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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.

Through ten chapters, each filled with photos, drawings, and lengthy quotes, Blakeman tells Wibb's story. The first three chapters ("Beginnings," "Teachers," and "Paris") are a breezy read. They tell of Bennett's early life, a happy upbringing as the only child of accomplished professional architects. (His mother, also a photographer, had studied drawing in Paris.) Surrounded by art and music, Wibb also enjoyed "an awful lot of making things for myself because there wasn't anything else there" [in Buckinghamshire, where his father moved the family to keep them safe from the bombing in London during World War II] (p. 19). At age eleven, he thought he might become a cartoonist, but then we learn of his first flute (a Boehm-system Rudall Carte with open G-sharp) and, just before he turned sixteen, of starting lessons with Geoffrey Gilbert. Wibb recalls Gilbert's teaching, the profound influence of concerts and recordings in his early musical development, and his experience as a finalist in the 1958 Geneva competition. An indispensable further step occurred in the summer of 1965 when he participated in his first master-classes with Marcel Moyse. Blakeman relates, "That first summer in Boswil was the great illumination of his musical life" (p. 43). In addition to Wibb's observations of Moyse's playing and teaching ("When Mozart say something three times, the third time he smiles"), we read letters to his parents and candid observations of his lessons with Jean-Pierre Rampal and Fernand Caratgé.

In "Orchestras," the reader learns of Wibb's rapid ascent to the top of England's orchestral scene, first winning the principal flute position with the BBC Northern Orchestra in Manchester in the autumn of 1958, then performing briefly with the Sadler's Wells Orchestra before moving on to the London Symphony (as co-principal with James Galway, then with Peter Lloyd) and principal positions in the English Chamber Orchestra and the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields. In "Heroes," Wibb tells of his admiration for musical colleagues, poignantly recalling the joy and brilliance of his longtime collaboration with the late Clifford Benson.

"All around his house you will find flutes and bits of flutes, in and out of cases, and each with a particular story attached" (p. 95). Indeed, Wibb's career includes a fascination with plotting "the creation of a perfect-tuned flute" and of experimentation with metals and all aspects of flute construction. He calls his Louis Lot 2828 "my best flute still" and repeatedly mentions "one of my preoccupations: trying to get a decent sound in the high register" (p. 101). In addition to offering thoughts on constructing and adapting flutes, he discusses favorite pieces and the

interesting narratives that surround them and shares observations on contemporary music and on playing the baroque flute.

Blakeman's chapter on Wibb's recordings includes the author's list of Top 20 recordings, including a special note about Wibb's 1978 recording of the Mozart flute concertos with the English Chamber Orchestra, George Malcolm conducting. The final chapters, "Teaching" and "Playing," offer specific guidance to the flutist, focusing on resonance and the value of singing, note bends and harmonics, articulation, shaping a phrase, and the importance of body alignment and holding the flute properly: "The body and flute resonate together" (p. 160). Wibb reveals one of his most exciting breakthroughs, following a performance of Haydn's *Creation* with soprano April Cantelo in the 1960s. "I'd always thought of the sound of the flute coming from where the air comes out from the lips, but I felt the flute wasn't outside me at the moment, it wasn't perched on my lip. . . . the air came from inside my body, as when you sing" (p. 164). He offers thoughts on difference tones and whistle tones, on the use of sensitive fingerings and, always woven into each discussion, on his lifelong quest for playing in tune. An interesting further dimension might have consisted of Wibb's most successful students' reflections on the important concepts of his teaching. And an index would be helpful: while Blakeman separates topics by chapter, there is inevitable overlap, and an index would assist the reader in finding information and connections more easily.

Growing up with artists who saw the world in terms of color, Wibb was fascinated by beauty of sound, variety of tone color, and accurate intonation. His lifelong cultivation of them in his playing, teaching, conversation, and practice led him to the top of his profession. A reading of this book about him will reward those seeking the insights of one of the masters of the flute.

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Robert Adelson, Alain Roudier, Jenny Nex, Laure Barthel, and Michel Foussard, eds. *The History of the Erard Piano and Harp in Letters and Documents, 1785–1959*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015. 2 Volumes (hardback), 1134 pages, 40 illustrations. English text with an appendix in French. ISBN: 9781107092914. €155.00 (US \$258.00).

Among the various figures that left a permanent impression in the development of musical instruments during the last three centuries, the name