

# THE TRACKER

*Newsletter of the Organ Historical Society*

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## THE DEBLOIS CONCERT HALL ORGAN - 1763-1851

by Joyce Ellen Mangler

The name of Thomas Johnston (1708-1767) of Boston has become familiar to organ historians through the outstanding and often-noted instruments at St. Peter's Episcopal Church, Salem (1754-1889), and Old North Church, Boston (1759-1886), the original Georgian case of which still stands today. At some time prior to 1763, a third organ was constructed and installed in the Boston Concert Hall managed by Stephen Deblois, a nephew of the organist by this name at King's Chapel. Stephen had purchased the building from his sons, Gilbert and Lewis, in 1754.

The Johnston organ was removed from the Concert Hall in 1763, replaced by a European-made instrument described at its official opening as a "delicate and melodious new organ, made by the first hand and lately imported from London," which remained in use until 1774. In 1771, Lewis Deblois advanced payments to his father in the form of monetary notes to bring the organ to King's Church (now St. John's Cathedral), Providence, where members of the Deblois family had become pew-holders. The action has been prompted through the installation of a new organ in the nearby Congregational Church, the first church organ in the town as well as the first in a "dissenting" congregation in America.

Dr. Ezra Stiles noted in his diary that the Johnston organ had been brought "from being employed in promoting Festivity, Merriment, Effeminacy, Luxury, and Midnight Revellings . . . to be used in the Worship of God." A well-needed consecration of the organ took place in December, 1772, with music performed by the Concert Hall organist, Josiah Flagg, and a small choir, and a sermon entitled "On the Lawfulness, Excellency and Advantage of Instrumental Music in Public Worship" probably based on James Lyon's popular essay.

The organ soon became a familiar part of public celebrations, with annual accounts of its use in Fourth of July programs and Masonic conventions appearing in the PROVIDENCE GAZETTE, in contrast to the Congregational organ which was seldom used even for regular services. In 1791 this prestige was threatened by seizure of the organ by agents for Gilbert Deblois now in London, remind-

ing King's Church that the loan of Lewis Deblois had never been repaid. The Wardens wrote Gilbert, pleading: "We persuade ourselves that your intention is not to distress the Church; having so long experienced the utility of an organ in Divine Worship, we should deeply deplore its loss." The matter was settled to Gilbert's satisfaction, his acknowledgement commenting: "I heartily wish your Church to increase, and not to suffer any Unexperienced Person to clean your Organ, (which) is equal to any of the size now in this Kingdom."

Unfortunately, nothing further is known about the size or specifications of the instrument. However, the surviving church records contain an interesting series of references to its repairs during reconstruction in a newly completed church in 1811. An appointed committee deliberated as to the proper builder, considering John Geib of New York who frequently advertised in the GAZETTE. Their choice was an "organ artificer" identified only as Dan Thompson. The following entries in a ledger by themselves create an accurate and colorful account of the restoration:

April 18	pd Bolston for 1 sheep & 5 squirrel skins for repairing the Organ	\$1.12½
April 30	pd blowing bellows 1 day - tuning the Organ	.25
	pd a boy . . . Organ Blowing	.56
May 7	pd Young Hay for blowing the Organ Bellows 3 days	.75
May 11	pd Dan Thompson pr. do for setting up, repairing and tuning the Organ	56.37½
May 14	pd Saml E. Hamlin pr Bill & rct for a copper glue-kettle &c for repairing the Organ	3.54
May 28	pd Saml E. Hamlin for Lead and casting Ornaments to cover the tops of the two new front Pipes of the Organ	.45

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# The Organs at St. Mary's School and Convent

By Albert F. Robinson

On a promontory called Mount St. Gabriel overlooking the broad and beautiful bay in the Hudson River at Peekskill, New York, stand the Convent and School of the Sisters of St. Mary (Episcopal). The imposing buildings contain two organs of particular interest to tracker enthusiasts, and the Sisters are most generous in allowing them to be seen and played.

The 2m-8rk tracker in the School Chapel has been attributed to several builders, among them Hilborne Roosevelt and Henry Erben. A cursory examination yields no evident marks of identification save a small circular photograph of a white-haired, capped gentleman who apparently built the organ sometime between 1870 and 1890.

The present condition of the organ is fair, there being some silent notes in the pedal and reed, and the general voicing is quite uneven. But it is used daily for practice and services, and has a rich and beautiful quality of tone.

The organ stands by itself on a space about 5 x 8 feet in area. The console occupies the central front, over which is a block of 13 Gamba pipes. Two sets of four of the largest Gamba pipes flank this center block and console, and the largest pedal Bourdon pipes constitute the two sides of the case. The displayed Gamba pipes are highly ornamented.

The stop-list is as follows:

GREAT - 61 notes	SWELL - 61 notes
8' Gamba ..... 61 pipes	8' Stop. Diapason..61 pipes
8' Melodia ..... 61 pipes	8' Aeoline TC ..... 49 pipes
4' Flute ..... 61 pipes	4' Violina ..... 61 pipes
COUPLERS	8' Oboe TF ..... 44 pipes
Great to Pedal	8' Bassoon ..... 17 pipes
Swell to Pedal	PEDAL - 30 notes
Swell to Great	16' Bourdon.....25 pipes
	Tremolo (not working)

There is a fixed swell pedal, and there were originally two other couplers which now have been removed - probaby a Great to Great 4' and Swell to Great 4'. An electric blower now supplies the wind.

The Sisters of St. Mary would like to sell this organ, but only for a substantial sum as they are anxious to build a fund for a good new pipe organ.

At the Convent Chapel the organ nameplate is engraved "Frank Roosevelt, successor to Hilborne L. Roosevelt No. 514 1892." There is an imposing

array of 31 ornate metal pipes across the front of the case over the console, the 21 center pipes being the lower notes of the Great Open Diapason - the others being silent. The stop-list is as follows:

GREAT - 58 notes	SWELL - 58 notes
8' Open Diapason.....metal (enclosed in Swell):	8' Violin Diapason.....metal
8' Salicional .....metal	8' Stopped Diapason..wood
8' Doppel Flote .....wood	8' Dolce .....metal
4' Gemshorn .....metal	4' Flute Harmonique....metal
	Tremulant
PEDAL - 27 notes	COUPLERS
16' Bourdon .....wood	Great to Pedal
	Swell to Pedal
	Swell to Great
	Swell to Great 4'

There is a balanced swell pedal, a "Bellows Signal" (which now serves as the electric blower switch), and the three mechanical toe pistons provide "piano", "full organ" and "great to pedal reversible" accessory action.

The organ was originally pumped by hand, but now the wind is supplied by an electric blower—the only change to be made over the years. The organ is in a very good state of repair and is used regularly.

Expert craftsmanship is in evidence throughout. There is evidence, though, that the Great Gemshorn was taken from an older organ and originally sounded as a Principal at a different scale since each pipe is marked "Prin" and three different key pitches appear on each. Then, at another point, the mark "Gems" is made in the same handwriting.

The Open Diapason is almost stentorian in sound, but the rest of the stops are beautifully voiced. The Salicional is fitted with carefully wrought metal "beards", producing a silvery quality that is almost the equivalent of a light reed and yet blends well with all other stops. The Doppel Flote is big but not too big, possessing a hollow and sometimes haunting quality. The Gemshorn is bright and indeed sounds more like a Principal. In the Swell the Violin Diapason is more like a second Open, and the Flute Harmonique is the most distinguished register of this manual. The Stopped Diapason is quite lovely and blends well with all. The Great manual keys rattle a bit, particularly when played rapidly, but otherwise the organ is in an excellent condition and should serve well for many years to come.

A visit to Peekskill can be a memorable experience, particularly when it includes a stop at St. Mary's.

# THE BALTIMORE BUILDERS

(continued)

Third Installment of the Story by Thomas S. Eader

During the 1870's some new faces appeared on the Baltimore scene. First came Henry Niemann who became well established at the time when August Pomplitz was coming to the end of his career. Though his later advertisements say he began in Baltimore in 1868, an authoritative sketch in the BALTIMORE FEDERATION OF LABOR for 1900 states he began in 1872. Henry Niemann was born on April 27, 1838, says the article, in Osnabruck, Germany, where he served three years as a cabinet maker's apprentice. Coming to this country in 1857 he gained employment with John Clop, organ-builder in Cincinnati, Ohio. He did well and went to London two years later to continue his study with Barker, ending his term there in 1862. Next he entered the factory of Cavaille-Coll in Paris and served there five years. (Subsequently both he and Cavaille-Coll died at the same time.) After building several small organs in Paris, he went to Meppen, Germany, where he built a large three manual costing \$8,000 for the Parr Kirche, the large Roman Catholic church. Niemann then toured all the largest factories, so the account goes, examining the many methods. He returned to the United States in 1872 and opened a business in Baltimore. The corner of Caroline and Holland Streets was the first Baltimore Directory listing for him in 1876. In 1878 he moved to Nos. 10 and 12 North High Street and the same year won the Maryland Institute Exhibition Gold Medal. At the time of his death, October 26, 1899, he had built about forty organs for Baltimore alone and many others for all parts of the country. Although the tone, workmanship, materials and design of his organs are generally of very fine quality, the cases or display fronts are totally without merit, being in all cases wide, formless, topless flats of large scaled pipes. The tone is very bold and brilliant, even in the small organs. The 1897 stop-list here presented is quite typical of all his stop-lists, and the instrument so represented is very full, though not overbearing. It is brighter than most classic style organs of today, but the tone is balanced well from treble to bass. It certainly is a remarkable instrument not even considering its late date. In 1887 Niemann was located at 561 East Monument Street, and he enlarged to include 563 East Monument in 1891, this building being two row houses thrown together, though the two stood separate from other nearby buildings. After 1899 Frank H. Niemann, Henry's son, continued the business, but by 1908 he had ceased operation.

The 1883 Directory was the first to mention the opening of Hilborne Roosevelt's branch at 218 West German Street (the old shop of other builders, it will be remembered) which had begun in 1880 with Adam Stein as the manager. In 1887 the new street numbering system made this same location 668 West German. In 1891 William F. Hastings

was the manager while Adam Stein was in New York after the death of Hilborne in 1887. Adam Stein returned to the city after January, 1893 when Frank Roosevelt closed down the Roosevelt Organ Works entirely. Stein continued at the 668 West German Street address on his own through 1912, being then the last of the tracker organ builders still working on new organs; for by World War I all organ building in the city had died, and has never returned to life. This information on Stein comes from the same Baltimore Federation of Labor publication as the Niemann material.

Though the last three builders were the more important, there were several others that deserve mention for their work at this time, not to forget those covered in the last installment such as James Hall, J. Edward Schad, Louisa Pomplitz, J. W. Otto, C. Louis Miller and Leon P. Beaulieu. In 1883 George A. Schumacher opened a shop at 79 East Monument Street which the next year was organized into the Baltimore Church and Concert Organ Company and then moved to 32 Hanover Street. Mr. Schumacher was the manager, but a prominent Baltimore financier, F. X. Ganter, was the president. Ganter was proprietor of the Baltimore Steam Show Case Works in the same location -- a strange combination! In 1885 both moved to 179 West Pratt Street and ads mention billiard and pool tables, store and office fixtures, as well as church organs. In 1887 they were at 11 West Pratt Street and stayed there until last heard of in 1899. No organs remain by this company as far as is known.

George E. Barker came to Baltimore in 1875 advertising the manufacture and repair of organs. He worked in his home until 1885 at 168 Asquith Street, in 1878 at 412 North Gay Street, and in 1880 at 124 East Pratt Street. In 1881 he set up a separate shop at 7 North Holliday Street and then opened the Barker Baltimore Organ Company at 88 East Monument Street in 1885 which lasted only through 1886. About 1875 the Shimek family, Joseph the father, James and V. J. (or J. V.) the sons, came to Baltimore as hand organ makers. They are mentioned until 1880 in the directories.

But for a few isolated names and facts, this concludes the story of the Baltimore organ builders. In the next issue of THE TRACKER, for whatever use can be made of it, there will be a summary of unknown material needed to fill in certain portions of the story and also mention of certain conclusions and opinions which cannot be backed up by anything sounder than supposition from reading between the lines. Also included will be a summary of the names, dates, locations, etc., of all builders for a ready reference.

# Baltimore-Built Organs...

By Henry Niemann, 1897, in Otterbein Memorial Church, Sharp and Conway Streets, Baltimore, Maryland:

GREAT - 58 notes	SWELL - 58 notes
8' Open Diapason	8' Violin Diapason
8' Melodia	8' Stopd Diapason
8' Dulciana	8' Salicinal
4' Octave	4' Harmonic Flute
2 2/3' Twelfth	III Dolce Cornet
2' Fifteenth	8 Oboe TC
PEDAL - 27 notes	COUPLERS
16' Bourdon	8' Swell to Great
(No tremulant)	8' Swell to Pedal
	8' Great to Pedal

By Adam Stein, 1905, in St. John's Episcopal Church, Richmond, Virginia:

GREAT - 61 notes	SWELL - 61 notes
8' Open Diapason	8' Open Diapason
8' Melodia	8' Stop Diapason
8' Dulciana	8' Salicinal
4' Gemshorn	8' Aeoline
4' Flute	4' Flute Harmonic
2' Super Octave	8' Oboe

PEDAL - 30 notes  
16' Bourdon

COUPLERS  
8' Swell to Great  
4' Swell to Great  
8' Swell to Pedal  
8' Swell to Pedal

By Hilborne Roosevelt, 1886, No. 320, in Martini Lutheran Church, Sharp and Henrietta Streets, Baltimore, Maryland:

GREAT	SWELL
8' Open Diapason	16' Bourdon
8' Dopplefloete	8' Open Diapason
8' Dulciana	8' Stopped Diapason
4' Octave	8' Salicinal
* Rohrfloete	* Vox Celeste
2' Harmonic Piccolo	4' Harmonic Flute
8' Trumpet	8' Oboe
COUPLERS	* Vox Humana
8' Swell to Great	PEDAL
4' Swell to Great	16' Bourdon
8' Swell to Pedal	* Lieb. Gedeckt
8' Great to Pedal	(* - 1926 Additions)

Chimes are playable from electric keyboard in notch where coupler stops are usually located over the swell manual, couplers being operated by on and offs between the swell and great manuals.

## NOTES, QUOTES and COMMENTS

Corrections to the July 1958 issue: Page 2 under list of organs visited should read No. 15 3m 1859 Wm. B. D. Simmons, electrified by (?) - St. Ignatius Church; page 3, paragraph 1, line 2, should read: "... building chamber and church organs, other THAN Baltimore firms were looked to when a larger instrument . . ."

An interesting organ has been installed in Westminster Presbyterian Church, Smiths Falls, Ontario, Canada, under the supervision of Bryant Robinson, organist and choirmaster. The church contained an old Warren tracker built prior to 1889, and from this seven ranks were salvaged for the new organ. A Hook & Hastings, formerly in St. Stephen's Church, Richmond, Virginia, was purchased. The reeds from the organ in the old Schwab mansion on Riverside Drive, New York City, were obtained, and a Trompette from Casavant's Opus 16 was added, resulting in a fine ensemble. Mr. Robinson's problems were manifold, including the construction of all new organ chambers, but his patience (and that of the congregation!) and ingenuity proved highly rewarding.

Another Canadian point of interest may be found at the Roman Catholic Church in Perth,

Ontario (not far from Smiths Falls). The organ is said to be a Warren of 1854, one manual, seven ranks, and partial pedalboard.

Those interested in "barrel organs" will find one dated 1820 built by a British bandmaster in the Museum at Sharon, Ontario. Another barrel organ is still in use at the Abbotsford, Quebec, Church of England.

Quote from an article by Carolyn F. Hummel in THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR dated July 29, 1958, a statement by E. Power Biggs: "The tracker action makes an organ a musical instrument; electricity makes it a mechanical instrument."

The Rev'd Robert McKim, pastor of the Presbyterian Church, Dover, Delaware, has kindly offered to arrange for the reproduction of all previous issues of THE TRACKER. We have had a few requests for earlier issues, but unless there was a considerable interest on the part of many members, we hesitate to burden Mr. McKim with this tremendous undertaking. Please write in, stating the particular issues you would like.

# *Report on*

# THE HENRY ERBEN (1863) ORGAN

by Edgar A. Boadway, Jr.

This instrument still stands in the Roman Catholic Church of St. John the Evangelist, Valley and Eager Streets, Baltimore, Maryland:

GREAT	SWELL
16' Bourdon .....	56 pipes (low octave unenclosed)
8' Open Diapason .....	56 pipes
8' Gamba .....	44 pipes
8' Clarabella .....	44 pipes
8' Stop.d Dia. Bass .....	12 pipes
4' Principal .....	56 pipes
2 2/3' Twelfth .....	56 pipes
2' Fifteenth .....	56 pipes
III Sesquialtera .....	168 pipes
8' Trumpet .....	56 pipes
4' Clarion .....	56 pipes
PEDAL	
16' Double Open Diapason .....	25 pipes
8' Violoncello .....	25 pipes
Bellows (No pistons)	
Sesquialtera: 17-19-22 to MC 12-15-17 to G2 8-12-15 to G3	
COUPLERS	
Pedal to Great	
Pedal to Swell	
Great to Swell	
Cornet: 12-15 throughout - no breaks	

This excellent organ stands free in the large rear gallery of the century-old church, and has a handsome five-sectional case of three flats of Opens and two flats of wooden dummies. The case is painted a cream color, and the pipes are gilded. The projecting console has two single-panel cupboard doors and a lid that slides out over the top. The square-shank flat knobs are arranged in four columns, and are lettered in shaded script. The manual keys have wood fronts and do not overhang. The Swell pedal projects out at the far right, and was originally a hitch-down; the pedals are of normal width. The six-sectional music desk slides on tracks in the sides of the stop jambs. The silver nameplate is on the impost above the console. The Swell and Great chests are almost on the same level, and the shades are vertical. The unmtered Swell basses are on a chest at the bass

end, and several pipes are marked with the name of the church and "Choir", showing Erben's preference for this nomenclature as late as 1863. The Pedal pipes are at each side of the case; the mechanism and pipework is in good condition, but dirt hinders much of the beauty of the reeds. The bellows handle is on the right side of the case, and water power was used for many years, though not originally. The metal pipes are of common metal, and the markings are either illegible or of no value.

The tone is quite rich, not too bright, but very pleasing; the acoustics of the building are excellent. The Great 16' Bourdon has 21 capped metal pipes in the treble, and the three 8' strings are bell gambas. All of the reeds are unmited, and the Trumpet has 7 open metal trebles; the Clarion has 17. The Swell 8' Stopped Diapason is a chimney flute, and the lowest octave is of stopped wood. The 4' Flute is of stopped wood except for 7 tapered metal trebles. The chorus is quite silvery, and the Double Open is a bit too foundational, but adds greatly to the full organ. The instrument is highly appreciated by the church.

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## AIMS AND POLICIES

by Kenneth F. Simmons

THE TRACKER is the news letter of the Organ Historical Society. Its purpose is to publish items of news and articles of interest to the members of the Society.

THE TRACKER is a **non-profit** publication. The writers receive nothing for their articles. The editors do their work without remuneration. Our costs are for paper, printing and postage. These expenses are covered by the Society's small treasury. This publication is sent to all members of the Society as a part of the service of the organization. Since we are operating on a very small budget, we would appreciate a contribution from non-member organizations such as schools, colleges, libraries, etc., to help cover costs and mailing.

The Organ Historical Society is endeavoring to promote research on and the study of American

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# The Preservation of Organ Tone

by Donald R. M. Paterson

It has long been one of the foremost aims of the Organ Historical Society to preserve what have been considered by many of its members to be fine examples of early American organ building. One of the most important reasons for this objective is a desire to prevent the disappearance of the tonal qualities of these old organs, resulting from an intense interest, both historical and musical, in these tones.

The most obvious and most successful method of preserving tone is, of course, the retention and maintenance of the instruments themselves, attempting to avoid any procedures which tend to affect its authenticity. Common knowledge discloses, however, that it has been impossible, for various reasons, to insure the preservation of old organ tone in many cases. As time goes on, early American organs still possessing their original tone—that is, organs in which the only change of tonal quality has been due to natural causes, such as the aging of reed tongues—are becoming fewer and fewer in number. Frequent, indeed, are the instances in which an instrument is rebuilt with the retention of the original pipes, unaltered, but with a different type of action or windchest. Often the mere substitution of a "pull-down" action to operate the pallets, consisting of an electro-pneumatic chest located below the orginal slider chest, has adversely affected the tonal qualities—either the sustained sound, or (perhaps more frequently the case) the attack of the sound.

This state of affairs—this increasing disappearance or alteration of original tone—has induced an alarming necessity for more extensive action in the methods of tonal preservation. Failing to insure the continued existence of an instrument in its original condition, the organ historian must naturally turn to the next best method—a preservation of the sound of the instrument without its actual presence.

The musical historian of today is in a far more advantageous position than he might have been almost eighty-five years ago. Since the invention of the phonograph by Thomas Edison in 1876 science has enabled us to make a permanent record of sound. Because of the extraordinary swift advances in recording techniques since that time, it is possible to rely upon the knowledge and techniques acquired by the men of science to produce a record of organ tone which is remarkably close in fidelity to the original sound. Through continuing technological advances, the process is constantly improving. This very procedure of recording—the fact that the sound of an instrument may be heard after this instrument has ceased to exist—constitutes one of the most singularly important developments benefiting the efforts of the musical historian.

Until the comparatively recent development of the tape recorder, technicians have had to employ the phonographic process. The complexities

of making discs created a necessity for bulky equipment, required considerable specialized knowledge, and, in most cases, a location especially designed for recording purposes—commonly called a studio.

The development of the tape recorder has been particularly beneficial to the organ historian. This device, because of its relative simplicity of design, not only can be operated by an amateur, but also has far greater portability, enabling the operator to set up his equipment with little difficulty in any location desired. Furthermore, the tape recorder's lower cost of operation, its intrinsically higher fidelity, its reduced surface noise, and its more simply designed mechanism for making copies demonstrate its considerable superiority over the older disc-cutting method. Ample proof of the inherent advantages of tape recordings appear in the fact that almost all of the high quality records of today are made from tape recordings of the orginal sound.

A person desiring to make recordings of old organs to preserve their tonal features in the form of permanent records is fortunate, therefore, in having such a process available, and by means of this method, may, in many cases, be able to reproduce the sound of an old organ that long since has been destroyed or has succumbed to the fashion of "modernization."

Having such a method at his Disposal, the organ historian must decide exactly how the instrument will be played when it is being recorded for posterity. Such a decision should be based upon a thorough consideration of both the musical value of the tone and its historical importance for preservation. The planning of the contents of such a recording, to be faithful, should include all of the tonal features—both desirable and undesirable. These contents actually consist of a demonstration of the organ, which not merely includes both its tonal virtues and limitations, but also emphasizes thoroughness and variety within a tonal scheme concentrating upon the most beautiful sounds contained in the instrument.

At this point, the separate roles of the organ historian and the organist-musician come into sharp focus. Although the former may possess qualities of scholarship and thoroughness which the latter may lack, the musician-organist, on the other hand, is generally apt to possess a degree of artistic skill in tonal discrimination and registration manipulation and a sensitivity which is entirely absent in the organ historian's experience. The two separate abilities must fuse into a complete unity if a successful recording of this type is to be produced. Thus the recording shall be both historical and musically valuable.

Common among laymen and insensitive musicians of today is the idea that only written compositions may be played in an organ to demon-

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# THE HALL & LABAGH (1866) ORGAN

This instrument still stands in the Roman Catholic Church of St. John the Evangelist, Frederick, Maryland:

GREAT	SWELL
16' Open Diapason....	16' Bourdon ..... 56 pipes
56 pipes	8' Viol d'Amour.. 56 pipes
8' Open Diapason....	8' Flute Pyramid 56 pipes
56 pipes	8' St. Diapason .. 56 pipes
8' Viol d'Gamba 56 pipes	4' Principal ..... 56 pipes
8' Flute Traverse 56 pipes	4' Night Horn .... 56 pipes
4' Principal ..... 56 pipes	2' Flageolet ..... 56 pipes
4' Rohr Flute ..... 56 pipes	III Cornet ..... 168 pipes
2 2/3' Twelfth .... 56 pipes	8' Oboe ..... 44 pipes
2' Fifteenth ..... 56 pipes	8' Bassoon ..... 12 pipes
III Mixture 1st.....168 pipes	Tremulant
III Mixture 2nd ...168 pipes	COUPLERS
8' Trumpet ..... 56 pipes	Great and Swell
PEDAL	Great and Swell Octave
16' Open Diapason....	Pedal and Great
25 pipes	Pedal and Swell
16' Bourdon (no label)....	Mixture 2nd:
25 pipes	22-26-29 to C♯1
8' Violoncello ... 25 pipes	19-22-26 to C♯2
.... (no pistons)	15-19-22 to C♯3
Mixture 1st:	12-15-19 to top G
17-19-22 to Middle C	
15-17-19 to C♯2	
12-15-19 to G♯2	
12-15-17 to top G	
Cornet:	
12-15-17 with no	
breaks.	

This fine organ, perhaps an example of the best work by Hall & Labagh, stands free in the rear gallery of the elegant church. It has three flats of gilded pipes, and the central flat is taller and capped by a semi-circular arch. The sides are paneled, and the case has not been painted. The console is detached and reversed a short distance from the front of the case, and resembles an early harmonium. The lid folds flat, and the six-sectional music desk folds down when the organ is not open. The manual keys have wood fronts, and do not overhang; the pedal keys are the "toothpick" type. The Swell pedal is a metal hookdown at the far right, and a wooden rod is pushed to one side to release it. The square-shank flat knobs are arranged in three horizontal rows on each side of

the keys, but are not in terraced jambs; they are lettered in plain Italics. The tremulant must be hooked into a notch to stay out; the undated metal nameplate is between the manuals. The pipework is very inaccessible, and is in good condition, but the action is rather heavy. The pedal pipes are at each side of the case, and the Cello is not a bell gamba. Some of the Swell Viol and Bourdon pipes are unenclosed, and can be seen at the sides of the box which is above the Great. There are many illegible monograms and marks on the pipework, and a few of the names are: "Kemp" and "A. Polster" on some of the Swell flutes and the dates 1865 and 1866. The acoustics are very good, and though an overhaul is needed, the organ is quite playable. It is quite rich and silvery in tone, and a bit mild. The Great Flute Traverse is an open wood Melodia, and the bass is not stopped. The Gamba is plain, but the Viol in the Swell is a bell gamba. The two Stopped Diapasons both have about 2½ octaves of chimney pipes. The Night Horn is a large-scale open metal rank, and the tapered metal Flute Pyramid has a few wood basses. The two reeds have 7 metal trebles. Many ranks are quite excellent, and the Great 16' Open is better than usual.—E. A. B.

## Aims and Policies

(From page 5)

organs from their earliest appearance to the present. Individuals who would like to become members are invited to do so by applying to Mr. Thomas S. Eader, 200 A Street, S. W., Glenn Burnie 7, Maryland, enclosing \$3.00 for yearly dues.

Material for publication should be sent to Kenneth F. Simmons, 20 Devonwood Road, Pa. Requests for copies and change of address should be sent to Albert F. Robinson, St. Cornelius Chapel, Governors Island, New York 4, N. Y. Information regarding organs for sale should be addressed to Miss Barbara J. Owen, 178 Pine Street, Fall River, Mass.

As a final word, I would again appeal for material for future publication and, at the same time, urge you when sending material to be extremely cautious regarding accuracy of context and copy. The deadline on copy must be the 15th of the month preceding publication. We plan to continue to publish quarterly in October, January, April and July. Hence the deadline for the next issue of THE TRACKER is December 15th. We hope you like our new printed format.

## The Preservation of Organ Tone

(From page 6)

strate its sound. Such an approach is impractical because of the fact that its exclusive use necessitates such a large number of compositions to produce a thorough demonstration. No one will deny the musical and historical need for hearing established works played on a given organ, but a far more efficient and imaginative procedure consists of a combination of these works with a group of well-planned improvisations upon individual and combined stops. If a sincere desire is present to record the complete sound of an organ, the only total satisfaction, both historical and musical, results from hearing everything of which the organ is tonally capable of producing. This demand for thoroughness cannot be met by music played with an indiscriminate drawing of all of the stops and couplers (frequently including tremolo), followed by a limited variety of "stock" registrations. The lack of musical taste and historical scholarship in evidence when such a process seems to satisfy is obvious, and the frequency of these satisfactions is unfortunate, to say the least.

For the sake of scholarship and thoroughness, all of these points should be kept in mind. Only by following this approach can the organ historian and musician-organist hope to achieve complete success in this vitally important type of historical and musical scholarship.

Following is a list of organs recorded by the writer. Experience has shown that the ear is the best judge of determining the location of the microphone, that the most accurate results are obtained at a constant recording volume level, and that 15"/sec. tape speed produces the highest fidelity. These recordings were made on a "Concertone" tape recorder with a half-track head, and with the employment of a high-quality dynamic microphone.

Those marked with an asterisk (\*) are extant organs at the time of writing (October 1958), and, to the best of the writer's knowledge, are unaltered.

Ashburnham, Mass.: Federated Church, E. & G. G. Hook & Hastings, Opus 595, 1871, 2:16.\*

Bennington, Vt.: Methodist Church, Johnson & Son, Opus 558, 1881, 2:14.

Boston, Mass.: All Saints' Lutheran Church, E. & G. G. Hook, Opus 254, 1859, 3:31.\*

Boston, Mass.: Immaculate Conception Church, E. & G. G. Hook & Hastings, Opus 322, 1863. Rebuilt and enlarged with electro-pneumatic "pull-down" action by Hook & Hastings, 1898, 4:58.\*

East Andover, N. H.: Village Church, E. & G. G. Hook, 1852, 1:10.\*

Hartford, Vt.: Second Congregational Church, Johnson Organ Co., Opus 373, 1872, 2:15.\*

Jamaica Plain, Mass.: First Congregational Society (Unitarian), E. & G. G. Hook, 1854, 3:37.\*

considered investing in an organ without these "modern conveniences." Furthermore, there is no evidence of either subscription or major expenditure for an organ until 1851, when E. & G. G. Hook replaced this instrument with a 3-manual 40-stop organ, complete with their standard case-work

4:58.\*

& G. G. Church, 15.\*

ional So- Opus 171,

l Church, E. &

urch, Wm.

Stockbridge, Mass.: First Congregational Church, Wm. A. Johnson, Opus 183, 1865, 2:20.

Woburn, Mass.: Congregational Church, E. & G. G. Hook, Opus 283, 1860, 3:36.\*

## Organs for Sale

We regret the omission of an "Organs for Sale" listing, particularly as there are several instruments of considerable interest available at the present time. However, a corrected list will appear in the next issue of THE TRACKER; but meanwhile inquiries may be addressed to Miss Barbara J. Owen, 178 Pine Street, Fall River, Massachusetts.

## THE DEBLOIS CONCERT HALL ORGAN 1763-1851

(From page 1)

June 4	pd Dan Thompson per Do for repairing an organ pipe which had been stolen and injured; and for retuning some other pipes, displaced by the Painter .....	1.50
June 10	pd Aaron Man for 2 pr. of Butts, Screws & Brass Screw-knobs for the Organ loft doors .....	.64

The work was completed in time for the consecration of the new building on St. Barnabas' Day, June 11, 1811, when the noted Oliver Shaw of the Congregational church furnished organ and choral music, directing his Psallonian Society in Hymns, an oratorio, and the "Hallelujah Chorus."

After this year, the church organists are identified through the account books as John, Henry, and William Muenscher, E. Smith, Moses Noyes, Mrs. A. E. Hansen, Henry Frieze, and Messrs. Hesse, Bissell and Cutler. The names of William Blodget and Dr. John Chace can be found in other sources as preceding these musicians. Apparently most of the repairs were made by the various organists in the early years. Although both Franklin Smith and Samuel Warren opened repair shops in Providence, neither they nor any other repairmen appear in the records until 1842.

The toll on the organ extracted by the amateur repairs could not have been too great, since no action was taken for a replacement until 1834. One historian of the church, the late Franklin Cushman, felt that the organ was replaced at this time. However, the additions of a Swell to Great coupler by John Bowden in 1842 and pedal keys and connections by E. & G. G. Hook in 1849 seem to negate the theory that a church would have considered investing in an organ without these "modern conveniences." Furthermore, there is no evidence of either subscription or major expenditure for an organ until 1851, when E. & G. G. Hook replaced this instrument with a 3-manual 40-stop organ, complete with their standard case-work

4:58.\*

East Andover, N. H.: Village Church, E. & G. G. Hook, 1852, 1:10.\*

Hartford, Vt.: Second Congregational Church, Johnson Organ Co., Opus 373, 1872, 2:15.\*

Jamaica Plain, Mass.: First Congregational Society (Unitarian), E. & G. G. Hook, 1854, 3:37.\*

Nashua, N. H.: Pilgrim Congregational Church, E. & G. G. Hook, Opus 289, 1869, 3:32.\*

Newbury, Mass.: First Presbyterian Church, E. & G. G. Hook, Opus 396, 1866, 2:29.\*

Shelburne Falls, Mass.: First Baptist Church, A. Johnson, Opus 76, 1858, 2:25.\*