

*Journal of the
American Musical
Instrument Society*

VOLUME XXV • 1999



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.

Where such information is available, Gellerman provides brief sketches of company history and includes lists of instrument serial numbers and dates to aid in determining the age of an instrument or its city of manufacture. Especially helpful is the inclusion of trade suppliers. These entries, along with extensive cross-referencing furnished by indexes, are a boon for the researcher seeking to compile the often multi-faceted record of the numerous companies and individuals involved in manufacturing a single instrument.

As in *The American Reed Organ and the Harmonium*, the photographs and drawings included in the *Reed Organ Atlas* are of particular value. Moreover, they are not simply reproductions of those that appear in *The American Reed Organ*, but rather they extend the already capacious offering of the earlier work. Not only can the illustrations be enjoyed as charming or amusing—a North Dakota farm girl perched on a dictionary to play her reed organ; advertisements showing sweethearts together at the reed organ (including one with a caption that proclaims “The HIM she likes best”)—they are also immensely instructive of the important cultural and societal position held by the reed organ.

One must be careful not to consider the *Reed Organ Atlas* a final research source, as the bibliography lacks recently produced material that would be essential to a thorough research project. However, the extent of its basic data and cross-referencing makes it an invaluable informational tool for the reed organ buff and an excellent starting point for the more serious researcher.

ALLISON ALCORN-OPPEDAHL
TRINITY INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY
DEERFIELD, ILLINOIS

Trevor Herbert and John Wallace, editors. *The Cambridge Companion to Brass Instruments*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997. xix, 341 pp.: 42 black-and-white illus., 5 tables, 23 musical exx. ISBN: 0-521-56343-7 cloth; ISBN: 0-521-56522-7 paper. \$59.95 cloth; \$19.95 paper.

The challenge to the editors of a volume that has fifteen authors, such as *The Cambridge Companion to Brass Instruments*, is to create a cohesive whole that, while making full use of the most recent scholarship, does not read like a group of unrelated journal articles. Trevor Herbert and John Wallace have done an admirable job meeting this challenge, and in

doing so have produced an extremely useful and readable overview of the history and technique of brass instruments that will be of interest to a broad audience.

A wide range of topics is covered in the eighteen articles prepared for the volume, the majority of which are strong contributions to the literature on brass instruments. In the introduction the editors mention six themes that they requested the authors to consider as they examined their individual topics. These common issues (concerning main developments, repertory, performance practice, technological developments, the significance of individuals, and the wider context of social and music history) do help unify the book. The editors also asked contributors to "outline controversies where they exist because the growth of interest in performance practice on brass instruments has, understandably, produced a range of different, sometimes conflicting, views" (p. 3).

Two of the most interesting articles, both of which take on the controversy challenge well, are Robert Barclay's essay on "Design, technology and manufacture before 1800" and Keith Polk's "Brass instruments in art music in the Middle Ages." Barclay's discussion presents differing views on, among other topics, the development of vented and keyed brass instruments, as well as proposing a more likely explanation of why the inner surfaces of horn bells were painted black (to mask the absence of a perfect finish) than the usual myth (so that horses would not be startled by reflections of sunlight off polished metal). Polk outlines the diverging scholarly opinions on the roots of brass instruments in the west, interweaving evidence from early manuscripts to support his analysis of developments in playing technique.

Articles are arranged approximately in chronological order, the first being Margaret Sarkissian's "Lip-vibrated instruments of the ancient and non-western world," which makes important points on gender distinctions and the dangers of relying on older, outdated sources. Other articles on brass before 1800 include "The cornett" by Bruce Dickey, "'Sackbut,' the early trombone" by Trevor Herbert, and "The trumpet before 1800" by Edward H. Tarr, all of which present the most recent scholarship on their topics. Of particular interest is Thomas Hiebert's article "The horn in the Baroque and Classical periods," which cites little-known and unique musical examples to illustrate his commentary on the development of horn technique. On nineteenth- and twentieth-century topics, articles by Ralph T. Dudgeon ("Keyed brass"), Clifford Bevan ("The low brass"), Trevor Herbert ("Brass bands and other vernacular

brass traditions”), Roger T. Dean (“Jazz, improvisation and brass”), John Wallace (“Brass solo and chamber music from 1800”), and Simon Wills (“Frontiers or byways? Brass instruments in avant-garde music”) are all strong contributions to the study of their individual topics.

On the other hand, a few articles exhibit weaknesses. Neither article by Arnold Myers (“How brass instruments work” and “Design, technology and manufacture since 1800”) includes any footnotes. Though both are overviews, some footnotes, or at least an indication of references used, would be appropriate. In other articles, not all quotes are footnoted; perhaps some are considered common knowledge, but I believe that the references should be shown. As a specialist in nineteenth-century horn technique, it is perhaps inevitable that I should notice dubious statements in regard to the horn. In Myers’s second article, he implies that the valve was invented “merely to change crook simply and rapidly” (p. 126). This idea has been repeated for years in numerous sources but has been shown to be fiction. Heinrich Stölzel and Friedrich Blühmel, the co-inventors of the valve, both clearly intended to make brass instruments chromatic.¹ On Brahms’s use of the horn, Simon Wills states in “Brass in the modern orchestra” that in some works the composer calls for two *Ventilhörner* [valved horns] and two *Waldhörner* [natural horns] (p. 161). But though most hornists undoubtedly performed his works on valved horns during the period of their composition, Brahms *scored* them exclusively for the natural horn. This scoring also negates Wills’s statement that in Brahms’s First Symphony “valves were for him a fast method of re-crooking” (p. 162). Robert Evans’s “The post-classical horn” includes small details that are incorrect. For example, in reference to Schubert’s famous song with horn obbligato *Auf dem Strom*, D. 943 (1828), Evans comments that “the outer sections are obviously designed for the hand horn in E, or the valve horn in F with the second valve depressed and then hand stopped” (p. 209), whereas Schubert actually wrote the work for the valved horn crooked in E (a

1. This was shown over twenty years ago by Herbert Heyde in part 1 of his series of articles on the early valve and valved instruments in Germany (*Brass Bulletin* 24 [1978]: 9–32), an important resource which, curiously, was not included in the extensive bibliography. The original source of the myth is an 1828 article by F. J. Fétis, translated in Jeffrey L. Snedeker, “Fétis and the ‘Meifred’ Horn,” this *JOURNAL* 23 (1997): 126–27. I discuss the issue in “Heinrich Stölzel and Early Valved Horn Technique,” *The Historic Brass Society Journal* 9 (1997): 63–82.

common practice according to numerous nineteenth-century sources that indicate the use of crooks on the valved horn, which was not necessarily treated as a fixed-pitch instrument in F). I must also disagree with his statement that the middle section of the work is "virtually unplayable" on the natural horn, since several modern hand-horn artists have shown that *Auf dem Strom* can, in fact, be played on the natural horn, although an instrument and mouthpiece of authentic, period design must be used to obtain the necessary flexibility of pitch.²

One additional concern is worth noting. Several definitions in the glossary will seem, at the least, obscure to the reader in the United States. For example, German silver is defined as "white bronze," whereas in the United States it would be called "nickel silver" and would not be thought of as being a bronze, since the alloy normally has no tin content.

Minor problems aside, *The Cambridge Companion to Brass Instruments* is a strong volume and would be a valuable addition to any library on instruments.

JOHN Q. ERICSON
CRANE SCHOOL OF MUSIC
SUNY POTSDAM

Brian W. Harvey and Carla J. Shapreau. *Violin Fraud: Deception, Forgery, and Lawsuits in England and America*. Second edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997. xxi, 212 pp.: 5 facsim. ISBN: 0-19-816655-9. \$35.00 (cloth).

Many of us have at one time or another had an experience with musical instrument fraud, and some of us experience it far too often. While the violin family has been the most targeted of musical instrument groups because of the extravagant value attached to many of its finer examples, fraudulent practices have affected all types of instruments. Various kinds of violin fraud have occurred since the dawn of violin making, but until now we collectors, connoisseurs, appraisers, and makers of violins have had few references to use in dealing with these practices. With this book, Brian Harvey (a law professor in Birmingham, England, and a violin connoisseur) and Carla Shapreau (an art law and intellectual property lit-

2. I had the privilege of hearing a stunning performance of *Auf dem Strom* on the natural horn by Richard Seraphinoff at the Early Brass Festival in 1997.