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INCORPORATED ASSOCIATION OF  
ORGANISTS — BERKSHIRE BRANCH

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A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Professor H. C. BARNARD, D.Litt., F.T.C.L.

Emeritus Professor of Education, Reading University

In wishing all our members a Happy New Year, I would like once more to thank those stalwarts who throughout the past twelve months have faithfully supported our efforts and attended our meetings. Their loyalty is a great source of strength to the Branch. I hope that in the coming year we may receive more encouragement from those of our members who have hitherto been passive rather than active. We shall appreciate warmly their co-operation, and the resultant advantage will, we believe, prove mutual. I should like to add that any suggestions as to future activities would be welcomed by the Council and would receive the fullest consideration.

EDITORIAL

In this our eighth issue we are breaking fresh ground in one respect. It was felt that Mr. John Russell's provocative talk on "our" instrument called for more considered comment than those who were present were able to make on the spur of the moment and our President has contributed a reply to Mr. Russell in his usual forthright and able style. This opens up possibilities and should any member feel disposed to make any form of rejoinder, comment, or even criticism arising from anything in this issue his (or her) contribution will be welcomed for inclusion in the next number. Also anything which may be raised under the heading of "Letters to the Editor", bearing in mind that the subject should be of such lasting interest as to warrant the delay of a year in the appearance of any form of reply in print.

Once again our thanks are due, in no merely formal manner, to Mr. Spriggs for supplying the very attractive cover and to the members of the Magazine sub-Committee and those members who have contributed matter for this year's number.

SECRETARIAL

I hope every member has entered the remaining items on the Syllabus in his 1955 Diary, if not please do so straight-away so that we may be sure of a large attendance at each event.

Feb. 19th. Annual General Meeting at St. Mary's Church House, Reading, at 7.15 p.m. followed by an informal Social Evening.

Mar. 26th. Visit to Douai Abbey, Woolhampton. Organ Recital by Dom R. Simpson at 2.15 p.m. Tea at Marigold Cafe, Newbury, followed by Recital by Mr. G. A. Sellick, F.R.C.O., F.T.C.L., at Newbury Parish Church.

Apr. 23rd. Annual Half Day Conference, at St. Laurence's Hall, Reading, at 3 p.m. Dr. Denis Chapman, F.R.C.O., (Manchester), Hon. Secretary and Treasurer of the Benevolent Fund, entitled "Ten Commandments for Organists". Tea. Followed by a Recital by Dr. Chapman at St. Laurence's Church at 5.30 p.m.

May. (Date to be announced) Sonning United Choirs' Festival, Sonning Parish Church. 7 p.m.

June 4th. (provisional date) Visit to Tewkesbury Abbey, leaving Reading at 10 a.m.

Reverting to our pre-War custom members of the London, Oxford, Winchester, High Wycombe, Surrey and Swindon branches are being invited to partake in the Half-Day Conference. Those who had the privilege of meeting Dr. Denis Chapman at the Reading Congress will realise how grateful we are to him for coming to speak and play to us. If the number of replies justify the action it is hoped to invite the President of the I.A.O., Sir William Harris to attend.

Everyone will have read of the recent rebuilding of the historic organs in Tewkesbury Abbey and this, with the lovely old town and the beautiful country en-route should make this a

fixture of outstanding appeal.

PLEASE let me have your replies for March, April and June events in good time so that adequate arrangements may be made.

### B E N E V O L E N T F U N D

Two of our members have continued to benefit from this Fund and 1955 will be notable for the first visit to the branch of the Hon. Secretary and Treasurer of the Fund, Dr. Denis Chapman. Dr. Chapman has devoted much time and energy to the Benevolent Fund and he and the Trustees of the Fund have lent a prompt and ready ear to all appeals which have been made to them, including our own. We have a great opportunity of shewing our gratitude to Dr. Chapman, in the way in which he would most wish, by ensuring a "bumper" collection for the Fund at the Half Day Conference and a record cheque to go to Congress from the Berkshire Branch next year.

A.E. Rivers, Hon. Benevolent Steward.

### M U S I C R E C E I V E D

Oxford University Press:- "O Taste and See" R. Vaughan-Williams. Motet for unaccompanied choir with organ introduction. Composed for the Coronation ceremony. Extremely simple and reminiscent of Folk-Music. It is well within the capacity of any church choir.

Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis in C. by Henry Havergal. Demands a competent choir - tricky changes of key and time, accompaniment calls for an organ with adequate resources. There is a unison ad libitum part for the congregation.

Toccata for organ, by Gordon Phillips. This although showy is not difficult to play. Your reviewer found it a little difficult to make much of this Toccata or to discover what the composer was driving at. Requires a large organ and there would be ample opportunity for making a loud (if not cheerful) noise.

Largo and Musette from Concerto Grosso Op. 6. No. 6. by G.F. Handel. arr. by G.A. Mathew. These two movements should make a most attractive voluntary or recital piece.

H.C.B.

Received too late for comment:-

Meditation by Gordon Phillips.

Second Organ Concerto by Charles Avison (1710-1770) arr. by A.G. Mathew.

Talk by Mr. John Russell "THE ORGAN THE BEGGAR OF INSTRUMENTS" at the Half-Day Conference, 24th April.

I hope you will regard anything said this afternoon as being "for amusement only" and as between friends. I hope no umbrage

will be taken, any remarks made being general and not particular. As regards myself I may perhaps be allowed to say that I was a Parish Church organist for six years and was a pupil of one of the finest English organists - the late Sir Walter Alcock. I mention this to shew that in discussing "that reluctant bagpipe" the organ I have some knowledge of the instrument I am talking about.

As regards the machine itself my dislike of the instrument and the music written for it has been growing during some forty seven years. I have left the Church of England and become a Quaker because of the way in which the music in church intrudes itself between me and my worship. I became a choir-boy at five years old but have always disliked the church organ (the cinema organ is a different thing - for one thing I have always been fascinated by the way the seat goes up and down.) In County Durham, where I spent my boyhood, the musical roost was ruled by pupils and ex-pupils of the Cathedral Organist. At ten or eleven I began to be taken to Organ Recitals in Durham Cathedral and was, even then, embarrassed by the glutinous mass of sound. Serious tuition began at nineteen or twenty and by then I felt the complete unmusicality of the organ as a means of purveying music. The reasons are - lack of balance of rhythm, - lack of accent (the organist says ah! but we have the agogic accent, to which I say No! this is a distortion of rhythm, the only accent exists in the player's mind and fingers and this is the difference between hearing and playing the organ) - lack of tone-colour, the swell pedal cannot express tone-colour it merely has control over loud and soft (Dr. Harvey Grace once likened the putting in of stops to the effect at a Choral Society rehearsal if, to obtain a diminuendo one had to tell all the Jones's to shut up, all the Smith's to shut up and so on until there was no Choral Society left) - unsubtlety of tone-colour - out of tuneness (the Voix Celeste in which one rank of pipes is deliberately made out of tune is supposed in some way to represent the singing of the heavenly host). The Swell Pedal crescendo comes much too suddenly, all at the beginning and would be better represented by a tuning fork laid on its side than the graduated sign employed in printed music. A preacher who faced some very conspicuous swell shutters from the pulpit once instructed the organist to open the swell box after he had been preaching for a given time and this is the best use of the box I have yet heard of. The swell box lets out two-thirds of the tone at the first movement. In rehearsing a Choral Society or Orchestra one seeks for clarity of texture and marks the parts cres. and dim. making little gaps to let in the daylight and give this clarity. On the organ this is supposed to be of paramount importance. Parry speaks of "truth in the inward parts" but instead of an "arch of sound" all the organ can do is to give a "phoney" accent on the first note and turn the last crotchet into a quaver. Phrasing is ninety per cent dynamic and the organ has no dynamics.

Dynamics are precisely what one cannot get on the organ. Now as regards the music written for the organ. All composers wrote their worst music for the organ. Even John Sebastian Bach did not write his best works for the organ but all his worst works were among his organ works. His best works were written not for the organ recitalist but for himself to play. Whenever Bach is below high-water mark it is in his organ music. Where is the organ music of Haydn, Beethoven, Berlioz, Wagner, Sibelius? Perhaps Mendelssohn did write his best work for the organ but is it as enduring as, say, the Violin Concerto? His slow movements are below the level even of the Songs without words. We have no Schumann or Tchaikowsky. Brahms did write a few Chorale Preludes but they are chiefly useful in giving ARCO candidates practice in reading the alto clef. So we are left with Rheinberger (where are his symphonies, concertos etc.), Reger, Karg-Elert with his seedy fair-ground effects. We have one great classic Guilment's Sonata in D minor but in general nothing is too banal for the organ, Widor what a great feeling it is to play but what rubbish is the sound that comes out. After this we are left with a great mass of pieces written chiefly for use as Voluntaries which do no more than keep in time with the machinery of the Church of England.

Then as regards the Organists. It is so easy to extemporise on the Organ as the sound goes on as long as the fingers are kept on the keys. Just start a descending Chromatic Scale on the pedals with the right foot on the swell pedal and in time you must reach some chord on which to finish. Such tricks are the stock-in-trade of the organist. In the past the local organist was the sole arbiter in matters musical. Examination whether of a pianist, vocalist, conductor or what not, were carried out by a church or cathedral organist. In composition lessons the harmony was limited to that of Hymns A. & M. and the early Victorians. And what of counterpoint with its rows of semibreves! Who is anyone - pupil or examiner - to use the style of Palestrina? and what of those lovely consecutive fifths in the Verdi "Requiem"? There has been a stranglehold of the organist on local music and teaching for the past two hundred years and it is no accident that English Music went down and down from the commencement of that time until Elgar wrote the Enigma Variations.

Part of my job is to advise the Public Library Committee on the purchase of music and having succeeded in introducing some new works I checked up and found that most of them had been taken out about four times in the first two years.

The average organ student from the RAM or RCM is too shy to ask to be heard in Concert Hall or Canteen but sit him at the keyboard of an organ and he will "fulfil himself" for half an hour. I have said nothing new and I know that the work of the Organist is to the glory of God and the enriching of worship with but little reward. He may work with the local Choral Society and Orchestra etc., but the ordinary Service Music makes no great technical demands but makes a great demand on Musicianship.

Among Mr. Russell's replies to points in the ensuing discussion were:-

The Baroque Organ. Yes it does do away with the glutinous sound for purely concert work. The Baroque organ is best for Bach and Handel but less suitable for later music.

Cesar Franck. A tiresome man. If he hadn't been an organist he might have been a great composer.

Are people like Thalben-Ball, Darke etc., merely wasting their time in a sterile field? There is nothing in an organ recital but a feeling of frustration and embarrassment. An organ recital bores me stiff unless I am giving it myself. The organ is an aloof instrument with no communication with its audience.

The organist's work with church choirs. They will persist in using boys who always sing sharp. Too many cliches in the music, which obtrude on worship. Too much omniscience of the organist.

Orchestral arrangements of organ works. The "bite" of the strings gives life to the Toccata and Fugue in D minor etc. The piano transcriptions of Busoni, Tausig etc., are obscene and unnecessary.

Most of what I said concerns my personal reactions and the only really serious things are the stranglehold of the organist and the lack of great composers for the instrument.

During the discussion a number of members shewed that they were not entirely in agreement with all Mr. Russell's remarks and, at the unanimous request of the Magazine sub-Committee, the President, Dr. H. C. Barnard has kindly contributed a reply to Mr. Russell.  
(Editor)

It was no doubt very good for all of us to hear what Mr. John Russell had to say about the organ; but I venture to think that no member of his audience was induced thereby to bate one jot of his love and enthusiasm for the instrument. These matters are not determined by pure reason or formal logic, for ultimately aesthetic problems are not resolved by argument. If Mr. A. falls in love with Miss B. he will remain unmoved if it is pointed out to him that Miss C. has more curly hair, or Miss D. bluer eyes, or Miss E. a more elegant carriage, or Miss F. (so far as can be ascertained) a more brilliant natural complexion. If in an address given to the Piscatorial Society the speaker tactfully points out what a dull and dreary business fishing is, how liable to give one a serious chill, and how cruel to the unfortunate fish, his arguments are likely to carry little weight among devotees of the "gentle art". In the same way we are not moved by a catalogue of the alleged shortcomings and inferiorities of the organ as compared with other instruments. We have chosen the organ for its own sake and we remain faithful to it; we are prepared to put up with endless inconveniences in order to play it - long journeys (often at awkward hours) to cold or stuffy churches, disbursements in respect of blowing, ciphers and other unexpected mishaps; whereas the patrons of other instruments practice in

the comfort of their own homes and in their own time. Such enthusiasm and devotion are not damped by arguments such as those put forward by Mr. Russell. All the same, it may be that something can be said in answer to his strictures, even if - from our point of view - they are ultimately irrelevant. In any case, his criticisms applied to some extent rather to some organists than to the organ itself. He spoke first of the organ's "lack of balance of rhythm" and "lack of accent". Various instruments express themselves in different ways, and the organ's way is not that of the piano or the violin. The organ calls for greater exactness of touch and phrasing than does the piano, for the very slightest blemish shews up at once. You cannot "get away with it" by putting down the loud pedal. If the organ produces a "glutinous mass of sound" this is likely to be the fault, not so much of the organ as an instrument, as of the organist who is playing it. It means that he is not sufficiently cognisant of the acoustic properties of the building, and not paying enough attention to clear phrasing, which is nine-tenths of good organ-playing. It is futile to compare this kind of technique with good piano technique. Each has its own characteristics and each is equally reputable. These comparisons between the organ and the orchestra or the piano are singularly unprofitable. "There is one glory of the sun, another of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differeth from another in glory". So also it is with musical instruments. Mr. Russell would probably consider it unreasonable to condemn the piano because it cannot sustain a note, so that suspensions played on it lose much of their effect and a prolonged pedal-point vanishes altogether. He would not I suppose vilify the violin because it cannot play four-part harmony, except by means of an inelegant arpeggio-scraps. We do not criticise the elephant because he cannot leap as gracefully as the gazelle or purr as comfortably as the cat. Similarly, it is not reasonable to expect of music interpreted by the organ the characteristics of piano or orchestral music; but let us, as organists, try in our playing to realise as far as we possibly can the clarity and exactness which our instrument so essentially demands.

The analogy about reducing the volume of the choir by shutting-off the Jones's and Smiths assumes that all persons with the same surname possess voices of the same quality and pitch; so that we need not take this jibe seriously. It is a little difficult to understand Mr. Russell's fulminations against the Swell Pedal. True, it is open to abuse and it often is abused. But I presume that Mr. Russell does not object to pedals on the pianoforte by which soft and loud effects are produced; or to the use of the mute with a stringed instrument - or any other mechanical device by which the tone of an instrument can be altered. Any organist knows that the first two inches of the Swell Pedal make more difference than all the rest put together; this is one of the first things that the beginner is taught. Mr. Russell's criticisms of the Swell Pedal should have been directed, not at the device itself, but at the abuse of it by some organists. So here again his

remarks have a moral which we may very well lay to heart.

Organ composers, like organists themselves, are a select band. But it is literally not true to say that "all composers wrote their worst works for the organ". This does not apply, for example to Mendelssohn or Cesar Franck, or even to Mozart, Schumann and Brahms. Whether it applies or not to J.S.Bach is surely immaterial. It is no condemnation of the piano to say that Beethoven wrote his worst works for it - witness the interminable scale passages and strings of Alberti basses in some of the smaller works, so different from Bach's close, scholarly contrapuntal writing; or of the orchestra, in view of the cheap "programme music" effects of the "Battle" Symphony or even (pace the Beethoven enthusiasts) of the "Pastoral Symphony". No one but a jaundiced critic would judge composers, or the instruments for which they composed, by their worst work. Beethoven revealed the sublimities of which the piano is possible in such works as the D mi. Sonata, the "Appassionata" the "Pathetique", and the Ab. Variations. The orchestra reached its greatest heights in the "Eroica" and many of the other Symphonies. To the organ belongs the unique distinction that for it the greatest of all composers wrote the noblest compositions that have ever been written for any solo instrument - witness the B minor Prelude and Fugue, the "Dorian" Toccata and Fugue, the St. Anne, the Passacaglia, the Choral Preludes. The list of such outstanding works could be indefinitely prolonged, and the reader can be referred to Harvey Grace's balanced estimate of their glories. If the organ had this repertory, and this only, it would still have a claim to be considered the "King of Instruments".

Mr. Russell devoted a considerable part of his talk to a criticism of extemporisation. This is a musical art, particularly associated with the organ, which perhaps is not so fashionable today as it used to be. But here again his remarks applied to certain organists rather than to the organ itself. Nothing is more infuriating to a musician than aimless, uninspired meanderings - the outcome of incompetence and laziness. Nothing, on the other hand, is more uplifting and inspiring than really good extemporisation - and it need not be strictly in form. Mr. Russell (who seems to have an animus against the Church in which he was brought up, and therefore against the organ which he associates with its services) spoke of "bits of extemporisation to cover up the footsteps of some priest walking from one place to another". One who has deliberately cut adrift from the English Church in order to join the Society of Friends may find it difficult to appreciate the beauty of a liturgical service or of a reverent and historic ritual. In the same way those who do value these things might be deterred by the austerity of a Quakers' meeting. But it is well to remember that there are diversities of operation but the same God which worketh all in all. Extemporisation, if it can be done - and is done - in the right way, may well be the organists' special contribution to the devotional significance of the service. It need not be in the very least a "filling up

of gaps". E.F. Benson puts the point effectively in one of his novels where he is describing a Celebration in St. Paul's Cathedral. He says: "Between the verses of the hymn (during the communion) the organ always played a little symphony. It was like some gentle, devout spirit, thinking over what had been sung". Much more could be said, but our space is limited. The importance of the organist as a musician, and the value of the musical training which centres round the organ, are well dealt with in Chapter V. of Dr. Conway's Playing a Church Organ - a stimulating little handbook which every organist ought to possess, and which Mr. Russell might read with profit. We can leave the matter there. Mr. Russell has given us much to think about, and for that we are grateful to him. It is well for us to be reminded of the outstanding importance of clean playing and careful phrasing, of the proper use of the Swell Pedal, of the limitations and opportunities of extemporisation, and of the necessity for a judicious choice of the organ music which we play.

Finally, let us hear one or two things which have been said about the organ by some who, like ourselves, have loved it and understood the unique contribution which, if rightly used, it can make to the worship of Almighty God.

"The tone of a church-built organ, slowly praising God"  
(Maarten Maartens - Dorothea).

"His voice was merrier than the merry organ  
On mass-days that in the churche gon". (Chaucer - Nonne  
Preestes Tale.)

... And heard once more in College Lanes  
The storm their high-built organs make,  
And thunder-music, rolling, shake  
the prophets blazon'd on the panes". (Tennyson - In Memoriam)

"But let my due feet never fail  
To walk the studious cloister's pale  
And love the high-embowe'd roof  
With antique pillars massy proof,  
And storied windows richly dight  
Casting a dim, religious light.  
There let the pealing organ blow  
To the full voice'd choir below  
In service high and anthems clear  
As may with sweetness through mine ear  
Dissolve me into ecstasies,  
And bring all heaven before mine eyes"  
(Milton - Il Penseroso).

But Oh! what art can teach What human voice can reach  
The sacred organ's praise?  
Notes inspiring holy love, Notes that ring their heavenly ways  
To mend the choirs above.

Orpheus could lead the savage race And trees unrooted left  
their place  
Sequacious of the lyre;  
But bright Cecilia raised the wonder higher; When to her organ  
vocal breath was given  
An angel heard, and straight appeared,  
Mistaking earth for heaven. (Dryden - Song for St. Cecilia's  
Day).

### A VILLAGE ENTERPRISE

Contributed by Mr. R. Brewer

To think of an Eisteddfod one's mind immediately flies to Wales, where so many of these big contests are held. But let's journey five miles out into the Chiltern Hills, where the members of the small choir at the Peppard Congregational Church said in 1935, "Let's try one!" This they did, with a small programme of twenty classes of Music, Art, Literature and other subjects, and this gave pleasure to many competitors and listeners.

After a few years war came, and the district, being called a "safe area", had its population nearly doubled with evacuees from London. Once again the organisers rose to the occasion and introduced a Junior Section which was even more successful, and competition was even found between City and Country.

Unconscious humour was often found in the schoolboy howlers and even in answers given by adults, often through nervousness or stage-fright, as when a lady who was asked "What happened to Lot's wife?" quickly replied, "She turned a somersault", instead of "She was turned into a pillar of salt". It may be noted that any proceeds are put to a New Organ Fund, and one year a class introduced was a Limerick on the subject "Our Organ". Here is the prize-winning effort:-

A box full of squeakers is true,  
But to call it an organ won't do,  
For it's sure past its prime,  
And it really is time  
That the "old" must give place to the "new".

Every year some classes are deleted and new ones introduced, and in later years oak shields have been awarded for small choirs and for a dramatic class. One year an interesting incident happened re. the music shield. Just before it was about to be presented it was found to be missing, and after many months it was returned after being seen by the police nailed to a tree several miles away.

Mention must be made at this point as to the wonderful part played by the adjudicators, and in this capacity many members of the Berkshire Organists Association have been most helpful with their educational and musical knowledge. Only this year a bouquet was handed out unconsciously by a small boy to a lady judge. On being asked by his mates, "What's she like?", he replied, "She's smashing, best judge we've ever had". Fortunately, through the generosity of many friends who subscribe to the prize fund, every year there has been a small balance, and the fund has benefitted to the extent of over £150.

With the Eisteddfod is linked an Exhibition, where both ladies and gentlemen compete in Cookery, Needlework, Knitting, Handicrafts and Floral Decoration. The programme has grown to sixty classes, and visitors and friends who "look in" on Exhibition Day, (usually the last Saturday in February), find a feast of beauty for their eyes, and plenty to make their mouths water, such is the skill displayed.

As we approach the 20th. season one can only say, "May the success of this Eisteddfod be exceeded only by future ones".

#### THE ORGAN IN THE PARISH CHURCH OF ST. GILES' IN READING

(By Mr. P. R. Scrivener, FRCO., FTCL.)

Very little is known of the origin of the present organ in the Church. Even Messrs. Walker & Sons, the builders, can trace nothing in their books in this connection, but something gleaned from an extract from the History of St. Giles' written by the Rev. L. Harman, may be of interest:-

"on the first page of the Great Account Book of St. Giles' a reference is found to a sum of twenty pence being paid "in earnest upon a pair of organs", this in 1518. The next year the organ arrived and the cost is given as about £130 in our money. It was often in trouble. A piece of cord, additional ironwork, a hinge for the bellows, all appear as items in the next few years, as well as substantial repairs in 1539. Items occur until 1559, after which date no mention has been found until 1574 when the organ pipes were sold. The Reformers' hatred of these "squeaking abominations" is well known. It was not until the Restoration that instruments gradually found their place again in the worship of the Church, but in this it rather seems that St. Giles' was behind. The first mention is of a "bassoon for the Church" in 1811 although there is an item of "Music books for the singing gallery" entered under May 14th. 1808. From Mr. Darter, a St. Giles' man, we learn that in 1816 the first proposal came for a new organ. Immediately the Choir went on strike. Mr. Darter has recorded "At this time I and another boy, about as old as myself, were for our age tolerably good players on the flute and were studying music under the same master. This became known to the Vicar at the time we were both under examination for Confirmation, and at his request and with the permission

of our parents we selected some of the best voices we could obtain from the boys belonging to the Sunday Schools. We were not long before the boys sang well enough to occupy the gallery which the choir had abandoned, my friend and I accompanying them on our instruments. This state of things lasted until the new organ was erected and this was accomplished by Jan. 17th. 1817, being in time to supply the music for the institution of the Rev. H. R. Dukinfield on January 26th. A "large new organ" was erected in 1829. This was brought down from the gallery in 1867 and what was useful in it was incorporated in the third instrument built by Messrs. Walker. In two stages it has been moved back to its present position where it still powerfully bears its part in the Services of the Church under Mr. P. R. Scrivener, whose Jubilee as organist and choirmaster of St. Giles' was kept in 1945".

SPECIFICATION:-

Three manuals:-

Great Organ:-

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| Double Diapason  | 16ft.     |
| Open Diapason  | 8 ft.     |
| St. Diapason   | 8ft.      |
| (Wald Flute, treble)   |           |
| Horn Diapason  | 8ft.      |
| Salcional  | 8ft.      |
| (probably used as a Diapason, on a former instrument, as the tone is nothing like a modern stop of the same name). |           |
| Principal  | 4ft       |
| Fifteenth  | 2ft.      |
| Twelfth  | 2 2/3 ft. |
| Mixture  | 3 ranks.  |
| Trumpet  | 8ft.      |

Pedal Organ:-

|               |       |
|---------------|-------|
| Open Diapason | 16ft. |
| Bourdon       | 16ft. |
| Cello         | 8ft.  |
| Trombone      | 16ft. |

Couplers:- Sw. to Gt. Sw. to Choir, Sw. to Pedals, Gt. to Pedals, Ch. to Pedals.

Old fashioned Swell Pedal.  
Tremulant Pedal.

Three Composition Pedals to Sw. and four ditto. to Gt.

Radiating and Concave Pedal Board. Electric Motor.

The action on the Great Manual is the old Barker lever pneumatic method. The rest of the organ action is tracker.

The main feature of the organ is the full powerful tonal-quality of the diapasons.

Swell Organ:-

|                 |          |
|-----------------|----------|
| Double Diapason | 16ft.    |
| Open Diapason   | 8ft.     |
| St. Diapason    | 8ft.     |
| Echo Gamba      | 8ft.     |
| Vox Angelica    | 8ft.     |
| Principal       | 4ft.     |
| Fifteenth       | 2ft.     |
| Mixture         | 3 ranks. |
| Horn            | 8ft.     |
| Oboe            | 8ft.     |
| Vox Humana      | 8ft.     |

Choir Organ:-

|   |                                |      |
|---|--------------------------------|------|
|   | Gemshorn (to tenor C)          | 8ft. |
| X | Keraulophon                    | 8ft. |
|   | Dulciana                       | 8ft. |
|   | (St. Diapason/Lieblich Gedact) | 8ft. |
|   | Principal                      | 4ft. |
|   | Piccolo                        | 2ft. |
|   | Clarinet                       | 8ft. |
| X | Harmonic Flute                 | 4ft. |

X These two stops were probably taken from the Great of a former organ, as they are much too powerful for the Choir Organ.

BRANCH MEETINGS 1954

- Feb.20th. Annual General Meeting at St.Mary's Church House, Reading. The Officers were re-elected with Messrs. B.W.Busbey and F.G.Spriggs to fill vacancies on the Council. Mr.L.F.B.Davis was co-opted to the Magazine sub-committee vice. Mr.J.Eric Few, resigned. The Annual Reports shewed a membership of 120 and a balance in hand of £22-18-6.
- Mar.17th. A programme of Organ Solos and Anthems at Broad Street Congregational Church, Reading by Mrs.K.F.Shorter and the choir of the Church.
- Apr.24th. Annual Half-Day Conference. Afternoon Session at St. Mary's Church House, Reading. Talk by Mr.John Russell, Musical Adviser to the Reading Education Committee "The Organ - the beggar of instruments". Tea. Evening Session in the Arts Theatre, Reading University. Talk by Professor J.A.Betts, A.R.C.A., on "Three levels of imagery in painting" illustrated by lantern slides.
- May 22nd. Visit to Messrs.J.W.Walker & Sons Ltd., Organ Works at Ruislip. After a very pleasant coach drive the party was taken on a comprehensive tour of the various departments. After tea in the Canteen the new console for the re-built organ in Nairobi Cathedral was inspected and a beautifully rendered programme of part-songs and solos given by members of the Hayes Girls' Choir, under the direction of Mr. Brian Trant ARCO.,LRAM., was accompanied on a portion of the organ which was being assembled for Ratcliffe College. It was a great pleasure to meet members of the London branch who were also making a visit.
- Jun.16th. Evening Coach Tour. From Reading, picking up in Newbury, via the Lambourn Valley to Lambourn. The Rev.E.J.Rumens, Vicar, gave a resumé of the history and antiquities of the recently restored Church. After refreshments we proceeded via. Letcombe Bassett to Wantage returning over the Downs to Newbury and Reading. In order to demonstrate the fine tonal effects of the organ at Lambourn Miss Eileen Peters played the "little" E minor Prelude and Fugue of Bach.
- Oct.9th. Presidential Service and Reception at Broad Street Congregational Church, Reading. Service conducted by the Minister, the Rev.John Wilding, B.A., who gave the address. Mr.T.G.Carter was at the organ, the opening and concluding Voluntaries being played by the President.

Nov.29th. Programme by the West Reading Girls' Choir (Conductor Mr.R.Alder) at St.Mary's Church House, Reading.

Dec.11th. Paper on Choir Training entitled "Can I help you?" by Mr.A.H.Lusty, ARCO.,LTCL., at Palmer Hall, Reading. This had special reference to the difficulties of younger members in small country churches.

### NEWBURY NOTES

#### The Musical Associations of Newbury Parish Church

During the year a new history of music in Newbury has been compiled under the above title. It succeeds "Some Stories of the Organs and Organists" of the same church and has been written and presented to the Reference Department of Newbury Public Library by Mr.R.E.I.Newton, a member of the choir for several years. The brochure contains a number of new features, including lesser known stories and anecdotes, an abridged report of the interesting circumstances in which Mr.J.S.Liddle came to Newbury and of the Council's discussion of their ancient right to appoint the Organist under the Cowslade bequest - this being the last time that it occurred. Mr.Liddle is still remembered by many in Newbury and may be by others further afield for his sterling work in raising and maintaining the standard of local music. A point of special interest for our Association is that this was formed in 1921, the year of Mr.Liddle's death. It had been intended to elect him as our first Chairman.

This time there is a little illustration, not the least of which is an exclusive photograph of a party of young ladies who, operating a barrel-organ, paraded the streets, assisted by another party of gaily dressed youngsters, on a Saturday in 1927, collecting funds for the new Organ Fund. Also inset is the report from an old magazine of the Queen Victoria Jubilee service at Newbury Church which gives some musical detail and names of old-time singers in the choir. Outside those connected with St.Nicholas are mentioned the names of prominent musicians who have visited Newbury Church from time to time - Sir George Elvey, Dr.Marford Lloyd, while Canon (then the Rev.) E.H.Fellowes, Mus.Doc., of St.George's, Windsor used to assist Mr.Liddle in his Chamber Concerts.

Last year's visit of 200 organists to Newbury is reported and reference made to the fact that the church of St.Nicholas and its organ appear in the course of Thomas Hardy's novel "Jude the Obscure" (Mr.Newton tells readers that this is a happy if unwitting recal of a most diverting article in the "Musical Times" of thirty years ago on the subject of the "Music of Thomas Hardy").

Other features embrace the discovery (by the compiler) of songs and other compositions of Mr.J.H.Godding, organist of the church 1865-84. He was a most interesting character. It is only regretted that high costs prevent this useful work being printed but it remains no less for public inspection

and, it is hoped, edification, of those interested in Church Music for all time.

The preface to the brochure concludes with an appropriate Pope quotation:-

"Some to church repair

Not for the doctrine but the music there".

Since the above was prepared the writer came across information which had eluded him since the source was not available. The fact is that an attempt has been made in the brochure to establish the approximate time when a choir was first in vogue at Newbury Church and the belief was expressed that this was during the organistship of Mr. George Godding (1833-65). His brother, Henry James, was already organist of St. Mary's, Speenhamland where a choir was in being. It is therefore quite possible that Henry James encouraged George to follow suit at St. Nicholas'.

En passant the Godding family were all musical, and, while there is no desire to detract from Mr. Liddle's subsequent great work it is claimed that they were the earlier pioneers of musical progress in Newbury.

Much fascinating information on the subject of music at Newbury Parish Church is given in "Newbury during the Victorian Era" (1837-93) by the late Mr. Frank H. Stillman, many years editor of the "Newbury News". It happened that Mr. J. H. Godding became organist just before the great restoration of the Church in the 1860's; the Rector was James Leslie Randall, later first Bishop of Reading, and, as a high Churchman, he may have encouraged the music performed. His indifferent health necessitated lengthened holidays and the care of the parish was temporarily in charge of a Rev. C. Grinstead. In view of the occasional clerical prejudice towards church music which organists meet it is a special satisfaction to read that "This gentleman was a sterling churchman and the pioneer of the musical services as they have developed".

All this may not give us a definite date of the choral beginnings at St. Nicholas but it confirms, more or less, the period already suggested. So that a choir has sung at this Church for about 120 years.

With reference to the visit to Douai Abbey and Newbury on March 26th. an account of the organ in Newbury Parish Church, with specification, appeared in our 1952 issue, and the organ at Douai Abbey was dealt with in 1953.

PROGRAMMES 1954

March 17th. at Broad Street, Congregational Church, Reading.

Anthem:- "I was glad"  
Organ:- "Symphony in F" Boyce (1719)  
Anthem:- "The Lord is my Shepherd" Schubert  
Organ:- "A little Tune" Felton  
"Rondeau" Couperin (1668)  
Anthems:- "All in the April evening" Hugh Robertson  
"The Cherubic Hymn" Tschaiikowsky  
Organ:- "Suite from Diocletian" Purcell  
Anthem:- "Benedictus" Stanford  
Organ:- "Offertoire in C minor" Lefebure=Wely  
Hymn:- "Praise to the Holiest" tune Richmond

Oct. 9th. Presidential Service at Broad Street Congregational Church.

Opening Voluntary:- Chorale Preludes:-  
"Christe, Redemptor Omnium", "Melcombe" Parry.  
Introit "O taste and see" R.Vaughan-Williams.  
Anthem "O how amiable are Thy dwellings" J.E.West.  
Concluding Voluntary:- Prelude & Fugue in B minor,  
Bach.

SPECIFICATION OF THE ORGAN IN BROAD STREET CHURCH

Builders:- P.Conacher & Co., Sheffield.

|         |               |        |            |                 |       |
|---------|---------------|--------|------------|-----------------|-------|
| Great:- | Open Diapason | 8 ft.  | Swell:-    | Violin Diapason | 8 ft. |
|         | Gamba         | 8 ft.  |            | Rohr Gedact     | 8 ft. |
|         | Dulciana      | 8 ft.  |            | Salcional       | 8 ft. |
|         | Lieblich      |        |            | Voix Celestes   | 8 ft. |
|         | Gedact        | 8 ft.  |            | Gemshorn        | 4 ft. |
|         | Principal     | 4 ft.  |            | Piccolo         | 2 ft. |
|         | Fifteenth     | 2 ft.  |            | Horn            | 8 ft. |
|         | Clarionet     | 8 ft.  |            | Oboe            | 8 ft. |
|         |               |        |            | Tremulant       |       |
| Pedal:- | Bourdon       | 16 ft. | Couplers:- | Great to Pedal. |       |
|         |               |        |            | Swell to Pedal: |       |
|         |               |        |            | Swell to Great  |       |
|         |               |        |            | Swell Octave.   |       |