

Issue 26, Autumn 2021

MECHANICAL MUSIC WORLD



A 'Capt'ivating Musical Box

An Association of Musical Box Collectors Publication

From the Editors' Desk

Climate Change seems to be the 'buzz' topic now that the Covid crisis is beginning to subside. Fortunately our types of collectables seem to be largely impervious to changes in climate and are eco-friendly in that, most of them, do not need electricity or any fossil fuel in order to perform their programmes for our entertainment. A very 'green' hobby!

It was with great sadness that we learned of the recent death of one of our Society founder members. Don Busby first became known to us as editors when he wrote a series of articles on how he made his own musical box. Don, in his working life, had been a highly qualified engineer and a forensic scientist with the UK Home Office. Having decided to make a musical box, he started from scratch, experimenting with suitable metals and working through comb making, the cylinder and pinning, tune arrangement – the whole works. He was kind enough to allow the Society to issue a CD of his experimentations. Don was not only a member of our Publications Committee but an active collaborator in several of the books produced, notably ‘The Music Makers of Switzerland’, ‘The Cylinder Musical Box – A Collector’s and Restorer’s Handbook’ and the forthcoming book ‘The Cylinder Musical Box – Tune Sheets, Makers, Agents and Dates’. He worked on the graphic charts and re-imaged many of the damaged or illegible tune sheets. He was a very conscientious technical proof reader. A quiet, friendly fellow collector and a very private person who will be sadly missed by those who had the privilege of his friendship and benefited from his experience and knowledge.

We are grateful to Chris Fynes for another of his beautifully illustrated articles, "Capt-ivating" it certainly is. Chris is also responsible for the beautiful covers of our Journal as well as the wonderful montages which make each issue special.

Paul Bellamy has given us a fantastic insight into the complex world of the Lecoultrre family. His meticulous researches, partially based on Anthony Bulleid's work whilst extending beyond is exemplary. In it he touches on the plight of the Huguenots, refugees from the French religious persecution. The Huguenots dispersed throughout Europe. They were welcomed in England, to where it is estimated that some 50,000 refugees made their way, and in many other countries within Europe between the late 1600s and early 1700s. Their technical, artistic and business skills proved very beneficial to the receiving countries.

David Soulsby lightens our spirits with an account of Automata at the Seaside. People like ourselves (in our case, brought up in Worthing, Sussex) have fond memories of seaside piers and their entertainments and want to say a huge thank you to David for evoking memories of the salt smell of the seaweed and the cries of the seagulls overhead. The automata are fun too...!



Merry Christmas - it will come soon enough!



CONTENTS

Chairman's Report, Officers of AMBC, AMBC Meeting Dates	2
'Capt'ivating Musical Boxes - Christopher Fynes studies two fine boxes by Capt	3
The Lecoultrre Frères - Paul Bellamy corrects some inaccuracies	8
Auction Team Breker's September sale - review of some of the interesting items	15
Special Offer for Christmas! - (order before December 1899).....	20
Automata at the Seaside - David Soulsby finds some more amazing Hunkin automata.....	21
Classified Advertisements	28

Chairman's Report

Here we are with the last journal before Christmas and the New Year. I hope you have kept safe and well and are looking forward to a better New Year.

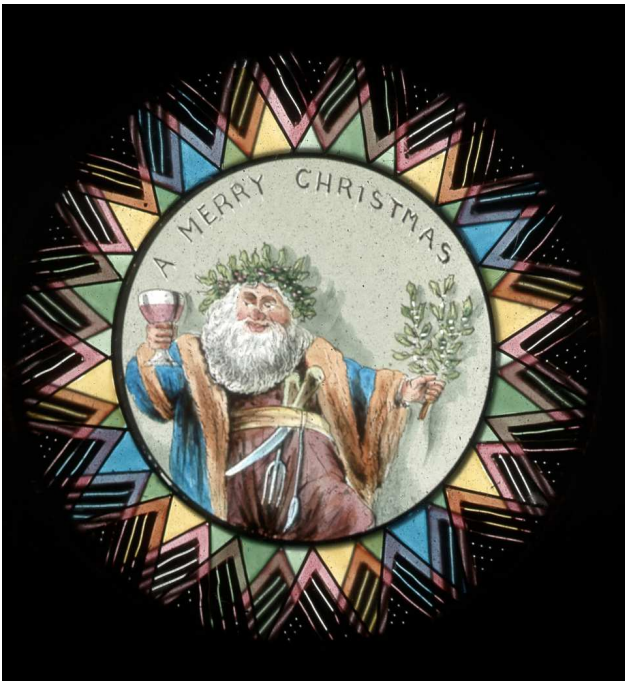
This year has been difficult but we must think positively as we are starting to get out and about and returning to a more normal life.

We are hoping to hold our first post lockdown Chanctonbury Ring meeting in February or March 2022. It will be open to members and guests who have had two Covid jabs. Masks will be optional but preferred during the talks.

We are also hoping to have an auction in the canteen a few weeks later. Details will be published in the January journal.

Finally the committee and I thank you, as members and contributors, for supporting our Association and wish you a Happy Christmas and a good New Year.

Ted Brown



*From a magic lantern slide,
circa 1860.*

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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

It is with great regret that your committee has had to abandon all thoughts of a meeting for the time being.

Having had to cancel meetings earlier in the year due to the Coronavirus restrictions we had hoped, with the levels of infection falling, that we would have been able to hold our traditional Christmas get together, even if some adjustments had to be made.

Sadly with infections now rising again and government guidelines changing almost daily it is impossible to go ahead with our plans.

‘Capt’ivating Musical Boxes

by Chris Fynes

Captivating is a particularly apt word to describe the following pair of musical boxes.

I begin with an early tin-cased tabatière musical movement (Picture 1). The name ‘H. Capt’ is stamped on a comb of 70 square-tipped teeth playing three delightful airs. Also stamped sideways on the bedplate, parallel to its left-hand edge, is the low serial number ‘2034’, indicative of an early movement. The three tunes are snail cam activated to play consecutively, but can be changed to repeat by sliding a brass button on the side of the case. The music is extremely well arranged and the movement is most likely to have been made by Henri-Louis Capt himself, although he also acted as an agent for others.

Its yellow painted tin case (Picture 2) has an engraved view of ‘Chillon Castle’ printed on the lid. The castle shown is the famous ‘Chateau de Chillon’ situated on an island in Lake Geneva.

These small movements were used in a variety of different forms, such as nécessaires, small clock bases and the ever-popular tabatières.

Henriot is uniquely noted for stamping his serial numbers at a sideways angle, and may well have sold many tabatières to Capt for resale. On the other hand, it could be more likely that Capt also used sideways numbering for making his own small movements, particularly as he stamped his own name on the comb. There is no doubt, however, that Henriot did produce cartel type musical boxes for Capt, who then put his own name on the tunesheet.

Next is an example of a Henri Capt cartel musical box that I purchased on eBay. Ostensibly a standard 6 air musical box, but with some major differences. The first and most obvious, even before opening the box (Picture 3), is that it is presented in an attractive case embellished with a veneer of figured Hungarian ash, inlaid with ebony stringing on the lid and front. When the box is opened (Picture 4), the figuring is extended to cover the whole of the interior. An engraved brass tunesheet mounted inside the lid lists the names of the six airs. One cannot help but notice the beautifully polished movement itself restored to absolute perfection. When I wound it, I noticed how easy it was to turn the key, requiring very little

force. I then put it into play and the comb was surprisingly loud and clear, having a nice ring to it without any damper noise, loud enough for anyone wishing to dance to its music in a large room. It must take a high-quality steel comb and precise tempering for it to be able to sound that good.

Great care had been taken with the restoration right down to the blueing of the screws (Picture 5), except for the nine screws on the comb which were left as polished steel. Stamped on the bedplate (Picture 6) is the serial number 13254 which is also written in ink on the inside of the case, confirming the case and movement are not a marriage. The polished governor assembly with its gears can be seen in (Picture 7). The pinned cylinder measures 27 x 5 cms playing on a comb of 100 teeth. The case measures 42 x 15 x 12 cms. Even the hinges are marked with the makers initials ‘P.M.&Co. Patent’.

Paul Tuck, who made such a fine job of restoring the movement, kindly informs us, that it came from Scotland. Such honey-coloured Ash furniture was popular in northern climes such as Denmark or Russia during the Biedermeier period, probably still is. He says it’s not often he restores such small key wound boxes, as they can often be tricky so can need a higher than average degree of skill.

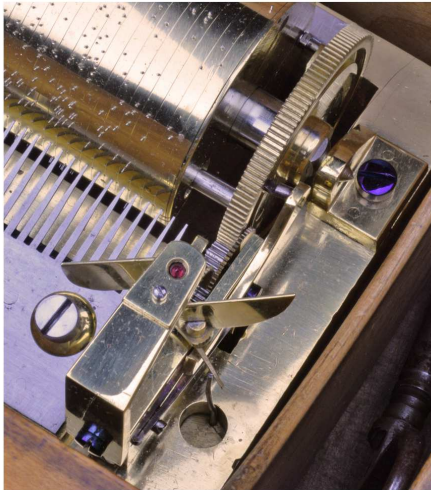
The well-pinned tunes are expressive and rhythmical (Picture 8). The brass engraved tunesheet and added descriptions in brackets read as follows:

Henry Capt à Genève. No. 13254

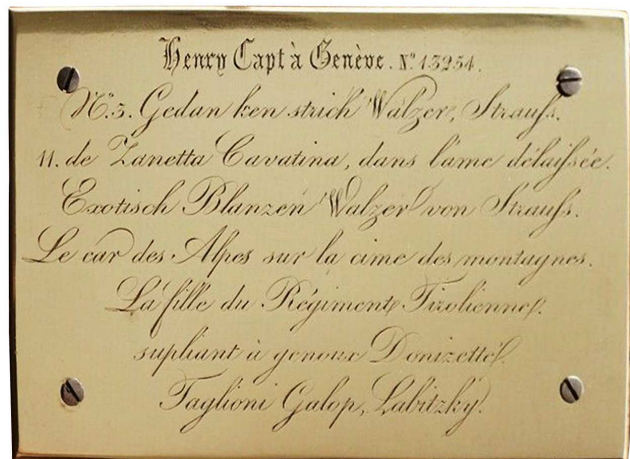
- (1) Gedanken striche Waltzer, Strauss. (Dash Waltz)
- (2) 11. De Zanetta Cavatina, dans L’ame déclassée. (Zanetta, rare opera by Auber)
- (3) Exotisch Pflanzen Waltzer von Strauss. (Exotic Plants Waltz)
- (4) Le car des Alpes sur la cime des Montagnes. (Alpenhorn on the mountain tops)
- (5) La fille du Regiment Tirolienne suppliant à genoux, Donizette.
(The daughter of the Regiment pleads on her knees)
- (6) Taglioni Galop, Labitsky. (Taglioni was a famous ballet dancer).

As the musical box sounded to me to be a bit too

⑤



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A Brief Description of the Pictures:

- (1) An early tin-cased tabatière musical movement. The name 'H. Capt' stamped on the comb of 70 teeth playing three delightful airs.
- (2) The yellow painted case has a view on the lid of the famous 'Chateau de Chillon'.
- (3) A Henry Capt cartel musical box inlaid with a beautiful veneer of figured Hungarian ash.
- (4) Inside the box, we see its engraved brass tunelist. The attractive shiny movement and comb below play its six tunes exquisitely.
- (5) The movement has been exceptionally well restored, right down to blueing of the screws.
- (6) The spring barrel and its reflections. The serial number 13254 is stamped on the bedplate.
- (7) A view of the top end of the cylinder, comb, governor assembly with its gears.
- (8) The tunes are all very rhythmical. Its tunesheet headed 'Henry Capt à Genève. No. 13254' lists Waltzes by Strauss, a Galop by Labitsky and Opera Airs by Auber and Donizetti.

loud for our small cottage, I thought I would try adjusting the comb to reduce it slightly. This gave me the opportunity to take out the movement and observe that most of the sound was actually due to the case projecting it, making it the perfect soundbox. This together with its highly flexible comb teeth, had the effect of sustaining the length of sympathetic notes to vibrate in harmony with each other in an extremely melodious manner. I stacked the front edge of the comb a tiny bit and when put back in its case, thought it sounded just right, without losing any of its pleasing musical qualities.

When the box had been apart, I couldn't help but admire its perfectly shaped dampers identically duplicated along the comb, finished off with neat feather barbs on the higher notes. I also noted the serial number that had been inked in the bottom of the case, now faded with age after the many years it had been concealed.

The earliest type of cartel musical box that Henri Capt produced is an example from 1820. It is mounted in the oval base of a French Ormolu clock. It has a cylinder about 8" long and has a sectional comb in 20 segments of 5 teeth. A picture of it can be seen in the MBSGB 'Music Box' magazine of 1965, Volume 2, No 5, written by Lieut. Col. Jackson Fritz. A number of Overture boxes of high quality have 'H Capt' engraved on their brass tunesheets. It is a matter of conjecture if he was the maker or agent.

Paul Bellamy was kind enough to supply the following historical details about the Capt family:

Henri-Louis Capt (Capt-Aubert) (1795-1874) was born on 6th April at le Chenit. His father was Abel Capt and his mother Marianne Golay. He moved to Geneva in about 1816 and married Françoise Aubert, the daughter of a musical box maker, in 1818. His wife assisted him in pricking cylinders. Their daughter was born in 1819. The 1822 census revealed their address at Isle 233 and his profession as a musical box maker and head of a workshop. In 1823 their only son was born, Henry-Frédérich Capt, who later succeeded him.

Examples of Henri-Louis Capt's work include erotic automata watches, circa 1810. Probably his first association was with Isaac Piguet in about 1802. He also made small movements, one of which is the frontispiece in Chapuis': *The History of the Music Box*. It is a nécessaire with two movements, circa

1820, one of which has his name, H. Capt and the other is signed F. Nicole (obviously Francois Nicole). He had another association as Capt & Janin, circa 1820. An example is a watch with sur plateau movement. Chapuis also illustrated a singing bird box by Frères Rochat that contained a musical movement inscribed with the name F. Nicole et Capt, almost certainly François Nicole and Henri Capt, circa 1820.

By 1826, he was at rue des Étuves 129 under the name Capt-Aubert (his wife's maiden name) found on some of his movements. By 1827, he was in association with Christian-Bernhart Freundler up to about 1830 and the company name was Capt & Freundler. Capt was the head of the workshop and Freundler effectively the administrator and company agent. The company objectives were to trade in jewellery, clocks and musical works. This association ended after only three years and the company dissolved on 11th January 1830.

In 1831 the company name was Aubert-Capt at Place Bel Air 186. Aubert was his brother-in-law David-Frédérich Aubert. An 1835 address book gave the Bel Air address plus a London address and the name Aubert et Klaffenberger at 137 Regent Street. The association with his brother-in-law did not last long, ending in 1835. Capt liquidated it and then moved to Place de la Fusterie 85 in the vicinity of rue du Rhône 177. He gave the date of the foundation of his business as 1822, still claiming to be a maker, an horologist and a dealer in jewellery and singing bird automata.

His son started working for him in the 1840s. During the period 1835-1844, Capt the father is said to have worked for Lecoultre & Falconnet. In 1856, Henry Capt junior was associated with Élisée-Jean Boyer. Boyer was a watchmaker and the company name was Capt & Boyer, selling watches and jewellery. It did not last long, failing in March of the same year, Henry Capt senior being charged with the liquidation. Two months later in May 1857 his wife, Françoise Capt (née Aubert), died. Henri Capt senior is thought to have retired about 1866 and he died, aged 79, on February 16th 1874. The son, Henry-Frédérich Capt (1823-1894), visited England twice in 1859, passing through France. He also visited America. Two years later, at the age of 43 he took over the business. In May 1866 he established a 'sleeping' partnership. The business was called Henry Capt, to manufacture and trade in

watches and Jewellery. No mention is made of musical boxes but a Geneva guidebook still referred to jewellery, singing birds and musical boxes.

In 1860, the Geneva Street numbering system changed and rue du Rhône 117 was changed to 17 where Frédéric continued to trade but probably not in musical boxes. A trademark was granted to him on November 1st 1880. In 1885 he married Jeanne-Marguerite-Angeline Christe. He also worked for a number of years with Louis Gallopin, who took over the business in 1889. Gallopin was associated with the brothers Dupuis and the company was called Louis Gallopin et Cie.

A movement with metal tune plaque engraved HRY. CAPT-AUBERT À GENÈVE has been noted with the comb stamped Lecoultre-Falconnet. This clue may resolve the question as to whether Capt was a maker or agent. He was almost certainly both at some time or other and this clue could indicate that he might not have ventured far, if at all, into making cartel movements.

Summary:

Bulleid only had one tune plaque for Henriot, (No. 332) for serial 3172. There were no tune sheet examples. The bedplate of 332 was stamped 14713 as well as the name HENRIOT A GENEVE. Henriot was also an agent. Bulleid surprisingly attributed the maker as Badel of Geneva, circa 1845. He gave no reason why. He also reported that Capt bought cartel musical boxes from Francois-Charles Lecoultre and fixed on his own tune plate, estimating this was at a date post 1847.

The musical repertoire of our illustrated box suggests, including Strauss, a date of around late 1830s to early 1840s. The movement and serial number, plus the Bulleid examples, are a reasonable fit to indicate that Francois-Charles Lecoultre was the maker of the movement with Henriot acting as an agent.

Three of its airs can be heard currently by going onto YouTube and searching for 'Henry Capt 6 air music box'.

NAME THAT TUNE

from Juliet Fynes

My schoolgirl French and German apparently qualify me as Chris's "Translator in Chief of Tune Sheets".

Our newly acquired Henry Capt box (see page 3) has a brass tune sheet with clear engraving that promised to make the task easy and the first, Gedanken-Striche Walzer, looked straightforward enough. The only translation I could find was "dash", so however odd sounding, it must be Dash Waltz. Further research uncovered how this tune got its strange name.

In 1834 Strauss and his orchestra received such a rapturous reception when they played in Leipzig that he decided to dedicate his next composition to "the Noble Inhabitants of Leipzig". Shortly afterwards this new work received its premiere in Vienna, where he invited the large public audience to decide on a title. The resultant vote was for "The Dash Waltz". The surprising thing was that Strauss should again risk this method of naming a tune, as when he did it previously, in 1833, the audience came up with "The Devil Take It Waltz".

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Vorzüglicher und billiger Apparat zur natürlichen Wiedergabe von Sprache, Gesang und Musik.

„Symphonion“ talking-machine

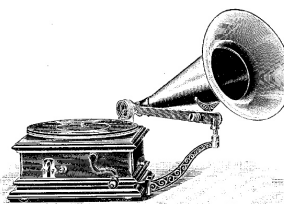
for small and large concerted sound-plates. — Oak case with fine nickeled sound-funnel and concerted diaphragm. Excellent and cheap apparatus reproducing speech, songs as also music-pieces in a very perfect manner.

„Symphonion“ machine parlante

pour grandes et petites plaques de son concertées. — Caisse en chêne avec beau pavillon nickelé et avec diaphragme concerté. Appareil excellent et bon marché reproduisant distinctement la diction, chansons et pièces à musique.



Netto-Gewicht
net weight — poids net —
peso limpio:
circa 6 kg.



Brutto-Gewicht
gross weight — poids brut
— peso bruto:
circa 14 kg.



Grösse des Gehäuses ohne Trichter und Arm.

Size of the case without sound funnel and arm. — Dimensions de la boîte sans pavillon et bras.

Tamaño sin embudo y sin brazo:
27½ × 27½ × 13 cm.

„Symphonion“ maquina que habla

para grandes y pequeñas planchas concertadas. Caja de encina con un magnifico embudo niquelado, aparato barato reproduciendo muy bien las palabras, canciones y piezas de música.



Symphonion-Sprech-Apparat ohne Platten mit Packing — without plates with packing — sans plaques avec emballage — sin planchas con embalaje
Symphonion-Sprech-Apparat mit 12 kleinen Platten und Packing — with 12 small plates and packing — avec 12 petites plaques et emballage — con 12 planchas pequeñas y embalaje
Kleine Schallplatten pro Stück — small sound plates by piece — petites plaques de son la pièce — planchas pequeñas por pieza
Grosse Schallplatten pro Stück — large sound plates by piece — grandes plaques de son la pièce — planchas grandes por pieza
Stahlnadeln per 1000 Stück — steel needles by 1000 pieces — aiguilles d'acier per 1000 piéces — agujas de acero por 1000 piezas
Stahlnadeln, 1. Qualität, per 1000 Stück — steel needles, 1st quality, by 1000 pieces — aiguilles d'acier, 1^{re} qualité, per 1000 piéces — agujas de acero, 1^{ra} calidad, por 1000 piezas
Dauerstift (praktische Neuheit), braucht nicht ausgewechselt zu werden, erspart also das lästige Nadelwechseln bei Sprechapparaten — durable pin (practical novelty) is not to be exchanged, therefore it is not more necessary to exchange the needles being very importunate — pointe durable (nouveau pratique) qu'on n'a pas besoin d'échanger par suite on évite l'échange importun des aiguilles — clavija durable (novedad practica) sin necesidad de cambio, por consecuencia se evita el fastidioso cambio de las agujas.

Preis		Prix		Prices		
Mk.	Pf.	Frs.	Cts.	Estl.	sh.	d.
75	—	93	75	3	15	—
117	—	146	25	5	17	—
3	50	4	38	—	3	6
7	—	8	75	—	7	—
2	50	3	12	—	2	6
3	50	4	38	—	3	6
3	80	4	75	—	3	10

The Lecoultre Frères

by Paul Bellamy

My thanks to the late Don Busby for tidying up the artwork on tune sheets and charts

Auction houses and collectors often use the term 'made by Lecoultre'. They rarely correctly identify which of the many Lecoultre musical box makers actually made the instrument. Sometimes it is David, sometimes Henri. Often it is Lecoultre Frères or just F. Lecoultre. I hope that this article may help to identify which of the many Lecoultres actually made a surviving musical box.

Charles A. Roche of Geneva published a history of the Lecoultres in 1919. It was entitled *La Famille Le Coultre, originaire de Lizy-sur-Ourcq du 16e au 20e siècle*. Roche constructed two family trees. One was for a Lecoultre who married a Pignet, Fig. 1. The other was for a Lecoultre who married a Golay, Fig. 2. He did not explain the relationship between them. Both were descendants of Pierre Le Coultre (circa 1539 - circa 1600) who fled France and settled in Lizy-sur-Ourcq in Switzerland, which is in the Valée de Joux.

Pierre was a Huguenot, one of many who fled religious persecution after Louis XIV of France revoked the Edict of Nantes in 1685. Henry IV of France established the Edict in 1598 to give freedom of religion to Christian Protestants called Huguenots. When revoked, it caused decades of religious conflict and bloody wars that affected Protestant Christians as well as those of the Jewish faith. There was a constant flow of migration to other countries, including Russia, Holland, America, Scotland and England. Nearby Switzerland and the Joux Valley welcomed many of these displaced people.

The late HAV Bulleid produced a dating chart for the Lecoultres and Perrelet, Chart 8 of his book *Musical Box Tune Sheets*. It is reproduced here as Fig. 3. Line ABC is for F. Lecoultre Frères, Lecoultre & Bréchet, followed by Perrelet. Line X is for David Lecoultre and line Y is for Henri Lecoultre. Fig. 1 shows that F. Lecoultre was François-Charles whose parents were Philippe Lecoultre and Charlotte Pignet. Fig. 2 shows that David and Henry were brothers whose parents were Abraham-Joseph Lecoultre and Jeanne-Marie-Julie Golay. David and Henri had a third brother, François-Louis.

The late Pierre Germain wrote a number of articles, one of which was about two of the Lecoultres pub-

lished in an MBSI Journal. He explained that François-Louis Lecoultre was a watchmaker who started making musical boxes in 1812 with bedplates stamped F. Lecoultre. François-Louis was registered in Geneva as François-Louis Lecoultre Frères. Germain wrote that he produced about 3000 musical boxes before his death in 1829. Originally they had musical combs made up of segments of teeth. Later ones had combs made from a single piece of steel. The details fit the beginning of line ABC for F. Lecoultre Frères. The line starts in 1830 at a serial number about 6000. The question is: Did Bulleid or Germain make a mistake in the names? The fact is that they did not.

It is now time to reconcile the research by Germain and HAV Bulleid. The result is my Fig. 4. It has Bulleid's date line ABC extended backwards to 1812 to include the output of François-Louis Lecoultre without the date lines X and Y for David and Henri Lecoultre. So, another question needs to be answered: Why did neither David nor Henri inherit the business of Lecoultre Frères?

There is also another example of cousins being successors to a business, François Nicole. When he retired, his son-in-law became registered in the Geneva archives as successor. However, the two Nicole cousins, David-Elie and Pierre-Moïse Nicole, had their workshops nearby within a short walk from François Nicole and his son-in-law.

The late Luuk Goldhoorn wrote that David and Pierre were in fact working under the auspices of François who concentrated on making sophisticated musical movements. Goldhoorn noted that François was developing very sophisticated musical movements capable of complex musical arrangements. The cylinders were uniquely engraved with a grid pattern and he did not use serial numbers. David and Pierre did use serial numbers and combs were stamped F. Nicole. When François retired, David and Pierre continued as F. Nicole, then Frères Nicole and finally Nicole Frères. They were nearly a generation younger than the son-in-law, Reymond-Nicole. Reymond adopted his wife's family name, Nicole, a convention of the times. When his father-in-law died he reverted to his own family name, Reymond. He

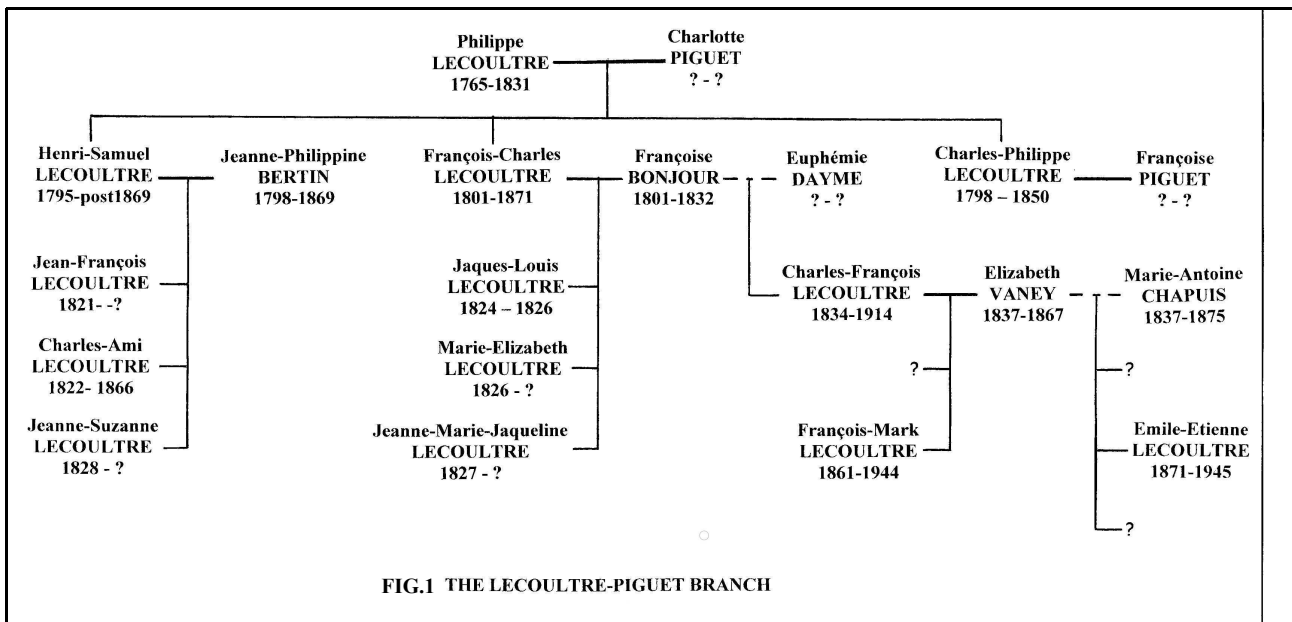


FIG.1 THE LECOULTRE-PIGUET BRANCH

then continued to work on his own and possibly, for a few years, in partnership with Falconnet and others. The comparison of the Nicole succession with that of the Lecoultrés is coincidence but there were both working and family connections.

When François-Louis Lecoultré died, David probably decided to become an independent maker but continued the original set of serial numbers as indicated by Bulleid's Chart 8, (Fig. 3). He was a year younger than François-Louis. His line X starts about 1827 at serial number 4000. This indicates that he was in partnership with brother François-Louis. He established his business at Le Brassus, in the Joux Valley, a considerable distance from Geneva.

Henri was nearly ten years younger than both David and François-Louis. He remained in Geneva. His serial numbers start at zero in about 1820 when he was 28 years old. It suggests he was not working as a partner with his older brothers.

In text accompanying Bulleid's Chart 8 he wrote: "Line X is for David Lecoultré, safe from just before 1830 until he joined the brothers in Geneva". I think Bulleid was wrong and confusing the two family groups. Jaques-David was listed as a blacksmith who lived and worked in the Joux Valley, a maker of ploughs and knives. Germain recounts that he forged and filed combs and supplied both his brother Henri and son Antoine Charles. The confusion about names is an ever-present hazard. For example, Alfred Chapuis in his book about the Swiss musical box makers incorrectly wrote that Henri and François were the sons of Jaques Lecoultré. In fact David,

Henri and François moved to Geneva, probably for work. Chapuis recalls that Henri invented an articulated spherical device used with drilling machines in the preparation of cylinders.

This example of succession by the Nicole cousins is more than coincident with that of the Lecoultrés. The two families were very closely connected, all in the same period of time and within close proximity. It is time to look at each of the Lecoultrés in the context of Geneva. It was an independent City State at the time, partly secular and partly a Bishopric. It was known by many as the Protestant Rome. Non citizens were called Aliens. All Aliens had to be registered if they wished to work in the city.

The Piguet branch, Fig. 1

Philippe Lecoultré (1765-1831) married Charlotte Piguet and settled in Geneva in 1821. They had three children, only one of whom is known to be a musical box maker. He was François-Charles (1801-1871). The other two sons were Henri-Samuel (1795-1869) and Charles-Philippe (1798-1850).

François-Charles Lecoultré married Françoise Bonjour. In 1828 he was recorded in the Chamber of Aliens as head of a musical box workshop. Aliens were selected people who had the right to reside and work in the City of Geneva, which was almost an independent state at the time. His brother Charles-Philippe (1798-1850) worked for him. This justified the business being called Lecoultré Frères. The son of François-Charles, Charles François, succeeded him.

François-Charles had a short partnership with a person called Dunant. This was probably Jean-Pierre Dunant (1793-?), a watch and musical box maker. François-Charles also had a second partner, thought to be Henri-David Golay-Audemars*. In 1828, Golay and Lecoultre were registered as musical box *établisseurs*, a term indicating control over the manufacture of musical boxes but also as subcontractors. This is an important date because it was about the time François-Louis, the cousin, died and when François-Charles became the successor to the Lecoultre Frères business.

The association with Golay ended about 1835. The 1828 population census records François-Charles as a mechanic working from home with his wife and two daughters at rue de la Cité 34. This date was used as the foundation date of his business. The family also lived at Place de Madeleine 135 but the date is not known. By 1831 the family moved to rue de Cou-tance 77 in the district of St. Gervais, the watch making quarter of Geneva.

François-Charles' wife died in 1832. In 1833 he married Euphémie Dayme. Their son, Charles-François, was born in 1834 the date they moved to rue de Chantepoulet 39 (later No. 23). He then collaborated with Alexis Pignal, a blank maker (i.e. a maker of bedplates, mainspring barrels and other mechanical components), until about 1845.

François formed another partnership with a person called Bréchet. The business was known as Lecoultre & Bréchet. Jean-Mathieu Bréchet was recorded in the 1837 census as a 23-year old mechanic living at this address in 1835 and again in 1843. The last reference

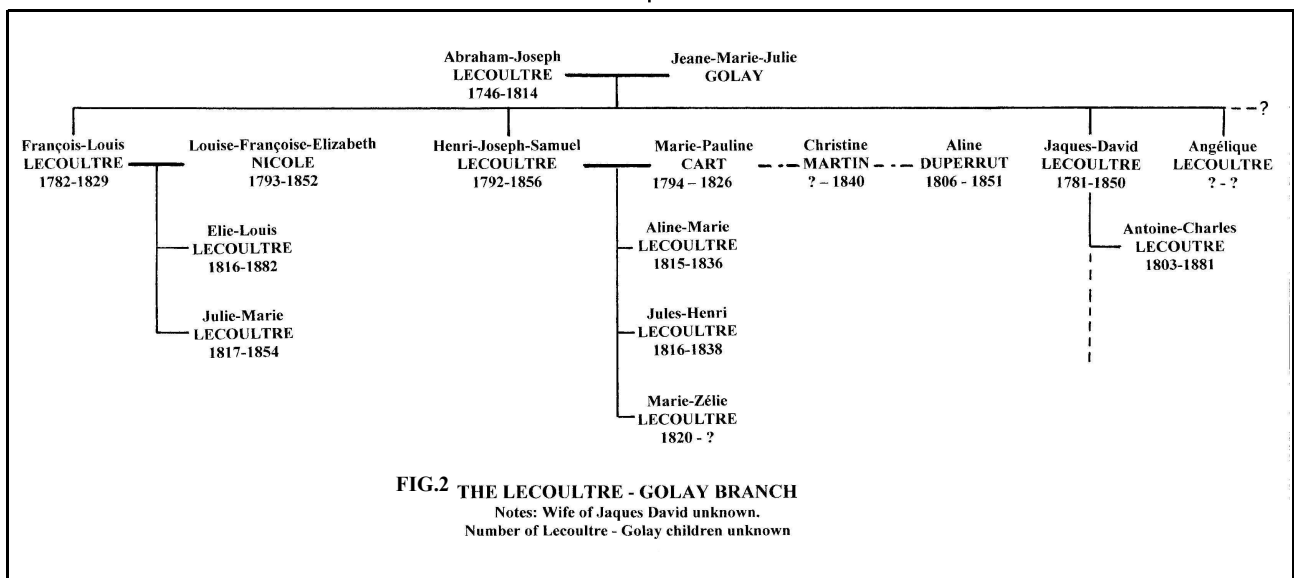
to him was in 1857 when he was known to be working on his own as a musical box maker. Bulleid's dating chart shows that the partnership existed from about 1844 to 1854.

In 1855 François-Charles received Geneva citizenship and was no longer registered as an Alien. His son, Charles-François, succeeded him about 1865. When Charles-François died in 1871, Perrelet took over to become Perrelet et Cie, using the same set of serial numbers.

Auguste Perrelet. Movements for Perrelet are quite rare and few are found with markings stamped on components. Movements with A. P. Co stamped on the governor cock are almost certain to be for him. The mystery of the 'missing' Perrelet movements may be explained if they were the subject of agency sales, thought to be by George Bendon.

From 1871 to mid-1874 a person called Grosclaude was associated with Perrelet under the trade name Auguste Perrelet & Cie at rue des Alpes 12. From 1874 to 1879/80 Grosclaude is thought to have been a maker on his own. From the end of 1879 to 1889 he was a professor of algebra, astronomy and technical drawing at the École d'Horlogerie de Genève, founded in 1824.

François-Charles travelled to London several times from 1837 to 1863, probably with Henry-Louis Capt-Aubert**. He used the London firm B. B. & C. (Berens, Blumberg and Co.) to import his musical boxes. B B et Cie is often stamped on bedplates and printed on tune sheets. The association with Capt is unclear but it is interesting to note that a firm of watchmakers called Nicole and Capt*** existed in



London in the 1840s. At its peak the firm employed about 50 workers, indicating the size and prosperity of the business.

The Golay branch, Fig. 2

Abraham-Joseph Lecoultre (1744-1814) married Jeane-Marie-Julie Golay (?-?). They had three sons who became musical box makers, François-Louis (1782-1829), Henri Joseph-Samuel (1792-1856) and Jaques-David (1781-1850). François-Louis married Marie-Françoise-Elizabeth Nicole (1793-1852), the daughter of François Nicole. François-Louis and his family lived at the same address as the Nicoles. It was a very large, multi-story building with families probably occupying a whole of or part of one level. Jaques-David was known as David. His son was Antoine-Charles Lecoultre (1803-1881) who founded the Jaeger Lecoultre watch-making business in 1833 that exists to this day.

David and his brother Henri are both credited with the development of single comb forté-piano movements. Each had a different way of creating loud and soft musical passages. The 'loud' was no louder than a normal movement but the piano passages were of much lower intensity. They even introduced musical crescendo and diminuendo passages. Each had a different way of achieving this unique and rare feature. The differences are technically complex (too much so to explain in this article) and still not fully understood to this day. It is possible that they were in some sort of sibling competition with each other. It is thought that Henri was the first to attempt forté-piano arrangements. Both abandoned the single comb method but their techniques apparently preceded the later two comb forté-piano movements.

François-Louis is credited with the development of spiral clock balance springs to make comb teeth damper wires as well as lead weights soldered to comb teeth to lower the pitch. Both were major advances in musical technology that enabled his relative by marriage, François Nicole, to make dampers for comb teeth. Antoine-Charles Lecoultre was, like his father, recorded in archives as a forger of steel and maker of combs. At first he also supplied the Nicoles and possibly others. Times were in recession and he reverted to a more profitable line of work making watches. He was the founding member of the Jaeger-Lecoultre firm that exists today.

Unfortunately, François-Louis Lecoultre rarely fea-

tures as a master of musical box production in his own right. If an F. Lecoultre musical box has a serial number at or below 3000 it is was definitely made by François-Louis Lecoultre. Those above 3000 must therefore be attributed only to François-Charles Lecoultre and his successors.

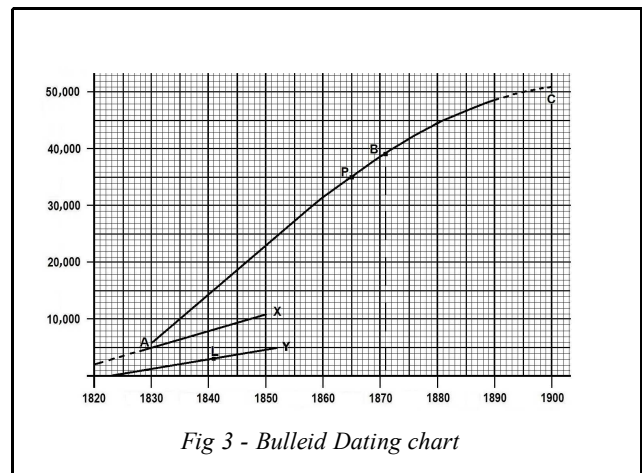


Fig 3 - Bulleid Dating chart

Lecoultre et Falconnet. Germain noted that movements had combs stamped Lecoultre et Falconnet. He assumed that it was François-Charles in partnership with Pierre-François Falconnet, some time after an association with a person called Henri-David Golay. Germain noted that the tune plaques of some movements were engraved with the names F. Lecoultre et Falconnet as well as Hy Capt-Aubert à Genève. The association with Henri Capt was probably with Capt acting as an agent. Falconnet had a number of associations and was probably more of an entrepreneur in association with other musical box makers than a maker in his own right.

Tune sheets

For the Lecoultre Frères there are apparently no known examples of tune sheets prior to about 1830. The earliest example is Fig. 5 François-Charles Lecoultre dated about 1835. It has acanthus leaf borders and beaded frame to the tune list.

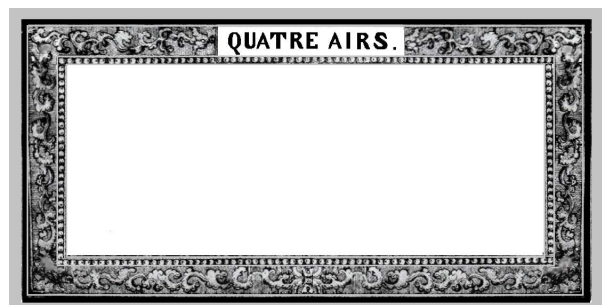


Fig 5: The earliest recorded tune sheet for François-Charles Lecoultre

Lecoultrre Frères

Including François-Louis Lecoultrre, François-Charles Lecoultrre, Charles-Philippe Lecoultrre, Charles Lecoultrre, Bréchet, Perrelet, Grosclaude

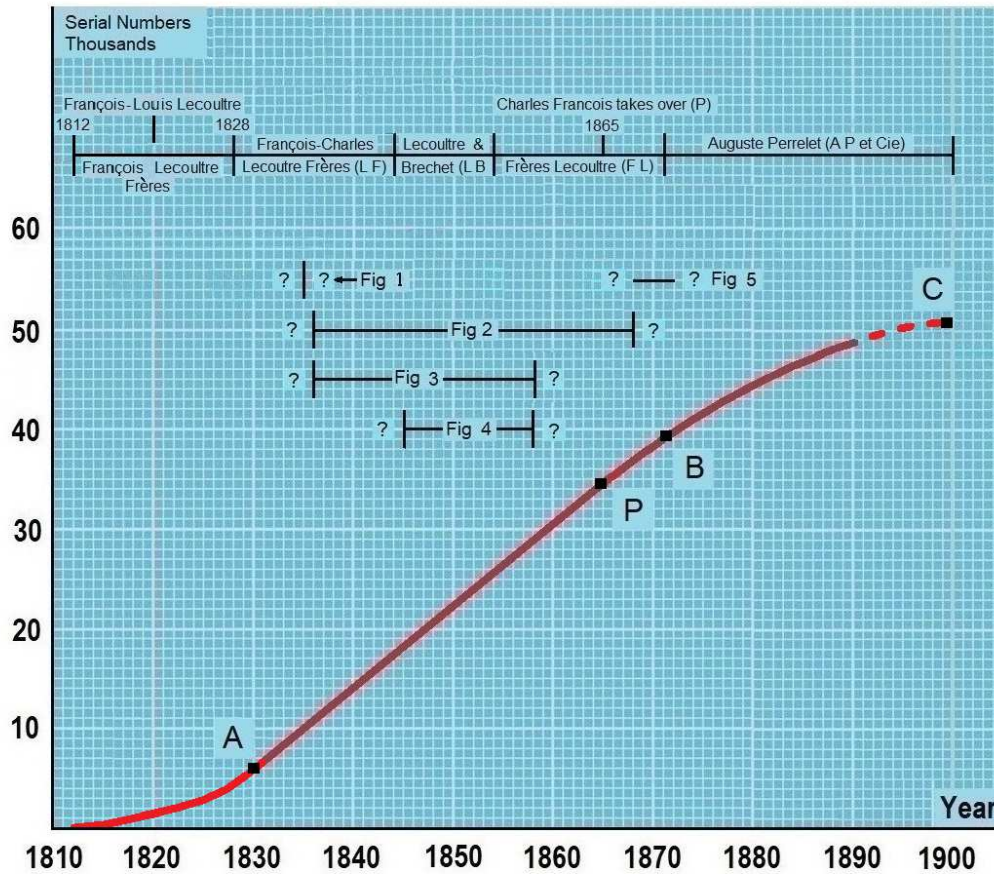


Fig 4: Paul Bellamy's latest version of the dating chart

Fig. 6 has an oak leaf border pattern and was used from about 1836 to 1868 when Charles Lecoultrre, the son of François-Charles, took over the business. It



Fig 6: Charles Lecoultrre, 1836 - 1868

has L F in the top right oval panel. The left hand oval panel was used for the gamme number. The bottom cartouche has BB&C for agent Berens, Blumberg & Co of London.

Fig. 7 is again mainly associated with agent Berens, Blumberg & Co (BB&C) and spans circa 1836 to post 1858. It has a swag of musical instruments in the left and right borders. The earliest versions carry FL for François-Charles. It then changes to LB for Lecoultrre Bréchet, pre-1842 to post 1855. This LF example then supersedes the others up to about 1858.

Fig 8A is the first coloured example with acanthus floral border top and bottom. The side borders have mandolins, tambourines, xylophone, etc. It is not uncommon to find the same pattern but with the side



Fig 7 (left): Sheet used by agent Berens, Blumberg & Co (B.B.&C.) from 1836 to at least 1868.

borders reversed. The tune sheet was in use from about 1845 to 1858, spanning the Lecoultre Bréchet partnership and then followed by the name Frères Lecoultre (FL). The pattern was also used by Badel of Geneva, who could have been acting as an agent. Fig. 8B is an enlarged version of the script: 'Etouffoires en acier, Badel à Genève.' Also, the bottom cartouche is underscored with a line thickened at its centre, typical of Henriot of Geneva, also was probably also an agent. One example of this pattern was also used by Reymond Nicole.

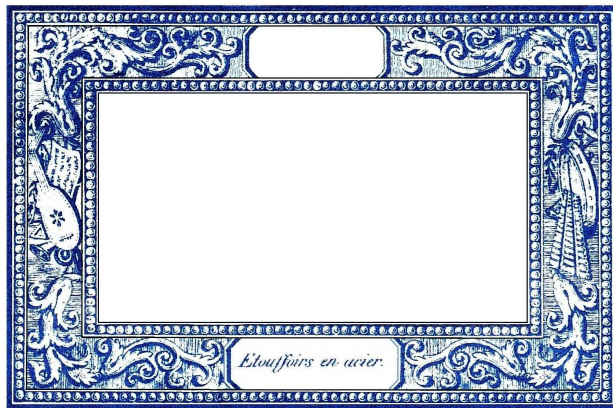


Fig 8A: This sheet in use from about 1845 to 1858.

Figs 9A and 9B. When Charles François Lecoultre succeeded his father in 1865, he introduced this diamond shaped tune sheet. Fig 9A has his name but it is absent on fig. 9B, probably when Perrelet took over the business. It is for serial 38607, circa 1870. Tune sheets after about 1870 are quite rare. It suggests Perrelet was making movements for others. Fig 10 is the only tune sheet pattern used by David Lecoultre. This example is circa 1848. It has the words 'Forti et Piano, Crescendo, Diminuendo' plus the heading **MUSIQUE à EXPRESSION.** It is not

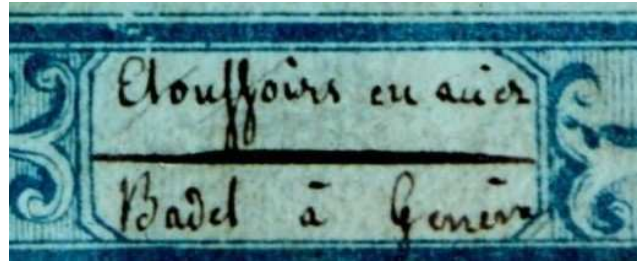
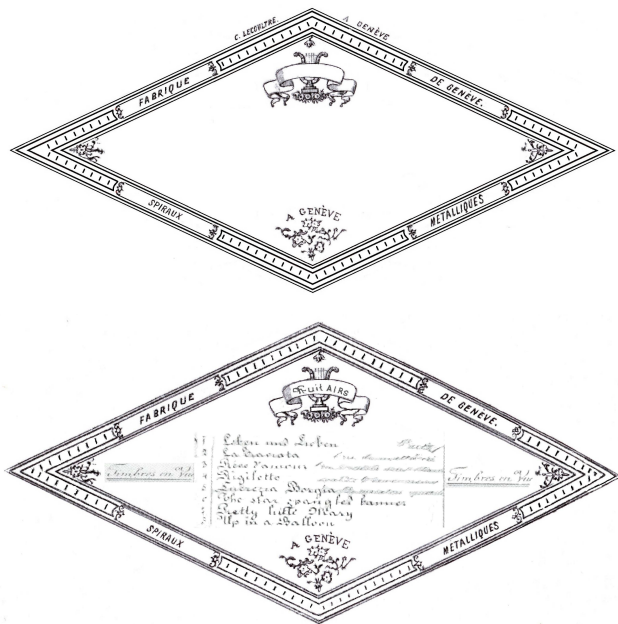


Fig 8B: The sheet in Fig 8A was also used by Badel of Geneva.



Figs 9A & 9B: Diamond shaped tune sheets introduced when Charles François Lecoultre succeeded his father in 1865.

just a single comb forte-piano movement but has the additional feature of increasing and decreasing volumes.

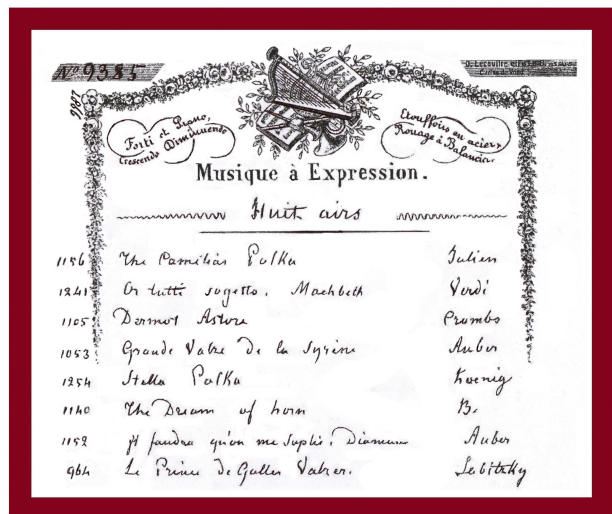


Fig 10: Pattern of tune sheet used by David Lecoultre.

The same tune sheet pattern may have different words such as 'Etouffoires en Acier' for a standard

movement or 'Piece à Expression' for a forte-piano movement without crescendo and diminuendo.

Fig. 11 was used when Henri Lecoultre was in partnership with Granger, circa 1836. It may have been an agency tune sheet and has the heading 'Airs Expressifs', probably meaning forte-piano.



Fig 11: Sheet used by Henri Lecoultre.

Fig. 12 has the letters V.L.G. in the top cartouche but was for a Lecoultre & Granger movement circa 1844. VLG is for an agent called Valogne. The same pattern was also used by Alexandre Soualle of Paris as late as 1871.

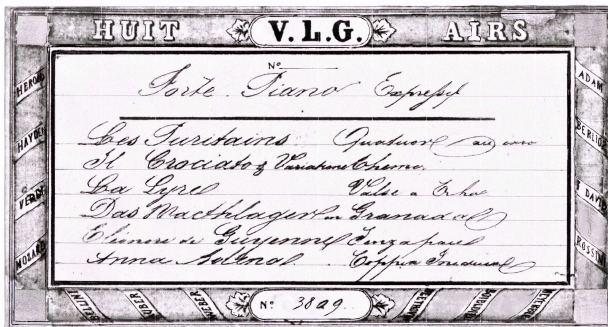


Fig 12: Agent Valogne for Lecoultre & Granger

Fig. 13 is a tune plaque for a Lecoultre & Granger long-and short-pin forte piano movement headed OVERTURES EXPRESSIVES, circa 1843. The agent is Mercier & Reynaud of Geneva.

Post script: I hope that the above account will help auction houses, restorers and collectors to stop using the term 'Made by Lecoultre'. I also ask that owners of musical movements to let me know if they have movements with combs stamped F. Lecoultre and with a serial number at or below 3,000. The very few that may have survived were made by François-Louis Lecoultre and he deserves to be credited with that fact.

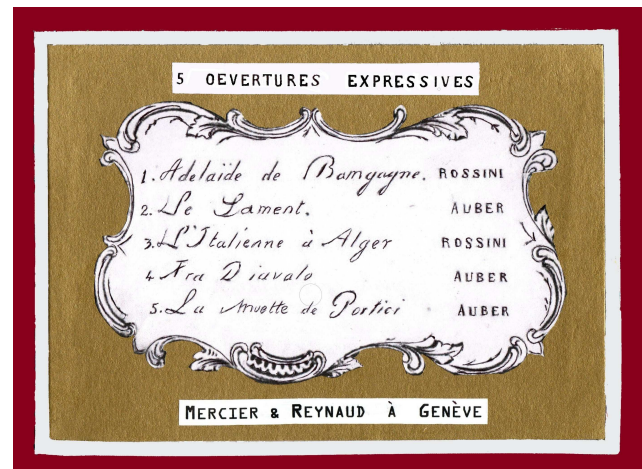


Fig 13: Lecoultre & Granger movement from 1843

Very few David and Henri Lecoultre movements will have survived. Some will be standard movements, others will be just forté-piano and, rarest of all, forté-piano with crescendo and diminuendo (achieved by grading the pin length). The wording on the tune sheet is critical for accurately determining which type. If the tune sheet is lost, close scrutiny and careful listening is the only way determine which type. If either of these types is repinned, the original quality of expression and musical timing will be destroyed forever.

***Louis Golay** of Le Chenit is recorded as a maker of musical mechanisms and singing birds in 1800. *Vide "Watchmakers and Clockmakers of the World"* by G. H Baillie. – Ed.

****Henri Daniel Capt** is recorded working with Isaac Daniel Piguet (1775 – 1841) in Geneva as watchmakers. The firm of Isaac D Piguet et Cie (with Capt) was in existence from 1802 until 1811. Piguet was considered to be one of the finest makers of complicated watches. *Ibid – Ed.*

***The watchmaking firm of **Nicole et Capt** is recorded working at Sollias in the Vallée de Joux. Henri Féréol Piguet in London was a member of the business in 1861, when he invented the chronograph pocket watch with fly-back seconds hand. *Ibid. – Ed.*

Note: The currently existing firms of **Audemars Piguet** watchmakers, founded by Jules-Louis Audemars (1851 – 1918) and Edward Auguste Piguet (1853 – 1919) can be explored at <https://www.audemarspiguet.com/en/anout/origins.html> and **Jaeger-Le Coultre** at <https://www.jaeger-lecoultre.com> – Ed.

“Clocking up the Records”

Auction Team Breker 24 – 25 September 2021



Fairground organ by Alfred Bruder, Waldkirch, sold for €20,000 (£16,868)

Office antiques aficionados were celebrating a **new world record price** last Saturday when an **1867 Rasmus Malling-Hansen “Writing Ball”** clocked up € 174,840 /\$ 204,560 (Lot 241) at Auction Team Breker’s two-day technology sale.

Showcased in the auction was a **colourful collection of fairground art** from the *Markt-und-Schausteller-Museum* in Essen. Leading the parade was a fabulous 48-key fairground organ by **Alfred Bruder of Waldkirch** with six boxes of music books at €20,000/\$23,200 (Lot 681), followed by carousel animals such as the whimsical two-seater elephant sofa at almost €4,400/\$5,100 (609), the English galloper by Arthur Anderson of Bristol for €4,800/\$5,560 (Lot 612) and figures like the elegant Gavioli flautist for €5,200/\$6.030 (Lot 684). A magnificently sombre **Style 104 19 5/8" Polyphon** in ebonised case provided musical accompaniment at €10,000/\$11,600 (Lot 529), while a stately **Viennese flute clock** marked the passing hours with opera at

€12,000/\$13,920 (Lot 678).

The 22-note organ had a spring-driven fusee movement with two ranks of wood pipes and eight spirally-pinned barrels. It dates from circa 1830-1840.

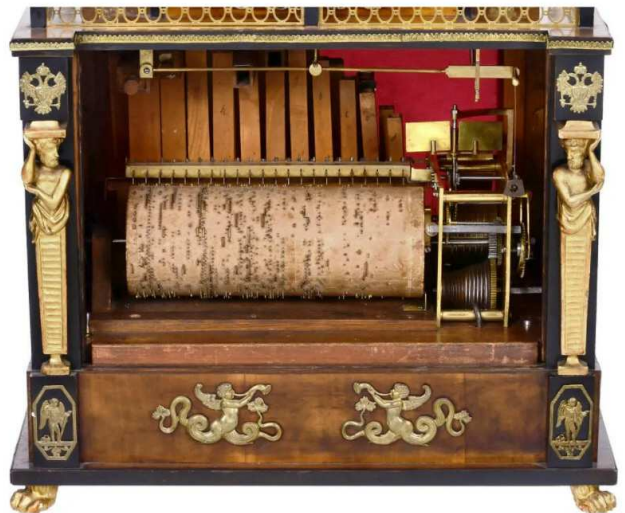
An unusual Reginaphone model 139 was complete with brass horn, turntable and tone arm but failed to meet its reserve.

A rare and amusing maritime themed Thorens 4 1/2" disc machine in stained soft wood featured carved fretwork ships, Neptune, anchors and "Trafalgar, Rule Britannia", topped by the Royal coat of arms. It may have been made in 1905 to commemorate the centenary of the battle. It sold for €700 (£590).

A pair of Hupfeld Clavistim pianos looked interesting. The first, an electric piano from 1910, was in a fine walnut case with Art-Nouveau candleholders. Its pneumatic action had jumping keys and came with a matching stool and 89 rolls. It



An ebonised Style 104 Polyphon, sold for €10,000 (£8,434)



A magnificent Viennese flute clock, sold for €12,000 (£10,120)

sold for €2,800 (£2,360).

The second, a wartime Model III Clavistich Orchestra in a vertical case, had a 10-note xylophone and harp effect. Despite its rarity, it failed to reach its reserve.

A coin-operated barrel piano orchestrion by E Dienst & Co of Leipzig was housed in a fine Art Nouveau styled case with transfer-decorated glass panelled doors. It featured 35 piano notes, a rotating mandolin effect, cymbal, snare drum and triangle and a 9-air barrel. It dated from 1905. It too failed to reach its reserve.

In the gramophone department, the rarest was the 1896 Phonograph Alarm Clock by Lioret and Farcot (not illustrated here), "Le Merveilleux", with celluloid cylinders, invented and made by Henri Lioret of Paris. It unfortunately failed to meet its reserve at €6,500 (£5,480). A spectacular looking French floor-standing (formerly) coin-operated café gramophone 'Concert Automatique' with a blue flower horn sold for €1,100 (£927). It came complete with both a Pathé reproducer for vertical cut records and a soundbox for standard 78 rpm records. Also French, a rare Pathé Actuelle could also play both types of record. It had a reflecting diaphragm mounted at the end of its slim cylindrical tone arm, the front of which had a rotatable needle/stylus holder. The bottom of the cabinet was for record storage. This also sold for €1,100 (£927).

Note: All prices shown exclude buyer's premium.

Unusual maritime themed Thorens 4 1/2" disc musical box, circa 1905, sold for €700 (£590)



Mahogany Reginaphone model 139 with 13 20 3/4" discs and matching base cabinet failed to reach its reserve at €10,000 (£8,434)





Hupfeld Clavist electric player piano, circa 1910, with stool and 89 rolls sold for €2,800 (£2,360)

Auction Team Breker's second sale of the season takes place on **Saturday 6 November**.

More details and a full list of realized prices at www.breker.com.

Please visit www.breker.com and www.youtube.com/auctionteambreker.

Please contact the main office in Cologne, Ger-

many for more details:

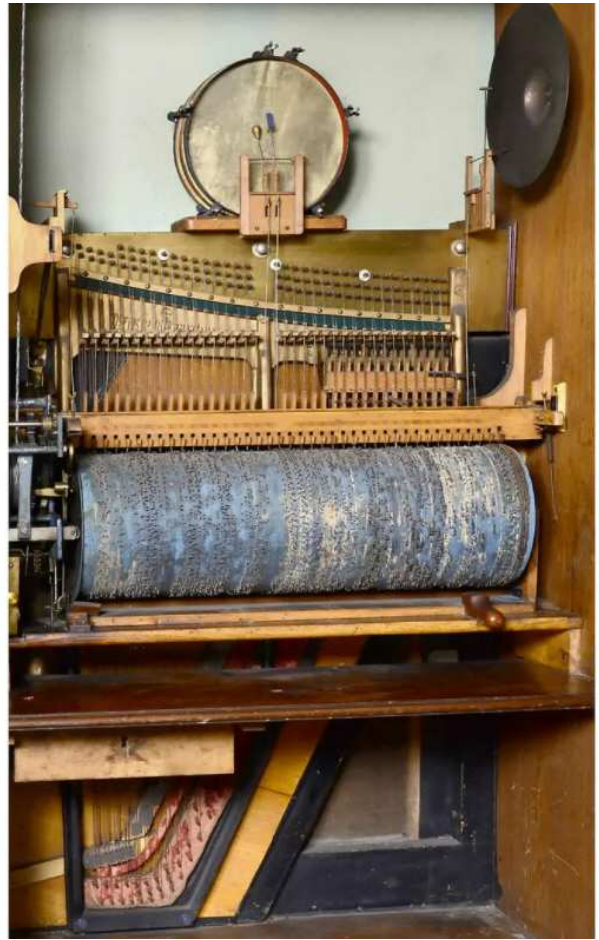
Auction Team Breker, 50997 Koeln (Godorf), Germany

Tel. + 49 (0) 2236-38 43 40 – Fax + 49 (0) 2236-38 43 430

E-Mail: auction@breker.com

Below: A Hupfeld Clavist Orchestra Model III, circa 1915. It failed to meet its reserve at €2,800 (£2,360)





*A Dienst weight-driven barrel piano orchestrion with 35 keys also failed to reach its reserve at at €1,800 (£1,520)
A Concert Automatique cafe gramophone sold for €1,100. Below A Pathé Actuelle cabinet gramophone also sold for €1,100.*



Patent.

„Gloriosa“ Lit. N.

Brevet.

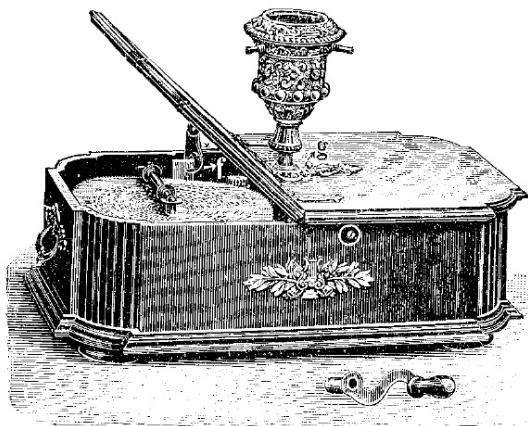
41 Töne — tongues — lames — voces.

Christbaum-Untersatz mit Dreh- und Musikwerk mit seitlichem bequemem Kurbelaufzug.

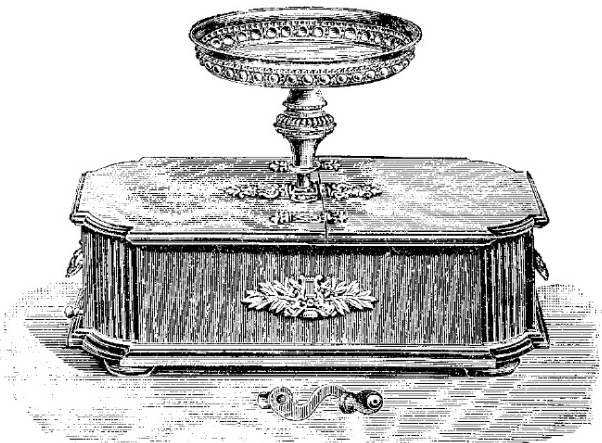
Christmas-tree-stand; with commodious side, crank-motion for the music-work.

Porte-arbres de Noël à mouvement tournant et boîte à musique, remontage latéral commode à manivelle.

Porta-árboles, torceándose con música.



Höhe mit Ornamentaufsatz 31 cm
height — hauteur avec surtout décoré — altura con adorno.



Höhe mit Schale 31 cm
height — hauteur avec coupe — altura con escudilla.

Elegantes Gehäuse Nussbaum matt mit Metall-Beschlägen. — Elegant dull walnut-case with brass-work. — Élégante caisse noyer mat a garnitures métalliques. — Caja de nogal mate con forro metálico.

Gewicht — weight — poids — peso: 9 kg netto, 13 1/2 kg brutto.

Auswechselbare Notenscheiben. — Exchangeable tunes. — Feuilles échangeables. — Hojas variables.

„Gloriosa“ Lit. N. bildet durch das starke mit über 100 Pfd. probirte Triebwerk einen prachtvollen Christbaum-Untersatz, um das heilige Weihnachtsfest durch einen sich langsam drehenden Tannenbaum mit feierlicher, dem Feste entsprechender Musik von prächtiger Klangfülle und edler Tonart zu verherrlichen. Das Musikwerk kann stets sofort abgestellt werden und ist das „Gloriosa“ dann als Drehwerk (für Schaufenster etc.) zu benutzen. Musik- und Triebwerk lassen sich während des Spielens und Drehens beliebig reguliren.

Genau wie die runden Christbaumuntersätze mit Spielwerken lässt sich der „Gloriosa“-Christbaum-Untersatz in Familien, Hôtels, Restaurants noch vielseitig verwenden, denn man kann damit Tafelaufsätze, Bouquets, Pyramiden etc. mit oder ohne Musikbegleitung in langsam drehende Bewegung setzen. Das „Gloriosa“ spielt nach vollständigem Aufzug der Feder circa 1/2 Stunde. Zu dem „Gloriosa“ wird eine reiche Ornamentaufsatzschale (Grösse 22 cm) zum Daraufstellen beliebiger Gegenstände, wie Vasen, Blumentöpfe, Goldfischgläser etc., 1 reicher Kunstguss-Ornamentaufsatz mit 3 Schrauben und Extra-Schlüssel zum Einspannen von stammförmigen Gegenständen bis zu 55 mm Dicke und 1 Notenscheibe gratis geliefert.

„Gloriosa“, with its working-power tested up to over 1 Cwt., forms a splendid Christmas-tree-stand, tending to enhance the festivities of the season by the slow revolutions of the tree; fine-toned good and suitable music also produces its effect. The music can be shut off at any moment and the stand be used for show-windows etc. It can be regulated during the play, serves with or without music for entertainments in hotels, restaurants, families etc., can be used for bouquets and various other purposes. Plays abt. 1/2 an hour by one winding. A rich ornamental dish (size 22 c. m.) serving to hold objects, such as Vases, flower-pots, gold-fish-bowls etc., and a rich, artistic ornamental casting with 3 screws and extra-key to hold trunk-like articles up to 55 mm in diam. and 1 music-disc gratis with each stand.

Avec son impulsion essayée à plus de 100 livres, „Gloriosa“ forme un magnifique porte-arbre de Noël qui contribue à rebousser l'éclat de la fête de Noël par un sapin qui tourne lentement avec accompagnement d'une musique solennelle et pleine de majesté. La musique peut s'arrêter à volonté et „Gloriosa“ peut alors servir de mouvement tournant pour les devantures, etc. La musique et l'impulsion se règlent à volonté pendant que la musique joue et que le mouvement tourne. „Gloriosa“ peut servir comme les autres porte-arbres de Noël à des usages multiples dans les hotels, restaurants et familles en y faisant tourner des surtouts, bouquets, pyramides, etc. avec ou sans accompagnement de musique. Gloriosa joue à peu près une demi-heure sans se remonter. Gloriosa se fournit avec une coupe ornementale sur laquelle on peut mettre vase, pot de fleurs, aquarium, etc., un surtout en fonte à 3 vis et clef pour fixer les objets en forme d'arbres pouvant avoir jusqu'à 55 mm d'épaisseur et avec une feuille de musique.

La „Gloriosa“ es alta atraccion para hoteles, restaurantes y muy apto para casas de familias y segun su decoracion un adorno para cada mesa. El instrumento se torcea ca. 45 minutos tirado enteramente, mientras que toca la música. Porta mas que 50 kilos. Se puede poner encima del plato vasos, pirámides, ramilletes, frutas, etc.



Gloriosa Lit. N. mit Zubehör und Kiste ohne Noten — with accessories and case, without sheets — avec accessoires sans feuilles — con accesorios sin hojas
Notenscheiben (discs — feuilles — hojas) zu Gloriosa Lit. N. à

Netto-Preise Prix nets	
M	P
48	50
—	40

Wer mindestens 1 Dutzend Christbaum-Untersätze „Gloriosa“ in einer Lieferung bestellt und abnimmt, erhält auf obigen Preis einon

Weihnachtsrabatt von 5%.
5% extra Christmas-box-allowance with each lot of 1 doz. taken at one time. — Celui qui prend en une commande au moins une douzaine de porte-arbres de Noël „Gloriosa“ reçoit encore une remise exceptionnelle de 5%. — Tomanda una docona á una vez, se da 5% extra.

Bei Baarzahlung innerhalb 30 Tagen 2%.
2% discount for cash within 30 days. — Escompte de 2% pour les paiements au comptant dans le délai de 30 jours. — 2% al contado dentro de 30 dias.

Automata at the Seaside

A look at Tim Hunkin's 'Under the Pier' Show

by David Soulsby



Photo 1: Southwold Pier, housing the 'Under the Pier' show

With lockdown over, for the moment, we decided to have a short break in Suffolk and pay a visit to Southwold pier (Photo 1) to see Tim Hunkin's celebrated "Under the Pier show". The original pier built in 1900 was 810 ft. long and used as a landing stage for the steamships that travelled from London Bridge. Over the years various parts of the pier were destroyed by storms and in 1979 it had been reduced to a mere 60 feet in length.

In 1987 it was privately purchased and rebuilding began in 1999 with completion in 2001.

Tim Hunkin is a Jack of all trades but master of them all. A Cambridge graduate living in Suffolk, he is an engineer, cartoonist, writer, TV presenter and builder of arcade machines and automata. He has produced a great number of automata over the years

including the collection boxes that were featured in Mechanical Music World Issue 20. Every one of these has a humorous theme running through it. I knew I was in Hunkin territory as soon as I walked through the pier archway with its animated sign (Photo 2). A motor, driven directly from a solar panel, makes the letters spelling out the pier name sway as if bobbing on the tide. Behind the sign there is a flexible stainless steel tube which snakes up and down like a wave, with model boats on top and fish below.

The "show" is not in fact under the pier but housed in one of the many buildings scattered along its boardwalk, now 623 feet long. It opened in 2001 starting with only five of his machines from Cabaret Mechanical Theatre at Covent Garden.



Photo 2: Tim Hunkin's animated pier sign

Standing outside the building is the famous Water clock built in 1998 and sponsored by Thames Water as a temporary feature to promote water recycling.

Constructed in about three weeks on a very tight budget, the original model had the water driving the pendulum to keep the clock hands turning. This design proved to be very unreliable and the whole thing was scrapped. However the owner of Southwold pier was so impressed he commissioned Tim to rebuild the clock re-using some of the original parts. A notice beneath the new clock describes the present mechanism.

“Water is pumped to the top of the clock from the pond. Originally the escapement was water powered, but it was rather unreliable so now it’s electric. The figures and chimes are powered from the water in the bath. Water gradually fills the bath then overflows and waters the garden. The clock escapement opens a valve to empty the bath. The figures and chimes are powered by water from the bath. The clock was made by Will Jackson & Tim Hunkin. All the copper comes from old hot water cylinders”.



Photo 3: The Water Clock

Every hour and half hour the mechanism behind the clock begins to pump the water around the sculpture (Photo 3). Flowers spring up from the tank at the base and the couple sharing the bath squirt water at each other in turn (Photo 4). The two boys below drop their pants and pee unsuccessfully into the toilet (Photo 5). The original clock bore the sign “Hunkin and Jackson Horological Urologists 1998” Drawn by the screams and laughter I soon found the arcade. It was heaving, the concept of social distanc-



Photos 4A and 4B: showing details of the figures sharing the bath



Photo 5: The two boys

ing obviously alien to the visitors, who gathered round the machines, their coins at the ready. The room was filled with Tim's quirky coin-op games, and simulators, which he built himself, mainly from scrapped materials or items picked up from second hand outlets.

The Change machine provided me with a handful of coins. The cost of playing was between 40p and a pound (certainly significant inflation since the one old penny machines I remembered as kid). "The Doctor" was the first exhibit that I tried. A papier-mâché figure in a glass case with a stethoscope in his ears is posed with a pen in hand (Photo 6).



Photo 6

The other end of the stethoscope protrudes from the case and you are invited to hold this against your stomach. Gurgling noises can be heard coming from the tube. The doctor nods his head, makes a diagnosis and begins to scribble on a pad. Movement of cams control the writing of the doctor's signature on a sheet of NHS prescription paper which is delivered via a slot below. Of course it is completely illegible.



Photo 7: Rent-a-Dog for a walk round Southwold

Another popular piece was "Rent-a-dog", which displayed a fibre glass model of a bull terrier standing on a treadmill. There is a lead attached to the dog's collar and after inserting your coin you are invited to stand behind the dog on the treadmill and take him for a walk. The treadmill starts up when you pull the lead back. There are two screens in front of you, on a wooden frame, one video depicting your journey and the lower one showing the dog's view.

From time to time the dog might pause to inspect something, as dogs do, and the treadmill will stop. On other occasions the dog may chase after a cat and the treadmill will speed up. The dog also turns its head round from time to time to grin at you. The treadmill was from a pier gym running machine that had broken and with his engineering skills Tim was able to mend it and reduce the gearing to slow it down. The view of your journey shown on the

screens demonstrates Tim's artistic skills. He took a series of digital photographs of buildings on a route round Southwold and printed them on a large format printer to about 300 mm high. He cut these out and folded them to make a 3D diorama and then produced an animated video of a walk round the town.



Photo 8: Crankenstein - the beast is brought to life at the turn of the handle

One of the automata on show that was in fact not made by Tim is called Crankenstein, (Photos 8 & 9). It was constructed by Will Jackson in 1989. Will went on to establish the renowned Engineered Arts company that produces incredibly lifelike robots for business and movie work. This early example of his talent features a life size model, with his head slumped down, locked in a cage. As you turn the handle below, the pointer on the meter indicating life force gradually moves round the dial. As it ominously approaches the red section the hands gripping the bars begin to move. They become more agitated as the handle is turned. The bars rattle and shake as the needle goes well into the DANGER zone. Finally with a mighty shout that startles all the visitors nearby, the 'monster' springs forward,

mouth open and eyes bulging. It is alive!!



Photo 9

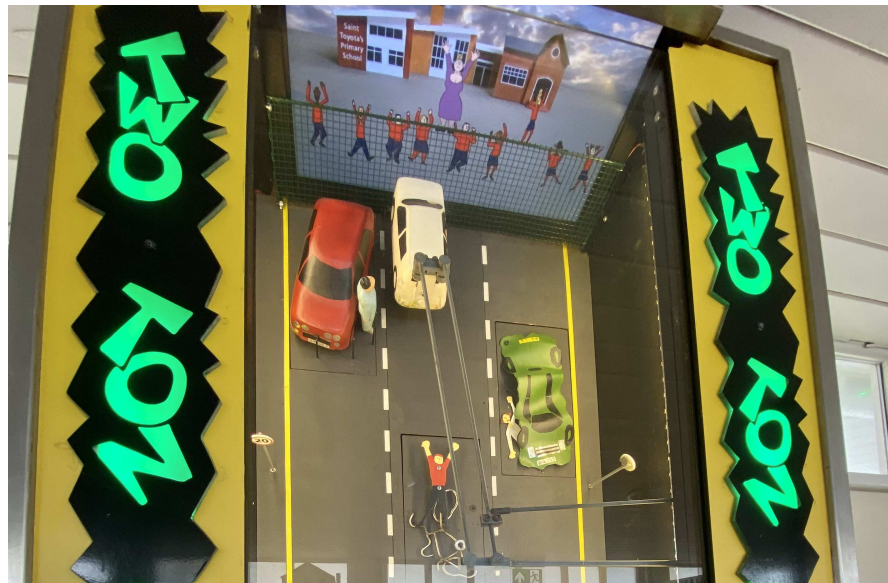
Just for a second, then you've had your 40p's worth and it slumps back with the life force ebbing to zero.



Photo 10: The family and lamb await the spin of the wheel

Tim also has another arcade called Novelty Automation near Holborn tube station. Some of the automata started life in Southwold and were later moved to London. "Pet or Meat" (Photos 10 - 13) is an interesting if perhaps slightly gruesome example of one machine that made the trip from the coast, possibly deemed not suitable for viewing by the kids on the pier. Wooden carved figures of a family of four and a lamb stand expressionless in a wooden 'theatre'. Above them is mounted a large wheel, with the words *Pet* and *Meat* printed alternately around the circumference. On top of the whole structure is a wooden lamb nervously looking down. Turning the handle below starts the pointer on the dial in motion accompanied by a menacing sound,

Photo 16: SUV arrives at the school leaving carnage in its wake



each time the car strikes them, revealing the havoc that ensues from each collision. When you reach the top a school mistress appears and awards you a score for your driving skill. Most participants were of course trying to crash into as many hazards as possible to expose the carnage that this caused!

Also on the pier, I glanced into a modern arcade filled with one armed bandits, pinball tables and large screen video games. The electronic sounds accompanying images of spaceships, racing cars and “shoot ‘em ups” drowned out the noise from the holiday makers. This sort of entertainment can be found in similar venues up and down the country. On the other hand the experience of Tim’s arcade is unique and well worth a visit.



Photo 15: Obstacles en route

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- To provide opportunities of social interaction to members through meetings and outings of musical and other historical interest.
- To establish formal links and working relationships with other national and international organisations in the field of mechanical music.
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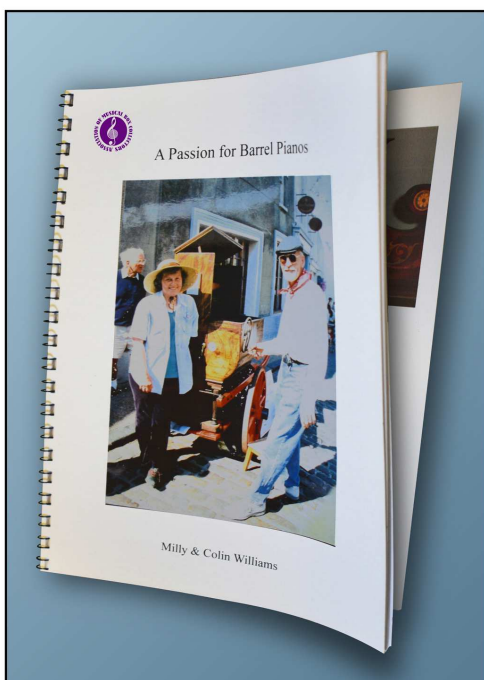
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