was a noted French composer of numerous operas, ballets, songs, and instrumental works. Of his 20 operas, the following are likely to appear on tune sheets:

- Le Caid 1849
- Le Songe d'une Nuit d'été 1850(1)
- Raymond 1851
- Le Carnaval de Venise 1857(2)
- Mignon 1866(3)
- Hamlet 1868

(1) has no connection with *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. (2) uses Paganini's variations on the old Venetian tune. (3) was one of the all-time great successes, with over 1000 performances in Paris between 1866 and 1894. Thomas followed Auber as head of the Paris Conservatoire.

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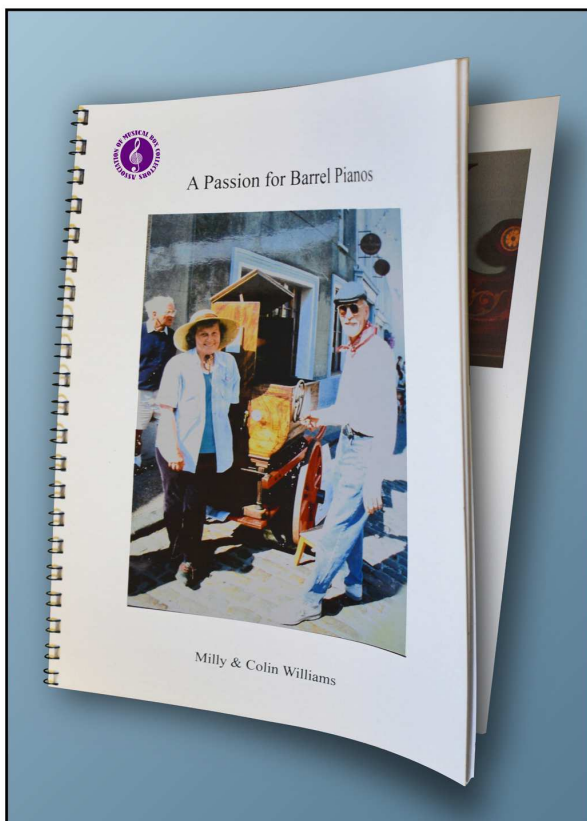
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