

ADDENDUM AND CORRIGENDA

Addendum

Recently Ivan Barko became aware that the organ in St. Peter's Anglican Church, Watsons Bay had been in the possession of Napoleon Bonaparte.

It was well known that, while waiting for Longwood to be readied for his exile on St. Helena, Napoleon had temporarily lived at 'The Briars', the Balcombe family home, and had given them various gifts, in particular to the daughter Betsy, of whom he was particularly fond. The family eventually returned to England at the instigation of Sir Hudson Lowe, the mean-spirited governor of St. Helena, but when the father William Balcombe, who had been Naval Agent for the British Fleet, was in some sense compensated by being appointed Colonial Treasurer at Sydney, they shifted there, presumably bringing their furniture from St Helena with them. Mabel Brookes' *St Helena Story* contains a photograph facing p.212 with the caption 'Napoleon's desk at the Briars (*In the possession of Mr. A. Balcombe, Parkes, New South Wales*)' but a short history of St Peter's, which the very interested acting vicar passed on to Ivan Barko, tells a much more interesting story of the provenance of the organ, which was never at St Helena. Notes on the installation of the organ read thus:

THE ORGAN

This historic instrument was placed in the church in 1920, in memory of eight parishioners who did not return from the 1914-1918 War. In the notes for the dedication ceremony it was described as follows:-

"The organ was built originally by Robert and William Grey, of London, in 1796. This firm is still flourishing under the name of Grey and Davidson. They have built many celebrated instruments [..]"

The little instrument under review was built for the Honourable Spencer Perceval, who was afterwards Chancellor of the Exchequer, and whose name will be permanently remembered, as he was shot in the House of Commons by a fanatic.

It was lent to the Emperor Napoleon, and after his fall in 1815, was brought to England in 1817 by Lady Perceval who ordered it to be sold. From the year 1829 to 1915 it was in the hands of the authorities of the Congregational Church at Wiveliscombe, Somerset. Dr C. A. Edwards, of Sydney who was born in Wiveliscombe, purchased it in the year 1901, on his return to England from the Boer War in South Africa. But, the then organist was so distressed at the passing of an instrument upon which he had played for so long, and to which he had become so attached, that the Doctor agreed to forego his purchase of the organ. During the late War, Dr. Edwards had another opportunity of visiting his native town.

On bringing it to Sydney, and seeking a suitable haven of rest for the instrument, Monsieur Henri Verbrugghen was pleased to receive it at the Conservatorium of Music, where it was erected in the small hall. It was almost immediately removed to the Apse of the large concert room for the performance of Bach's *Magnificat*, where the organ part of that great work was executed in masterly style by Mr. Arnold Mote, Mus. Bac. F.R.C.O., a native of Sydney, and later organist of the Abbey Church at Sherburn [sic] in Dorset bringing it to Sydney, and seeking a suitable haven of rest for the instrument, Monsieur Henri Verbrugghen was pleased to receive at the Conservatorium of Music, where it was erected in the small hall. It was almost immediately removed to the Apse of the large concert room for the performance of Bach's *Magnificat*, where the organ part of that great work was executed in masterly style by Mr. Arnold Mote, Mus. Bac. F.R.C.O., a native of Sydney, and later organist of the Abbey Church at Sherburn [sic] in Dorset.

Corrigenda

- (1) In the article 'Two Napoleonic Collections', p. 13, par. 2, l. 3, Mabel Brookes, who lived to a good age (1890-1975) did not marry in 1810, but in 1910.
- (2) In the article 'Napoleonic Toponymy in Australia' pp. 19-19 there are confusions regarding the nobiliary titles which Napoleon conferred on the two marshals Masséna and Murat.

Masséna (André, 1758-1817) was made Maréchal d'Empire (1804), duc de Rivoli (1808) and prince d'Essling (Jan 1808).

Murat (Joachim, 1767-1815) married Caroline Bonaparte (1800), was made Maréchal d'Empire (May 1804) prince et grand amiral (Feb 1805) grand-duc de Berg et de Clève (Mar. 1806) roi de Naples (Jul. 1808).