George Ashdown Audsley Papers
MS 7
1908–1925

Finding aid prepared by Bynum Petty
November 28, 2018

Organ Historical Society Library and Archives

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SUMMARY INFORMATION

Repository: Organ Historical Society Library and Archives
Creator: Audsley, George Ashdown, 1835–1925
Title: George Ashdown Audsley Papers
Date: 1908–1925
Extent: 0.5 linear foot
Language: English
Abstract: The collection consists of correspondence between Audsley and organ builders William Schuelke and Philipp Wirsching.
Provenance

Charles P. Wirsching, Wirsching’s grandson, donated the collection of papers to the Organ Historical Society Library and Archives in 1986.

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BIography

George Ashdown Audsley was an accomplished architect, artist, writer, and pipe organ designer. Audsley’s interest in the pipe organ was largely sparked by early experiences hearing W. T. Best at St. George’s Hall, Liverpool. Audsley wrote numerous magazine articles on the organ, and as early as the 1880s was envisioning huge instruments with numerous divisions each under separate expression, in imitation of the symphony orchestra. The Los Angeles Art Organ Co. (successors to the Murray M. Harris Organ Company) had Audsley design the world’s largest organ they were building for the St. Louis Exposition of 1904, and included him on the paid staff. This instrument was produced just as his book on The Art of Organ Building was being published. This great pipe organ eventually was purchased for the John Wanamaker Store in Philadelphia, PA, where it is today known as the Wanamaker Organ. In 1905, Audsley published the monumental two-volume *The Art of Organ Building* as an attempt to position himself as the pre-eminent organ designer in the US. The lavish work includes numerous superb drawings done by Audsley and is still consulted today although organ fashions have evolved in many directions in the ever-fluid, passion-driven world of music.

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ARRANGEMENT

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The collection is arranged into the following series. Series 1: Wirsching Correspondence. Series 2: Schuelke Correspondence.

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**CONTROLLED ACCESS HEADINGS**

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**Genre(s)**
- Correspondence

**Personal Name(s)**
- Audsley, George Ashdown, 1835–1925
- Schuelke, William, 1849–1902
- Wirsching, Philipp, 1858–1926

**Subject(s)**
- Organ (Musical instrument)—United States

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**COLLECTION INVENTORY**

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