

## REVIEWS

**The Early Horn – a Practical Guide** by John Humphries. Cambridge University Press: ix + 138pp. Hardback: ISBN 0 521 63210 2; prices US \$49.95/UK £32.50. Paperback: ISBN 0 521 63559 4; prices US \$18.95/UK £11.95.

Horn players have been well served in the matter of literature on their instrument during the past half-century. In the first decade after the War came Dr. Birchard Coar's two works, *The French Horn* (1947) and *A Critical Study of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Horn Virtuosi in France* (1952). In the next, Philip Farkas's *The Art of French Horn Playing* (1956), Morley-Pegge's *The French Horn* (1960), Robin Gregory's *The Horn* (1961), Gunther Schuller's *Horn Technique* (1962), and Murray Barbour's *Trumpets, Horns and Music* (1964). Wonderfully informative as these works are, a yet more brilliant work of scholarship came in 1970 with Horace Fitzpatrick's *The Horn and Horn-playing and the Austro-Bohemian Tradition 1680-1830*. Bernhard Bröchle and Kurt Janetzky's works followed: *The Horn* (1977), *A Pictorial History of the Horn* (1976), *Horn Bibliographie* (1970-83), with Janetzky's collected essays, *Aus der Werkstatt eines Hornisten*, in 1993.

Scholarship and discovery, of course, never stand still and this new volume acts as both a *resumé* of that which we knew from the above, and a *précis* of recent research. John Humphries will already be known to horn-players from the thoroughly idiomatic completions and reconstructions of Mozart's concerti that feature on Anthony Halstead's recordings of 1987 and 1993. He has profound knowledge of the *urtext* of all the major works for horn, and their historical backgrounds. All the major, and many of the minor, tutors have been digested. Dauprat, Domnich, Duvernoy, Gallay, Gounod, Haumuller, Jacqmin, Kastner, Lagard, Meifred, Mengal, Mohr, Thévet, Urbin and Vandebroek are quoted from the Gallic tradition; Franz, Fröhlich, Göroldt, Gumbert, Klotz, Nemetz, Wirth from the Austro-German with, in English, everything from Winch in 1746 to Philip Farkas two centuries later. The pertinent commentaries on the instrument, from Baines and Burney to Wagner and Westrup, are all reviewed. One source that gives me great delight is the collected correspondence of Reginald Morley-Pegge and W.F.H. Blandford—future material for an *HBSJ* piece, one would hope. Humphries is excellent on “Historical Background”, the second of his chapters, always keeping to the front of his mind the task that he has set himself, of informing the approach to period instruments being made by a modern horn-player. I particularly enjoyed his description (p. 31) of the difference in response between a horn crooked in B $\flat$  *alto* and one in B $\flat$  *basso* as “akin to the difference in handling between a sports car and a lorry” (U.S. *truck*).

In his chapter on *Equipment* I found myself wishing for a little expansion on the puzzling question of why Italian composers consistently wrote for A, A $\flat$  and G *basso* crooks. Humphries quotes Renato Meucci on Pelitti (*HBSJ* vol. 6), but on re-reading this, I remain puzzled. Verdi, writing to Ricordi in 1892, says that he wanted a “genuine old waldhorn without valves in low A $\flat$ —the instrument must be voluminous so that it can be sounded

more easily.” (Interestingly, in one of two *Pas redoublés*, written for the Crown Prince of Sweden in 1836, Rossini writes a natural trumpet part in *low Ab*—what was going on in Italy I wonder ?). He also brushes lightly over vented Baroque horns. Faced with the irreconcilable wishes of certain conductors and recording engineers to have Baroque brass play “authentically,” yet have the intonation of the eleventh and thirteenth partials “corrected” to suit twenty-first century ears, I am not sure what my personal response would be. Temperamentally I am with Robert Barclay—a Baroque horn with vent-holes is a different instrument, but then, I have never had to play a *Quoniam* !

The chapter on the *Language of Musical Style* contains jewels that many horn-players may not have considered before; for example, I cannot think that many will have read the tutors by Quantz, C.P.E. Bach, and Leopold Mozart for their respective instruments. Humphries gives us superb opinions, from contemporary sources, on topics such as vibrato, tone quality, cadenzas, and ornamentation. Reading Dauprat’s disapproval of prelude and tuning up before the public—“one should hide the means and show only the results”—found me bellowing my wholehearted agreement.

The next chapter, “Technique”, is packed with usefulness. It outlines all the secrets of negotiating the hand-horn and there is much here that will be of value to aspirants. The final chapter is entitled “Case Studies” and reveals, with insight into the contemporary technology of the instruments, how seven great composers (Bach, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Schumann, and Brahms) all conceived their music for the horn. In Beethoven’s case he is more concerned as to which instrument, hand-horn or early valve-horn, Eduard Lewy used to play the fourth-horn solo in the première of Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony than as to whether he played it at all (p. 91). For me, Theodore Albrecht (*The Horn Call*, vol. 29, no. 3) proves almost conclusively that it was Friedrich Hradetzky, and not Lewy, who played it—on a hand-horn.

Some tiny quibbles:

Page 14: Bedrich Dionys Weber composed four, not three, sextets. Three are expansions of the quartets and differ only in having occasional four-bar introductions added to movements and an additional trio for the first movement of No.1. The fourth is a separate work. Edward Tarr’s research (*HBSJ* 6: 150-52) indicates first performances at the Prague Conservatorium of a quartet in March 1831, with performances of sextets in 1833, 1836, and 1837. They are scored for *Corni* in F except *Corno I* (C *alto*), *Corno V* (C *basso*) and *Corno VI* (F *basso*—modern notation, bass clef). One wonders whether Director Weber intended the sextets for occasional use by other brass; possibly a posthorn on the 1<sup>st</sup> part and euphonium/tuba types on the lower parts. Of the performers names listed in 1836, however, only one, Alois Taux, is not listed elsewhere as a horn-player and this, anyway, does not prove that he was not a horn-player.

Page 20: Although Meyerbeer certainly had all his later works given on the French stage, he was Prussian by birth.

Page 21: Adolf Borsdorf studied in Dresden from 1869 until 1874. I doubt that he was still a student in 1879, the year he became contracted to the Royal Italian Opera in London.

Page 117: We now know the date of Karl Haudek's death to have been 25 July 1802 (Dresden State Archives: Loc. 2427, *Das Churfürstliches Orchester* Vol. XVI, p.13).

To summarise—John Humphries's book is an excellent *vade mecum* to both the history, and the playing technique, of horns from the time of Sporck to the end of Franz Strauss's career. If one believes that any serious horn student should nowadays get to grips with the modern instrument's precursors, then it ought to be required reading for all freshmen.

*Chris Larkin*

*The Cornet Compendium. The History and Development of the Nineteenth-Century Cornet*, by Richard I. Schwartz. Privately published and purchasable from the author at [Irisrick@aol.com](mailto:Irisrick@aol.com) (\$40.00) in spiral bound booklet (267 pp.); also available in downloadable format (at no cost) at: [HTTP://www.angelfire.com/music2/thecornetcompendium](http://www.angelfire.com/music2/thecornetcompendium)

When I first started seriously collecting and studying the history of Périnet-valved soprano brasswinds in the 1980s, I was astonished by the dearth of readily available published accounts of the history of nineteenth- and twentieth-century brass musical instruments beyond the few invaluable books by Baines and others—and the arrival (in 1993) of William Waterhouse's magnificent *New Langwill Index*.<sup>1</sup> And though it is welcome news that the Historic Brass Society is increasingly moving into this area, I have continued to yearn for something meaty to read on cornet history.

Thus it was with a keen sense of anticipation that I awaited arrival of Richard Schwartz' *Cornet Compendium*. Schwartz is Coordinator of Music Theory at Virginia State University, Petersburg, where he has taught "music theory, clarinet, saxophone, woodwind classes and conducting"—and has recently developed a passion for playing, and elucidating the history of, the cornet. Schwartz sees his work literally as a living document, as he has announced his intention to emend the website downloadable text periodically. (Indeed, in that spirit, I will eschew inclusion of the traditional list of errors and omissions in this review—having already e-mailed the relatively few I identified to the author).

Schwartz' book is accurately named: for the most part, it is indeed a compendium, culled from a variety of sources, many of which are no longer readily available. For example, his two chapters on "well-known" and "lesser-known" cornet soloists of the nineteenth century owe much to the hard-to-find *Pioneers in Brass* by Glenn Bridges (1965).<sup>2</sup> Yet at the same time, there is much that is new here—the direct product of Schwartz' own research. In particular, Schwartz includes new information on black American cornetists of the nineteenth century, filling in a rather conspicuous gap in the otherwise standard accounts. I also found his discussion of the acoustical problems inherent in adding three valves to a posthorn refreshingly novel. And his background as a music theorist stands him in good stead as he presents his own analysis of the use of cornets in major orchestral and operatic

works of the nineteenth century. I particularly enjoyed his analysis of the low opinion voiced by Berlioz on the cornet's sound—perhaps the first of many nineteenth-century opinions expressed on the supposed vulgarity of cornets vis-a-vis the more noble trumpet, yet a sentiment standing in marked contrast to Berlioz' extensive and successful use of cornets in his own scores. Schwartz concludes (p. 42 of bound edition) that "I firmly believe that such composers wanted the conical sound of the cornet! Orchestral cornet parts after 1870 should, in my opinion, be played on the cornet, and not on the trumpet."

Ah, but what exactly *is* a cornet? Tradition has it that the Parisian maker Halary applied Stölzel valves to the German posthorn to produce the first cornet. Baines,<sup>3</sup> citing Dauprat's contribution to Forestier's *Méthode pour le Cornet à Pistons* (1834), puts the date at around 1827. Schwartz, though, follows an article by Tarr,<sup>4</sup> citing a method book by Dauverné that puts the date at 1831; combined with a brief review of extant early cornets, Schwartz concludes conservatively that the invention should be put at circa 1830.

There is no known patent for the invention. It has always seemed a bit odd that it was a Frenchman who first decided to apply German (i.e. Stölzel) valves to an open German horn; Schwartz follows Bessaraboff<sup>5</sup> in maintaining that Halary made the right choice, as the German posthorn was a "four-octave" instrument (without pedal), while the French posthorn had but three octaves (and no pedal)—and "a two-valve four-octave instrument works much better melodically and chromatically than a two-valve three-octave instrument" (p. 10). Whatever the merits of this acoustical argument might be, we are still left wondering how the configuration of earliest cornets—decidedly *not* circular—came about. Baines<sup>6</sup> helps us by reporting that the German maker Schott offered "a natural post-horn in trumpet form." I can only conclude that we desperately need much more thorough research on the earliest cornets, relying as much as possible on accurately dated instruments.<sup>7</sup>

Schwartz treats later developments in cornet design rather cursorily. The addition of a much-needed third valve came along rather quickly in the 1830s. The substitution of Périnet for Stölzel valves on the better-made French cornets, beginning in the early 1840s, vastly improved the sound of these instruments. The very earliest Périnet-valved cornets look astonishingly similar to their Stölzel-valved ancestors—no mean feat, as the air flow in Stölzel-valved instruments typically was through the bottom of the three valves.

Schwartz also presents useful compilations of "Solos for the cornet" (Ch. 4) and "Tutors" (Ch. 5). Chapter 6, drawing heavily on *Langwill* as well as other sources, is a handy condensation of what is known of many of the more important makers. Though there is relatively little new here, the value of this chapter (as in much of the book) is the original and creative juxtaposition of information from a variety of sources. Inevitably, though, some of these sources are suspect—such as the Courtois company's dubious website claim, included here (p. 217), that Arban developed a "Cornet-Arban" with Courtois in 1883. True, Courtois sold an "Arban model"—known as such from catalogue copy only, as the bells were apparently never stamped "Arban." (See Eldredge, "Biological and material cultural evolution"<sup>8</sup>; and <http://www.vintagecornets.com/html/frenchconnect.htm>, for illustrations and discussion). Courtois did market a Koenig model (actually in two distinctly different configurations), as well as "Levy's Model," the "Arbuckle" and the "Emerson." Bells were

stamped bearing these names for export only. Though the Arban was different from these models (the “Levy’s,” “Arbuckle,” and “Emerson” differing among themselves only in bore size), at least one instrument is known, a “presentation” horn stamped “Levy’s model” and “1<sup>st</sup> August 1870,” that is identical in all respects (including bore size) to what later was sold as the “Arban model.”

Schwartz concludes his text with a two-page chapter “Links to the Web,” and a bibliography. The book ends with the phrase “Always in process...” in boldface—testimony to the spirit of an inquiring mind, one not reluctant to take advantage of the wonderful opportunities for constant editorial revision and update occasioned by the advent of electronic publishing on the web. On the whole, Schwartz has given us a most useful and badly needed addition to the growth of knowledge of the cornet—one that will undoubtedly prompt still more research into the history of this magnificent instrument.

*Niles Eldredge*

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> William Waterhouse, *The New Langwill Index*. London: Tony Bingham, 1993.

<sup>2</sup> Glen Bridges, *Pioneers in Brass*. Privately published, 1965.

<sup>3</sup> Anthony Baines, *Brass Instruments. Their History and Development* (London: Faber & Faber, 1976).

<sup>4</sup> Edward H. Tarr, “The Romantic Trumpet,” *Historic Brass Society Journal* 5 (1993): 213-61.

<sup>5</sup> Nicholas Bessaraboff, *Ancient European Musical Instruments* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1941).

<sup>6</sup> Baines, *Brass Instruments*, p. 226.

<sup>7</sup> As this review was in press, I received a copy of *Historic Musical Instruments in the Edinburgh University Collection*, vol. 2, part H, fascicle viii: Post-horns, cornets and ballard horns (A. Myers and R. Parks, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Collection of Historic Musical Instruments, 2000). The authors report (p. 6) that “Étienne-François Périnet’s French patent 4149 of 1829 on a three-valve cornet opens with the statement ‘Le cornet dit à piston, connu depuis quatre ans environ, n’avait, dans son origine, que deux pistons; depuis, on en avait ajouté un troisième.’ The invention of the cornet can thus be placed with some confidence at circa 1825.”

<sup>8</sup> Niles Eldredge, “Biological and material cultural evolution: Are there any true parallels?” in N. Thompson, F. Tonneau, F. eds., *Perspectives in Ethology* 13:113-54 (New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers, 2000).

"*Tabourot.*" *Royall Drummes & Martiall Musick*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Austin: Tactus, 1997. x + 192 pp. ISBN 1-881-428-10-9. Price \$25.00 (plus \$4.00 shipping and handling for a single copy). Order from The Tactus Press, P.O. Box 9704, Austin, TX 78766-9704.

It used to be fair enough to assume that percussionists did not have to become entangled in the thorny jungles of performance-practice disputes that characterized most other areas of performance scholarship for much of the twentieth century. Until 1974 there were few systematic studies of early percussion instruments, and since that date the *de facto* Bible for percussionists has remained the book by the former timpanist of the London Symphony Orchestra, James Blades. Blades' survey (*Percussion Instruments and Their History*) is laudable for its ambitious scope and its position as the first full-length study of percussion instruments' history, but its method and ideological orientation approximate those of Adam Carse or other early-twentieth-century historians who viewed early instruments, performance practices, and even repertoires as (at best) interesting precursors to the truly great repertoire of the Classic and Romantic periods. As the historical-performance movement gained momentum over the last two decades of the century, however, percussionists increasingly responded to a growing awareness of the need for more historically rigorous and musically balanced treatments of the early portions of their instruments' history. The result has been not only an appreciable improvement in Blades's text in its subsequent editions, but also a smattering of musicologically and musically substantive explorations. While none of these studies approaches the grandeur and breadth of a full-scale history, they individually and collectively facilitate a substantially more complicated, rewarding, and exciting view of that history than is possible through the seemingly more authoritative sources previously available (including Blades's text).

The work of Peggy Sexton, a music graduate with a concentration in percussion from the University of Texas, *Royall Drummes & Martiall Musick* is a study emblematic of the contemporary state of percussion scholarship pertaining to early (pre-1800) and martial music: it is a study reflecting a considerable amount of practical performance experience, a good knowledge of available primary sources, and a readily evident enthusiasm not only to share information and ideas, but also to encourage or provoke conversation and debate concerning the performance practices and organology of military and concerted percussion instruments. Certainly some readers may feel (as I do) that the author goes a bit too far in attempts to make the book unintimidating: chapter titles such as "Tympanosaurus Rex" and "Eons at the Improv" may be harmless enough, but the rewards of stating "do not top a hot fudge sundae with a dill pickle" and "Never eat more than one banana split at a time" in the section on "good taste" in the latter chapter probably are not commensurate with the space or distractions offered by those truisms (and the illustrations provided for them). Yet these matters affect the book's style more than its substance, and they really are misleading indicators of "Tabourot's" scholarly seriousness. And of course, some readers may prefer its style to that of (for example) Benjamin Harms' more conventional (but also readable) essay on Renaissance percussion (in Jeffery Kite-Powell, ed., *The Performer's Guide to Renaissance Music* [New York: Schirmer Books, 1994]) or my own (likewise conventional)

essay on seventeenth-century percussion (in Stewart Carter, ed., *A Performer's Guide to Seventeenth-Century Music* [New York: Schirmer Books, 1997]).

What is more, most readers will find much to inform and intrigue in this book. To be sure, "Tabourot's" information concerning the early concerted repertoire is largely derivative, and should serve as only a very general starting point for inquiries on that issue. By contrast, however, many readers will find much useful in the chapter titled "The Long Echo" (dealing with the acoustic and vibrational properties of various kinds of membranes), the several examples providing recommended stickings and embellishments, and the tables of national variations in styles and executions of various rudiments.

In short, for the practicing percussionist the book is worth the read. Most will decide to supplement it with other sources providing different sorts of information, but all will find it useful and well organized.

*John Michael Cooper, University of North Texas*

*The Tuba Family* by Clifford Bevan. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, revised, expanded, and updated. Piccolo Press, 10 Clifton Terrace, Winchester, SO22 5BJ, UK. Tel. 01962 864755; fax 01962 864755; email <PiccoWinch@aol.com>; U.S. Address; PO Box 50613, Columbia, SC 29250, USA. ISBN 1 872203 302. £35 or \$60 (US). Published 2000. 640 pages.

If you've recently heard a low, powerful, and undulating sound floating through the air, fear not an earthquake, volcanic eruption, or some other natural disaster. More likely it is the sound of low-brass players through out the world, collectively playing in celebration of the long-awaited publication of the second edition of Clifford Bevan's *The Tuba Family*. The first edition, originally published jointly in 1978 by Faber & Faber and Scribner's, has been out of print for many years. This second edition, published by Bevan's own publishing firm, is revised and greatly expanded to more than double the number of pages from the original. Doubtless it will stand as the definitive study on low brass instruments for quite some time.

The use of the word "family" in the title is significant. It implies a certain connection to the history and use of other brass instruments, and of course this is absolutely the proper view. The resulting book is really a complete study of brass music with an emphasis on the tuba and other low brass instruments, rather than just a book on the tuba. As Bevan points out, the tuba and its relatives make up a family termed "valved bugle-horns," and any study that ignores the entire range of related brass instruments would certainly be incomplete. Thus the book is a valuable resource not only for tuba players but for all who are interested in brass instruments and music. Cliff Bevan's tone is sometimes informal and a often rather chatty, with a good deal of humor scattered throughout, but one should not doubt that this is a serious work of solid scholarship. The amount of detail in the book is absolutely remarkable. It comprises sixteen chapters, three comprehensive appendixes, a bibliography, and numerous illustrations, musical examples, and photographs.

The chapters dealing with terminology, acoustics, and valve systems are particularly helpful; they are highly detailed, yet they explain rather complex information in a manner

that is understandable to non-experts. Bevan's coverage of the history and music of the serpent, ophicleide, *cimbasso*, and other early low-brass instruments is exceedingly thorough and always keeps in view their relationship to other brasses.

Bevan devotes a full chapter to Adolph Sax and his instruments, carefully explaining this man's complex career as well as the significance of some of his major patents. Bevan helps to correct certain misconceptions about Sax, perpetrated by a host of scholars, including, as he points out, his own errors in the first edition of this book. Other chapters are devoted to the tuba and its music in various regions, including Germany, Austria, Eastern Europe and Russia, France, Italy, Britain, and America. These chapters, as well as the one on low-brass in the nineteenth-century orchestra, are thorough, insightful studies that not only will be useful to anyone interested in music, but just low-brass players.

Bevan's coverage of the contemporary tuba is as thorough and detailed as the historical chapters. There is also a section on the tuba outside the orchestra, covering bands, small ensembles, jazz, avant-garde music, and the tuba on radio, stage, and film. Nor does he ignore what he calls "exotica"—the helicon, Antoniophone, Sudrephone, Wagner tuba, duplex instruments, and other related low brass instruments.

The appendices will prove invaluable to anyone conducting research on low-brass instruments and music. They include a translation of Wieprecht's 1835 patent for the bass-tuba with associated drawings, a glossary of brass-related terminology, lists of repertoire classified by instrument, lists of historic players, makers, and instrument collections, and an extensive bibliography.

One will always have reservations about a work as far-reaching as this book. There were a number of omissions that I found regrettable. In the section on the ophicleide, mention of Trevor Herbert's research on one possible cause of the decline of that instrument would have been welcome. Herbert offered in *The Welsh Internationalist* (1991) an amusing anecdote concerning nineteenth-century solo instrument competitions, which were often sponsored by instrument manufacturers. Frequently the winner was a virtuoso ophicleide player and invariably the first prize was a brand-new euphonium! Also missing is Tony George's important work on the ophicleide and his positions as Professor of Ophicleide at the Royal College of Music and at the Royal Academy of Music, posts not filled since the nineteenth century. While Sam Pilafian is mentioned in connection with the development of certain types of tubas, his activities as a leading jazz performer are not. The chapter on the tuba in small ensembles is far too brief in my opinion; in particular, there is little discussion of the brass quintet and its history, repertoire, and performers. Groups such as the New York Brass Quintet and American Brass Quintet have been very influential and discussion of these groups and this genre would have been most welcome.

However, these are very small quibbles and in no way detract from the overall importance of this publication. The entire brass community owes Clifford Bevan a great debt of thanks for the painstaking research that has resulted in the publication of the second edition of this valuable book.

*Jeffrey Nussbaum*

*The British Brass Band: A Musical and Social History*, edited by Trevor Herbert. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000. ISBN 0-19-816698-2. Price, \$85.00. xvii, 381 pages.

Few American readers of this journal, I bet, can contemplate the British brass band without a vague wistful feeling. It really is quite a splendid idea, with all those baritones, E♭ cornets, alto (excuse me, tenor) horns, and everything—all the fine gradations of a basically unified sound, a good solid joint of beef rather than the tossed-salad-with-chicken-chunks you get with an orchestra or concert band. Its history, in the mine and factory towns of Wales and northern England, lends an admirable working-class authority to the music and the people who have played it. And its present state, as we can tell from the recordings that have made their way over here, is still very distinguished indeed. We had our chance at a tradition like this, and somehow we—no pun intended—blew it.

Like its American counterpart, the British brass band began in the early years of the nineteenth century with groups playing on keyed bugles, ophicleides, trombones, and natural instruments, and received a big technological boost from the invention of the valve in 1814 and especially the rise of the saxhorn family, with its full-consort approach and standardized fingerings, in the 1840s. Both traditions were consolidated in the 1860s by the massive association of town bands with locally raised military regiments (on our side, this was precipitated by the Civil War; on theirs, by the volunteer movement that began in the late 1850s). Both traditions probably reached their numerical peak, with amateur bands of every possible size in every small town or village you could name, in the decades around 1900. And then the stories start to diverge: British brass bands continued to thrive in the twentieth century, and the American town band dwindled.

After World War I the social forces that had created these amateur bands were weaker and those ranged against them were stronger. On the musicians' side there was jazz—a new kind of music that used some of the same instruments, presented an exciting temptation, and must have made the old marches and overtures seem a little stiff and dreary; on the audience's side, recordings and radio relieved small-town people of the burden of entertaining each other. It was hard, as the teens turned into the twenties and thirties, for amateur brass bands to compete for players and listeners. Or at any rate, such is what we habitually say about the decline of the American town band; the problem is that these same conditions prevailed in the British Isles at the same time—and were compounded by a demographic change, with fewer young men available to play in the bands—but with a very different result.

So what happened? The answer is, to me at least, a disturbing one. In Great Britain they had (and still have) band competitions, from local events with just a small handful of bands to large annual competitions like the Belle Vue Manchester "Open" contests inaugurated in 1853 and the "National" contests begun at the Crystal Palace in London in 1900. These had the effect of unifying the tradition, giving band members at every level a sense that they were not isolated but part of a big pyramid, showing the world what the playing was like at the top of that pyramid, and along the way creating, in repertoires of the best bands and especially the test pieces used at the most important contests, an élite

level of music for the bands to aspire towards. This sort of thing never caught on in the United States: town bands at the turn of the century got together on occasion for regional firemen's parades, G.A.R. encampments, and so forth, and some of these events involved band competitions of a sort, but these were seldom the focus of their activities and certainly—perhaps because of the distances involved and expense of travel—never grew into a national contest movement. What happened in America was that as the amateur brass-band tradition diminished in the communities, the concert-band tradition grew in the schools. The result, perhaps as inevitable as it is sad, is that band music is hopelessly associated in our minds with school, and that we are about as likely to play our instruments after graduation as we are to do trigonometry. Grateful as I am to the American school-band movement for my own education (and current paycheck), and loathsome as I find the whole idea of the band contest to be, there seems to be no way around it: the British have a strong amateur-band movement and we don't.

This is not the subject of Trevor Herbert's new book, which apart from a few instrument manufacturers does not discuss things American at all. It's a terrific book, though, the kind that gives instant new perspective on thoughts you've been having for years.

I confess I was a little disappointed, when it came in the mail, to see that it was not the work of one author, as I had expected, but a collection of essays. Normally this is not the best way to tell a complicated story that needs above all a single guiding intelligence. But as it turns out, this is about the most tightly edited and unified book of the type that I have ever read, and if it were not for the attributions at the beginning of each chapter, it would often be difficult to know what was and wasn't Trevor Herbert's own work. It begins with two chapters covering the history of the brass band movement: Herbert himself on the nineteenth century and Dave Russell on the years from World War I to the early 1960s. Next, a pair of chapters on ancillary considerations that cover the entire period: Vic and Sheila Gammon attempt to put the music into its popular context, and Arnold Myers discusses the evolution of the instruments. Then another pair of chapters on some variants of the central theme: Herbert on the Salvation Army bands that grew up alongside the secular bands but had a surprisingly separable existence (not adopting A=440 till 1964, not allowing their music to be played by non-Salvationists till 1992!), and Duncan Blythell on how the tradition was translated to Australia and New Zealand. Finally the original repertory is discussed in some detail by Paul Hindmarsh, and the performance practice by Herbert again and John Wallace.

Only one of these chapters registers with me as an intrusion: the Gammons' essay seems, in context, a little long on socio-historical theorizing and short on interesting facts about bands. But the others hit their mark precisely, gratifying the curiosity—even curiosity I didn't know I had—without bogging down; and, as I say, they are so beautifully interconnected that it almost seems unfair to single one chapter out for special praise. But I will: the essay on performance practice is a most unusual accomplishment and deserves especially to be read outside the community of brass-band enthusiasts.

Reconstructing the performance practices of these brass bands is a trickier business than you might think: we know how they sound now, and we know that many have a

continuous tradition from the nineteenth century. But tracing their manner of playing back into their history is nowhere near as simple as assuming that what there is now, there was then—or, perhaps more seductively, of extrapolating from what we can hear in recordings of increasing age and decreasing sound quality. Herbert and Wallace treat the obvious sources of evidence sensibly and sensitively—for instance in their speculations about the amount of vibrato used by early bands (pp. 288–91); but even more impressive is their ability to wring performance-practice clues from the scores themselves. Here, for example, is what they get from a set of surviving handwritten partbooks of the mid-nineteenth century:

The Cyfarthfa manuscripts show the players to have had rounded techniques in which a very broad dynamic and expressive range, and the capacity to perform lyrical lines over a wide tessitura, were commonplace. It also shows them to have been capable of intricate ensemble playing (the bandmaster and arranger explored a wide range of textures) and to have possessed playing skills which were diverse and sophisticated. Indeed, the technical demands made of the Cyfarthfa players comfortably outstrip anything found in the brass orchestral writing contemporaneous with it. It is not just that there are occasional passages which test the players; it is that there is apparently an underlying assumption upon the part of the arrangers of this music that the players could play almost anything that was placed before them, provided it was within a given range (p. 284).

They reprint a page from one of the ophicleide books, and it certainly proves their point; I would be terrified to play the thing on euphonium. Herbert and Wallace have learned a lot from the subtle approaches lately being taken to medieval and Renaissance performance practice, and the medievalists could now, I suspect, learn a thing or two from them.

Enough? No, the book also has the coolest appendices in captivity: (1) six representative price lists from British instrument manufacturers, 1839–1927; (2) data on the Salvation Army bands, including a census of bandsmen from 1878 to 1998; (3) four sets of contest rules from 1860 (reprinted in facsimile), 1902, 1907, and 1989; (4) the winners and placers of Jackson's Crystal Palace Contests, 1861–63, and (5) ditto of the Open and National championships from 1853 to 1997, with conductors and test pieces listed.

I have spotted just one flaw, and it is a strange one: the spine abbreviates the title only as *The British Band*, which will be rather misleading on a library shelf. My guess, however, is that anyone who takes it down by mistake will be very glad they did.

*Kenneth Kreitner, University of Memphis*

*Edinburgh University Collection of Historic Musical Instruments: Portfolio of Drawings of Mouthpieces for Brass Instruments*, by Raymond Parks, March 1999. (Available from the publisher: Edinburgh University Collection of Historic Musical Instruments, Reid Concert Hall, Bristo Square, Edinburgh EH8 9AG, Scotland.)

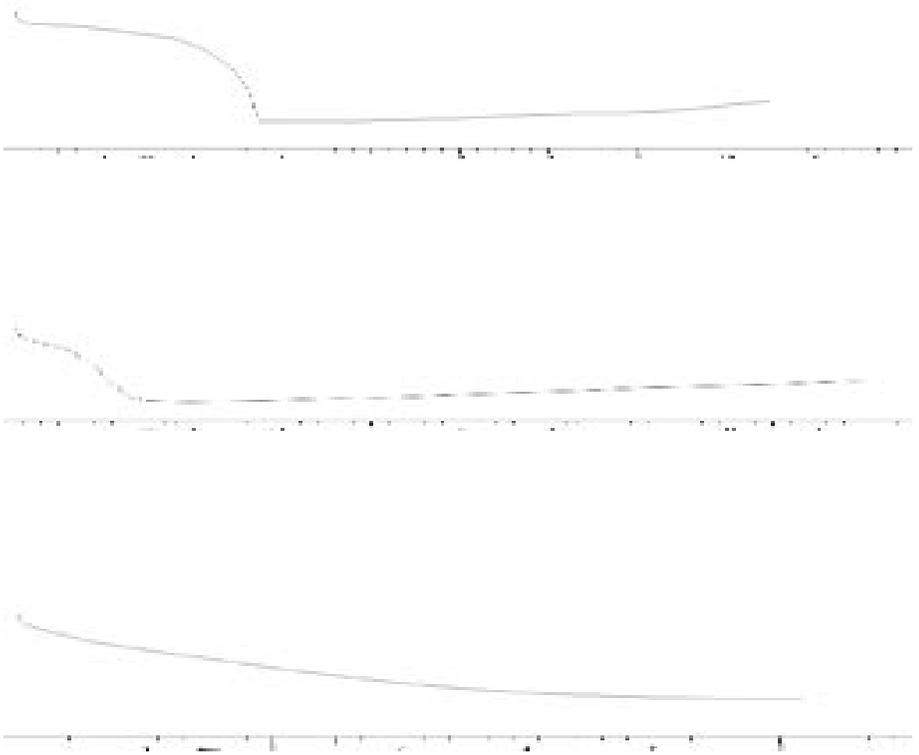
The Edinburgh University Collection has scored another first with this portfolio of forty-four drawings of brass instrument mouthpieces. The object of the drawings is to provide working dimensions of the interior profiles that will be of use to makers (see Figure 1). Exterior details, which are of no importance to the acoustics of the system, can be derived from the full-size black and white photographs that accompany the drawings. According to the text provided with the portfolio, the mouthpieces were selected for their importance as good examples for copying or for study, their reliability of provenance or their association with particular instruments, and their good condition.

The text explains the methods of measuring the mouthpieces, which involves the use of calibrated standards of a high degree of accuracy for the bores, and curvature gauges for the "bite". Tolerance in diameter is  $\pm 0.02\text{mm}$ , and depth is accurate to  $0.20\text{mm}$ . The data resulting from the measurements have been manipulated with AutoCAD drafting software. During this process no "smoothing" of the data has been done, as the authors feel that such adjustment is better left to the maker of the mouthpiece.

The portfolio boasts several novel features. Not only are the drawings of the cross-sections of the interiors reproduced in actual size, they also appear magnified ten times so that very fine detail can be observed. Also, having the drawings on transparent acetate sheet gives the opportunity to compare profiles by overlaying. In addition, the profile drawings are supplied on a  $3\frac{1}{4}$ " diskette as GIF files.

The contents of the portfolio are described in the Edinburgh collection's website, which is well worth a visit anyway for the other material it contains. An order form for all the collection's publications is also included: <http://www.music.ed.ac.uk/euchmi/> As the mouthpiece is the probably the most critical element of the brass instrument, it is strange that such a high quality of documentation is not more commonly disseminated. Bravo to the Edinburgh University Collection for filling a gap! I know there are lots of brass makers, scholars, and students out there who possess drawings, dimensions and other data on historic mouthpieces. It would be nice to see their information published using the same or a similar format, thus setting a uniform standard.

*R.L. Barclay*



**Figure 1**

**Three interior profiles of mouthpieces. Details of drawings from *Portfolio of Drawings of Mouthpieces for Brass Instruments* by Raymond Parks. (Courtesy of Edinburgh University Collection of Historic Musical Instruments.)**