



Anthony Roper's arms, from those on the organ case, with reference to the arms on Roper's memorial, Farningham Parish Church. By Marietta van Dyck

Theewes a Company

The Theewes claviorgan (a combined harpsichord and organ) in the Victoria & Albert Museum, is the earliest dated harpsichord we have from Northern Europe in the 16th century. Malcolm Rose reports on his continuing research into its provenance and ownership, among them his discovery that its original owner was the grandson of Henry VIII's ill-fated Chancellor, Sir Thomas More, a staunch Catholic who counted Tallis and Byrd amongst his friends

In an article in *Early Music* (November 2004), I reported on my research into the history of the claviorgan by Lodewyk Theewes (1579), in the British Galleries of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Since then I have made some further progress in filling in the gaps in the story, and I am presenting the results here for the first time.

For readers who have not yet had a chance to read about the Theewes, I will start with a summary. The whole claviorgan, which came to the Victoria and Albert in 1890, is in a severely damaged state, but with careful study, it is possible to gather enough information about its original set-up and disposition to leave amazingly little room for doubt. One advantage of an instrument being wrecked, in this case by water damage, is that no-one has tried to make it playable in modern times, or to extend its compass.

The claviorgan consists of an elaborate harpsichord which rests on top of the organ; both are played from the harpsichord keyboard. The harpsichord's compass is of 49 notes, C to c''' chromatic, though it is possible that C# was tuned to AA to suit much of the virginalists' repertoire. The disposition is 2 x 8', 1 x 4'. The organ has a compass of 48 notes rather than 49, so probably the bottom C# was omitted. The specification of the organ was most likely:

1. 4 foot wood, in oak, open.
2. 2 foot wood, in oak, open.
3. 1 foot wood, in oak, open, breaking back at the top octave; this rank could perhaps have been a quint stop.
4. 8 foot regal.
5. Cymbel, metal, 1 foot, repeating each octave (or perhaps in some other pattern).
6. A toy or nightingale.

Every stop except the cymbel was divided, but without the sliders it is hard to tell whether between b and c', between c' and c#', or even between f' and f#'.

Just one pipe remains, D# from the 4' wood, but that pipe, along with the spacing of the toe holes, is of great importance in showing the relationship between the lengths and widths of the pipes. One reconstruction of the organ has been made, by Goetze and Gwynn, and this instrument, combined with one of my copies of the harpsichord, is in the USA.

The instrument is signed and dated on the lid, 'Lodewyk Theewes me fesit 1579'. Theewes came from a village near Antwerp; he and his father were among the group of instrument makers who joined the Painters Guild in Antwerp, the Guild of St Luke, in 1557, and he was among the hundred thousand Calvinist protestants who fled the Inquisition in the Netherlands in the 1560s and 70s, half of them coming to Britain. He was active in the Dutch Church in Austin Friars, in the City of London.

The original owner

It was possible to trace two stages in the history of the Theewes by delving into the fascinating field of heraldry. The original Catalogue of Musical Instruments in the Victoria & Albert Museum, written by Raymond Russell and published in 1968, includes three photographs of the instrument. Photo 16c shows the claviorgan in the state in which it arrived in the museum, with complex coats of arms in the roundels of the organ case, now known to be those of Hoby and Carey. Photo 16a shows the instrument after 1947; during cleaning, arms of the Roper family were found underneath the later arms. What was not immediately realised was the presence of the crescent moon, which is the *difference* a second son has to make to the arms he inherits. It is this barely distinguishable crescent which links the claviorgan directly to Anthony Roper.

The Theewes harpsichord is the only dated harpsichord we have from northern Europe of the 16th century, and the organ has complete windchests *and* the earliest dated English pipe. It is an astonishing extra bonus to be able to identify the instrument's original owner: Anthony Roper, second son of William Roper and Margaret More, and grandson of Henry VIII's ill-fated Chancellor Thomas More. Anthony Roper remained a staunch Catholic during Elizabeth's reign, and therefore was more or less confined to barracks: his house at Farningham in Kent, just below the North Downs. We know from the will of Joan Tallis, Thomas Tallis's widow, that Roper counted a close-knit circle of Catholics among his friends, particularly Thomas Tallis and William Byrd. Though just speculation, it is easy to imagine Tallis, Byrd and fellow sympathisers from the Chapel Royal going down to Farningham from Greenwich or Eltham Palaces, perhaps to take part in a catholic mass in the Organ Room, as the room was known, in Farningham Manor.

The next owner, Edward Hoby

Anthony Roper died in 1597, and it is a fair assumption that his son, another Anthony and a bit of a bad lot, sold the instrument to Sir Edward Hoby

(pronounced Hobby) fairly soon afterwards. This is likely because Hoby's wife, Margaret Carey, died only eight years later in 1605. They would presumably both have been alive when their arms were painted on the case.

Sir Edward Hoby at the time was Chief Constable of Sheppey, appointed to watch the Thames estuary and prevent the illegal export of armaments which might have fallen into Spanish hands. I am still unable to show whether he had the claviorgan at his official residence, Queenborough Castle on the Isle of Sheppey, or at his family house, Bisham Abbey, on the Thames near Henley.

The most striking of several prominent memorials in the Hoby chapel in Bisham Church is known as the Swan monument, commissioned by Edward Hoby on the death of Margaret Carey in 1605. It becomes clear that the Hoby arms, on the south side of the monument, are those which appear in the left-hand roundel of the organ case, along the long side. Among the less usual quarters is the first, top left, with three fusils, which represent weavers' spindles. At the bottom left the quarter has three hobbies, which is an old name for the falcon, making a play on Hoby's name. The sixth quarter has a pomegranate, which entered English heraldry with Catherine of Aragon.



The Hoby arms on the Swan monument in the Hoby Chapel, Bisham Parish Church

The combined arms appear again in the window, which is dated 1609. It is perhaps worth mentioning here that there was a resurgence of interest in genealogy and heraldry in the last quarter of the 16th century, perhaps as a result of the prosperity of the country, perhaps as part of a spirit of nationalism while there was the constant threat of invasion by Spain. Elizabeth Hoby, Sir Edward's mother, was in the forefront of this revival, and almost certainly founded this chapel on the death of her husband Thomas in 1566.



The combined Hoby and Carey arms, on the same monument. The right-hand half, the Carey arms in sixteen quarters, appeared in the right-hand roundel of the organ case until 1947

The third owner, the Selbys at Ightham Mote

For many decades the claviorgan stood in the chapel at Ightham Mote, north east of Sevenoaks in Kent, a moated house begun in the 14th century and now owned by the National Trust. Mrs Luard Selby, owner of Ightham Mote and the last in a long line of Selbys, gave it to the South Kensington Museum, as it then was, in 1890.

A photograph at the V&A, which must have been taken in 1890 at the latest, and reproduced in the Galpin Society Journal article, shows the instrument in place in the chapel. In my previous delvings into history I established that the instrument was already there in 1839, because it is accurately described in Colbran's New Guide to Tunbridge Wells at that date. It has long been thought that this chapel was created out of guest rooms in the early 18th century; all the furnishings, the pews and pulpit and so on, were brought in from elsewhere and adapted.

However, recent research at Ightham Mote shows that Lady Dorothy Selby, when a widow and in failing health, gained a licence to have a private chapel at Ightham Mote in 1633. An entry in Laud's Register in St John's College Cambridge, runs: '1633 Ightham, Kent. Consecration of a private chapel on October 13 by Dr John Bancroft, Bishop of Oxford, under a commission from the Archbishop of Canterbury. Eucharist celebrated.'

At this time the Church was keen to keep control over private chapels, principally to ensure that no illicit activities were being entered into by those not attending the parish church. Lady Selby was granted the licence because of her extreme old age. Anyway, it seems quite possible that she bought the claviorgan around this date, to accompany services in the new chapel, in which case the ownership could have passed directly from the Hobys to the Selbys. I had thought there was a gap in our knowledge of the instrument's history from 1617, the death of Edward Hoby, until the guide book of 1839, but in fact it seems likely that we now have the full story.

The 19th Century

It is amazing how much interest there was in the second half of the century in antique music and instruments. This was largely fostered by the Great Exhibition of 1851, which led to the establishment of the South Kensington Museum. The most inspiring leader behind this movement was Carl Engel, who was born near Hanover in 1818, but lived mostly in England from the 1840s. Among other collectors and scholars were Sir John Donaldson, whose collection forms the bulk of the Royal College of Music Collection; A J Hipkins, who worked for Broadwood, and Edward Rimbault.

Engel borrowed the Theewes claviorgan for a special exhibition in 1872, and returned it afterwards to Ightham Mote. For this exhibition Engel wrote *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Musical Instruments in the South Kensington Museum*. Here is the entry for the Theewes.

A claviorgan exhibited by Mrs Luard Selby, the Mote, Tunbridge, Kent, affords evidence of a higher antiquity of instruments of this kind than might perhaps be expected. It bears the inscription, 'Lodowicos Threwes me fecit, 1579'. There is scarcely more remaining of this interesting relic than the outer case; but this is so elaborately finished

that, if the mechanism was constructed with equal care and success, it must have been a superior instrument. The maker is unknown in musical history. Perhaps he belonged to the family of Treu (also written Trew), musicians of repute in Anspach about the year 1600.

Such entries from earlier times are interesting in showing how much was known at the time, and how much was still unknown. It is amazing how many people over the years have not managed to read the inscription on the lid correctly.

The fourth Owner, the South Kensington Museum

In 1889 the last Selby, Mrs Luard Selby, was preparing to sell Ightham Mote, and in the first bill of sale, the claviorgan was actually included with the house. At some point she changed her mind and gave the instrument to the Museum which had borrowed it seventeen years before. The Museum kept ledgers, known as Day Books, in which all new acquisitions were described and numbered; this is the entry for the Theewes:

Organ-Harpsichord or Claviorganum. A combination of an organ and a harpsichord, permitting them to be played either separately or together, the later being effected by means of a stop or pedal and yielding a sustained sound. These instruments are in a most defective condition; the organ, however, seems to have contained five stops (wood & metal), probably Open Diapason, Stopped Diapason, Principal, Twelfth and Fifteenth. Of the oaken pipes only one, tenor C, remains, and of the manual only one black key. The wind, which was supplied by two single-acting bellows, was, in the case of at least one stop, conveyed by paper tubes to a separate sound-board of curious construction. The pallets are like those in use at the present day.

The harpsichord is made of oak, and has been decorated internally with colour and stucco ornament and externally with leather, stamped and gilt. The inside of the lid is painted; among the details is a medallion with the subject of Orpheus charming the beasts. The case of the organ is oak, constructed in panels separated by pilasters, painted & gilt, the decoration consisting of strapwork, and of medallions containing two armorial shields and two crests. The name of the maker is painted on a panel which originally stood behind the key-board, and reads "LODOWICVS THEEWES ME FESIT 1579", which is probably a Latinised form of the English surname Theio [?] (Theewe?).

These instruments originally stood in the Chapel of Ightham Mote, near Sevenoaks, Kent.

Probably English.

By 'these instruments' the writer refers both to the Theewes and to the Hitchcock harpsichord, which also came from Ightham Mote.

The guess at the specification, we now know, is wide of the mark. What is particularly interesting is the information that only one pipe remained, whereas later reports mention three. We cannot know why the pipe is called tenor C; it is not complete enough to have worked if blown, and it is in fact labelled D with a little curved stroke, which is a Germanic form of D#, or "D with a tittle". John Koster of the National Music Museum, Vermillion SD, USA, pointed out in his article in the Galpin Society Journal in 1980 that this pipe was not stopped and therefore sounded at 4' pitch; the only 8' register was therefore the regal. Both he and the organ builder Dominic Gwynn have made reproductions of this pipe, and both conclude that it establishes a pitch of A 408 - 410.

The Day Book also contains the following entry:

Note communicated by Mr Everard Green [the Somerset Herald at the College of Arms, London]:-

I see you have the instrument which belonged to Sir Edward Hobby of Bisham Abbey in Berkshire, whom Camden calls "that famous and worthy knight". Sir Edward married Margaret daughter of Henry Carey, 1st Lord Hunsdon K.G., Lord Chamberlain to Queen Elizabeth, and sister to Robert Carey, Earl of Monmouth. The Hobby shield is quarterly of six (see instrument). The Carey shield is quarterly of sixteen (see instrument).

The writer goes on to identify some, but not all, of the sixteen quarters of the Carey shield.

This concludes my work so far on the history of the Theewes claviorgan. I have still to look in detail at the wills of Lodewyk Theewes, and of his wife Hellyn Bays, both of which were registered in The Testamentary Records of the Consistory Court of the Venerable the Dean and Chapter of the Collegiate Church of St Peter, Westminster, now known of course as Westminster Abbey. I hope to be able to report on these wills on another occasion. *

Further reading
and
listening
on the
Theewes Claviorgan

Some pictures and a short description can be found at <http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O60635/claviorgan-the-theewes-claviorgan/>

For a list of recordings made on copies of the Theewes harpsichord, please see <http://www.malcolm-rose.com/cd-recordings.htm>. The short CD, Elizabethan Keyboard Music, played by James Johnstone, is available free from The Workshop to readers of *Sounding Board*.

A description of the technical aspects of the harpsichord can be found in the article in the Galpin Society Journal LV, published in 2002.

Further reading

John Koster, *The Importance of the Early English Harpsichord*, Galpin Society Journal XXXIII (March 1980).

Malcolm Rose, *Further on the Lodewijk Theewes Harpsichord*, Galpin Society Journal LV (2002).

Malcolm Rose, *The History and Significance of the Lodewijk Theewes Claviorgan*, *Early Music*, Vol. XXXII /4, Nov. 2004.

Raymond Russell, *Victoria and Albert Museum: Catalogue of Musical Instruments, Vol. 1: Keyboard Instruments*. HMSO 1968. This Vol. was revised by Howard Schott and republished in 1985.



★ LOOK! ★

FOUR HANDS!

Music for four hands may be the earliest example of fully-notated chamber music for keyboard players, discovers Masumi Yamamoto, who finds the repertoire beats continuo playing, erm, hands-down any day

When a child learns to play a keyboard instrument, today most commonly the piano, the earliest ensemble experience is likely to be the teacher providing accompaniment to a little tune he or she plays. Later, the teacher might play the left-hand part while the student plays the right, and vice versa, in preparation for putting hands together. I have always found this exercise exciting. For me, it developed from my teacher's accompaniment, to playing duets with my sister and friends, and now with colleagues on the harpsichord. I find much pleasure in the excitement of playing music for four hands.

It was not until the 1720s, in Bach's violin sonatas, with obbligato harpsichord accompaniment, that it was even assigned equal status

For a harpsichordist, ensemble playing usually involves playing continuo, sharing the bass line with another instrument, and 'realising' from figured bass to provide harmonic support to the rest of the ensemble. The role is a supportive

one, and although interesting and satisfying in its own way, the harpsichord of the continuo team is not an equal partner in a chamber-music setting. It was probably not until the 1720s, when Bach wrote his violin sonatas, with obbligato harpsichord accompaniment, that the instrument was even assigned similar status.

The music for four hands may be the earliest example of fully notated chamber music for a keyboard player. There is something exciting about playing with another musician who has exactly the same resources and means of expression. The notes are pre-determined, and

the performers' job is to deliver these notes in a convincing way.

After a cursory survey, it was found that there has been a keen interest in this repertoire for many years in Britain. Concerts involving two

harpsichords that match, or at least complement each other, are difficult to organise, for obvious reasons. Yet the mere sight of two beautiful instruments together on a concert platform enhances the experience of this wonderful repertoire!

The Repertoire

The earliest piece known to have been written specifically for two keyboards is found in the *Fitzwilliam Virginal Book* and is called 'For Two Virginals', by Giles Farnaby (c.1563-1640). This eight-bar piece is written with the first part playing a simple melody. The second part is an embellished version of the original, but played simultaneously, and there is no dialogue between the two parts.

The first fully-developed English music for four hands was written by Nicolas Carleton (c.1570/5-1630)

Couperin also wrote a piece for two harpsichords in the opening movement of the 9th Ordre, 'Allemande à deux Clavecin'. The four hands all have independent lines, which are delicately interwoven

and Thomas Tomkins (1572-1656) who were known to have been friends. Both *A Verse* by Carleton and *Fancy for Two to Play* by Tomkins are playable on one keyboard, and all four hands have fully-notated parts with interplay between the parts.

In France, Gaspard le Roux (d.1707?) published *Pieces de Clavecin* in 1705, which contained pieces for solo harpsichord. Le Roux also supplied a trio-sonata version for each piece with two

treble lines and a bass line with figures. He also provides an example of a fully written-out version for two harpsichords, stating that any of his suites can be arranged for two harpsichords, and musicians should model their 'arrangements' on his examples.

Similarly, François Couperin (1668-1733), in his preface to 'D'Apothéose de Lully' in 1725, says that this work, as well as 'L'Apothéose de Corelli' and his other trios can also be played on two harpsichords in a similar way. The performers share the same bass line and take each of the treble lines. William Christie and Christophe Rousset have recorded these, and they work rather well. This idea provides harpsichord duos with limitless possibilities and a chance to experience the trio sonata repertoire without having to gather busy string players!

Couperin also wrote one fully written-out piece for two harpsichords as the opening movement of the 9th Ordre, *Allemande à deux Clavecin*. The four hands of the *Allemande* all have independent lines which are delicately interwoven to create a sonorous texture. Other examples are found scattered in his *Troisième livre de Pieces de clavecin* (1722): *La Julliet* from the 14th Ordre, *Muséte de Choisy* and *Muséte de Taverny* from the 15th Ordre and *La Létiville* from the 16th Ordre. They are all notated

on three lines and are played just like the trios mentioned earlier.

Also from the Couperin family, Armand-Louis Couperin, a cousin of François, wrote *Quatuors à deux clavecins* and *Simphonie de clavecins* in the 1770s. The *Simphonie* is of historical importance since it is known as the only piece that requires *genouillères* (*knee-levers*) that enabled gradual changes of dynamics. The piece is a lively affair, full of optimistic energy.

In Germany, the Bach family left us a substantial amount of works for two harpsichords. Perhaps the most popular work of this repertoire, the Concerto for two harpsichords in C major (BWV1061) by J.S. Bach (1685-1750), is frequently programmed in concerts and final

Many of the composers who wrote keyboard music for two hands (Tomkins, Couperin, Bach, Krebs) come from a family of musicians, and I cannot help thinking this is not merely a coincidence!

recitals, and cherished by professionals and students alike. It originated as a work for two harpsichords alone and the orchestra was added later, only highlighting textures and adding colour to the work. Of the three concertos for two harpsichords that Bach wrote, the C major work is the only one specifically written for two harpsichords. The other two, BWV1060 and 1062 which are both in C minor, as well as his concertos for three harpsichords in D minor BWV1063 and C major BWV1064, and the concerto for four harpsichords in a minor BWV1065 are all arrangements. The 1751 edition of the *Art of Fugue*,

BWV1080 also contains a work for two harpsichords, however, whether Bach himself wanted it to be played on two harpsichords cannot be ascertained since the edition appeared after his death in 1750. Bach's sons, Wilhelm Friedemann (1710-1784), Carl Philipp Emanuel (1714-1788), Johann Christian (1735-1782) also contributed to the repertoire for two harpsichords. With so many keyboard players in the family, perhaps it was only natural! Many of the composers mentioned in this article indeed come from a family of musicians (eg. Tomkins, Couperin, Bach, Krebs) and I cannot help thinking this is not merely a coincidence. W.F. Bach's F major sonata is probably the best known and most frequently performed among his sons' works. C.P.E.

Bach's work was reconstructed from his sonata for flute and obbligato harpsichord at the composer's instruction to arrange it for two harpsichords, much in the same manner as the works by French composers' earlier in the century.

Other works from Germany worth mentioning include the Sonata and the Suite in G minor by Johann Mattheson (1681-1764) and the Concerto in A minor by Johann Ludwig Krebs (1713-1780). My personal favourite of this repertoire is the second movement of the Krebs' concerto, written with exquisite lyricism and dialogue between the two parts. This piece,

again without orchestral accompaniment, was written for the Dresden court where he performed in 1753 which was a thriving musical court at the time. Krebs was known to have been a gifted pupil of J.S. Bach: C.F. Cramer reported in the *Magazin der Musik* in 1784 that Krebs was a single crayfish (Krebs) caught in this great stream (Bach).

Elswhere in Europe, from Italy we have '14 Sonatas for two Harpsichords' (1704) by Bernardo Pasquini (1637-1710), for which he only wrote the bass line with figures, leaving much freedom for the performers. In Spain, Antonio Soler (1729-1783) wrote six concertos for two obbligato organs (1776) which are also playable on two harpsichords. They were written for Prince Gabriel, son of Carlos III and Soler's pupil from 1766 until his death in 1783.

There are unlimited possibilities for making arrangements for two harpsichords: The abundance of trio sonatas, operatic overtures and concerto grossi of the Baroque era provides very good source material

So there are unlimited possibilities for making arrangements for two harpsichords. The abundance of trio sonatas of the Baroque era provides a very good source for material and any number of orchestral pieces, such as the overtures to operas and concerto grossi, can also be arranged effectively. As Maurice Hinson once said, 'Almost all music can be performed by twenty fingers. In fact, the natural tendencies of multi-piano playing make it a symphonic medium.' Of the performers in the UK today, there are some enthusiastic and

skilful arrangers. Steven Devine, who plays as a duo with Colin Booth, has made several successful arrangements, while Helena Brown, who has played with Penelope Cave over the last 30 years, has also made arrangements which they have performed together. Of the younger generation, Chani and Nadja Lesaulnier of Le Petit Concert Baroque included their own arrangements in their concert at this year's Early Music Competition in York, in July.

As one of the most flamboyant arrangements I have come across, Andreas Staier's arrangement of the *Fandango* by Luigi Boccherini (1743-1805) is worth a mention. It incorporates the castanets, making the interplay between the two harpsichords all the more colourful. Christie and Rousset's Boccherini CD contains another version of the *Fandango* for two harpsichords

along with 18th-century arrangements of his six string quartets found in a manuscript in Dresden. Although the core repertoire of original works written for two harpsichords is relatively small, there is great potential for expansion and many appropriate works are waiting to be arranged. ✱

Masumi thanks all who responded to her enquiries in preparation for this article, in particular Colin Booth and Penelope Cave. Also special thanks to her duo partner, Takako Minami, for sharing this exciting repertoire!

.....continued in section 3

