NOTES AND QUERIES.

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THE ORGANS AND ORGANISTS OF WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

The Abbey of Westminster, doubtless, possessed several " pairs of organs " in monastic times, but of these we have no record. The earliest notice we find of an organ, in connection with the Abbey, is in 1596; when John Chappington, an organ-builder of note, erected a new instrument, selling the old one to the parish of St Margaret's. In the accounts of the latter parish we read: —

Paid to Mr. Chappington for the organs of the colledge [i.e. of Westminster], xij,iij,iij, ivd." The organ placed in the Abbey, in the room of the one just noticed, we may presume was that destroyed by the Puritans in 1643. Bruno Ryves tells us, in his Mercurius Reticus; The Countries Complaint of the barbarous Out-rages committed by the Sectaries of this late flourishing Kingdome, 1646, that at Westminster —

" the soldiers of Westhorne and Caswood's companies were quartered in the Abbey Church, where they brake down the raiyl about the altar, and burnt it in the place where it stood; they brake down the organs, and pawned the pipes at several ale-houses for pots of ale," &c.

At the Restoration, the Abbey organ was replaced by a new one by the celebrated Father Smith, at a cost of 120/.

The date usually given for the erection of this organ is 1662; but Pepys, in his Diary, under the date Dec. 30, 1660, says: —

" Lord's Day: I to the Abbey, and walked there, seeing the great confusion of people that came there to hear the organs."

From this notice we may safely conclude that Smith's organ was erected, at an earlier date than that generally received. The specification of this instrument is curious, and will interest those who care to go into details: —

**Translation of the New Testament — Burials above Ground**

1. Open Diapason
2. Stopped Diapason
3. Open Octave
4. Nason
5. Twelfth
6. Fifteenth
7. Sesquialtera
8. iv. ranks

**Shifting Movement.**

This, it will be remembered, was the organ on which Blow, Purcell, and Croft played, and under which they were buried. It stood on the north side of the choir, over the stalls; and views of it may be seen in Sandford's Coronation of James II., 1687, and Dart's Antiquities of Westminster Abbey, 1723. It was removed from the Abbey in 1730, and subsequently re-erected in the orchestra of Vauxhall Gardens by Byfield, who extended the compass up to E 3 in alt, and provided it with a long movement: —

"This long movement," remarks Mr. E. J. Hopkins, "was the first of its kind made in England; and it served as a model for the similar appliance attached to the organ temporarily erected by him in Westminster Abbey for the Handel Festival of 1784, and which instrument, destined for Canterbury, was afterwards transferred to the Cathedral in that city."

The instrument that succeeded Smith's organ, was the present noble one built by Shrider and Jordan in 1730, at a cost of 1000/., and of which the opening is thus recorded in an old MS. book in the custody of the Precentor of Westminster: —

" The new organ, built by Mr. Schreider and Mr. Jordan, was opened on the 1st of August, 1730, by Mr. Robinson: the anthem, Purcell's O give thanks." This organ was placed on the screen at the west end of the choir, where it remained till 1846, when great alterations were made in the arrangements of the Abbey itself, including the remodelling and alteration of the instrument. The original situation of this organ greatly interrupted the view of the east window from the choir, and of the apse from the west end of the church. It is now divided into three cases: one placed on the north side of the church, in the fourth arch from the opening of the transept, contains the great organ; another, exactly similar, is placed fronting it, in the corresponding arch on the south side of the church, and contains the swell; and a third, placed over the arch in the screen, contains the choir organ. As the cases of the great organ and swell scarcely project beyond the face of the
wall and the line of pillars, and as the case containing the choir organ rises but very little above the tabernacle work of the stalls, the view from the west to the east end of the church is uninterrupted, and the expanse of the roof is unbroken to the eye of the spectator. The organist sits behind the choir organ, facing the north. The pedal pipes lie along the organ-loft transversely (i.e. from north to south). Thus the organist may be said to sit surrounded on all sides by his instrument.

Having given an account of the organs of Westminster Abbey, I shall now proceed to give a list of the organists from the earliest time to the present, which I am enabled to do from a MS. in the handwriting of Dr. Benjamin Cooke.

When the late Mr. Vincent Novello was writing his Life of Purcell in 1831, he applied to Dr. Goodenough for a list of the organists; but that gentleman, in his reply, says: "From the Restoration we can go on regularly enough, but there is irregularity and uncertainty before that period."

Upon a similar application, which I made some twelve years later, to Dr. Buckland, the worthy Dean told me that some of the earlier books were missing, and he believed no perfect list could now be formed. The roll of organists then, made by Dr. Cooke, has an additional value from the circumstances above related. I have added a few brief notes containing some new scraps of biographical information:

A.D. 1549. John Howe.—Probably a monk, and the person called "Father Howe," whose name occurs in the old parish accounts of Lambeth, St. Mary-at-Hill, St. Helen's, &c., as "mending" and otherwise attending to the "orgayns."

1562. John Taylor, also Master of the Choristers.—Nothing is known of this musician.

1570. Robert White, B.A., Mus. Bac., also Master of the Choristers.—This eminent man proceeded Tallis and Byrd as a church composer, and died before their fame was fully established. He appears to have been organist of Ely Cathedral from 1562 to 1567. The Rev. W. E. Dickson, in his Catalogue of Musical MSS. in Ely Cathedral, speaks of White's death as having occurred in 1567; but this is impossible, unless, which seems hardly likely, there were two musicians of this name flourishing at the same period.

1575. Henry Lowe, also Master of the Choristers.—An unknown name in the history of music.

1588. Edmund Hooper, also Master of the Choristers.—He was sworn a Gentleman of the Chapel-royal in 1603, and was the first regularly appointed organist of the Abbey. A copy of his patent is still preserved. Dr. Goodenough says he appears to have been frequently employed in "mending the organ," also in "pricking new song-books." He died in 1621, and was buried in the cloisters.

1621. John Parsons, also Master of the Choristers.—He was the son of old Robert Parsons, who was drowned at Newark-upon-Trent in 1600. He was appointed organist of St. Margaret's, Westminster, in 1616, which situation he probably resigned when he accepted office at the Abbey. He died in August, 1623, and was buried in the cloisters.

1623. Orlando Gibbons, Mus. Doc.—"One of the rarest musicians of his time," and not inaptly styled the "English Palestrina." He was born at Cambridge (1583?), and in all probability was the son of William Gibbons, who on November 3, 1567, was admitted one of the "waytes" of the town of Cambridge, with the annual fee of 40s. He was appointed organist of the Chapel-royal in 1604; Bachelor of Music, 1606; and Doctor in his faculty, 1622. In 1623, in the overseer's books of St. Margaret's, Westminster, is rated as residing in the Wool-staple (where Bridge Street now stands), "Orlando Gibbons, if."

The following entry of his death is extracted, for the first time, from the ancient cheque-book of the Chapel-royal:

"1625. Mr. Orlando Gibbons, Organist, died the 5th of June (being then Whit-Sunday), at Canterbury, where the King was then to receive Queen Mary, who was then to come out of France, and Thomas Warwick was sworn in his place Organist, the 1st day of July following, and to receive the pay of the Pistorer."

He was buried in Canterbury Cathedral, where there is a monument to his memory.

1625. Thomas Day, also Master of the Choristers.—He was sworn a Gentleman of the Chapel-royal in 1616, and died in 1654. Daniel Day, "son of John Day," was buried in the cloisters of the Abbey, June 1, 1627.

1633. Richard Portman, also Master of the Choristers.—Educated under Orlando Gibbons. He resided some time in France with Dr. Williams, Dean of Westminster, and upon his return was appointed organist of the Chapel-royal.

1660. Christopher Gibbons, Mus. Doc., also Master of the Choristers.—Son of the celebrated Orlando Gibbons. He was organist of Winchester Cathedral before the Civil War, a fact not hitherto known. When the dean and prebends fled, he accompanied them, and served in one of the garrisons. He married a daughter of Dr. Robert Kercher, Prebend of Winchester. Charles II. had so great a regard for him that he was induced to give him a personal recommendation to the University of Oxford, requesting that he might be admitted to the degree of Doctor in Music, which honour was accordingly conferred upon him in 1664. He died in 1676, and was buried in the cloisters of the Abbey.

1666. Albertus Bryne.—A scholar of John Tomkins, greatly patronised by Charles I., who appointed him, at seventeen years of age, organist
of St. Paul’s Cathedral. In 1660 he petitioned for the place of organist of Whitehall, but whether he succeeded in his application we are not informed. According to Wood, he was buried in the cloisters of the Abbey, but the date of his decease is not given.

1669. John Blow, Mus. Doc.—Born at North Collingham, Notts, 1648; Gentleman of the Chapel-royal, 1673; Master of the Choristers of the same, 1674; Almoner and Master of the Choristers of St. Paul’s, 1687; and Composer to the Chapel-royal, 1699. The degree of Doctor of Music was conferred upon him by Archbishop Sancroft. He died Oct. 1, 1708, and was buried on the north side of the choir of Westminster Abbey. In the entries of his death and appointments of his successors, in the cheque-book of the Chapel-royal, he is described as “organist, composer, and master of the children.” Weldon was sworn in as his successor in the first-mentioned place, and Croft in the two last, but no entry of his appointment as organist has been discovered.

1680. Henry Purcell, the pride and boast of the English school of music, was born in 1658, in the city of Westminster, it is generally supposed. His father Henry and his uncle Thomas were both musicians, and gentlemen of the Chapel-royal at the Restoration. He was educated under Captain Cooke, the master of the royal choristers. It is stated in most of the biographies of Purcell, that “in 1676, being eighteen years of age, he succeeded Dr. Christopher Gibbons as organist of Westminster Abbey, and a few years later Mr. Edward Lowe, as one of the organists of the Chapel-royal.” The first of these statements is certainly wrong, as we now see that he succeeded Dr. Blow in 1680, when he was twenty-two years old. Tom Brown, of facetious memory, has left a graphic sketch of the interior of the Abbey choir, and of its crowded and expectant audience, when an anthem of Purcell’s was about to be given. This great genius, whose life and times I have been some years engaged upon, died Nov. 21, 1695, and was buried in Westminster Abbey, where a flat stone covers his grave, with a Latin inscription totally effaced by the footsteps of passengers.

1695. John Blow, Mus. Doc.—This appointment is the one generally known; the fact of his also having preceded his great pupil as organist has been overlooked.

1708. William Croft, Mus. Doc., also Master of the Choristers.—He was born at Nether Eaton, Warwickshire, in 1677, and received his education at the Chapel-royal, under Blow. He originally wrote his name Crofts. He became gentleman organist, and composer, in the establishment in which he was educated. His biographers say that his death was caused “by a disease brought on by his attendance at the coronation of George II.” This, however, could not have been the case; George II. was crowned on October 11, 1727, and Croft died on August 14 succeeding. He was buried in Westminster Abbey, on the north side of the choir.

1727. John Robinson.—One of the choristers of the Chapel-royal under Blow, and, according to Dr. Boyce, “an excellent performer on the organ.” He was for many years Dr. Croft’s assistant at the Abbey. He died in 1762, aged eighty, and was buried in the same grave with Croft. There is an engraved portrait of him by Vertue, from a painting by T. Johnson.

1762. Benjamin Cooke, Mus. Doc., also Master of the Choristers. He was born in 1734, and died in 1793. He was for many years Mr. Robinson’s deputy at the Abbey. There is a monument to his memory in the west cloister of the Abbey, where he was buried, and an engraved portrait of him by Skelton.

1794. Samuel Arnold, Mus. Doc.—He was born in 1759, and educated as a chorister in the Chapel-royal, under Bernard Gates and Dr. Nares. On the death of the latter he succeeded him as organist and composer of the Chapel-royal. He died Oct. 22, 1802, and was buried in the Abbey.

1803. Robert Cooke.—The son of Dr. Benjamin Cooke, and a musician of considerable ability. He was unfortunately drowned in the Thames in 1814.

1815. George Ebenezer Williams.—Educated as a chorister in St. Paul’s Cathedral. He was for some years Dr. Arnold’s deputy at the Abbey. He died in 1819, at an early age, and was buried in the south ambulatory of the cloisters.

1819. Thomas Greatorex, F.R.S.—Born Oct. 5, 1758, and educated under Dr. Cooke. He was elected organist of Carlisle Cathedral in 1780, but resigned his post in 1786 in order to study vocal music in Italy. He died July 17, 1831, and was buried in the west cloister of the Abbey, near his friend and master, Dr. Cooke.

1831. James Turle, also Master of the Choristers. —The deputy of Mr. Greatorex, and the present excellent organist.

Many of the above distinguished church musicians, as will be seen, were also masters of the choristers of Westminster; and amongst the eminent men who were masters, without being organists, occur the names of Walter Porter, 1639; Henry Purcell, Sen. 1661; Thomas Blagrave, 1666; Edward Braddock, 1670; John Church, 1704; Bernard Gates, 1740, &c. We also find among the “copyists” the names of Henry Purcell, Sen., 1678; William Tucker, 1678; Edward Braddock, 1690; John Church, 1710; John Buswell, 1716; Thomas Vanderman, 1763; Thomas Barrow, 1782, &c.

Besides the biographical importance of this roll of organists in connection with a number of musicians of eminence, it is also useful as settling a
in the biography of the eminent political writer and historian, Sir Philip Warwick. Wood tells us, "This noted person was born of Thomas Warwick, Organist of the Abbey Church of St. Peter in Westminster." But this must be an error, as his name is not included in the above list, which there is every reason to believe is correct in every particular. We have seen by the notice of the death of Orlando Gibbons, extracted from the ancient cheque-book of the Chapel-royal, that Thomas Warwick succeeded that great master as organist of the royal establishment, which must be what Wood meant to say.

EDWARD F. RIBMBAULT.

CARFAX.

Having duly read all I can find in "N. & Q." about Carfax, well known as the name of a place in Oxford, I feel bound to say that none of the derivations proposed for it seem to me to be properly proved, and I therefore venture to propose another which is something more than a guess, as a good deal can be shown in its favour, it being capable of being traced through all its changes. The best of those proposed are quatre-faces, and quatre-voies, the latter being the favourite, and adopted in the Oxford guide-books. But I submit that it remains to be shown that the phrase quatre-voies was ever commonly used; quadrivium was used in Latin, but was quatre-voies used in French? The answer is, no; the word commonly used in old French was carrefour, and the word still commonly used in French is its modern form, carrefour. Now the history of this word is very much to the purpose. First, let us see what Burguy says of it: he says, "Quarefor, quarefort, carrefour; composé de quadrifurcum, propr. quadruple fourche." This is quite sound; there is no doubt that the Latin root-words are quadrivium and furca. Next, hear Cotgrave; he says, "Quarre-four: the place in, or part of, a towne where four streets meet at a head. Par tous les quarre-fours de: Throughout all the four quarters, corners, or streets of;," and this is a good sound explanation. I must now just remark that, according to "N. & Q.," an old spelling for Carfax is "Carfox," and I can then trace the word from beginning to end as follows. In MS. Camb. LI. 2, 5, fol. 41, are the lines—

"A lentree de luxembourg,
Lieu ny auoit ne carfoures
Dont len neust vu venir les gens,"

In MS. Trin. R. 3. 17, which is a translation of the above Romance of Melusine, we find on fol. 39 the corresponding lines—

"No place ther had, neither carfouhes non,
But peple shold se ther come many one."

Whence it is easy to see that Carfax is a corruption of Carfouhes, and from Carfax comes, as has been admitted, the modern form Carfax. I propose, therefore, to give up the derivations quatuor facies and quatuor vicis, and to adopt quatuor furca; to suppose, in fact, that the -fax or -fox answers to the English forks. Those who think voices the true original have to show how the k sound got in to the word; I make the simpler supposition that an r has dropped out. By way of corollary, it may be noted that the French have retained the r, but have dropped the k or g; thus they no longer write carrefourg, but carrefour.

A correspondent has made the curious objection that, at Horsham, Carfax means a place where three ways meet, and he actually thinks this fatal to the etymology! Of course, the idea of four was easily lost, but the idea of crossways, or roads meeting, retained. How would such a person understand Peter's "passing through all quarters" (Acts ix. 32)? Or, we might thus argue that journal has no connection with the Latin diurnus, because the London Journal is published once a week. Or again (and this is yet more to the purpose), it may be shown that even carrefour may denote, not four crossways, but one street only. For Froissart uses le souerain carrefour to denote the principal street; Froissart, vol. iv. c. 28.

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WALTER W. SKET.

"Our Medium of Intercommunication."—From a recent personal experience, and which I consider an exceedingly happy one, I wish to state to the readers and contributors of "N. & Q." that the periodical in question is presented to me in an entirely new light—viz. as a medium for introduction to a scholar or gentleman, for any brother-contributor venturing on the privilege of a private correspondence. I am emboldened to prefer this suggestion to the general readers of "N. & Q." from the fact of having submitted a question of relative importance through the post to a gentleman known only to me by "making a note" of the signature appended to an article in one of its instructive pages: the result of which was a copious supply of the knowledge I so much desiderated, enhanced by the utmost courtesy, and proffers of further valuable assistance. I trust the obvious benefit presented by this statement will condone for the intrusion I have ventured upon, but which is made in the pure spirit of promoting good fellowship, and propagating extended knowledge amongst the readers and contributors of your inexhaustible "medium of intercommunication."

EDWARD C. DAVIES.

Cavendish Club.

Embassies.—I seize this heading to come to the rescue of one of my two professions. There is an old definition constantly quoted: "An ambassador is a person sent to lie abroad for the