



Extracts from the Chapter minutes from 1701 onwards
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E&OE

In the last edition I mentioned the position of **Church Pricker**. Michael Goater kindly responded with some interesting research of his own: 'My source of 'copyist' is Burrows and Dunhill's *Music and Theatre in Handel's World: The Papers of James Harris 1732-1780*, OUP, 2002, p.336. I've included the editors' gloss.

3 January 1759.

James Harris, Salisbury, to William Warburton, Dean of Bristol (draft) [G945]

Your very obliging letter has encouraged Mr Higgins, the bearer of this, candidate for the Organist's place in your Cathedral, immediately to set out for Bristol. The character I sent of him to Mr Yorke, both as to his morals & skill, I believe very sincerely to be true. I can therefore add nothing to the trouble I here give you, but that I think my self very happy in an event, which has made me known to a person of your distinction.

George Combes, organist of Bristol Cathedral, resigned his post in 1758. His successor was Edward Higgins, admitted on 29 January 1759: at the end of 1764 Higgins resigned, to join the choirs of Christ Church and St Patrick's Cathedrals, Dublin, and Combes took up the Bristol post again. He played the organ at the 1761 and 1762 Salisbury Festivals. Higgins may have been the chorister of that name at Salisbury Cathedral 1747-55 who was then appointed 'Church Pricker' (music copyist) in 1756, and whose successor in that office was appointed in August 1759.'

THE CHORISTERS SCHOOL

The Reverend Edmund Dowland was admitted to the office of *Second Master* of the Cathedral Choristers School in October 1863. In the previous April the Chapter had agreed to purchase the fittings from the previous master. The School House and garden (Braybrooke House and Wren Hall) were to be free from all rents rates and taxes but to be kept in good tenantable repair. The schedule of fixtures was very large

and to my mind gives a wonderful insight into Victorian life - an up-market '*Do The Boys Hall*'.

Some words may be unfamiliar or have altered their meaning. *Pins, nails, pegs* and *crooks* are all forms of hook. A *lath* is a thin strip of wood. *Deal* is fir or pine softwood of a standard size. A *curb* is an enclosing framework. I suspect that an *ironing stove* was to keep a series of smoothing irons warm and I assume that an *eight-day dial* is a clock. A *valance* is a pelmet and *floor cloth* is similar to linoleum. A *flower guard* is a iron screen decorated with iron flowers and used to cover open windows. I don't know what a *bacon rack* is but it probably was to hold a joint ready for carving.

Boilers often needed an attached *cistern* as the mains water flow was not reliable. A *Register stove* is the usual built in iron with a basket.

Schedule

Attic No.1 - Four iron pins - painted bracket as fixed - blind on staircase.

Attic No.2 - Gate as fixed.

Attic No.3 - Two painted brackets

Attic No.4 - One painted bracket - painted rail and two pegs.

Attic No.5 - Painted rail and eight pegs - old grate.

Attic No.6 - Painted rail and four pegs - two iron pegs on door - bell as fixed - two roller sun blinds - seven iron bars to windows - grate as fixed - one iron bar to window - cistern and piping with brass tap - rail with five pegs in closet - shelf over closet.

Servants bedroom - Painted rail and two pegs - ventilator.

Scullery - Plate rack - deal board under window - brick and cement trough - water piping and three brass taps - copper with lead curb - grate brickwork and cover - deal shelf - deal shelf over window.

Kitchen - Kitchen range with oven and boiler and ironing stove - tin blower - two iron racks - two iron doors to oven with grate and brickwork - copper cistern to fill boiler of grate - iron rod to window - painted shelves with cupboard under and over - three shelves in recess - painted dresser with two drawers and two doors - one gas pendant - pump as fixed with wood trough - piping and brass tap - towel roller - two shelves - one bell as fixed - coffee mill.

Servants Hall - Iron stove and piping - iron guard to stove - two iron bars to window - painted cupboard with folding doors - towel roller - spring to door - rail and three brass pins - china cupboard fitted with shelves and lock with key - eight brass

crochets - two towel rollers - dresser with five shelves - iron pegs and two brass crooks - gas burner with glass shade - seven bells as fixed - small bottle rack.

Larder - Bacon rack - deal dresser as fixed - slate dresser with three shelves over - deal shelf - one bell as fixed.

Cellar - Three shelves - three iron bars to window - three meet crooks.

Breakfast Room - Register stove as fixed - two Venetian blinds - baize door to room - two shelves in cupboard.

Drawing Room - Register stove as fixed - two Venetian blinds - extra baize door - iron guard to window.

Dining Hall - Iron stove and piping - chain to bell - two branch suspended gas pendants - seven roller sun blinds - two brass hooks for curtains - stone slab - iron curtain rod.

Store Room - Iron stove and piping - four deal shelves as fixed - six shelves as fitted to recesses - three deal shelves.

Wash Room near School Room - Brass tap and piping - two towel rollers - four iron bars to window.

Cellars - Nest of four small shelves o one gas burner - deal board under window - one gas burner.

School Room - Grate as fixed - six roller sun blinds - eight day dial - two branch suspended gas burners and chimney - two one light burners and two chimneys - nine mounted maps - sixteen eight feet deal writing desks - three small desks - deal forms - eighty-four volumes of books - deal box - stage to desks each end of room - easel and blackboard shelf and Master's desk.

Study - Register stove as fixed - bookcase as fitted to recess with three drawers under - deal cupboard fitted with six shelves near fireplace and lock with key - roller sun blind - painted lath over window - two deal shelves in cupboard near door - iron pin on door.

Chamber No.1 - Register stove as fixed - two Venetian blinds - two cast iron flower guards - two brass pins on door - three shelves in cupboards - two brass pins on door.

North Dormitory - Deal lath - iron rod and valance to window - cast iron flower guard to window - register stove as fixed.

Water Closet - Small mahogany corner shelf - piece of floor cloth.

Chamber No.2 - Grate as fixed - two Venetian blinds - two cast iron flower guards to window - two iron pins on door and five brass nails in cupboard - four brass nails on door - four shelves in cupboard - two laths and one rod to window - night-bolt to doors.

Chamber No.3 - Grate as fixed with boiler and brass tap - roller sun blind - five deal shelves enclosed with folding doors and lock with key - gas burner - water tap and piping - two brass crooks to windows - two iron pegs to door - ventilator.

Hall Passage and Staircase - Painted rail and five large brass pins - one light gas burner - small painted shelf - painted rail and fourteen iron pegs - one gas burner - painted rail and seventeen iron pegs - painted rail with seven pegs - roller sun blind on staircase - one gas burner - roller sun blind - brass water tap - iron pulley and weight to door.

Outside - About one hundred and twelve feet of wire fencing about six feet high and two doors with locks and keys - brickwork to ash-hole - deal shelves in fowl house - summer house with seat and slate floor.

Green House - with stage and flight of five steps.

Tool House - Deal board under window - three deal shelves.

You do get a feeling of Upstairs:Downstairs - what poor soul had to light all those fires in the morning? And surely they did not manage with one WC! Perhaps they were not counted as fittings. Those of you of my generation would know what it was like before central heating and double glazing, which would help you get into the spirit of those times. Similarly, those of you who went to Prep-School would know the 'hardship is good for you' attitude.