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COMMUNICATIONS

The Bonfire Still Smolders

WILLIAM E. HETRICK

It seems inevitable that after a study is published, its author will continue to collect additional information about the subject in question. In that light, the present communication offers a few addenda to my article “Harry Edward Freund’s Great Square-Piano Bonfire: A Tale Told in the Press,” which appeared in vol. 30 (2004) of this JOURNAL.¹

Recent perusal of the Chicago periodical *Presto-Times* has unearthed several items from the 1930s that report Harry Edward Freund’s activities during that decade. While living in Chicago in 1930, he wrote a letter to the editor of that periodical, indicating his enthusiasm for the high level of musical ability shown in the performance of a youth orchestra that he had heard.² In mid-1935, he moved to Woodstown, New Jersey,³ where he delivered an inspirational address to the members of the local civic orchestra in 1936⁴ and organized a two-day “Cultural Olympics” festival in 1937.⁵

To return to Freund’s 1904 bonfire: an issue of the New York *Music Trade Review* of 1899 presents an intriguing (and antedating) parallel in an article entitled “Fate of Old Pianos: Mystery Even to Dealers—Some Burned for Advertisement.”⁶ An anonymous piano dealer in Indianapolis is quoted as saying that he does not know what happens to old pianos: “You would think that these old fellows would become so old that they would be consigned to the scrap-pile, but there is no scrap-pile for old pianos.” The article goes on to quote a visitor to the dealer’s store, an

1. William E. Hetrick, “Harry Edward Freund’s Great Square-Piano Bonfire: A Tale Told in the Press,” this JOURNAL 30 (2004): 57–97.

2. *Presto-Times*, no. 2246 (May 1930): 23.

3. *Ibid.*, no. 2276 (June–July 1935): 11. This source substantiates my suggestion that the indication of Freund’s location as “Woodstown, N.Y.” in his letter published in the *New York Times* on August 1, 1937, is a misprint for Woodstown, NJ (see Hetrick, “Harry Edward Freund’s Great Square-Piano Bonfire,” 97n114). It also supersedes my statement that “no evidence has been found that he was living there” (*ibid.*).

4. *Presto-Times*, no. 2280 (September–October 1936): 14.

5. *Ibid.*, no. 2282 (June–July 1937): 8.

6. *Music Trade Review* 29, no. 18 (October 28, 1899): 27.

equally anonymous traveling piano salesman, who reports that some dealers stage a public burning of old pianos:

I have a customer in New York state in a town of about 5,000 inhabitants that does this. Every year at the approach of the holidays he advertises in the local papers that he has pianos to burn, and will prove it if the people will come to his store on Christmas eve. It's an annual event that is looked forward to in this little city, where amusements are scarce, and about half the town turns out to see the dealer burn a couple of pianos in the street in front of his store. He could probably sell the instruments for \$40 or \$50, but they didn't cost him anything in the first place, as they were taken in exchange for new instruments. Burning pianos is a great scheme, and if it were not for the asphalt streets you could do it here [in Indianapolis]. I'm in favor of burning all of them, and then the business will boom.

The only piano-model reference in this article is to uprights, and square pianos are not mentioned at all; but it is entirely possible that Freund noticed the essay in this rival music trade journal (whose editorial office at 3 East 14th Street was just nine blocks south of Freund's *Musical Age* office at 42 East 23rd Street) and appropriated the idea of a ceremonial burning for his own attack on squares four years later.

The final piece of information has special value, as it provides first-hand evidence of the lasting effect of Freund's scheme on American piano manufacturing. In 2005, I received a personal letter from Henry Z. Steinway (1915–2008)⁷ offering kind words about my article as well as the following account of an incident that took place early in his career and concerned old pianos, fires, and his father, Theodore E. Steinway:

When I was young in the business (I am now 90 and long retired) we used to burn up what we called "clunkers"—old uprights we took in trade back of our factory at 43-02 Ditmars in Astoria. I suggested to my father that the industry have a big fire, and his reaction was instantaneous and irate, and [he] told me of the great fire of 1904, which he said caused bad publicity for our industry for years.

7. Henry Z. Steinway, personal letter to the author (characteristically self-typed), December 2, 2005.

Corrections and Additions to the Review of Eric
Hoeprich's *The Clarinet* (New Haven: Yale
University Press, 2008)

ALBERT R. RICE

I made a rather bad error in my review of Hoeprich's book (this JOURNAL 35 [2009]: 174–77) by writing that Hoeprich was mistaken when he stated that Robert Schumann wrote a revision of Bach's *St. John Passion* that included parts for two basset horns (p. 256). I misidentified this work as Georg Schumann's 1929 edition of Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*, partly based on the famous edition by Mendelssohn. After purchasing a CD and completing some research I must admit that Hoeprich was correct in regard to Robert Schumann's revision of the *St. John Passion*. However, Schumann intended to use one basset horn rather than two in one of the arias.

A fine CD of Schumann's arrangement of Bach's *St. John Passion* was completed in September 2006 and made available in 2007 on the CPO label, 777 091-2. The period orchestra Das Kleine Konzert is conducted by Hermann Max, who contributes thorough and scholarly notes on pages 19–25 in the CD booklet. Here, Max discusses Schumann's interest in Bach's work and provides justification for his choice of instruments on the CD to replace Bach's early eighteenth-century instruments, based on Schumann's own conducting score (published in Berlin in 1831) and piano score (Berlin, 1830). Max consulted several secondary sources, the most important of which is Matthias Wendt's article, "Fanfaren für Bach und andere Besetzungsprobleme: Schumanns Düsseldorfer Erstaufführung der Johannes-Passion," in *Vom Klang der Zeit: Besetzung, Bearbeitung und Aufführungspraxis bei Johann Sebastian Bach: Klaus Hofmann zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Ulrich Bartels and Uwe Wolf (Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel, 2004), 156–79.

Wendt identifies the various modern instruments that Schumann used to replace the *viola d'amour* (a muted violin), *viola da gamba* (english horn or viola solo), and lute (viola and clarinet). He also reproduces two B-flat clarinet parts used for numbers 6, 7, 10, and 31. In the CD recording, Max uses one basset horn in the aria "Zerfließe, mein Herze" because Schumann left a note in his workbook indicating that this was his intention. Schumann conducted a performance on April 13,

1851, in Düsseldorf, but had to eliminate this aria. It is beautifully played on the recording by a former student of Hoeprich's, Gili Rinot, on a nineteenth-century basset horn (or a reproduction). Rinot and Philippe Castejon play the clarinet parts on appropriate clarinets in several numbers.

I also want to be fair to Hoeprich by stating that his description (pp. 23–24) of the similarity of the stock-bell of the Berkeley Denner three-key clarinet to the stock-bell of a two-key clarinet by Johann Christoph Denner (now lost), was his own thought and not based on David Ross's description at the 2007 Clarinet Symposium in Edinburgh. My words in the review erroneously suggest that Hoeprich had taken this idea from Ross when that is not accurate.

The maker of the Berkeley Denner three-key clarinet cannot be conclusively determined. However, evidence concerning the work of Johann David Denner (1691–1764) has been overlooked. Ekkehart Nickel (*Der Holzblasinstrumentenbau in der Freien Reichsstadt Nürnberg* [Munich: Katz-bichler, 1971], 268) mentions two transverse flutes sold by J. D. Denner to Johann Agrell of Nuremberg in 1747, but he assumes that Denner only sold and did not make these flutes. About 1755, the tradesman Leonhard Paul Grundler provided a list of Nuremberg items with makers and prices. Here, "J. David Denner" is identified as the maker of several instruments: two transverse flutes (fl. 8 [8 Florins]), two piccolos (fl. 2½), two *flutes d'amour* (fl. 10), and two F clarinets (fl. 10). If Johann David Denner was making F clarinets around 1755, he could also have made the Berkeley three-key clarinet during the 1740s or 1750s.