

THOMAS CHIPPENDALE (1718–1779):
MUSICAL INSTRUMENT CONNECTIONS
AND NEW INSIGHTS

MARGARET DEBENHAM

2018

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About the author

MARGARET DEBENHAM is an independent scholar living in Cambridge. She was awarded her doctorate at *The Institute of Educational Technology*, The Open University, Milton Keynes in 2001. In retirement, she continues to maintain an active interest in exploring innovative uses of Computer Mediated Communication (CMC), in particular the use of internet based resources as a research tool to locate and obtain historical primary source material in the Arts and Humanities field, focusing on musical instrument and furniture history. Further information on her published work is available on the [Publications page](#) of her personal website.

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Thomas Chippendale (1718 – 1779): musical instrument connections and new insights

Revered as the greatest furniture maker of his age, the name of Thomas Chippendale does not however immediately spring to mind in connection with the manufacture of musical instruments. So, in this the 300th anniversary year of his birth, it was fascinating to discover a newspaper advertisement placed by Chippendale and Rannie in 1758 offering for sale a barrel organ housed within a ‘handsome Piece of Furniture’ at their shop in St Martin’s Lane.

Other newly identified primary source materials relating to Chippendale’s life and work include a report of a City of Westminster Coroner’s Inquest into a suspicious death, which provides positive identification of four workmen employed in his chair workshop in 1772; and two records relating to his second marriage in 1777 – a Marriage Allegation and Bond, both personally signed by Thomas Chippendale.

Chippendale and musical instruments

It has long been established that by 1754, the year in which he launched the first edition of the *Gentleman and Cabinet Maker’s Director*, Thomas Chippendale had entered into a partnership with James Rannie and moved both his business and his residence to the properties in Nos 60-62 St Martin’s Lane, which were to become the Chippendale firm’s premises for the next sixty years. As Christopher Gilbert first reported, fire devastated the workshop in April 1755, but by 1756 it had been re-constructed and it appears that the partners quickly recovered from this setback.¹

Although the firm quite frequently placed advertisements in the press for updated editions of the *Director* in these early years of their business, it seems the partners rarely felt the need to advertise furniture made in their workshops for sale publicly. Presumably this was because their trade came mostly from bespoke items commissioned by wealthy aristocratic clients. It was therefore surprising to discover a newspaper advertisement for a barrel organ, placed by the firm in 1758, which reads as follows:

To be SOLD

A Large and fine-toned Barrel Organ, being/ adapted to Gentlemen or Ladies who can’t play with the Finger./ It likewise being a handsome Piece of Furniture, and extremely useful/ upon an Emergency to dance a Minuet or Country Dances, plays a suf-/icient Number for an Evening’s Diversion, without the Expence of a/ Musician. It likewise plays a favourite Concerto of Mr. Handel’s, and/ his famous Water Piece, &c. in a compleat Manner. Further Particu-/ lars may be had at Mess. Chippendale’s and

¹ C. Gilbert, *The Life and Work of Thomas Chippendale*. (Bristol: Artworks, UK, 1978, 9-10)

Rannie's, Cabinet-makers, in St. Martin's Lane, where the Organ may be seen every Day except/ Sundays, from Ten o'Clock in the Forenoon to Three in the Afternoon.²

Although the 1762 edition of *Chippendale's Director* includes a number of designs for organ cases,³ this notice precedes that publication by four years and provides the first firm evidence of a complete instrument being offered for sale directly from Chippendale's own premises. It is interesting that the advertisement specifically mentions that the music played includes two works by Handel, since, this information provides a useful clue to a possible maker of the barrel organ mechanism, as will be discussed shortly.

A further pointer to suggest the firm's involvement in this field has emerged recently in the shape of a remarkable [barrel organ in a case attributed to Chippendale](#) (dated 1772), offered for sale by a specialist firm of antique dealers in mid- 2018.⁴ An on-line image of the original makers label for the mechanism of this instrument reads 'All sorts of Machines and other Organs made and sold by Geo Pyke/ Maker to His MAJESTY/ Facing Bedford Row'. So, one wonders, is it possible that George Pyke could also have been the maker of the barrel organ mechanism of the 1758 instrument advertised by Chippendale?

George Pyke (1725-1779), Musical Clock and Organ Builder

Born in 1725, George Pyke was the son of John Pyke (d.1762) a highly regarded musical clockmaker of his day.⁵ After claiming his Freedom in the City of London Clockmaker's company by patrimony on 1 June 1753,⁶ George worked in partnership with his father for some years, as is evidenced by an advertisement placed shortly before John Pyke's death in 1762 in which they describe themselves as 'servants to the Royal Family'.⁷ Pyke the elder was responsible for the completion of the elaborate musical clock named *The Temple of the Four Grand Monarchies of the World*, which had been left unfinished by the renowned clockmaker Charles Clay at the time of his death in 1740, and which included music composed by George

²*Public Advertiser* 5 May 1758. (*17th-18th Century Burney Collection Newspapers*; [hereafter BD] accessed 16 April 2018)

³ T. Chippendale, *The Gentleman and Cabinet Maker's Director*, 3rd edition, (London, 1762) Plates CIII–VVI

⁴Barrel organ offered for sale by Silvertone Musical Boxes in August 2018: <http://www.silvertonemusicboxes.co.uk/product/george-iii-barrel-organ-by-george-pyke/> ; accessed 5 August 2018. This instrument fits the description of a Pyke barrel organ in an article by Nicholas Simons in *The Music Box* (1991), Vol 15, No3, 83-84, including the exact list of tunes on the barrel. Strangely however, the image of the instrument accompanying Simon's description is of a different piece – presumably a publication error.

⁵ Brittany Cox, 'George Frederick Handel and Musical Clocks' *The Furniture History Newsletter No. 190* (London, 2013), 4-6 provides information on Charles Clay, to John and George Pyke's activities as a musical clock makers and George's later activities as an organ maker.

⁶ City of London Freedom Admission papers London Metropolitan Archive; Ref. No.: COL/CHD/FR/02/0778-0-785 (accessed via Ancestry, 27 May 2018). This document gives the name of six Freemen supporting George Pyke's application, as follows: W^m. Scafe, Clockmaker; Nat^l. Style. Clockmaker; John Locker, Leathersmith; John Avenell. Clockmaker; Rich^d. Adney, Barber and Rob^t. Carrington, Clockmaker.

⁷*Public Advertiser*, 6 January 1762 (BD, accessed 28 May 2018)

Handel.⁸ Handel is known to have composed music for Clay's clocks during the 1730s, a collaboration celebrated in 2014 by an exhibition at The Handel House Museum, London which included the manuscript score of Handel's *Ten Tunes for Clay's Musical Clock* and a Clay clock with 'a compass of three octaves and whose chimes and organs produce complex sounds faithful to the composer's intentions'.⁹ A recently restored spectacular and intricate organ clock, dated 1765, made by George Pyke, held at Temple Newsam also plays one of Handel's compositions.¹⁰

In this context, it is interesting that, as we have seen, Chippendale's 1758 advertisement specifically mentions two of Handel's well-known compositions being included on the barrel organ for sale in his shop. And in 1757, Pyke's premises were situated at May's Buildings, St Martin's Lane, just a few short blocks away from Chippendale's premises,¹¹ as is evidenced by a Sun Insurance policy dated 8 February 1757, which gives his occupation as 'Musical Clockmaker & Organ Builder' and the value of his insured household goods, utensils and stock in trade as £500, with a further £100 for wearing apparel.¹² With premises situated in the same street, it is likely that the two men would at least have been acquainted with each other's work.

Further evidence of Pyke's activities as a barrel organ builder at May's Buildings, St Martin's Lane is found in an article by R. Ison, 1994, who reports that a Table Barrel Organ in the collection at Burton Constable Hall bears a trade label which reads as follows: 'Geo. Pyke at the Bird Organ in May's Buildings, St Martin's Lane, London makes all sorts of musical boxes for birds, for country dances, minuets and to play concertos all in the neatest manner.' Ison provides a list of the tunes played for all six barrels on this organ and it is noteworthy that Barrel 3 includes '5. Air by Handel' and '6. Handel Water Piece' – the latter being one of the pieces specifically mentioned in the 1758 Chippendale and Rannie advertisement.¹³

⁸ *Daily Advertiser* November 25, 1743 (BD, accessed 1 June 2018). An extract from this advertisement states: 'and the Musick compos'd by Geminiani, Handel and Corelli and adapted to the Machine by Mr. Geminiani'. This clock is now in the Royal Collection at Kensington Palace (RCIN 1418), but minus the musical mechanism.

⁹ Jonathan Lennie, [Report in *Timeout on the Handel House Museum Exhibition*, *The Triumph of Music Over Time* held in London in 2014](#). For a more detailed report of the content of the exhibition, see <https://www.allinlondon.co.uk/whats-on.php?event=118823>

¹⁰ See the following link to a Leeds Museum YouTube video describing the [Temple Newsam Pyke organ clock](#) – entering the commentary three minutes in to listen to the tune by Handel.

¹¹ The segment of Horwood's map of London, 1792, showing the location of May's Building in St Martin's Lane is viewable on-line at: <http://www.romanticlondon.org/explore-horwoods-plan/#18/51.51021/-0.12643>, a part of Dr Matthew Sangster's '[Romantic London](#)' research project

¹² L. Whitehead and J. Nex, '[The Insurance of Musical London and the Sun Fire Office 1710–1779](#)' Sun Insurance Policies, P to U, in *The Galpin Society Journal* (London, 2014), Vol. LXVII, 264. George Pyke: Insurance Policy No. 156086, Ms 11936/119, p.173. Pyke insured is household goods, utensils and stock in trade for £500, with a further £100 for wearing apparel.

¹³ R. Ison, 'Pyke Organ at Burton Constable' [The Music Box, Summer \(London, 1994\), Vol 16:6, 158](#). Ison tentatively dates all the tunes as being pre 1770 and the organ as being made between 1760–1770. It is now clear from Sun Fire insurance records that by 1760 Pyke had left May's Buildings and his premises were

In 1760 Pyke took out another Sun Fire insurance policy this time insuring his dwelling house 'near the waterside at Vauxhall' and 'known as Marble Hall' for £300; his Household Goods, Utensils and Sock in Trade therein' for £1,000 and 'Utensils and Stock in his Workshop only' for £200. This was a substantial increase in insurance, suggesting that his business had expanded considerably over the course of the intervening three years.¹⁴ Following his father's death in 1762, George moved to John Pyke's former premises in Bedford Row and took out another insurance policy for that address, for a total value of £2,000, so his business was clearly prospering.¹⁵

When considered together, these circumstantial findings make George Pyke a likely candidate to have worked with Chippendale on the construction of their 1758 barrel organ, thus raising intriguing questions for future research.

Pianoforte attributed to John Pohlman in a cabinet attributed to Chippendale, ca.1775

Further evidence of Chippendale working in co-operation with a musical instrument maker has recently emerged from an important item of furniture sold on 5 July 2018 at Christie's 'Thomas Chippendale 300 Years' London auction, '[A George III Chinese Lacquer and Japanned Small Piano](#)'. The pianoforte action (attributed to John Pohlman, based on distinctions unique to the maker)¹⁶ is housed in an impressively decorated cabinet, attributed to Thomas Chippendale.¹⁷

As Michael Cole's catalogue description of the construction of this instrument explains, his examination of the piece revealed that the instrument and cabinet were designed and made as an entity, rather than the pianoforte action being inserted into an existing cabinet as a later addition. This therefore indicates a collaborate venture between cabinet maker and musical instrument maker.¹⁸ Debenham and Cole have observed that such combined pieces had become fashionable items of furniture for the wealthy elite during this period,¹⁹ as is also evidenced by

situated at Vauxhall, so it therefore seems likely that the Burton Constable organ was made *before* he moved, probably in the late 1750s.

¹⁴ Whitehead and Nex, '[Insurance of Musical London](#)' (2014), George Pyke Sun Fire insurance policy dated 31 December 1760; Policy No. 179595, Ms 11936/135, p.463.

¹⁵ Whitehead and Nex '[Insurance of Musical London](#)' (2014), George Pyke Sun Fire insurance policy dated 1 October 1762; Insurance Policy No. 192834, Ms 11936/143, p.434

¹⁶ For an informative account of the life and work of the early pianoforte maker, John Pohlman, see the '[John Pohlman](#)' page on Michael Cole's [Square Pianos website](#)

¹⁷ Christies London sale 'Thomas Chippendale 300 Years': [Sale 168395, Lot 17 July 2018](#). Hammer price realised: £175,000.

¹⁸Michael Cole's description in the [Christies catalogue Lot essay for the Chippendale – Pohlman pianoforte](#) (see note 16)

¹⁹ M. Debenham and M. Cole. 'Marquetry Cabinets containing Newly Fashionable Pianofortes made in Eighteenth-Century London: the cabinet maker's pianoforte – or the pianoforte maker's cabinet?' *The London*

advertisements placed by Longman & Broderip, as well as items reportedly for sale in Joseph Merlin's showrooms.²⁰

An Organ Case based on a Chippendale design at the Victoria and Albert Museum

Co-incidentally, it is also interesting to learn that a barrel organ roll is stored alongside the remains of an organ case held at the Victoria & Albert Museum, said to follow the design of Plate V of Chippendale's *The Gentleman and Cabinet-maker's Director*, 3rd edition, 1762, with slight variations.²¹ According to Raymond Russell, writing in the Victoria and Albert Museum catalogue *Early Keyboard Instruments 1959*:

The chamber organ, of which this case forms the front, stood in the front hall of Polebarn House, Trowbridge, Wiltshire. Two keyboards survive, one of them signed 'Lincoln 1794'.

From the supporting literature it appears that the case has been subjected to considerable modification/adaptations at various times in its history. Could it be that in its first incarnation it may have housed a barrel organ, rather than a finger organ, given the survival of the barrel organ roll stored with it? Again, this raises further questions for future research.

A handwritten list inscribed on the roll (Figure 1a) gives the names of the six Christian hymn tunes it was programmed to play (Figure 1b), these being: Morning Hymn, Mount Ephraim, Old Hundreth, Old 104th, Oxford and Evening Hymn. One possible use for such an instrument could have been to accompany hymns in a small church lacking a playable organ – or perhaps lacking the services of an organist available to play a conventional organ. Equally well, it might have been used for a similar purpose in the domestic setting of a wealthy household.

Journal on-line - Latest Articles section (London, Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, 2018), 9 E-print link: DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/03058034.2018.1425518>

²⁰ M. Debenham, 2014. 'Joseph Merlin in London, 1760–1803: the Man behind the Mask. New Documentary Sources' *The Royal Musical Association Research Chronicle*, (2014, Abingdon: Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, Vol. 45 Issue 1, 149). E-print link: DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/14723808.2014.888175>

²¹This organ case (ca. 1775-1799) was bequeathed to the Victoria and Albert Museum by Mr J. M. Courage in 1931 and is now in the Furniture Department of the Museum. (Museum No.W.37:1 to 5-1931). A full description of its provenance is given at: <http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O48876/organ-case-unknown/>



Figure 1a: Barrel Organ roll, part of W.37-1931
 Reproduced by kind permission © Victoria and Albert Museum, London

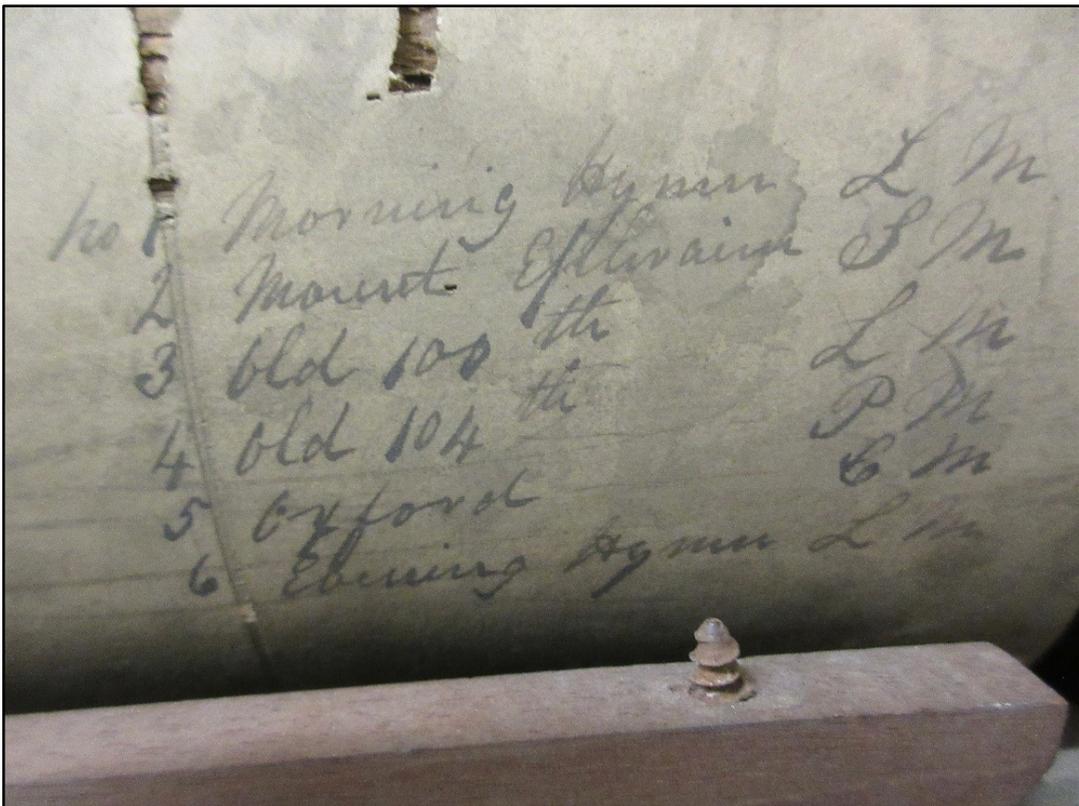


Figure 1b Close up of the writing on the Barrel Organ roll: W.37-1931
 Reproduced by kind permission © Victoria and Albert Museum, London

Four Chippendale workmen in 1772

The second set of archival discoveries reported here are of a quite different nature. Sourced from digitised records reported in the *London Lives* website, the findings are drawn from reports of a Coroner's inquest into the suspicious death of one Edward Rawling which happened after an incident at the chair shop of the Chippendale workshop in 1772, leading to his [Rawling's] death several days later.²² The account of these proceedings will be of particular interest to Chippendale scholars since it provides unequivocal primary source evidence to establish the names of three cabinet makers not previously identified as having worked in Chippendale's shop, in addition to the deceased workman, Edward Rawling.

Two of the witnesses called to give evidence into the circumstances of Rawling's death, were John Wisker and Thomas Jennings, both identified as Chippendale's workmen who were present at the time of the incident, which involved an argument between Rawling and third workman, named as Franklin Thomas.

Wisker, a cabinet maker, was the first to testify, telling the court that Rawling was a servant of Mr Chipindale[sic] who used to keep an account of the mens' working hours and delivered out candles [for use in evening work]. He went on to recount that when Rawling visited the workshop on the evening of 5th December for these purposes, he [Rawling] observed that Mr Thomas already had a piece of candle and therefore assumed he would not need one. Franklin Thomas retorted that in fact he *did* need another one, as he had been ordered to work late. When Rawling continued to refuse him, a scuffle broke out, during which both men fell to the floor. Rawling lay injured, saying that he feared he had broken two of his ribs. However, after a few minutes, he got up and went on to complete his work, taking account of the men's working time, before leaving the workshop.

Next to testify was Thomas Jennings, another cabinet maker working in Chippendale's shop,²³ who briefly confirmed the account given by Wisker. He was followed into the witness box by James Jones, an apothecary, who reported that he had been called out to see Rawling the following day. Though he had administered medication, this proved ineffective and Rawling died of his injuries four days later.²⁴

Having considered the evidence, on 14 December 1772 the jury concluded that Rawling's death was the result of an accident and recorded their verdict accordingly.²⁵

²² City of Westminster Coroners: Coroners' Inquests into Suspicious Deaths CW | IC: 4th January 1772 - 30th December 1772: [London Lives ref: WACWIC652120898, Image 898 of 932, 14th December 1772](#) (accessed via London Lives, 19 April 2018). The site provides scans of the original documents as well as transcripts of the text.

²⁴ City of Westminster Coroners: Coroners' Inquests into Suspicious Deaths CW.IC ; London Lives ref: [WACWIC652120899](#) 14th December 1772 (accessed via London Lives website, 22 April 2018)

²⁵ City of Westminster Coroners: Coroners' Inquests into Suspicious Deaths CW/IC, London Lives ref: [WACWIC652120890](#) Image 890 of 93, 14th December 1772 (accessed via London Lives website, 22 April 2018)

A further exploration of digitised archival materials has revealed additional information about two of these workmen, John Wisker and Franklin Thomas, which throws further light on their respective histories, as described below.

John Wisker

The *Dictionary of English Furniture Makers*, 1986 includes an entry for John Wisker, cabinet maker, a Freeman of York but living in Drury Lane by 1774.²⁶ An image of the original record now reveals that he first appeared in the list of newly Franchised Freeman of York in 1757, his occupation being given there as a cabinet maker.²⁷

The fact that he was a Freeman of York who went to work for Chippendale is interesting, since it suggests a further link to Chippendale's Yorkshire roots. Unfortunately, the name of Wisker's Master is not given and the author's exploration of other available Apprenticeship records has so far failed to locate it. However, conclusive evidence to show that this was the same John Wisker who was active in Drury Lane, London by 1774 has emerged from an unexpected, much later source.

In July 1818 John Wisker Junior, a Stone Ware Potter of Vauxhall, London, applied for the Freedom of York by patrimony, some 50 years after his father's admittance to the Freedom of York. The image of his application (Figure 2) provides the information that he was the son of John Wisker, cabinet maker, late of the City of York, and his wife Elizabeth; that he was born on 15 February 1778 and baptised in the Parish of St Mary-le-bone, Westminster on 22 March 1778.²⁸ A slightly later entry in the 1818 York Freemans Register records that his father was deceased.

Building on this finding, an exploration of Westminster records has confirmed that John Wisker, aged 33 (therefore born 1736), a cabinet maker, married Elizabeth Wagstaff, aged 25 of the Parish of St Clement Dane at the Church of St Martin in the Fields on 12 September 1769,²⁹ thus clearly demonstrating his presence in the capital by that year. As we have already seen, by 1772 he was employed in Chippendale's chair shop and is also recorded in the St.

²⁶Entry for John Wisker in *Dictionary of English Furniture Makers* (Leeds: The Furniture History Society and Maney, 1986), 994.

²⁷John Wisker, Cabinet Maker is included in the list of Newly Franchised Men, 1757, Folio115. Entry in the *Admission Register of Freeman of the City of York* (accessed via Findmypast, 11 June 2018)

²⁸John Wisker Junior, Application for Freedom of York by patrimony, 29 June 1818 in the *City of York Apprenticeship and Freeman Records*, 1272 – 1930; a second record, also in 1818, in the *Admission Register of Freeman of the City of York*, 1812 –1847, shows his father as 'deceased' (accessed via Findmypast, 11 June 2018)

²⁹ Marriage Allegation, 11 September 1769. This document gives the groom's name as John Wisker of the parish of St Martin in the Fields, aged 33; the spouses name as Elizabeth Wagstaff, of the parish of St Clement Danes, aged 25. (Marriage Allegation ref. DL/A/D/006/MS10091/); There is also a Marriage Bond, 11 September 1769, for this couple (Bond: MS10091E/82/4). The marriage is also recorded in the Parish Register of St Martin in the Fields (all accessed via Ancestry, 13 June 2018)

Margaret's Westminster rate books in Drury Lane in that year.³⁰ In May 1774, with his occupation shown as carver, he took an apprentice named Daniel Bootle.³¹ Westminster rate books confirm his continued presence in Drury Lane 1782 – 1784 and the York Poll book in 1784 ³² also provides the information that he was a cabinet maker living in London. To date neither his burial record nor will has come to light and further investigation is merited to establish his date of death.

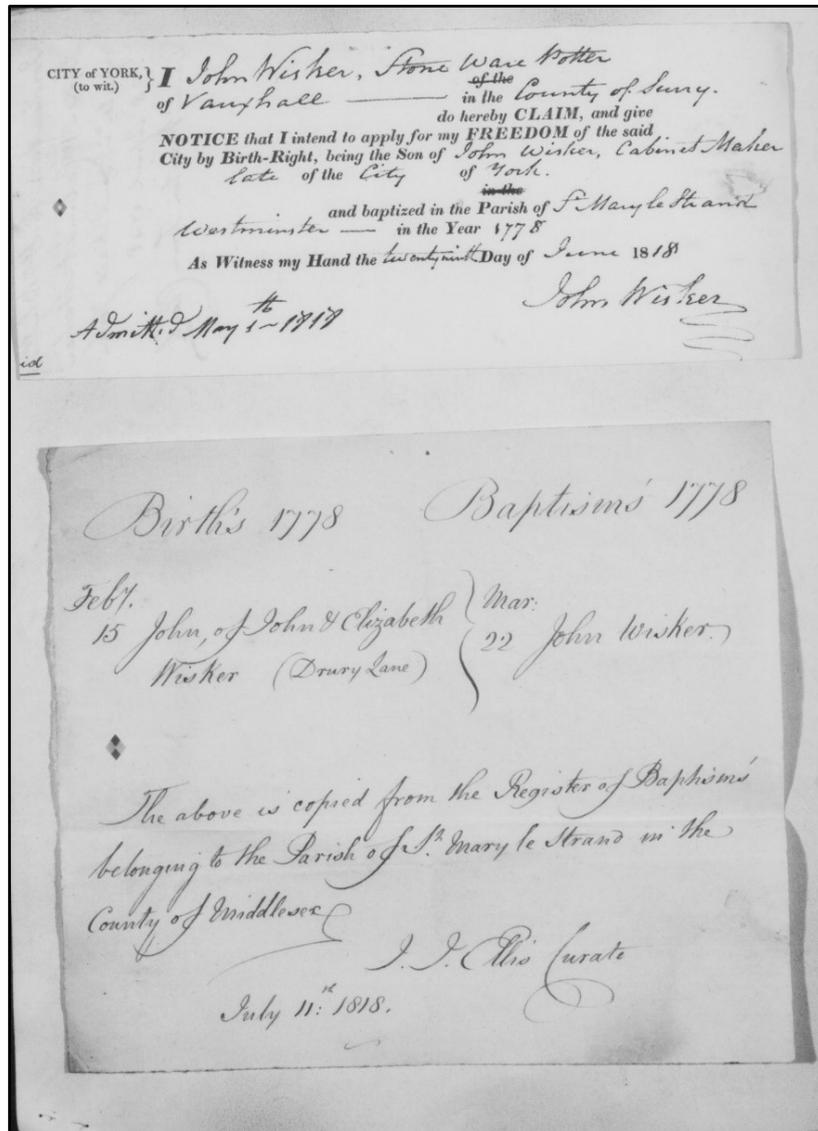


Figure 2: John Wisker Junior application for admission to the Freedom of the city of York by Patrimony, 1818 (accessed via Ancestry, 11 June 2018)

³⁰ Jno. Wisker, Drury Lane. St James Paving Rate 1772-1777, Folio number 95 (accessed via Findmypast, 20 August 2018).

³¹Daniel Bootle, apprenticed to John Whisker [sic], carver in the Parish of St Mary Le Strand, Middlesex, 28 May 1774. (Board of Stamps: Apprenticeship Books, IR1: Piece 28 (*British Country Apprentices 1710–1808* database, accessed via Ancestry, 13 June 2018)

³²York Poll book for 1784, 45 (accessed via Findmypast, 11 June 2018)

Franklin [Franklen] Thomas

New information has also come to light relating to Franklin Thomas, the workman involved in the fracas reported in the above-mentioned inquest proceedings. He was born in the village of Stoke Damerel, Devon and baptised 26 August 1739, son of Nehemiah and Susanna Thomas.³³ In November 1751 he became apprenticed to John Hundrey, a cabinet maker of Plymouth.³⁴ Assuming he served a normal seven-year apprenticeship, we may deduce that he would have qualified as a journey-man in about 1758.

In 1764 we find him in London, as recorded by his marriage to Jane Carns on 5 February of that year,³⁵ and in 1772, as we have seen, he was working in Chippendale's chair shop.

The next located mention of his name comes from the Apprenticeship records in 1778, by which time it appears he had moved to Chatham in Kent, where his occupation is given as 'joiner' and on 1 October of that year he took an apprentice, named John Palmer.³⁶ Marriage records show that Thomas Franklin took another wife, Mary Peaty, in Chatham on 10 May 1779, so presumably he had been widowed by that time (the death of his first wife has not been located). In July 1787, still in Chatham and now listed as a cabinet maker, he took a second apprentice, Thomas Wilkinson;³⁷ and some three years later, in October 1790 he took another apprentice, Redman T. Seague.³⁸ No record of his death or will has as yet been located.

Tracing further information about the other two workmen named in the 1772 inquest, the deceased Edward Rawling and the witness, Thomas Jennings, has proved more difficult. There is an apprenticeship record that refers to a Thomas Jennings becoming apprenticed to John Donnowell, a carpenter in Westminster, in 1755 – but there are two other Thomas Jennings listed in the *Dictionary of English Furniture Makers* who could also be this person.³⁹ We may hope that more information on the background of these individuals may emerge in the future, as more searchable records become available.

³³ Composite registers, Plymouth Devon, 54. Archive ref. 166.4 (accessed via Ancestry, 27 April 2018)

³⁴ Franklen [sic] Thomas, apprenticed to John Hundrey of Plymouth, cabinet maker on 5 February 1752 *Board of Stamps: Apprenticeship Books*, IR 1: Piece 51 (Register of Duties Paid for Apprentices' Indentures, 1710-1811 database, accessed via Ancestry, 22 April 2018)

³⁵ Parish register St Martin in the Fields (accessed via Ancestry, 27 April 2018)

³⁶ *Board of Stamps: Apprenticeship Books*, IR1: Piece: 30. (accessed via Ancestry, 23 April 2018)

³⁷ *Board of Stamps: Apprenticeship Books* IR 1: Piece: 64 (accessed via Ancestry, 23 April 2018)

³⁸ *Board of Stamps: Apprenticeship Books*, IR 1: Piece: 65 (accessed via Ancestry, 23 April 2018)

³⁹ A 'Thomas Jennings' became apprenticed to John Donnowell of St James, Westminster, carpenter on 25 June 1755. (*Board of Stamps: Apprenticeship Books* IR1: Piece 20 (accessed via Ancestry, 15 August 2018). The *Dictionary of English Furniture Makers*, 485 also records a Thomas Jennings, cabinet maker in York in 1758; and a Thomas Jennings, carver and gilder at 46 New Compton Street, Soho (1804–1820).

Thomas Chippendale's second marriage documents, 1777

Finally, two documents have come to light of a much more personal nature, thanks to the digitisation of records at the London Metropolitan Archives. In 1777, five years after the death of his first wife, Catherine [Redshaw] in 1772⁴⁰, the widowed Thomas Chippendale Senior took a second, much younger wife, Elizabeth Davis, as is already well known.⁴¹ However, archival searches have now revealed the existence of the original Marriage Allegation document, dated 17 July 1777 and Marriage Bond (Figures 3 and 4 below) relating to this union. Both bear Chippendale's personal signature and will be of particular interest to furniture historians, introducing a colourful new element to his life story and thus enriching the scant biographical information known to date.

Summary

In summary, the findings reported here provide new insights into diverse aspects of Thomas Chippendale's history and identify leads for future research.

Firstly, they provide evidence of his involvement with musical instruments makers at a time when placing instruments within decorative pieces of furniture had become a fashionable trend amongst the wealthy aristocratic elite, notably in London.

Secondly, the Coroners Court documents are useful in enabling positive identification of cabinet makers employed in Chippendale's chair workshop. In turn, this information has led to the discovery of more information about the personal histories of two of these craftsmen.

Finally, the images of the Marriage Allegation and Bond documents signed by Chippendale in 1777 provide a poignant, tangible link with his personal history – his marriage to the young Elizabeth Davis, which sadly was destined to endure for such a short time until his death in 1779.

⁴⁰ Catherine Chippendale's burial is recorded in the Parish Register of St Martin in the Fields on 7 September 1772 (accessed via Ancestry, 8 August 2018)

⁴¹ Christopher Gilbert, *Chippendale*, 1978, 15 and n.78, provides a transcript of the parish register entry for the marriage of Thomas Chippendale and Elizabeth Davis, which took place at Fulham Parish Church on 5 August 1777. The entry records that the marriage was by licence rather than by banns.

LONDON }
Diocefe. }

27 July 1777

Appeared personally ^{Thomas} Chippendale
and made Oath, that he is of
of Kensington in the County of Middlesex
a Widower

and intendeth to marry with Elizabeth Davis of the
same Parish Spinster aged twenty one
years and upwards

Holman and that he knoweth of no lawful Impediment, by Reason of any Pre-
contract, Consanguinity, Affinity, or any other lawful Means whatso-
ever, to hinder the said intended Marriage and prayed a Licence to
solemnize the same in the Parish Church of Kensington
James

and further made Oath that the usual Place of Abode of him the said
Thomas Chippendale

hath been in the said Parish of Kensington

for the Space of four Weeks last past.

Thos. Chippendale

Sworn before me

J. Simpson
Surrogate

Figure 3: Extract from a page of the Marriage Allegation Book, *Surrey Marriage Bonds and Allegations*: London Metropolitan Archives, London, England, Ms 10091/137 (image accessed via Ancestry, 3 July 2018 and reproduced by kind permission, London Metropolitan Archives)



KNOW all Men by these Presents, That We *Thomas Chippendale* of the Parish of *St. Andrew Undershaft* in the County of *Middlesex* *Unph. Officere*

are, hereby become bound unto the Right Reverend Father in God *Robert* by Divine Permission Lord Bishop of London, in the Sum of Two Hundred Pounds of good and lawful Money of Great-Britain, to be paid to him the said Right Reverend Father in God, or his lawful Attorney, Executors, Successors or Assigns; For the good and faithful Payment of which Sum, we do bind ourselves, and both of us, jointly and severally, for the Whole, our Heirs, Executors and Administrators, firmly by these Presents, Sealed with our Seals, Dated the *10th 17th* Day of *July* in the Year of our Lord 1777 -

Chippendale & Davis

THE Condition of this Obligation is such, that if hereafter there shall not appear any lawful Lett or Impediment, by reason of any Pre-Contract, Confanguinity, Affinity, or any other lawful Means whatsoever; but that *the above bounden Thomas Chippendale* *Widower* and *Elizabeth Davis* *Spinster*

may lawfully solemnize Marriage together, and in the same afterwards lawfully remain and continue for Man and Wife, according to the Laws in that Behalf provided: And moreover, if there be not at this present Time any Action, Suit, Plaint, Quarrel, or Demand, moved or depending before any Judge Ecclesiastical or Temporal, for or concerning any such lawful Impediment between the said Parties: Nor that either of them be of any other Parish or Place, nor of any better Estate or Degree than to the Judge at granting of the Licence is suggested. *and by his own*

And lastly, if the said Marriage shall be openly solemnized in the Church, or Chapel in the Licence specified, between the Hours appointed in Constitutions Ecclesiastical confirmed, and according to the Form of the Book of Common Prayer, now by Law established, and the above bounden *Thomas Chippendale* do save harmless and keep indemnified the above-mentioned Right Reverend Father in God, his Chancellor and Surrogates, and all other his Officers and Ministers whatsoever, by reason of the Premises; then this Obligation to be void, or else to remain in full Force and Virtue.

Sealed and Delivered in the Presence of

Thos Chippendale
W. Bennett

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Figure 4: Marriage Bond: Surrey Marriage Bonds and Allegations: London Metropolitan Archives, MS10091E/90 (accessed via Ancestry, 3 July 2018, and reproduced by kind permission, London Metropolitan Archives)