CHAPTER V
BRITISH ORGANS

THE BRITISH IN ARGENTINA 1870-1940

Great Britain had a unique relationship with Argentina throughout this period, to the extent that an Argentine vice-president, in the 1930s, claimed that "Argentina was virtually part of the British Empire." This association started very early in Argentina's life as an independent country, since the commercial interests of England favored the colony's independence from Spain in the early nineteenth century. England aided the revolutionary forces of Argentina in their effort to overthrow the Spanish and thus enabled Argentina to become finally an independent nation in 1816.

More important, as Great Britain rose to global empire status and became the center of an increasingly integrated international economy, Argentina was well situated to be a good trading and financial partner. It was the only nation outside of the British Commonwealth to be part of the group that historians called "lands of recent settlement" which included Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and South Africa. Argentina shared with them a big, sparsely populated territory, temperate weather, and abundant natural resources, especially fertile land. Thus**,** it needed to attract population and capital to develop quickly, to import extensive amounts machinery for infrastructure, and to find markets for its increasing production of beef, grains and dairy.

Since the mid nineteenth century, Great Britain had become a perfect partner for those needs. Substantial British investment and commercial interests in Argentina led to a fairly large and well-established British community in the country, especially in its

capital, Buenos Aires, and in its surrounding areas. Moreover, the Argentine landowning elite, the main beneficiaries of the country's close relationship with Britain, became very "anglophile", adopting many social practices and customs from the upper classes of British society. All of these circumstances led to a strong impact of British culture and products in Argentine society, particularly in the two decades around the turn of the century, from 1890-1910.

These English immigrants were mostly Protestants and, as a result, founded churches to practice their religions in Argentina, a country whose people were predominantly Catholic. Among the elements they imported for these new churches were pipe organs from their homeland. It is unfortunate that the British community in Argentina did not import any instruments by the most prestigious builders of the period in England (1860-1905), such as Henry Willis, Hill & Sons, and J. W. Walker; however, Argentina is very fortunate to house organs by Bishop, Bryceson, Gray and Davison, A. Hunter & Sons, and Forster & Andrews. The author of this study has chosen two instruments to represent British organs as *Historic Pipe Organs in Argentina*: the organ built by Bryceson housed at the *Iglesia Anglicana All Saints* in Quilmes, Province of Buenos Aires and the instrument by Forster & Andrews founded at the *Primera Iglesia Metodista* in the City of Buenos Aires. This selection has been based not only on the characteristics, but also on conditions and history of the organs. Some of the British organs in Argentina have been substantially changed through their history, and therefore cannot be considered historical organs for this study.

THE BRYCESON ORGAN AT THE *IGLESIA ANGLICANA ALL SAINTS*

The organ now housed at the *Iglesia Anglicana All Saints,* in the city of Quilmes (a town south of Buenos Aires Capital), was built by Bryceson Bros. in 1864 for the *Catedral Anglicana St. John the Baptist* of the city of Buenos Aires.[32] The Anglican Cathedral had been a center for British music in downtown Buenos Aires since its foundation in 1825. In a period of sixty five years, the cathedral housed three instruments: an organ by Richard Nicholson of Rochdale installed in 1831, replaced by the Bryceson in 1864, and the current instrument built by Bishop & Son in 1895. The latest was an important organ that unfortunately has been electrified, as well as downgraded throughout the years. In 1896 the Anglican Church of Quilmes purchased the Bryceson organ, and soon after, the historic treasure was installed in the sanctuary where it remains today.

Henry Bryceson (1776-1870) founded his company in London in 1796 and started a dynasty of organ builders that lasted a century. Though the business changed names many times through the years, for most of the time it remained a family endeavor. Bryceson never enjoyed the success of other British organ builders of the period, but his craftsmanship was highly respected. Argentinean organ builder Enrique Godoy discovered a very important document that was glued to the back of the music rack in this Brycesonorgan.[33] The two pieces of valuable information that the manuscript contains are a list of products offered by the firm and a copy of the program of the dedication recital. The list

[32] Found at http://www.galeon.com/brycesonquilmes. April 1, 2006.

of instruments ranges from very small organs to larger ones. In some cases, prices are included. A copy of the document can be found in figures 38 and 39. It is of equal interest to study the program of the dedication recital (see figure 40) performed at the factory in London by the organist of the Royal Agricultural Hall, Mr. Frederic Archer. The importance given to this performance by Mr. Bryceson strongly suggests that this organ was a very important achievement for the company.

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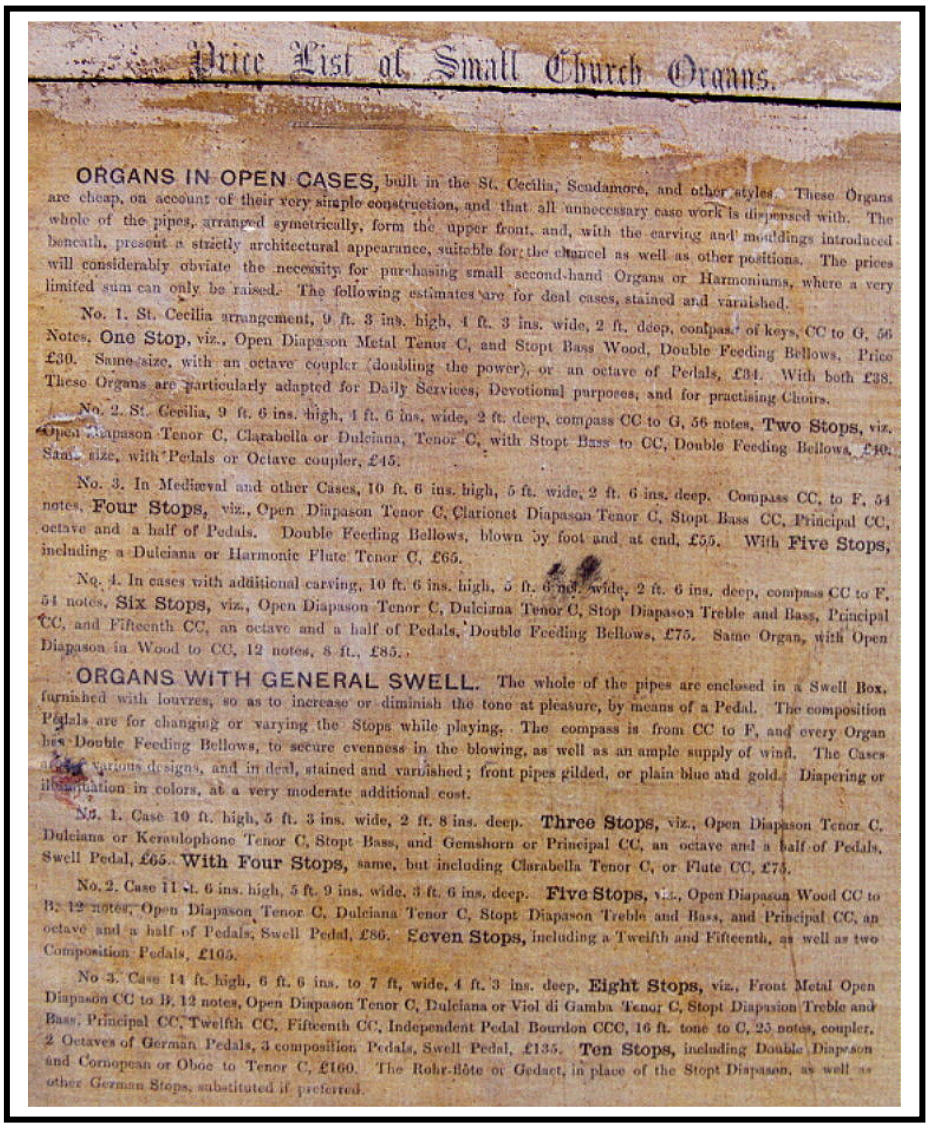
[33] *Ibid.*



Price List of Small Church Organs.

ORGANS IN OPEN CASES, built in the St. Cecilia, Scudamore, and other styles. These Organs are cheap, on account of their very simple construction, and that all unnecessary case work is dispensed with. The whole of the pipes, arranged symetrically, form the upper front, and, with the carving and mouldings introduced beneath, present a strictly architectural appearance, suitable for the chancel as well as other positions. The prices will considerably obviate the necessity for purchasing small second-hand Organs or Harmoniums, where a very limited sum can only be raised. The following estimates are for deal cases, stained and varnished.

No. 1. St. Cecilia arrangement, 9 ft. 3 ins. high, 4 ft. 3 ins. wide, 2 ft. deep, compass of keys, CC to G, 56 Notes, **One Stop,** viz., Open Diapason Metal Tenor C, and Stopt Bass Wood, Double Feeding Bellows. Price £30. Same size, with an octave coupler (doubling the power), or an octave of Pedals, £34. With both £38. These Organs are particularly adapted for Daily Services, Devotional purposes, and for practising Choirs.

No. 2. St. Cecilia, 9 ft. 6 ins. high, 4 ft. 6 ins. wide, 2 ft. deep, compass CC to G, 56 notes, **Two Stops,** viz. Open Diapason Tenor C, Clarabella or Dulciana, Tenor C, with Stopt Bass to CC, Double Feeding Bellows, £40. Same size, with Pedals or Octave coupler, £45.

No. 3. In Mediæval and other Cases, 10 ft. 6 ins. high, 5 ft. wide, 2 ft. 6 ins. deep. Compass CC, to F, 54 notes, **Four Stops,** viz., Open Diapason Tenor C, Clarionet Diapason Tenor C, Stopt Bass CC, Principal CC, octave and a half of Pedals. Double Feeding Bellows, blown by foot and at end, £55. With **Five Stops,** including a Dulciana or Harmonic Flute Tenor C, £65.

No. 4. In cases with additional carving, 10 ft. 6 ins. high, 5 ft. 6 ins. wide, 2 ft. 6 ins. deep, compass CC to F, 54 notes, **Six Stops,** viz., Open Diapason Tenor C, Dulciana Tenor C, Stop Diapason Treble and Bass, Principal CC, and Fifteenth CC, an octave and a half of Pedals, Double Feeding Bellows, £75. Same Organ, with Open Diapason in Wood to CC, 12 notes, 8 ft., £85.

ORGANS WITH GENERAL SWELL. The whole of the pipes are enclosed in a Swell Box, furnished with louvres, so as to increase or diminish the tone at pleasure, by means of a Pedal. The composition Pedals are for changing or varying the Stops while playing. The compass is from CC to F, and every Organ has Double Feeding Bellows, to secure evenness in the blowing, as well as an ample supply of wind. The Cases are of various designs, and in deal, stained and varnished; front pipes gilded, or plain blue and gold. Diapering or illumination in colors, at a very moderate additional cost.

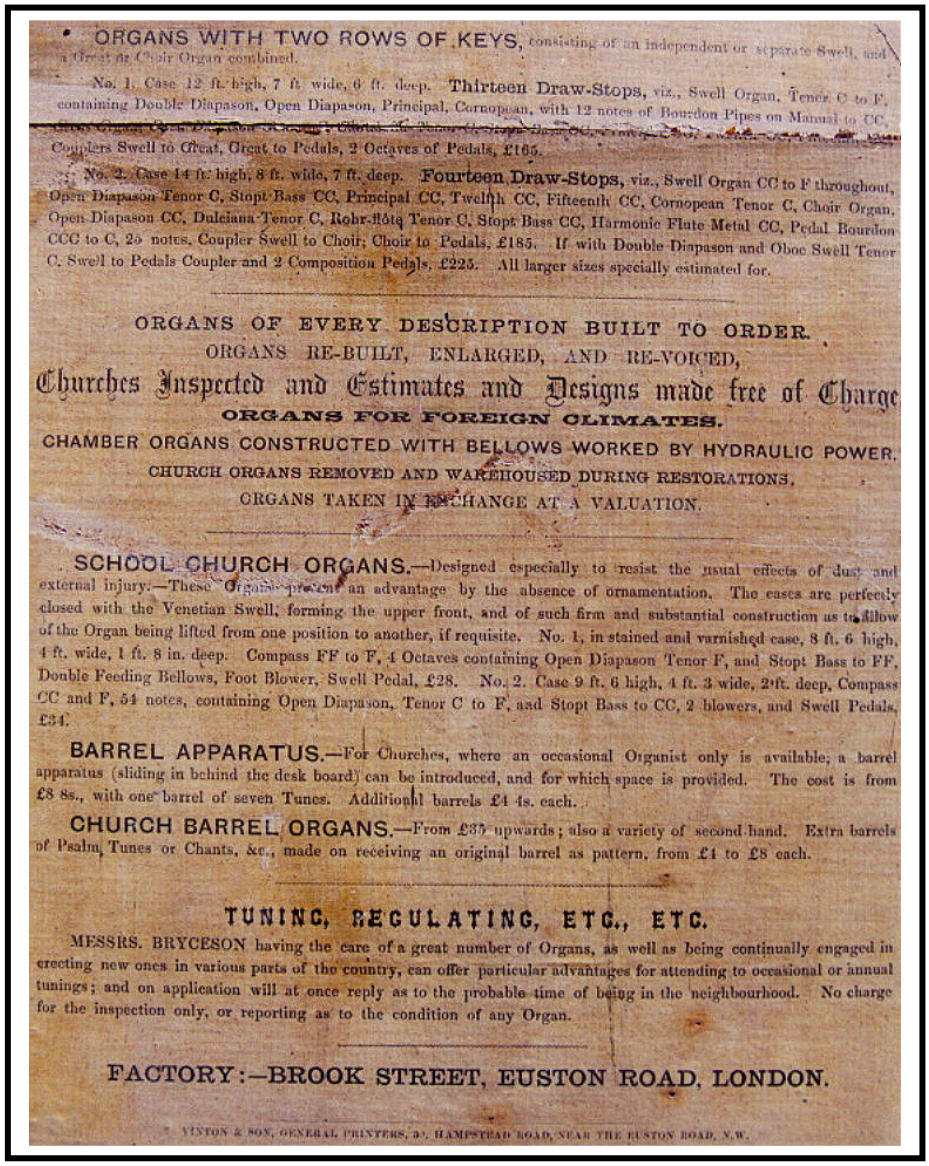
No. 1. Case 10 ft. high, 5 ft. 3 ins. wide, 2 ft. 8 ins. deep. **Three Stops,** viz., Open Diapason Tenor C, Dulciana or Keraulophone Tenor C, Stopt Bass, and Gemshorn or Principal CC, an octave and a half of Pedals, Swell Pedal, £65. **With Four Stops,** same, but including Clarabella Tenor C, or Flute CC, £75.

No. 2. Case 11 ft. 6 ins. high, 5 ft. 9 ins. wide, 3 ft. 6 ins. deep. **Five Stops,** viz., Open Diapason Wood CC to B, 12 notes, Open Diapason Tenor C, Dulciana Tenor C, Stopt Diapason Treble and Bass, and Principal CC, an octave and a half of Pedals, Swell Pedal, £86. **Seven Stops,** including a Twelfth and Fifteenth, as well as two Composition Pedals, £105.

No 3. Case 14 ft. high, 6 ft. 6 ins. to 7 ft. wide, 4 ft. 3 ins. deep, **Eight Stops,** viz., Front Metal Open Diapason CC to B, 12 notes, Open Diapason Tenor C, Dulciana or Viol di Gamba Tenor C, Stopt Diapason Treble and Bass, Principal CC, Twelfth CC, Fifteenth CC, Independent Pedal Bourdon CCC, 16 ft. tone to C, 25 notes, coupler, 2 Octaves of German Pedals, 3 composition Pedals, Swell Pedal, £135. **Ten Stops,** including Double Diapason and Cornopean or Oboe to Tenor C, £160. The Rohr-flöte or Gedact, in place of the Stopt Diapason, as well as other German Stops, substituted if preferred.

Figure 38: **Small organs offered by Bryceson.**
Courtesy of Enrique Godoy

Figure 38 shows the "Price List of Small Church Organs" found on the back of the music rack of the Bryceson organ in Quilmes, Argentina. As the reader can observe, the company offered several standard small organs with prices ranging from £34 to £225.



ORGANS WITH TWO ROWS OF KEYS, consisting of an independent or separate Swell, and a Great or Choir Organ combined.

No. 1. Case 12 ft. high, 7 ft. wide, 6 ft. deep. **Thirteen Draw-Stops,** viz., Swell Organ, Tenor C to F, containing Double Diapason, Open Diapason, Principal, Cornopean, with 12 notes of Bourdon Pipes on Manual to CC. [illegible] Couplers Swell to Great, Great to Pedals, 2 Octaves of Pedals, £165.

No. 2. Case 14 ft. high, 8 ft. wide, 7 ft. deep. **Fourteen Draw-Stops,** viz., Swell Organ CC to F throughout, Open Diapason Tenor C, Stopt Bass CC, Principal CC, Twelfth CC, Fifteenth CC, Cornopean Tenor C, Choir Organ, Open Diapason CC, Dulciana Tenor C, Rohr-flöte Tenor C, Stopt Bass CC, Harmonic Flute Metal CC, Pedal Bourdon CCC to C, 25 notes, Coupler Swell to Choir, Choir to Pedals, £185. If with Double Diapason and Oboe Swell Tenor C, Swell to Pedals Coupler and 2 Composition Pedals, £225. All larger sizes specially estimated for.

ORGANS OF EVERY DESCRIPTION BUILT TO ORDER.
ORGANS RE-BUILT, ENLARGED, AND RE-VOICED,
Churches Inspected and Estimates and Designs made free of Charge
ORGANS FOR FOREIGN CLIMATES.
CHAMBER ORGANS CONSTRUCTED WITH BELLOWS WORKED BY HYDRAULIC POWER.
CHURCH ORGANS REMOVED AND WAREHOUSED DURING RESTORATIONS.
ORGANS TAKEN IN EXCHANGE AT A VALUATION.

SCHOOL CHURCH ORGANS.—Designed especially to resist the usual effects of dust and external injury.—These Organs present an advantage by the absence of ornamentation. The cases are perfectly closed with the Venetian Swell, forming the upper front, and of such firm and substantial construction as to allow of the Organ being lifted from one position to another, if requisite. No. 1, in stained and varnished case, 8 ft. 6 high, 4 ft. wide, 1 ft. 8 in. deep. Compass FF to F, 4 Octaves containing Open Diapason Tenor F, and Stopt Bass to FF, Double Feeding Bellows, Foot Blower, Swell Pedal, £28. No. 2. Case 9 ft. 6 high, 4 ft. 3 wide, 2 ft. deep, Compass CC and F, 54 notes, containing Open Diapason, Tenor C to F, and Stopt Bass to CC, 2 blowers, and Swell Pedals, £34.

BARREL APPARATUS.—For Churches, where an occasional Organist only is available, a barrel apparatus (sliding in behind the desk board) can be introduced, and for which space is provided. The cost is from £8 8s., with one barrel of seven Tunes. Additional barrels £1 1s. each.

CHURCH BARREL ORGANS.—From £35 upwards; also a variety of second-hand. Extra barrels of Psalm Tunes or Chants, &c., made on receiving an original barrel as pattern, from £1 to £8 each.

TUNING, REGULATING, ETC., ETC.

MESSRS. BRYCESON having the care of a great number of Organs, as well as being continually engaged in erecting new ones in various parts of the country, can offer particular advantages for attending to occasional or annual tunings; and on application will at once reply as to the probable time of being in the neighbourhood. No charge for the inspection only, or reporting as to the condition of any Organ.

FACTORY:—BROOK STREET, EUSTON ROAD, LONDON.

[illegible] & SON, GENERAL PRINTERS, 30, HAMPSTEAD ROAD, NEAR THE EUSTON ROAD, N.W.

Figure 39: **Organs offered by Bryceson.**
Courtesy of Enrique Godoy

Figure 39 is the continuation of figure 38. In this section of the document the reader can clearly see that the builder was not only trying to promote new organs, but he was also advertising the services that he offered, including restorations, relocations, tuning and regulation.

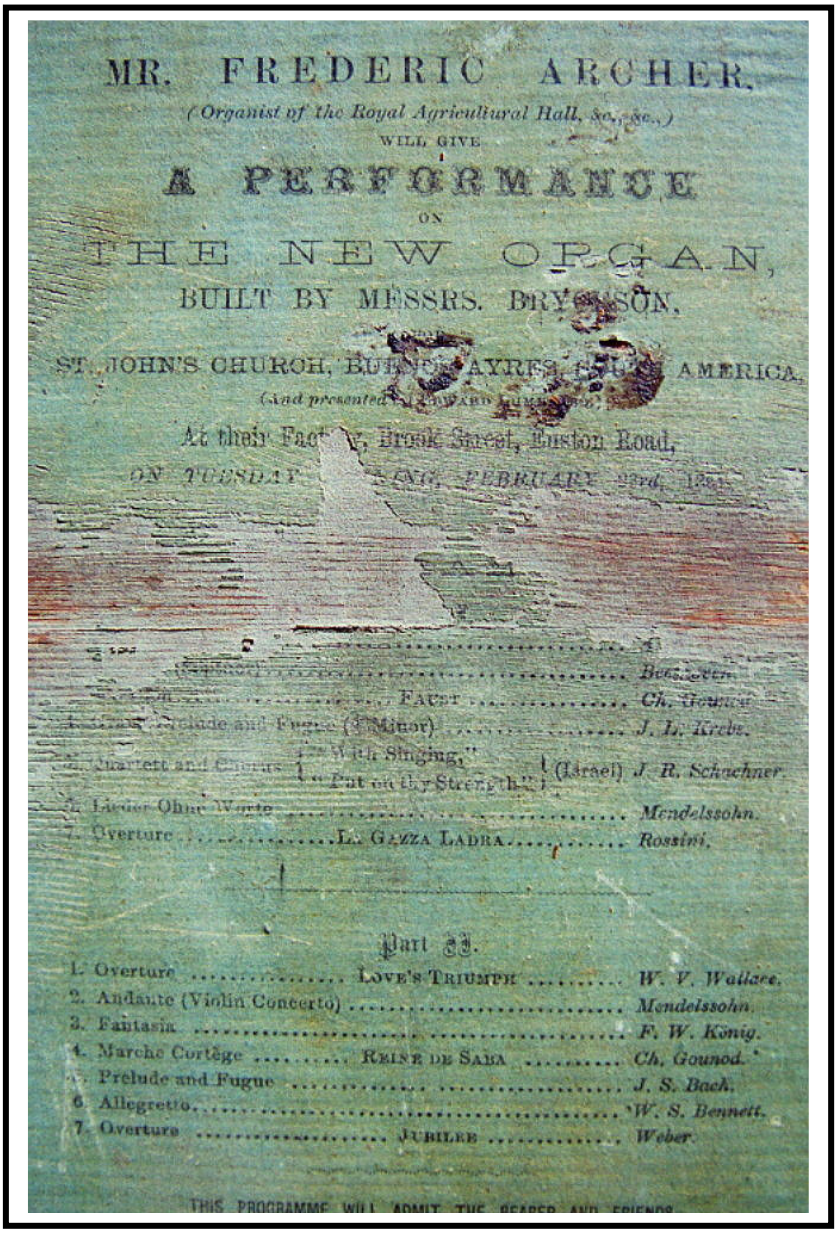


Figure 40: **Program of the dedication Recital**
Courtesy of Enrique Godoy

The program of the recital played by Mr. Frederic Archer, Organist at the Royal Hall, is shown in figure 40. Due to the degradation of the ink and paper, it is not possible to read the exact pieces that were played at the recital, but one can see that the music

ranged from organ compositions, such as the pieces by Bach and Krebs, to several transcriptions including works by Mendelssohn and Rossini.

According to documents housed at the *Church of All Saints* in Quilmes, the organ was moved and refurbished by a British organ builder residing in Argentina by the name of Walter Wainwright.

A BRITISH ORGAN BUILDER IN ARGENTINA

The name of Walter Wainwright appears in the above-mentioned documents as the person responsible for packing the organ in downtown Buenos Aires. He was in charge of its transportation to Quilmes, and he performed a restoration and installation of the organ in the *Church of All Saints*. He was known to have maintained the instrument for many years. His name also appears in a British-style organ that he may have built in Buenos Aires. It is currently housed at the private collection of Professor Enrique Rimoldi. It is still a mystery why he went to Buenos Aires and where he learned the trade of organ building. Even though his name is not mentioned in the Directory of British Organ Builders, in that very same publication there are two builders who share his surname: George J. Wainwright and J. A. Wainwright. It remains unclear whether or not Walter was related to these two gentlemen. Regardless, this is another indication of the activity level of organ building in Argentina at the turn of the twentieth century, as previously noted in Chapter II, with the immigration of Italian builders to Argentina.

Even though there is no information on Mr.Wainwright's background in organ building, one can examine the installation of the organ in the *Church of All Saints* and

study his proposal for the moving and maintenance of the instrument. The author of this study can clearly see that Wainwright had vast experience in the field and was well aware of the trends of organ building in the world. Unfortunately, he took some liberties and changed the original specification on the Bryceson organ.

Specifications

Bryceson Organ
All Saints Anglican Church, Quilmes
Year of construction: 1864

Original Specifications

Great		**Swell**		**Pedal**
Open Diapason	8'	Bourdon	16'	Open Diapason 16'
Rohrflöte	8'	Open Diapason	8'	
Dulciana	8'	Stopped Diapason	8'	**Couplers**
Principal	4'	Principal	4'	Swell to Great
Harmonic Flute	4'	Fifteenth	2'	Great to Pedal
Trumpet	8'	Mixture III ranks		Swell to Pedal
		Cornopean	8'	
		Oboe	8'	

Manual compass: C to f'"
Pedal compass: C to e'

This instrument has gone through many specification changes since 1864. Four major rebuilding jobs have been performed, each one resulting in a new specification according to the changing fashions that unfortunately changed the organ's historic character. The addition of Italian and German ranks did not help the overall sound of this instrument. During the last restoration in the year 2000, the goal was to conserve, as much as possible, the original pipe work and therefore Bryceson's sound.

Specifications Year 2000

Great		Swell		Pedal	
Open Diapason	8'	Bourdon	16'	Open Diapason	16'
Dulciana	8'	Open Diapasón	8'		
Röhrflöte	8'	Violin Diapason	8'	**Couplers**	
Principal	4'	Principal	4'	Swell to Great	
Harmonic Flute	4'	Twelfth	3'	Great to Pedal	
Trumpet	8'	Fifteenth	2'	Swell to Pedal	
		Clarinette	16'		
		Tremulant			

Manual compass: C to f'"
Pedal compass: C to e'
Wind pressure: 6 inches.

The added stops on the Swell are not of British origin. The Violin Diapason is of German origin, probably from Laukhuff, and the Clarinette was built in Italy. The instrument is installed in a chamber on the north side of the Sanctuary. This is a very different setting from that of its previous church (*Catedral Anglicana*) where the organ was freestanding and facing the congregation. The sound is somehow muffled by this placement, but since *All Saints Church* is very small and has superb acoustics, the musical result is outstanding, especially for choir and congregational accompaniment. The pipes of the facade of the organ are decorated with paint on stenciled design that make of this instrument one of the few with this kind of decoration in Argentina.

Figure 41: **Bryceson Organ at All Saints Anglican Church, Quilmes, Argentina**
Front view
Photo: Enrique Godoy

In the picture in figure 41, the reader can appreciate the decoration of the facade and the console. The stop knobs are placed at both sides of the keyboards. [The console can be observed in more detail in the picture in Figure 42.] The knobs on the left belong to the Swell stops, while the ones on the right manage the Great and Pedal divisions.

Figure 42 : **Bryceson Organ at All Saints Anglican Church, Quilmes, Argentina**
Console view
Photo: Enrique Godoy

Above the pedal board are the toe level pedals that activate the four fixed combinations. The hitch-down pedal on the far right opens and closes the Swell shades.

Even though the Bryceson organ is an instrument that represents very well the British school of organ building of the second half of the nineteenth century, it is fair to say that of all the organ building traditions discussed in this study, *Historic Pipe Organs in Argentina*, the British organ building school lacks the representation of a superb organ in Argentina. There is, however, an organ housed at the *First Methodist Church* of

Buenos Aires built by the firm of Forster and Andrews that, if properly restored, could fill that gap.

PRIMERA IGLESIA METODISTA DE BUENOS AIRES

The First Methodist Church of Buenos Aires was founded in 1836. During the first thirty years of its existence, the church offered services only in the English language since it was forbidden, in Argentina, to use the Castellano language for any Christian religion other than Roman Catholicism. The Church is located in the heart of the city and is one of the most beautiful examples of neo-gothic architecture in the country. From the British stained glass windows, to the amazing ceiling, this church was constructed as a masterpiece that today deserves the title of Historic Monument.

Figure 43: **First Methodist Church of Buenos Ayres**
Ceiling view
Photo: Rafael Ferreyra

From the day of its foundation, the *First Methodist Church* of Buenos Aires has been one of the premier centers for music in the city. Even today, the concerts of the

British community of Buenos Aires are held in this church. Handel's "Messiah", Haydn's "Creation" and many famous Christmas programs are some of the annual traditions of the community. Music, along with an outstanding social program, especially designed to help the poor, make this congregation one of the more active in the city. Even though both clergy and congregation are aware of the value of their historic pipe organ and would very much like to preserve it, they lack the financial means for such a job. As a result the very important Forster and Andrews organ has been silent for many decades. It would be possible to restore it due to the fact that most of the pipe work, as well as other components, are still all in the organ and in fair condition.

FORSTER AND ANDREWS ORGAN BUILDERS

> In the seven or eight decades before the first European War there were many organ builders in Britain. Most of them were worthy; some were artistic and a dozen or so were both, and produced works of great distinction. The Hull firm of Forster and Andrews, which produced more that thirteen hundred organs, was among the best.[34]

James Alderson Forster and Joseph King Andrews were, at very young age, apprentices with the well-known London firm of J. C. Bishop. In December of 1842, Forster and Andrews, while still very young, twenty four and twenty one respectively, decided to set up a shop for themselves in the city of Hull (the birthplace of Andrews). It did not take long for the firm to become established as one of the leading companies in the field. By the year 1846, they had built an organ for *St. Mark's Church*, Hull, which was regarded as a fine instrument. Their reputation grew through the years, not only

[34] Laurence Elven, *Forster and Andrews Organ Builders 1843-1956*. (Lincoln:1968). Page 5.

because of the quality of their organs, but also because of the many innovative inventions included in their instruments. Forster and Andrews was one of the first to overhang the keyboards, to set the stop jambs at an angle of 45 degrees, to introduce in Britain the compass of 61 notes for the manuals, to introduce the radiating and concave pedal board, and to use pneumatic levers. As the reader can appreciate, the firm utilized all of the advanced mechanisms developed for organ building during their era, which made them, at that time, a very celebrated builder. Among their instruments are the ones at Claremont Street U.P., Glasgow; Eastgate Union Church, Louth; Clowes' Chapel, Hull; Kinnaird Hall, Dundee and St. Peter's Catholic Church, Scarborough. In the year 1882, Forster and Andrews built the organ for the First Methodist Church of Buenos Aires.

Specifications

Forster and Andrews Organ Builders
First Methodist Church, Buenos Aires
Year of construction: 1882

Great Organ

Double open diapason	16'
Open diapason	8'
Clarabella	8'
Dulciana	8'
Principal	4'
Harmonic flute	4'
Piccolo	2'
Trumpet	8'

Swell to Great Sub
Swell to Great
Swell to Great Super
F to Great
MF to Great
Piano to Great

Choir Organ

Gamba	8'
Dulciana	8'
Flauta travesera	4'
Flautino	2'
Clarinet	8'

Expression to Choir

Swell Organ

Bourdon	16'
Open diapason	8'
Lieblich gedackt	8'
Salicional	8'
Voix celeste	8'
Principal	4'
Suabe flote	4'
Flageolet	2'
Mixture 3 ranks	-
Horn	8'
Oboe	8'
Vox humana	8'

Tremulant to Swell
FF to Swell
Forte to Swell
MF to Swell
P to Swell
Expression to Swell

Pedal

Open diapason	16'
Bourdon	16'
Violoncello	8'

Great to Pedals
Swell to Pedals

Manual compass: C to a""
Pedal compass: C to f'
Wind pressure: 4.9 inches

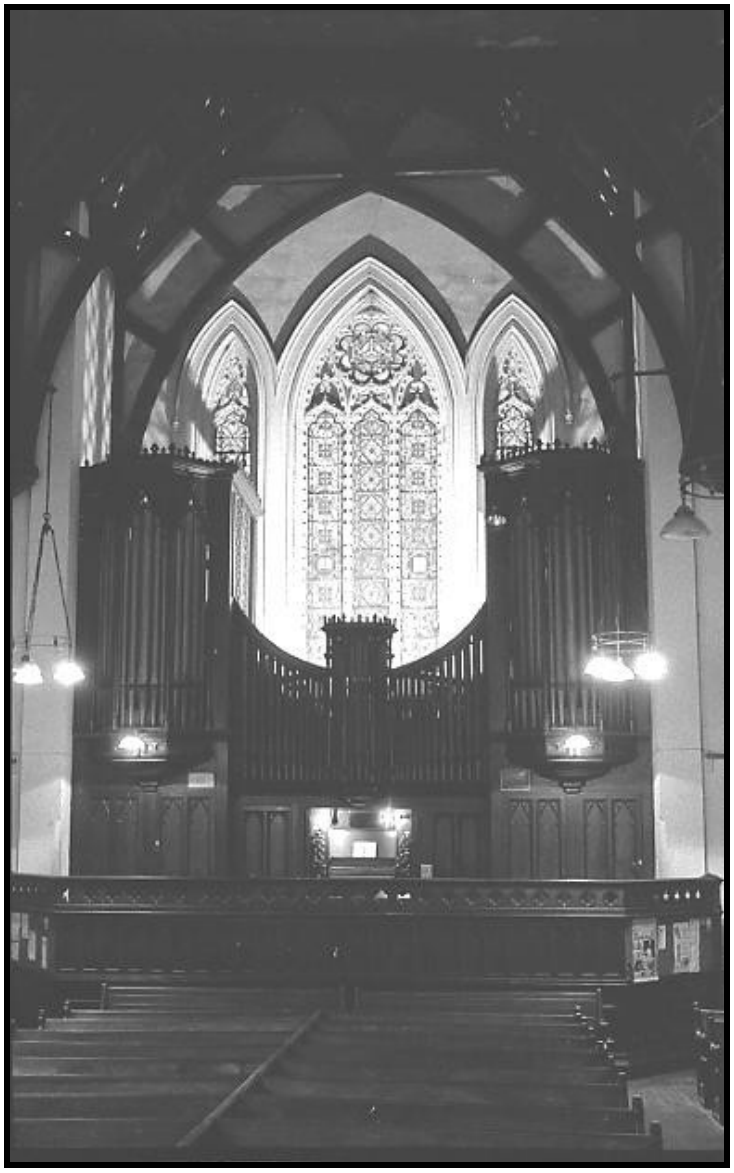


Figure 44: **Forster and Andrews organ at the First Methodist Church, Buenos Aires.**
Façade view.
Photo: Rafael Ferreyra.

Figure 44 shows the façade and case of the organ built for the First Methodist Church of Buenos Aires by Forster and Andrews. The reader should notice the integration of the organ into a superb space.

Figure 45: **Console of the Forster and Andrews Organ at First Methodist Church, Buenos Aires.**
Console view.
Photo: Rafael Ferreyra.

The picture in figure 45 shows the console with all the innovations previously mentioned, including the stops jambs at an angle of 45 degrees and the radiating and concave pedal board.

There are no documents regarding the organ in the church, but it is known that the instrument was used well into the decade of the 1970's. The hope is that a foundation or the government will some day provide the necessary funds to bring this treasure to life. Once a restoration is performed, this organ will be a superb example of British organ building that can be included among the most important *Historic Pipe Organs in Argentina*.