

‘Long valued for the fullness and sweetness of their tone’:

250 Years of Ruckers Harpsichords in Britain

An Inventory of Documentary References

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This Inventory is a complement to my article ‘Long valued for the fullness and sweetness of their tone’: 250 Years of Ruckers Harpsichords in Britain’, *The Galpin Society Journal* 76 (2023), pp. 147–162. It aims to bring together all the known references to the import, sale and use in Britain of keyboard instruments made by members of the Ruckers and Couchet families of Antwerp, principally Hans Ruckers (c1550-98); his sons Ioannes (1578-1642) and Andreas (1579-1645); and Ioannes I Couchet (1615-55), son of Hans’s daughter Catharina; for a recent summary of what is known of their lives, see the item abbreviated below as Vandervellen 2017, pp.12-13. It starts with the earliest, Sir Francis Windebank’s purchase of a single-manual harpsichord from Ioannes Ruckers in 1639, and it ends with the nine Ruckers instruments assembled in London some 250 years later for the 1885 Inventions Exhibition at South Kensington. The latter was a turning-point in the harpsichord revival in Britain and the wider early music movement – a point made in my article abbreviated below as Holman 2020. Corrections or additions to the Inventory will be gratefully received and will be credited in future revisions.

Scope and Limitations of the Study

My main source for references in eighteenth-century London newspapers has been the digital *Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Burney Newspapers Collection*, accessed in my case through the Brotherton Library, University of Leeds <<https://www.gale.com/intl/primary-sources>>. This is a powerful research tool, though it is patchy in its coverage; see Simon McVeigh, ‘London Newspapers 1750 to 1800: A Checklist and Guide for Musicologists’, *A Handbook for Studies in Eighteenth-Century English Music*, ed. Michael Burden and Irena Cholij, 6 (Oxford: Burden and Cholij, 1996), pp.1-60, esp. p.2; Ashley Marshall and Robert D. Hume, ‘The Joys, Possibilities and Perils of the British Library’s Digital Burney Newspapers Collection’, *The Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 104, no.1 (March 2010), pp.5-52.

I have mostly accessed provincial newspapers via *The British Newspaper Archive* <<https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/>>. Other databases drawn on include *British Periodicals* <https://about.proquest.com/en/products-services/british_periodicals>; *British Library Newspapers* <<https://www.gale.com/intl/primary-sources/british-library-newspapers>>; and *JSTOR* <<https://www.jstor.org/>>, all accessed in my case through the University of Leeds.

Unfortunately, the *Burney Newspapers Collection* is not easy to use. In its early stages (it has now improved substantially) it was estimated that ‘anything from 20 to 50 percent (or more) of what can be found by manually eyeballing the full texts of the newspapers will not show up in the list of results’ produced by the search engine (Marshall and Hume, ‘The Joys, Possibilities and Perils’, p.41). The problem is exacerbated by the seeming inability of English auctioneers and copywriters to avoid mangling the relatively straightforward surname ‘Ruckers’. A look through the Inventory will show that variants include: ‘Rucker’, ‘Ruckter’, ‘Rucker’s’, ‘Rouker’, ‘Ruchers’, ‘Ruker’s’, ‘Ruker’, ‘Rooker’, ‘Ruiker’, ‘Rucke’, ‘Reicher’ and even ‘Kooker’. The *Burney Newspaper Collection* requires repeated searches with variants of these to track all the references down, and

there are doubtless some that have eluded me, though luckily auctioneers and vendors tended to invest in repeated newspaper advertisements, sometimes across several titles. The other databases I have used seem to be rather more sophisticated, though unfortunately many of the provincial newspapers digitised in *The British Newspaper Archive* are faint or blurred and difficult to use. Doubtless the situation will change for the better in the next few years as more newspaper collections become available and search engines become more sophisticated.

To avoid the Inventory becoming intolerably lengthy I have normally quoted only one advertisement for each auction or sale, the one I have found closest to the date of the event; I have added extra material from earlier advertisements where necessary. However, for news items and anecdotal material I have tried to find the earliest citation; eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century newspapers and journals frequently plagiarised each other. I have also restricted myself mostly to references to instruments said to be by members of the Ruckers and Couchet family, though I have included a few references to unnamed instruments that were probably made by them, such as the 'very fine Harpsicord of the Silver Tone' (6/7/1728), which is apparently the same instrument as the one by Hans Ruckers that the auctioneer, Christopher Cock, put into a second sale the following year (3/2/1729).

I have restricted myself in most cases to the material in advertisements, except where it might throw light on the provenance of particular Ruckers or Couchet instruments or might illuminate their changing social and musical role. However, I have transcribed complete some advertisements that are of outstanding general interest. By the middle of the nineteenth century what came to be known as 'historical concerts' were frequently repeatedly previewed and then reviewed in several places, and so I have restricted myself to the ones that give the most information about the instruments used. I have passed over the many mentions of Ruckers instruments in historical articles about old keyboard instruments in nineteenth-century newspapers and journals, many of them ultimately derived from Burney and Hawkins, as well as the mentions of them in short stories and other works of fiction.

I have refrained from providing a lengthy commentary on the entries, except to suggest a few identifications with surviving instruments, to identify some of the owners and to explain the circumstances of the sightings of Ruckers and Couchet instruments in letters, account books, diaries and wills. In the parent article I address the broader themes of the development of the music trade in Britain, its connection with the art market, and the privileged position that Ruckers harpsichords have enjoyed in musical life in these islands since the seventeenth century.

Sale Catalogues

I am aware that more information about Ruckers and Couchet instruments is still awaiting discovery in the printed catalogues of auction sales. These often describe instruments in more detail than in the advertisements for the sales, and auctioneers often did not bother to mention the odd keyboard instrument when announcing house-clearance sales. Unfortunately, only a few auction catalogues have so far been digitised in the large-scale projects covering eighteenth- and nineteenth-century publications, among them the two parts of *Eighteenth Century Collections Online* <<https://www.gale.com/intl/primary-sources/eighteenth-century-collections-online>>; *Internet Archive* <<https://archive.org/>> and *Google Books* <<https://books.google.com/>>.

The *Getty Research Portal* <<http://portal.getty.edu/>> does include some digitised auction catalogues as part of a research project concerned with the provenance of fine art, though

maddeningly not all of them are reproduced in full, sometimes omitting sections on music and musical instruments. It is to be hoped that the British Library will soon start to digitise its unparalleled collection of sale catalogues; for them, see <<https://www.bl.uk/collection-guides/sale-catalogues>>, and the useful finding list in A. Hyatt King, *Some British Collectors of Music c1600-1960* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963), pp.130-44. It is unfortunate that I began serious work on this Inventory and the parent article just as the British Library closed during the first lockdown in the spring of 2020; my opportunities to work there have been severely limited ever since.

Nevertheless, we must be grateful for what we have. I began collecting references to Ruckers harpsichords in Britain as a by-product of my work on the harpsichords associated with Handel (see the articles abbreviated below as Holman 2021), though I little expected that my Inventory would be approaching 150 entries, an eloquent testimony to the enduring attraction these wonderful instruments had for musicians, collectors and the wider upper classes – and of course to the digital resources now available to anyone with access to a laptop and the internet. A study of this sort would have taken a lifetime only a few decades ago.

Editorial Method

Portions of primary sources within quotation marks are given literally, only disregarding wordbreaks, line-breaks, ligatures, small differences in sizes of type, and obvious small lacunae – such as the omission of a letter caused by broken type. Some extended quotations, such as those from exhibition catalogues, are placed in separate paragraphs, marked off from editorial matter by spaces. The quotations from newspaper advertisements have been shuffled where necessary, so that as far as possible the information appears in a standardised order, with the name and address of the auctioneer (where given) placed last. Ellipses (...) denote my omissions of portions of text, and do not appear in the original. Contractions are expanded within <angle brackets>; Gothic type is rendered within {curly brackets}; omissions are supplied in [square brackets]. In **1/11/1709** the Fraktur has been rendered in conventional Roman type, with words in Roman type given in Italics. All dates are modernised, so that with Old-Style Julian calendar dates (before 1752) the year has been adjusted where necessary to start on 1 January rather than 25 March. I have not attempted to modernise the Julian calendar; by 1752 it was eleven days behind the modern Gregorian calendar, which had long been in use in Scotland and most of continental Europe.

Abbreviations

<@>	A digital copy of the item was available at an open-access site at the time of publication. All databases were last accessed on 25 January 2023.
AA	Auction announcement
BMO	<i>Boalch-Mould Online</i> <@>, the digital successor to Donald H. Boalch, revised by Charles Mould, <i>Makers of the Harpsichord and Clavichord 1440-1840</i> (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 3rd edn., 1995, updated and revised by John Watson and Lance Whitehead.
CHE	<i>The Cambridge Handel Encyclopedia</i> , ed. Annette Landgraf and David Vickers (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).
<i>Clinkscale</i>	<i>Clinkscale Online: A Research Database dedicated to the Worldwide Cataloguing of</i>

	<i>Pianos built before 1860</i> <@>.
DA	<i>The Daily Advertiser</i>
DC	<i>The Daily Courant</i>
DJ	<i>The Daily Journal</i>
DP	<i>The Daily Post</i>
Engel 1874	Carl Engel, <i>A Descriptive Catalogue of the Musical Instruments in the South Kensington Museum</i> (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 2nd edn., 1874).
GA	<i>The General Advertiser</i>
GNDA	<i>The Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser</i>
GSJ	<i>The Galpin Society Journal</i>
HCD	<i>George Frideric Handel Collected Documents</i> , ed. Donald Burrows, Helen Coffey, John Greenacombe and Anthony Hicks, 4 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013, 2015, 2018, 2020).
Holman 2020	Peter Holman, 'The Harpsichord in Nineteenth-Century England', <i>Harpsichord & Fortepiano</i> 24, no.2 (Spring 2020), pp.4-14.
Holman 2021	Peter Holman, 'Handel's Harpsichords Revisited; Part I: Handel and Ruckers Harpsichords'; 'Part II: Handel's Domestic Harpsichords', <i>Early Music</i> 49, no.2 (May 2021), pp.227-43; no.3 (August 2021), pp.413-27.
ILN	<i>The Illustrated London News</i>
LDA	<i>The London Daily Advertiser</i>
LDP	<i>The London Daily Post and General Advertiser</i>
MC	<i>The Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser</i>
MP	<i>The Morning Post</i>
MPBI	Charles Humphries and William C. Smith, <i>Music Publishing in the British Isles from the Beginning until the Middle of the Nineteenth Century</i> (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 2nd edn., 1970).
MW	<i>The Musical World</i>
NA	The National Archives
O'Brien	Grant O'Brien, <i>Ruckers: A Harpsichord and Virginal Building Tradition</i> (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2nd edn., 2008).
ODNB	<i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i> < https://www.oxforddnb.com/ >.
PA	<i>The Public Advertiser</i>
RMARC	<i>Royal Musical Association Research Chronicle</i>
SFO	Lance Whitehead and Jenny Nex, <i>The Insurance of Musical London and the Sun Fire Office 1710-1779</i> , online Supplementary Material <@> to the published paper, <i>The Galpin Society Journal</i> 67 (2014), pp.181-216.
V&A	<i>Catalogue of Musical Instruments in the Victoria and Albert Museum</i> , one-volume edition, Part 1: Howard Schott, <i>Keyboard Instruments</i> ; Part 2: Anthony Baines, <i>Non-Keyboard Instruments</i> , ed. James Yorke (London: V&A Publications, 2nd edn., 1985; reprinted 1998, 2002) <@>.
Vandervellen 2017	<i>The Golden Age of Flemish Harpsichord Making: A Study of the MIM's Ruckers Instruments</i> , ed. Pascale Vandervellen (Brussels: Musical Instrument Museum, 2017).

INVENTORY

1639

Sir Francis Windebank (1582-1646), one of Charles I's secretaries of state, acquires a single-manual harpsichord by Ioannes Ruckers through the agency of Balthasar Gerbier, English resident at the Hapsburg court in Brussels, having rejected a double-manual harpsichord with a short-octave bass; see Paula Woods, 'The Gerbier-Windebank Correspondence: Two Ruckers Harpsichords in England', *G&S* 54 (2001), pp.76-89; ead., 'Windebank's Virginal: A Lost Ruckers Harpsichord', *Harpsichord & Fortepiano* 9, no.1 (Spring 2001), pp.16-23.

Woods suggested that this instrument is O'Brien 1639 IR, now in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, an identification accepted in John Koster, 'The Harpsichord of the Virginalists', *Aspects of English Keyboard Music before c1630*, ed. David J. Smith (Abingdon: Routledge, 2019), pp.29-48, at p.40. For Windebank, see Patricia Haskell, 'Sir Francis Windebank and the Personal Rule of Charles I', 2 vols., PhD thesis, University of Southampton, 1978 <@>; Brian Quintrell, 'Sir Francis Windebank', *ODNB*. See also *V&A*, part 1, pp.57-8 (no.16); *BMO*, no.1660; Holman 2021, p.229; **10/8/1853, 1869, 1883** (no.22).

1/11/1709

The traveller Zacharias Konrad von Uffenbach (1683-1734) from Frankfurt am Main describes a visit to the Romer Tavern in Gerrard Street, Soho kept by the Frenchman Robert Binnet:

Gegen Abend giengen wir mit Herrn Pauli und einem Holsteiner, Namens Fleischer, welcher auch in der Gesellschaft war, in die *Gerardstreet at the Romer tavern*, allwo der Wirth, der ein Franzose ist, Namens Binet, wöchentlich ein Musik-Concert hält. Er hat einen grossen Saal, daran ist ein kleines Zimmer, in welchem eine grosse Menge von auserlesenen Musicalischen Instrumenten hiengen. Er hatte insonderheit zwey unvergleichliche Flügel, so vor die besten in ganz Engelland gehalten, und jeder von ihn zwey hundert Pf. Sterl. geschäzet wurden. Sie sind schon über hundert Jahr alt, und von zweyen der berühmtesten Meister in Antwerpen verfertigt. Das beste ist von Hans Rucker, das andere von seinem Sohn, der sich zum Unterschied Jean Rucker geschrieben. Beyde sind mit doppelten Tuillanten. Das erste gehet sehr *douce*, das andere aber im Baß etwas stärker, der Discant aber ist etwas holzig, und nicht so angenehm als an dem andern. Sie klangen jedoch beyde sehr gut. Herr Fleischer spielte mit grosser Fertigkeit, Accuratesse und ungemeinen Manieren darauf. Er sang dabei sowohl einen Baß, als einen ungemein zarten Discant. In diesem giebt er dem Nicolini wenig nach, und ist sonderlich in *adagio* und passagen ungemein. (*Herrn Zacharias Konrad von Uffenbach Merkwürdige Reisen durch Niedersachsen, Holland und Engelland*, ed. Johann Georg Schelhorn, 3 vols. (Frankfurt, Leipzig and Ulm, 1753-4), vol.3, pp.242-3 <@>).

Towards evening we walked with Herr Pauli and a gentleman from Holstein called Fleischer, who was also of our company, to the Romer Tavern in Gerrard Street, where the host, a Frenchman called Binet, holds a weekly musical concert. He has a large hall with a small room adjoining it where there hung a great quantity of choice musical instruments. His most notable possessions are two matchless harpsichords which are considered the best in the whole of England, each being valued at 200 pounds Sterling. They are already over 100 years old and were built by two of the most famous masters in Antwerp. The better one is by Hans Rucker and the other by his son, who signed himself Jean Rucker to avoid confusion. Both have two manuals. The first is very soft but the second is a little stronger in the bass, although its treble is somewhat reedy and not so agreeable

as in the first. But both sounded very good. Herr Fleischer played on them with great dexterity, accuracy and uncommon ornaments. He sang to his [own] accompaniment both [as] a bass and an extraordinarily delicate treble. In the latter he came not far short of Nicolini, and he is particularly noteworthy in *adagio* and [florid] passages. (Translation adapted from W.H. Quarrell and Margaret Mare, *London in 1710, from the Travels of Z.C. von Uffenbach* (London: Faber & Faber, 1934), pp.181-2; Michael Tilmouth, 'Chamber Music in England, 1675-1720', PhD dissertation, University of Cambridge, 1960, pp.102-3).

For Robert Binnet and the Romer (actually Bear and Rumer) Tavern, see 'No. 9 Gerrard Street', *Survey of London*, vols. 33 and 34: *St Anne, Soho*, ed. F.H.W. Shepherd (London: London County Council, 1966), *British History Online* <@>. I am grateful to Michael Talbot for his assistance with the transcription and translation of this document.

18/4/1711

AA: 'An Excellent Collection of Pictures never before expos'd to Sale, will be sold by Auction this Day ... at Mr Bressan's at the 2 Flower-Pots in Summerset-yard in the Strand'. Includes: '2 extraordinary good Ruckers Harpsichords of Antwerp, each of them 2 Setts of Keys, approv'd of by the best Masters in England'. (*DC*, 18/4/1711).

For the woodwind maker Peter Bressan (1663-1731), see esp. David Lasocki, 'Peter Bressan (*formerly* Pierre Jaillard)', *ODNB*. I have argued (Holman 2021, p.229) that Peter Bressan, born Pierre Jaillard in Bourgen-Bresse north of Lyon, used his contacts abroad to enable him to locate and import Ruckers instruments. It is unlikely that the 'best Masters in England' would have approved of them had they not been modernised, with aligned keyboards and an extended compass.

3/2/1713

'To be Sold, Two extraordinary Harpsicalls, of a Resonance as never was heard better, being made by the same Hand as what Mr. Roselli has sold here in the Name of Couchet. They are to be seen to the 7th Instant at the Blue Flower-Pot in Little Queen-street, the fifth Door from Windmill-street'. (*DC*, 3/2/1713).

I have been unable to identify Mr Roselli.

24/2/1713

AA: 'An excellent Collection of Original Pictures, by several of the best Masters, together with some curious Figures in Brass, &c. Also a very fine Harpsichord, with Two Sets of Keys, made by Hans Ruckers Anno 1613 ... at Mr. Gouge's late Dwelling-House in the Little-Piazza, Covent Garden'. (*DC*, 23/2/1713).

Mr Gouge is not mentioned in the account of the five houses making up the Little Piazza in Covent Garden, rebuilt after a fire in 1769; see *Survey of London*, vol.36: *Covent Garden*, ed. F.H.W. Shepherd (London: London County Council, 1970), *British History Online* <@>.

12/1714

The sale catalogue of the music library of the coal merchant and concert promoter Thomas Britton (1644-1714), sold in December 1714, includes as no.26 of the instruments: 'A Rucker's Virginal, thought to be the best in Europe'. (Sir John Hawkins, *A General History of the Science and Practice of Music*, 5 vols. (London: Author, 1776), reprinted in 2 vols. (London: J. Alfred Novello, 1853; reprinted New York: Dover Publications, 1963), vol.2, p.793 <@>).

See also Holman 2021, p.230. No copy of the sale catalogue is known, but it was printed apparently complete by Hawkins. For Britton, see esp. Douglas A. Reid, 'Thomas Britton', *ODNB*.

27/1/1718

'Two very good Harpsicords, made in Flanders by a good Master, one of 'em being with two setts of Keys, and some other Musical Instruments; to be sold at Montague's Coffee-house in Sheer-lane, over-against Temple-Bar; Where also Gentlemen may be accommodated with very good Lodgings'. (*DC*, 27/1/1718).

Had the 'good Master' been a member of the Ruckers-Couchet family, the advertisement would surely have mentioned the fact, such was the cachet their instruments enjoyed at the time.

23/8/1720

The catalogue of instruments belonging to James Brydges, Earl of Carnarvon and then Duke of Chandos (1673-1744), drawn up and dated 23/8/1720 by J.C. Pepusch, includes, as the first of the plucked keyboard instruments at Cannons near Edgware (the duke's country seat): 'A four square Harpsicord with two Rows of Keys at one End and a Spinnet on the side made at Antwerp by John Ruckers, the Lid is painted and represents the Mount Parnassus with the nine Muses and Minerva coming to instruct them, painted by A. Tilens in the year 1625'. (facsimile in *Handel: A Celebration of his Life and Times*, ed. Jacob Simon (London: National Portrait Gallery, 1985), pp.282-3).

'A. Tilens' is probably an error for the Antwerp painter Jan Tilens (1589-1630). The instrument was auctioned in 1747 prior to the house's demolition (see **3/6/1747**) and seems to have been acquired by J.C. Pepusch, who had been the duke's musical director; see **21/5/1785**, **9/6/1785**, **23/6/1787** and possibly **3, 4/5/1804**. See also *HCD*, vol.1, pp.499-500; Holman 2021, p.230. For this type of Ruckers instrument, a two-manual harpsichord with a virginal incorporated into its bentside, see O'Brien, p.45; Vandervellen 2017, pp.126-37. For Brydges, see esp. Joan Johnson, revised by M.D. Mitchell, 'James Brydges, first Duke of Chandos', *ODNB*; Susan Jenkins, *Portrait of a Patron: The Patronage and Collecting of James Brydges, first Duke of Chandos (1674-1744)* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016), pp.23-44.

29, 30/11/1722

AA: 'At Mrs Lewis's, the House late Mr. Isack's, on the Paved Stones, in St Martin's-Lane ... The joint Collections, and Original Paintings of the late Mr. John Gressier, and Mr. Victor Jannsens, with Marble antique Heads, Bustos, Bass-Reliefs, Models of celebrated Masters, also an excellent double Harpsicord, and a Virginal of J. Ruckers of Antwerp, two carved Cannon, and a most curious Silver Tea-Kettle, &c.'. (*DC*, 24/11/1722).

This was probably a combination harpsichord-virginals rather than two separate instruments, and was clearly not the same one as that owned by the Duke of Chandos (see **23/8/1720**), since that instrument was still at Cannons when it was sold on **3/6/1747**.

22, 23/5/1724

AA: 'Mr. Gambarine's very valuable Collection of fine Pictures, by the most celebrated Italian, French and Flemish Masters; as likewise a great and curious Collection of fine old Japan China, a fine Marble Statue of Abundance, by John de Bellone, with an excellent Harpsicord by the famous Ruckter; at his Dwelling House the Green Rails in Green-street, Leicester Fiends'. Auctioneer: Mr. Cock 'in Broad-street, Soho'. (*DC*, 19/5/1724).

Carlo or Charles Gambarini (d. 1754) from Lucca, art dealer, collector and author of *A Description of the Earl of Pembroke's Pictures* (Westminster: A. Campbell, 1731), was the father of the musician Elisabetta de Gambarini; see Anthony Noble, 'A Contextual Study of the Life and Published Keyboard Works of Elisabetta de Gambarini, together with a Recording, Facsimile of the Music and Commentary', 2 vols., PhD thesis, University of Southampton, 2018, esp. vol.1, pp.22-48 <@>. See also **30/3/1764**.

26/2/1725

AA: 'This Day at 11 a-Clock begins the third and last Days Sale of the Right Hon. the Earl of Roseberry, at the Iron Rails in Greek-street, Soho. Consisting of all the Choice Pictures in the Collection, as likewise a most excellent Harpsicord of Ruckers'. Auctioneer: Mr. Cock 'in Broad-street, St James's'. (*DP*, 26/2/1725).

In earlier advertisements (e.g. *DP*, 24, 2/1725) the collection is said to have been 'brought from his Lordship's seat in Scotland', and the instrument is described as: 'a fine Harpsicord of the famous Rucker'. Archibald Primrose, first Earl of Rosebery (1664-1723), who died on 20 October 1723, had his seat at Dalmeny House in West Lothian; see T.F. Henderson, revised by Philip Carter, 'Archibald Primrose, of Dalmeny, first earl of Rosebery', *ODNB*.

19/5/1725

AA: 'All the rich Furniture, in the House of the Rt. Hon. William Lord Marquis of Powis, in Ormond-street, near Queen's-Square ... N.B. This Day will be sold the fine Eight-Oar'd Barge, with all the fine Furniture; likewise a fine Harpsicord, made by Hans Rucker in 1605, perfectly complete, and several fine Pier-Glasses'. Auctioneer: Mr. Cock, 'Broad Street, Golden-Square'. (*DJ*, 19/5/1725).

For William Herbert (d. 1745), Jacobite sympathiser, see Paul Hopkins, 'William Herbert, second Marquess of Powis and Jacobite second Duke of Powis', *ODNB*.

1/1/1726

'At Meyer's Coffee-house, in King-street, near Bloomsbury-Square, Holbourn, are to be Sold, Two Harpsichords, one by Tabel, with two Rows of Keys, with a very fine Lute Stop, one by Kooker, and a Bass-Viol'. (*DC*, 1/1/1726).

Hermann Tabel (1672-1739), a harpsichord maker originally from Lower Saxony, came to England around 1714 from Amsterdam (rather than from Antwerp as was traditionally thought), though he popularised a Ruckers-derived style in London through his associates Burkat Shudi and Jacob Kirkman. For Tabel, see esp. Charles Mould and Peter Mole with Thomas Strange, *Jacob Kirkman, Harpsichord Maker to her Majesty* (Ellesmere: Peter Mole, 2016), pp.9-12, 42-4. It is possible that the 'Kooker' (presumably a misreading of 'Rooker' or Ruckers) had been imported and modernised by Tabel.

3/3/1726

AA: 'This Day ... All the Rich Household Furniture of a Person of Quality deceas'd, at the Corner of Southampton-street, next to Bloomsbury-Square', includes 'a fine double Harpsicord made by Hans Rucker of Antwerp, in the Year 1607'. Catalogues: 'at the Place of Sale'. (*DP*, 3/3/1736).

18-20/1/1727

AA: 'The principal and remaining Part of the Houshold Goods of William Garnham, Esq, at his House the Corner of Charles-street, the North Side of Soho Square, being brought from his seat

in Hampshire, together with the rich Furniture of a Person of Quality, whose Title we are obliged to conceal'. Includes: 'a Rucker's Harpsicord'. (DP, 18/1/1727).

This sale was postponed from 15-17/12/1726 (DP, 16/12/1726), and in that advertisement two instruments are mentioned: 'a Harpsichord by Rucker, a Spinnet'. There is no mention there of the mysterious 'Person of Quality', so they were clearly owned by William Garnham. He was perhaps the William Garnham of East Woodhay in Hampshire who made his will (NA, PROB 11/764/303) on 8/2/1745; it was proved on 7/9/1748.

6/7/1728

AA: 'THIS Day ... the Dwelling-House of the Hon. General Webb, deceas'd, in Great-Marlborough-street, near Golden-Square ... To which will be added. The Entire Stock of Mr. James Moor, Cabinet-Maker to his late Majesty, and an eminent Milliner, both deceas'd'. Includes: 'a very fine Harpsicord of the Silver Tone'. Auctioneer: Mr. Cock, 'Broad-street, Golden Square'. (DP, 6/7/1728).

This may be the same instrument as the one auctioned by Christopher Cock the following year, see 3/2/1729.

3/2/1729

AA: '*This Day*'. Among '*many other Curiosities*' are: 'Particularly a very curious Musical Clock, which plays great Variety of the most celebrated Opera and other Tunes, with many rare Mathematical Movements, &c. being one of the finest made by Mr. Pinchbeck', and 'a Harpsichord of the Silver Tone, by the famous Hans Rucker'. Auctioneer: Mr. Cock, '*Auction-Room, in Poland-street, near Golden-square*'. (DJ, 3/2/1729).

Christopher Pinchbeck's 'curious Machine, call'd the Theatre of the Muses' played 'on several instruments, great Variety of most excellent Pieces of Musick, compos'd by Mr. Handel, Corelli and other celebrated Masters, with such wonderful Exactness, that scarce any hand can equal'; see *HCD*, vol.2, pp.244-6. For Pinchbeck, see Rita Shenton, 'Pinchbeck family', *ODNB*.

12/2/1729

AA: '*This Day ... at the House late the Earl of Bradford's in Sobo-Square*'. Property of 'Mrs. Pickering, deceased, who formerly liv'd in Holborn-row Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, and likewise the Furniture of a Gentlewoman, deceased, brought from her late Dwelling House, In Kensington'. Includes: 'a Chamber Organ, Harpsichord, Spinnet ... N.B. A Harpsichord by Hans Ruckers'. Auctioneer: Mr. Bouchet, 'on the Pavement in St Martin's Lane'. (DP, 12/2/1729).

3/7/1729

'*To be SOLD*, A Very fine Toned Harpsichord, made by the most famous RUCKER of Antwerp, with two Sets of Keys. Enquire of Mr. Weldon at his House in Great Cheny Row in Chelsea, or at Mr. Slaughter's Coffee-house in St. Martin's-Lane near Charing Cross'. (DP, 3/7/1729).

The vendor was apparently not the composer John Weldon, who died at his house in Downing Street, Westminster on 7 May 1736; see Margaret Laurie, 'John Weldon', *ODNB*.

26/1/1730

AA: '*This Day ... at the Great House, being the Fifth Door above St. Martin's Court, on the Pavement in St. Martin's Lane*. All the Effects of Sir SCIPIO HILL, lately deceased, brought from his late Dwelling-

House in James Street, Westminster ... *To which are added*, The effects of the late Mr. Pujolas, F.R.S. brought from his late Dwelling-House in Litchfield-street'. Includes: 'a fine Harpsichord, by the famous Andrea Ruckers'. Auctioneer: Mr. Bouchet, 'on the Pavement in St. Martin's-lane'. (*DJ*, 26/1/1730).

9/3/1731

AA: '*This Day* ... ALL the rich Furniture of the Right Hon. Lord George Howard of Norfolk, and Tho. Barker, Esq, (both deceased) at their late Dwelling-House on the North Side of Golden-Square'. Includes: 'a fine Harpsichord of Haris [Hans] Rucker's'. Auctioneer: Francis Sheldon, 'at the Golden Lion in Leicester-Fields'. (*DP*, 9/3/1731).

16/11/1734

'Whereas it has been maliciously reported that Mr. *Tabel* the musical Instrument-maker was dead, and that he had learn'd his Art to one of his Men, to make that fine Tone in Harpsicords, all which is false and groundless; he lives still at his House in Swallow-Street, over-against Haddon-Court near Golden Square, and has a fine Harpsicord left with him by a certain Gentleman to dispose of, made by the famous Couchet, who was Partner with John Ruckers'. (*The Country Journal, or The Craftsman*, 16/11/1734).

A slightly differently worded version of this item appeared in the *St James's Evening Post*, 23/11/1734. For Hermann Tabel, see 1/1/1726.

?1734/1735

A letter of uncertain date from Mary Pendarves in London to her sister Anne Granville in Gloucester: 'Since my writing of this letter I have had an hours visit from Mr. Hendel & he has play'd most deliciously on my Harpsicord[;] we are to meet on Monday at Lady Mary Colleys who has the finest Rucker that ever was heard'. (*HCD*, vol.3, p.41).

Lady Mary Colley, the widow of Henry Colley (who had been a member of the Irish House of Commons), lived in Grosvenor Square in 1735-6. For Handel's fondness for, and use of, Ruckers harpsichords, see Holman, 2021, esp. pp.227-43.

13/2/1735

AA: '*On Thursday the 13th of February Next, and the following Days, in Dover House, Dover Street, St. James's*. THE valuable Effects of Richard Norton, Esq; ... brought from his late seat of Southwick near Portsmouth'. Includes: 'a fine Harpsichord by Rouker, and various valuable Curiosities, with all his Scenes, Machines, Decorations and Habits, used in the Life-time of Mr. Norton in his Playhouse at Southwick-House'. Auctioneer: Mr. Cock, 'in the Great Piazza, Covent Garden'. (*DJ*, 5/2/1735).

24/3/1736

AA: '*This Day ... and the following Days*', The effects of 'FRANCIS CLARKE, Esq; deeces'd, at his late Dwelling House, the West Side of Essex-street in the Strand There is an undoubted Harpsichord of Ruckers will be sold in the Sale this Day'. Catalogues: 'at the Place of Sale, at Mr. Fowler's, Brooks-Market House; and at Mr. Heath's at the Golden Head, in Great Hart-street, Covent-Garden'. (*LDP*, 24/3/1736).

9/4/1747

AA: *'This and the following Days, At LINDSEY HOUSE, beyond the Church at Chelsea, the Seat of the Hon. CHARLES BERTIE, deceas'd; and lately in the Possession of Her GRACE the DUTCHESS of RUTLAND'*. Contents include: 'an excellent fine ton'd Harpsichord by And. Ruckers 1642'. Auctioneer: John Heath. (*GA*, 9/4/1747).

This duchess appears to have been Lucy Manners (c1685-1751), widow of John Manners, second Duke of Rutland.

3/6/1747

The sale of the contents of Cannons after the death of the Duke of Chandos in 1744 includes, in the third day's sale, 3 June, in *'His Grace's Study'*, lot 12: *'An exceeding fine toned double key'd harpsicord, with a spinet at one end, by the famous Ruckers of Antwerp --- 31 10 0'*. (Christopher Cock, *A Catalogue of the Genuine Household Furniture &c. of his Grace James Duke of Chandos, Deceas'd, at his late Seat called Cannons* (London, 1747), p.14).

For this remarkable instrument, see **23/8/1720**. It seems to have been acquired, either at the auction or subsequently, by the composer, harpsichordist and violinist J.C. Pepusch (1666/7-1752), who had been musical director for the Duke of Chandos at Cannons from at least 1717 to 1723; see esp. Donald Frederick Cook, 'The Life and Works of Johann Christoph Pepusch (1667-1752), with Special Reference to his Dramatic Works and Cantatas', 2 vols., PhD dissertation, King's College, University of London, 1982), vol.1, pp.184-217 <@>; Graydon Beeks, 'John Christopher Pepusch', *ODNB*. For later sightings of the instrument, see **21/5/1785**, **9/6/1785**, **23/6/1787** and possibly **3, 4/5/1804**.

22/2/1748

AA: *'This present Monday and the three following Days, at the Corner-House of James-street in Golden-Square, lately in the Possession of JOHN PARSONS, Esq; THE Rich Household Furniture, and other valuable Effects of a GENTLEMAN leaving off House-Keeping, consigned from his Seat in NORFOLK'*. Includes: 'a fine ton'd Harpsichord, with double Sets of Keys, Concert Pitch by Andrea Ruckers'. Auctioneers: John and Robert Heath, 'the Golden Head in Long-Acre'. (*GA*, 22/2/1748).

8/3/1749

AA: *'This Day the 8th of March, and the following Days ... At the Great Room over Exeter-Exchange in the Strand, A Rich Parcel of Household Furniture'*, including: *'a fine ton'd Harpsichord, by Ruchers of Antwerp'*. Auctioneer: John Heath, 'at the Two Golden Balls in Long-Acre'. (*GA*, 8/3/1749).

7/11/1749

AA: *'This Day, ALL the Genuine and Entire Houshold Furniture, &c. of a Person of Quality, remov'd for Conveniency of Sale, from his late Dwelling-House (being lett) to the last House on the left Hand in Great Brook-street, Grosvenor-square'*; including: 'a Harpsichord by Ruckers of Antwerp'. Auctioneer: Robert Heath, 'in Broad-Court, Bow-Street, Covent-Garden'. (*GA*, 7/11/1749).

11/12/1751

'To be SOLD, for Ten Guineas, AN undoubted OCTAVE SPINET of James [sic] Ruckers, of a fine brilliant Tone, and well preserved ... To be seen up one Pair of Stairs at the Pestle and Mortar, against Lancaster Court, in the Strand, near Hungerford-Market'. (*LDA*, 11/12/1751).

2/3/1754

'There is to be sold at Della Corbet's at the Naked Boy in Tavistock-street, Covent-Garden, A Very fine ton'd Double-row'd Original Harpsichord of Hans Ruckers, beautifully Japann'd, and the Lid painted in Figures by Sir James Thornhill, which was late in the Possession of Mr. Robinson, Organist. Also another single-row'd two-stop Harpsichord, of Joseph Mahoon's Make'. (*PA*, 2/3/1754).

For John Robinson (1682-1762), organist of Westminster Abbey, see L.M. Middleton, revised by K.D. Reynolds, 'John Robinson', *ODNB*. Thornhill also designed a lid painting for a harpsichord owned by Handel; see Holman 2021, pp.413-15.

28/5/1755

AA: 'This Day'. Includes: 'a fine ton'd double key'd Harpsichord by Ruckers, A.D. 1616'. Auctioneer: Mr. Ford, 'At his Great Room the Upper End of St James's Haymarket' (*PA*, 28/5/1755).

17/3/1756

AA: 'This [day], and To-morrow, SUNDRY Effects which have been deposited as Security for the Loan of Money'. Including: 'a Harpsichord by Ruckers, of Antwerp'. Auctioneer: Miles Nightingall, 'At his House the East Side of Golden-square'. (*PA*, 17/3/1756).

27/8/1756

AA: 'By a Written Catalogue, THE genuine Houshold Furniture, Wearing Apparel, and Stock in Trade of Mr. JOHN METZENER, Harpsichord-maker, deceased, at his late Dwelling-house in Queen-street, near Dean-street, Soho, Tomorrow ... Several very fine Second-hand, double and single Harpsichords; one double-key'd by Johannes Ruckers, of Antwerp'. (*PA*, 26/8/1756).

For Metzener, see *BMO*; *SFO*, p.218.

14/12/1756

AA: 'by Order of the Assignees, under a Commission of Bankruptcy, ONE Lyrichord, two Forte Piano's, several Harpsichords, most of them finished to the greatest Perfection, by that eminent Maker Mr. Rutgerus Plenius of South Audley-street, Grosvenor-Square; also one Harpsichord, by Ruckers, of Antwerp; at the same Time will be sold the Work Benches, Engines, Tools, and Utensils; a Parcel of St. Joseph's Wood in Plank and Vanear; sundry Carcasses for Instruments and other Stock in Trade. To be viewed at Mr. Plenius's as above till the Sale'. Auctioneer: Miles Nightingall, 'in Golden-Square'. (*Gazetteer and London Daily Advertiser*, 11/12/1756).

For the keyboard instrument maker Rutgerus or Roger Plenius (1696-1774) from Orsoy near Rheinberg and Amsterdam, see *BMO*; *SFO*, p.255; Margaret Debenham and Michael Cole, 'Pioneer Piano Makers in London, 1737-74: Newly Discovered Documentary Sources', *RMARC* 44 (2013), pp.55-86, at pp.56-66. He had been declared bankrupt in July 1756.

1759

In Section VIII, paragraph 15 of the second edition of his treatise *Harmonics* (*'The scale of musical sounds is fully explained and made changeable upon the harpsichord, in order to play all the flat and sharp sounds, that are used in any piece of music, upon no other keys than those in common use'*), the mathematician Robert Smith (1689-1768) comments on the distinctive quality of a single string on a keyboard instrument: 'The famous *Ruckers* and other musicians of a delicate ear, always valued the tone of a single string for its distinctiveness and clearness, spirit and duration, and preferred it to that of unisons and octaves. I must confess I have long been of that opinion, even before I thought of this changeable scale of single sounds, which however after some years experience upon my own harpsichord has fully confirmed me in it'. (Robert Smith, *Harmonics, or The Philosophy of Musical Sounds* (London: printed for T. and J. Merrill, booksellers in Cambridge, 2nd edn., 1759, p.171).

It is possible that Robert Smith based this observation on having played or heard a Ruckers single-strung virginal, several of which were in circulation in eighteenth-century England; see **12/1714**, **11/12/1751** and **29/12/1777**. Smith was an accomplished practical musician as well as a Cambridge academic; see Geoffrey Cantor, 'Robert Smith', *ODNB*. I am grateful to John Koster for drawing this item to my attention.

26/4/1760

The auctioneer John Prestage, 'at his Great Room the End of *Savile-Row*, next *Conduit-street*, *Hanover-square*', includes two harpsichords in an auction of music, musical instruments, coins and medals: lot 58: '*A fine toned harpsichord, by SLADE, in a japan case*'; lot 59: '*A ditto, by ditto, in a walnut-tree case*'; lot 60: '*A ditto, by Couchet*'. (J. Prestage, *A Catalogue of a Curious Collection of Coins and Medals in Gold, Silver and Brass, belonging to a Gentleman Deceas'd* (London, 26/4/1760) <@>).

Prestage advertised the auction the previous day (*PA*, 25/4/1760). For the harpsichord maker Benjamin Slade (1669-1730) and other probable members of his family, see *BMO*; *SFO*, p.303.

18/12/1760

AA: 'This, and the following Day, THE genuine and neat Household Furniture ... late the Property of a Person of Distinction'. Includes: 'a curious Harpsichord by the famous Andreas Ruckers'. Auctioneer: Mr. Burnsall, 'Charles-street, Berkeley-square'. (*PA*, 18/12/1760).

22/12/1761

AA: 'This, and the following Days, ALL the neat genuine Household Furniture' of 'Mrs. ANN RICHARDS, deceased, at her late Apartments at the Paper Warehouse in Great Russell-street, Covent-Garden'. Includes: 'a real double-key'd Harpsichord by Ruckers of Antwerp, 1603'. Auctioneer: Robert Heath, 'in Hart-street, Covent-garden'. (*PA*, 22/12/1761).

16, 17/3/1763

AA: 'THE Genuine and Rich Household Furniture, and several Italian Paintings, among which is a Capital Picture of the Holy Family, by Carlo Dolci, painted on Mother of Pearl, belonging to his Excellency the NEAPOLITAN AMBASSADOR, (on his return to Naples) at his late Dwelling House in Stanhope-street, May-Fair'. Includes: 'a double-keyeg [*sic*] Harpsichord, by the famous Couchet of Antwerp'. Auctioneer: Mr. Prestage, 'the End of Savile-Row, next Conduit-Street, Hanover-Square'. (*PA*, 11/3/1763).

1/12/1763

AA: ‘This and the following Days, ALL the entire, neat, genuine Houshold Furniture, China, &c. of a LADY, brought from her late Dwelling House in the Country’. Includes: ‘two Harpsichords, one of which is a double key’d and fine toned, by Rucker, 1616’. Auctioneer: Mr. Pervil, ‘at his House in Bow-street, Covent Garden’. (*PA*, 1/12/1763).

30/3/1764

Elizabeth Chazal, daughter of Charles Gambarini (see **22, 23/5/1724**) advertises her father’s collection of pictures, ‘selling every Day, from Ten in the Morning to till Five, at the Large Rooms (late the Universal Register-Office) the Corner of Castle-court, opposite the New Exchange Buildings in the Strand’. Includes: ‘Three exceeding good double key’d Harpsichords to be sold, one by Raukers, the other Silverman [Silbermann], and Francisco Coston; three fine Violins, one by Stainer, the other Stradivario, and the other Italian; also a Guittar by Kerckman’. (*PA*, 30/3/1764).

See Noble, ‘A Contextual Study of the Life and Published Keyboard Works of Elizabetta de Gambarini’, vol.1, pp.109-11. For the Silbermann family and Francis Coston, see *BMO*.

11/12/1766

AA: ‘This, and the three following days, THE neat and genuine Houshold Furniture of a GENTLEMAN, deceased’, and ‘the valuable East India Effects of a GENTLEMAN, now returning there’. Includes: ‘A Harpsichord by Ruckers, finely preserved’. Auctioneer: Mr. Ford, ‘At his Great Room the upper End of St James’s Haymarket’. (*PA*, 11/12/1766).

12/12/1767

AA: ‘This Day. THE genuine and Neat Household Furniture, China and Trinkets, late the property of JOSHUA WALTHER, Esq; of Grosvenor-Square, deceased’. Includes: ‘an exceeding fine toned Harpsichord by Rucker’. Auctioneer: Mr. Burnsall, ‘At his Auction Room in Charles-Street, Berkeley-[Square]’. (*PA*, 12/12/1767).

11, 12/3/1768

The catalogue of the sale of the art collection of the violinist Matthew Dubourg (1703-67), auctioned by James Christie on 11 and 12 March 1768, includes as the sole musical item a Ruckers harpsichord ‘esteem’d by the most eminent Masters of Musick [as] one of the finest ton’d in England’. It fetched £6. 10s. and went to a Mr Porter. (H. Diack Johnstone, ‘Matthew Dubourg as a Collector of Art’, *Handel Institute Newsletter* 33, no.1 (Spring 2022), pp.9-11).

The harpsichord is not mentioned in Christie’s announcement of the sale (*PA*, 9/3/1768), where Dubourg is described as ‘first Musician to his Majesty’. For Dubourg, see Anthony Ford, ‘Matthew Dubourg’, *ODNB*.

7/5/1768

AA: ‘THIS and the 4 following Days, (Sunday excepted)’, ‘the property of the Reverend Doctor FRIEND, late Dean of Canterbury, deceased’, and ‘the Property of an India Captain’. Includes: ‘a fine Harpsichord by Rucker, a Chamber Organ’. Auctioneer: Mr. Burnsall, ‘At his Auction Room, Charles-street, Berkeley-square’. (*PA*, 7/5/1768).

17/1/1769

‘To be SOLD, A very fine HARPSICHORD, made by Joannes Ruckers, of Antwerp, in exceeding good condition; likewise some OLD MUSIC, by the best masters. Enquire of Mr. Prat, printer in New Round-court, in the Strand, who has the instrument in his possession’. (*GND A*, 17/1/1769).

18/2/1769

‘For the Benefit of Sig. PUGNANI. AT Almack’s Great Room, Thursday, March 9, will be a Concert of Vocal and Instrumental MUSIC. Tickets Half a Guinea each; to be had of Sig. Pugnani; at Mr. Lombardi’s, Operator for the Teeth, in the Haymarket; and of Mr. Almack. And at Mr. Pugnani’s is to be sold, an Harpsichord of J. Rucker, of the late Mr. Handel’s’. (*PA*, 18/2/1769).

The violinist Gaetano Pugnani (1731-98), the leader of the opera orchestra at the nearby King’s Theatre, was evidently disposing of his Ruckers harpsichord, with its Handelian associations, prior to returning to Italy at the end of the season; see Holman 2021, p.231. See also Peter Holman, *Before the Baton: Musical Direction and Conducting in Stuart and Georgian Britain* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2020), p.258.

21/2/1769

‘An HARPSICHORD by Rooker of Antwerp, ESTEEMED by the most eminent Masters to have the finest Tone of any in England, in it’s original Case, as finished by Rooker, and fuller Compass than most of his making. To prevent Trouble, the lowest Price is Eighty Guineas. To be seen at Mr. Christie’s, next door to Cumberland House, Pall-mall’. (*PA*, 21/2/1769).

21/3/1769

‘*To all Lovers of Musick.* TO be SOLD, by public voluntary roup [auction], on Tuesday the 21st current, between the hours of ten and twelve before noon, in the house of Mr. Arrigoni, opposite to the British Linen Company’s office, Canongate [in Edinburgh], An exceeding fine double HARPSICHORD, made by RUCKER, who is reckoned, by judges, one of the best makers in Europe. The harpsichord may be seen any day before the roup, from twelve o’clock to two, at Mr. Arrigoni’s house. N. B. Any person inclined for the same, may treat with Mr Arrigoni for a private bargain’. (*Caledonian Mercury*, 18/3/1769).

The Italian violinist Ferdinando Arrigoni led the Edinburgh Musical Society from 1763 to 1770; see Sonia Tinagli Baxter, ‘Italian Music and Musicians in Edinburgh, 1720-1800: A Historical and Critical Study’, 2 vols., PhD thesis, University of Glasgow, 1999, vol.1, pp.185-9; Jennifer Macleod, ‘The Edinburgh Musical Society: Its Membership and Repertoire 1728-1797’, PhD thesis, University of Edinburgh, 2001, pp.28, 77, 143-5, 152, 255.

10, 11/7/1769

AA: ‘On Monday and Tuesday, the 10th and 11th Instant ... THE genuine Household Furniture and other Effects of a GENTLEMAN and LADY both Deceased; amongst which are a fine toned Harpsichord of Ruckers of Antwerp; a Forte Pia[n]o’. Auctioneer: Mr. Blyth, ‘At his Great Room in Dean-street, Soho’. (*PA*, 6/7/1769).

27/1/1770

‘ONE of the finest Tone Double-Key’d Harpsichord, by the famous Rucker of Antwerp, as finished by him, to be sold. Please to enquire at Mr. Welcker’s Music-Shop, the Corner of Gerrard-

street, Soho. N. B. The same Compliment will be made to any Music-Master, as by a Maker'. (*PA*, 27/1/1770).

For Peter Welcker, see *MPBI*, pp.326-7; *SFO*, pp.360-1.

1770

In 1913 William Dale, describing Ruckers harpsichords, asserted that 'As late as 1770 one fetched the enormous price, at that time, of £120'. (William Dale, *Tschudi the Harpsichord Maker* (London: Constable and Company, 1913), p.23).

11, 12/3/1772

AA: 'This Day and Tomorrow, A VARIETY of CURIOUS and RICH ARTICLES, the Property of A GENTLEMAN, deceased'. Includes: 'an elegant and fine-ton'd ORGAN; a brilliant fine-ton'd HARPSICHORD by JOHN RUCKERS of ANTWERP'. Auctioneer: Mr. Christie, 'At his Great Room (late the Royal Academy) in Pall-mall'. (*PA*, 11/3/1772).

18/4/1772

'To be disposed of, a fine double-rowed Rucker Harpsichord, In a black and Gold Case; the Tone very delicate. To be seen at Mr. John Campbell's, Upholsterer, No. 140, High Holborn'. (*DA*, 18/4/1772).

18/11/1772

'To be sold, a Harpsicord, by Andre' Ruker, stands well in Tune. Likewise an Organ, which for Fullness and Sweetness of Tone, (of it's Size) is not to be equalled. It is calculated either for Piano or Forte, to suit every one's Taste, in a neat Mahogany Case, about eight Feet nine Inches high, at Mr. Holloway's, Organ-Builder, Tottenham-court-road'. (*PA*, 18/11/1772).

22, 23/12/1772

AA: 'THE genuine Household Furniture, Linnen, China, a Harpsichord, by Couchet, etc. of Mr. WILLIAM COOPER, whose Health would not permit him coming to Town, at his intended Dwelling-House, No. 15 Charlotte-street, near Charlotte-Chapel, Rathbone-Place'. Auctioneer: Thomas Winn, 'No. 33, Wigmore-street, Cavendish-square'. (*PA*, 21/12/1772).

1772

The Broadwood Journal (GB-Ob, MS Eng. Misc. b.107) contains a number of entries relating to two Ruckers harpsichords kept by the Shudi-Broadwood firm for hire:

- 15/2/1772 'Miss Fleming hired the little Ruker'.
24/2/1772 'Mr Leigh had the Rukers tuned'.
14/5/1772 'Dutches of Richmond had a new Double Harp<sichor>d instead of the Ruker for Hire [entry crossed out]'.
30/5/1772 'Miss Fleming Paid Bill for hire / 16 6'.
'for tuning & chair-men / 10 6'.
10/6/1772 'Lady Pembroke hired the Little Ruker Harp<sichor>d for Brightlampston'.

8/8/1772 'Lady Pembrok[e] Delivered the little Rucker Harp<sic> to Lady Pleniswith [name uncertain]’.

In addition, William Dale (*Tschudi the Harpsichord Maker*, p.24) mentioned two more entries, not traced in the Broadwood Journal: ‘Mr. Lee had the Rucker for one night’ and ‘Lady Cathren Murray hired the little Rucker harpsichord’. He added the comment: ‘These instruments must have been considerably more than one hundred years old at the date of the entries’.

For the Broadwood Journal, see Charles Mould, ‘The Broadwood Books’, *The English Harpsichord Magazine* 1 (October 1973, April 1974), pp.19-23, 47-53 <@>; I am grateful to Lance Whitehead for providing me with copies of pages from this manuscript. See also **1770**, **7/4/1773**, **12/6/1775**, **12/3/1790** and **12/7/1792**. For the firm founded by Burkat Shudi (1702-73) in the 1720s and continued by his son-in-law John Broadwood (1732-1812) and other members of the family until the 1990s, see esp. David Wainwright, *Broadwood by Appointment, a History* (London: Quiller Press, 1982); *BMO*; *SFO*, pp.44, 297-8; *Clinkscale*. For the musical activities of Elizabeth Herbert, Countess of Pembroke (1737-1831), see Peter Holman, ‘Henry Elizabeth and George: New Light on Music at Wilton House in the 1770s’, *British Music, Musicians and Institutions, c1630-1800: Essays in Honour of Harry Diack Johnstone*, ed. Peter Lynan and Julian Rushton (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2021), pp.9-31. The ‘little Rucker’ was presumably hired by Lady Pembroke for a summer holiday in Brightelmstone, as Brighton was called in its early days.

3/2/1773

‘To be SOLD, A Double-row Harpsichord, warranted original, made by A. Rucker, in perfect Order. To be seen at Mr. Rock’s, Harpsichord-maker, in Parliament-street, Westminster’. (*PA*, 2/3/1773).

For William Rock (fl. 1744-94), see *BMO*; *SFO*, pp.279-80.

7/4/1773

The Broadwood Journal (GB-Ob, MS Eng. Misc. b.107) includes the following entry: ‘Sent the Rucker to the Loke Hospital & tun<e>d it’.

On that day there was a benefit performance in the Lock Hospital Chapel in London of the oratorio *Ruth* by Felice Giardini; see Eva Zöllner, *English Oratorio after Handel: The London Oratorio Series and its Repertory, 1760-1800* (Marburg: Tectum Verlag, 2002), p.221; for *Ruth* and oratorios at the Lock Hospital, see *ibid.*, pp.184-6. See also **1772**, **12/6/1775**, **12/3/1790** and **12/7/1792**.

31/1/1774

The Rev Thomas Twining (1735-1804) in Colchester writes to Charles Burney in London about his keyboard instruments: ‘I have hitherto made shift with a little Andrew Ruckers; but the want of compass is miserable. The tone is very fine in the middle, & has a certain silver crispness (I cannot help my own ideas!) that is not in any other harpsichord that I know of. But the sweetness, the equality & the firm bases of Kirkman’s are far beyond. I have likewise a 2 Unis[on] Kirkman which was Mrs. T[wining]’s, & has hitherto stood at Colchester. This I shall carry to Fordham, & sell my Ruckers if I can get anything for it. Do you know any body I could impose upon? It was the very harpsichord that Handel used for some years at Covent Garden: I think my father bought it of Kirkman – Shudi – I don’t know which. Seriously, pray tell me what is the best way of parting with it, & what I may reasonably expect to get for it’. (*A Selection of Thomas Twining’s Letters 1734-1804: The Record of a Tranquil Life*, ed. Ralph S. Walker (Lewiston NY: Edward Mellen Press, 1991), vol.1, pp.89-90).

This instrument, O'Brien 1640a AR, is now at Yale; see also *BMO*, no.1563; Holman 2021, pp.236-7; see also **7/3/1774**, **8/5/1847**, **10/5/1855**, **6-8/1872** (no. 9), **1883** (no.45). For Thomas Twining, see Stanley Lane-Poole, revised by Anna Chaboud, 'Thomas Twining', *ODNB*. For his musical activities, see Peter Holman, 'The Colchester Partbooks', *Early Music* 28, no.4 (November 2000), pp.577-95, esp. pp.580, 585-6, 589.

7/3/1774

Thomas Twining writes to Charles Burney, replying to a lost letter (Burney's reply to **31/1/1774**): 'Thank you for your opinion about my Ruckers. Here is fresh exercise for my patience. If any fool would give me but 18 guineas for it, I think I should be easy. Why, Sir, the mere curiosity of the stops coming strait out at the sides, as they did in Jubal's harpsichord, if he made any, is worth the money. (I should like to rub out the name & date, & put it in an auction as a *Jubal*).'. (*A Selection of Thomas Twining's Letters*, ed. Walker, vol.1, p.91).

17/3/1774

The Hertford organist, concert organiser and keyboard tuner Thomas Green (1719-91) lists in his account book under the heading 'Tuning Instruments for the Year 1774': '17 Mar[ch] / Of Col'l Craige a Harpsicord, Rucker fecit, 2 Unisons and Octave / 10 G'. (*The Accounts of Thomas Green 1742-1790*, ed. Gillian Sheldrick ([Ware]: Hertfordshire Record Society, 1992), p.45).

17/2/1775

AA: 'this and the two following Days, THE MAGNIFICENT FURNITURE' of 'A NOBLEMAN', including: 'a key'd Organ, Piano Forte, Harpsichord by O. Rucker, of peculiar Excellence'. Auctioneer: Mr. Christie, 'At his Great Room, the Royal Academy, in Pall-Mall'. (*DA*, 17/2/1775).

In an earlier advertisement (*DA*, 31/1/1775) the instrument is said to be 'a Harpsichord of peculiar Excellence, by A. Rucker of Antwerp'. 'O. Rucker' seems normally to have been Christie's shorthand for 'Old Rucker' – that is Hans rather than Ioannes or Andreas Ruckers; see **24/6/1786**.

8/3/1775

'Harpsichord, by Andrew Rucker. TO be Disposed of, An exceeding fine-toned one, made Anno 1604, inclosed in a new Mahogany Case, with a new Set of Keys, Buff Stop and Pedal, by Schudi. To be seen at Bremner's Music Shop, opposite Somerset House, Strand'. (*PA*, 8/3/1775).

For the Shudi-Broadwood family of harpsichord makers, see **1772**. For the music publisher Robert Bremner (c1713-89), see Mary Anne Alburger, 'Robert Bremner [Brymer]', *ODNB*.

16/3/1775

'At the HANDELL's HEAD, No. 79, New Bond-street, To the Curious in Musical Instruments. MR. LIGHT begs leave to acquaint the Nobility and Gentry, that he has taken great pains to collect a variety of the very best and most curious MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS of all kinds, viz. Finger and Barrel Organs, Harpsichords by Kirkman, Shudi, the famous Rucker, and several other curious makers, Pianofortes with a swell, a small neat Harpsichord, only four feet long, not to be equalled for tone and keeping in tune, besides all other kinds of small instruments, as Basses, tenor and treble Violins, Harps, Spanish and English Guitars, &c. which may be had wholesale and retail at a very reasonable price. Also a good assortment of foreign and English Music. N. B. Instruments

of all sorts tuned and neatly repaired, and old Instruments bought or exchanged. WANTED, as an Apprentice, a Lad of entire good behaviour, about 14 or 15 years of age, who will be taught Music, &c. A premium will be required. Apply as above'. (MP, 16/5/1775).

For the musical instrument dealer, inventor and composer Edward Light (1746/7-1832), see L.M. Middleton revised by Anne Pimlott Baker, 'Edward Light', *ODNB*; Hayato Sugimoto, 'The Harp Lute in Britain, 1800-1830: A Study of the Inventor Edward Light and his Instruments', PhD thesis, University of Edinburgh, 2015 <@>; *SFO*, p.200. I am grateful to Michael Cole for drawing this item to my attention.

8/4/1775

AA: 'this Day, in the above Sale' [the effects of 'A NOBLEMAN']: 'THAT much-admired double-key'd HARPSICHORD, by RUCKER, remarkable for its fine Tone, and keeping well in tune; which Mr. Handel performed upon in his Oratorios, and has ever since his Time been used for that Purpose by Mess. [John] Stanley and [J.C.] Smith. To be viewed'. Auctioneer: Mr. Christie, 'At his Great Room, the Royal Academy, in Pall-Mall'. (DA, 8/4/1775).

See Holman 2021, p.231, where it is suggested that John Stanley was forced to sell this instrument because his 1775 oratorio season at Drury Lane, which had ended the day before, had been financially disastrous. See also Zöllner, *English Oratorio after Handel*, pp.76-7, 223. For Stanley, see 24/6/1785.

12/6/1775

The Broadwood Journal (GB-Ob, MS Eng. Misc. b.107) contains the following entry: 'Lady Pembroke hired the Rouker and sent [it] to Brighthelmston'.

See 1773 for the Ruckers harpsichords kept for hire by the Shudi-Broadwood firm, and for Elizabeth Herbert, Countess of Pembroke and her summer holidays in Brighton.

27/11/1775

'TO be sold, a double-key'd Harpsichord, made by the famous Rucker, at Antwerp, in the Year 1654. An Gentleman wanting a good Consort Instrument, may have it at a reasonable Price. Enquire at No. 12, Fisher-Street, Red-Lion-Square'. (DA, 27/11/1775).

1776

Sir John Hawkins, writing about Froberger's keyboard music, adds this footnote: 'The studies of Frescobaldi and Froberger contributed greatly at this time to bring the harpsichord into general use, which before had been almost appropriated to the practice of ladies; as did also the exquisite workmanship of the Ruckers, harpsichord makers of Antwerp, their contemporaries: there were three of the name and family, viz., the father, named Hans, and two sons, Andreas and Hans, who, for distinction sake, wrote his Christian name as the Germans do, Johann, and assumed for the initial of it, J. instead of H. The harpsichords of the Ruckers have long been valued for the fullness and sweetness of their tone, but are at this time less in use than formerly, on account of the narrowness of their compass, compared with the modern ones'. (Hawkins, *A General History*, vol. 2, p.627, fn.).

In his assessment of Handel's character, Sir John Hawkins includes this anecdote: 'He had a favourite Rucker harpsichord, the keys whereof, by incessant practice, were hollowed like the bowl of a spoon'. (Hawkins, *A General History*, vol.2, p.912).

This instrument seems to be O'Brien 1612a HR, which was presented by J.C. Smith to George III sometime between 1774 and 1784; see Holman 2021, pp.233-5. Two other early sources mention the worn keys; see 1799 and 3/2/1811; also 1885. I suggested (Holman 2021, p.420) that Handel kept the instrument in his house for his private practice. It is still in the Royal Collection, now on loan to the Benton Fletcher Collection at Fenton House in London.

8/11/1777

AA: 'this Day ... THE genteel and genuine Houshold Furniture', 'the property of a Gentleman, Brought from his House, in Stratton-Street, Piccadilly'. Includes: 'a fine-toned Harpsichord by Rucker, a Finger Organ with seven Stops'. Auctioneer: Mr. Squibb, 'At his Great Room in Savile-Row'. (*DA*, 8/11/1777).

2/12/1777

'HARPSICHORDS Second Hand. THE great encouragement given Mr. DOWNING by a generous Publick, calls for his warmest acknowledgments, as it enables him to pursue his Plan of collecting and selling good and settled Instruments on cheaper terms than any other person in London, Mr. Downing thinks it necessary to acquaint the Public, that he was bred a Harpsichord-maker; but the great increase of artists in that profession, and the small number who can succeed, were reasons that induced him to adopt the above Plan; he has at present (among various others) a capital double key'd Harpsichord, by Shudi and Broadwood, with their patent swell; an excellent one by Couchett, and another by Rucker, both made at Antwerp; one in 1634; the other in 1638, and have been substantially repaired by Messrs. Kirkmans. For the accommodation of learners, there are many at ten Guineas and under'. (*MC*, 2/12/1777).

For the harpsichord maker and dealer George Downing (*JL*1786-92), see *BMO*; *SFO*, p.101. Downing evidently made an error reporting the date of the 'Couchett' instrument as 1634, since Ioannes I Couchet, the grandson of Hans Ruckers, only entered the Guild of St Luke in Antwerp as a master harpsichord-builder in 1642 or 1643; see *BMO*.

19/12/1777

'TO be SOLD, a double-key'd Harpsichord, made by Rucker, in a japan case; it is in good condition, and will be sold cheap. It would be an excellent Instrument for a Concert. Enquire at No. 6, Duke-street, St. James's, facing Ryder's-street'. (*GND A*, 19/12/1777).

29/12/1777

AA: 'this Day ... VARIETY of elegant Mahogany and other Houshold Furniture', 'moved from a Gentleman's Chambers in one of the Inns of Court, who is gone Abroad'. Includes: 'a good toned Virginal by Rucker'. Auctioneer: Mr. Murrell, 'At his Auction Room, Cold-Bath Fields'. (*DA*, 29/12/1777).

8/4/1779

AA: 'This Day and the following Days, THE MODERN GENTEEL HOUSEHOLD FURNITURE ... of A NAVAL OFFICER'. Includes: 'excellent piano forte, harpsichord by Rooker'. Auctioneers: Clayton and Paris, 'At their spacious Room, in King Street, [S]t. James's Square'. (*MP*, 8/4/1779).

14/4/1779

The keyboard player and composer Joseph Kelway (c1702-82) draws up his will, leaving 'his harpsicord made by Petrus Johannes Couchet and my Cremona violin and all other my Musical Instruments and all my Books of Music and Musical Compositions of every kind' to his grandnieces Elizabeth, the wife of the composer John Stafford Smith, and Ann Heather. It was proved on 5 June 1782, Kelway having died in May or June. (NA, PROB 11/1092/15).

Petrus Ioannes Couchet (b.1648) was the son of Ioannes I Couchet and the great grandson of Hans Ruckers; see *BMO*. This document provides additional evidence that Petrus Ioannes was a harpsichord maker, which has been doubted in the past. For Kelway, see L.M. Middleton revised by David J. Golby, 'Joseph Kelway [Kellaway, Kellway]', *ODNB*. I am grateful to Lance Whitehead for drawing this item to my attention.

24-6/8/1779

AA: 'This Day, and two following Days', 'late the property of the Right Hon. the Earl of Harrington, deceased, brought from his mansions in Stable-yard, St. James's, and Petersham'. Includes: 'a most capital and exceeding fine-toned double-keyed Harpsichord, by Rucker'. Auctioneer: Mr. Squibb, 'at his Great Room, in Saville-row'. (*MP*, 24/8/1779).

For the soldier and politician William Stanhope, second Earl of Harrington (1719-79), see Philip Woodfine, 'William Stanhope, first Earl of Stanhope', *ODNB*.

3/3/1780

AA: 'Tuesday the 7th of March, and the following days ... THE neat and genteel HOUSHOLD FURNITURE' of 'CHARLES LAWRENCE, Esq. deceased. The south side of Red Lion Square, Holborn'. Includes: 'a capital VIOLIN, formerly the property of the late GEMINIANI, two well known and distinguished VIOLONCELLO's, of the late celebrated CORPORALI, a remarkable fine-toned HARPSICHORD by COCHET, other MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS, Manuscript and Printed MUSIC, among which are some, late in the collection of Dr. BOYCE'. Auctioneers: Mr. Sampson, 'No. 29 Budge-row' and Mr. Spurrier, 'No. 101, Leadenhall-street'. (*MP*, 3/3/1780).

I am grateful to David Hunter for drawing this item to my attention.

11-13/4/1780

AA: 'THE Genuine Houshold Furniture and other effects of Mrs. TURNER, deceased, at her late dwelling-house in the Whiting-street, Bury St. Edmunds'. Includes: 'harpsichord, made by Ruckers at Antwerp, and upon the lid is a beautiful painting representing a country wake, &c. executed in a masterly stile'. Auctioneer: John Oliver and Son, 'in the Market-place and Cook-row, Bury'. (*Ipswich Journal*, 8/4/1780).

5/8/1780

'HARPSICHORD and PIANO HARP. A Double-key'd HARPSICHORD, made by Andrew Rucker, of Antwerpia, in the year 1635, in its original state. Also a Piano Harp, by Crang Hancock, at Mr. Jones's, No. 143, corner of Brook-street, Holborn'. (*MC*, 5/8/1780).

See also **20/3/1781**. For the book seller and dealer in musical instruments Charles Jones (d.1780), see *MPBI*, p.196; *SFO*, pp.175-6. For John Crang Hancock, see *BMO*.

20/3/1781

‘TO be SOLD, the following valuable Second Hand Musical Instruments, at Mr. JONES’s, No. 143, the corner of Brook-street, Holborn Bars. An exceeding fine ton’d Chamber Organ, containing stop diapason, open diapason, principal[,] fifteenth, sexquialtra and cornet. A Grand Piano Forte, made by the late Mr. Backers. A Piano Forte. Two Double Key’d Harpsichords, the one made by [A]ndrew Rucker, in the year 1635, and the other by Hitchcock. A Single Keyed Harpsichord, made by Rock. Two Spinnets, the one made by Hitchcock; and the other by Harris, with a bulf [*sic*] stop. An exceeding fine-ton’d Tenor’. (*MC*, 20/3/1781).

For Jones and his 1635 Andreas Ruckers harpsichord, see **5/8/1780**.

8, 10, 11/3/1783

AA: ‘THIS DAY, the 8th, Monday the 10th, and Thursday the 11th [*sic*] of March’, the effects of ‘Mr. BATES, at his house and premises, near Tottenham High-Cross, Middlesex’. Includes: ‘a very fine tone[d] harpsichord, a real Andreas Ruckers (1643)’. Auctioneers: Mr. Sampson, ‘Throgmorton-Street’ and Mr. Spurrier, ‘Cophthall-Court, Throgmorton Street’. (*MC*, 8/3/1783).

24/9/1783

‘MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS Manufactured and Sold by HENRY HOLLAND, of Bedford-row, Nephew and Successor to the late Mr. PYKE, Organ Builder to his Majesty, on as reasonable Terms as at any other Warehouse in London; allowing twelve Months Trial with the Privilege of exchanging, if not approved of, or if none purchased, to play for the Hire. An elegant Piano Forte, in a Case enamelled, singularly beautiful; and an Organ in the same Stile. Variety of the much-admired Instruments Piano Fortes organized ... Any Lady or Gentleman having a Piano Forte, and wishing to have an Organ under it, may have it made on reasonable Terms at the above Warehouse. A fine toned Harpsichord to be sold cheap, an Original of Hans Ruckers’. (*Kentish Gazette*, 24/9/1783).

For the organ builder Henry Holland, see *MPBI*, pp.184, 370; *SFO*, p.165; *Clinkscale*.

5/1/1784

‘MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS To be Sold or Exchanged, at the Great Music Magazines, No. 13, Haymarket, and No. 26, Cheapside. FIVE fine-toned double-key’d Harpsichords, at second hand, by Kirkman, Shudi, Rucker, Longman and Broderip, &c. twelve single-key’d ditto, by the same famous makers; an elegant Piano Forte by Zumpe, in form of a comode; grand and small Piano Fortes, by Stodart, Backers, Beyer, and Polman, &c. Finger and Barrel Organs, Pedal Harps, and two new constructed Instruments, viz. Piano Fortes organized, and Piano Forte Guitars; with every other kind of Musical Instrument, new and second-hand, on reasonable terms. Also lent out, conveyed and tuned, in town and country, on the shortest notice, and if purchased and paid for within six months, the hire abated’. (*Reading Mercury*, 5/1/1784).

15-17/6/1784

AA: ‘THIS and the two following days, on the Premises, late in the Possession of Sir Thomes Rumbold, Bart. the center house in Cavendish-street, Portland Place’. Includes: ‘fine toned rucker

harpsichord, by William Harris, two organs, piano forte, several capital violins, tenors, and violoncellos, &c. &c.'. Auctioneer: Mr. Campbell, 'No. 140. High Holborn'. (*GND A*, 15/6/1784).

For Sir Thomas Rumbold (1736-91), East India Company administrator, see Willem G.J. Kuiters, 'Sir Thomas Rumbold, first baronet', *ODNB*. The harpsichord was probably a Ruckers modernised by the London harpsichord maker William Harris; for him see *BMO*.

21/6/1784

AA: 'THIS DAY ... All the neat and genuine Houshold Furniture, Stock in Trade, &c. of Mr. Charles Holmes, Harpsichord-maker and Organ-builder, at his House, No. 15, College street', Dublin. Includes: 'several Harpsicords and Piano Fortes, particularly a remarkable fine toned, double keyed Harpsicord, by RUCKER'. Auctioneer: Messrs. Hawkins and Davis. (*Hibernian Journal, or Chronicle of Liberty*, 21/6/1785).

For Charles Holmes, see *BMO*; *Dublin Music Trade* <@>. I am grateful to Michael Cole for drawing this item to my attention.

21/5/1785

AA: 'To the CURIOUS in HARPSICHORDS. By Mr. CHRISTIE, At No. 88, Jermyn-street, St. James's, on Saturday next, A Fine-toned Rucker Harpsichord and Virginal, formerly in the possession of the celebrated Dr. PEPUSCH. To be viewed as above, To-morrow and Friday'. (*MP*, 18/5/1785).

This is presumably the instrument formerly at Cannons (see 23/8/1720, 3/6/1747), where J.C. Pepusch had been director of music. For later sightings, see 9/6/1785, 23/6/1787 and possibly 3, 4/5/1804.

9/6/1785

'To the CURIOUS in MUSIC. TO be SOLD very cheap, Dr. Pepusch's famous Ruicker Harpsichord and Virginal. Enquire at Mr. Perry's, No. 18, Brownlow-street, Drury-lane'. (*PA*, 9/6/1785).

Presumably the same instrument as that sold by auction the previous month (see 21/5/1785). In an earlier advertisement (*Morning Herald*, 3/6/1785) it is described as 'A remarkable fine toned Rucker Harpsichord and Virginal, formerly the property of Dr Pepusch, to be sold cheap'. This Mr. Perry may have been related to the Dublin stringed instrument maker Thomas Perry (c1738/9-1818); for him and other members of the family, see John Kenneth Rice, 'The Life and Work of Thomas Perry', MA thesis, St Patrick's College, Maynooth, National University of Ireland, 1993 <@>; *Dublin Music Trade*.

8/5/1786

AA: 'THIS and the following days, A Superb Collection of Drawings, Prints and Pictures, of JOHN and PETER VERBRUGGEN, Esqrs. deceased, Late Founders to his Majesty, at Woolwich'. Includes: 'a capital Harpsichord, by old Rucker, 1611; also a fine-ton'd Merlin's Harpsichord, with all the stops, in perfect order; a Violoncello, a Carillon, and other Instruments'. Auctioneer: Mr. Greenwood, 'At his Rooms in Leicester-square'. (*GND A*, 8/5/1786).

For the Dutch gun-founder and artist Jan Verbruggen (1712-81) and his son Pieter (1735-86), see Ruth Rhynas Brown, 'Jan Verbruggen', *ODNB*; *Jan Verbruggen: Artist, Inventor and Master Gun-Founder* <@>.

24/6/1786

The catalogue of the sale of the music library of the composer John Stanley, who had died on 19 May 1786, includes the following keyboard instruments (p. 4): lot 75: ‘A fine-toned double-keyed harpsichord by Kirckman, with 5 stops and pedal and leather cover’; lot 76: ‘A remarkable full-toned single-keyed ditto, undoubted, by O. Rucker and leather cover’; lot 77: ‘A fine-toned piano forte with a pedal, by Beck’; lot 78: ‘A ditto clarichord’; lot 88: ‘A small spinnet’. Auctioneer: Mr. Christie, ‘At his Great Room in Pall Mall’. (J. Christie, *A Catalogue of all the Capital Musical Instruments, Extensive and Valuable Collection of Manuscript, and other Music, by the most Eminent Composers, late the Property of John Stanley, Esq, M.B. dec.* (London, 24/6/1786)).

‘O. Rucker’ was James Christie’s shorthand for ‘Old Rucker’ – that is Hans Ruckers rather than Ioannes or Andreas. This is revealed by an advertisement for the sale (*MP*, 24/6/1786): ‘an UNDOUBTED SINGULAR FULL-TONED ditto [harpsichord], by old RUCKER’; see also **8/4/1775** and Holman 2021, pp.231, 233. For Stanley (1712-86), see esp. A. Glyn Williams, ‘The Life and Works of John Stanley (1712-1786)’, PhD dissertation, University of Reading, 1977; Peter Lyman, ‘John Stanley’, *ODNB*.

23/6/1787

‘NEW MUSIC, PRINTED and SOLD, at G. SMART’S Music Warehouse, Corner of Argyle-street, Oxford-street ... The following second-hand Instruments, to be sold cheap: A curious double key’d Harpsichord, with a Virginal, made by Rucke. A good second-hand ditto, by Kirckman, three stops and a pedal. A French Pedal Harp, by Cousineau. Great variety of second-hand Forte-Pianos, and other Instruments. All Sorts of Instruments bought and sold by Commission; also tuned, repaired, and lett, or conveyed to any part of the town and country’. (*The World*, 23/6/1787).

This is apparently yet another sighting of the Ruckers combination instrument once at Cannons; see **23/8/1720**, **3/6/1747**, **21/5/1785**, **9/6/1785**, and possibly **3, 4/5/1804**. For George Smart (c1750-1818), father of the conductor and organist Sir George Smart, see David J. Golby, ‘George Smart’, *ODNB*; *MPBI*, pp.294, 383; *SFO*, p.304.

10/1/1788

‘To be SOLD. An EXCELLENT HARPSICHORD Made by RUCKER, A. D. 1617, well preserved, of a brilliant powerful Tone. A Trial may be had by applying at Mr. PLURA’S in Milsom-street, Bath’. (*The Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette*, 10/1/1788).

It is possible that this instrument survives as O’Brien 1617 IR, which John Koster (private communication) believes was enlarged and modernised by the London maker John Crang in the 1740s; I am grateful to him for sharing with me an unpublished paper on the subject. See **14/2/1801** for another possible sighting of this instrument in Bath.

15/5/1788

At the end of a long list of ‘NEW MUSIC ... Printed for G. Goulding, Haydn’s Head, No. 6, James-Street, Covent-Garden, and No. 113, Bishopsgate-Street’, is: ‘N.B. An elegant Harpsichord, with five Stops, by Shudi, Mahogany Case, Mother of Pearl Keys, &c. &c. and a ditto, by old Rucker, in a Japan case, in very fine Preservation, to be sold cheap’. (*St James’s Chronicle, or The British Evening Post*, 13-15/5/1788).

For the firm founded by George Goulding in 1785, see *MPBI*, pp.158-9, 368; *Clinkscale*. ‘Old Rucker’ may imply the instrument was by Hans Ruckers; see **24/6/1786**.

25/3/1789

AA: 'MUSIC AND MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS', 'late the Property of Mr. JOHN SMITH, Of Bow Street, Bloomsbury, deceased. One of the Members of the Anacreontic Society'. Includes: 'a remarkable fine toned double keyed Harpsichord by RUCKER, made in the year 1662, with four stops; one very fine toned ditto, by Shudi, in a Mahogany Case, five stops, Pedal, &c.'. Auctioneer: Mr. Hutchins, 'at his Rooms in King Street, and Hart Street, Covent Garden'. (*The Times*, 23/3/1789).

According to O'Brien the latest surviving authentic Ruckers is 1654 AR.

8, 9/4/1789

AA: 'MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS and MUSIC ... By Direction of the Proprietor, On the Premises, No. 196, Fleet-street, near Temple Bar ... ALL the remaining valuable STOCK in TRADE, consisting of a capital large Finger Organ, two Portable ditto, a large Chamber ditto with six barrels and seven stops, and sundry barrel Organs in elegant Mahogany Cases; an exceeding fine ton'd Harpsichord, warranted by Ruckers of Antwerp; single and double key'd Harpsichords, by Kirckman, Burket, Shudi, Baker, Harris, Table, Hitchcock, Longman and Co. and other eminent makers; organized Piano Fortes, by Kirckman, Longman and Co. Pohlman, Beck, Beyer, Ganer, and Haltzburgh; sundry fine toned Spinnets, Violins, Violoncellos, Guittars, Voxhumanes, Bassoons, Hautboys, Horns, and other Instruments. Likewise a large Quantity of Ancient and Modern Music, by the most celebrated composers'. Auctioneer: John Forfur, 'Sworn Broker, No. 25, Bread-street, Cheapside'. (*The Times*, 2/4/1789).

This is clearly the stock-in-trade of a prominent musical instrument and music dealer, though the only relevant enterprise known at that address is the music engraver and printer, music seller and publisher Edward Riley, active there from about 1795; see *MPBI*, p.274. The commas between 'Burket' and 'Shudi' and between 'Baker' and 'Harris' tell us that the copywriter of the advertisement, presumably John Forfur himself, was unfamiliar with the musical instrument trade.

28/5/1789

The printed catalogue of an auction of prints and drawings by John Greenwood includes (pp. 5-6) a substantial collection of musical instruments, including the following harpsichords: lot 27: 'A harpsichord by Ruckers of Antwerp, with a curious painting in the lid, 1608'; lot 31: 'A harpsichord by Ruckers, in a handsome mahogany case'; lot 33: 'A very capital double-keyed harpsichord by Van Alfsen, in a beautiful mahogany case'. (J. Greenwood, *A Catalogue of a Superb Assortment of Musical Instruments* (London, 28/5/1789)).

The only instrument mentioned individually in an advertisement for this sale (*The World*, 28/5/1789) is lot 27, the 'very excellent Harpsichord, by Racker of Antwerp, with a curious painting on the lid'. Van Alfsen is not a maker recorded in *BMO*. Lot 33 is specifically said to be a double-manual instrument, which perhaps implies that lots 27 and 31 were single manuals. Lot 31 had a 'handsome mahogany case', perhaps the result of a late eighteenth-century English modernisation. For the artist, print maker and art dealer John Greenwood (1727-92), see Anonymous, revised by Richard H. Saunders, 'John Greenwood', *ODNB*.

12/3/1790

William Dale reported an entry in the Broadwood Books: '12th March 1790. Lord Camden for two harpsichords, the one, the one a Ruker, double row, the other a Kirchmann, octava, 25

guineas each'. Dale commented: "The entry that the "Dutchess of Ritchmond" had a "new double harpsichord for hire instead of the Rucker" reminds us of the ultimate fate of the two Ruckers harpsichords so long used by Shudi as hack instruments. Neither of them fetched the good prices these instruments were supposed to command. But the grand piano had now become the rage, and the days of the harpsichord were over'. (Dale, *Tschudi the Harpsichord Maker*, p.72).

The original source of this item has not been traced. See also 1770, 1772, 7/4/1773, 12/6/1775, 12/7/1792.

13/1/1791

'MUSIC. THE most elegant, fine toned NEW and Second-hand PIANO FORTES are now to be SOLD, remarkably cheap, at the New Repository, No. 115, Great Portland-street, Oxford-street: – also a sweet-toned real Rucker HARPSICHORD, and two excellent GUITARS, of the best improvement ... Commands addressed to H. Yelverton, at the Repository, will be duly attended to'. (*The World*, 13/1/1791).

See also 12/2/1791.

12/2/1791

'PIANO FORTE and RUCKER HARPSICHORD. At the cheap Rooms, for the best improved new and second-hand Musical Instruments, No. 115, Great Portland-street, Oxford street, ARE now just come in, a peculiar fine-toned Piano Forte, by his Majesty's Royal Patent, with improvements and convenience superior to any other, and without any addition to the price: Also, a real Rucker Harpsichord, very sweet tone, with a pedal for double bass occasionally; and other Instruments that will be found on enquiry well worth attention'. (*GND A*, 12/2/1791).

See also 13/1/1791.

9/8/1791

The will of Thomas Bever, made on 9 August 1791 and proved 16 November 1791, includes: 'Item I Give to my Friend M^r. James Bartleman my small Harpsichord made by Couchet as an Acknowledgment for the trouble he has so often taken to keep in order hoping he will never part with it during his life but keep it as the memorial of an Old Friend who always held him in the highest esteem'. (NA, PROB 11/1210/215).

The lawyer and writer and amateur musician Thomas Bever (1725-91) died on 8 November; for him see J.L. Barton, 'Thomas Bever', *ODNB*. The instrument appears in the sale of James Bartleman's music library; see 27, 28/6/1821. I am grateful to Harry Johnstone for drawing this item to my attention.

29/2/1792; 1, 2/3/1792

The printed catalogue of the auction of the 'Household Furniture ... AND OTHER VALUABLE EFFECTS' of Catherine Sharp, widow of the ironmonger James Sharp, at her house, 15 Leadenhall Street; she was 'Retiring from BUSINESS'. It includes (p. 9), in room no.7 'Centre Room One-Pair', lot 7: 'A fine-toned harpsichord in a japanned case, by *Andrew Ruckers*'. It was acquired by Catherine Sharp née Barwick, Catherine sister-in-law. Auctioneer: Messrs. Spurrier & Phipps, Throgmorton Street. (B. Crosby, 'Private Concerts on Land and Water: The Musical Activities of the Sharp Family, c1750-c1790', *RMLARC* 34 (2001), pp.1-118, at p.70).

The sale was advertised in *GND A*, 25/2/1792. For Catherine Sharp (1745-1835) and her family, see also Hester Grant, *The Good Sharps: The Eighteenth-Century Family that Changed Britain* ([London]: Vintage, 2021).

12/7/1792

William Dale reported an entry in the Broadwood Books, recording the sale of one of their hire harpsichords: ‘Mr. Williams for a double keyed Rucker harpsichord, £26, 5s.’ (Dale, *Tschudi the Harpsichord Maker*, p.72).

The original source of this item has not been traced. See also 1770, 1772, 7/4/1773, 12/6/1775 and 12/3/1790.

15, 16-18/12/1792

AA: ‘THIS, and three following days, Sunday excepted ... by order of the Executors of Lady Bindledge, late Relique of Sir Edmund Bindledge, Bart. deceased, removed from Gratton-hall, Suffolk. ALL the neat and valuable Houshold Furniture’ includes: ‘a fine-toned harpsichord by Rucker; a Piano forte, by Kirkman; and elegant table-clock, in the form of a Chinese Temple, by Pinchbeck ... a fine-toned barrel-organ’. Auctioneer: Mr. Harper, ‘PORTSMOUTH-STREET, Lincoln’s Inn-fields’. (*The Morning Herald*, 15/12/1792).

For another clock by Christopher Pinchbeck, see 3/2/1729.

3/7/1795

AA: ‘On the Premises, Newman-street, Oxford-street, THIS DAY ... by order of the Assignees of ‘Mr. FRANCIS RAYDOR, Merchant, a Bankrupt’. Includes: ‘a double-keyed Harpsichord, by Ruckers’. Auctioneer: Mr. Winstanley, ‘Paternoster-row’. (*MC*, 3/7/1795).

1799

The Rev William Coxe, son-in-law of Handel’s assistant J.C. Smith, writes about the Ruckers harpsichord, O’Brien 1612a HR, that Smith gave to George III: ‘The harpsichord, so remarkable for the ivory being indented by Handel’s continuous exertions, and on which, as has already been related, the far greater part of his music had been composed; and his bust, by Roubillac, he [the king] sent afterwards to Windsor Castle’. ([William Coxe], *Anecdotes of George Frederick Handel and John Christopher Smith* (London: W. Bulmer and Co., 1799), p.55).

See also 1776; Holman 2021, pp.233, 235. For William Coxe, see Jeremy Knight, ‘William Coxe’, *ODNB*; David Hunter, ‘William Coxe’, *CHE*, pp.174-5.

3/4/1800

AA: ‘ALL the remaining HOUSEHOLD FURNITURE, belonging to the late WM. SMITH, Esq.’. Includes: ‘a fine-toned Harpsichord, by Rucker’. Auctioneer: Mr. Stennett, Boston, Lincolnshire. (*Stamford Mercury*, 21/3/1800).

14/2/1801

‘The following venerable coincidence took place in Bath a few days since:– A Gentleman, now in his 74th year, sat down to a Rucker’s harpsichord, full 150 years old, upon a chair which belonged, at least 250 years ago, to one of the Monks of Glastonbury, and played some music published above 200 years since by Palestrina and Bird: so that the aggregate age of the performer, the

instrument, the seat, and the music, amounted to *six hundred and seventy four years*’. (*London Courier and Evening Gazette*, 14/2/1801).

It is possible that this is an allusion to the 1617 Ruckers, offered for sale in Bath on **10/1/1788**; it may survive as O’Brien 1617 IR.

3, 4/5/1804

AA: ‘THE large and valuable STOCK-in-TRADE of Mr. GEORGE SMART (retiring from business), at his Music and Musical-Instrument Warehouse, No. 331, in Oxford-street, the corner of Argyle-street; consisting of a great variety of forte-pianos, with and without additional keys, many of them new; a most superb and unique pedal harp, made for the late Queen of France, by the celebrated Cousineau; various other French and English pedal harps; a capital large finger organ, with eight stops, fit for a chapel or spacious hall, by Snetzler; a smaller organ, with four stops, by S. White; a very curious ancient Harpsichord, by Rucker, of Antwerp; a great variety of barrel organs, violins, violoncellos, Spanish and English guitars; flutes, oboes, clarionets, &c. &c.’. Auctioneer: Mr. Willcock, 25 Golden Square. (*MC*, 3/5/1804).

For Smart, see **23/6/1787**. It is possible that he failed to sell the Cannons combination harpsichord-virginal (see also **23/8/1720**, **3/6/1747**, **21/5/1785**, **3/6/1785** and **23/6/1787**), retaining it as a conversation-piece in his showroom.

6/1/1811

Part of a report from Windsor of George III’s recovery from madness: ‘His Majesty now uses his sitting room in the Blenheim Tower [at Windsor Castle], takes his meals regularly, and at intervals amuses himself with playing the most familiar tunes on the harpsichord, with a correctness surpassing the most sanguine expectations. As a striking proof of the fact, on some very recent occasions, when his Majesty, in consequence of his defective sight, struck a wrong key, he instantly corrected the error, by modulating the tune, and finishing it with his accustomed science and judgment ... The harpsichord on which his Majesty plays, formerly belonging to the great Handel, and is supposed to have been manufactured at Antwerp in the year 1612’. (*Edinburgh Annual Register* 4 (1/1811), p.5).

For the instrument, O’Brien 1612a HR, see **1776**, **1799**, **1885**; *BMO*, no.1628; Holman 2021, pp.233-5. For George III’s musical interests, see Stephen Roe, ‘King George III’, *CHE*, pp.255-6.

3/2/1811

An article attempting, unconvincingly, to correct some of the details of **6/1/1811**. It asserts that ‘his MAJESTY never learned to play on that instrument [the harpsichord], or the piano forte or organ; but his MAJESTY, some years since, used to amuse himself with playing on a flute’. It continues: ‘an old harpsichord, that belonged to the great HANDEL, we understand, is not at Windsor, but is at the Queen’s Palace [at Kew], where his MAJESTY used to shew it to his musical friends with much pleasure, and explain to them who it belonged to, and that the keys were worn away by HANDEL’s fingers’. (*The Examiner*, 3/2/1811, p.77).

It is possible that O’Brien 1612a HR was briefly moved to Kew Palace at some point, where Queen Charlotte lived during the king’s bouts of madness, though there is good evidence that it was back at Windsor Castle during George III’s lifetime, and that it was there until the 1880s, not least the stamp on the bottom boards: ‘V[ictoria] R[egina], 866, Windsor Castle, Room 528’, confirming its location as the Grand Vestibule there; see Holman 2021, p.235. George

III's ability to play his Ruckers harpsichord even in old age and during his madness was often remarked upon; see **21/3/1812**, **19/11/1814**, **9/9/1816**, **22/10/1816**, **25/9/1818**.

21/3/1812

‘A letter from Windsor, dated Saturday [21/3/1812], says – “But little variation has taken place in the King’s malady during the last week. His bodily health continues extremely well, and he eats very heartily. He frequently amuses himself with touching the keys of a harpsichord.”’. (*The Public Ledger and Daily Advertiser*, 23/3/1812).

19/11/1814

‘The KING’s bodily health is excellent, and his disposition uniformly cheerful. It will be gratifying to the Public to know, that his MAJESTY, in his present seclusion, is not without exercise, or even amusement. He walks in a suite of ventilated apartments, and has, in his sitting-room, his favourite harpsichord, at which he passes several hours daily’. (*The Sun*, 19/11/1814).

9/9/1816

‘His MAJESTY has an upright grand piano forte at Weymouth, in size and form resembling a book-case, which, when at Weymouth, his MAJESTY used to delight to hear, as he considered the tones of it to be very like those of an organ, his favourite instrument. His MAJESTY knows the theory of music very well, but the only instrument he plays well is a flute; when he played on that instrument, it was a favourite amusement to accompany the QUEEN on the harpsichord’. (*MP*, 9/9/1816).

The Kentish Weekly Post or Canterbury Journal (10/9/1816), repeating this item, adds an extra snippet: ‘and the music they principally played on those occasions were the English operas’.

22/10/1816

‘THE KING. – The following anecdotes of our beloved SOVEREIGN may be relied on as authentic:– In the summer of 1814 the KING had lucid intervals; the QUEEN desired to be informed when that was the case – she was so; and, on entering the room, she found him singing a hymn, and accompanying it on the harpsichord’. (*The Star*, 22/10/1816).

25/9/1818

‘THE KING ... His MAJESTY is perfectly blind; and occupies a long suite of rooms, through which he is almost continually strolling. Several piano-fortes and harpsichords are placed at certain intervals, and the Monarch frequently stops at them, runs over a few notes of Handel’s Oratorios, and proceeds on his walk’. (*Chester Chronicle*, 25/9/1818).

10/5/1819

The description of O’Brien 1612a HR on the website of the Royal Collections Trust includes the following statement: ‘This instrument was certainly owned by Queen Charlotte and appears in the catalogue of the sale of her effects at Christie’s on 10 May 1819, as lot 124, ‘a capital harpsichord by Rucker of Antwerp, in a japanned case’. It was purchased for £42 by the Prince Regent and sent to Carlton House where it was entered into the Receipts Ledger as: ‘A Large Oldfashioned Harpsichord in a Black Japanned and Gold Case. Mounted on 8 Legs. A Book Stand to it with Plated Branches for Two Lights. The Harpsichord by Rucker of Antwerp’. (RCIN 69028 <@>).

Queen Charlotte had died on 17/11/1818 at Kew Palace. It seems unlikely that the Ruckers instrument included in the sale of her effects really was O'Brien 1612a HR, since that instrument belonged to George III (who was still alive in 1819) rather than the queen, and it was known to be at Windsor rather than Kew; see **1799, 6/1/1811**. Also, the Handelian associations of O'Brien 1612a HR were well known in the early nineteenth century and would surely have been mentioned as a selling point by Christie's in their sale catalogue. It seems therefore that, if Queen Charlotte owned a Ruckers at the end of her life (she may have owned O'Brien 1639 IR in the early 1760s; see **1639, 1869**), it was another instrument, as yet unidentified.

27, 28/6/1821

AA: 'on the Premises, No. 45, Berner's-street, THIS DAY, and following Day, by order of the Administratrix of James Bartleman, Esq. deceased, HIS Collection of Valuable MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS, Violins and Violoncellos (by Stradinarius [*sic*], Amati, &c.); a remarkably fine-toned Harpsichord, with an octave of pedals to the additional bass notes (by Kirkman); a small Ditto (by Ruckers), 1637; a small Ditto (by Couchet); a Finger Organ (by Snetzler and Jones), of excellent quality and power, suited to a large room or small chapel; a large quantity of very superior Strings for Violins, &c.; original Portraits of Handel, Corelli, Geminiani, Purcell, &c.; a collection of Prints of Musical Composers and Performers; a Bust of Handel (by Roubiliac)'. Auctioneer: Mr. White, 'Storey's Gate, Westminster'. (*MP*, 27/6/1821).

The singer James Bartleman (1769-1821) had inherited his Couchet harpsichord from the lawyer Thomas Bever; see **9/8/1791**. For Bartleman, see J.A. Fuller Maitland, revised by John Rosselli, 'James Bartleman', *ODNB*.

18, 19/5/1825

AA: 'THIS DAY, and following Day ... THE very excellent HOUSEHOLD FURNITURE ... removed from a Gentleman's residence in Hill-street'. Includes: 'square pianoforte by Stodart, a harpsichord in a valuable Japan case'. Auctioneer: James Denew, 'at his Auction Room, Charles-street, Berkeley-square'. (*MP*, 18/5/1825).

This harpsichord might have been a Ruckers instrument since, as a number of the entries in this inventory show (e.g. **1838**), the cases of instruments made by members of the family were commonly japanned, that is, finished in multi-layered varnish and paint imitating oriental lacquerwork; see Sheridan Germann, 'Japanning (Japaning)', *The Harpsichord and Clavichord, an Encyclopedia*, ed. Igor Kipnis and Robert Palmieri (New York and London: Routledge, 2007; reprinted 2015), p.274.

1838

'THE Harpsichords used in England, in the 16th and 17th centuries, were principally imported from Antwerp, of the make of John and Andrew Ruckers;* many of these were extant and in excellent condition, in London, fifty years ago, bearing dates from 1559 to 1620. One, bought at the sale, on the demolition of Nonsuch Palace, near Ewell, and said to have belonged to Queen Elizabeth, was in the possession of Mr. Preston, in the Strand, about twenty years since. These Harpsichords were in japanned or painted cases, frequently ornamented with gilding, the insides of the tops commonly painted emblematically; some were said to be the work of Rubens, and of his master.

The tones of these instruments were generally silvery sweet. They possessed (those of the later dates) two unisons and an octave; that is, two strings were tuned in unison, and a third string, on a separate bridge on the sounding-board, was tuned an octave above the unisons. And three pieces of wood (technically "jacks"), in which were inserted quills resting on one and the same key, on the key being *pressed* down, rose, and with their quills twanged the strings, producing a tone

combined of those two sounds: they generally had two sets of keys. The upper row of keys acted on one set of jacks only, and these jacks on a single unison string, the lower set of keys acted on the whole three sets of jacks, and the jacks on the three strings at once; viz., two unisons and one octave string. This was the only method of diminishing and augmenting power of tone'. [Footnote:] * "Handel's Harpsichord, in possession of John Broadwood and Sons, is by Andreas Ruckers, 1651. / "(Signed) H.F. Broadwood, January, 1862.'" (*Some Notes made by J.S. Broadwood, 1838, with Observations & Elucidations by H.F. Broadwood, 1862* (London: W.S. Johnson & Co., 1862), pp.3-4).

This passage about Ruckers harpsichords comes from a set of reminiscences about harpsichord and piano making in London and the activities of Broadwood's, apparently written in 1838 by James Shudi Broadwood (1772-1851), grandson of Burkat Shudi, and published in 1862 by his son Henry Fowler Broadwood (1811-1893). Nonsuch Palace near Cheam in Surrey, built by Henry VIII, had been in the Crown's possession until 1670, when Charles II gave it to his mistress Barbara Castlemaine, who had it demolished around 1682-3. It is conceivable that the story about the Ruckers owned by the instrument maker Thomas Preston around 1818 was a confused memory of an instrument that had once been in the royal collection; see **1639, 1869**. However, the idea that it had belonged to Queen Elizabeth is presumably just another of the many legends about artefacts said to have belonged to her. John Preston had been in business at 97 Strand from about 1778, and the business was carried on there after his death in 1798 by his son Thomas, who remained there until 1834; see *MPBI*, pp.263-4, 379; *SFO*, pp.261-2; *Clinkscale*.

8/5/1847

An article about Michael Rophino Lacy's series of lecture Handelian Operatic Concerts reports that 'Mr. GREEN, of Soho-square, is associated with Mr. ZACY [*sic*] in the undertaking, and has procured a harpsichord, supposed to have been in the possession of HANDEL, for the purposes of illustrating the state of musical mechanics in his day, and affording the public an opportunity of contrasting the harpsichord of HANDEL with the grand-piano of MENDELSSOHN'. (*The Critic* 5 (8/5/1847), pp.374-5).

However, a detailed review of the first of Lacy's 'instructing Series of Handelian Lecture Concerts', in the Hanover Square Rooms on 17/5/1847, makes it clear that in the event only a piano was used: 'T. L. HATTON', apparently the young John Liptrot Hatton, 'performed most beautifully on the pianoforte an *obligato* to the song, "Vo far guerra," ['Vo' fa guerra' from *Rinaldo*] written for the harpsichord, which Handel himself is said to have played during the entire run of the opera in which it occurs'. According to the critic, Hatton's performance 'developed the correctness of the lecturer's observations on the richness and variety of the latter' – the piano (*The Critic* 5 (22/5/1847), pp.414-15).

For the Irish-Spanish violinist, concert promoter and Handel enthusiast Michael Rophino Lacy (1795-1867), see David J. Golby, 'Michael Rophino Lacy', *ODNB*; Richard G. King, 'Michael Rophino Lacy', *CHE*, p.382. The instrument that Lacy planned to use in the concert was probably O'Brien 1640a AR, one of three Ruckers harpsichords associated with Handel in the nineteenth century. It was owned at the time by the Twining family, who believed it to have been used by Handel in his oratorios; it was used by Charles Salaman in concerts in 1855 and was exhibited at South Kensington in 1872; see **31/1/1774, 7/3/1774, 10/5/1855, 6-8/1872**; Holman 2021, pp.236-7. Lacy was apparently relying on the music seller, publisher and instrument inventor John Green to put in in working order for the concert; Green was in business at 33 Soho Square c1820-48, see *MPBI*, p.162.

1852

O'Brien 1637a IR was supposedly 'Depicted in an oil painting by William Powell Frith, R. A., 1852, showing an eighteenth-century group. Painting sold at Sotheby's in 1946'. (BMO, no.1656).

I am grateful to Mark Bills for his help in attempting to locate this painting, though it has not yet come to light. According to A.J. Hipkins, **1883** (no.20), the harpsichord belonged to the painter John Callcott Horsley (1817-1903), the son of the London organist and composer William Horsley (1774-1858), so it is possible that it had been owned by successive members of the Horsley family.

10/8/1853

The destruction by fire of Kirkman's factory in the early morning of Wednesday, 10 August 1853 was a calamity for those interested in early keyboard instruments, then and now. A report in *The Times* the following day (11/8/1853) concentrated on the fire, the attempts to put out and the damage to surrounding houses, but a detailed report ten days later supplied details of the instruments lost or damaged:

The firm of Messrs. Kirkman is one of the oldest in the trade, having been originally harpsichord makers, and is coeval to the first introduction of that instrument into this country; and from that time to the present has taken part with other eminent firms in the manufacture and improvement of pianofortes. The works just destroyed had been in the occupancy of the firm for upwards of a century. An immense number of pianofortes of every description, finished, or in progress, together with a quantity of rare and costly woods, very difficult to replace, have been totally destroyed; but, what is more to be regretted, is the destruction of some musical relics and curiosities connected with the progress of the art: and a number of models showing the various progressive improvements of the pianoforte from its first invention. Among these was a curious clarichord – once belonging to the great Handel, and from which the idea of making the square pianoforte was originally taken. Here, also, was the harp used by the Court bard of Charles II., the head beautifully carved by Grinling Gibbons; a small Japanned harpsichord, by Andreas Ruckers, of Antwerp, made in the year 1634 [*recte* 1639] – the sounding board and inside of the top beautifully and elaborately painted with flowers and Cupids; and once used by his Majesty George III. Another of the lost relics was the celebrated harpsichord formerly the property of Joah Bates, who for many years conducted the Antient Concerts; together with a large harpsichord fitted with curious German pedals, made for Mr. Greatorex, who succeeded Mr. Bates as director of the Antient Concerts. Among the manufactured stock saved is Messrs. Kirkman's Miniature Grand Pianoforte (the smallest to be played upon, ever made) which excited such general interest at the Great Exhibition of 1851. ('DESTRUCTION BY FIRE OF MESSRS. KIRKMAN'S PIANOFORTE MANUFACTORY', *ILN* 23 (20/8/1853), pp.137-8, at p.137).

In fact, two of these instruments did survive, and are today in the Victoria and Albert Museum, having been presented by Kirkman's to the South Kensington Museum (as it was then called) in 1869; see *V&A*, part 1, pp.53-6 (no.15); part 2, pp.76-7 (no.16/1). The harp had nothing to do with Grinling Gibbons or Charles II but is a triple harp made by David Evans in London in 1736, while the harpsichord, sadly reduced to a torso in the fire, is O'Brien 1639 IR; see **1639, 1869**.

9/1/1855

The pianist and composer Charles Kensington Salaman (1814-1901) gives the first of his lecture recitals ‘on the ancient keyed-stringed instruments, which preceded and originated the Pianoforte’ at the Marylebone Literary and Scientific Institution in Portman Square. A review mentioned that Salaman played Byrd’s ‘Carman’s Whistle’ on a virginals and ‘some most interesting compositions by Byrde, Dr. Bull, and Orlando Gibbons, upon a very fine Reicher Harpsichord. The applause was great and continuous’. The review continued: ‘The Harpsichord was thus introduced, and Mr. Salaman played upon Handel’s own double harpsichord, kindly lent to him by the Messrs’ Broadwood, the air and variations on the “HARMONIOUS Blacksmith”’. (*MW* 33 (13/1/1855), p.26).

Subject headings for the lecture, which ranged from ‘An account of some stringed instruments in use in the middle ages’ to ‘John Sebastian Bach – Philip Emanuel Bach – Domenico Paradies’, are listed in *MP*, 11/1/1855. In *The Literary Gazette* (no.1991 (17/3/1855), p.173) it is stated that ‘Handel’s own harpsichord, made by Andreas Ruckers in 1651, was lent for the occasion by the Messrs. Broadwood, to whom the precious relic belongs’. A detailed and appreciative review (*ILN* 26 (13/1/1855), p.31) stated that ‘Mr. Salaman played upon it several of the finest harpsichord pieces by Handel and Dominico Scarlatti’. For this instrument, O’Brien 1651b AR, see **18/11/1868**; *V&A*, part 1, pp.53-6 (no.15); *BMO*, no.1573; Holman 2021, pp.235-6. The ‘very fine Reicher Harpsichord’ that Salaman also played was evidently O’Brien 1640a AR; see **10/5/1855**. For Salaman, see J.C. Hadden, revised by Anne Pimlott Baker, ‘Charles Kensington Salaman’.

15/3/1855

Charles Salaman repeats his **9/1/1855** lecture recital at the Hanover Square Rooms. According to a review, ‘The curious old virginal ... attracted much attention. Some spinets, too, and virginals of rare antiquity, not exhibited at the first lectures, were now shown. Mr. Salaman illustrated the various periods with performances on the spinet, virginal, and harpsichord, all of which were received with loud applause’. (*MW* 33 (17/3/1855), p.174).

10/5/1855

Charles Salaman gives a lecture-recital attended by Queen Victoria and Prince Albert at the Royal Polytechnic Institution in Portman Square. A report includes: ‘a list of the instruments exhibited in presence of Her Majesty:– A virginal, made for Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth (1600.) A virginal, made for John Loosemore (1655.) A single harpsichord, by Johannes Rükers, of Antwerp (1640.) Handel’s own double harpsichord, by Rükers, of Antwerp (1651.) A spinet. (1713.) A spinet (1724.) A double harpsichord, by Kirkman (1798.) Mr. Salaman performed, on John Loosemore’s virginal, “The Carman’s Whistle,” by Byrde; on Handel’s harpsichord, “The Harmonious Blacksmith;” and on Kirkman’s double harpsichord, Philip Emanuel Bach’s Presto on C’. (*MW* 33 (12/5/1855), p.300).

The ‘single harpsichord, by Johannes Rükers, of Antwerp (1640.)’ seems to be (despite its attribution to Ioannes Ruckers) the small single-manual by Andreas Ruckers, O’Brien 1640a AR, now at Yale, which was owned at the time by the Twining tea-trading family; see **31/1/1774**, **7/3/1774**, **8/5/1847**, **6-8/1872**, **1883** (no.45), **1885**; Holman 2021, pp.236-7. Salaman’s lecture-recital was repeated at the same venue on 15/5/1855 (*The Times*, 15/5/1855).

20/2/1857

The sale of musical instruments belonging to the London brewer and wine merchant James Goding (1765-1845) by Christie and Manson, on 20/2/1857, includes the remains of a Ruckers

harpsichord that had once belonged to the organist and composer Claude-Bénigne Balbastre (1724-99). It had been seen by Charles Burney on 17/6/1770 in Balbastre's house in Paris:

After church M. Balbastre invited me to his house, to see a fine Rucker harpsichord which he has had painted inside and out with as much delicacy as the finest coach or even snuff-box I ever saw at Paris. On the outside is the birth of Venus; and on the inside of the cover the story of Rameau's most famous opera, *Castor and Pollux*; earth, hell, and elysium are there represented: in elysium, sitting on a bank, with a lyre in his hand, is that celebrated composer himself; the portrait is very like, for I saw Rameau in 1764. The tone of this instrument is more delicate than powerful; one of the unisons is of buff, but very sweet and agreeable; the touch very light, owing to the quilling, which in France is always weak. (Charles Burney, *The Present State of Music in France and Italy* (London: T. Becket and Co., 1771), p.38 <@>).

Edward Francis Rimbault quoted Burney's description of this harpsichord in his account of the predecessors of the piano, outlining the next stage of its history in a footnote:

This instrument was afterwards brought to London, when it became the property of the late James Goding, Esq. That gentleman had so little veneration for the work of Rucker, that he caused the "inside" of the harpsichord to be taken out, and a modern pianoforte substituted in its room! At the sale of Mr. Goding's musical instruments, by Christie and Manson, February 20, 1857, the instrument was thus described: "A MAGNIFICENT GRAND PIANOFORTE CASE: the top and sides beautifully painted with classical subjects, by Boucher: the inside, with a large subject of the performance of a masque by the Royal Family, exquisitely painted by Le Prince, on a superbly carved and gilt stand. The instrument, 6 ½ octaves, by Zeitter." It sold for seventy guineas. When Zeitter took out the old sounding-board, he caused it to be made into a handsome music box, preserving the inscription, "Johannes Ruckers me fecit Antwerpae," at the back. This box is now in the writer's possession'. (Edward Rimbault, *The Pianoforte, its Origin, Progress and Construction* (London: Robert Cocks and Co., 1860), p.76 <@>).

Jacob Frederick Zeitter established himself as a piano maker in London in 1833 or shortly before; see *Clinkscale*. He had carried out the conversion of this Ruckers harpsichord to a piano by 12/1837, as is revealed by the following news item: 'Magnificent Pianoforte. – We were yesterday much gratified by being permitted to see and hear a grand piano, built by Messrs. Zeitter and Co. for Mr. Goding. In music it is of a very high order of merit; but its unique attraction is in the instrument itself, with its embellishments of art. Mr. Goding, it seems, discovered this splendid curiosity in Paris, and, after some years of watchfulness, had the good luck to make himself its owner ... Messrs. Zeitter have been employed to convert it into a grand pianoforte; and, in our opinion, they have succeeded to admiration'. (*The Literary Gazette*, no.1093 (30/12/1837), p.839). A second report (*The Court Magazine and Monthly Critic* 12 (2/1838), pp.205-6) describes the paintings in detail, confirming that this was the instrument seen by Burney in 1770 and sold in London in 1857. The music box mentioned by Edward Rimbault was sold in the last day of the sale of his library, 7/8/1877, lot 2341: 'A tulip-wood Box, made out of the inside of a harpsichord, with maker's name'. (Sotheby, Wilkinson & Hodge, *Catalogue of the Valuable Library of the late Edward Francis Rimbault, LLD* (London, 1877; reprinted Buren, 1975), p.158).

The instrument was reconstructed again, by Erard in 1874, and was mentioned in a lecture on harpsichords given in 1875 by Sir Robert Prescott Stewart (1825-94), Professor of Music at Trinity College, Dublin: 'Many harpsichords had been destroyed for the sake of their beautiful painted panels. I myself was witness to this process of destruction, for when visiting Erard's factory last year, I saw a set of panels, representing nymphs, shepherds and satyrs, about to be fastened outside the works of a new grand piano. I thought how much better to have left the antique instrument in its own quaintly ornamented case, and to have enclosed the magnificent Erard works in their

usual plain but elegant envelope of rosewood'. ('Sir Robert Stewart's Lectures', *The Orchestra* (5/1875), pp.307-10, at p.309). Photographs of the instrument suggest that little of the original Ruckers harpsichord survived the attentions of Zeitter and Erard; see Laurence Libin, 'A Rediscovered Portrait of Rameau and *Castor and Pollux*', *Early Music* 11, no.4 (October 1983), pp.510-13, and the photograph and description produced for the Sotheby's sale on 8/6/2005, lot 22 <@>.

4/12/1858

An article entitled 'MESSRS BROADWOOD'S PIANO MANUFACTORY' includes the statement that Handel's 'favourite Harpsichord', presumably O'Brien 1651b AR, 'is now to be seen in one of the warerooms in Great Pulteney-street'. (*ILN* 33 (4/12/1858), p.528).

4/6/1859

A news item about the arrangements for setting up an exhibition 'at the Crystal Palace for the exhibition of various relics and memorials of Handel, in a court arranged for the purpose'. It included 'his harpsichord, contributed by Messrs. Broadwood, the eminent pianoforte manufacturers, in whose house, in Great Pulteney-street, when in the occupation of Tschudi, the harpsichord maker – the Broadwood of his day – Handel was a frequent visitor'. (*The Leader* 10 (6/1859), p.701).

Another sighting of O'Brien 1651b AR. The Crystal Palace became a centre for the performance of Handel music after its relocation to Sydenham and its opening in 1854, culminating in the great Handel Commemoration Festival of June 1859.

19/4/1862

'There is a private show most interesting to all musicians caring for keyed instruments now to be seen at the Pianoforte Establishment of the Broadwood family; an historical collection of boxes of music (as the Quaker called them) ranging betwixt the old Elizabethan virginal, for which Dr. John Bull wrote, and the present portentous concert grand pianoforte (the German clavichord being the only missing specimen). The virginal (which, till it be unclosed, looks much like a mediaeval coffin), Mr C. Salaman's property, is an instrument by Loosemore, of Exeter, who built the organ there – the artful and ornamental finish of which would shame many a maker of to-day. The harpsichords (Handel's included) are less richly bedecked, but the advance in tone and in peculiarity is remarkable, though nothing is more striking for those who pass from one to the other, with ears to hear, than the quaint and pleasing, and still fresh, tone with which these old creatures talk. As to matters of pitch and power of keeping in tune, those are separate questions'. (*The Athenaeum*, no.1799 (19/4/1862), p.536).

This seems to be the first mention of a formal exhibition of working old keyboard old instruments assembled by Broadwood's at their premises in Great Pulteney Street. It evidently included the Winchester Ruckers, O'Brien 1651b AR, which had been acquired by Broadwoods in 1852 (see **18/11/1868**), and the 1771 Shudi harpsichord that Broadwood's kept in working order for concerts for much of the nineteenth century; see Holman 2020, pp.6-7, 9.

18/11/1868

Broadwood's donate O'Brien 1651b AR, the double-manual Winchester Ruckers, to the fledgling musical instrument collection at the South Kensington Museum, now the Victoria and Albert Museum, accompanying it with documentary evidence attempting to prove that it had belonged

to Handel, in the form of accompanying letters ‘transmitted by Messrs. Broadwood’; they were printed by Carl Engel in his 1874 catalogue of the musical instruments in the Museum:

“33, Great Pulteney Street, London,
18th November 1868.

“Handel’s harpsichord was brought by us of Mr. Hooper, a pianoforte tuner at Winchester, in 1852. He had obtained it from Dr. Chard, the Cathedral organist of that city, who had taken pains to prove it to be the same instrument which Handel had left by will to his friend and amanuensis, Christopher Smith.

The letter goes on to summarise the accompanying document (transcribed below), and to describe the instrument in detail, concluding as follows:

As a musical instrument, this harpsichord has lived its life. It is not now capable of being tuned, and any attempt to improve the accord of it might prove disastrous by the sounding-board giving way altogether. It is, therefore, of consequence to the preservation of the woodwork that tuning should not be attempted.

JOHN BROADWOOD AND SONS.”

Letter to the Rev. G. Coxe, Twyford, Rector of St, Michael’s, Winchester.

“My dear Sir,

Will you oblige me by certifying (if I am correct) the following:—

The celebrated Mr. Smith (or Schmidt) was Handel’s private friend, and amanuensis. This said Mr. Smith was presented by Handel with his favourite fine double-keyed harpsichord, made by the best maker of the day, Andreas Ruckers of Antwerpia, 1651. This said instrument you have repeatedly heard Mr. Smith play on. Mr. Smith was father-in-law to you as well as your sister, the Dowager Lady Rivers; and at his death the said harpsichord, together with a large collection of Handel’s oratorios, etc., etc., MSS., came into the hands of the Dowager Lady Rivers. This instrument was parted with to a Mr. Wickham, surgeon, who parted with it to the Rev. W. Hawtrey, Prebendary of Winchester Cathedral, upon the death of whom I purchased it at the sale of his effects; and in my possession it still remains. Is this not the identical instrument now spoken of? Your early answer to these queries, as the only living witness, will oblige,

Dear Sir,

Yours faithfully,

G. W. CHARD

P. S.— Will you oblige me by certifying on this sheet of paper, and returning it?

Answer,

I certify that the above statement is correct, so far as my knowledge goes.

GEORGE COXE,

Twyford, May 13th, 1842.

Witness to the above signature —

Susanna Gregg,

James Harris.”

(Engel 1874, pp.279-82).

The provenance outlined in these documents for the Winchester Ruckers, O'Brien 1651b AR, descends from J.C. Smith, Handel's assistant, to his stepdaughter Lady Martha Rivers Gay (1749-1835); the surgeon William John Wickham (d.1864); Prebendary John Hawtrey (d.1817); George William Chard (1765-1849), organist of Winchester Cathedral; the Winchester piano tuner Mr Hooper; and in 1852 to Broadwood's; see Holman 2021, pp.235-6. A.J. Hipkins (1826-1903), a prominent employee of Broadwood's and the leading English authority on early keyboard instruments, subsequently cast doubt on the assertion that Handel presented this instrument to J.C. Smith; see 'Handel's Harpsichords', *The Athenaeum*, no.2917 (22/8/1883), pp.378-9.

O'Brien 1651b AR had certainly 'lived its life' in London in the 1850s, as a trophy hired out by Broadwood's to Charles Salaman as Handel's harpsichord'; and then exhibited by them at their premises in Great Pulteney Street and at the Crystal Palace; see **9/1/1855, 10/5/1855, 19/4/1862, 1883** (no.47); Holman 2020, pp.6-7. In *V&A*, part 1, pp.53-6 (no.15), it is argued that the date '1651' on the soundboard has been repainted and should actually read '1631'; see also *BMO*, no.1573.

1869

Kirkman's present O'Brien 1639 IR to the musical instrument collection at the South Kensington Museum (now the Victoria and Albert Museum) in London. In its 1874 catalogue Carl Engel sets out part of the oft-repeated legend that it had been in the royal collection of keyboard instruments in the eighteenth century: 'This instrument was formerly the property of George III., and was removed from Buckingham Palace when Jacobus Kirkman sent a new harpsichord for Queen Charlotte. The action and keys were destroyed at a fire which occurred at Messrs. Kirkman's manufactory in the year 1853'. (Engel 1874, p.283).

The legend that O'Brien 1639 IR had belonged to Queen Charlotte was doubtless transmitted by Kirkman's to Engel. It was elaborated in 1930 by Philip James, who wrote the following about the 1766 Kirkman harpsichord then at Warley Place in Essex: 'The last of these [three lavishly decorated double-manual Kirkmans] was made to the order of George III for Queen Charlotte who, being an accomplished musician, wanted an up-to-date harpsichord in place of her instrument by Jean Ruckers, which is now preserved in the Victoria and Albert Museum'. (Philip James, *Early Keyboard Instruments from their Beginnings to the Year 1820* (London: Peter Davies, 1930; 2nd edn.: The Tabard Press, 1970), p.130 and plate 50); for this Kirkman instrument see *BMO*, no.985 and the Sotheby's sale of property from the Berkeley Collection, 11/12/2019, lot 39 <@>. Another link in the chain was made by Paula Woods ('The Gerbier-Windebank Correspondence', pp.87-8) who connected O'Brien 1639 IR to the instrument imported to England in 1639 by Sir Francis Windebank. She suggested that Windebank's heirs sold it to Charles II, though it remains to find evidence for this in Restoration court documents. See also *V&A*, part 1, pp.57-8 (no.16); **1639, 10/8/1853, 6-8/1872, 1883** (no.22).

6-8/1872

The Special Exhibition of Ancient Musical Instruments, held at the South Kensington Museum (now the Victoria and Albert Museum) in London in June, July and August 1872, was the first public exhibition of old musical instruments with contributions by a variety of lenders from Britain and abroad. It was organised by a committee headed by the Duke of Edinburgh, with Carl Engel as the prime mover, and was accompanied by a published catalogue, *Catalogue of the Special Exhibition of Ancient Musical Instruments* (London: South Kensington Museum, 1872) <@>. It includes (p.11) three Ruckers harpsichords in Class I, 'STRINGED INSTRUMENTS PROVIDED WITH A KEY-BOARD':

[no.] 7 HARPSICHORD. Made by Andreas Ruckers, Antwerp, 1639. Black and gold japan-work case. The sound-board ornamented with paintings of birds, fruit and flowers The inside of the

cover ornamented with paintings of Bacchanals and grapes. The interior edge of the case and the front ornamented with tracing in white on a black ground. *S.K.M.* [South Kensington Museum]

[no.] 8 HANDEL'S HARPSICHORD. Made by Andreas Ruckers, Antwerp, 1651. Case of deal, black japanned; with internal ornament of flowers painted, and inscriptions in gold. Given by Messrs. Broadwood to the South Kensington Museum. The documentary evidence of this instrument's authenticity, as Handel's harpsichord, has been transmitted by Messrs. Broadwood with the Instrument. *S.K.M.*

[no.] 9 HARPSICHORD. By Andreas Ruckers, anno 1640. "It once belonged to the celebrated composer Handel, and was used by him in composing his Oratorios. Afterwards it came into the possession of the Rev. Thomas Twining, of St Peter's, Colchester; thence it came to W. Richard Twining, Esq., F.R.S.; and thence to his daughter, Elizabeth Twining." *Lent by Mrs. Twining, Dial House, Twickenham.*

The first two of these instruments, O'Brien 1639 IR and 1651b AR, will have been known to those visiting the exhibition with an interest in old instruments, since the latter, the Winchester Ruckers, had been much touted as Handel's harpsichord by Broadwood's since they acquired it in 1852 (see esp. **18/11/1868**), while the former, the instrument supposedly acquired by Kirkman's from the royal collection, came to public notice when it was partially destroyed by fire; see esp. **10/8/1853, 1869**. However, the third instrument, the Twining Ruckers, O'Brien 1640a AR, was less known since it is only known to have been seen in public when played by Charles Salaman in 1855; see **31/1/1774, 7/3/1774; 10/5/1855**; *BMO*, no.1563; Holman 2021, pp.236-7. A fourth instrument with Ruckers connections is said to have been included in the 1872 exhibition, though it does not appear in the catalogue, see **5/7/1872**. For the exhibition, see esp. *Monthly Musical Record* 2 (1/8/1872), pp.114-15; *Chambers's Journal of Popular Literature, Science and the Arts*, no.454 (7/9/1872), pp.570-3; *The Illustrated Review* 4 (9/1872), pp.140-1; Harry Lieberman, *Music and the New Global Culture: From the Great Exhibitions to the Jazz Age* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2019), pp.40-2; Sarah Kirby, *Exhibitions, Music and the British Empire* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2022), pp.86-7.

5/7/1872

'A beautifully painted harpsichord, made by "Pascal Taskin à Paris, 1774," has been lent for exhibition at South Kensington Museum by Viscount Powerscourt, at the suggestion of the Duke of Edinburgh, during his recent visit to Ireland. The inside and outside of the case are covered with oil paintings of landscapes &c., of a finish and delicacy equal to those of many of the old Dutch pictures'. (*MW* 50 (13/7/1872), p.449).

This large double-manual harpsichord, O'Brien '1612 HR', now in Brussels, does not appear in the catalogue of the 1872 South Kensington Exhibition (see **6-8/1872**), so either it was never sent from Ireland or it arrived too late to be included in the publication. It figures in the Ruckers literature (see *BMO*, no.111), though it is now thought to be a late seventeenth-century French harpsichord thrice modernised: by an unknown craftsman c1700-10, by Antoine Vater c1750, and by Taskin in 1774; see Alain Anselm, 'A Note on the so-called "Ruckers/Taskin" Double-Manual Harpsichord ("1612 HR")', Vandervellen 2017, pp.388-93. See also the long account of the instrument in [Mervyn Wingfield], Viscount Powerscourt, *A Description and History of Powerscourt* (London: Mitchell and Hughes, 1903), pp.47-9 <@>, where it is said to be in 'the Saloon or Ball room' at Powerscourt, Co. Wicklow, and to have been 'purchased by my father, Richard, sixth Viscount Powerscourt, at Rome from the Torlonia family'.

13/3/1876

The anonymous article 'A VIRGINAL BY JEAN RUCKERS' (*Musical Standard* 10 (11/3/1876), pp.163-4), is almost certainly by A.J. Hipkins, who was collecting information at the time for the article on the Ruckers family in Grove's *Dictionary* (see **5/3/1881, 1883**). It surveys existing research

into Ruckers instruments; outlines the current state of knowledge of the activities of the various members of the family; and describes some instruments in French and Belgian collections.

By the 1870s Alfred James Hipkins (1826-1903), a long-term employee of Broadwood's, was Britain's leading authority on early keyboard instruments; for him, see esp. [F.G. Edwards], 'Alfred James Hipkins', *The Musical Times* 39 (1 September 1898), pp.581-6; Lieberson, *Music and the New Global Culture*, pp.47-78; Holman 2020, esp. pp.9-10; Holman 2021, pp.421-4.

5/3/1881

'MR. A.J. HIPKINS, who is writing an article for Dr. Grove's "Dictionary of Music and Musicians" on the Ruckers family of Antwerp, would be glad to receive information, addressed to 100, Warwick Gardens, Kensington, about any harpsichords and virginals by those makers that he has not yet catalogued. He wishes particularly to hear of one said to have belonged to Handel's amanuensis and friend, Christopher Smith, a few years ago in the possession of one of Smith's descendants at Hertford Street, Mayfair'. (*The Athenaeum*, no.2784 (5/3/1881), p.343).

This rumour about yet another Ruckers harpsichord connected with Handel seems to have come to nothing. The reference to J.C. Smith suggests it was a confused memory of the Winchester Ruckers, O'Brien 1651b AR, by 1881 in the South Kensington Museum; for it, see esp. **18/11/1868, 6-8/1872, 1883** (no.47); Holman 2021, pp.235-6.

1883

A.J. Hipkins publishes his pioneering article 'RUCKERS' in *A Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. Sir George Grove, vol.3 (London: Macmillan and Co., 1883), pp.193-9; with a supplement, vol.4 (London: Macmillan and Co., 1889), pp.776-7; see also vol.3, p.652; vol.4, p.305 <@>. It is the most detailed study of the family and their instruments before O'Brien, a notable milestone in the fledgling discipline of organology. Its '*Catalogue of Ruckers Clavecins, still existing (1881), as far as possible according to date*' lists eight instruments identified as having a '*Present Owner*' in Britain; four more are added in the 1889 supplement. They are listed here with the information as given by Hipkins in the categories: '*No.*' / '*Form.*' / '*Date.*' / '*Present Owner*' / '*Source of information.*':

I. HANS RUCKERS DE OUDE (the Elder).

9 / Oblong. / Undated / Messrs. Chappell & Co., London. / A. J. Hipkins.
O'Brien (1591)b HR; see *BMO*, no.1604.

II. HANS RUCKERS DE JONGE (the Younger).

20 / Bent side. / 1637 / John Callcott Horsley, Esq. R.A., London. / J. C. Horsley.
O'Brien 1637a IR; see **1852**, *BMO*, no.1656.

22 / Bent side. / 1639 / South Kensington Museum (gift of Messrs. Kirkman). / A. J. Hipkins.
O'Brien 1639 IR; see **1869**, *BMO*, no.1660.

23 / Bent side. / 1642 / F. R. Leyland, Esq., London. / A. J. Hipkins.
O'Brien 1642b IR; see *BMO*, no.1664.

III. ANDRIES RUCKERS DE OUDE (the Elder).

31 / Bent side. / 1614 / Colonel Hopkinson, London. / A. J. Hipkins.
O'Brien 1614 AR; see *BMO*, no.1537.

38 / Bent side. / 1623 / Dr. Hullah, London. / H. Holiday.
O'Brien 1623 AR; see **25/6/1884**, *BMO*, no.1548.

45 / Bent side. / 1640 / Miss Twining, Dial House, Twickenham. / A. J. Hipkins.

O'Brien 1640a AR; see **6-8/1872**, *BMO*, no.1563.

47 / Bent side. / 1651 / South Kensington Museum (gift, as having been Handel's, of Messrs. Broadwood). / A. J. Hipkins.

O'Brien 1651b AR; see **18/11/1868**, *BMO*, no.1573.

Added in the 1889 supplement:

HANS RUCKERS (the Elder or the Younger) and ANDRIES RUCKERS (the Elder).

67 / Bent side. / [Undated] / Panmure Gordon, Esq. / A. J. Hipkins.

68 / Bent side. / 1628 / Walter H. Burns, Esq. and Captain Hall. / A. J. Hipkins.

O'Brien '1628 AR'; see *BMO*, no.1580.

69 / Four cornered. / [Undated] / W. H. Hammond Jones, Esq., Witley, Godalming. / W. H. H. Jones, Esq.

ANDRIES RUCKERS (the Elder).

70 / Bent side. / 1639 / Mr. C. Cramp, Byfield, Northamptonshire. / Mr. C. Cramp.

O'Brien 1639b AR; see *BMO*, no.1562.

Hipkins's work on the Ruckers family and their instruments was continued after his death in 1903 by his daughter Edith and Francis Galpin, and was published (with a greatly expanded catalogue of 94 instruments) in the second edition, *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. J.A. Fuller Maitland (London: Macmillan and Co., 1904-10), vol.4, pp.180-9.

25/6/1884

The auction of the music library of the conductor and music educationalist John Hullah (1812-84) on 25/6/1884 concluded with lot 423: 'A curious old HARPSICHORD by Andreas Ruckers, of Antwerp, inscribed "Andreas Rvckers me fecit Antwerpiae, 1623," two manuals, three stops, with octavo strings, painted sounding board, in mahogany case of the last century, in good playing order, and fine tone. / ** The Ruckers Harpsichords have become very scarce, being absorbed in the Great Belgian and other Collections, as well as Museums to which they naturally gravitate. Amateurs of old keyboard instruments should therefore watch this opportunity to secure a fine example of the best makers, who, as a family, rivalled the great families of Cremona Violin makers'. (Puttick and Simpson, *Catalogue of the Valuable Collection of Music and Library of Works on Musical Literature formed by the Late Dr. John Hullah ... also the Library of a Well-Known Amateur ... also (the Property of Dr. Hullah) a Curious Old Harpsichord by Andrew Ruckers, 1623* (London, 25/6/1884)).

The auction was originally planned for 13/6/1884, as stated in a preliminary advertisement (*The Athenaeum*, no.2952 (24/5/1884), p.651), but was postponed to 25/6/1884 (*The Athenaeum*, no.2956 (21/6/1884), p.778). It went for £28 (*The Musical Standard* 27 (9/8/1884), p.74). For Hullah, see J.A. Fuller Maitland revised by David J. Golby, 'John Pyke Hullah', *ODNB*. For the instrument, O'Brien 1623 AR, see *BMO*, no.1548.

1885

The International Inventions Exhibition, held at South Kensington in London between 4 May and 9 November 1885, included old musical instruments as an important strand, for the first time in an international exhibition in Britain; the Loan Collection of instruments, music and related artefacts was exhibited in the Albert Hall. The published catalogue, *International Inventions Exhibition, London, 1885, Guide to the Loan Collection and List of Musical Instruments, Manuscripts, Books, Paintings*

and Engravings Exhibited in the Gallery and Lower Rooms of the Albert Hall, ed. A.J. Hipkins (London: William Clowes and Sons, 1885), lists nine instruments by or attributed to members of the Ruckers family:

p.5: THE MUSEO CIVICO, TURIN. – *Clavecin*, lacquer case, by A. Ruckers, of Antwerp, 1636. Restored by Pascal Taskin, of Paris, 1782. The Clavecin (French), Clavicembalo (Italian), Harpsichord (English), is wing-shaped, and has two or three strings to each note, while the Spinet, trapeze-shaped and Virginal, oblong, have each only one. It appeared first in the 16th century, and the oldest one known is a Roman Clavicembalo in South Kensington Museum, dated 1521.

O'Brien '1636 AR'; see *BMO*, no.1584.

p.30: JOURET, Mons. LEON. *Virginal*, by HANS RUCKERS. 1628.

O'Brien 1628a IR; see *BMO*, no.1648.

p.30: MAHILLON, Mons. VICTOR. – *Virginal*, by Hans Ruckers. 1622.

O'Brien 1622 IR; see *BMO*, no.1641. Illustrated and discussed in A.J. Hipkins, *Musical Instruments, Historic, Rare and Unique* (Edinburgh: A. and C. Black, 1888; reprinted London, 1921, 1945), plate 18 <@>.

pp.41-2: CHAPPELL & Co., Messrs. – *Double Spinet*, by Hans Ruckers the Elder. About 1590, Antwerp. This instrument shows one of the expedients used to gain brilliancy of effect by an octave string before Hans Ruckers himself introduced it into the clavecin. The left-hand spinet is the octave one, and may be withdrawn and used away from the rest of the instrument.

O'Brien (1591)b HR; see **1883** (no.9), *BMO*, no.1604. Illustrated and discussed in Hipkins, *Musical Instruments, Rare and Unique*, plate 20.

p.47: LEYLAND, Mr. F. R. – *Clavecin*, by Hans Ruckers the Younger. 1642. Decorated case with paintings inside the top. This fine instrument, like Lord Powerscourt's, shows the rich decoration often bestowed upon the famous Ruckers harpsichords, and not unfrequently a hundred years after the instrument had been made. New keyboards were introduced, and there were room for additional strings, with wider range of compass. In Mr. Leyland's, this last alteration does not appear to have taken place, and the original stops have been retained.

O'Brien 1642b IR; see **1883** (no.23), *BMO*, no.1664. Frederick Richards Leyland (1831-92) was a shipping magnate and collector.

p.58: HOPKINSON, Lieut.-General H., C.S.I. – *Double Clavecin*, or *Harpsichord*, by André Ruckers. 1614, Antwerp. Painting inside the top attributed to Van der Meulen.

O'Brien 1614 AR; see **1883** (no.31), *BMO*, no.1537. See also Jeremy Montagu, 'Salerooms: Instruments', *Early Music* 33, no.1 (February 2005), pp.149-53, at p.151. It was sold by Gardiner Houlgate on 17 June 2022 (lot 1555) for £227,520; see *Gardiner Houlgate, the Specialist Auctioneers* <@>; Michael Cole, *Square Pianos, Michael's Blog*, 10 June 2022 <@>. The soldier Henry Hopkinson (1820-99) served from 1838 in India, retiring with the rank of General.

p.63: HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN. – *Double Harpsichord*, by Hans Ruckers. 1612. From Windsor Castle. The "large harpsichord" named in Handel's will may have been this instrument. The keyboards are new.

O'Brien 1612a HR; see **1776**, *BMO*, no.1628. Apparently the first sighting of this instrument since it was mentioned in reports of George III's madness; see esp. **3/2/1811**. Hipkins did not include it in **1883** and wrote in September that year that it had recently been discovered at Windsor Castle; see A.J. Hipkins, 'Handel's Harpsichords', *The Athenaeum*, no.2917 (22/9/1883), pp.378-9, at p.379: 'I went to see the instrument, and learned that Mr. Seabrook, who had charge of the works of art in the Castle, had discovered it, with some old sedan chairs, in an almost forgotten store-

room. Being struck with the age of it, he had had it placed in one of the state apartments and labelled as a piano of Shakespeare's time; but finding it not respected by the visitors, some of the ivory of the keys having been detached and purloined, he was compelled to have it stored again'. Hipkins wrote in a revised version of this article ('Handel's Harpsichords', *The Musical Times*, special Handel supplement (14/12/1893), pp.30-3, at p.33) that 'The keyboards were again renewed by Messrs. Broadwood before this harpsichord was exhibited by Her Majesty the Queen in the Inventions Exhibition Loan Collection, 1885'; see also Holman 2021, pp.233-5, 420.

p.111: POWERSCOURT, Viscount. – *Clavecin* or *Harpsichord*, by Hans Ruckers of Antwerp. Double keyboard. Dated 1612. Restored by Taskin, 1774. Painted with scenes of the period of Louis XIV. by Van der Meulen. Said to have belonged to Marie Antoinette.

O'Brien '1612 HR'; see **5/7/1872**, *BMO*, no.111. It was placed in the 'Salon Louis XVI' along with other furniture from eighteenth-century France. An engraving by John Hipkins entitled 'The Louis XVI. Music Room' is reproduced in Sarah Kirby, 'Prisms of the Musical Past: British International Exhibitions and "Ancient Instruments", 1885-1890', *Early Music* 57, no.3 (August 2019), pp.393-407, at p.404.

p.134: HORSLEY, Mr. J. C., R.A. – *Harpsichord*, by J. Ruckers 1637, Antwerp.

O'Brien 1637a IR; see **1852, 1883** (no.20), *BMO*, no.1656.

Much the same ground as Hipkins's official catalogue of the Loan Collection was subsequently covered by William Dale in *Brief Description of Spinets, Virginals, Harpsichords and Pianos shown in the Loan Collection of the International Inventions Exhibition, 1885* (London: Fargues and Co., 1885); see also David Hackett, *Harpsichords and Spinets shown at the International Inventions Exhibition 1885, Royal Albert Hall, from a Presentation made at the Friends of Square Pianos Spinet Day, April 8th 2017* <@>. For the Inventions Exhibition, see esp. Kirby, 'Prisms of the Musical Past', pp.395-404; Holman 2020, pp.9-10; Kirby, *Exhibitions, Music and the British Empire*, pp.18-20. The Ruckers harpsichords do not seem to have been used in the accompanying concerts, held in July; for them, see Holman 2020, p.10 and the sources listed in fn.118.