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The documentation in chapter 7 of the eleven extant sixteenth-century Nuremberg trombones is perhaps the most valuable feature of the book (though it would be useful to be told the nominal pitch of the bass trombones described here). The differences in response of the extant early trombones (p. 159) is not explained; one is tempted to ascribe the weaker resonances of some instruments to leaks.

The publisher's presentation of Vereecke's material is initially attractive, but the author has not always been well served. The use of color printing is welcome but puzzling. The many bar charts in the appendices use color unnecessarily; many of the instrument photographs would have benefitted from color printing. Color should also have been used in some of the diagrams where a monochrome printing requires the use of dotted lines in comparative graphs. The dotted lines are almost completely invisible in Figure 6.12, for example. The final stage proof-reading was deficient, as in footnote 12 of chapter 1, showing stray hyphens. The quotation from Adolf Ledebur in German on p. 69 should also be translated. On p. 158, one reads, "The results . . . are provided to the reader on the CD attached to this thesis"—but there is no CD provided with the book.

The intended audiences are the small number of instrument makers and the large number of sackbut players. The players can now be well informed in selecting an instrument for the early repertoire. The granularity of the data presented is commendable, although few readers will be concerned with the second decimal place in the elemental composition of brass. Indeed, the general reader might have welcomed a few more conclusions about the relative significance of the amassed facts, but at least they can be confident that no stone has been left unturned in the quest to ascertain what the extant instruments can teach us.

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Germain, Christopher, Philip J. Kass, Darcy Kuronen, Dameron Midgett, and John Montgomery. *The American Violin*. AFVBM Foundation, 2016. 327 pp. 363 color photographs, 30 black & white photographs, 3 tables, reference list, index. ISBN 978-0-692-64339-6 (standard edition), ISBN 978-0-692-64340-2 (Deluxe edition). \$299 (hardbound standard edition), \$479 (leather deluxe edition).

In 2006, an exhibit chronicling the development of American violin making was mounted at the Library of Congress, "The American Violin:

From Jefferson to Jazz,” along with a three-day symposium of lectures, panel discussions, and concerts. This event gave rise, a decade later, to the publication of *The American Violin*, a stunningly beautiful reference work that fills a significant lacuna in the scholarship of the violin family and its luthiers. What becomes clear through this book is that lutherie in America has a far longer history than many may realize—noting that the first violin made by an American-born maker was as long ago as John Antes’ 1759 violin now preserved at the Moravian Historical Society in Nazareth, PA (not Bethlehem, as Kass states [p. 40], and which AMIS members will be able to see during the 2018 meeting in Bethlehem/Nazareth). Further, one becomes aware that even lutherie does not exist in a vacuum, and American lutherie evidences the same spirit of thinking outside the box and not feeling hemmed in by tradition that is seen in every other area of American invention. That said, it is also fascinating to read and observe how violin making in the United States turned a corner in rather profound ways once the European masterpiece instruments made their way to our shores—but startling to realize that did not happen until the early twentieth century.

The essays in this volume are thoroughly researched and well written pieces of scholarship primarily by authors familiar to those in the violin world. Philip Kass and Christopher Germain handle the lion’s share of the writing, which is divided more or less by geographical region—New England, Philadelphia, New York, the “heartland,” and western states—although several chapters make forays into more topical areas such as self-taught makers, eighteenth-century America, and bow making. The essays are loaded with information about makers and their craft, and one of my complaints with the book is precisely because it *is* such a gold mine of invaluable information. That complaint is the lack of meticulous citations and an exhaustive bibliography. Montgomery and Germaine offer some citations, but Kass includes none. Kass explains in a page titled “A Note on Sources...” (p. 318), that most existing texts were inaccurate, and therefore he based his work “almost entirely on primary resources.” As one should. And though he goes on to mention the titles of quite a few of the sources he used, the information still is not cited in the standard ways one expects and needs to find in scholarly work. If, for example, one wanted to follow up on Ava Lucille Butler, who is mentioned only in passing (p. 32) as part of the so-called “Bryant School,” with no citations given for that entire chapter, no clear research path is laid out, and one is at a bit of a loss to know where to begin looking. Another instance worth mentioning is the fabulous if apocryphal Geoffrey Stafford

story (p. 51)—Stafford as an English violin maker who had been banished to Boston around 1690 as part of a contingent of convicted felons resettled to a colony. It is indeed a delightful tale, and one just wishes it were true. I hesitate to include it even in my class lectures, however, because no citation for the story is offered. Ironically, lack of citations with which to check facts and continue the research path is one way texts perpetuate the very inaccuracies that are bemoaned in the “Note on Sources.” It is also in just this way that important sources unintentionally can be omitted, such as must be the case with the lack of reference to Darcy Kuronen’s important 2002 article in this JOURNAL (“Early Violin Making in New England,” vol. XXVIII, 5–62). Careful attention to that article may also have prevented at least one troublesome error, such as assigning ownership of the Simon Snow instrument (p. 24) to the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, when it actually belongs to the Lexington (MA) Historical Society. On the same page, however, Kass suggests that all church basses had painted purfling, but, in fact, church basses do exist with inlaid purfling, such as the three by Abraham Prescott that *are* at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

Without doubt the most charming and unexpected gift of *The American Violin* is the subtle humor that pervades the entire book. More often than not completely lacking in scholarly work, the humor takes one by surprise and—if one has muscled through transporting this hefty tome to read while relaxing at the local coffee shop—sudden laughing out loud is sure to draw curious glances. In fact, I had a sneaking suspicion (hope!) that I was in for some enjoyable scholarly reading when I first cracked the book open and went straight to the entry on Matthias Dahl, since my personal violin is a 1934 Dahl. The entry notes that Dahl was a spiritualist who claimed to channel the masters to discover their secret varnish recipes, and concludes, “Judging by this varnish, which lies rather flat on the pegbox walls, neither Stradivari nor Guarneri were particularly talkative” (p. 138). Casual reference to George Gemünder as “the testy German master” (p. 62) or reference to A.J. Maskrey’s work as “the type that gives nightmares to dealers everywhere” (p. 224) is the sort of writing one longs to find in the work of more scholars and makes one just want to sit down and debate this all over a good beer. To find the balance between engaging writing and obviously meticulous scholarship is indeed a feat worthy of pride.

One hundred seventeen instruments were selected to be featured with a brief description of the instrument and full color photographs of the instrument’s front, back, and scroll detail. It would be nice to have

provenance specifics included for each instrument, but only occasionally is that information provided. The photography is superb, and given that 223 pages are devoted to these exquisite photographs and short narrative (61% of the book), it seems odd that photographer Tucker Densley, who shot all but eleven of the instruments and the bows, is not included in the author list. Moreover, the archival photographs in the essays are outstanding, including such gems as the William Moennig shop in 1928 (p. 47), Simone F. Sacconi working at the bench c. 1935 (p. 57), and an impressive image of the Wurlitzer workshop in 1958 with René A. Morel, Mario D'Alessandro, John Roskoski, William Salchow, Hans Nebel, Frank Passa, Simone F. Sacconi, Rembert Wurlitzer, Thomas Bertucca, and Dario D'Attili (p. 58).

A significant objection I have with this remarkable publication begins by questioning the parameters. In the preface, John Montgomery writes, "This volume is the first to address this need [a reference book devoted to violin making in America] with high quality images and text dealing with instruments that cumulatively can be called American" (p. 12). The exhibit that birthed this book had relatively clear parameters: from Jefferson to Jazz, though one could probably debate the termination point. On the other hand, what were the criteria for inclusion in *The American Violin*? Further, what were the criteria for the instruments that were featured with lavish photography? Importantly, where in that criteria were women *excluded entirely*? Not a single instrument by a female luthier is featured. Scant mention of women is made in the essays—even Carleen Maley Hutchins, winner of the Guggenheim Fellowship and of the top achievement award offered by the American Acoustical Society, received only slight mention (p. 64). Yet, William M. Bissett (1837–before 1900) has an 1890 instrument featured, even though "Bissett's work is not particularly professional, perhaps due to his initial career in agriculture" (p. 85). One might take issue with the slight against farmers, but more to the point is to wonder why AFVBM would want to feature work that is not particularly professional while ignoring the work of *any* of the comparatively few women in the field. Arguing that Hutchins' instruments, for example, were experimental does not ring true, because even discounting the numerous "traditional" instruments she made, *The American Violin* features at least one non-traditional instrument in the mute violin of Charles Francis Albert (pp. 98–99). The John Friedrich violin featured is noted as "less interesting in character, something unfortunately true of much of Friedrich's work after his major successes at the Chicago and St. Louis Expositions" (p. 164). If, in fact, it is less

interesting, why include that instrument to the exclusion of *any* instrument by a female luthier? With no criteria discussed—time, place, gender, quality, other significance/influence, availability of examples—one is left to find the exclusion of women luthiers to be supremely unfortunate and disturbing indeed.

Nevertheless, *The American Violin* is an important and welcome addition to the collection of scholarship on the violin family and its makers. It should find a well-respected place in research libraries and workshop libraries for use by scholars, luthiers, dealers, collectors, and performers alike. It is deeply satisfying to see American lutherie placed in a solid context that enables celebration of American instruments and makers, both in their adherence to traditions and in their breaks from those traditions.

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Edward Blakeman, *Wibb—A Flute for Life*. London: Tony Bingham, 2016. 205 pages, 113 photos/drawings. ISBN 978-0-946113-10-1. \$38.50.

William Ingham Brooke Bennett (“Wibb”) is among the finest flutists of our time. Also a renowned teacher, he has guided the development of master flutists throughout the world during his long tenure as professor of flute at London’s Royal Academy of Music and as a teacher of master-classes in Europe, Asia, and the United States. During his sixty-year career, Wibb has demonstrated an endless fascination with the flute, especially in his pursuit of a vibrant, singing tone with varied colors, flawless intonation, and eloquent shaping of the musical line.

In the years leading up to Bennett’s eightieth birthday in 2016, Edward Blakeman, Head of Music at BBC Radio 3 and a longtime colleague, friend, and admirer of the flutist, conceived of telling the story of Wibb’s life and career. Simultaneously admiring Wibb’s performances and lamenting that the flutist has written almost nothing about his musical life, Blakeman embarked on the project and spent three years engaging Wibb in long conversations, while also poring over music, concert programs, and drawings. By weaving together Wibb’s own words, Blakeman captures the values, vibrancy, and vivid personality of his iconic subject. Writing informally, Blakeman overlooks some grammatical errors as if he didn’t wish to slow the pace of lively conversation in order to correct them.