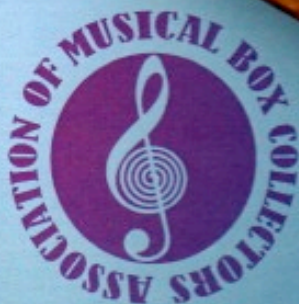


Issue 24, Spring 2021

MECHANICAL MUSIC WORLD



An exquisite
Overture Box
with 272 teeth by
Lecoultre & Falconnet



An Association of Musical Box Collectors Publication

From the Editors' Desk

'Normal service will be resumed as soon as possible' was the message on the screen of BBC TV receivers after some transmission problem many decades ago. Well, we are still awaiting normality to resume after the pandemic, but we are not holding our collective breath. In the mean time...

This issue begins with a description of a fine organocléide box and continues with an analysis of bell box production in Switzerland. Paul Bellamy continues to expand upon tune sheets and HAV Bulleid's research together with additional information which is coming to light. Juliet Fynes has detailed a delightful 'Industrial' novelty clock whilst Chris Fynes has provided a beautifully illustrated and well-researched article on one of their small tin-cased boxes.

Overture boxes always command attention and Chris Fynes has collaborated with Alan Godier to describe in great detail the restoration of a particularly fine and rare example of the genre. A most interesting technical exposition.

Street Clocks in England incorporating automata is another of David Soulsby's fascinating insights into the world of automata on the grand scale on this occasion. These clocks give pleasure to all who see them. Hopefully David will be able to

visit the clocks in Exeter and Wells when Covid restrictions permit.

We thank all of our contributors to this edition of Mechanical Music World - you make this publication possible!

In response to our suggestion that you might use your lock-down time to produce an article of your own for inclusion in a forthcoming edition, we received an email from a member asking if we have ever produced guide lines for potential authors. Well, no, we have not, but here are a few thoughts on the subject:

It should be of interest to collectors, restorers of, and dealers etc in, mechanical music or allied instruments, machines, music etc. We try to include a wide variety of subject matter, as our readers have a wide range of interests.

The length is not important - small snippets are as useful sometimes as more lengthy contributions.

Illustrations are a good, but not essential, addition and could save a thousand or so words!

Finally, we are here to help with it - if you are unsure about any aspect of your contribution just contact us or any member of the committee.

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Chairman's Report

For us in the United Kingdom our thoughts and condolences go to the Queen on the loss of her husband, Prince Phillip. He would have been one hundred years old on June 10th, so just missed receiving a telegram from his wife. (In Britain one of the highlights of being one hundred years old is receiving a telegram of congratulations from the Queen.)

We are all trying to think positively about the Covid pandemic. Some of us may have lost close friends or relatives but things should improve now that we have a selection of vaccines.

Thank you all for paying your subscriptions on time this year and covering the small extra for postage. We do try to minimize costs wherever possible to give you value for your money. I would like to thank all those who made a donation to build up our reserve fund. This extra money goes towards additional publications, many of which, in the interest of mechanical music, are now available throughout the world.

We hope to have an auction in late September or early October, subject of course to Government Covid restrictions current at the time. Details will be in the next journal.



Officers of the AMBC

Chairman Ted Brown
01403 823533

Deputy Chairman & Treasurer Paul Bellamy
01634 252079
Email: bellamypaul@btinternet.com

Committee Secretary, Events Secretary & Web site
Juliet Fynes

Design & Photography Chris Fynes

Secretary/Subscriptions Kay Brown
01403 823533

Research & Publications Committee:
Don Busby
Paul Bellamy
Ted Brown

Editors David & Lesley Evans
001 250 746 5652
mechmusicmuseum@aol.com
4920 Bench Road, Cowichan
Bay BC, V0R 1N1 Canada

AMBC website: www.ambc.org.uk
Email: info@ambc.org.uk
Feel free to contact any of us.

Publication Dates for "Mechanical Music World"

Winter issue 28th January; Spring issue 28th April; Summer issue 28th July; Autumn issue 28th 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.

AMBC MEETINGS

Cancelled until further notice

Having had to cancel all our meetings for the past year, we have been very much hoping that we will be able to get together again this year. With the roll out of vaccinations and falling infection numbers we are cautiously optimistic about holding our usual early Christmas celebration in November. All being well we shall notify the date in the next edition.

CORRECTION

Apologies for publishing an incorrect email address for PayPal payments. The correct email is:

ambcmembership@gmail.com

Treasurer's Report

Despite the pandemic preventing last year's (and possibly this year's) AGM, we have managed to increase our membership. Subscriptions only pay for printing and posting the Journal plus the monthly costs of maintaining our website. We thank our advertising members as well; they get coverage in the journals and mention on our website for a modest cost and their contributions as restorers and selling agents fulfil a vital function in providing expert services, advice and the opportunity to enable these antique musical machines to be restored and made available to another generation. Whilst we cannot endorse any particular restorer and cannot be held responsible for their work, we do ask members to support our advertisers where possible.

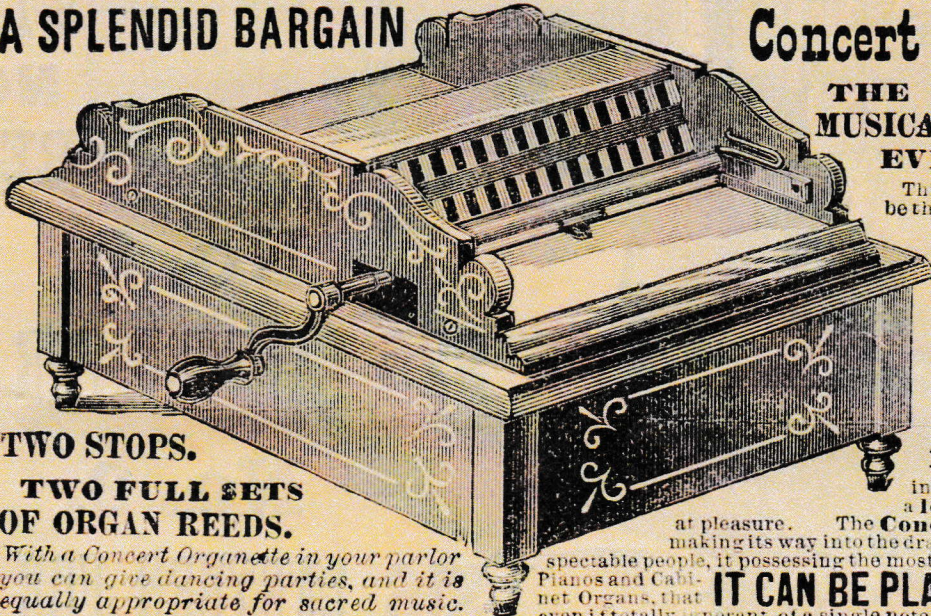
The closing balance for the year March 1st 2020 to end of February 2021 provides enough funds for the anticipated cost and P&P of the journal, the website plus a sufficient reserve to produce a limited edition of our next major work entitled The Cylinder Musical Box, Tune Sheet, Makers, Agents and Dates.

The formalities of an AGM have to comply with the terms of our constitution as lodged with our bank. Thus, as an unincorporated society registered as a Community Account the account signatories cannot be changed by the bank unless endorsed by the membership at an AGM or EGM. Thus Ted Brown, Juliet Fynes and myself will continue in that role until further notice.

Also, members attending the AGM can see a printout of the closing February statement of the society account. This enables members to see whether or not the society is cash viable for the coming year. The committee have just approved the accounts for March 2020 to February 2021 and we are viable for all anticipated expenditure for the year March 2021 to 2022. When the pandemic eases I intend to comply with the above formalities at the first meeting opportunity.

Paul Bellamy

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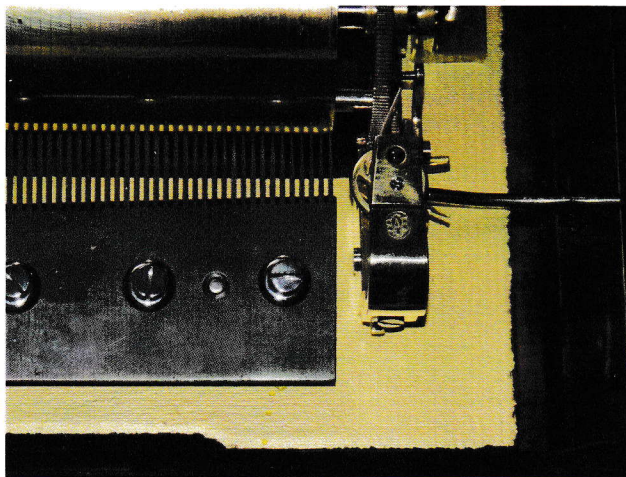
Brémond "Mandoline Orgue Extra" No. 15261

by David Evans

Baptiste-Antoine Brémond was born in Geneva in 1834. In 1858 he joined Théodore Greiner, an established maker of musical boxes, and perhaps provided some marketing experience, as Brémond was described as a merchant at that time. The firm was called Greiner & Brémond and was located at rue Sismondi in 1861. The partnership lasted for five years, after which Brémond continued on his own until about 1902. More information about Brémond can be found in the AMBC book 'The Music Makers of Switzerland' by Paul Bellamy.

Surviving boxes by the firm seem to indicate that they aimed at the quality end of the market, the example shown here being no exception. The case is beautifully finished in burr walnut, the domed lid decorated with double kingwood banding with boxwood stringing either side (Picture 1), the front and ends similarly decorated, the canted corners also inlaid with similar banding. The back of the case is veneered with book-matched rosewood. The whole stands on a moulded ebonised plinth with four shallow block feet. The ebonised inner lid is also inlaid with kingwood and boxwood banding. This lid seems to have never had a leather lifting tab – the small shaped block at the front centre appears to be original. The case measures 34 1/2" over the feet x 14 1/4". The dating chart suggests circa 1875.

Other Brémond features mentioned in Bellamy's book include a small vertical wood block just in front of the winding lever, the BAB monogram on the cock and the serial number 15261 in ink on the bottom of the case.

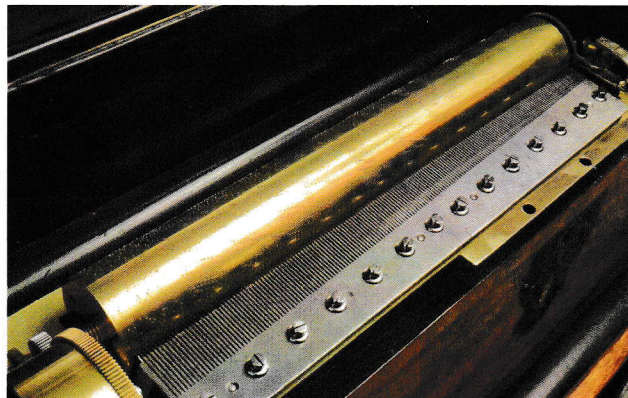


Picture 2: The governor cock with BAB monogram



Picture 1: The fine quality case of No. 15261

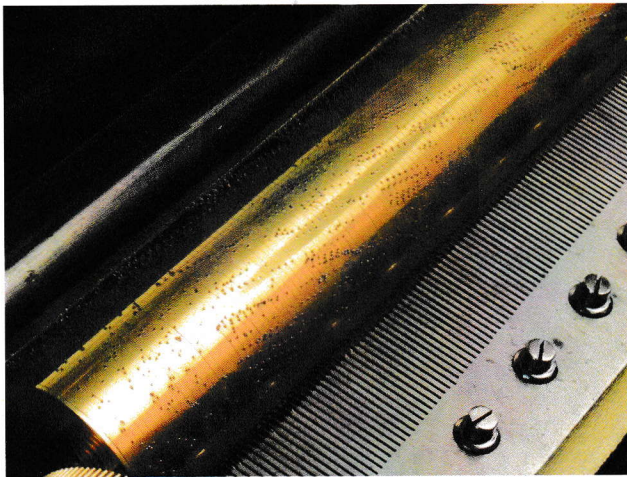
This example has a winding lever with a conventional turned brass knob, the serial number being stamped on the side of the lever. The tune sheet (Pictures 5 & 6) is as TSB 352 in the Tune Sheet Book. The comb is divided (for convenience – there is no overlap) and has a total of 186 teeth, each comb having 93 teeth. The mandolin effect is continued down into the bass region, the comb having teeth in multiples of 7, 8 and in one case 9 teeth tuned to the same pitch. The cylinder measures 19 1/2" x 2 3/4" diameter.



Picture 3: Cylinder and combs

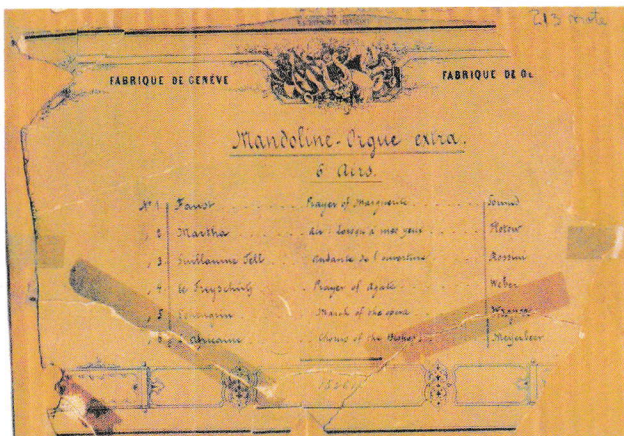
The term 'Mandoline-Orgue extra' refers to the instrument's organocléide arrangement. Ord-Hume (Musical Box – 1980) describes the organocléide: 'Whereas the mandoline type of movement has repeated notes in the treble which allows the equivalent of a sustained note to be reproduced, the organocléide has this feature throughout the length of the comb, with particular emphasis being placed on the bass notes. The effect of these rapidly repeated bass notes is to give the impression of a long, low note rather like a pedal note on a pipe organ. The overall

tonal scale of the organocléide is quite different from that of a normal musical box in that it is pitched a whole octave lower and plays a programme of music best suited to its basso profundo'.



Picture 4: Showing the mandoline effect pinning in the bass

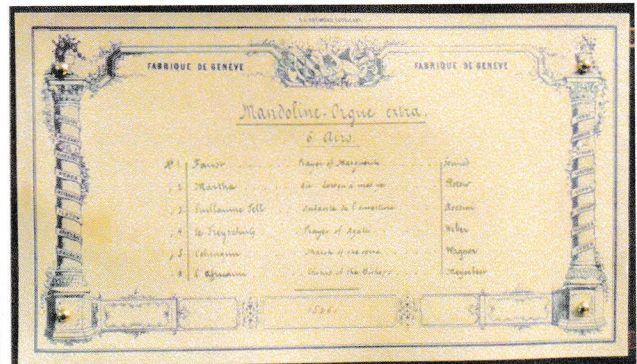
The original tune sheet (Picture 5) is badly damaged. Rather than replace it with an obviously modern one I was fortunate enough to acquire a blank replica sheet in the original colours and size from Ted Brown. I scanned the central part of the original sheet into the computer and digitally 're-stored' it, leaving the background as transparent. I then printed it on to the replica sheet, the result being as Picture 6, which I hope you will agree looks reasonable.



Picture 5: All that remains of the original tune sheet

The tune list includes some well-known pieces from composers popular at the time – Gounod, Flotow, Meyerbeer etc.

Right - a Brémond receipt dated 1869 for a musical photo album and a musical yellow leather work box.

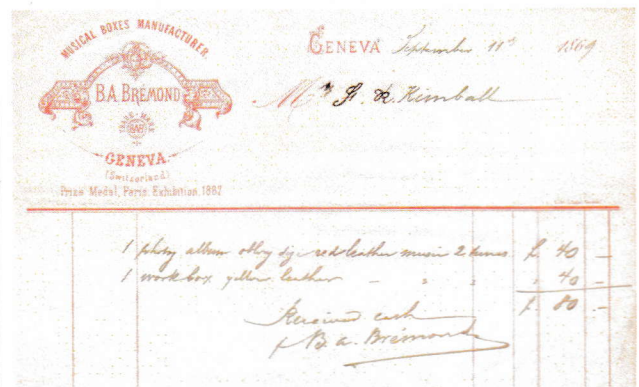
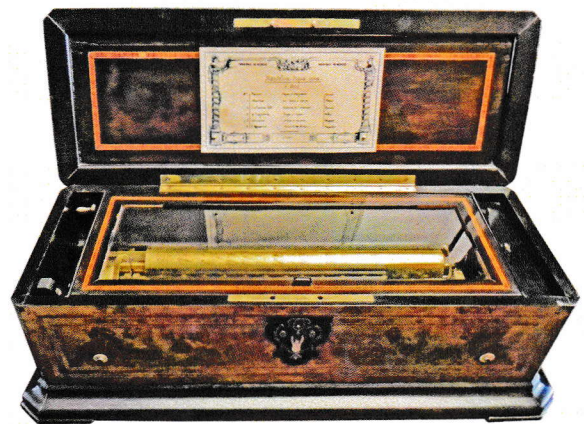


Picture 6: The recreated tune sheet

Tune list:

1. Faust – Prayer of Marguerite – Gounod
2. Martha – Air: Lorsqu' á mes yeux – Flotow
3. Guillaume Tell – Andante de l'ouverture – Rossini
4. Le Freyschütz – Prayer of Agate (*Agathe*) – Weber
5. Lohengrin – March of the Opera – Wagner
6. L'Africaine – Chorus of the Bishops – Meyerbeer

Altogether a fine box, playing some good arrangements.



Musical Boxes with Bells

Paul Bellamy

The late Arthur Cunliffe's register of musical boxes, mostly of the cylinder type, called cartels, listed a very large number of those made by Nicole Frères. This is because, of all the known makers, more of these survived than any other maker. The reason is uncertain but probably due to the fact that the 1800s were the days of the Great British Empire with London at its heart and its ability, as a power house of trade, to convey Swiss musical boxes to its Empire. Many Swiss makers had agents in London.

1815 was when Napoleon was beaten and the long-standing conflict between the British and French was brought to an end. Switzerland became free from French restrictions that had inhibited trade, particularly in Geneva. 1815 is the foundation date of at least two makers, one of which was Nicole Frères of Geneva.

Although the USA was also a major market for the Swiss musical box industry, other makers such as Paillard seemed to dominate that market; the products of the Nicoles did not seem to have much impact. The dynamic USA was always in the habit of casting aside the old to replace with the new and that is why there was not much of a surviving legacy of musical boxes. The British and European cultures tended to hang on to the artefacts of the past.

It is reasonable to assume that the pattern of development of Nicole Musical boxes was closely aligned with that of other makers and the market as a whole. In making that assumption it is possible to examine the period when the Nicoles made musical boxes fitted with bells. However, because serial numbers were supplied sequentially irrespective of the type of instrument, it is not possible to estimate how many they made or to estimate the number made by other makers.

The first and only Nicole bell cylinder musical box in the register is a 4-air movement with the addition of a drum, serial 25523, made in 1847. There was nothing to say if the drum was in view or hidden away inside the case but there is little doubt that it was tucked away inside along with the bells. Bulleid described these as hidden bell boxes. The next Nicole to be recorded was in 1854. This was a 6-air movement with the addition of a drum and bells.

Bulleid estimated that the first bell boxes appeared about 1850. It is rare to find an early box with just the addition of bells. He wrote that those with bells in view came about 1860. He preferred hidden bells and explained that even the best of the ones in view rarely competed well with the best of the hidden type. Bells often had two strikers per bell.

Bulleid explained that one aspect of quality between the 'hidden bell' and 'bells in view' type was due to the complexity of linkage on the latter. Hidden bells mostly have direct connection between its comb tooth (un-tuned, of course) that was used as a cantilever spring to actuate the linkage to its bell striker. Thus, when cylinder pins actuate the bell comb, the timing can be very precise, particularly when there is rapid reiteration of a bell for musical effect. Bells in view require at least two links with roller bearings at each end of a transverse pivot rod. The inevitable 'play' in the linkage made the musical timing of the bells to the tuned comb harder to achieve.

That might explain why the hidden bell type stayed in vogue for another ten years in competition with those 'in view'. Brémont, for example, is known to have made, or sold, both types over a period of time. Bulleid quoted two examples, serial 6702, circa 1863, a 'bells in sight' musical box; the other was serial 12584, circa 1873, a hidden drum and bells movement.

Bulleid categorised three groups of musical boxes with just hidden drum and bells.

Group 1: 8 or more bells with 12 to 16 strikers and a drum with 10 to 16 strikers.

Group 2: 3 to 6 bells and 6 strikers and a drum with 8 to ten strikers. He thought both Brémont and L'Épée were the principle makers (possibly the only makers) of this group.

Group 3: Special types, with 3 bells and no drum. He classed these as superior musical quality, many possibly made by Ducommun Girod. There were other 3 bell types with triple strikers and he quoted one by an unknown maker.

He also referred specifically to Rivenc 3-bell musical boxes. One example is a 6-air movement, serial 38398, circa 1892. This late movement had the typical Rivenc rosette-shaped comb-screw washers that were also used to cap the bells. He referred to the oversized case for this short 5.5-inch cylinder because of its large soundboard, stating that it gave effective sound radiation 'down to about c below middle c, 128Hz'.

From about 1862 the next recorded version was with the addition of the castanet. Cylinder musical boxes seemed to continue with one or more of these additions, nearly always with bells, right up to the end of the musical box era. From about the late 1870s Nicole movements appeared with 6-, 8- and 12-air versions. The 12-air types are almost exclusively the two-per-turn variety, one of which had alternate-tip comb teeth. Here, only alternate teeth were tuned on a standard comb. Although the

number of playable teeth was halved the gap between tuned teeth allowed more tunes to be pinned on the cylinder at one tune per turn. The number of tunes could be doubled or tripled if two or three tunes were pinned on each turn. The demand for more tunes seemed to exceed the demand for quality; even so, there are some remarkably good arrangements to be found. The demand for more airs plus the extra percussive additions led to some extraordinary examples. Such was a Nicole 20-air, two-per-turn instrument.

'Bells in view' started to become popular and hence the terms 'in view', 'in sight' or 'exposed' were legitimate statements found in adverts and on tune sheets. Hence 'hidden' is not a reflective term used to describe musical boxes with the accoutrements hidden away inside the case and is never found on tune sheets.

The cases of musical boxes with hidden bells and other musical accoutrements were typically much deeper and wider than instruments without these additions. Most had a fret-wood internal cover, many also had delightful woven silk picture, all adding to the appearance of the instrument when the lid was opened.

There is no doubt that when the bells were mounted in view, often along with the drum and castanets, they added to the visual appearance of the musical box. The 'strikers' range from simple hammers to very elaborate and decorated ornaments such as butterflies, birds, bees, mandarins, etc. However, the advantage of bells and other accoutrements in view was even greater. Bells could be stacked, one above the other or horizontally, one cupped inside the other. They are examples of the musical box becoming a form of automaton, enhancing the visual effect by use of decorative elements.

Up to about the late 1870s, Nicole made 6-, 8- and 12-air movements with just the addition of bells. It is not surprising that this was the case because bells can make a truly musical addition to any musical box whereas the drum and castanet were not always appreciated. Drums and castanets depend upon a series of repeated strikes. Bells, however have one or two strikers and hence are intended to enhance the melodic quality rather than the percussive or rhythmic aspect of the music. There are some bell boxes that have odd and unexplained arrangements in respect of bells and strikers. For example, some boxes may have just one striker per bell. There is a known bell box with a six-toothed bell comb but with seven bells. Although unexplained, it is a reasonable guess that one bell had two strikers connected to the same tooth.

It is very rare to find a bell box without a tuned comb. These were once normal for musical clocks. The clocks had pinned cylinders that played a set of tuned bells via linkages, in the same way that cylinder musical boxes adopted. Of course, the musical repertoire was limited to

the number of bells, rarely exceeding 12.

In 1796 **Antoine Favre-Salomon**, a Geneva clock maker is said to have invented the first cylinder musical box that utilized a metal comb with tuned teeth that was directly plucked by a pinned cylinder instead of tuned bells struck via linkages from the cylinder. Others said he patented the musical box but patents did not exist for nearly another one hundred years. In 1800 **Isaac Daniel Piguet** in Geneva produced repeating musical watches with a pinned horizontal disc operating radial spaced tuned steel teeth, called *sur plateaus*. Neither produced the cartel type of cylinder musical box. It seems fairly certain that both played a part in adapting known technology but neither of them should be claimed as inventors.

The number of bells makes a big difference to the appreciation of the music. With at least six bells, the arranger can emphasise some of the musical passages but they remain a percussive accompaniment. With 9 or more bells, the arranger can actually use them as a musical addition to the air. Thus, with all bell boxes, it is best to listen very carefully as to which category the bells belong. In most cases all the additions could be switched on or off by means of simple levers. However, worse was to come as makers started to reduce the number of bells, which then made little contribution to the music.

Amongst the musical boxes with bells, drums and castanets was the type described as orchestral, which have the addition of a small reed organ. Two Nicole versions were recorded for about 1869 but Nicole and others makers may have made them at an earlier date. One of these was a Nicole 20-air two-per-turn movement and the other an 8-air musical box. The only *Interchangeable* Nicole instrument with drum, bells & castanets is a 6-air movement made in about 1870.

Movements in the 12-air category often had bells, some with a combination of bells, drums and castanets. Certain pieces of music can be enhanced by these additions particularly with marching or military-type airs. Bulleid only once agreed that an arrangement of military origin was actually improved. Modern taste seems to be based on the complexity rather than the musical quality.

The question as to when the first cartel (cylinder) bell boxes were made is uncertain. Other than those recorded in the Cunliffe register the only other clues appear to be the Bulleid tune sheet book and supplements where there are several examples. The following are referred to by their tune sheet number but in date order with the description of the accoutrements as written on the tune sheets:

Tune sheet terms:

Timbres/timb./Glocken = bells.

Tambour/timb. /Tromme = drum.

Castanettes/castanet/castagn^{tes}/Castagnetten = castanets.

Mechanical Music World

Sichtbarre/en vue/in view/visible = in sight.

Jeu de Timbres = set of bells.

*Bulleid and post Bulleid tune sheet numbers. (*see note):*

15: 1855, Lecoultré et Bréchet. Tambour et Timbres for a hidden drum and bell movement, circa 1855. The Lecoultré dating charts suggest Bréchet was in partnership with François-Charles from 1844 to 1854. This seems to be the earliest recorded tune sheet example of a bell box.

34. 1865, L'Épée. 'Tambour et Timbres'.

291. 1865, Brémond. Bells exposed. This is the earliest tune sheet example and indicative of the transition between hidden and exposed bells.

151. 1866, agent J H Heller. 6 bells, 'Jeu de timbres.'

324. Circa 1870, agent J H Heller. 'Jeu de timbres,' hidden bells.

351. 1870, Brémond. Bells exposed (repeated twice).

359. 1870, Perrelet (successor to David Lecoultré). Triangular tune sheet, 11 bells. 'Timbres en vue' noted twice.

72. 1871, Charles Ullmann. 'Tambours, Timbres, Castanettes'.

352, 1871, Brémond. Mandoline-Organocleide, bells exposed.

508. 1871, Samuel Troll, 'bells'.

111. 1874, Paillard-Vaucher. 'Bells Visible'.

271. 1875, Conchon. 'Tamb. Timb.'

127. 1876, Ducommun Girod. '6 bells.'

49. 1877, Baker Troll. 'Bells in sight.'

327. Circa 1878, P.V. F. 'Visible bells'. Note: 6 teeth for 7 bells.

52. 1878, Conchon. '9 Timbres en Vue'.

319. Pre-1880, unattributed. 'Timbres en vue' on a printed tune sheet.

384. 1880, L'Épée. 'et 3 Timbres'. 3 airs per turn.

42. 1880, Paillard-Vaucher. 'Tambour et timbres' on a sublime harmonie movement.

125. Mid-1880s, Jules Cuendet. 'Timbres Visibles'.

288. 1880, possibly Troll. 'Drum, Bells and Castanets'.

390. 1882, unattributed. 'Drum Bells & Castanets'.

198. 1882, L'Épée. 'Timbres Visibles'.

Plate 8. 1883, Arthur Junod. 'Visible Bells'.

11. 1886, Junod. 'Timbres.'

226. 1886, Karrer. 'Sichtbarre Glocken, 1886.'

427. 1887, Paillard. 'SichtbarreTrommel Glocken & Castagnettes.'

511. 1890s, Jaccard Frères. 'Timbres Visibles.'

175. 1890, Grosclaude. 'Drum & Bells.'

263. 1890, Cuendet. 'Bells in sight.' 6 bells.

Plate 13. 1895, B H Abrahams. 'BELLS IN VUE.'

435. 1897, Jaccard du Grand. 'Tambour et Timbres'. 5 bells.

239. 1899, unattributed. 'Bells in View'.

300. 1902, possibly L'Épée or Paillard. 'BELLS IN VIEW'.

362. 1904, L'Épée, 'Tambour, Timbres, Castagnettes, Cithare'.

339. 1893, Possibly Paillard, a rare *Rechange* (interchangeable cylinders) musical box. 'Tambour Timbres Vue'. 6 bells.

341. 1901, B H Abrahams. 'BELLS IN VUE'.

391. About 1901-1905, B H Abrahams. 'BELLS IN VUE'. 3 bells.

413. Date unknown, Gueissaz. 'Drum & Bells'.

Note: *Tune sheets 401 to 453 and their captions were produced by the late HAV Bulleid. Tune sheets 454 and the remainder of the 4th supplement were the work of Timothy Reed in collaboration with Paul Bellamy and the late Arthur Cunliffe.*

Examples of tunes sheets for musical boxes with bells:



Fig. 1 is for a 10-air Brémond musical box with the words: 'Bells Exposed' written twice, clearly intended for the English-speaking market, in this case America. This has been digitally enhanced because of the poor condition of the original. The instrument had a standard 13-inch cylinder, a comb with 68 teeth and the extra bell comb with 6 teeth to actuate 6 bells. Bulleid dated the instrument as 1870 and was convinced that the term 'bells exposed' heralded the 'in view' era. However, he had forgotten tune sheet 291 with the same term dated 1865 as well as his book in which he thought 1860 was the date

they started. It is easy to be critical in hindsight but one must remember that his books and researches spanned a long period of time and that he was always updating his work. Thus we can safely assume the earlier date of 1860 as a point of transition between hidden and exposed bells.



Fig. 2, another enhanced example, reinforces his opinion for another Brémont musical box, dated 1871. The movement was a rare 6-air example with the words 'Mandoline-Organocleide and Bells Exposed' written on the tune sheet. The Organocleide is another form of mandoline instrument where notes are repeated to give the *Mandoline* effect. Here, though, the repeated notes range deep into the bass end and produce the sonorous effect of a bass organ pipe, hence the made-up term 'Organocleide.' Both Bullied examples (tune sheets 351 and 352) were sold by New York agent AM Hayes.



Fig. 3, Bulleid tune sheet 15, is the earliest Bulleid example by maker Lecoultré & Bréchet serial 27740, circa 1855, for a 6-air drum & bells musical box (Tambour et Timbres). Note the gamme number 5817 in the top left cartouche and the initials LB in the top right cartouche for the maker. The central bottom cartouche has the initials BB&C for agent Berens Blumberg & Co. The tune sheet, which is carelessly written, does not show the

serial number and thus it is easy to confuse the gamme number for the serial number. The column on the left is headed 'No.' for the tune sheet numbers; the right hand column is headed 'Auters' for the composers but is not used. The script is mostly in French but with some English: The 'L'Enfer Galop' has the title re-written by an English hand as 'The Hell Galop'.



Fig. 4: A L'Épée tune sheet for a 6-air drum and bells musical box circa 1865. The tune sheet is not typical of the maker and carries the monogram FC in the top cartouche for Frederic Conchon. Bottom left is the serial number 1216 and bottom right the gamme number 2863. Bottom centre is the number 748, which could be the agent's reference. The script is in French.



Fig. 5: A Brémont 6-air exposed bells musical box circa 1865, hence no other accoutrements such as drum or castanets. The serial number 8389 is written in the top right margin. Bulleid notes that the layout of the bells was in pitch order whereas bells in later versions were symmetrically displayed with the largest (lowest pitch bell) in the centre.

Fig. 6: A tune sheet for agent J H Heller of Bern, Switzerland. The term 'Volant compensé', repeated twice in the bottom cartouches means that the movement is fitted with a compensated speed governor. The serial



number 1076 is not written on the tune sheet whereas the gamme number 622 is written across the pedestal of the left hand column. The pedestal of the right hand column has the number 400, thought to be an agency serial number. With such a low serial number it is difficult to identify the maker but it could be by Karrer of Bern.

Brémond also used this tune sheet pattern so he also could have been the maker or bought movements from Karrer.

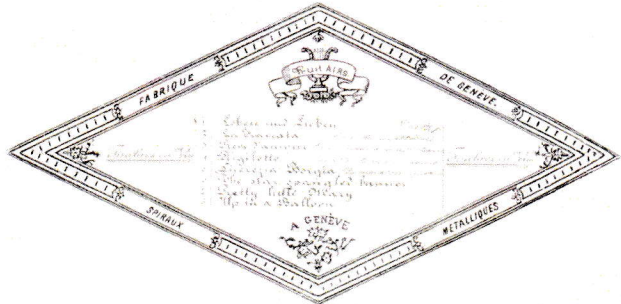
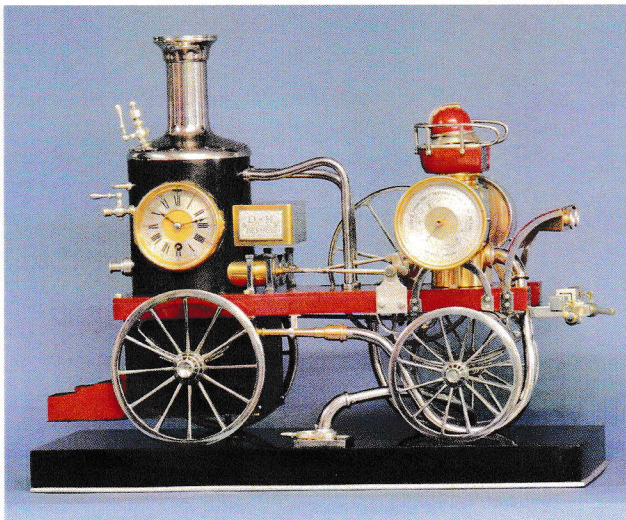


Fig. 7: Although the script ink has faded this unusual diamond-shape tune sheet is for Auguste Perrelet, serial 38607, circa 1870. The standard 13-inch cylinder operates 11 bells, quite an exceptional number, denoted twice as 'Timbres en Vue'. Perrelet (A P & Cie.) was the successor to F. Lecoultrre Frères of Geneva.

A RARE FRENCH ANIMATED FIRE ENGINE CLOCK

by Juliet Fynes



The illustration shows an exceptionally rare early 20th century automated fire-engine industrial clock.

The red painted, silvered and gilt-bronze case stands on a black marble base and depicts a horse drawn steam powered fire engine. It is 17.5 ins wide, 7.25 ins deep and 14.5 ins high.

The clock dial has a silvered chapter ring with Roman numerals for the hours and Arabic numerals marking the five minute intervals. It has a balance wheel escapement and is wound through the front. The silvered barometer dial is in French. A similar known example was lettered in English.

The animation movement is housed behind the barometer



and accessed by a hinged door and wound from the back. Three piston drive rods turn the large wheel which can be seen in motion on YouTube.

With thanks to Sundial Farm for permission to use this information.

(There were many 'Industrial' novelty clocks of this kind produced in France around the last quarter of the 19th Century. Steam stationary engines of various kinds were a popular subject for designers as there were many moving parts to watch, but lighthouses, windmills and ships also were produced. - Ed)

“Lights... – Cameras... – Action!”

Auction Team Breker's **Vision – Photographica and Film**

Saturday 24th April

This Spring Auction Team Breker of Cologne, Germany, will be hosting an exciting sale celebrating two hundred years of audio-visual technology.

Included are music machines in many forms, from the elegant Art-Nouveau Pathé Concert Model 5 to the striking Wurlitzer 1080 jukebox designed by Paul Fuller in 1947.



Pathé Concert Model 5 phonograph, c. 1912
Sold for £2,964

Stepping back a hundred years provides a glimpse of entertainment in the Victorian era. Barrel organs and



Longcase clock with carillon and moon phase, c. 1800

Sold for £3,800

musical boxes were the first forms of programmable sound for the home. The precursor of the jukebox was the interchangeable disc musical box, while carillon clocks kept time as well as marking the hours melodiously.

Sold prices shown were obtained online from the auction site in Euros and exclude buyer's premium - Ed.

Mechanical Music World



*Wurlitzer Model 1080 ("Colonial") jukebox with 24 original discs, 1947
Sold for £4,880*



*Regina Style 34 automatic disc-changing musical box for 12 Discs, c. 1903
Sold for £13,950*



*Bacigalupo Violinopon barrel organ, c. 1925
Sold for £2,440*



*Automaton singing bird jardinière by Blaise Bontems, c. 1890
Sold price not confirmed at the time of going to press.*

WAGRAM, WASHINGTON, WATERLOO

by Juliet Fynes

For reasons of space our collection has always consisted of cylinder boxes. In our small low-ceilinged cottage soon every horizontal surface bore a musical box or three. Then it was only a matter of time before there was no room left under the furniture either. So, from a few snuff boxes, it became a matter of necessity to concentrate on small movements if we wished to continue collecting. This proved to be a very rich seam to mine.

These small boxes can be of fine musical quality but one of the joys is the variety of cases that can be made from materials unsuited to large boxes. We have examples in silver and also wood, tortoiseshell and composition, some with hand-painted pictures, brass plaques or impressed designs on the lid. But my personal favourites are the unassuming tin boxes. I believe the appeal lies in the contrast between what is usually a good quality early movement and the simple, often scruffy, case.

It is hard to obtain cases for orphan movements, so we were delighted when we were able to buy a tin box to house a rather nice Bordier sectional comb movement* we had owned for some time. It was a bonus that the box bears a very unusual engraving, if somewhat awkwardly printed sideways on. It depicts a dejected soldier, in the uniform of a Napoleonic grenadier guard, slumped against a large letter W. His bearskin has fallen to the ground and he is holding a spade. The W has a profile portrait to one side and is surmounted by an eagle (Picture 1 - see Page 14). On the front edge are the words Wagram, Washington, Waterloo, Etc. (Picture 2).

An Internet search very quickly led to the print (Picture 3) taken from the page of an alphabet book. The W is ingeniously portrayed several times by human figures, a pyramid between leaning palm trees and a snake, amongst others. It is by the French artist Jean Victor Adam and dates from around 1833. Adam was a prolific painter and lithographer, much of whose work was of military subjects. The letter W didn't exist in French until it was introduced into the alphabet as foreign words began to be adopted. There is an earlier print from an alphabet book by Adam where one page serves for V and X, with W omitted.

However, a closer comparison of this print and the tin lid, whilst bearing many similarities, also showed

big discrepancies. Both illustrate "Wagram" with an eagle draped in a ribbon banner. The Battle of Wagram in 1809 was a victory for Napoleon against the Austrians. The French Imperial Eagle surmounted standards carried into battle by Napoleon's troops and although they were the victors at Wagram a number of standards were captured by the Austrians.

The Battle of Waterloo is depicted on the Adam print and is also represented by a cross and sword thrust into what is presumably a burial mound. A French officer is writing "Washington" on a large stone, underneath a profile picture of George Washington, watched by another officer casually relaxing on a pile of stones. The Washington portrait on the tin lid appears to be the same but the demeanour of the single soldier is completely different to the two on the Adam print.

A further internet search produced another print from which the picture on the tin lid was clearly taken. This engraving (Picture 4) is dated 1836 and comes from another Alphabet book printed in French, German and Dutch. In the full print the mound surmounted by a cross appears, but without the word "Waterloo". There are feet protruding and the implication is that the exhausted soldier has just buried his comrade. The initials MD appear on the floral decoration of the box sides and again on the capital W, presumably of the designer of the flower border who adapted the print to fit the top surface.

Another discrepancy is in the words used to illustrate the letter W. Although the edge of the lid reads "Wagram Washington Waterloo", the engraving from which the lid decoration is taken reads "Wagram Waterloo Wandelbaar". The only translation for the Dutch word "Wandelbaar" I have been able to find is "walkable". This must have meant something at the time, as must the reference to George Washington on both of the engravings.

Apart from these mysteries it seems a very odd choice of illustration for a musical box lid; a sombre subject, cropped and applied at right angles to the usual alignment. Perhaps commissioned for a special reason that we will never know.

*This features in the "Musical Snuff Boxes" CD

A Puzzling Musical Box

Pictures for Wagram, Washington & Waterloo Article



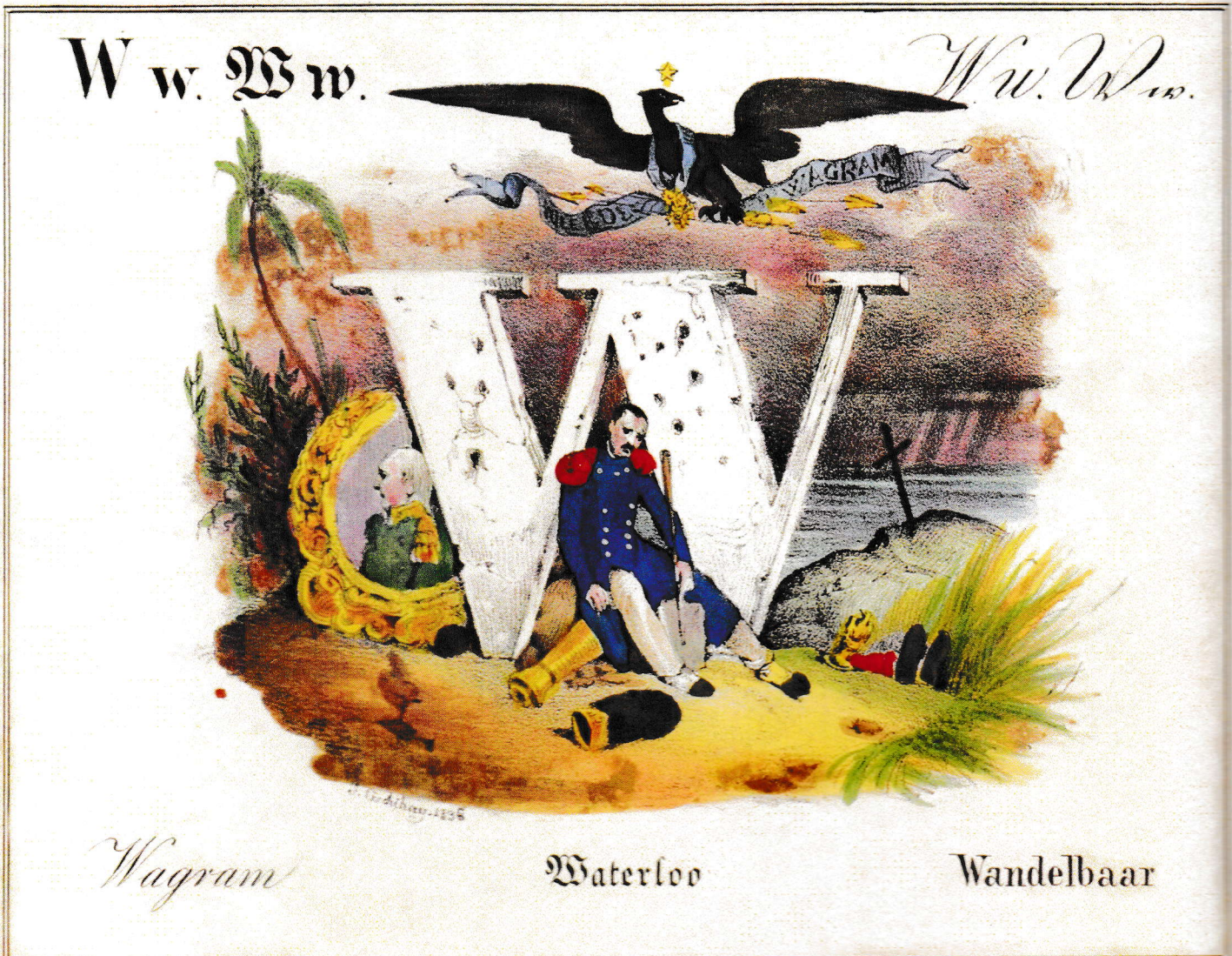
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3

2

4



W w. W w.

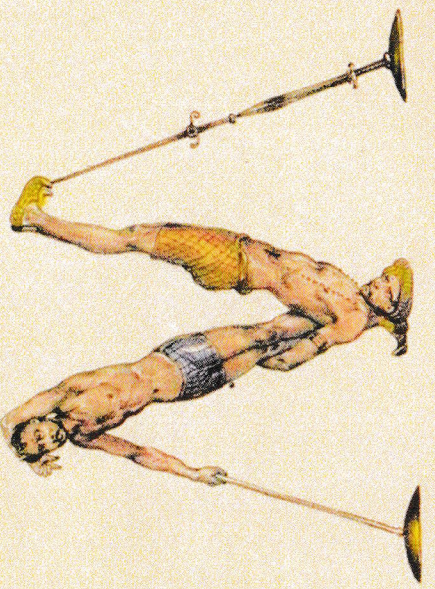
W w. W w.

Wagram

Waterloo

Wandelbaar

W



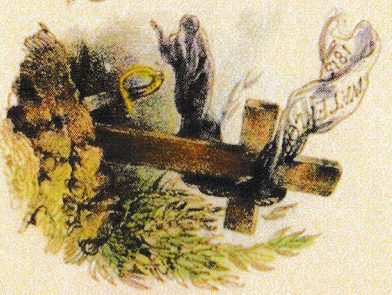
W

W

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W



WATERLOO

Restoration of a fine Lecoultre & Falconnet Overture Box with 272 teeth

Technical Details:

The picture on the front cover and those that accompany this article show a superb early Lecoultre & Falconnet musical box that plays three overtures. The comb has a massive 272 teeth, the cylinder measuring 13½ inches long by ¾ inches in diameter. It has a low serial number of 458. The names 'Lecoultre & Falconnet' are stamped twice in small letters on the comb. The case and movement bear many of those characteristics associated with this fine partnership; typically, individual cut-outs for the control levers in the end flap, the mitred corner joints to the case, the comb with hollowed out teeth in the base, the separate brass plate under the steel comb and the fixed lower bearing for the governor fan. It has a beautiful veneered walnut case with a nicely engraved brass tune sheet in the lid, listing the makers' names and the three overtures. As you would expect the arrangements are amazingly complex with mandolin pinning stretching well into the base, the slow turning cylinder taking about 9½ minutes for three revolutions.

The Three Overtures:

The first is the overture to 'Don Giovanni' or 'Don Juan', on which the story is based, an opera in two acts by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, with Italian libretto by Lorenzo da Ponte. It was originally premiered at the National Theatre in Prague on October 29, 1787. The story is about an irresistible and amoral young man, the notorious Don Juan, who woos and takes advantage of a large number of women and his eventual descent into hell. The opera was a great success and remained popular for many years. It also followed the success of Mozart's previous opera, 'The Marriage of Figaro' and its overture, the third tune on this musical box.

The second overture is to the opera 'The Siege of Corinth', an opera in three acts by Gioachino Rossini set to a French libretto by Luigi Balocchi and Alexandre Soumet, premiered at the Salle Le Peletier of the Paris Opéra on October 9th 1826. It was based on the composer's reworking of his earlier Italian Opera 'Maometto II', premiered in Naples in 1820. It commemorated the siege and ultimate destruction of the town of Missolonghi in 1826 by Turkish troops during the ongoing Greek war of independence, the violent story of conflicting passions and divided loyalties. With a spectacular end-

ing to the opera using special effects, Rossini soon made his mark in Paris.

The third overture 'The Marriage of Figaro' is an opera in four acts by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart with an Italian libretto by Lorenzo Da Ponte, premiered at the Burgtheater in Vienna on May 1st 1786. It tells the story of how the servants Figaro and Susanna succeed in getting married, foiling the efforts of their philandering employer Count Almaviva to seduce Susanna and teaching him a lesson in fidelity. It remains one of the most frequently performed operas of the day.

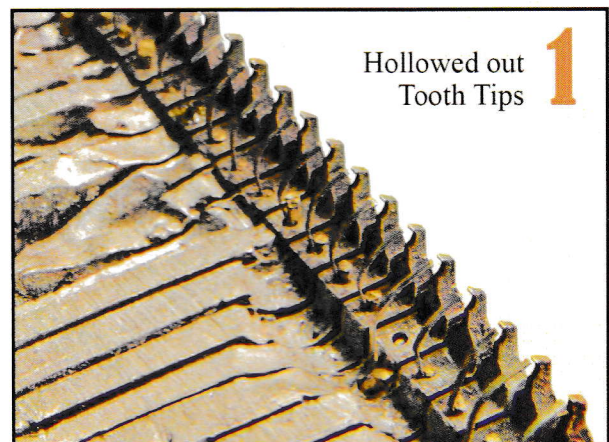
Lecoultre & Falconnet Partnership:

Falconnet (1800-1861) was a watchmaker. He is known to have had several partners. Pierre Germain thought that the Lecoultre of the Falconnet-Lecoultre partnership was François-Charles of the Lecoultre-Piguet branch.

Research on the Lecoultre & Falconnet partnership by Paul Bellamy casts doubt on this assumption.

He claims there were also two other possible contenders, David Lecoultre and his brother Henri-Joseph of the Lecoultre-Golay branch.

If we take into account the technical features, mentioned above, of the Lecoultre & Falconnet box, such as its hooked teeth, these are almost exclusively attributed to these two Lecoultre brothers. Hooked teeth were always used on their single comb long-and-short-pin forte-piano movements but also thought to be on their standard movements as well. Hooked teeth were also found on combs stamped with the name Falconnet, either alone or in partnership as for this example.



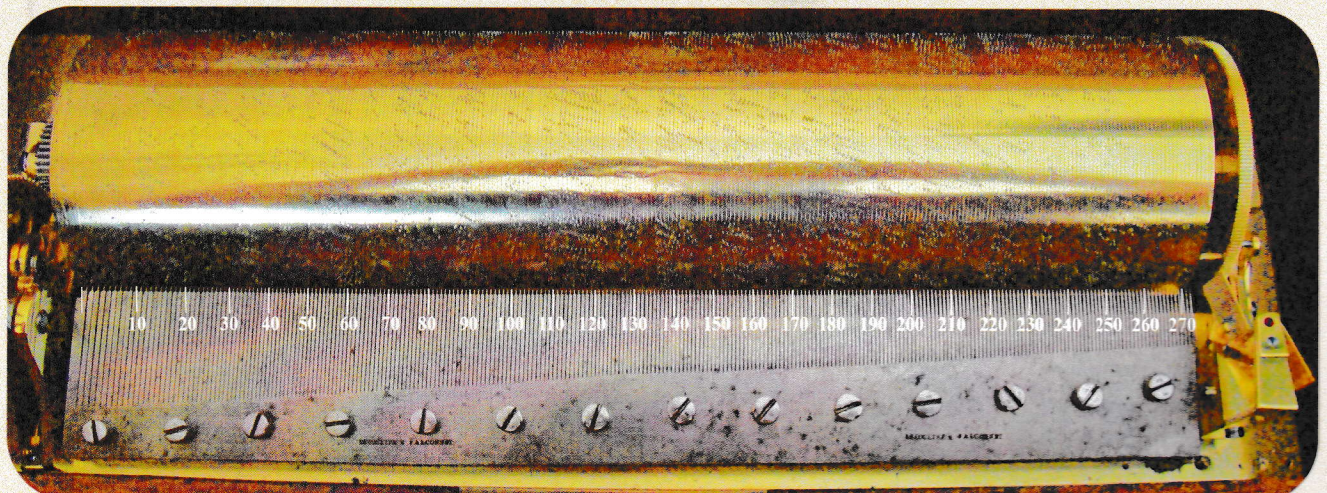
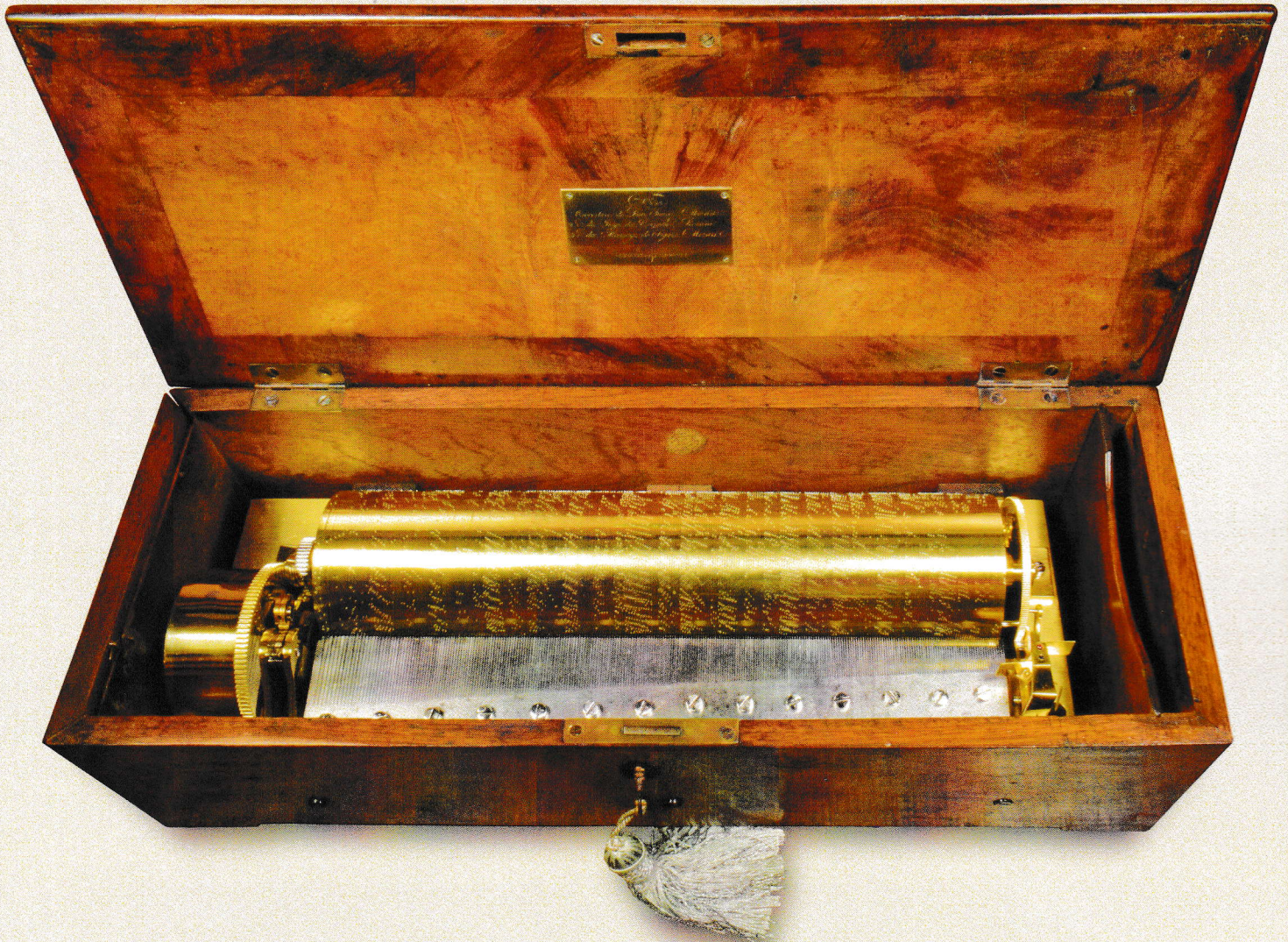
Hollowed out
Tooth Tips

1

Lecoultre & Falconnet

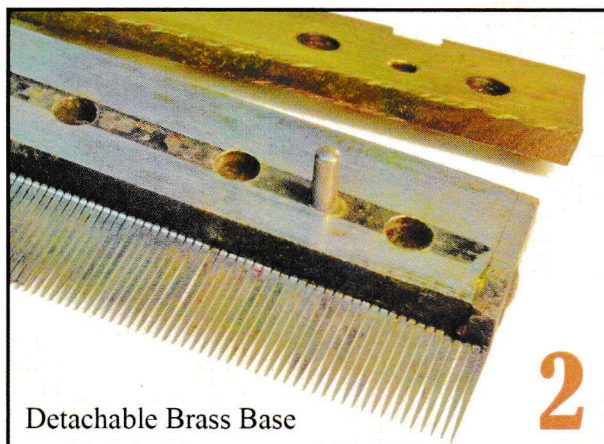


Brass tunesheet engraved with overture titles and names of Lecoultre & Falconnet. Top view of movement in its beautifully figured walnut case. Close-up of cylinder and comb with an incredible 272 teeth.



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The type of hook used on our Lecoultre & Falconnet have simple hollowed out tooth tips (Picture 1), as opposed to the alternative type which have definite hooks with curved tips. Henri used the simpler hollowed out tooth tips. The Lecoultre & Falconnet also has a detachable brass plate under its steel comb (Picture 2). Henri too used a detachable brass plate. David Lecoultre used cast steel ones. Furthermore, if we look at the dates and low serial numbers used on Lecoultre & Falconnet examples, they also could quite easily fit with those used by Henri.



Detachable Brass Base

Henri worked in Geneva, brother David had his workshop in Brassus, recorded as D. Lecoultre & brothers. F. Lecoultre & Brothers were also in Brassus. It seems that they were all in Geneva at some time in their lives before establishing their own sets of workshops and serial numbers.

Adding it all up, the evidence seems quite strong that the Lecoultre associated with Falconnet was most likely Henri.

Discovering and Restoring the Movement:

What we know about the recent history of the box was that it was originally bought from a boot fair in St Albans many years back. It was then sent to Keith Harding for restoration who sent it on to another restorer for a re-pin. Some years later the comb was yet again returned to that restorer to have the leads renewed, apparently a common fault on Falconnet movements. While this was still waiting to be done, its present owner was shown the comb and asked if he would like to buy the box. Negotiations secured its purchase from the original owner. The comb was then fitted with extra-long leads and passed on to Alan Godier for re-tuning.

This was going to be a major job because of the number of teeth involved, so had to be done in stages, but Alan is one of the very few restorers with the unique musical ability to accomplish this complex task. The following is his own account of the re-tuning in his own words:

Re-tuning the Comb by Alan Godier:

One of the most difficult aspects of the restoration of this musical box was tuning the relead. The comb has 272 musical teeth, 94 of which had had the leads already replaced before I received the repair, the cylinder had also been repinned.

There was no scale marked on the comb, but there are several assumptions which can be made when tackling a job like this. The treble and higher pitched part of the comb (178 un-leaded teeth) will play the melody, the leaded part will play the accompaniment and the bass notes. Fortunately, the 3 Overtures were known and engraved on the brass tunesheet.

Comb teeth were tuned in sequence from treble down to bass, for some notes there will be several teeth all tuned to the same note, which can be seen in the centre part of the scale where one C has 11 teeth all the same note (Picture 3). The number of teeth tuned to the same note depends on the notes required to play the tunes and also how often the notes are repeated.

On an Overture box like this it is likely that the scale will be chromatic, in other words every note which would be on a piano keyboard (black and white notes) would also be present on the comb. Usually on a more normal musical box only the notes required to play the particular tunes would be present and sharps would be omitted if not needed.

The basic musical scale used in western music is the diatonic scale, not all the gaps between the notes are the same. Thinking of a piano keyboard, starting on C, all the white notes would play a scale if played in sequence (Picture 4). It can be seen that there is a black note between C&D, D&E, F&G, G&A and A&B and also none between E&F and B&C.

Mechanical Music World

Between one note and the next is called a semitone, C to C#, C# to D etc. So, the pattern of notes for a diatonic major scale in semitones is 2,2,1,2,2,2,1 from C to C, the pattern is of each note relative to the others. It is independent of the absolute frequency of the notes, the same as Tonic Sol-fa used in unaccompanied singing. Also, it isn't dependent on the pitch of C. Modern standard pitch is A = 440 Hz but the pitch of a musical box comb may be several notes different to this. I find it easiest when tuning to work in the key of C as there are no sharps or flats in the scale. As a result of this the pitch of C on the scale for this overture box is D# minus 20 cents (each semitone is divided into 100 cents), so A 440 would be somewhere near F# on the scale.

The final chord of the overture would be the tonic chord (the key the tune is played in) made up of notes C, E & G, the lowest note would be a C. The tune would end with a cadence or series of chords, the next to last would be a dominant chord consisting of G, B & D, or sometimes a dominant 7th chord consisting of G, B, D & Fs, if a bass note is sounded it would be a G.

Sometimes in the arrangement, rather than chords all played at the same time there can be arpeggios which are chords where the notes are spread in time.

A glissando is also a rapid progression of notes but are notes which are closer together than those of a chord, they are often diatonic or sometimes chromatic.

Sometimes the final chord will be repeated for emphasis, using different teeth, this will show which other teeth are tuned to the tonic chord C, E & G.

The key an overture is played in can change during the duration of the tune, it would likely change to the key of G giving G, B, D chords or the key of F giving F, A, C chords, it may also change to a minor key, if so, the tonic would be a minor 3rd lower down to A giving chords of A, C, E.

So, taking all this into consideration when tuning a re-leaded comb, it is best to work from the smallest lead to the biggest. When the leads are put on, they should be bigger than they need to be so that tuning consists of cutting off lead to raise the pitch of the note. Before any tuning is done the leads should be trimmed enough for the comb to fit on the bedplate so that it can be played. It is also important to make sure that all the leads are clear of each other and that each tooth will sound properly although too low in pitch. So, the tune is played and it will be possible to work out the tuning in the treble part of the comb with the final chord being C, E, G. These notes can be marked with a felt tip pen on the comb and once this is done it is possible to work out the tuning of the rest of the treble part of the comb. I find it easiest to draw a scale on a piece of paper which can then be laid on the comb.

Proceeding then to the first leaded tooth, it will either be the same note as the last unleaded tooth or it may be a semitone or tone lower in pitch, this can be worked out by trimming it to a tone lower and listening how it fits into the accompaniment, are there arpeggio or chords which it fits into? With musical boxes such as this overture box it can be seen that there are definite bands of pins on the cylinder for the different notes. The bands which pinned the heaviest are for C, E, G. Looking at the picture of the cylinder it can be seen that there is a wide band of pins almost in the centre, this is the group of 11 teeth all tuned to C (Picture 5).

Having recorded which note it is and tuned it, then proceed to the next one. This will again be the same note as the first leaded tooth, or a tone lower, this then needs to be tried out by playing the tune to see how it fits into the music, is it a final note of the tune? If it is then it would be either C, E or G. It is possible to work on 2 teeth at a time to work out their tuning, but with 94 leads it can be seen it will be a long-winded job! It's usually only possible to work out a few notes at a time before trying the comb out.

Another guide, as said before, is the bands of pins on the cylinder, it will be noticed that the sharps have a lot less pins than C, E, G, and also D, A & B. This can be seen on the cylinder where the notes are marked (Picture 5). Interestingly enough this particular comb is completely chromatic right down into the bass octave which is unusual, the semitones are used in the bottom octave in the Don Giovanni overture, the pins can be seen on the top of the cylinder at the left-hand end (Picture 5). It turned out in the end that the range of the leaded part of the comb is 2½ octaves. It may also be found that sometimes in the bass, 2 notes will be sounded an octave apart to give emphasis, this is also useful in working out a scale. When tuning leaded teeth, it is best to tune from the note an octave above and the lower note should be left 10 cents flat of exact to allow for stretching in the tuning. For an overture box like this the notes which are the same note would be tuned exactly the same as each other.

It is very satisfying to play a newly tuned re-leaded comb and to hear all the intended notes of the tune fitting in as designed by the arranger.

(Picture 6) is of the cutters I made and used to trim down the leads.

How to Listen to the Tunes:

To accompany this article and appreciate the sound of these splendid overtures, you are now able to purchase our new CD release 'Overture Box', which is advertised on the first page of this magazine. It not only features the full repertoire of this incredible musical box, but also a selection of other overture boxes made by well-known makers. In particular, another four-tune overture box by Lecoultre which includes a fine rendering of the famous 'Thieving Magpie' overture by Rossini.

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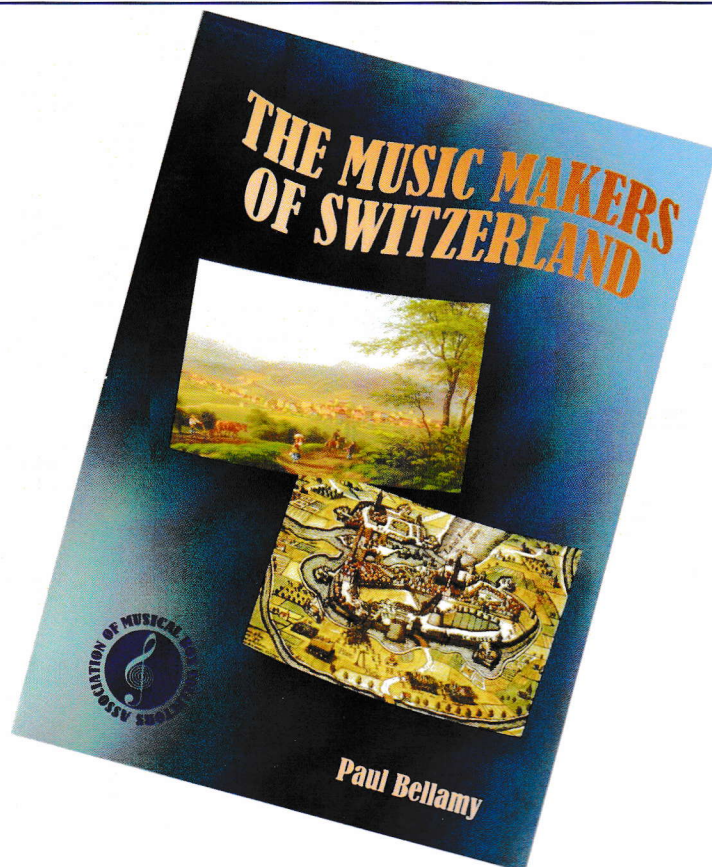
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Street clocks in England incorporating Automata

by David Soulsby

There are a number of ornamental street clocks dotted around the UK whose hourly chimes are accompanied by the movement of figures or animals. I decided to visit a number of locations in the UK to track some of them down and find out more details of the automata in action.

I began my journey in London near Regent Street, adjacent to the Liberty store where there is an arch spanning Kingly street that features an ornate clock. In the stone face above are models of Saint George on a white horse and the legendary fire breathing dragon. Restored by master craftsmen Gillett & Johnston back in December 2010, the original was finished with the mock-Tudor Liberty building in the 1920s. The inscription below reads "No minute gone comes ever back again take heed and see ye nothing do in vain". On the quarter hours St George chases the dragon several times across the window. On the hour with his lance striking at each chime of the clock, the beast is slain. (Photo 1).



Photo 1: Liberty's George & Dragon clock

Another clock featuring automata is less than a mile away, outside the front entrance to Fortnum and Mason's,

the providers of luxury hampers and food, store in Piccadilly. It was unveiled in 1964 and features 4 ft tall mannequins representing the store's namesakes. On the stroke of the hour the clock chimes and William Fortnum and Hugh Mason emerge from doors on either side, one carrying a tray with a teapot and the other with a candelabrum. They turn to meet each other while the bells chime and both figures nod their heads inviting customers in for tea. (Photo 2).



Photo 2: Mr Fortnum and Mr Mason

Not far away, in Fleet Street is the Guild church of St. Dunstan in-the-West where one of the UK's oldest automata clocks is situated. It was built in 1671, only five years after the Great Fire. In an alcove above and behind the clock are carvings of two giants, possibly Gog and Magog, legendary guardians of the City. (Photo 3). Every quarter hour, these figures strike the bells next to them with clubs, and they turn their heads to look left and right along Fleet Street.

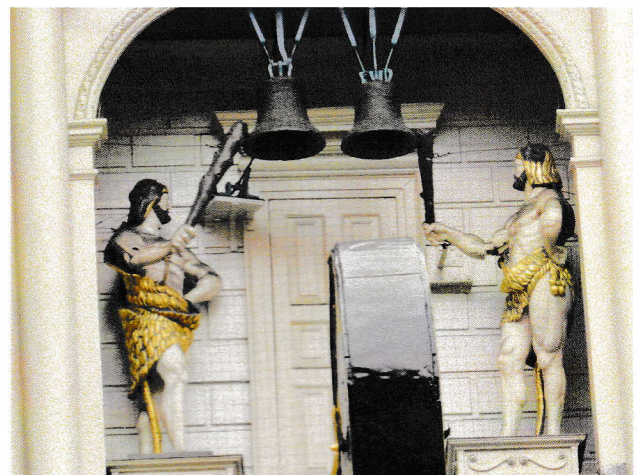


Photo 3: Gog and Magog in Fleet Street

In Basildon, Essex the “Cat’s Cradle Pussywillow III clock”, built by Roland Emmet in 1981, is still working in the Eastgate Shopping centre. (Photo 4). On the hour every hour the bell rings, the bicycle wheels begin turning and a variety of figures move around the structure, telling the story of Lear’s “the Owl & the Pussycat”. Emmet was renowned for his whimsical machines; he was a great cartoonist, designer and builder of “things”. He is perhaps best known for the machines that he designed and constructed for the 1968 film “Chitty Chitty Bang Bang”.



Photo 4: Roland Emmet's Cat's Cradle Pussywillow III clock in Eastgate, Basildon, Essex

Situated outside the Blackburn bird pavilion in the grounds of the London zoo stands the rather splendid clock built by Tim Hunkin in 2008. Tim is a self confessed clock lover and indeed has built several more around the UK, incorporating automata. Perhaps the most famous being the water clock at Southwold pier featuring two boys dropping their trousers and peeing into a toilet bowl. However this bird themed clock, to my mind, is superior because of the clever pneumatic engineering and the intricacies of the design and movement of the automata (Photo 5). At the base of the clock on either side are toucans pecking at the main pendulum. There are male and female figures above a display case of eight beautifully coloured birds. The man, in a top hat, has a knife and fork in one hand and the other on the handle of

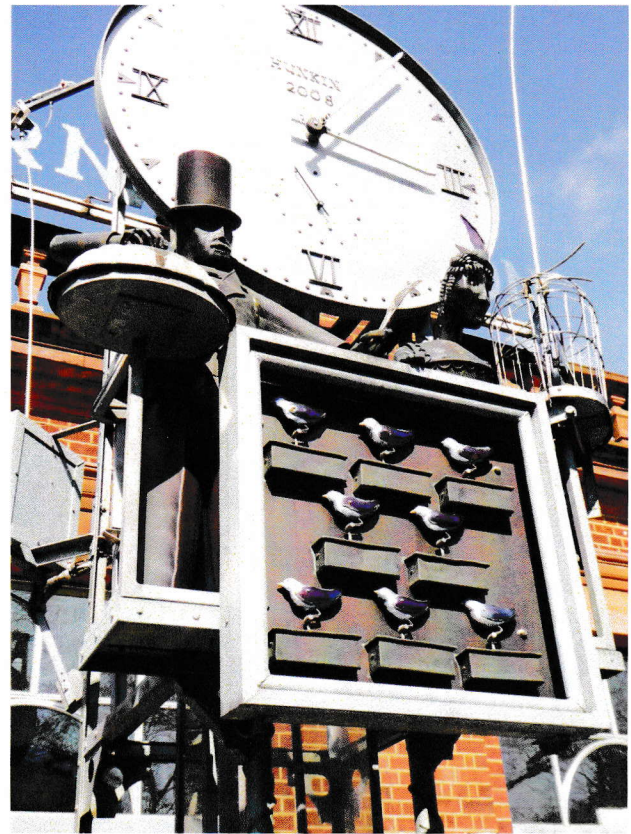


Photo 5: Tim Hunkin's Bird clock

a pan. The woman holds a cage containing a similarly coloured bird. The man shakes his knife and fork and lifts the lid of the pan where there is another bird trembling inside. The birds in the case disappear one by one and pop up at various places around the clock, including out of the top hat and on the woman's bodice. The man lifts the lid of the pan once more revealing the bird, replaces it and on lifting it again the bird has gone and is flying round the clock. The woman opens her birdcage and the bird flies out, wings flapping, and joins the other. The heads of the two figures twist back and forth trying to watch the flight of the birds round the clock. The toucans at the base vanish and reappear squawking at the top of the clock. The birds in flight gradually slow down, one gliding back into the cage which closes, and the other into a box along side. The toucans and the eight birds then return to their original positions.

The Swiss Centre in Leicester Square was opened in 1968 to showcase the best cultural aspects of Switzerland and promote tourism. It didn't meet expectations and was demolished in 2008. I visited the glockenspiel and clock which had become popular with tourists and moved to nearby Swiss Court. Twenty-seven bells are struck by mannequins every hour, and the base rises to reveal eleven beautifully carved animated figures and animals moving in procession. (Photos 6).

I had heard about an automata clock, built in 1988, just

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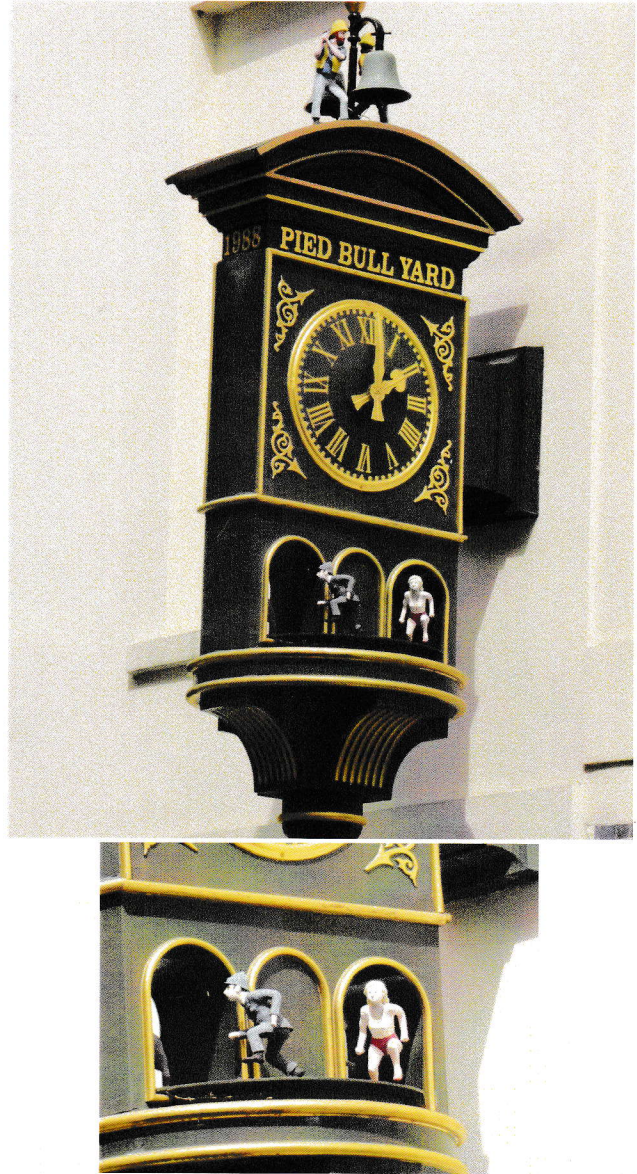


Photos 6: The Swiss Centre clock in Leicester Square

round the corner from the British museum. I tracked it down in the Bloomsbury shopping area of Pied Bull Yard (Photos 7). It has two miniature figures at the top ready and waiting to strike the bell. At the bottom is a track where a bull, a businessman, a jogger, a policeman and a Mohican haired punk are poised to chase each other in circles on the stroke of the hour. I waited as the hands of the clock crept round but at the appointed hour, the figures remained annoyingly static. I made enquiries with

a number of shopkeepers in the area; some of them had seen the clock in operation, but not for several years!

Bit of a disappointment!



Photos 7: Clock in Pied Bull Yard, Bloomsbury, unfortunately non-working

I set off for a pleasant trip to the Cotswolds to the county city of Gloucester. There at the Cross above the beautifully preserved Edwardian shop of G A Baker and son, the jewellers, is an interesting clock built in 1904. There are five bells in the automata display struck every quarter of an hour by life sized figures. The centre bell is struck by Old Father Time, pulling down on a rope. The other characters striking bells in front of them are from Ireland, England, Scotland and Wales respectively. (Photo 8).

Situated in nearby Cheltenham at the Regents arcade, there is a much more modern clock, built in 1986 by Kit Williams. (Photo 9). He is an English writer and



Photo 8: The Bellringers of Gloucester, circa 1904

illustrator, best known for his 1979 book "Masquerade" a pictorial storybook which contained clues to a golden jewelled hare actually buried somewhere in the UK (it was later discovered at Amptill Park in Bedfordshire). The clock structure is 45 feet tall and thought to be the tallest mechanical clock in existence. It features a number of eclectic characters. There is a goose that appears to lay a never ending stream of golden eggs, a family of mice continually trying to escape a snake chasing them on the top. Suspended from the bottom of the clock is a large wooden fish that blows bubbles every half hour, to the



Photo 9: Clock by Kit Williams in Regent's Arcade, Cheltenham.

tune of "I'm forever blowing bubbles". The working and structural parts were built by Michael Harding from the famous Sinclair-Harding makers of fine clocks since 1967.



Photos 10 & 11: the Godiva clock now located in Broadgate, Coventry, with Peeping Tom taking a crafty look!

Moving on a mere fifty miles an interesting clock located in the city of Coventry. This is based on the 13th century legend of Lady Godiva, who rode naked on a white horse through the streets to gain remission from the high taxation that her husband, the Earl of Leofric had placed on the citizens. The clock now in Broadgate Square, was originally in the old Market Hall clock tower which dated from 1870. Following damage during WWII, the clock was moved to its present location. On the hour the bell strikes, a door on the right opens, and Lady Godiva with her golden hair, seated on her white horse, travels across and disappears through the door on the left. (Photo 10).

While this is happening, a window above opens and out pops the head of Peeping Tom, (Photo 11), the only citizen to have watched her ride, as the others stayed away in respect. He has a peek then covers his eyes (the legend says that he was struck blind), before moving

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back, the window closing until the following hour.

Moving back closer to home in the south-east I sought about another two street clocks having moving figures within them. St Mary's, the Parish church of Rye, in East Sussex has dominated the town since its construction in the twelfth century. The clock was added in 1562 and is the oldest working turret clock in the country. The exterior clock face and the original Quarter boys, who strike the quarters but not the hours, were added in 1760. (Photo 12). These are gilded cherubs which have been replaced by fibreglass copies, the originals however are on display in the church. The inscription above the clock reads 'Our time is but a shadow that passeth away'.



Photo 12: The Quarter boys at Rye Church, Sussex

The last automaton clock I visited was only 17 miles from home at Abinger Hammer in Surrey. The clock designed by Connor O'Brien and built by Smith of Derby was added to the original building in 1908 (Photo 13). The four foot figure of "Jack the Blacksmith" made from teak, strikes the bell every hour. It is a tribute to the long iron working tradition in the village, the Clock House stands on the site of a blacksmith's shop from the 17th century.

My itinerary round the UK to visit other interesting automata clocks, particularly the Matthew the Miller clock in Exeter and also at Wells Cathedral, was unfortunately cut short by the corona virus travel restrictions.



Photo 13: The Blacksmith's Clock at Abinger Hammer

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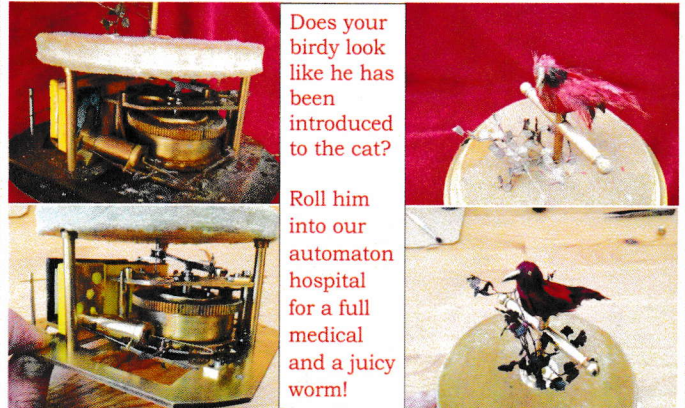
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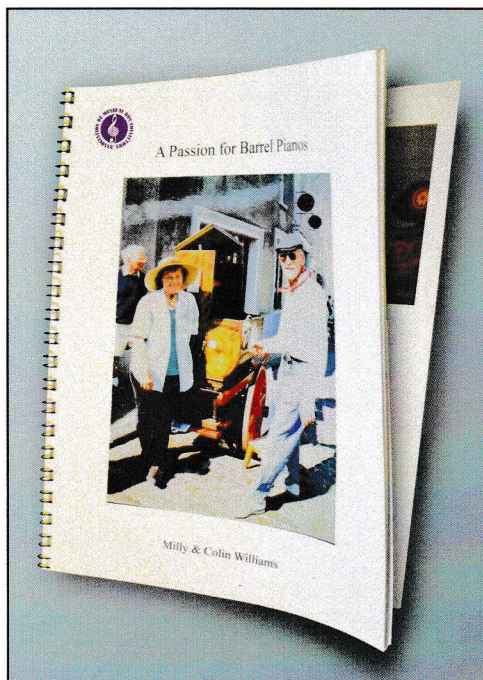
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