

*Journal of the
American Musical
Instrument Society*

VOLUME XV • 1989



Copyright by the [American Musical Instrument Society](#).
Content may be used in accordance with the principles of fair
use under [Section 107 of the United States Copyright Act](#).
Content may not be reproduced for commercial purposes.

valved or compensating systems for the baritones and tubas, although the F-tuba with five or six valves appears in a simple list called "The Practical Brasses" in chapter 7, p. 104. Also absent is the modern bass trombone with one or two valves to change the pitch from B-flat to F or E, though it is described in chapter 3, p. 45. Either the East Germans are manufacturing archaic brasses, or these systems are omitted from the drawings and text for the sake of simplicity in this basic handbook.

A few errors are evident: in illustration 44, p. 33, both the keyed trumpet and keyed bugle are identified as keyed trumpets; on the chart of slide positions for trombones, page 44, the second harmonic in first position for the bass trombone should be F instead of G; and while the table of dimensions on p. 205 is for an F-tuba with four valves, the accompanying drawing on the opposite page shows a three-valved instrument.

Despite these criticisms, *Metallblasinstrumente* is a very useful book, for it contains a mass of accurate technological, acoustical, and historical data.

GEORGE R. HUNTER, Denison University

The Glen Account Book: 1838–1853. Introduction and indexes by Arnold Myers. Edinburgh, Scotland: Edinburgh University Collection of Historic Musical Instruments, 1985. 253 pp.; 1 facsimile. ISBN: 0–907635–12–1 £17.00.

The *Glen Account Book* is the purchase ledger for the period from July 1838 through July 1853 of the Edinburgh firm begun in 1826 by Thomas Macbean Glen (1804–1873). This ledger survives in the handwriting of two persons: the first ten years of it, presumably, are in Thomas Glen's own hand; in 1848, John Glen, Thomas' eldest son, began to keep the account. No earlier or subsequent volume of the account ledgers has survived. The original document consists of 200 pages of varying and miscellaneous details concerning the instruments (new and used), repair supplies, parts, materials, music, and instruction books that were bought and sold during these fifteen years. Unfortunately, the book does not shed much light on Glen's own instrument making; but there are some references to his manufacture of strings, drums, brasses, woodwinds and of course, bagpipes. The accounts provide a glimpse into the British

music trade of the period, as well as information on hundreds of other dealers, makers and performing groups who had dealings with Glen. The original account book is now part of the Edinburgh University Collection of Historic Musical Instruments (formerly the Galpin Society Permanent Collection), placed there on loan in 1969 together with instruments from the Glen Collection.

This published transcription of the *Glen Account Book* allows immediate and easy access to original source material that until now has been available only to scholars and organologists who were able to view the manuscript in Edinburgh or secure difficult-to-read photocopies of it. The transcript is accompanied by two valuable indexes that greatly facilitate any investigation connected to the ledgers: the first is an alphabetical index of over two hundred names of instrument suppliers, makers, and sellers of second-hand instruments, giving the dates of transactions with them; the second is an analytical index of instruments bought (new and used), in which much useful data about the kinds, numbers and prices of instruments bought each month between 1838–1853 is given. In addition to the types of instruments one would expect to find, there are such diverse instruments as musical glasses, music boxes, keyed serpents, a bass hibernicon, and Indian instruments.

It is difficult to assess the quality of the transcription without seeing the original manuscript. (Only one sample page of the original ledgers is provided; comparing this one page of manuscript with its typescript transcription, one sees that the pound sterling sign is indicated several times when it is not given in the original.) The margins and line spacing within the entries have been made regular in the typescript, thereby creating a slightly different look and character (which at times could cause minor misunderstanding). While the editor indicates illegibility with a question mark “(?)”, there are otherwise no editorial remarks included in the typescript.

A somewhat humorous glossary of the variant spellings used throughout the manuscript is included in the introduction, and other variant spellings are given in the index of instruments bought (there are at least nine variations on the spelling of “piccolo”). The glossary helps to protect the sanity of the user trying to cope with “plaire” for “player” and “tuths” for “teeth.” Besides spelling pitfalls, Myers had to decipher unclear handwriting and somewhat erratic arithmetic. “Shillings and pence were sometimes ignored, usually to Mr. Glen’s advantage,” he remarks.

An appendix gives pertinent excerpts from another manuscript from approximately the same time period that documents the Glen firm, the

Day Book (1847–1857). The original bears the handwritten title “Day book Tuesday 8th June 1847/ belonging to Tho^s Glen Edin^r”. The handwriting is thought to be that of John Glen, whose signature is written on the inside front cover. In this book, part of the National Library of Scotland since 1983, accession No. 8396/16, Glen recorded credit sales, partial exchanges, repairs, cleanings, payments, loans, and rentals; no cash sales were entered. The customers were primarily bands. Only the entries relating to the sales of instruments have been excerpted for inclusion in the appendix to the transcription of the *Glen Account Book*.

Though in his introduction Arnold Myers supplies basic but somewhat scanty information about the firm and about Glen as an instrument maker, he suggests that as a supplement the reader might consult his article “The Glen and Ross Collections of Musical Instruments,” *Galpin Society Journal* 38 (1985): 4–8 for further details of the history of the firm. This overly modest recommendation should be reinforced, for the article adds so much that the *Glen Account Book* should not be studied without it.

SUSAN BERDAHL, University of Central Arkansas

James M. Borders. *European and American Wind and Percussion Instruments: Catalogue of the Stearns Collection of Musical Instruments, University of Michigan.* Ann Arbor, Mich.: University of Michigan Press, 1988. 171 pp.; 254 black-and-white illustrations. ISBN: 0-472-10070-X \$42.50.

James Borders' *Catalogue of the Stearns Collection* is a welcome addition to a recently published group of books describing wind and percussion instruments in public musical instrument museums around the world. With more than two thousand items and many significant instruments for study, the Stearns Collection is one of the major public musical instrument museums in the United States.¹ Borders' *Catalogue* provides concise descriptions of 516 woodwind, brass and percussion instruments constructed from the fifteenth through the twentieth centuries. The

1. Laurence Libin, “Instruments, Collections of,” *The New Grove Dictionary of American Music*, 4 vols., ed. H. Wiley Hitchcock and Stanley Sadie (New York: Macmillan, 1986), 2: 492–94. Three important permanent collections were omitted from this article: the Kenneth G. Fiske Museum of The Claremont Colleges, Claremont, California; the Streitwieser Foundation's Trumpet Museum, Pottstown, Pennsylvania; and the private collection of Richard Colburn, Los Angeles and New York, bowed strings.