

# MECHANICAL MUSIC WORLD



The Britannia Disc Box  
See article inside

An Association of Musical Box Collectors Publication

## From the Editors' Desk

We do trust that by the time this publication reaches you winter will finally have melted into spring! We are very glad that so many of you were able to enjoy the meeting at Bucks Green so diligently reported by Paul Waterman.

My eye was caught by the musical mangle – what an intriguing device! Dare I say it is just the type of thing one used to find, not working, at jumble sales. These are now of course repaced by the numerous charity shops etc which seem to proliferate in our city centres. The word ‘mangle’, in the wringing sense, is fast vanishing from the language, but it jolted a memory for us. In a rather up-market antique shop in the South of England David & I found a rather the worse for wear musical box. The movement, with bells and drum, was housed in a nicely inlaid case, the cylinder about 14” long. Our attention quickly focussed on shreds of material attached to some of the pins. A more detailed examination revealed the awful truth. Some small girl in times past had used this beautiful box as a mangle for her doll’s clothes. The evidence was there for us to see – shreds of miniature clothes on the pins and the absence of a number of teeth from the comb told the rest of the sad story.

After reading Ted Brown’s article we have no excuse not to know that the B.H. of B.H. Abrahams stands for Barnett Henry! Also, thanks to this article we know that the firm, as well as making a wide variety of disc and cylinder musical boxes, also sold very desirable phonographs. The photograph on page 11 shows a wonderful outfit for the new phonograph owner.

Paul Bellamy continues his ongoing task of working with Anthony Bulleid’s archive., continuing the high standard of research and recording of facts, this time to further tease out the Cuendet story and time line for us all to benefit from. An earlier result of Paul’s research is of course the wonderful book ‘The Music Makers of Switzerland’.

Do you remember the beginnings of Classic FM on the radio? Bird song broadcast for weeks before the official opening of the station. We recently picked up early test broadcasts from the newly-opened Mechanical Music Radio, available on-line. We highly recommend this innovative move on the part of James Dundon and hope that you will ‘tune in’ to [www.mechanicalmusicradio.com](http://www.mechanicalmusicradio.com) and enjoy it as much as we do over here in Canada. It plays 24 hours per day. It is lovely to be able to listen to tunes (rather than ‘head banging music’ to quote our late friend Gerry Wells, formerly of the British Vintage Wireless Museum).

Last but not least, we are delighted to announce that your Association, the AMBC, has produced another publication, this time on musical novelties! It is not quite hot off the press, that comes toward the end of April, but we have seen a copy and it is quite outstanding. Like the first small blue book (‘An Introduction to Mechanical Music’), it is aimed at those of us new to the hobby, but will still be of interest to all of us. Juliet and Chris Fynes have done another fine job!

### CONTENTS

Chairman's Report, Meeting Dates .....	2
February Meeting Report - <i>Paul Waterman reports and Conchon and Britannia were discussed</i> .....	3
<b>Barnet Henry Abrahams</b> - <i>Ted Brown examines the history of this important manufacturer</i> .....	7
<b>A Most Unusual Musical Mangle</b> - <i>Chris Fynes finds a rare novelty</i> .....	12
<b>H A V Bulleid and Cuendet</b> - <i>Paul Bellamy produces a new dating chart</i> .....	14
<b>The Harp that Once...</b> - <i>David Evans discovers musical harps made for the Odd Fellows</i> .....	19
<b>Advertisements</b> .....	26
AMBC Aims and objectives & editorial policy etc .....	26
Classified Advertisements .....	28

## Chairman's Report

As I am sure you all know, I do not do computers, emails and the like but I do have a telephone and a fax machine that I can plug in on request. In an Association like ours this is very useful, as I get quite a few telephone enquiries, especially about restoration, where exchanging emails would take forever before the matter is resolved. If I do not know the answers I usually know someone who does, so give me a call.

Sourcing materials and tools is one of the biggest problems, and I know this is made easier by going to various web sites, but we are hoping to make up a list of some of the more unusual suppliers of our needs. If you know any useful names please send them in.

Meanwhile, I will continue to ensure that the Association does its best to promote mechanical music of all types. Our latest 'little blue book' has just been published and covers Musical Novelties. It is perfect for young and old and ideal for beginners who have a small pocket, as all items are between £5 and £100. You can see the advertisement on the inside front cover.

I hope to see some of you at the A.G.M. on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> June, when we are also hoping to have our Organ Grind after the A.G.M.

Please bring your own sandwiches to this meeting, but we will supply the puddings and the usual drinks.

Ted Brown

### 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.

## Officers of the AMBC

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**AMBC website: [www.ambc.org.uk](http://www.ambc.org.uk)**  
Feel free to contact any of us.

## 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.*

### Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> April

Meeting at The Old School

### Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> June

A.G.M., followed by Organ Grind

### Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> August

Meeting at The Old School

### Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> November

Christmas Meeting

AMBC Meeting 25<sup>th</sup> Feb 2018.



Fig. 1. 6-Air Harpe Tremolo musical box possibly by Conchon

Despite the cold weather there was a full attendance. The themes of the day comprised the usual ‘show and tell’ where members brought along an item of their choice, a review of BH Abrahams and a reflection upon African-American music between 1880 and 1910.

One member demonstrated a 6-air musical box that was presumed to be made by Conchon. The casework was of extremely high quality, the slightly convex lid was veneered with rosewood with a beautiful floral inlay and triple boxwood stringing to lid and case front. The movement was in perfect order, complete with tune indicator and tune selector as well as the normal stop/start and tune change levers, Fig. 1. The detached tune sheet was headed *Harpe Tremolo* and had the agent’s name: D. Boer & Fils La Haye, Fig. 2. La Haye means The Hague and it seems to be the first record of this agent.

The movement was a standard 13-inch cylinder, about 2 1/8 inches in diameter and had three combs. The dimensions are shown on the tune sheet in the bottom right cartouche as 24”-2.4””. This is French code for lignes and pouce, dimensions slightly different to English inches. 24 lignes = 2.132 inches, the diameter of the cylinder. 12 lignes = 1.066 inches = 1 pouce. Thus the cylinder is 12.79 inches long. However, this could be a measure excluding the thickness of the end caps\*.

\*Note: Bulleid described three possible interpretations of cylinder length in his book *Cylinder Musical Box Design & Repair*, page 95.

The outer two combs were tuned to *Sublime Harmonie*, each with about the same number of teeth,

the third having 39 teeth, Fig. 3. The teeth on the first comb are slimmer than those on the third comb. Both were tuned to the same scale but with slight variation of pitch between them. Teeth are plucked simultaneously so that two teeth of the same pitch resonate together. The slight difference in frequency between



Fig 2. The tune sheet

them gives a pleasant interaction as the frequencies combine and oppose to give an undulating frequency similar to the *voix celeste* stop of an organ, where two pipes are similarly tuned and played at the same time.

The central comb has 54 fairly slim teeth. They are also slightly shorter but tuned to the same scale. Here the full length of its scale is covered by a strip of fine tissue mounted in a holder called a zither. This is the ‘harp’ comb when the paper is in contact. The holder can be brought into contact with the comb or, thankfully, lifted clear. When in contact it causes a buzzing sound as the teeth vibrate. Although once very popular it is rarely to modern taste.

The centre comb might be described by other makers as a *piccolo* comb when used without tissue contact. Thus the comb set-up and musical arrangements for this movement are quite subtle and of a high musical standard. The term *tremolo* is another musical effect

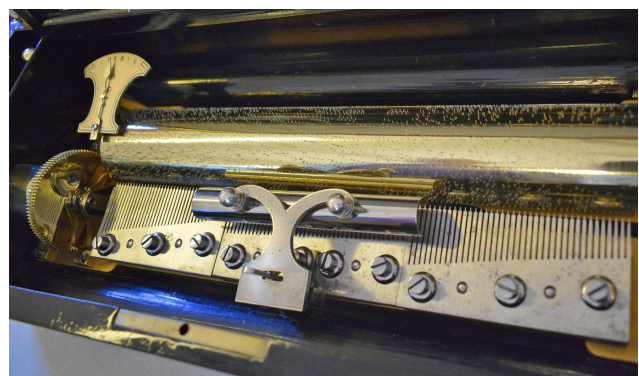


Fig 3. The three combs

where a note is repeated several times by tuning a group of teeth to the same pitch. This movement could achieve a continuous repetition giving the effect of a sustained note.

The *Sublime Harmonie* effect made the earlier *Forte Piano* movements redundant. They were called *Forte Piano* because of the use of two combs tuned to the same scale. One comb was set with less tooth lift to give the *piano* effect. However, this movement also had some loud and soft passages, no doubt achieved by playing the soft ones on a single comb instead of in the *sublime harmonie* arrangement where teeth are played in pairs.

The movement had the standard start/stop and tune change levers but with tune indicator to the left and tune selector to the right, Fig 1. The tune selector mechanism was a simple pivoted lever with a pawl. With the movement stopped at the tune gap, a forward pull of the lever engaged its pawl with the snail cam to rotate it to the next tune position. Successive pulls moved the cylinder to the desired tune as displayed on the indicator.

In reflection, after the meeting, further investigation indicated no positive proof that the movement was made by Conchon although one expert opinion suggested that it was. The reason for possible doubt is a study of the tune sheet, Fig. 2. Bullied noted five other tune sheets with this pattern and its identical 'lyre and spray of leaves' motif in the top centre cartouche. All are unattributed. They are listed in his tune sheet book and its supplements as Nos. 213, 214, 237, 238, 369.

Although there are similar simple 'borders pattern' tune sheets common to other makers, each had distinctive differences in detail. For example, Ducommun Girod (No. 7, not shown) and Metert & Langdorff (No. 59, not shown). Thus these five are the only ones with Bulleid's description of the lyre. Fig. 2 fits Bulleid's description exactly, being black with gilt overlay on flimsy paper. He reckoned that the pattern was in common use between 1840 and 1880. Although he claimed it was used by other makers he gave no examples in any of his books and supplements. The five examples add even more confusion because the estimated dates for the given serial numbers do not tally with any other maker's date line for all the dating charts Bulleid produced.

So what is the date of this movement? There is just one clue; tune number 5, *Mignon*, by Thomas. Am-

brose Thomas wrote the *Opera Comique, Mignon*, which was performed for the first time on the 17<sup>th</sup> September 1864. Thus the date of this movement will be post this date. If the serial number is for Conchon it would have been made in 1882, which seems a bit late. The only other clue is tune 6: 'Mein Liebster ist im Dorf (My love lives in the village)' by Arnold Krug (1849-1904). So far the date of this compositions has not been found.

The next 'show and tell' was by Chris Fynes. It was an early key-wind 4-air movement, again by an unknown maker and without a tune sheet (Fig 4). The first of its four tunes is from Gustave III, ou Le bal masqué (Gustavus III, or The Masked Ball). It received its first performance at the Salle Le Peletier of the Paris Opéra on 27 February 1833, The opera was a major success for the composer, with 168 performances until 1853. It was also a delight to hear. It had similar features to an Alibert movement of the same period. As with all our 'show and tells', this day produced as many questions as answers.



Fig 4. Key-wound 4-air musical box

The next main feature was a study of BH Abrahams, the subject of a separate article in this issue by Ted Brown. Paul Bellamy demonstrated his 41-tooth single comb, 9-inch disc movement. Although the boxes were cheaply made using printed paper to simulate wood surfaces and edge banding they still looked very good, Fig 5A. The Britannia logo, beautifully produced in colour on a silver backing was the main feature of this BH Abrahams 'Britannia' musical box.

It had a sturdy gramophone-type winding handle that needed to be wound forwards towards the body

when facing the instrument. However, when wound from behind it wound forward by the left hand. The tone of the instrument was both loud and clear, capable of using edge and centre driven steel discs lacquered on both sides to preserve and protect the surfaces, Fig 5B. Fig 5C shows the movement without the disc. The bedplate is intended to make the bold statement: 'The Imperial, made in Switzerland'. Thus Abrahams, whilst lauding the British Empire and Britannia was circumspect enough to underline the highest quality: Made in Switzerland.

Another 'show and tell' was a novelty Amorette, Fig 6, an 8-3/8 inch disc musical box with dancing figures automata. The box was restored by Roger Booty and is part of the museum held by Johnny Ling when it moves from the Cotton Museum. (See the advertisement in this issue for the Open Day).

The next topic for this very full musical day was the subject of African-American music from about 1880 to 1910. We played a whole variety of instruments: cob organs, organettes, player pianos and organs, disc boxes, cylinder and disc records. What we heard was



Fig 5A. Paul Bellamy and the Britannia 9" disc box.

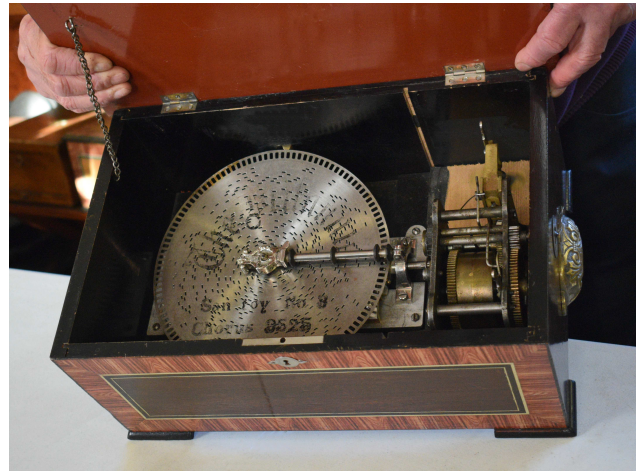


Fig 5B. Britannia inside

aptly described by Ted as a 'plethora of music'. The titles use words that are nowadays deeply offensive although in common use at the time by the African-American community as well as other Americans and

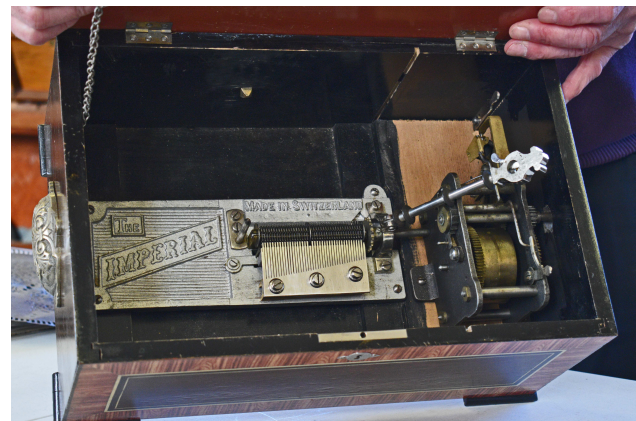


Fig 5C. The Britannia movement

Europeans. However, the music must not be lost because it was so popular at the time and enjoyed by all. Also, the early genre of African-American music spread and developed not just with time, but throughout the world, from religious, choral, ragtime, jazz and blues into the mainstream and beyond to the music we hear today.

We heard dances and songs of all types. Paul Baker demonstrated and gave us a very informed talk using early phonograph cylinders and gramophone discs. We learned why a cakewalk was so called, based on African-American dance traditions and competitions where they dressed up and danced in imitation of the 'other folk'. The dance steps were a parody of the steps or walks. The prize for the winner was a cake! The cakewalk style became a musical genre of its own. We also heard 'Whistling Rufus' played on a number



Fig 6. 8 3/8" disc Amorette organette. The automaton figures dance whilst it plays.



Fig 7 (above). An Ehrlich disc with a doubtful title!

Figs 10 & 11 (right)

Ted Brown at the Orchestrelle and happy members!

Fig 8 (below). A selection of (in)appropriate sheet music



Fig 9. Paul Baker plays a roll of typical music.

of instruments, still popular to this day. Fig. 7 shows an Ehrlich patent disc and Fig. 8 a selection of sheet music. We finished with Paul Baker on the roll-playing piano, Fig 9, Ted Brown playing the Aeolian organ, Fig 10 and a view of some very happy members, Fig 11.



# Barnet Henry Abrahams

by Ted Brown

Barnet Henry Abrahams is a tricky chap to pin down. He was certainly British, having roots in Scotland and London. We know he died in 1902 but details of his life are not known with any certainty. There are suggestions that he moved to Switzerland in 1857 and dealt in musical boxes in St Croix and Geneva. A more credible source shows him emigrating to Switzerland in 1895.

Whilst in England from 1866 he worked in Houndsditch with Newmark and Goldschmidt dealing in cylinder boxes. He certainly appears to have dealt with Ami Rivenc and Charles Cuendet (Fig 1). He also sold a wide range of fancy goods, including silver. His silver marks were recorded at assay offices in London, Birmingham and Chester. Some marks have the letters B.H.A. in a rectangle or each letter within a circle (circa 1880). Later the letters were within an eight-point star (Fig 2), the same as his disc box trademark which also have "The Silver Star Depot" cast in their base plates (Fig 3).

It is interesting to note that in 1895 he took over



Cuendet, establishing the B. H. Abrahams Company in St Croix. This makes some of his earlier cylinder boxes difficult to distinguish from Cuendet, as I am certain he was using old stock in movements and cases. His cylinder boxes had a large full colour tune sheet (Fig 4).

The disc boxes produced by his firm in St Croix were as follows: 25½ inch upright, 17 inch upright (Fig 5), 11¾ upright (single and double comb) and table model (Fig 6), 9 inch (fig 7) to 8½ inch edge and centre drive (single and double comb upright) and the 5 inch edge drive table model (Fig 8). From 9 inch upwards, the lids or doors were veneered with halved or quartered walnut like his cylinder boxes. The decoration was either imitated grained wood with diagonally grained edging or grained rosewood case sides. The top of the lids and or the inside of the doors had very regal silver transfers (Fig 9): also gold-leaf transfers, one the Royal Cypher (Fig 10) and the other the Britannia coat of arms (Fig 11). These were usually on silver-leaf (Fig 12), to be laid on damp varnish and soaked off after

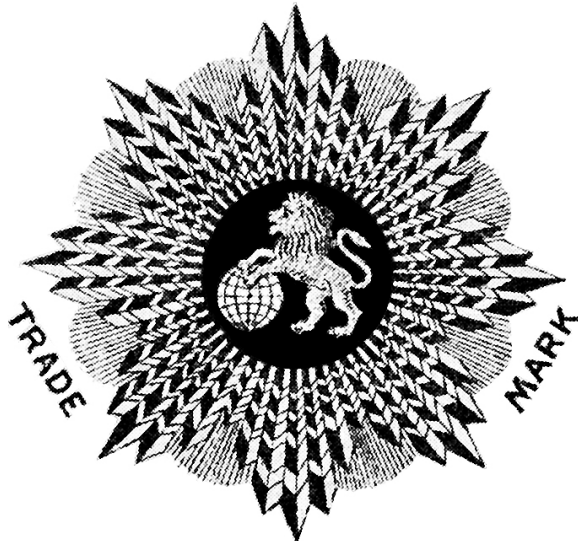


Fig. 2

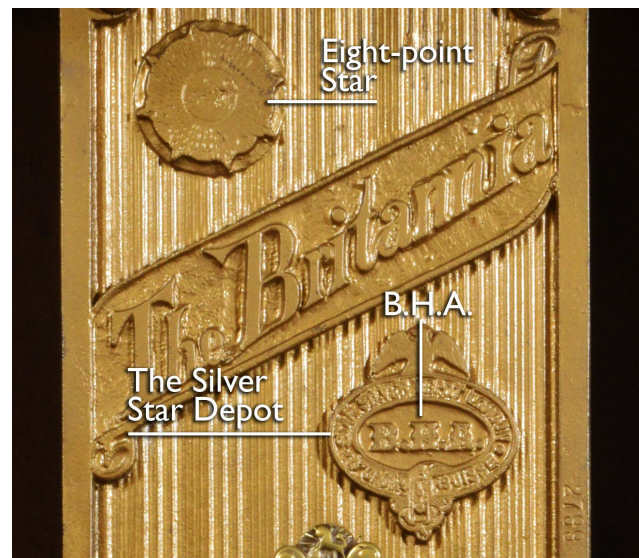


Fig 3



*Fig. 4*

the varnish had dried. The gold leaf transfers were usually applied to the motor covers which were glass (Fig 13).

Abrahams produced music for the masses, fat cylinders that played two, three or four tunes per turn. Most were music hall and operetta tunes of the day (a bonus for people hunting for these, almost lost, tunes of yesteryear) with a few classical pieces and hymns. As yet I have never found Christmas carols on their tune lists.



*Fig. 5 - 17" Upright disc machine*



*Fig. 6 - 11 3/4" Table model*

The cylinder box combs are usually fairly coarse to accommodate the large number of tunes but they are chunky, which gives the boxes (all of which have a large base area) plenty of volume. Untuned bells and zither attachment were included in many of the boxes. The disc boxes similarly use a large case and sound board and a strident comb. These are sometimes referred to as brash but they are loud enough to dance or sing to and I am sure that this was Abrahams' intention. Remember, the phonograph, gramophone and player piano were only just around the corner. Abrahams himself entered the phonograph market.



*Fig. 7 - 9" Upright with clock*



Fig. 8 - 5" Edge Drive Table model

My 17-inch upright Britannia has double combs (Fig 14) but, to increase the bass volume, the last nine teeth on both combs are twice the width and played singly instead of in pairs. This effect is also used on a 15½ inch Polyphon, which is a single comb model with a short base comb to increase the volume.



Fig 9. - Regal Silver Transfer

For more information about Abrahams see page 148 onwards in *The Music Makers of Switzerland* by Paul Bellamy.

Paul Baker's Britannia Type A phonograph is illustrated in Figures 16 to 18. The original advertisement has a perforated lower edge (Fig 15), so was presumably a loose insert in a magazine from which the original purchaser sent off the lower portion to buy the machine by mail order. At 5 guineas it was expensive compared with similar phonographs then



Fig 10.



Fig 11. - The Britannia Transfer



Fig 12. - Silver leaf transfer on sheet



Fig 13. - Gold leaf applied to glass motor cover

on the market which could be bought for around £3.

Some examples of this phonograph (Fig 16), have been seen with a B H Abrahams transfer on the front of the wooden baseboard but this example



Fig 14. - Bedplate of 17"Upright model



Fig 15. - Phonograph advertisement

does not have one. The phonograph was manufactured by Thorens and presumably supplied to the wholesale order of B H Abrahams. Unusual features are the Sheraton style inlaid cover (Fig 17) and the ship's-wheel winding key, which are unique to this model.

This photo (Fig 18), taken from a 1970 publication, shows the Britannia Phonograph



Fig 16. - Britannia Type A Phonograph. Very similar to the contemporary Columbia.



Fig 17. - The elegant inlaid cover

Cabinet, which contains a Thorens manufactured phonograph mechanism and storage for 20 cylinder records. At the time it was on loan to the Science Museum and was reported to be one of only two surviving examples worldwide, the other being in a private collection in America. The phonograph slides forward for easy accessibility. The horn, when not in use, is lodged under a semi-circular shelf. There are pigeon-holes for the 20 cylinder records and there are small drawers to hold accessories, such as reproducer and recorder. Externally, the cabinet is inlaid in Sheraton style in the same manner as was the cover of the Model A Britannia phonograph.

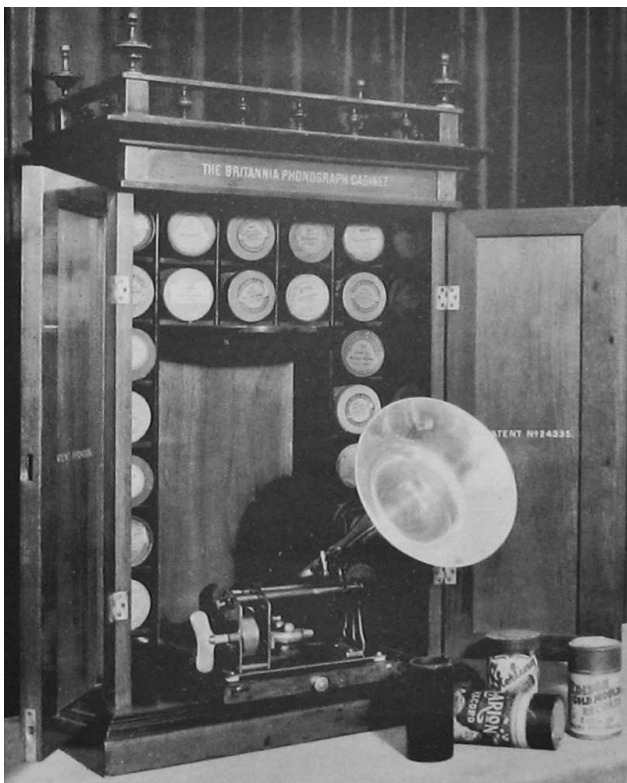


Fig 18. - Britannia Phonograph Cabinet for the machine and twenty cylinders.



The world's FIRST radio station playing 24/7 Automatic Musical Instruments opened on April 1st this year. You can listen any time of the day or night for the best variety of music.

## What is Mechanical Music Radio?

Fairground, Dance and Street Organs, Pianolas, Music Boxes, Orchestrions & more. With so many instruments to discover, be sure to tune in whenever you can. We also bring you news, information and events from our wonderful hobby.

Listen with just 'one click' on this website, or download our mobile app. Search 'Mechanical Music Radio' in the app store.

## What will I hear every hour?

We've done our research and picked the most iconic Mechanical Organs from around the world, playing music from the best arrangers, past and present. The most popular tracks will get the most plays across a week, and with such a wide database of music, each hour is full of surprises.

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## A Most Unusual Musical Mangle

by Chris Fynes

Of all musical novelties this must be one of the most peculiar. It is a miniature reproduction of an actual mangle made by 'Nelson & Co' of London which is inscribed upon the arch above.

As can be seen in the accompanying pictures (page 13), it is manufactured in the finest detail right down to the tiny working wheels underneath. The rollers rotate when the handle is turned and rise up and down to allow the clothes to pass between. The spring tensioner at the top is also adjustable.

On the lower section is a box enclosed by a hinged flap on the front. There is a tiny handle that holds the flap closed, which when opened allows the flap to drop down exposing the musical movement inside.

When first acquired the box was in need of a little restoration. The leaf spring at the top was missing so I cut out a brass shape to emulate one I found on a website. I very much suspect the original may have been made from sprung steel, but this I shall probably never know. Anyway, it looks more complete with a spring, notwithstanding that it is more cosmetic than practical.

The obvious question is, was this originally made as a musical box, or was the movement added later? One can speculate, but in my opinion, it could well have been meant as a musical box.

In support of this theory, the box and the flap are well constructed and of the same colour and patina as the

rest of the mangle. It is also uncommon for mangles to have compartments at their base. The backplate has three holes drilled in it for screws to attach to the musical movement, and internally these holes have three circular spacers carefully soldered around them to rest against the bedplate of the movement, all of which were very well made. There is a further hole in the back for a key to wind the movement.

On the other hand, there is the condition in which I found the musical movement, which was a bit of a bodge. There were three holes tapped in the bedplate of the movement which did not quite line up with the holes in the back, so instead, the movement had been badly glued and screwed in with tatty wooden spacers. The control lever (which looked like a lever stolen out of an old alarm clock) was totally impractical, as it had a stop for the fan soldered on the wrong side, so went counter to the job of the stop/start control. The tuning weights on the base teeth were locked together with dirt and dust which needed cleaning out before they could sound.

To remedy the problems, I re-drilled the holes in the backplate to the positions of the holes in the movement and made a new control lever and now it works well. I also made a new back plate to cover all the holes.

My guess is that it originally had a musical movement which was properly attached, but for some reason was replaced with a later movement and badly put together.

### **Cotton Mechanical Music Museum moves to "THE GRANGE MUSICAL COLLECTION"**

by Alan Smith

Well known organ enthusiast and collector of mechanical music, Jonny Ling first opened his Collection to the public in 1992. His love of mechanical music grew from the time when, as a young boy, he played the JC Bishop barrel organ for his grandmother in North Lopham Church, and visits to the Bressingham Steam Museum. He acquired his first instrument at the age of fourteen and having trained with Diss organ builders W A Boggis, has been organ building, restoring and collecting mechanical music at The Grange since then.

Under the guidance of the late Robert Finbow he became a Trustee of the Museum of Mechanical Music at Cotton. Following its closure, the major exhibits of the Cotton Museum are being relocated over the next two years to "The Grange Musical Collection".

The combined collection promises to be the largest and most diverse of self playing musical instruments in the U.K. including Theatre, Dutch street, Fairground, Chamber and Cafe organs, piano orchestrions, musical boxes, Polyphons, barrel pianos and lots more!

Opening times of the Collection in 2018 are Saturday 19th May, 10.00 – 7.00, prior to the Diss Organ Festival, and on the FIRST SUNDAY of EACH MONTH from June to December between 12.00 – 5.00. Private tours are also available by arrangement.

Contact details: "The Grange Musical Collection", Palgrave, Diss, Norfolk, IP22 1AZ. Tel.01379 783350, mob. 07708890728. Email musicmuseum54@yahoo.co.uk and Facebook.

Reserved for Mangle pictures

## HAV (Anthony) Bulleid and Cuendet.

by Paul Bellamy

*In Issue 11, we summarised the complexities of the Cuendet clan. The late HAV (Anthony) Bulleid published articles on musical box tune sheets first and almost exclusively in the USA (MBSI journal). This article summarises and expands on his work on Cuendet with a proposed new dating chart.*

*Bulleid was a university educated engineer and a senior industrial manager. He was accomplished in looking at technical details, drawing conclusions and publishing or making decisions based on the results. His care in applying the same criteria to his hobby of researching the technicalities and manufacturing history of musical boxes was and remains a tour-de-force.*

*In the late 1990s Ted Brown, a longstanding friend and collaborator, suggested that he should publish a book based on his work. Ted edited Anthony's book: 'Cylinder Musical Box Tune Sheets', known as 'The Tune Sheet Book'.*

*Three more supplements, the third with my collaboration, bringing the total to 395 and we continued the research together until his death.*

*Anthony left his archive to Ted and me to continue his work. It has resulted in many other articles and tune sheet research published in the AMBC Journal plus our recent very well received book *The Music Makers of Switzerland*. The work continues with:*

### ***A proposed Cuendet Dating chart:***

Bulleid only referred to the name Cuendet or his full name Jules Cuendet and not to other members of that family. All makers applied serial numbers sequentially. They were meant for the maker's records, not the person buying the musical box. Bulleid used serial numbers to create 15 dating charts. He noted common

tune sheet errors when serial and gamme numbers (a tuning scale code) were sometimes reversed in error. He also noted that agents (sometime other makers) often wrote their own serial number in addition or in substitute. Thus a serial can be a maker's number, a gamme number in error (they are nearly always shorter than the adjacent serial) or an agent's number.

His dating charts used points he called 'fixes'. They were determined from sources published in a manufacturer's sale catalogue, a bill of sale or something found written on a tune sheet. He sought the latest date that a tune had its premier, knowing that the movement was made after that date in order to predict a date line. When plotted on a graph the scatter of 'fixes' indicating a possible manufacturing trend. Only one or two firm fixes are required to predict a line past all the fixes. He anticipated a start-up rate of production followed by a uniform rate before tailing off to the date the production ceased. Changes in the life of the business by way of take-over or succession often caused one series to be terminated and replaced with a new one. Thus, some surviving movements can have the same serial number but at entirely different dates of manufacture.

Bulleid was cautious about using tune sheet patterns as a method of dating or ownership. However, patterns change with time and can indicate 'time zones' when coupled with other factors. This helps to make the right choice of tune sheet pattern when replacing a missing tune sheet. He used the symbol \* to indicate a tune sheet made by others. Sometimes he cross referenced to another tune sheet but not always. For example, he gave no examples of one pattern of Cuendet tune sheets said to be used by others. It does not mean that he was

wrong but more likely to mean that he was unable to obtain a photograph that was fit to publish.

Makers needed to sell their goods to an ever-changing, demanding and sometimes depressed market. That there are so many unattributed tune sheets and some general purpose ones implies makers were selling to agents in order to expand their sales. When Bulleid states that a tune sheet is a general purpose one, it is reliable. When he states it as 'used by others' this seems to be limited to a select few, such as an associated agent or maker. For Cuendet, there is positive evidence for this, particularly for Charles Ullmann.



Fig. 1A

Ullmann, thought to be a German speaking Swiss, lived in Paris with his brother Jaques. He set up business in 1881 as musical instrument dealers at Faubourg Poissonière 11 as successors to Ch. Mathieu. Ullmann was involved with John Manger (J. M. & Co.) in patenting a small interchangeable musical box in 1886 called the *Multiphone*. They introduced the *Qualite Excelsior* brand name with their trademark of a Griffin holding a shield inscribed ChU. Figs.1A, 1B & 1C are examples of his trademark logos.

In February 1884 Ullmann made contacts with others such as H. Thorens and François Jaccard of l'Auberson and Jaccard transferred his business to him. Ullmann did not exhibit except for the 1900 Paris Universal Exhibition. Known as Charles et Jaques Ullmann, they advertised musical boxes as made in 'Auberson près Ste.-Croix (Suisse)'. The firm existed from 1882 to



Fig. 1B

about 1904. Charles Ullmann took over another Cuendet enterprise, Philippe Cuendet of l'Auberson until its demise in 1911. Whether or not Philippe and Jules Cuendet of nearby Saint Croix co-operated is not known but the family name and proximity suggests the possibility.



Fig. 1C

Cuendet used different tune sheet patterns, some also used by others. Bulleid named them 'line of birds' (Fig. 2), 'terrace at right' (Fig. 3), '4-post columns' (Fig. 4), one abbreviated to 'lake steamer' (Figs. 5A & 5B), 'lyres & stars' (Fig. 6). Another example has 'borders of child musicians' (Fig. 7).

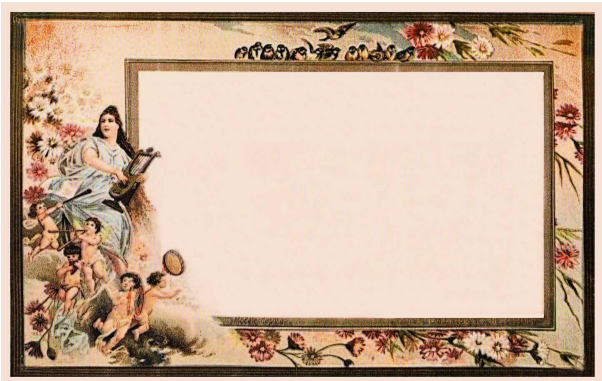


Fig. 2 - Line of Birds Tune Sheet. They are seen just above the rectangular listing panel.

Notes: Tune sheet 4A was modified and used by agent John Manger & Co, see 4B. The Lake & steamer pattern, 5A, showing a view of Saint Croix, was modified by Alpsteg to show his works at Niederhallwyl in the German speaking part of Switzerland, 5B

The 'lyres and stars' pattern is also associated with Paillard-Vaucher et fils and will be the subject of another article on the Paillards together with a proposed dating chart for the smaller branch of the two Paillard families, namely Paillard-Vaucher et fils and the London agency PVF.

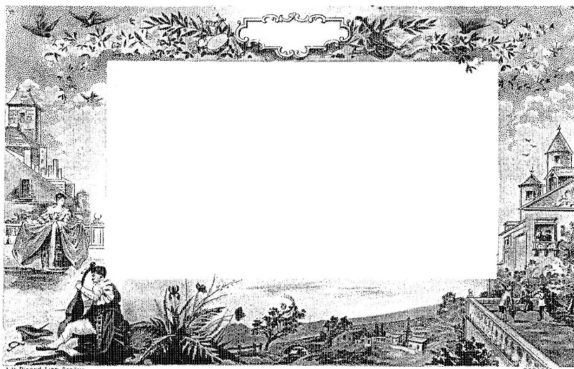


Fig. 3 - 'Terrace at Right' tune sheet

The following lists the different patterns. Some have been selected to establish 'fixes' denoted as points 1 to 12 on the proposed dating chart, Fig. 8.

**Fig. 2, Line of birds.**

No. 443, serial number 219 (point 1), latest tune 1872, actual date unknown.

No. 30, serial 6549 (point 6) about 1895. The movement was stamped Ullmann. Pattern was also as used by Alfred Junod. The serial number could be for either of them but no serial numbers are known for Alfred Junod.

No. 220, serial 15633, (point 3), latest tune 1885.

No. 346, serial 94967, circa 1895. A 1930s copy on a Mermod movement. Not used..

No. 454, serial 12603, date unknown. Not used.

**Fig. 3, Terrace at right:**

No. 272, serial 4348, (point 5), 1891. A firm fix.

No. 6, serial 33085, (point 4), about 1892.

No. 425, serial 13377, (point 9) about 1895.



Fig. 4A - 'Four-post Columns' tune sheet

**Figs. 4A & 4B, 4-post columns:**

No. 343, serial unknown, about 1870. Not used.

No. 302, serial 17101, (point 10), about 1895.

No. 31, serial 655, (point 2), no known date. Used by agent J. M & Co. but not his serial no. Plotted as if for Cuendet.

**Figs. 5A & 5B, Lake steamer (in landscape of lakes & mountains):**

No.489, serial7910, (point 7), post 1890.

No. 75, serial 10767, (point 8), about 1894. Used by Alpsteg.

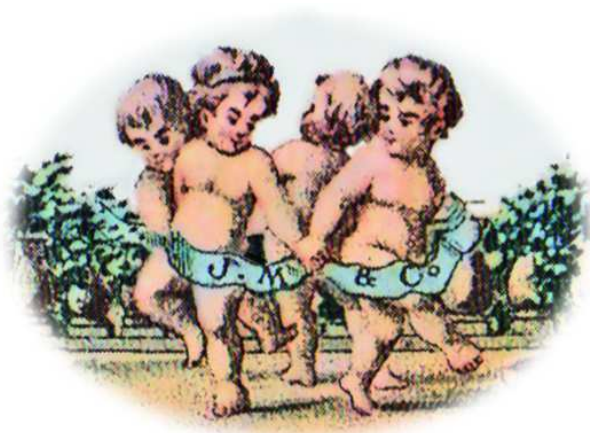


Fig. 4B - different cherubs at bottom centre, otherwise similar to Fig. 4A. As used by John Manger & Co.

No. 78, serial 21258, (point 11), about 1898.

**Fig. 6, Lyres & stars:**

No 263, serial 44539, (point 12), about 1894.

**Fig. 7, Borders of child musicians.**

No. 125, serial 316, mid 1880s estimate.



Fig. 5A - 'Lake Steamer' style

No. 149, unknown serial number, about 1896. Shown at the 1896 Geneva Exhibition.

Both not used but both could be for the second date line.

**Analysis:** The proposed Cuendet dating chart is Fig. 8. The lowest serial number appears to be 219. The highest one for serial 47648 is for a 'lyres & star' pattern common to Paillard and therefore possibly not Cuendet.

The date range, about 1872 to at least 1898, fits well with trading dates for the Cuendet clan. Serial numbers appear to fall into two groups,



Fig. 5B - Different factory at bottom centre, otherwise similar to Fig. 5A.

which confirms Bulleid's suspicion that Cuendet had two sets of serial numbers.

**Conclusion.** There is so much more to be learned about makers such as Cuendet. Who-

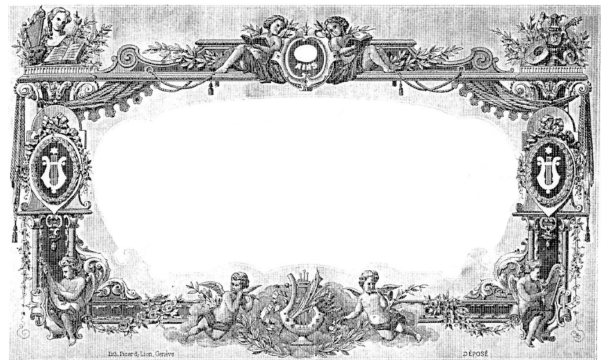


Fig. 6 - 'Lyres & Stars'

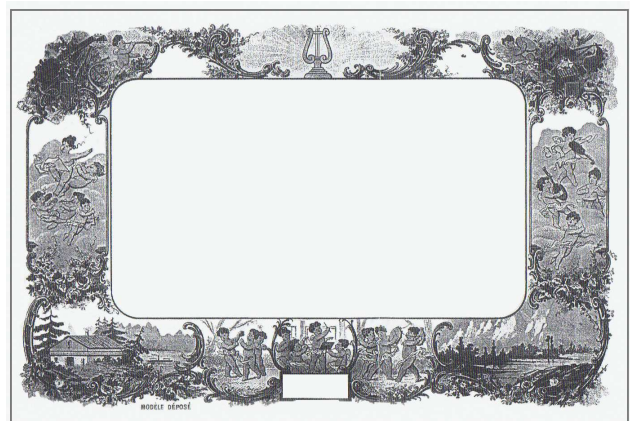


Fig. 7 - 'Child Musicians'

ever has surviving musical boxes can now use this proposed Dating Chart as a basis of comparison and possible correction. It was the way HAV Bulleid tried to establish the basis of his dating charts, which not only have proved to be fairly accurate for all practical purposes but were also subject to constant revision.

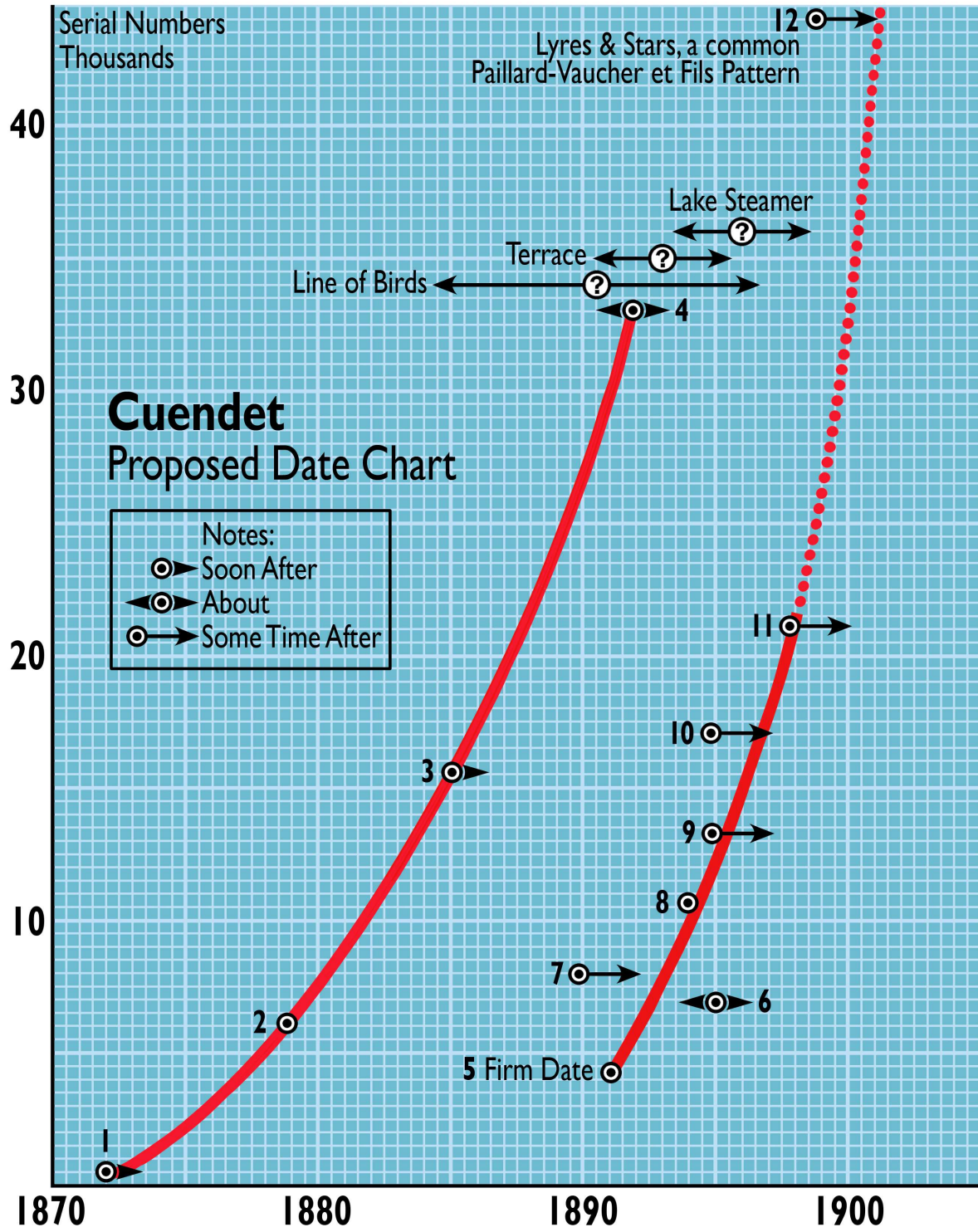


Fig. 8 - New Cuendet Dating Chart

## The Harp That Once...

by David Evans

*The harp that once through Tara's halls  
the soul of music shed  
now hangs as mute on Tara's walls  
as if the soul were fled.  
So sleeps the pride of former days so glory's thrill is  
o'er  
and hearts that once beat high for praise  
now feel that pulse no more.<sup>1</sup>*

The harp is probably the world's oldest musical instrument, having been around for many centuries. Over this time it has grown from a basic wood frame with gut strings stretched across it to the magnificent modern concert harps of today, with key-shifting pedals, dampers etc. Many of the top orchestras include a harpist among their musicians. The very earliest instruments were small and portable. Being light and easy to carry, they could be taken on travels, to work or virtually anywhere a person could go.



Picture 1 - Ward-Stilson musical box harp



*The Kinnor of King David at the entrance to Jerusalem.*

Playing of musical instruments by hand has been declining as a calling or occupation during the progress of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, except, of course, for the ubiquitous electric guitar. Harps, as well as many other instruments, have been hanging mute on walls besides Tara's. In the first few decades of that century, all sorts of instruments were being invented and adapted to play themselves in various different ways, as we all know. About the only successful self-playing harp was that invented by J W Whitlock of Rising Sun, Indiana. He first patented it in September 1899 and it was marketed by the Wurlitzer Company from 1905 until 1910, during which 1500 coin-operated harps had been made and sold, many of them to speak-easy type establishments. Apart from a few modern attempts ranging from the weird to the impractical (look on Youtube.com), no further self-playing harps have been produced, though some very good replicas of the Wurlitzer harp were constructed in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century..

Another kind of self-playing harp appeared in the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century – one with a musical box movement built in (Picture 1). These were marketed by, amongst others, the Ward-Stilson Company of New

London, Ohio, and after 1913, of Anderson, Indiana, and by the Henderson-Ames Company of Kalamazoo, Michigan, whose 1910 catalogue lists several variations on the theme. The clients for these instruments were generally lodges of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows (I.O.O.F.), who used them in their First Degree of Friendship ritual. They were produced in several different forms.

### **The Independent Order of Odd Fellows**

The Independent Order of Odd Fellows (I.O.O.F.) was founded either in 1819 or 1843 as a fraternal order in North America. Insurance was added later. The I.O.O.F. publishes the International Odd Fellow, monthly, and boasted 462,780 members in 1994.

The I.O.O.F. had its roots in Washington Lodge No. 1, organized on April 26, 1819, by an expatriate Englishman named Thomas Wildey and a few fellow Odd Fellows. Other lodges were founded in Boston in 1820 and Philadelphia in 1821. The Grand Lodge of Odd Fellows of the United States was organized in 1825 under the auspices of the Manchester Unity, though other Odd Fellows organizations also supplied members to the new order. This lodge, now the Sovereign Grand Lodge, oversees Canadian as well as American Grand Lodges.

The reasons for the split from the English parent(s) are by no means clear. It is possible that it was provoked by the 1843 chartering of a black lodge, the Grand United Order of Odd Fellows, under the jurisdiction of the old United or Union Order of Odd Fellows in England. Whatever the reason, the split came in 1843, and the I.O.O.F. became the American Branch of Odd Fellowship. As in England, it attracted many of the artisan class; in California's gold country, for example, I.O.O.F. halls still stand as testimony to their attractions for miners who did not want to spend all their money in the saloons. By the time of Wildey's death in 1861, there were over 200,000 members of the I.O.O.F. and during the Civil War the seats of secessionist members were kept vacant, and their dues were remitted.

The peak membership was probably in 1915, when there were 3,400,000 members; the Great Depression halved that number, and by the late 1970s membership had fallen below the quarter-million mark. Astonishingly, this figure had nearly doubled again by 1994, though this number may reflect the inclusion of auxiliaries.

The lodges work four basic degrees (the number of degrees was stabilized in 1880), but there are three additional degrees in the Encampment Lodge, which maintains a pseudo-militarily uniformed marching society called the Patriarchs Militant. There is also one honorary degree.<sup>2</sup>

*From Henderson-Ames Catalogue 1910, specifically for the I.O.O.F.*

### **NET CATALOGUE NUMBER FIVE**

Degree Staff Costumes, Regalia, Paraphernalia, Books, Blanks and Supplies For Odd Fellow Lodges – the term Net referring to the pricing, meaning what you see is what you pay, including taxes etc. – where illustrations are mentioned, please refer to Picture 2.

#### **HARPS FOR DAVID**

No. 697 The above harp is made plain with plain wire strings fastened on steel pegs so that they can be kept tight by a key. It answers the purpose very nicely, as the strings produce harmonious sounds when picked (sic), although not intended to play upon \$3.00

No. 698 The same style harp as shown above but has the self-playing attachment.

It is not elaborately ornamented but is finished plainly, plain strings and steel pegs \$5.00

No. 699 Harp same as No. 698 but elaborately ornamented the same as No. 700 \$5.75

No. 700 A very nice ornamented mahogany finish authentic David harp. It is 25 ¼ x 11 ½ inches with six real strings, F. E. D. C. A. G., with screw head, on which chords are easily picked and airs played with practice. \$5 00

No. 701 The self-player harp is the same as the above but has the self playing attachment which plays a tune by simply touching a lever. It can also be played by hand. \$7.00

No. 702 The above Egyptian style harp is made of three ply wood, finished mahogany color and neatly decorated. It is 30 x 15 inches in size. It is supplied with steel strings for appearance only, as the music comes from a mechanical arrangement which plays appropriate tunes for two or three minutes without rewinding. It is operated by simply winding it up as one would a clock \$8.50

No. 703 Harp, illustrated above is 28 x 17 inches, has seven strings as illustrated. Self-player. \$5.00

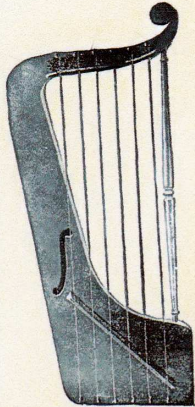
No. 704 Harp, illustrated above, is 28 x 17 inches, has seven strings and is beautifully ornamented, similar to illustration. Self player \$5.75

No. 705 Harp, illustrated above, is 20 x 18 inches, has seven strings, as illustrated

Self player \$5.75

No. 706 Harp, illustrated above, is 28 x 18 inches. It has seven strings, as illustrated and is beautifully ornamented, similar to the illustration. It is a Self Player. \$6.50

HARPS FOR DAVID

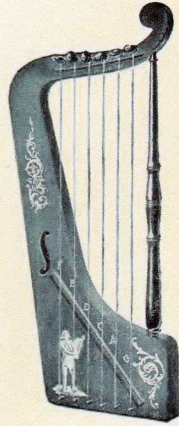


No. 697

697 The above harp is made plain with plain wire strings fastened on steel pegs that can be kept tight by a key. It answers the purpose very nicely, as the strings produce harmonious sounds when picked, although not intended to play upon.....\$3 00

698 The same style harp as shown above but has the self playing attachment. It is not elaborately ornamented but is finished plainly, plain strings and steel pegs.....\$5 00

699 Harp same as No. 698 but elaborately ornamented the same as No. 700..... 5 75



No. 700

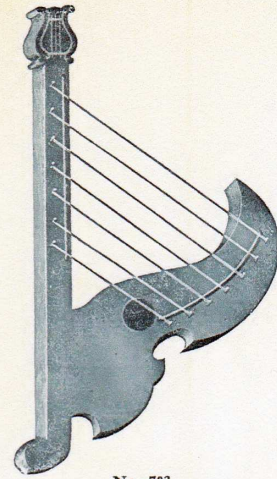
700 A very nice ornamented mahogany finish authentic David harp. It is 25½ x 11½ inches with six real strings, F. E. D. C. A. G., with screw head, on which chords are easily picked and airs played with practice.....\$5 00

701 The self-player harp is the same as the above but has the self playing attachment which plays a tune by simply touching a lever. It can also be played by hand..... 7 00



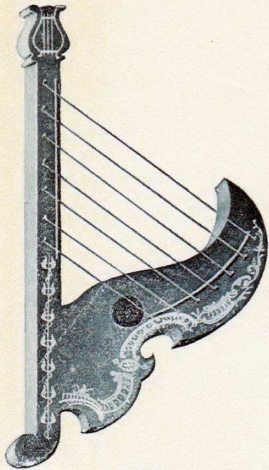
No. 702

702 The above Egyptian style harp is made of three ply wood, finished mahogany color and neatly decorated. It is 30 x 15 inches in size. It is supplied with steel strings for appearance only, as the music comes from a mechanical arrangement which plays appropriate tunes for two or three minutes without rewinding. It is operated by simply winding it up as one would a clock.....\$8 50



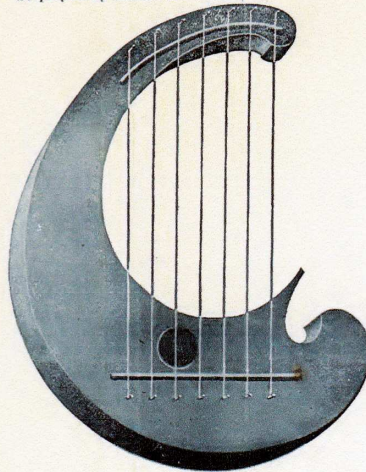
No. 703

703 Harp, illustrated above is 28 x 17 inches, has seven strings as illustrated. Self player....\$5 00



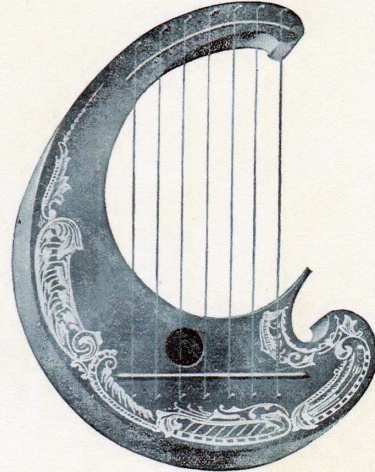
No. 704

704 Harp, illustrated above, is 28 x 17 inches, has seven strings and is beautifully ornamented, similar to illustration. Self player.....\$5 75



No. 705

705 Harp, illustrated above, is 26 x 18 inches, has seven strings, as illustrated. Self player.....\$5 75



No. 706

706 Harp, illustrated above, is 28 x 18 inches. It has seven strings, as illustrated and is beautifully ornamented, similar to the illustration. It is a Self Player.\$6 50



No. 707

JESSE'S HORN

707 Jesse's Horn—Fine polish horn with nickel plated mouth piece; clear tone.....\$1 75

THESE PRICES ARE NET

Picture 2



Picture 3 - A classical Egyptian style harp

The catalogue also includes Hoodwinks, Masks with Mustaches, Warden's masks with wigs and beards, bald wigs, three links for front of the building, from 12" to 40" length, Sxxxxs, genuine, full length, select, wired and deodorized \$45.00 (only members are allowed to know what this is, but they are made of papier maché!), chains, handcuffs, dirks for robbers, wrist and ankle shackles, bows and arrows, Conductors' and Supporters' Wands, Warden's axes, red fire cones etc. I.O.O.F. was an offshoot of the Freemasons organisation.

The styles of the various I.O.O.F. harps seem to depend upon the maker/agent. The Henderson-Ames Company supplied models based on the Egyptian concept (see Pictures 2, 3 and 4) whilst the Ward-Stilson Company supplied the more traditional Biblical varieties (Pictures 1 & 5). Where movements have been identified, they have mostly been by Mermod Frères, of various sizes ranging from the two-per-turn 28-note one (Picture 6, which bears the star mark of Mermod on its comb) in the Kinnor of King David-style example in Picture 1 to the six-air cartel-size movement seen in Picture 8. Some movements have no obvious identification, such as Pictures 9 and 10, with a letter R on the top of the comb and very sturdy stop-work.

The Ward Stilson Co. had its beginnings in New London, Ohio, in 1888, when C. E. Ward and his brother-in-law, E. R. Stilson, bought a company, which made lodge rosettes, from four men for less than \$200 (Picture 11).

The business received an unexpected boost shortly after when the company received an order for 600 bullion collars from the Odd Fellows Lodge. The men accepted the order, undaunted by the fact that no one in their company knew how to make them or run a sewing



Picture 4 - A Henderson-Ames musical harp Style 706

machine.

They quickly hired a man to train two of their female employees in the sewing involved and the order was filled. The company added caps, robes, swords, lodge aprons and other lodge paraphernalia for the Masons, the Odd Fellows, the Knights of Pythias, the Red Men and numerous other fraternal organizations.

In 1905, buoyed by a large order from the Masonic Lodge, E. R. Stilson bought his half of the business from C. E. Ward and set out on his own, with his son Ward Stilson as partner. The company moved to Anderson, Indiana, in 1913 and set up operations in a three-story building at Seventh and Meridian, which it soon outgrew.

They moved to a second three-story building at Ninth and Central, which was destroyed by fire in 1927.

Something about Anderson must have made Stilson officials happy because they resisted several offers by other cities and purchased the former Hayes Wheel factory at Third and Sycamore, which they modernized extensively (Picture 12).

#### **The I.O.O.F. Rituals**

The following is from one of the I.O.O.F. Degree rituals. For more details please see Endnote 2.

### **First Degree, the Degree of Friendship**

#### **PART II<sup>2</sup>**

*The following Scene is enacted, the parts of King*



Picture 5 - Another Ward-Stilson harp, in the Atari Nevel style.

*Saul, David, Jonathan, Jesse, and the Herald being performed by members present, and the Lodge-room arranged for the purpose.*

*This is witnessed by the Candidate, seated.*

**King (seated):** Jonathan, my son, draw nigh. I would have speech with thee.

*Jonathan advances and stands before the King.*

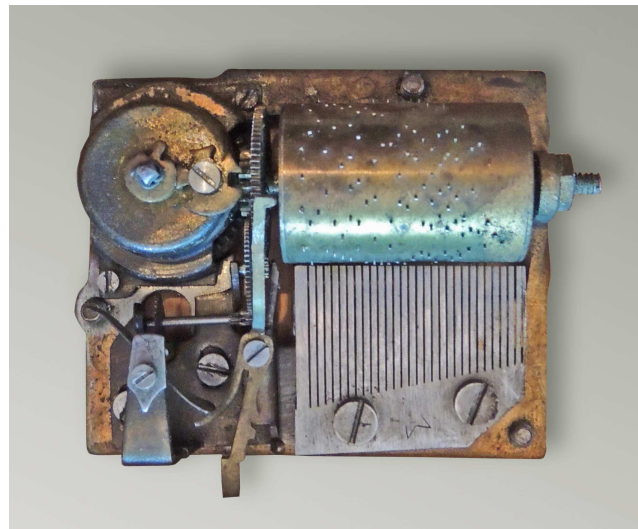
**King:** My son, thy father is sorely troubled. *Pause.* Methinks the days of Saul, the King, are numbered. Evil spirits beset me, and I fear that I am going mad.

**Jonathan:** Father, only yesterday, one of thy guardsmen told me of a shepherd lad of Bethlehem, who plays sweetly upon the harp. His music hath power to cast out evil spirits. I pray thee, send for this lad.

**King:** Of what avail! *Pause.* Yet, if it please thee, I will send for him. What is his name?

**Jonathan:** David, the son of Jesse.

**King (to Herald):** Go thou to Bethlehem; find out



Picture 6 - The two-air movement from Picture 1. Note the star mark of Mermod Frères on its comb.

Jesse, the shepherd, and say unto him: "Thus commands Saul, the King; send me David, thy son, that he may stand before me."

**King (to Jonathan):** Leave me, my son, I would be alone, alone.

*Jesse is summoned by the Herald.*

**Herald:** Peace be with thee and thine. Art thou Jesse, the shepherd?

**Jesse:** Thou hast said it. Peace be with thee.

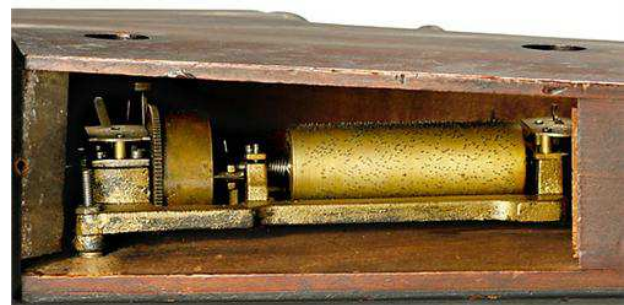
**Herald:** I am from Saul, the King.

**Jesse:** Sit thee down and rest.

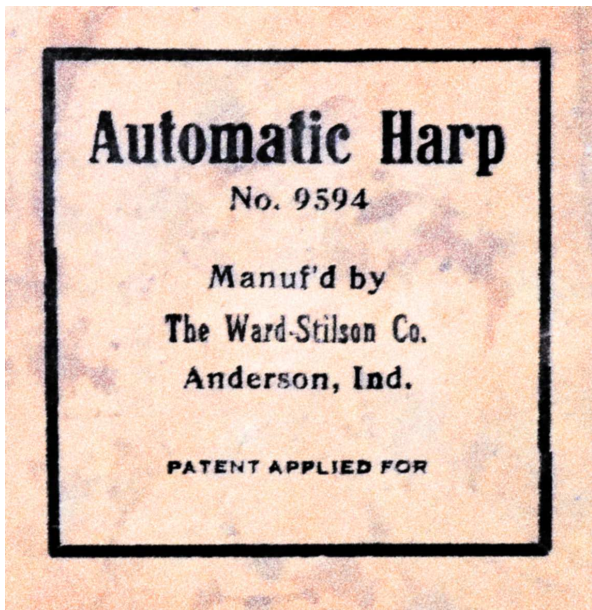
**Herald:** Jesse, thus saith Saul, the King: "Send me David, thy son, that he may stand before me."

**Jesse:** David! My youngest son! Send David to the King! He alone is left to tend the flocks, and comfort me in my old age. His brothers even now are under arms. O gentle stranger, go to Saul, I pray thee, and beg of him to spare me my youngest born.

**Herald:** 'Tis the King's command!



Picture 7 - Mermod 6-air movement from the base of a harp similar to Picture 4.



Picture 8 - The label from the harp in Picture 1.

**Jesse (after pause):** The King's command must be obeyed. **Pause, then, as if speaking to himself but so as to be heard distinctly:** No evil can befall him, since the prophet Samuel has anointed him with holy oil.

**Herald (aside):** Samuel anointed David? Then David is chosen to rule over Israel!

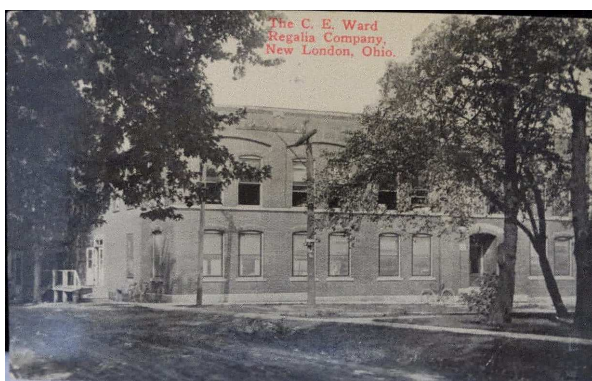
**Jesse comes out of house and blows horn. Music finished, David enters from ante room.**

**David:** Thy blessing, O father. **Kneels for blessing. Jesse lays hands upon his head. David rises.** Peace be with thee, O stranger. **Pause.** Didst thou signal, father?

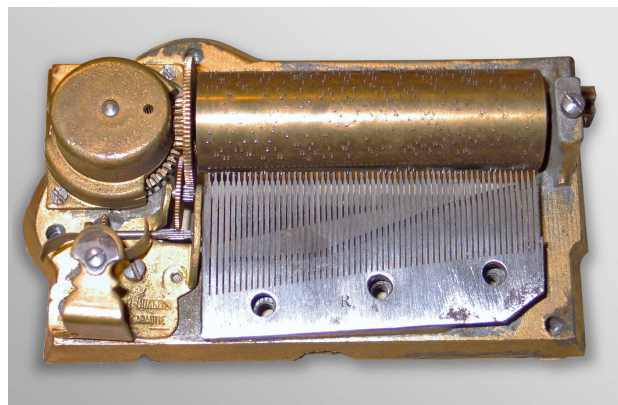
**Jesse:** Aye. David, this stranger bears a message from the King. Saul commands me to send thee to him.

**David:** The King sends for me?

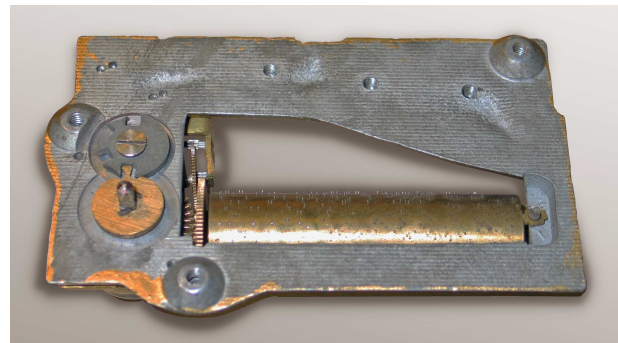
**Herald:** Thou playest upon the harp, I am told.



Picture 11 - The C E Ward (later Ward-Stilson) factory at New London, Ohio



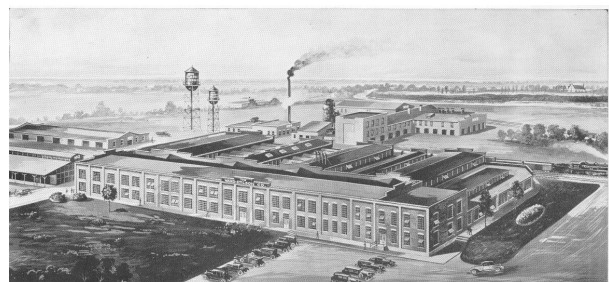
Picture 9 - Unidentified 2-air movement from another Ward-Stilson harp. Note the letter R on its comb. The legend by the governor reads 'Qualité Garantie'.



Picture 10 - The substantial stop-work on the movement in Picture 9.

**David:** For mine own amusement.

**Herald:** Thy ability has reached the ears of the King. 'Tis for that thou art summoned.



Picture 12 - The Ward-Stilson Co. factory at Third & Sycamore Streets after 1927.

**David:** But I cannot leave my father alone.

**Herald:** 'Tis the King's command!

**David (after pause):** Be it so! I am ready.

**Jesse:** Fare thee well, my son; fare thee well. Seek out thy brothers in the army and give to them their father's blessing **David kneels. Jesse blessing him.** The peace of God be with thee alway.

**Herald:** The peace of God rest on this house and all that dwell therein.

*The Herald and David return and are met by Jonathan.*

*Jonathan (to David):* Who art thou?

*David:* David, son of Jesse.

*Jonathan:* Aye, the shepherd lad. I am Prince Jonathan. *David begins to kneel.* Nay, kneel not to me. David, my father, the King, is sorely troubled with an evil spirit and thy music may soothe him.

*David:* But I am not clothed to appear before the King.

*Jonathan:* I would not have thee different than thou art. Come, be not afraid.

*Jonathan presents David to the King.*

*King:* Lad, who art thou?

*David:* David, son of Jesse. Upon the hills of Bethlehem, I tend my father's flock

*King:* Come hither, lad. Thou hast found favor in mine eyes. Sit thou here at my feet.



*Above:*

*Atari Nevel in European Cherry wood.*

*Left:*

*Classic Kinnor of King David in mahogany.*

*Both from Harrari Harps.*

*David seats himself on dais at foot, and at one side of King. David plays a few chords on harp, then kneels and speaks to King.*

*King (to David):* I would have thee with me alway.

*David:* O King, one favor I crave of thee that I may visit my brothers who serve thee on the field.

*King:* Go then, but soon return.

The ritual continues with the slaying of Goliath etc. (see web site at Endnote 2).

For our purposes, suffice it to add that versions of the harp with a musical box movement were recommended to Lodges who had no members with a musical talent.

### **History of the harp.**

“Upon the green meadows of Israel long ago, peaceful shepherds sung their songs and played their harps...

The mystical sounds of the harp had been heard from time immemorial. Yuval, one of the great-grandchildren of Adam and Eve, “was the ancestor of all who play kinnor and ugav” (Genesis 4:20-21).

Generations later, a young shepherd named David was inspired by the harp's peaceful and healing sounds. Wherever David went, he would take his harp with him, and wherever he slept at night, he would hang it on a tree branch above him.

In the middle of the night, as the wind changed direction, it would blow across the strings, and the harp would begin to be played by the wind. David would awaken with inspiration to these mystical sounds, pick up his harp, and sing his deepest feelings to God.

Many beautiful melodies were played throughout the land, but the most beautiful of all were the psalms of David. It is known that he composed all of the music for the Psalms upon the Nevel and the Kinnor (both pictured below). Alone in the fields, the future King David would play his harp while tending his flock. As the music flowed from his soul, heaven and earth were joined and new songs would be created. These songs were so powerful that they were famous throughout the kingdom<sup>3</sup>.

Some beautiful Biblical harps are made today by Micah and Shoshanna Harrari of Harrari Harps in Jerusalem.<sup>4</sup> To see them being played, go to Harrari Harps web site (see Endnote 4) and search for them on Youtube.com.

We are most grateful to Shoshanna Harrari for permission to use illustrations and text from their web site.

#### Endnotes:

1. Old Irish song with words by Thomas Moore.
2. For more information on I.O.O.F. and their rituals go to:

[http://www.stichtingargus.nl/vrijmetselarij/ioof\\_en.html](http://www.stichtingargus.nl/vrijmetselarij/ioof_en.html)

3. From Harrari Harps web site.
4. House of Harrari, Moshav Ramat Raziel 52, D.N. North Yehuda 90974, Israel.  
Tel: +(972)-2-570-9075.

E: [harrariharps@gmail.com](mailto:harrariharps@gmail.com).

<https://www.harrariharps.com/kinnor-david>



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To encourage research and publication of articles and books on the subject.

To reach out to the public and foster a wider interest in mechanical music.

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Contact P. Bellamy or Ted Brown for P&P details: bellamypaul@btinternet.com or 01403823533.

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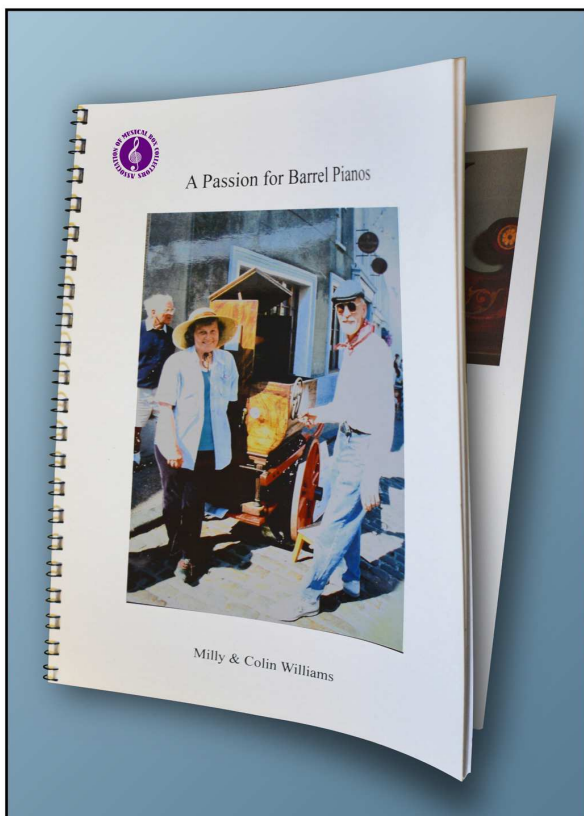
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