

The 1904 **TERCENTENARY LOAN EXHIBITION** and the Illustrated Catalogue

In 1604, King James I granted a Charter of Incorporation to the Worshipful Company of Musicians. By 1904, the Company was celebrating the 300th Anniversary of this event and mounted a Tercentenary Exhibition under the Patronage of His Majesty King Edward VII. The exhibition included items of musical interest that had been loaned for the duration by members and friends of the Company and some, indeed, from the King (whose contribution included Handel's manuscript of *Messiah*)

The 1904 Loan Exhibition was held at Fishmongers' Hall. It was opened by HRH The Prince of Wales (later King George V) on 27 June and ran until 16 July. It was estimated that between seven and eight thousand people attended during that period. Items on display included ancient musical instruments, unique manuscripts, artworks, rare books, early printed music, concert bills and personal mementos. Also present at the Opening Ceremony were the Princess of Wales, The Lord Mayor, The Lady Mayoress and the Sheriffs, the Master Musician and Prime Warden Fishmonger, together with their respective Wardens and Clerks.

The ceremony naturally included musical entertainment, which was provided by six players led by The Revd F.W. Galpin, on instruments that would have been played in 1604. The picture is taken on the south terrace of Fishmongers' Hall. Galpin himself (a major collector of historical and period instruments) played a Bass Viol and had also loaned a number of instruments to the exhibition. He was subsequently awarded the Honorary Freedom of the Company.

The Musicians' Company Archive website www.wcomarchive.org.uk contains a great deal more information about the exhibition, including



(R) The Revd. F W Galpin and colleagues at the opening ceremony with 1604 period instruments

images of the Programme for the opening ceremony; transcripts of the Prince of Wales's speech on that opening day; links to the Minutes of Court Meetings, in which many of the practical arrangements and financing were planned; images of medals awarded to the organising committee (especially the silver-gilt award made to the Chairman, Sir Homewood Crawford); posters advertising the event; a drawing of Their Royal Highnesses with the reception party at Fishmongers'; and a link to a scrapbook of many other press cuttings and photographs.

Those attending the Loan Exhibition could buy a sixpenny (6d) programme detailing the items on show and from whom they had been borrowed. Sadly, no copy of this programme has yet been located, so if any

reader has one, and would agree to its being photographed, please get in touch! However, in 1909, some five years after the Exhibition closed, a limited edition, gold-blocked, hard-backed and beautifully bound and illustrated catalogue was published. It contained almost 360 pages, comprising an Introduction and seven chapters, which included descriptions of every exhibit.

Unfortunately, in the intervening 113 years, the Company's copy of this splendid catalogue has deteriorated, with leaves becoming loose and the covers separated.

However, thanks to the skill of conservator Paul Thorogood, under the aegis of The Guildhall Library (where most of our archives are housed), the catalogue has been restored to its original splendour. It makes fascinating reading

and, as every page can be viewed on the Archive website, it is now accessible to anyone keen to study the Company's history, without having to leave home!

An innovative and popular part of the 1904 Exhibition was the *Lecture Series*. Seventeen individual lectures were given in the Court Room of Fishmongers' Hall. Each focussed on a particular aspect of the development of music over the previous 300 years. These lectures (nine of them given by members

of the Company) were well illustrated, bound and published in 1906 as a book entitled *English Music*.

Every page of this book is also available via the archive website – which has a "What's New" button on the Home Page. This facility identifies when every new feature is added and is certainly the best way to keep up to date with discoveries and developments in the Company's archive. Details of the Exhibition and publications can be found under "What's New"/February 2016, the date when the information was added to the site.

Pastmaster Paul Campion & Liveryman David Herbert



The Tercentenary Exhibition poster



The de-luxe Exhibition 'Illustrated Catalogue'