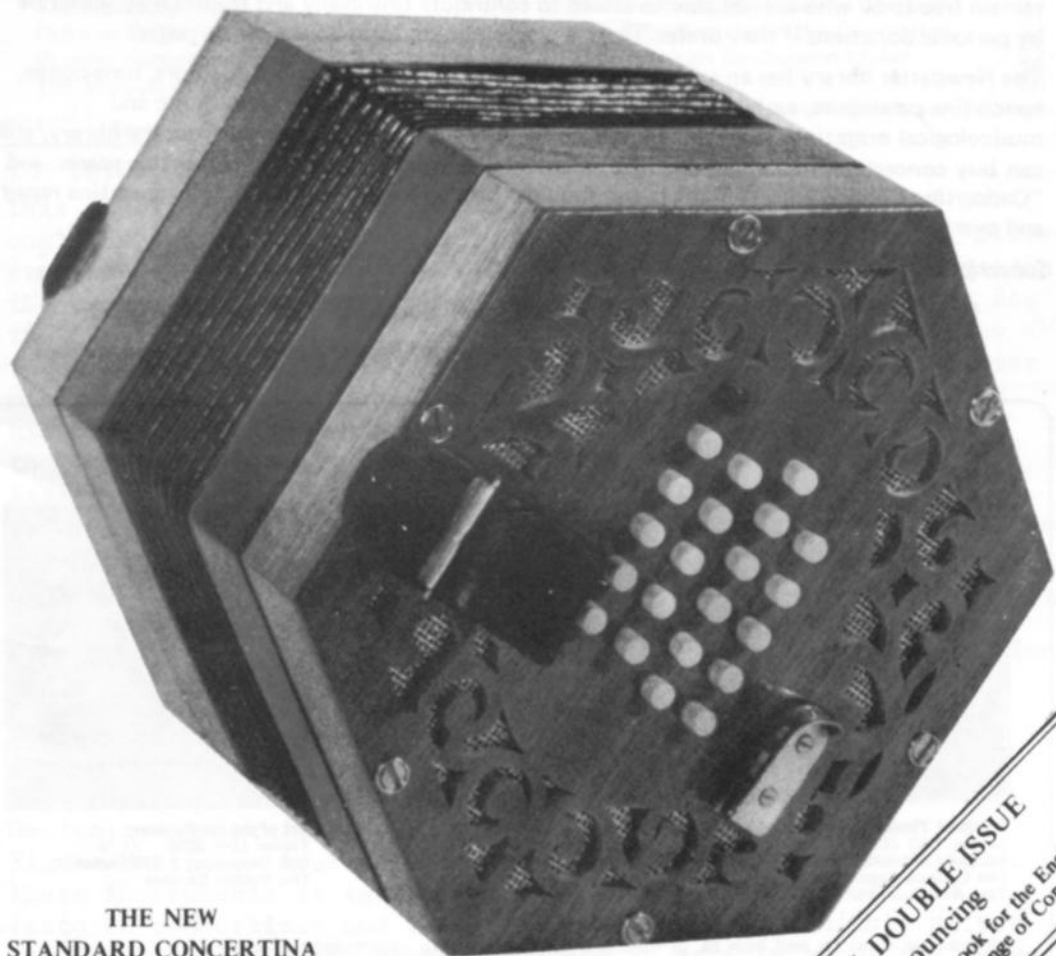


# Free Reed

The Concertina Newsletter



No. 17 January/February 1974



THE NEW  
STANDARD CONCERTINA  
Now available to Free Reed  
Subscribers

**SPECIAL DOUBLE ISSUE**  
Announcing

Frank Butler's Handbook for the English  
Concertina and a New Range of Concertinas

## FREE REED

*The specialist magazine for concertina and free-reed instrument enthusiasts.*

Available free,  
or on subscription,  
and supported by  
readers' donations

Edited by: Neil Wayne  
Duffield  
Derby  
England.

The editor welcomes articles, letters, and musical contributions from subscribers, on any subject relating to the history, repair, revival and use of free-reed instruments of all types.

Subscriptions become due on November 1st each year, and new subscribers are entitled to all back issues from the previous November. Both subscription to the Newsletter, and any back issues, remain free to all who are not able to afford to contribute financially and readers may subscribe by periodic donations if they prefer. There is a subscription form on the centre pages.

The Newsletter library has an extensive collection of early concertina music, tutors, tune-books, concertina catalogues, early photographs, and an extensive collection of folk music and musicological magazines from all over the world. Any subscriber can borrow from the library, and can buy concertina, melodeon and instrumental folk records, tune-books, concertina spares, and "Concertina Consciousness" T-shirts and shoulder bags at good discounts. A full concertina repair and overhaul service is available.

*Subscription rates from 1st November 1973-1974 :-*

Great Britain £1.50    Europe £2.00    Elsewhere: Surface \$7.00    Air-Mail \$12.00

*From now on, renewals can be made with Banker's Order — See Centre Pages*

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*Our sincere apologies for delay of this issue due to fuel crisis and 3 day week — N. Wayne.*

## EDITORIAL

### NEW TUTOR, AND NEW CONCERTINAS!

This double issue of Free Reed, for the first two months of 1974, contains two announcements of great importance to concertina players everywhere, crucial stages in the worldwide revival of interest in the concertina. Firstly, the splendid new handbook and tutor for the 'English' concertina, written by Frank Butler, is the first tutor of any kind for the concertina to appear for over a quarter of a century, and the only such book to include passages on the history, repair and maintenance of the instrument. In addition, the book is unique in its approach to the teaching of music, taking music theory one gentle step at a time, rather than in a few dense pages of theory and definitions. The musical examples are great, ranging through Folk song, dance and classical music, and there are lots of recommendations for further study. We're only able to print a limited edition, at least this year, so Free Reed subscribers should take advantage of the pre-publication offer in this issue to ensure their copy.

The second piece of good news is the new range of 'English' system concertinas now available through Free Reed, designed to the specifications of American concertina specialist Oliver Heatwole, and craftsman-built in Italy under the direction of Signor Bastari. Available in treble, tenor and baritone ranges, these instruments at last provide an alternative to both old restored concertinas and the relatively scarce and highly priced new British-made instruments. There's an article about the range in this issue, and an address to write to for more information. There'll be samples for you to try at most of the Festivals in England where Free Reed will be running workshops.

# NEW "ENGLISH" CONCERTINAS NOW READILY AVAILABLE

## INTRODUCTORY OFFER TO FREE REED SUBSCRIBERS

Four new models of English concertinas, made to high specifications in Italy, will be available in March. The regular price is expected to be a little over \$200 (£75), but a substantially reduced introductory price will be available to readers of Free Reed. American and Canadian subscribers should write to Oliver Heatwole, 3900 Sixteenth St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20011, U.S.A.; All other subscribers write to Neil Wayne, Free Reed, Duffield Derby, for full details.

The models include a 48-key treble, range G, third space below the treble clef, to C, sixth space above the treble clef; a 47-key treble, range F, third line below the treble clef, to B, fifth line above the treble clef (see the keyboard diagram herein); a 43-key tenor, range Bb, second line of the bass clef, to C, second line above the treble clef; and a baritone, range G, lowest line of the bass clef, to G, first space above the treble clef. A picture of the baritone model appears on the cover of this issue of Free Reed. In order to help keep down the price, all four of these models are the same size, for economies in making both the concertinas and the carrying cases.

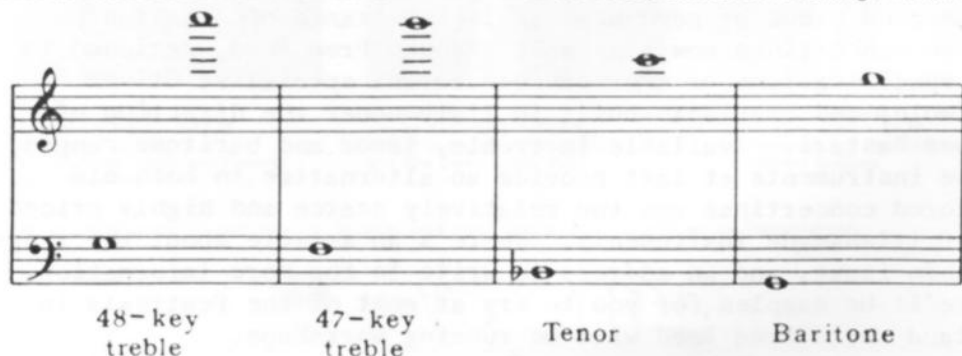
The addition of the low F on the 47-key model, as an alternative to the 48-key model, offers several advantages. The key of F is very common in vocal music; the low note F permits the tonic chord of that key to be played in root position satisfyingly low. That note often occurs in the right-hand part of piano music. The 47-key model can play the tenor part of hymns, carols, and folk song harmonies, reasonably well. This new model is also useful for a number of

instrumental melodies that go as low as F without going lower.

These models have very attractive fretworked wooden ends. There are eightfold bellows, with leather corners, and edges covered with leather inside and out. For economy of price, some elements of the Italian constructions have been retained. The levers are of flat aluminium, rather than heavy wire. The reed chambers are attached to the ends of the concertina, rather than being formed on separate sound boards. Each reed plate has two reeds tuned to the same note attached to it. The reeds are of Swedish steel, hand tuned and edges hand filed, and of for higher quality than other European made free reed instruments.

The tone of the new models is not as good as that of the old Whatstone or Crabb Concertinas, but since the new models are less than half as expensive, they should be of interest to many amateur players. The baritone should be especially useful in concertina ensembles. Played in its low register it will enrich the sound of an ensemble. It can also play the bass part (or any other) of hymns and carols.

The new Tutor and Handbook for the English Concertina by Frank Butler announced in this issue, contains a series on the use of tenor and baritone instruments, while a new 60-page book, The English Concertina and An Introduction to Music, by Oliver Heatwole, will be out in America in February. It includes keyboard diagrams of all four new models, and diagrams of the reed plates and the tuning of their reeds.



#### FREE REED 'ROADSHOW'

Talking of workshops, we're offering a wider range of services to Folk Festival and club organisers this year, comprising a very flexible package of concertina, melodeon, and English Country band workshops, repair and tuition sessions, Ceilidh bands and callers, and Punch and Judy Shows, One Man bands and Roaring Jelly! More info inside, on page 11.

#### THE CONTINUING ADDRESS LIST SAGA

One subscriber started getting six copies, wrote and told the Free Reed computer, and then got none! One subscriber got his issues delivered to Bath via Australia. Another one of the faithful has tried to subscribe five times, and so the sad tales roll in. Well, good news - I've sacked the computer and on the advice of Folk Review's Fred Woods I have invested £48 of Free Reed's fragile funds in a tame, handoperated, ecologically sound and possibly foolproof addressing machine. Here's hoping the addressing chaos now begins to end!

#### THE EIGHTH CONVENTION - DERBY, 9TH MARCH, 1974

Almost 3 months to the day since the splend 7th Convention, at Kendal, there's another gathering of the clans at St. Helen's House, W.E.A. Centre, King Street, Derby. Concertina Conventions have had a lot of good publicity lately, so if you have not been to one before, get your application in early - we may have to limit accommodation to around 120. There's an invite and form in this issue on Supplement page 12.

#### FOLK REVIEW....

....Our fellow magazine, is featuring the concertina revival in the March and April issues, with interviews with Michael Tubridy, Alistair Anderson, Gordon Cutty, John Kirkpatrick, Boys of the Lough, and many other fine players, together with a brief history of the concertina and its revival by your editor. Fred Woods puts in a tremendous amount of work on Folk Review, and it is well worth a sub, especially if you'd like to find out more about the British Folk 'scene'. Oh, and congratulations on your Valentines Day wedding, Fred!

#### THE IRELAND TRIP

A superb, if hectic, two weeks of music. The visits to the traditional concertina players of Dublin and Co.Clare will be reported in detail in a later issue, but plans are well advanced.

ced to release possibly up to six records on Topic and Free Reed-Topic of the marvellous playing we recorded while in Ireland. First releases on Free Reed-Topic are expected to be recordings of Gordon Cutty and Tommy Williams, hopefully within the next few months.

#### CIRCULATION, FINANCE, FREE REED RECORDS

New subscriptions, and the rate of belated renewals seem to be picking up, perhaps helped by the publicity from the Free Reed Discount Folk records service, opened to the public in December. Earnings from the sale of records through this scheme, and from an increase in advertising in Free Reed, reduced the deficit of over £300 to £160, and continuing good publicity, sales of the tutor, etc. should get this further reduced, and enable our magazine to become a bit more regular than of late! I've added a great many more selections to the Free Reed Records lists, including all of the Claddagh, Outlet and Tradition catalogues, many more Transatlantic, Gael linn and Mercier records, and some super American imports recommended by some of our U.S. subscribers. Later on in the summer I hope to circulate lists of rare secondhand Folk music LP's, and a "collectors' rack" of 78's and even cylinders of concertina music. I'd really appreciate your suggestions for good Folk song and Folk music records you'd like to see in the Free Reed discount lists - if it's available, we'll get it, and sell it cheaper than anywhere else!

#### CONCERTINA CLUBS

As well as the Liverpool Concertina Club, founded over 6 months ago, I'm getting news from the Leeds, and the Sheffield Concertina Clubs, formed by enthusiastic Free Reed subscribers in these towns. More such groups are forming this summer, and we'll be running regular reports on their activities.

#### TUNE-SWAP

Ever since Free Reed was a three-sheet newsletter, its content has been largely decided by the subscribers who write the articles and letters - it's nice that the co-operative tune location service, run by and for readers, through tune-hound Steve Wood, is proving useful and encouraging readers to get together to find and exchange interesting and rare music - Steve's latest report is in this issue.

## FESTIVALS PREVIEWS AND FESTIVAL DIARY

This issue contains the first of many announcements of this year's British Folk Festivals, many of which will be featuring concertina and melodeon workshops - incidentally, we'd like to hear more about similar festivals in Europe, Australia and the U.S.A. and hope our overseas readers will keep us informed. So, the Festival Diary returns in the next issue.

## FREE REED'S AMERICAN EXPEDITION

Advance warning here for American concertina enthusiasts. Between August 9th and September 19th of this year, Alistair Anderson and Neil Wayne will be touring the U.S.A. on an intense programme of concerts, lectures, demonstrations and workshops on all aspects of the history, repair, social history, styles and playing techniques of the concertina family of instruments. If any of our U.S.A. readers would like more details of this trip, itineraries, etc. please write to me for full details - needless to say, we're really excited with the prospect of this visit to the States, and hope to meet many of the American subscribers during the tour.

## KEEP THOSE LETTERS AND CARDS COMING IN FOLKS ...

Many of you, especially the folks who used to receive the first few duplicated issues, will appreciate the way that our magazine has grown and has changed over the past two years - I feel very aware that some of these changes might have been forced on the magazine, and may not be exactly what early readers expected the Newsletter to grow into - so, I'd really appreciate some detailed critical letters from some of you (constructive, if possible!) about the way the magazine is going, what changes you'd like to see, and what you like and dislike - after all, you're the readers!

Keep together,

NEIL WAYNE

## READERS' LETTERS

Alvin Spiro, of New York, USA writes...

"I am one of those fortunate beings — a student (Concertina) of Mr. Boris Matueswitch in New York. Last week he introduced me to your fine Concertina Newsletter, and I hereby subscribe to it.

I am looking forward with much anticipation, to Mr. Butler's "Tutor and Guide to the English Concertina" as well as your notes on 'Concertina Repairs'.

The journal English Mechanic, in the last quarter of the 19th Century, published a number of "How-to-do-it" letters on Concertina reed making, replacements and tuning — most were short and sketchy.

Are you familiar with two American books on Accordion and Concertina repair?

"Accordion Repairs Made Easy" by John Reuther (84pp.)

and

"Repairing Your Accordion" by Pietro Deiro (44pp.)

both published by O. Pagani & Bro. Inc.,  
289 Bleecker St.  
New York, N.Y.

The first is priced at \$7.50 and the second at \$1.25. Mr. Reuther's book contains 2 pages of Concertina repairs (English) information, plus 4 pages of Concertina key-board layouts. Mr. Reuther was an instrument maker in an accordion factory for many years; so the book (of 84 pages) is very authoritative".

"Frank O'Gallagher of Sydney is a practising electrical, mechanical and acoustic engineer. He's also crazy about concertinas, and has agreed to make me a new Anglo to any specifications I outline. He already makes bellows and does large and small repairs to 'tinas, harmoniums, accordions etc., and his work is absolutely 1st class. He makes his bellows to the Wheatstone pattern (3 layers on the corners) not the Lachenal (only 1 thickness) and can really do wonders with heavy or stiff actions, tuning, pitching, etc.

It's nice to know that someone with sufficient skill and knowledge is keen enough to find time to do this work."

Write to Frank, care of Chris Wendt,  
9/39 Delbridge St., N. Fitzroy,  
Australia 3068.

### The Glasgow Concertina Band

Some recollections from the last Secretary,  
John Hailey.

"I am an old timer (77 years old) but still interested in any thing about the 'tina. I still keep playing for pleasure and play for old age pensioners Concerts.

As a matter of interest we had a very good concertina Band in Glasgow years ago. I was Secretary of the band for a number of years. There doesn't seem to be the same interest in the 'tina now but it may come back into favour again, with a few more enthusiastic people like the one who gave me the copy of the Newsletter. I hope to be a subscriber to your magazine after I get over the New Year!

## PETE NALDER

BRITISH FOLK ACCOMPANIED ON RARE AND UNUSUAL  
INSTRUMENTS

45 ST. JOHNS ROAD  
ERITH KENT

ERITH  
36207

## LEEDS CONCERTINA CLUB

A small but enthusiastic group of concertina players has already had three meetings in the "Grove" to talk and play 'tinas. More ambitious projects that we have in mind need the support of more people — so if you can get into Leeds on a Tuesday evening come along and bring your squeeze-box. If you haven't got a squeeze-box yet come along anyway and we'll try to help you to get one.

Meetings are held in the Grove, Back Row, off Victoria Road (Under the bridge by City Station). They are held fortnightly and the next two meetings are Tuesday Jan. 15th and Jan. 29th (I've just been to check those dates on my Tolkien calendar — so they must be right!). Come along then or contact Steve Wood any time for more details (See 'Tune Swap' for the address — SAE please if you write.

## A VICTORIAN CONCERTINA CRITIC

The interesting piece of information is taken from a very cutting and sarcastic paper in the "Good Words Supplement" for March 1st 1869, in which all types of amateur musicians are slighted.

"The harmonium and concertina force themselves upon our attention. There are certain perfect forms and perfect players of both these instruments; but we deal not with the master workmen, the Regondis, the Blagroves, the Tamplins, and the Engels. The same instrument which in the hands of these men is a thing of beauty and delight, is capable of tempting the musical amateur into wild and tuneless excesses! We will put it to any impartial person, was there ever found in the house of an amateur, a concertina or harmonium in tune with the piano? Was there ever an amateur who could be deterred from playing these instruments together, however discordant the result? When there is a chance to have a duet, people seem to lose all sense of tune. If the concertina is only about a half-semitone flat, the lady thinks she can manage. A little nerve is required to face the first few bars, but before "Il Balen" is over, not a scruple remains, and the increasing consternation of the audience is only equalled by the growing complacency of the performers"...  
H.R. Harris

Researched and Contributed by Steve Gardham 9

## BIRD SWING

by Ivor Cutler

© 1973

Got a letter  
from a thrush.  
"Come and  
see me compose".  
So I went.  
She stuck  
her beak  
into the ink  
and sputtered  
on to the manuscript.  
Then sang it.  
"Tra la la  
tweet tweet  
warble warble  
ptui ptui".  
When she finished  
I was asked  
for an opinion.  
With a grave look  
I opined :—  
"Well,  
it's very good.  
Regular thrush music.  
Good range  
plenty of variety  
nice timbre".  
"Look Cutler",  
said thrush,  
"do you think  
it's worth  
making a demodisc  
or a tape  
and  
going round the agents?  
I think  
it's chart material."  
"Look, thrush,"  
I replied,  
"it could only succeed  
as a gimmick".  
"Yeah, I suppose,"  
she tweeted,  
and flew  
into a stump.

"Taking advantage of a 'tip' from a fellow Leeds concertina player, I found and bought a nice loud 55 key Wheatstone McCann Duet with Hexagonal metal ends and leather case, in good condition apart from dust. Anyway, the gentleman I bought the instrument from, a Mr. George Grant, gave me a cutting from a recent 'Evening Post' concerning 'Characters' (with a capital C) of bygone Leeds. Talking to him about these people, and his own playing, revealed some interesting facts.

A musician mentioned in the newspaper article was Blind Alf who used to play concertina on Commercial Street outside Smith's bookshop, when interviewed in 1921 he was aged 54 and said at that time he had been street singing for over 40 years. Another street-musician was Mr. Jack Hartford; who I believe is still alive and lives somewhere on Dewsbury Road; who played a Duet concertina outside the Leeds Empire Theatre on Queen Victoria or King Edward Street.

Duets were considered the best and there were numerous players, many taught by Mr. Walter Thackreh of Hawse Terrace. George Grant, who incidentally called his concertina 't'old flageolet', played with a few friends; Mr. Joe Rhodes of Ainstree Grove who played a large octagonal Wheatstone Duet and Mr. Arthur Watson who played a duet similar to George Grant's and did repairs for many people including Blind Alf.

Mr. Grant's uncle, another George, played a metal ended anglo, and was constantly in demand for community dances on the 'Muck', a piece of wasteland down Dolly Lane, where he played waltzes non-stop until George Grant displaced him with the Duet and it's 'sharper fuller sound' (his words).

Another anglo-player was an irishman Martin Dunofy whose life consisted of getting drunk and playing his concertina —I'm green with envy!"

#### News from Bill and Helen of Leader Records

We started 1974 with news from our record presser that the present shortage of plastic in this country made it impossible for them to undertake further pressings for us. As many of our customers who have been waiting for out of

stock records for months will realise, our pressers hadn't been doing very well in supplying us in 1973 anyway. Fortunately they have undertaken to supply us with those new releases which are in the pipeline, and they also have a sizeable backlog of orders which they have pressed but have been unable to deliver because of an internal dispute in their works. So all in all, while availability will not be any better than it has been in the past year (and that, unfortunately, has been pretty bad), there will not be a sudden cut-off of supplies. Meanwhile we are seeking alternative suppliers, and going ahead with our plans to introduce tape cassettes later in the year.

To keep down the confusion as much as possible, we have omitted those records from our latest order form that were not in stock when our latest mail-out was prepared.

A word of warning. It is very likely that when we find another supplier, the cost of manufacturing our records will pretty well double, so it is very likely that our next circular will bring news of a price increase.





# Free Reed Roadshow

Offers festival and club organizers a flexible service, comprising instrumental music workshops, soloists, bands, callers and exotic shows, as follows !

★ CONCERTINA WORKSHOPS

Repair, maintenance and playing of Anglo, English and Duet concertinas, plus displays of old instruments.

★ CONCERTINA SOLOISTS

Alistair Anderson (Newcastle 654358)  
John Kirkpatrick (via 01-272 6659)  
are available as soloists or for specialized workshops, as are some noted older players, subject to distance.

★ PUNCH & JUDY SHOWS

The original traditional, horrific, from Messrs. Pearce and Timms.

★ FREE REED DISCOUNT RECORDS

An added service, supplying ALL British, Irish and selected U.S. Folk records at great discounts, for festivals and open air do's.  
Own Umbrella

★ MELODEON & COUNTRY MUSIC WORKSHOPS

Led by "Whistling Rufus" — Tufty Swift, John Tams and Derek Pearce — and covering some aspects of Country Dance music technique and repertoire.

★ A "NEW" BAND

With John Kirkpatrick, Sue Harris, John Toms, Derek Pearce, Tufty Swift, Full P.A. — Super Music !

★ Derek Pearce's ONE MAN BAND !

★ CEILIDH CALLER OF NOTE . . .

Taffy Thomas (via 01-272 6659), who can also bring the lovely MAGIC LANTERN

★ ROARING JELLY

A group of five singers & players from Nottinghamshire.

FOR FULL DETAILS ON ANY (OR ALL!) THE ABOVE — Contact  
FREE REED ROADSHOW · DUFFIELD · DERBY · (840935)

Michael Castling, of 178 Jefferson St.,  
Newcastle on Tyne, writes . . .

Looking at your expenditure, I was wondering if it might be economic or desirable for you to send bulk packages to highly subscribing areas, to be distributed by some enthusiastic member with a list of addreses and a pushbike. I wouldn't mind meeting fellow subscribers in this way; particularly Alistair Anderson for example. I admit it's fraught with pitfalls, but it's just a thought anyway and there are possibilities you must concede — it might lead to the growth of a hard-core Newcastle free reed faction.

Now to the boring bit! I shall now put in my twopenn'orth about the state of the music biz; (be warned, I'm very prejudiced). Basically, although I am a dedicated folk music "appreciator", I have mixed feelings about the way the folk "scene" is manipulated: the fact that certain 'stars' makes names for themselves thro' material written by those who cannot claim the credit seems to me a colossal fraud — particularly when the said 'stars' behave in a rather conceited fashion and think that they can get away with anything — i.e. I'm thinking of Popeye Span, like Steeleye Span or the Spinners, I don't like either commercial mass appeal or, alternatively the elitist cliques I've found in certain folk clubs. It seems you get caught between the devil and the deep blue sea somehow — make a song too popular and it is grabbed and transformed into something that is not longer 'folk', or alternatively try to be too 'ethnic' and obscure and have the songs fall dead on you. I really don't know the answer.

I do also wish that people would show more personality and 'integrity' in performance — I don't really want to hear people doing n'th rate note-for-note impersonations of Martin Carthy, nor yet do I like to hear pseudo-irish accents from people more English than myself. The trouble is that once a sound is "Vogue" people blindly rush onto the bandwagon without realising what fools they make of themselves.

This, sad to say, could possibly be applied to the meteoric resurgence of the concertina — I hope those taking it up do so because they genuinely like the instrument, rather than the fact that it's another revival to be in the train of, if you see my point, and excuse my sentence construction.

The crunch will come in a few years time — we'll see if the concertina can stand another change in public taste. I myself do hope to continue; I like the instrument, even though I am not capable of much in the way of performance. My philosophy is that if you can't actually be a master of an instrument the next best thing is to listen and support those that are, and I find quite a lot of opportunity to do this I'm glad to say.

Another thing that rankles is the way that the price of concertinas (particularly English) has escalated: concertinas are musical instruments to be played not status symbols.

I admit that experts deserve the best, but concertinas seem to be going to those who can pay not those who can play, which prices novices like me out of the market. What matters is what you play on the concertina, not who made it or how much you paid for it and I'm certain there must be a lot of £50 concertinas and £20 players around.

I also, I'm afraid, disapprove of excessively immersing oneself in concertina lore: whilst I find history interesting to a certain extent I have not time for fanaticism whereby the instruments' peculiarities and family tree become more important than what you can do with it. What I'm trying to say is that the music and the people who keep it alive are the important things — there is too much division and elitism in the folk world; the music should be a unifying element rather than a breeding ground for pretentious pseudos — you can take things too seriously, in which case there's no fun left in music, which spoils everything entirely.

With all this in mind, I would not object to a little diversification in Free Reed — you reach a lot of people, so lets have plenty of space for e.g. diaries of coming events — not necessarily for concertinas only; so that we can enjoy some music in appreciative company. As I can think only of Folk Review to fulfil a similar role, I think you could fulfil a useful service in this respect.

I sympathise with your financial problems and consequently enclose another 50p donation.

I do appreciate your efforts; particularly the record lists, tune lists and reviews; I also admire the spirit of the bloke in the latest issue who's offering to lend out his tune collection"

*I hope there'll be some comments on*

*Mike's letter. . . . N.W.*

**TUNE SWAP** — *Steve Wood's regular feature to help you track down tunes.*

This feature has got off to a good start with a number of requests for tunes and lists of two music collections which make me drool! I also received the Nine Points of Roguery from Stephen Chambers of Burton on Trent — Thanks!

I am hoping that we will eventually be able to co-operate with Peter Nalder's feature in English Dance and Song and I have written to Peter about this.

I am sure that more subscribers must have interesting music collections so let's hear about them. (Don't forget books in your local library). Brief notes on the contents of books would help — photostats of the contents pages would be even better.

Keep the requests coming in but please don't forget to send an SAE. Any donations of stamps and manuscript paper oddments would also be appreciated.

Now for this month's requests, can anyone supply any of the following tunes?

1. A small pipes version of the hornpipe 'The Banks' as played by Billy Pigg. The version in Scott Skinner's 'Scottish Violinist' has too great a range for the pipes.
2. 'McMahon's Reel' composed by Tommy McMahon of Fermanagh. Robin Morton plays this tune.
3. 'Mua na h'Eireann' (The Women of Ireland) Set by Sean O'Riada. This is on the LP 'Chieftains 4'.
4. 'The Exhibition Waltz' (Also known as the Victoria or the Speaking Waltz). Played by John Doherty on the EFDSS LP 'Pedlar's Pack'.

The mention of these tunes which occur on records reminds me that we could do with the services of one or two people who can accurately transpose tunes from records and tapes — any offers?

That's all for this month, Steve Wood, 26b Cavendish Street, KEIGHLEY, Yorkshire.

# TOPIC

## New Releases



A Lancashire Mon, Harry Boardman  
12TS236



The Moon Shone Bright, The Broadside

# 2nd Poynton Folk Festival

12th, 13th, 14th APRIL (Easter)

Ceilidh    Concerts    Workshops    Singarounds    Folk Exhibitions

**BROKEN CONSORT**

**BOB DAVENPORT**

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*Full details from 269 Birchover Way, Allestree, Derby (56705).*

# THE DUET CONCERTINA — ITS HISTORY

## AND THE EVOLUTION OF ITS KEYBOARD

(written around 1950)

by K. V. Chidley

One of the last managers of Wheatstone & Co.

with notes by Neil Wayne.

The actual date of the invention of the Duet system of fingering from the concertina is uncertain, but it lies between 1837 and 1844, and was the invention of C. Wheatstone. Two of the prototypes are in the possession of the Wheatstone company, and I date them about 1840.<sup>1</sup> It was covered by the original concertina Patent No. 5803 of 1829; also by the later Patent No. 10041 of 1844. It derives its name from the fact that it was originated to play two part music, with the distinct separation of the two parts. This is achieved by having a separate scale on either side, differing from the English system which divides the scale between both sides.

A feature of the Duet system from its origin, is the overlap of the scale at the top of the left hand, with the bottom of the right hand scale. The amount of the overlap varies from half an octave to an octave and a half, according to the range of the instrument. This overlap allows the player to produce many charming harmonic effects, which can only be rivalled by a two or more manual organ. The original model had 24 keys, as shown in diagram No. 1. It will be noted that it is not chromatic being set out in the key of G major. The instrument is rectangular 6" x 4½" as will be seen from the illustration.

The 1844 patent shows four more Duet systems, one with 8 rows of keys, and one with 7 rows, both chromatic; one with 4 rows of keys, chromatic, and one with 4 rows of keys, diatonic in E flat. They all were deficient in some or all of the essential qualities I enumerate later.

The original system is the best of any Duet fingering that has come to my notice; why Wheatstone did not make it chromatic we shall never know; it is doubtful if he was a proficient performer on any of the concertinas, which may be the reason.

In 1861, William, brother of C. Wheatstone patented among other features, a 7 row chromatic version of the original arrangement. It had some good points, but lacked uniformity. After this the Duet seems to have gone into hibernation for about 25 years.<sup>2</sup>

We next hear of it when J. H. McCann of Plymouth applied for and secured, in 1884,<sup>3</sup> a patent No. 4752 for improvements to the original duet system of Wheatstone, augmenting it in several sizes between

39 and 58 keys, and making it chromatic. As he states in his patent specification, he does not interfere with the original natural scale of the Duet, but it will be seen from diagram No. 2 — taken from his patent specification — that in making it chromatic he got into all kinds of difficulties, particularly on the right hand side.

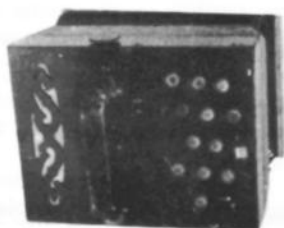
Since then there has been further modification to this side, and it now corresponds to the left hand side, in its lower part as shown in diagram No. 3. Who was responsible for these later changes I do not know; probably several people were involved.

McCann in his desire not to alter the original diatonic scale made a fundamental mistake, for although the original scale was good for its simple functioning<sup>4</sup>

a chromatic form. He should have placed the D sharp (E flat) above the D, and removed the upper A away to the left, above its octave.

I think this error should now be rectified, and in diagram No. 4, I show what I think the Duet system should be. The diagram is of a larger compass, i.e. 72 keys, to show the full implication of the change. The arrangement gives much better flow to the fingering; it brings the chords in the flat keys into a much better disposition and also improves the sharp keys where D sharp occurs. This matter of "flow" in a keyboard is of great importance. By "flow", I mean that smooth rhythm in scale playing that is essential for the proper performance of music. The English system has this flow to a high degree. Of the many keyboards that have come to my notice, practically all of them lacked this vital point, or had it in no more than one or two keys; it should be present in keys up to at least 4 signatures of sharps and flats, to be of practical use. For a good duet system, you must have four rows for natural keys, and two rows for accidentals per octave, you have to accommodate one accidental in the natural rows. All Duet keyboards have to be something of a compromise; the one I now put forward does not have a good degree of the four essentials,

namely, uniformity, flow, disposition of common chords, reasonable reach, and is nearer to the harmonic excellence of the English system. Except that the English and Duet are both concertinas there is little comparison between them; they properly perform different functions. The English is capable of effects not possible on the Duet and vice versa. I rate the technical perfection of the English keyboard higher than the Duet, I am not biased in favour of it; I like them equally. They are both so good in their proper places. I only keep one concertina at home for such little time as I can play to amuse myself, and that is a 72 key Duet.



THE 1844  
PROTOTYPE

#### Footnotes:

1. I have three of these prototype duets, one in its original case, there is also one on display in the Science Museum, London. More are numbered, and all are stamped with the Conduit St. address.
2. In the Wheatstone factory records, the only duets I can find before 1891 were sold in 1863 as follows.  
Dec. 10th, bought by Mr. Boucher Mahog.  
Duet — 12/-.  
Aug. 26th Mr. Curling, 2 Mahog. Duets — £1.12  
May 16th Mr Smith. Duet £1.1.0  
Jan. 29th Mr. Forsyth Duet — 15/-.  
The spelling is variable, and the prices for cheaper than English models, then selling for between 5 and 10 guineas.
3. No duets are mentioned in the records for this year, or any year until the detailed lists end in 1891.
4. There is a break in Chidley's manuscript here.

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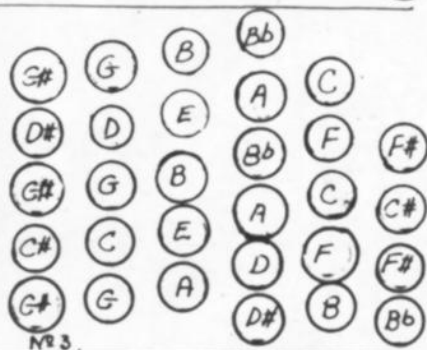
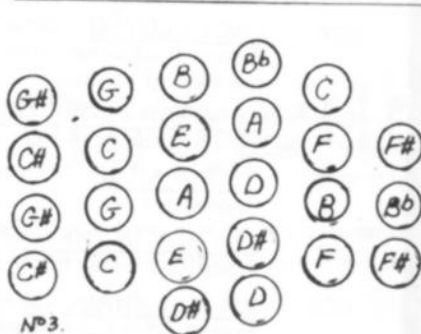
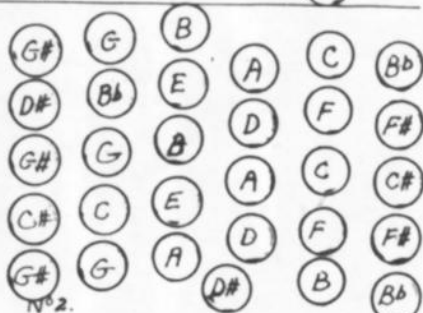
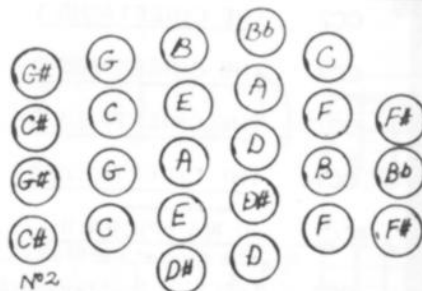
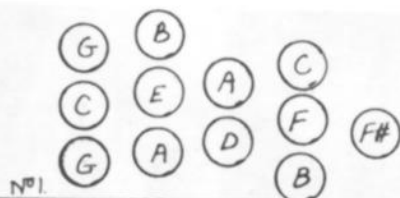
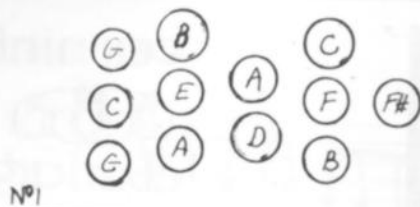
*and many others in a*

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Michael Gorman



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Harry is a member of Liverpool Concertina Club, and teaches Duet.

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*Allegro*

*p*

*mf*

*MENO MOSSO*

*f*

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Handwritten musical score for a Concertina solo, featuring various tempo and dynamic markings. The score is written on seven staves in treble clef. The key signature is one flat (B-flat). The tempo markings include *MOLTO MENO MOSSO*, *a tempo*, *VIVACE*, *ritenuto*, and *rit.*. The dynamic markings include *p* (piano) and *f* (forte). The score includes various rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. A triplets mark is visible on the fourth staff. The piece concludes with a double bar line on the seventh staff.

This well-known dance is a splendid Concertina solo, but it needs extravagant contrasts of rhythm. Slow down at *MENO MOSSO*, play slower still at *MOLTO MENO MOSSO*, and then back to the original speed at *A TEMPO*. *RITENUTO* is a sudden holding back for two bars only. The next two bars of *A TEMPO* make a dramatic contrast.

8  
Dec. 1473


# THE MARQUIS OF WATERFORD

James Hill



The Marquis of Waterford; not one of Hills best known tunes. I came across this one in the W.A. Cocks manuscripts at the Black Gate Bagpipe Museum. Try to keep the jumps really brights. The low D in the fourth bar from the end is a concertina addition it is much easier than it looks as of course the low D is on the opposite end of the instrument to the higher D

— Alistair Anderson.



## ON THE PRODUCTION OF MUSICAL SOUNDS FROM METALLIC SPRINGS PART 3

From the Penny Magazine, October 19, 1839.

Most of our readers are probably familiar with the external appearance of an accordion. We may consider it as a rectangular pair of bellows, varying from six to about fourteen inches in length, and from three to six in width. There are from six to twenty finger-keys attached to one of the boards, in a manner convenient for the player; and these keys are in connection, by means of wires, with an equal number of circular valves or stops, which cover circular holes perforated through the board or face of the instrument. Immediately beneath the perforation is a series of oblong apertures with metallic tongues vibrating freely in them, and beneath the tongues is the open cavity of the bellows. The vibrating tongues are not all in communication with each other, there being two placed under each circular hole, and cut off from those in the vicinity. Of the two which form each of these clusters, one can only vibrate when it is impelled by wind from above, and the other when it is similarly impelled from below. This is affected by means of little valves placed below in the one case, and above in the other: the action of valves in a pump will sufficiently explain this.

The tuning of the instrument is thus managed. Suppose, for simplicity of illustration, that there are only four finger-keys; these will open as many circular holes; but as each hole is connected with two springs, eight notes can thereby be produced. The two springs opening under one hole are made to yield adjoining notes in the musical scale, so that the first key is in connection with the springs C and D, the second with E and F, the third with G and A, and the fourth with B and C, thereby making up an octave. Nearly

the same plan is observed when the number of keys is greater, except that in some complicated instruments all the semitones, as well as the natural notes, are introduced.

This being the arrangement of the keys, the mode of playing is as follows:— There are no openings in the case of the instrument but what are stopped by keys; so that some keys must be touched before the bellows are drawn out, else there would be a partial vacuum in the instrument, and it would be liable to burst. Suppose then we draw out the bellows and press down the key in connection with the springs C and D, the circular hole is opened — air enters — passes by one of the springs (say D) into the body of the instrument, and sets the spring into vibration, thus eliciting its sound. On closing the bellows the air rushes back again, but cannot pass the spring D on account of a valve placed there, but passes the spring C, and elicits its sound. But if we want any other two notes, say E and F, we touch the adjoining key, draw out the bellows to produce one note, and close them to produce the other. By a skilful choice therefore of the keys which we touch, we can go through all the varieties of a melody, and even of harmony, by using two or three keys at once.

There is also an extra key to produce a harmonized chord, or bass; a key to act as a vent without producing sound, and a variety of intricate contrivances which could not be adequately explained without a longer description than we can devote to them. But the foregoing will suffice to give a general idea of the instrument.

Next Issue — The Seraphine

Researched and Edited by Steve Gardham.



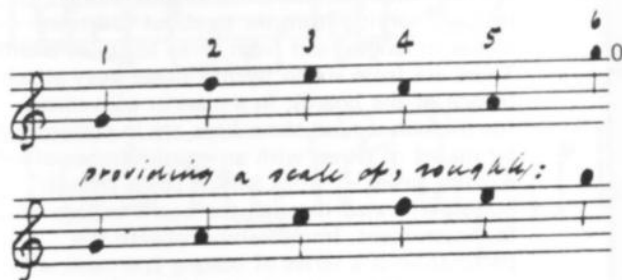
# A FREE REED MOUTH ORGAN FROM THAILAND

A.L. Lloyd Writes:

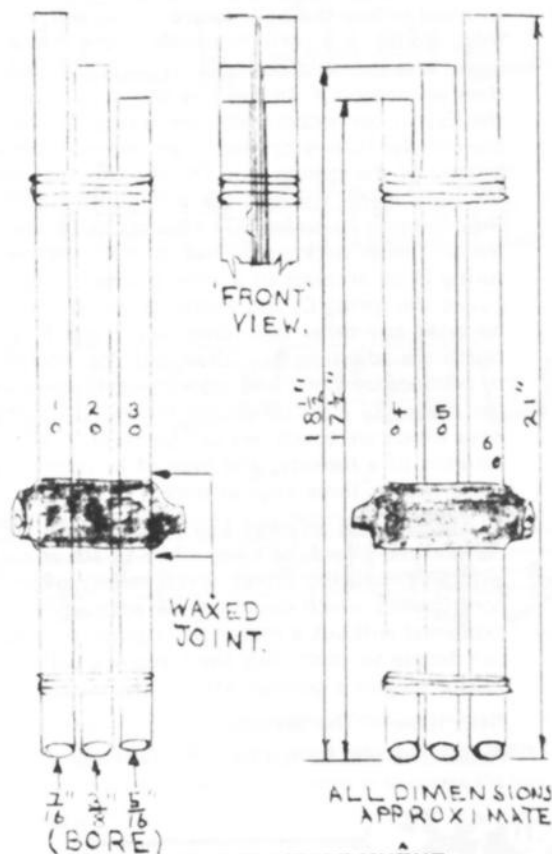
"I enclose a diagram of a six-tube Khène, I bought in Thailand — for the equivalent of 20p — three years ago. It's a fairly standard model for the south Thai villages. At times, even in the remoter rural districts, one comes across more elaborate models — ten and fourteen tubes — but these are mostly of small-town rather than village manufacture. The town models, of various pitches, are used quite a bit in Thai schools, for classroom orchestras; but the rural models, like mine, are too variable in pitch for any other than rough-and-ready ensembles (though I like the buzzy sound produced by such ensembles) and they're usually played solo.

I didn't see in Thailand any five-tube mouth-organs like the Cambodian *khim* (*phloy*), though they may exist in the extreme south-east of Thailand, in the Cardamon uplands.

The pitches I indicate are approximate. To my ear they vary fractionally according to the weather. The tone is full and sweet (never fails to astonish people who blow the instrument). The basic tone with no holes stopped seems to be about G#, but it's hard to determine.



As you may imagine from the scale, one can play a whole lot of Appalachian pentatonic tunes on it. Not so many British ones: I wonder why; That do-re-mi run within the sol-pentatonic scale seems to have been particularly attractive to American settlers."



THE SIX-TUBE KHÈNE

**WANTED TO SWOP OR BUY.** Old or damaged Concertinas and any other old metal reed instruments, and Concertinas with unusual labels, stamps, decorations or keyboard arrangements. I'd be interested in any melophones, symphoniums, square concertinas, and bandoneons that people may wish to part exchange. Concertinas I'm specially interested in are those with the labels of G. Jones, Shakespeare, Ebbelwhite, Sedgwick, George Case, Louis Lachenal, Nickolds, Simpson, Joseph Scates, Myers, Howson, Winrow, G. Jeffries, W. Jeffries, Journet, Metzler, Murdock and early Crabb. Condition is unimportant, and I'd prefer to exchange them for some of my more modern playable Anglos and English instruments. I could also swap for Banjos (Grey, Winsor and Vega) Guitars (Panormo, Lacôte, Gibson), Mandolins, Phonofiddle, Citterns, lutes, or for old Fairground penny Amusement machines, stereo rock records or Antique silver! Large and small duets, Bass and Contra bass Concertinas are also of interest. Information and enquiries to Neil Wayne, c/o the Newsletter.

## The Ashton-under-Lyne Concertina Band

James Ash, for many years a member of this band, tells his story . . .

"I started learning the Anglo Concertina in 1920, then changed to the English in 1922. After a time I joined the Ashton-under-Lyne Concertina Band which had been reformed after the war. This was 1924. We had a full compliment of 26 players, a drummer, plus a few extras, and used Brass Band Music, and we had special instruments made for the lower end.

Of course we had a first class conductor, who could play any concertina and was dedicated. At that time, we had engagements every Sunday in parks all over Lancashire and Yorkshire. Sometimes booked by an agent, who also ran St. Hilda's, Don Pedro's etc. During the summer we hired a 40 seater coach and for one week toured the Potteries, of Durham and the Lake District moving on each day. We also did the Midlands, Malvern and round about, this went on for several years.

In Winter, we did mostly Sunday concerts afternoon and evening quite a lot in the five towns of the Potteries, where they had first class concert Halls, belonging to the local authority, with very comfortable tip-up seats and accommodation for between 100 & 200, we were very popular in those days 1930-1935 going back year after year. Our fee in those days was around £40 and teas. We gave a concert in the Royal Hall, Harrogate with Basil Cameron on the bill and their own Philharmonic Orchestra. I remember a new piece we played at that concert called "Chal Romano" which brought the house down.

I remember another concert we gave at Newport, I left home at 6 o'clock Sunday morning to pick up the coach, we gave afternoon and evening concerts in the local cinema, and I returned home at 7 o'clock Monday morning - just had time for a drink of tea, and caught the 7.30 bus to work! I became secretary for the Band in 1930, and used to book Broadcasts on the B.B.C. one each month for 6 months, mostly at Manchester.

We had a first class quartet and Duet act which we put on occasionally. Once we played in People's Park, Halifax in the 30's: £40 fee for afternoon and evenings, the takings were £109 from collecting boxes at gates and enclosure seats.

We played on 2L.O. London and Manchester Parsonage, the Studio here was 3 storeys below street level, (later it was Piccadilly).

The Studio was draped with blankets to keep out unwanted noises, the last time we played there Leonard Henry, did his stuff in the middle, we being in a ring on the outside, there was so little room. We played at Birmingham and Manchester B.B.C. Exhibitions each year.

For a number of years the Band entered the Belle Vue band contest, which were held on the same day as the Brass Band July Contests. On average there were 16 to 18 Concertina Bands competing. These included bands from Manchester, Oldham and some from Durham, quite a number from Yorkshire. Test pieces I remember "Many Wives of Windsor" Eugen Onegin etc., The Ashton-under-Lyne Band won 6 out of the last 7 contests held before they were discontinued.



JAMES ASH, IN BAND UNIFORM AROUND 1935



Most instruments belonged to the band, being specially made to our own instructions and paid for out of Band Funds. Mostly Wheatstone. I still play on a "twiddler" now and again but I am sadly out of practice, and I am now 73 and retired.

The band made 6 Gramophone Records for Zonophone Green Label about 1935. I remember one double side had 'Tales of Hoffmann' one side and 'Glow Worm' on the other. I had this second,

but seem to have lost it, a very good recording. Made in Ashton-under-Lyne about 1930/1935. The B.B.C. once asked me to supply a concertina player to take part in a get-together of local folk at the White Swan Hotel, Dobines's, Saddleworth. The fee was 2 guineas, and he had to play 2 verses of "Greenlands Icy Mountains". We had once an offer to go to Canada, but it was turned down, but they were good times!"

Zoological Gardens, Belle Vue, Manchester.

### RESULTS OF PREVIOUS CONCERTINA BAND CONTESTS.

<b>1905.</b> <i>"March of the Light Infantry"</i> 1 Ashton-under-Lyne 2 Rochdale 3 Rochdale 4 Rochdale	<b>1906.</b> <i>"The Band"</i> 1 Ashton-under-Lyne 2 Rochdale 3 Rochdale 4 Rochdale	<b>1907.</b> <i>"The Band"</i> 1 Ashton-under-Lyne 2 Rochdale 3 Rochdale 4 Rochdale	<b>1908.</b> <i>"The Band"</i> 1 Ashton-under-Lyne 2 Rochdale 3 Rochdale 4 Rochdale
<b>1909.</b> <i>"The Band"</i> 1 Ashton-under-Lyne 2 Rochdale 3 Rochdale 4 Rochdale	<b>1910.</b> <i>"The Band"</i> 1 Ashton-under-Lyne 2 Rochdale 3 Rochdale 4 Rochdale	<b>1911.</b> <i>"The Band"</i> 1 Ashton-under-Lyne 2 Rochdale 3 Rochdale 4 Rochdale	<b>1912.</b> <i>"The Band"</i> 1 Ashton-under-Lyne 2 Rochdale 3 Rochdale 4 Rochdale
<b>1913.</b> <i>"The Band"</i> 1 Ashton-under-Lyne 2 Rochdale 3 Rochdale 4 Rochdale	<b>1914.</b> <i>"The Band"</i> 1 Ashton-under-Lyne 2 Rochdale 3 Rochdale 4 Rochdale	<b>1915.</b> <i>"The Band"</i> 1 Ashton-under-Lyne 2 Rochdale 3 Rochdale 4 Rochdale	<b>1916.</b> <i>"The Band"</i> 1 Ashton-under-Lyne 2 Rochdale 3 Rochdale 4 Rochdale
<b>1917.</b> <i>"The Band"</i> 1 Ashton-under-Lyne 2 Rochdale 3 Rochdale 4 Rochdale	<b>1918.</b> <i>"The Band"</i> 1 Ashton-under-Lyne 2 Rochdale 3 Rochdale 4 Rochdale	<b>1919.</b> <i>"The Band"</i> 1 Ashton-under-Lyne 2 Rochdale 3 Rochdale 4 Rochdale	<b>1920.</b> <i>"The Band"</i> 1 Ashton-under-Lyne 2 Rochdale 3 Rochdale 4 Rochdale

A Handbill from The Great Band Contest, 1926

## Ashton English Concertina Band

Records For H.M.V.  
Gramophone Co.

The Ashton English Concertina Prize Band—the world's champion concertina band—recorded for His Master's Voice Gramophone Co. in the Vestry Hall, Ashton, last week. They recorded six pieces equal to three two-sided records, and played from half-past six to 10 o'clock in the evening.

The compositions recorded were:

March, "The Contest" (J. Ord Hume).  
Allagro Marziale, "Nautical Moments" (Aubrey Winter).

Bacarelle, "Tales of Hoffman" (Offenbach).

Lull, "The Glee Worm," (Paul Lincke).  
Entr'acte, "Narcissus" (Ethelbert Nevin), and

Grand Valse, "Casino Tanne" (Gungl).

The actual recording was done in a van outside the Vestry Hall which was connected to the hall by means of a portable telephone. The Band played each piece twice, and although they were in the hall for three-and-a-half hours they did not feel the strain unduly.

### BROADCAST IN TIMES.

This is another distinction in the history of a very successful band. It has broadcast from North Regional on 14 occasions, three times from London, and once from Birmingham, and has won the Belle Vue Challenge Cup outright.

Now, according to Mr. H. West, advance manager for the band, they can get no band to challenge them, although it is believed that there are some 25 concertina bands in the country.

### FOR NEW UNIFORMS.

The proceeds from the engagement to record for H.M.V. Company will be devoted to the purchase of new uniforms for the bandmen. At least 60,000 impressions of their record will be made, and it is anticipated that the band's remarkable career of successes will result in a wide sale of the records.

The members of the Band who recorded were: Conductor, W. Courland; soprano, W. Price; solo cornet, E. Smith (secretary) and A. Worsley; bandmaster, H. Isaac; 1st clarinet, J. Isaac; euphonium, J. Ash and C. Carter; 2nd cornet, J. Stopford and A. Dunlop, junr.; 3rd cornet, W. Gould; and E. W. Hooley, W. Hipwell and J. Price; euphonium, C. Cross; 1st baritone, W. Allonby; 2nd baritone, T. Jones; 1st trombone, H. Cross; solo tenor horn, T. Eckersall; 1st horn, J. Carter; drummer, L. Goodall.

The Band will give a concert on November 8th at Strangeways Gaol, Manchester. They have also promised the Workpeople's Committee a sacred concert on behalf of the District Infirmary, if a suitable hall can be engaged.

## JAMES SCOTT SKINNER — The Strathspey King by Ronnie Robertson.

Because of the increasing search for new music for the concertina, players have turned to the published collections of Scottish Fiddle Music, and in particular to the collections of Scott Skinner who must rank with William Marshall, and the Gaw Family, Father Neil and Sons and the greatest export of this music. Although many of his pieces require a high degree of technical skill in performance, any hard work will be well repayed by the excellence of the music, his reels, marches and pastoral airs being in particular suited to the concertina.

James Skinner was born in 1843, at Banchory Deeside the second son of an itinerant dancing master, and 'left handit' fiddler William Skinner. After his father's early death, the family were provided for by the elder brother Sandy, who gave his brother his first lesson at the age of six. Soon he was accompanying his brother and another local fiddler Peter Milne, at dances in the countryside, on the cello.

Sent to eke out his education in Aberdeen, he joined a boy's band 'Dr. Marks Little Men' at the age of twelve. Indentured for six years, he received a firm musical training, and lessons from an accomplished violinist, during this period.

But the love of home was strong and with only three months to complete his tenure, he returned to Aberdeen, where he took up the family profession of dancing master and fiddler.

After some success as a fiddler and highland dancer, he married and followed the profession of dancing master, organizing concert parties to tour Scotland, and all the time publishing the collections which were to perpetuate his name.

After returning from North America he married for a second time and took up residence at Monk, near Aberdeen, where William McHardy, the Laird of Drumblair placed a rent free cottage at his disposal. Here appropriately he composed his most celebrated strathspey the 'Laird of Drumblair'.

At this time fiddle music for listening was highly regarded in Scotland, and from the turn of the century onward we find Skinner making numerous concert appearances throughout the country. This was to make him a household word in the world of Scottish Fiddle Music.

"FROM AN ASHTON NEWSPAPER  
AROUND 1930"

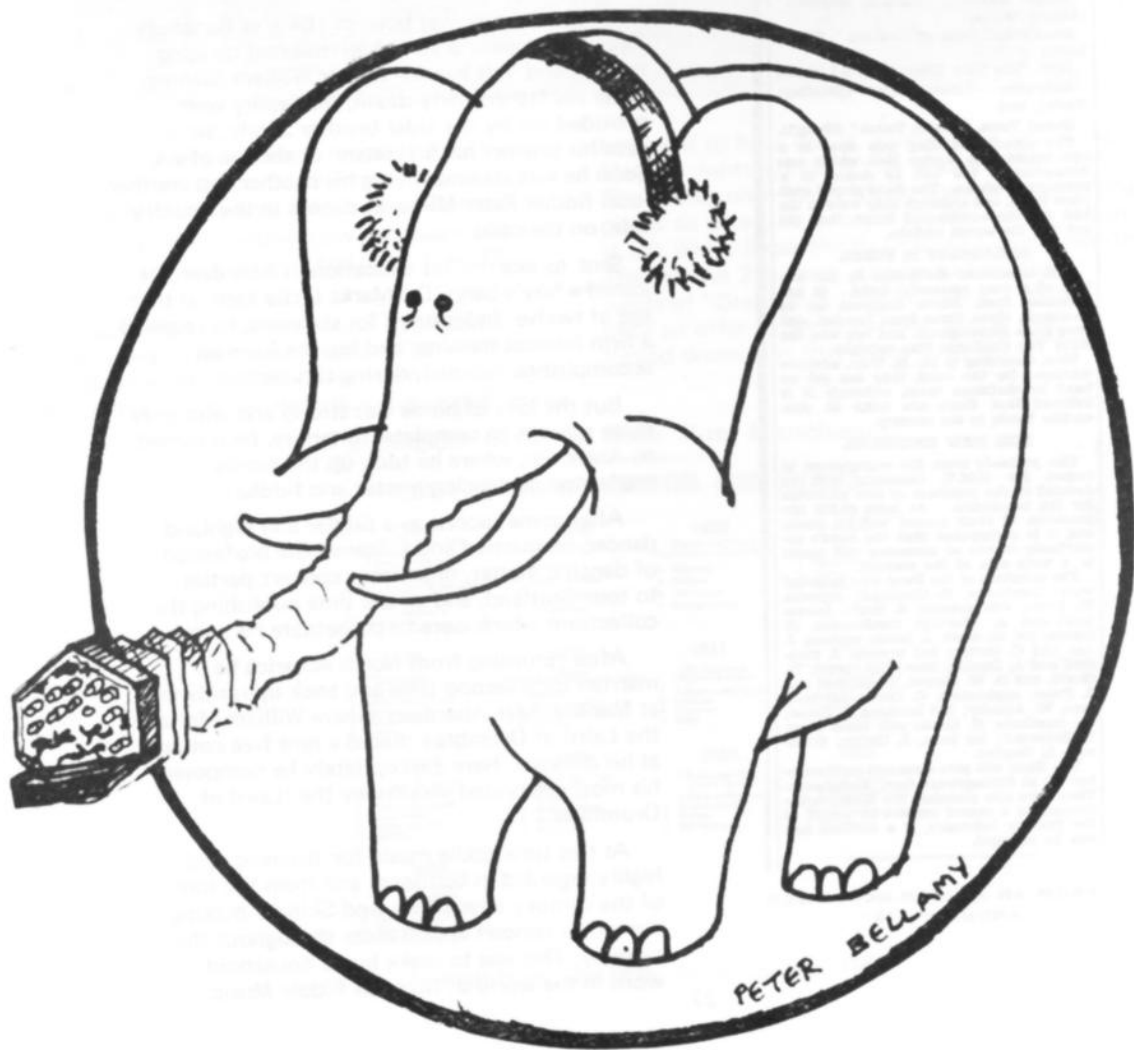
He returned to Aberdeen in 1922, and finally gave up public performances in 1925 at the age of eighty-two, he passed away on the seventeenth of March 1927 and is buried in Aberdeen, where a memorial marks the last resting place of the Strathspey King.

Perhaps the best known of Scott Skinner's collections is the "Scottish Violinist" which contains a selection from Scott Skinner's other publications. This can usually be purchased at most music shops for thirty-pence, or from the publishers "Boyley and Fergusson", 65 Berkeley Street, Glasgow, C.3.

The collections published during Skinner's lifetime were:

- 'Twelve new Strathspeys and Reels' (1865)
- 'Thirty new Strathspeys and Reels' (1868)
- 'Miller O' Hirn Collection' (1881)
- 'Elgin Collection' (1884)
- 'Logie Collection' (1888)
- 'Harp and Claymore' (1904)

Despite this prolific output for publishing before and after his death, some of Scott Skinner's pieces still remain in the tradition, and his compositions hold a firm place in the repertoire of musicians in Scotland".



**MANCHESTER ENGLISH CONCERTINA  
BAND** — some recollections by F.H. Chadwick.

"For a considerable number of years my concertina has laid almost idle, and it seems a lifetime, almost, since, as a schoolboy, I regularly journeyed from one side of Manchester to the other to attend band practice, in a now demolished church hall in Hulme.

The band was the Manchester English concertina band. It consisted of some 25 to 30 members and included some very talented individual musicians.

Rehearsals were held on Sunday mornings, and lasted roughly a couple of hours. The repertoire, was similar to that of any brass band, ranging from the musical tunes of the period, the famous marches, the inevitable Gilbert and Sullivan, and I can remember included Sibelius's 'Finlandia', as a highlight.

I can always remember that man who sat behind me in the band. He had one of those colossal instruments (at least that's how it seemed to a schoolboy) — a bass concertina, which with its small number of keys in the midst of all that woodwork looked silly — when you hadn't even seen one before.

In those days, 1928-29, the Manchester Parks had a regular programme of band music, in the parks on Sunday afternoons; and the local cinemas also had live acts between the silent films. The band undertook concerts in the Parks and provided intermissions at cinemas, apart from the odd concert which they sponsored for their own enjoyment and benefit.

My own participation was in a very minor role, third violin parts, or second cornet occasionally. I can still see the conductor, at rehearsals, gradually getting more and more carried away with the music as the music progressed and the unity of the players became more apparent. He would start off with an overture — William Tell often took a caning, or the Gladiators entered in staggered formation! It was almost inevitable that he would call an abrupt halt after only a few bars. In fact, often even the first note was a calamity. The baton came down, but the response from the musicians was often far from simultaneous, and frantic, booming voice yelled 'Stop! Come on, wake up, I know it's Sunday morning, but you're not in bed!' After several false starts, the overture would eventually be accomplished.

The hard work given to the conductor now caused him to take off his jacket. The following musical comedy selection — the Desert Song — gave the boys a bit of rhythm, and the energy of conducting the marching of the Riffs during the selection prompted the removal of the waistcoat, by the conductor.

We were now in full flight. The timing was good, the playing was improving, the rhythm could now lead to the standby of all musicians — Gilbert and Sullivan — and promptly the full instrumental volume face full zest to the 'Pirates' and the bass behind me boomed to an almost deafening crescendo. The conductor's taking off his tie!

Happy days! How nice to read they seem to be returning!

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"And it came to pass, when Moses help up his hand, that Israel prevailed; and when he let down his hand Amalek prevailed. But Moses hands were heavy; and they took a stone, and put it under him, and he sat thereon; and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on one side and the other on the other side."

The Vicar paused, leaned over the pulpit, a twinkle in his eyes. He pointed to the children seated on the front row and asked, "What is a concertina?". There was a long pause, and the children fidgeted, nudging each other. My pulses quickened; I could have answered that question. "Well Johnny? Catherine? Stewart?" Silence, then Catherine stood up. "Don't know sir".

"Well, I'll tell you. It's a musical instrument, similar to a piano accordion with key boards at each end and bellows in the middle. It doesn't have shoulder straps like the accordion, some have hand straps, others just have a loop to put your thumbs in". He paused and addressed the whole congregation.

"Forty six, or was it forty seven years ago, I was on holiday at Yarmouth just a lad in my teens. Some of you older members of the congregation will remember the old bathing huts with the large iron wheels, all lined up on the beach — I was only looking at my album the other day. What a difference in the bathing costumes, everyone wore bathing hats, rubber slippers. No trunks for the men in those days; chests covered and thighs covered to half an inch above the knees."

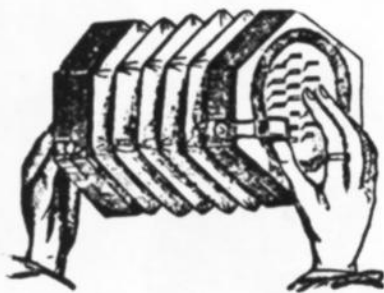
"Two or three Salvationists came on to the beach twice a day, three times on a Saturday and Sunday. an hour each session. One of them played the concertina. He stood with his feet slightly apart, thumbs through the leather loops, his arms revolving, first one way then the other, in a circular movement, distributing the strain to each muscle in turn. He would gather quite a circle of youngsters and grown ups, including me." The pause was longer this time as though the Vicar was conjuring up the scene again, but he was looking directly at me.



"Every time I read that portion of the scripture I think of that Salvationist, how his arms and chest must have ached, witnessing for Christ with his Concertina."

The rest of the sermon was just a jumble of words. I could not concentrate. Had I heard him right? My brother, Jim, was born at Yarmouth, he is forty seven now. I wonder, yes, I wonder — Leven, Lochgelly, Inverkeithing, Dundee, Edinburgh, Perth, Wick including the Orkney and Shetland Islands, Glasgow. Then south to Great Yarmouth, Nunhead, Upper Norwood, Thorton Heath, Wimbledon, Kingston-on-Thames, Battersea, up to Lincolnshire, Grimsby, souther again to Bedford, north to Darlington, down again to Cheltenham, up to Sunderland and finally to Hadleigh, Essex — how many people would have heard his concertina?

The minister heard and remembered. There must be many others who also remember, and, in them all my father's witness for Christ continues.



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Stevens Point is the home of one of the few concertina makers still working in this country.

Anton Wolfe, 2157 Jefferson St., made his first concertina in 1951 but that one "didn't turn out good", he said.

He was living in Ashland at the time, and had had been operating a part-time accordion and concertina repair service for two years. Asked how he got started making concertinas, Wolfe replied, "I was a dumb fool. It was intriguing but it's more work than I thought it would be. But I'm not sorry".

He learned how to make concertinas by taking them apart. He couldn't find a book or school with information on them, and, he said, "Nobody showed me anything."

He became involved with the instruments rather accidentally. He was a dairy farmer at the time he bought his first concertina. It was broken, so he decided to fix it and then started fixing accordions.

Then, he said, he got tired of farming. "Now I wish I was back", he added.

One of the things which may make his wish that is the fact that he must find a new shop within the next year if his business is to continue to operate.

But Wolfe said, "There is nothing available."

He is not happy about the authority's buying of his property. "I can't just move into the street," he said "I'm not delinquent or anything".

Wolfe also feels business is not as good as it might be. It takes him about 200 hours to make a concertina, and price reflects this. He said he is hurt "by competition from foreign companies that can undersell and people working part-time out of their homes".

The concertina maker said that the original instruments had a more pleasant sound than accordions, but that the imported ones today sound very similar to the larger instrument.

He said the change has occurred because the manufacturers tune them differently and use a different type of steel than did the original concertina makers. The old steel came from an area which is now part of East Germany. It was harder but also more brittle than the





Swedish steel which is used now. The Swedish steel is stronger and vibrates longer but is not as sharp.

Wolfe said he is trying to get the German steel, and that he still tunes his concertinas the old way.

There are still several differences between accordions and concertinas. The accordion has its keys in front, and concertina keys are located on the sides. On an accordion, each key is for a chord, but on a concertina, each key is for a single note, and chords are formed by pressing several keys at once. Thus, a concertina can play a single note scale, but an accordion can't.

Because of the way the reeds are tuned, each one sounds different, depending on whether the bellows are being expanded or contracted. However, all but two reeds have duplicates, so that all but two notes can be played on either stroke.

Wolfe usually does not make his concertina for specific orders. "I make them up, and if they come and buy them, OK. If not, I go broke, which is happening."

The reason Wolfe needs about 200 hours to make a concertina is that he starts from scratch.

He fits pieces of jute paper together to make the bellows, which include 512 individual pieces of the special paper, muslin, leather, book cloth and aluminium foil paper.

He cuts the reed frames out of sheets of aluminium and punches the reed slots. He cuts the reeds from metal strips and files them to the proper note. He can make the springs which work the keys, although he said he prefers to buy them.

He puts the wooden end frames together to hold the reeds, and he even does the decorative engraving on the outside of the frames. And he assembles all the parts.

The number of different operations involved is reflected in the tools Wolfe has in his shop — a grinder, a drill press, a metal plater, a punch press, a radial saw, a table saw, a joiner, a sander, a buffer, a frame jib, a paper folder, two tuners, a band saw, a wood shaper, and a sewing machine.

Wolfe said he knew of only one factory in the country making concertinas, a Chicago business which had an assembly line with seven or eight employees. He said the company was purchased by an Italian firm last winter.

*From Stevens Point Journal, Wisconsin, U.S.A.*

*Contributed by Paul Bentzen*

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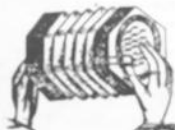


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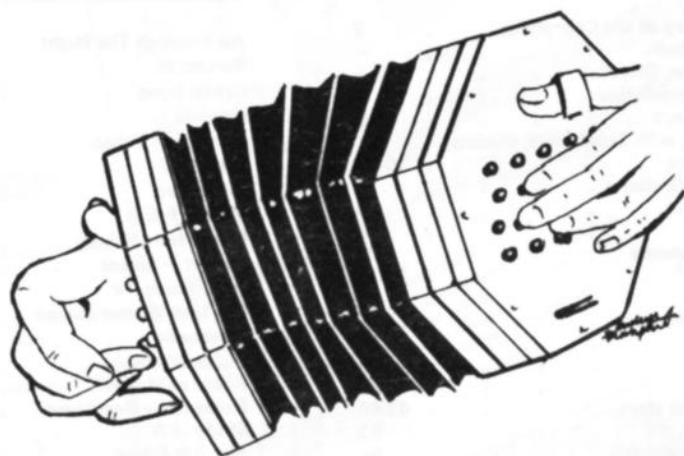
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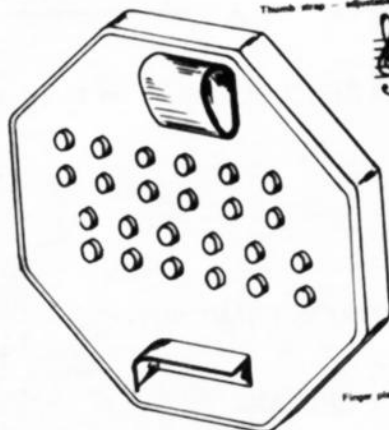
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LEFT HAND



Thumb strip - adjustable

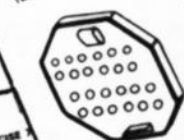
Finger plate - rest on fourth finger

### EXERCISE 1

This exercise equal one bar (down) dropped (up) of notes.



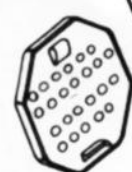
1st row  
2nd row (first finger)  
3rd row (second finger)  
4th row



Two important notes to learn.



C<sup>4</sup> sharp is third finger left-hand on 4th row.  
B<sup>4</sup> flat is first finger right-hand on 1st row.



### TWO OCTAVE SCALES

The scale of D over two octaves. The form has been varied by making each D a minor.



The scale of B flat over two octaves. Four B flats at the end will give you practice in jumping the octave.

### THREE A PLATE

Each begins the natural A. The lowest is played with the third finger on the 4th row, the others are first finger on the 1st row.  
You will find these on pages 50 and 51.

62

48

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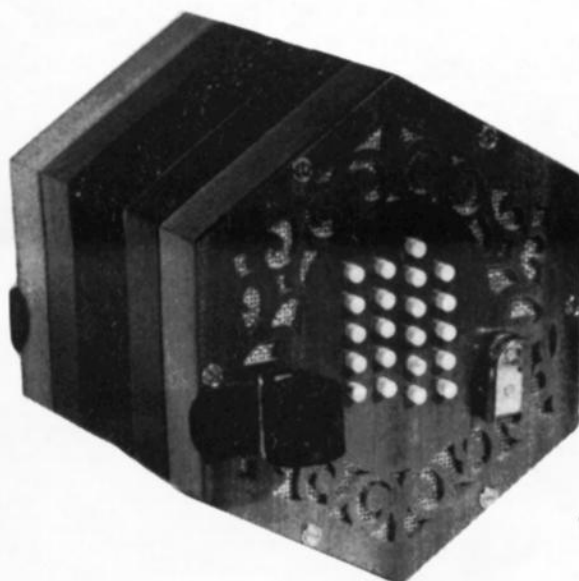
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