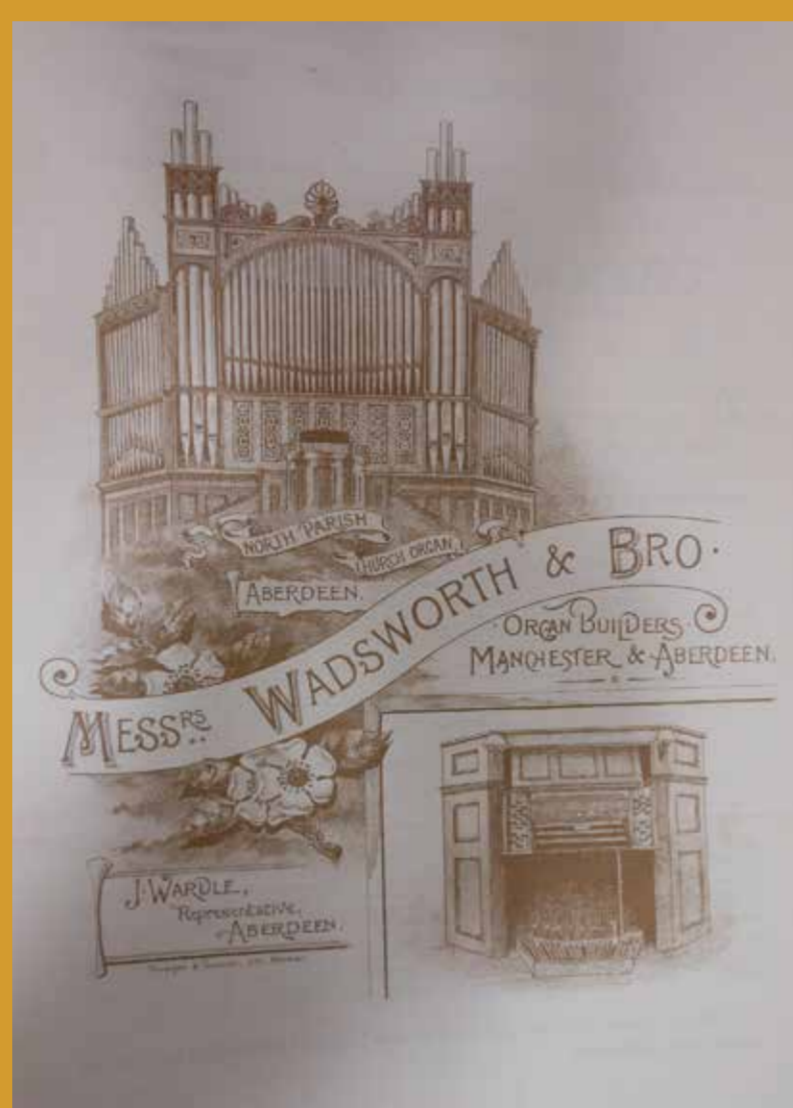




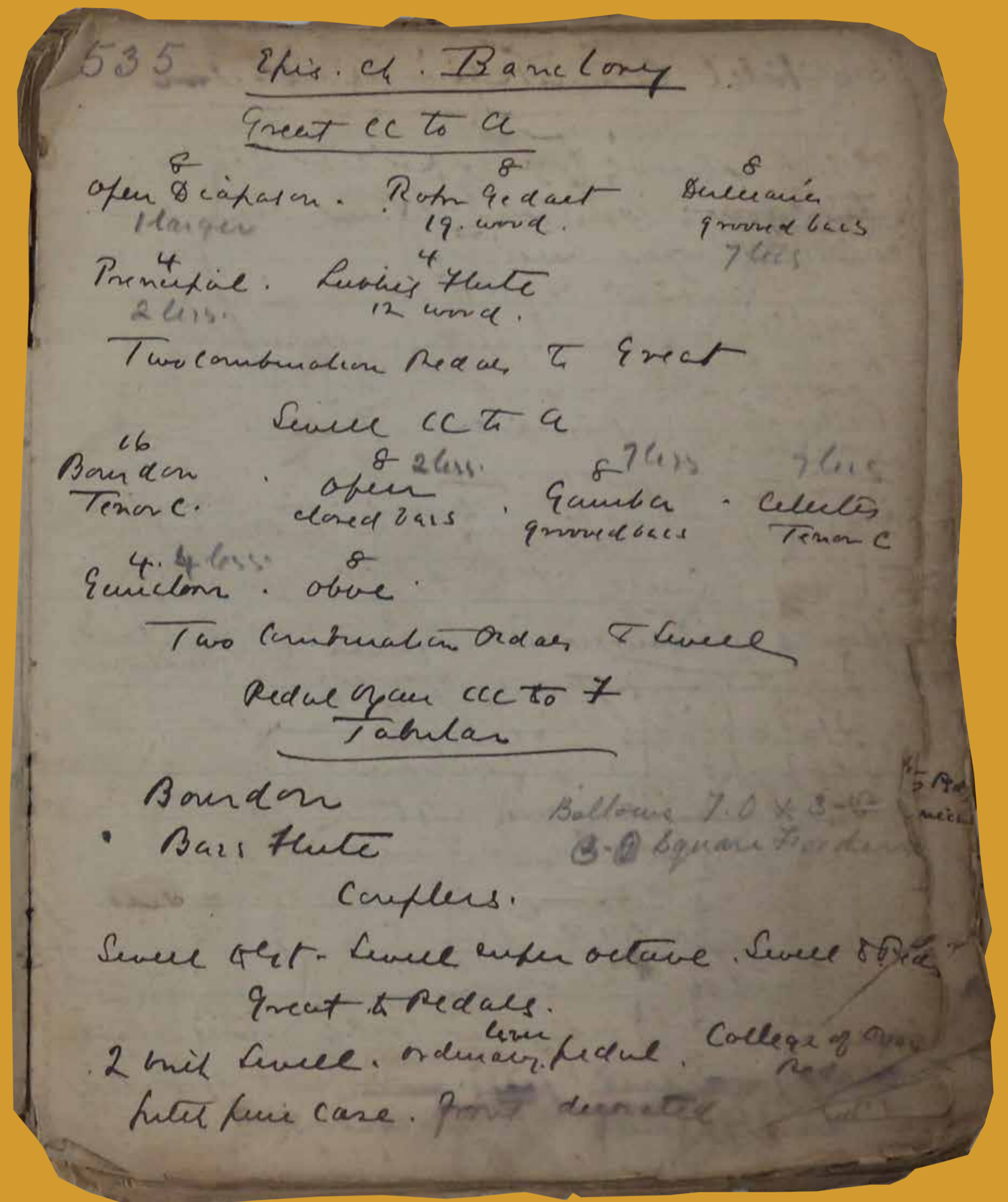
# THE WADSWORTH ORGANBUILDERS

Edward Wadsworth, then aged 22 set up his own organ-building company in about 1861. This was the beginning of the boom in church-building, and Wadsworth was one of many such enterprises, building small to medium sized instruments suitable for chapels and parish churches (and also many for use in larger houses).

By 1870 he was employing 20 men and 6 boys, one of whom would have John Wardle. A few years later, in 1874, Edward's brother, Ernest (younger by some 13 years) gave up his career as a first class cricketer for Lancashire, and joined the company. The name was changed to Messrs. Wadsworth and Brother.



It is clear from what still exist of the company's records, that organ building, its design, its manufacture and the eventual installation was very much a large mixture of skills and crafts. The order for an organ was often no more than one page in the workshop book. Some of those crafts, such as rolling out the molten metal to make the pipes, are still in use, almost unchanged, today.



After a period of prosperity, in which the Aberdeen and London branches were established, difficulties arose. Edward went through a difficult divorce, and his wife committed suicide. He went over to Montreal, Canada where he set up a short-lived branch office, remarried, but on his return did not rejoin the company. Ernest stayed in charge until his death in 1918, after which the company was run by the employees.

During their existence, the Wadsworth companies made over 1000 organs, mainly for churches in the North of England. John Wardle sold 161 (and maintained many others) in Scotland. A map of his efforts is shown below.

The Great Depression and the Second World War saw declining church attendances and revenues, and the demand for organ building and repair declined with it. The business was eventually taken over by Jardine & Co, in 1946.

Part  
12 of 12



St James' Church

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"That's all from me...  
your guide John Wardle.  
I do hope you've enjoyed  
your time on our tour.  
Farewell and God bless."

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Thank you for joining the interactive  
tour of St James' Church.

We hope you enjoy the rest of your visit.  
Please look around the rest of the church  
and visit our Exhibition.

[www.stjames-stonehaven.org.uk](http://www.stjames-stonehaven.org.uk)

