

Online Presentation: *The New Oxford Organ Method* by Anne Marsden Thomas and Frederick Stocken. (Oxford: OUP, 2020).

On Wednesday 25 November, EDOA hosted an online event via Zoom to learn about *The New Oxford Organ Method* from its joint authors Anne Marsden Thomas (an EDOA member) and Dr Frederick Stocken. EDOA members were joined on this occasion by members of the Southwark and South London Society of Organists, and there were in total about 50 people present.

Anne and Frederick deftly led us through the Method, revealing on the way how many decades of successful teaching at all levels (from beginner-level to conservatoire-level) have informed the two authors' design of the Method.

The Method is a comprehensive organ course of 20 graded lessons providing a complete syllabus whether for use by a self-learner or as material for use by a teacher and it covers a range of styles, including works by J. S. Bach, Buxtehude, Franck, Reger, and Walton. There are a further 40 graded works available on-line to complement those printed in the Method. The authors' expectation is that the 'beginner' organist will already be proficient on a keyboard instrument at Grade 3 ABRSM, although it was not clear from the presentation and ensuing discussion at what level the book concludes.

A single piece of repertoire is at the centre of each of the twenty incrementally more demanding lessons. Each lesson covers four main topics: registration, fingering and pedalling, and historically-informed interpretation. The authors have designed the book for use by independent learners as well as those working with a teacher. How long it might take to complete the Method is akin to the 'piece of string' question, but during the meeting Anne commented that she had experience of a diligent and capable adult student completing the entire course in just seven months.

This evening seemed to me to be a thoroughly worthwhile event and I would welcome EDOA hosting similar educational presentations in future.

Andrew Pink