

# THE TRACKER

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE ORGAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

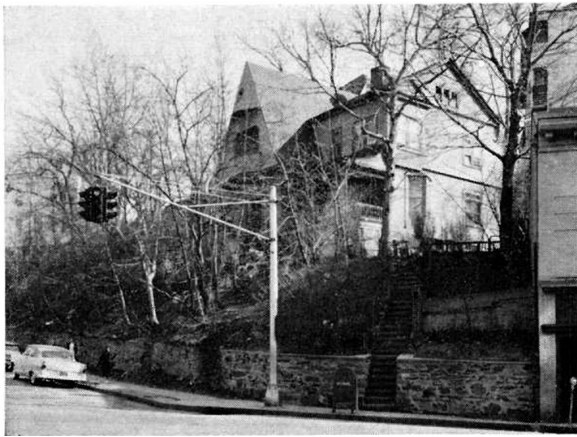
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## An Audsley Organ Bites the Dust

BY F. R. WEBBER



Yonkers lies a dozen miles due north of midtown Manhattan. This city of 178,000 population is of interest to the organ world for here lived Dr. G. A. Audsley (1838-1925), architect, author of 35 or 40 books, essayist and a man of stupendous learning in all matters relating to organ building. The great organ in the Grand Court of John Wanamaker's, Philadelphia, will always be associated with the name of Dr. Audsley. The present generation might well honor him above all others, for it was he, single handedly, who put mutations and mixtures back into our organs at a time when anything higher than eight-foot pitch aroused an angry chorus of **anathema sit**.

Having lived for a number of years within five or six miles of Dr. Audsley's home, and the same distance from one of his finest organs, it became a project on a recent Saturday to make a pilgrimage to the Audsley country. Yonkers and Mount Vernon (where I live) are one community in all matters except our municipal governments.

The Audsley home is at Number 1 Van Sice (now Saratoga) avenue, in a section in the south part of Yonkers known as Lowerre, and pronounced Lowery, rhyming with **flowery**. It was here that Audsley's great **The Art of Organ Building** was written. He spent seven years writing it in longhand, and two solid years in making hundreds of marvellous drawings. The work is composed of two volumes 10" x 13½" by more than five inches thick, and weighing 23 pounds. It was at Number 1 Van Sice avenue that many of his fine essays and magazine articles were written, in addition to the great work just mentioned.

The old Audsley neighborhood is easily found, but nobody in all Yonkers seems to remember the dignified, bearded gentleman who used to descend the 30 or more stone steps from his dooryard to the street, and take the 7:20 commuter train to his office in the city. The records of the fire engine station and the police headquarters, both within a few rods of where Dr. Audsley lived, yielded no information as to the exact house. Then, mindful of my boyhood discipline in the office of my father, an attorney and land title specialist, I made my way to the city registrar's office. My father used to say, "If in doubt, consult the Lot and Block Book in the city hall." An old book of city surveyor's maps soon disclosed the fact that Number 1 Van Sice avenue is now Number 1 Saratoga avenue, and the house perched some 20 feet above the street and resting on a rock, is the Audsley house. Mr. K. T. Simmons spoke to certain members of the Audsley family who verified the house on the rock, and the long flight of stone steps. The neighborhood is no longer a shady, residential one. Chinese laundries, pizza counters and dry cleaning shops crowd the house on the rock. However, it is worth one's while to explore the streets behind the house and to find the deep, rocky glen that reminds one of Dr. Audsley's native Scotland.

Everyone who owns a copy of **The Temple of Tone**, Dr. Audsley's swan song, will remember the full page plate of the big organ in the Eugene C. Clark residence in Yonkers. Mr. Clark was vice-president and general superintendent of the Alexander Smith & Sons carpet works, whose buildings stretch up the Saw Mill Valley from Yonkers avenue to Lake avenue, a distance of eight-tenths of a mile. In 1905 Mr. Clark moved from a mansion at 72 Locust Hill avenue to another mansion with ten acres of beautifully kept grounds at North Broadway and Odell avenue. Whether the Audsley organ was built for the Locust Hill home or for the one on North Broadway nobody seems to know.

The Clark residence on North Broadway is a very large house with a wing extending to the south. This wing is 25' wide by 50' or more long, inside measure, and it has a high, coved ceiling. An organ fills a large portion of the south wall. Both music room and organ were designed by Dr. Audsley. The room has double windows whose sills are high above the floor, and below these are panels of mahogany. Dr. Audsley was a church

architect, and it is not surprising that the Clark music room looks like a chapel of good design. In recent years the Clark mansion has been occupied by the Hudson River Country Club.

Having found the place where Dr. Audsley lived at the turn of the century and for some time thereafter, the next thing was to visit the former Clark mansion and to see whether the Audsley organ still exists. I had seen it once before. Mr. Joseph O'Donnell and his staff were most helpful. Certainly it would be all right to see the music room and the organ. Mr. O'Donnell produced a drawer full of keys, and we went to the organ room. It had changed somewhat. The organ case and the paneling around the room have been painted gray. The elaborate fireplace has been replaced by one of modern design. Openings have been made into a room to the east.

The organ's facade contains two tall towers, in each of which are seven Diapason pipes. In the center is a large cusped opening behind which stand 17 metal pipes. There are four smaller flats, two to the right and two to the left of the central opening. These contain 13 small pipes in each of the four openings. When blown by mouth they proved to be on unusually low wind pressure. Dr. Audsley's maxim "a copious supply of wind on low pressure" came to mind.

The original keyboard appears in old photographs to have had a paneled lid. The present one has a roll top of peculiar form, for the horizontal strips are somewhat thicker than a broom handle. Mr. O'Donnell said that there used to be a detached console in the far end of the building, and perhaps this is why none of his dozens of keys would unlock the attached one. Mr. O'Donnell opened a door at the CC-sharp end of the organ and we stepped inside. Instead of the usual wind chests, pipes, wind trunks, fan frames and trackers, I saw shelving piled with the things necessary to enable a country club to run smoothly. My kind guide said that during the 1939-1945 war, when tin and others metals were in short supply, the metal pipes of the organ were contributed to the war effort, and chests and wood pipes removed. Today only the case and the front pipes remain.

The organ contained 22 draw knobs and five couplers, arranged in stepped jambs at the right hand end of the console, and an identical number on the left end. The organ was duplexed.

This Clark organ was of historical importance, for Dr. Audsley describes it as the first that contained multiple expression. Until it was built, organs were unwieldy things, with only the Swell division under expression, and in rare cases a few ranks of the Great organ enclosed. In organs designed by Dr. Audsley and built with his assistance, the Great, Swell and Choir divisions each contained two subdivisions. All was under expression except the first sub-division of the Great Organ. The organ in Festival Hall, St. Louis, designed and supervised by Dr. Audsley, had a console with seven swell shoes controlling six swell boxes.

All efforts to find the stop list of the Eugene Clark organ have led down dead end streets. Perhaps the editor can locate a copy, as he did in

the case of St. John's, Varick street. Or, it is possible that some reader of these lines has the Clark stop list.

Dr. Audsley waged a fifty year battle against the unisonic craze of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, and against the barbarous custom of unification. Following a misguided leader, almost all organ builders discarded everything that was not of eight foot pitch, with the exception of a quiet 4' flute and a 16' Pedal Bourdon. Instead of mutations and mixtures, certain ranks were extended to 85 and even to 97 pipes. From such an extended rank, by means of electric wiring, a Diapason 16', a Diapason 8', an Octave 4', a Twelfth 2 $\frac{2}{3}$ ', a Fifteenth 2' and a Mixture of three, four or five ranks were taken. All this, on the excessively high wind pressures of the unisonic period, resulted in a blast of blurred sound, with no melody line whatever. Shrill treble was present, and muddy bass, but not much in the middle registers.

Dr. Audsley was a man of prodigious industry. Coming to America from Scotland, with a pause in England en route, he designed parish churches, a city art museum and sundry mansions. His Bowling Green Offices was once New York's tallest skyscraper. He wrote 35 or 40 books, four of which were on organ building, and one of which has never been surpassed. The main library in Manhattan has a series of scrap books containing magazine articles on organ building, architectural design and related subjects, all written by Mr. Audsley. At the age of 27 he built himself a 2-19 residence organ that still exists. It is a beautiful piece of workmanship and tonal refinement. He designed, supervised and in some cases assisted in building a few other organs, all of which are still in use except the Clark organ. They are examples of superb tonal appointment, fine materials and artistic craftsmanship. The day will come when people will no longer praise the 5,040 organs said to have been presented by Queen Anne to Trinity Church and approved by Handel. They will, when desiring prestige, call their organ an Audsley organ.

During the Romantic Period, that came to a close with the depression and the 1939-45 war, Dr. Audsley's great influence was forgotten. While romanticism reigned, the organ was thought of as an assemblage of beautiful, unrelated voices, to be displayed one by one as solo voices, to the accompaniment of shimmering string tone. It was after Dr. Audsley's death that his fifty years of urgent effort, in a gentlemanly and occasionally in a sharp-tongued manner, began to bear fruit. Unified organs lost their great popularity. Theatrical toy shop trivialities, such as the ubiquitous Vox humana, the Voix celestes, the harp, chimes and Echo Organ, vanished. Even the Solo Organ is a thing of the trolley car age. Organs with mutations and mixtures are the universal rule today, thanks to the men who spent their evenings reading Audsley's books and numerous magazine articles. It is true that we have overdone matters. Our organs of today are top heavy with mixture work. It reminds one of the late Charles Gauss, of De-

*(Please turn to page 8)*

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# A History of the Johnson Family and Firm

A Thesis by Kenneth F. Simmons

N.B. This is the second installment of this important and interesting paper written in 1948 and slightly edited by the author.

## Characteristics of the Early Period

The organs of the early period of the Johnson firm had the following characteristics. The consoles were recessed within the casework. When the doors, which were hinged or sliding, were closed they were even with the case of the organ. The manuals, music rack and stop knobs, were all inside. The music rack was stationary, solid wood and not adjustable. The fronts of the keys were perpendicular.

The stop knobs were round with a flat surface and a square shank. They were divided on both sides of the manuals. On the right hand side were the stop knobs of the Great organ with reeds on top, then the mixtures, and so on down to the 8 foot pitch pipes as on the modern organ. The lower knobs on this side usually included the Pedal stops, Pedal Check and Blower's Signal. On the left side were the draw knobs of the Swell organ arranged as were those of the Great; i. e., with reeds on top, the upper work next, and then the 8 foot and 16 foot pitches. Below these were found the couplers which were Swell to Great, Swell to Pedal, and Great to Pedal.

Although I have never seen a three manual organ of this period, it is probable that the Choir stop knobs were below those of the Great and the Pedal knobs were moved to the left or Swell side.

In the case of the one manual organ the stops were divided evenly on each side of the manual.

The compass of the manuals of this period was from CC to G3, or 56 keys.

The pedal boards of these organs were far different from those of today. The range of the pedal began at low CCC, going up to 12, 13, 17, 20, 24, 25, or 27 notes. The pedals were narrow, short and close together. The chromatic pedals were of a semi-circular nature. There was also a board mounted above the pedal board which seems to have served as a foot rest.

In the two and three manual organs only the Swell division was enclosed within a Swell box. On the one manual specimens everything, except the Open Diapason 8 ft. and the Pedal pipes, was enclosed.

The shutters of the organs of this period were worked by a "hook-down" Swell pedal which was located to the right of the pedal board. The Swell shades, therefore, were either completely closed or completely open, and could not be left stationary at any intermediate point. At any point between the two extremes the organist had to keep his foot on the swell pedal.

In most installations these organs stood against a wall, either in the front of the church or a rear

gallery. In this way three sides were exposed, and usually there was space between the top of the organ and the ceiling. Consequently, the tone was uninhibited and spoke directly into the room. The two sides were wood paneling and the front contained the console with display pipes above. The display pipes were either actual pipes of the Diapason or false pipes.

## General Characteristics

It seems appropriate at this time to discuss the characteristics of the Johnson organs which were common to the life of the firm.

Mechanically, these organs were instruments of perfection in tracker action. All the wood used was well seasoned and there has been neither warping nor swelling of the sliders in the chests because of this; nor has there been any leakage of wind in the chests. The action of these organs is in perfect mechanical condition to this day. With the replacing of worn felts in the consoles and adjustments of the action in some cases, any of these organs would be as they were when originally installed. There are no instances of split feeders and wind trunks as found in later organs. These wooden parts were all covered by shellac or other varnish. The only exception to this is found in organs where maintenance men of inferior quality and ability have been permitted to break trackers, etc. As anyone in the organ profession knows, one trip through an organ by one of these charlatans of the maintenance field will ruin an organ practically beyond repair, no matter who or what company built the organ originally.

It is well to note that the material used in the pipe work by Johnson was of the highest quality. The leather used was well treated and many organs are to be found with no air leaks, the original leather still there after nearly one hundred years.

The metal Diapason pipes of 16, 8 and 4 foot pitches, were made of pure tin except in the large pipes below Tenor F of the Open Diapason 8 ft., which had to be made of zinc.

The other ranks of metal pipes were made of various combinations of "spotted metal," which is composed of tin and lead. The proportions varied according to the particular rank being made, but never had less than thirty-three percent tin with as much as fifty percent tin for the ranks of string and reed tones.

The best material available was put into all the Johnson organs, and, as one organ builder said, "Johnson organs were built on honor."

The basis of the Johnson organ was its Diapason. The 8 ft. Open Diapason of the Great organ had a tone, was rich and brilliant. It was voiced loudest of all the flue pipes and still could be favorably used in any combination or alone. In combination it produced a pleasing, predominantly

8 foot blend. In the instance of adding this rank to an otherwise full organ it gave greater body and solidity to the whole organ. This was the first basic rank of any and all Johnson organs.

The next stop was the 4 ft. Octave. This, too, was pure Diapason in tone and followed the characteristic of all Johnson voicing; i. e., definite, precise and colorful, having the quality of being able to be used in any combination with perfect blend and without distortion. It was voiced slightly softer than the 8 ft. Diapason, thereby adding brilliance without being over-powering. It was the ideal relationship between the 8 ft. and 4 ft. Diapason.

In order to have each family of the flue stops represented, Johnson always had a flute and a string on 8 ft. pitch. The flute was the Stopped Diapason in the very early time. The voicing of this stop was mezzo-piano compared to the forte of the Open Diapason. The Johnson flute was smooth; there was none of the windiness as is often found in modern flutes, but rather mellowness and smoothness was the basis. The string tone leaned toward the Diapason. By this I mean that the strings, while keeping the basic string quality, were not the type of string found in more modern organs which have a biting, cutting tone, refusing to blend. The Johnson strings were always constructed and voiced in such a manner that there was blend into a rich ensemble. This first string was usually the Dulciana 8 ft., and was voiced in comparison with the other three ranks above. One of Johnson's greatest attributes was the ability to voice pipes that blended in every combination.

These four ranks of pipe were probably what were used in the early one manual parlor organs. There have been no parlor organs nor specifications for a parlor organ found by any who have investigated Johnson's work. These parlor organs may or may not have had pedal pipes or pedal boards. If they did, it was probably of thirteen pedal notes and thirteen pipes of Sub-Bass 16 ft. The Sub-Bass is a stopped wooden pipe of large scale known as Bourdon 16 ft. in modern organs. I am basing my conclusions on what has been given by Johnson at a later time as the smallest specification used by him.

In the early organs the use of divided ranks of pipes was common. For instance, the Stopped Diapason would be drawn on two stop knobs. The Stopped Diapason Treble would effect all notes above Tenor F, and Stopped Diapason Bass would effect Tenor F and all notes below. The division was not necessarily at this place but was usually here or at Tenor C. Then other ranks of pipes, such as Dulciana, Melodia, etc., would be short ranks and have the same range as the Stopped Diapason Treble. In this case the Stopped Diapason Bass would have to be used when one of these other ranks was drawn alone in order to have all of the notes on the manual sound. It is, however, very seldom that we find that any of the Diapason chorus was divided, particularly when it was on the Great organ.

There are historical as well as practical reasons for this practice, especially on the Swell organ.

The early American two manual organs quite often did not even have keys below Tenor F on the Swell. Therefore, the addition of the bass octave and a half was a notable one.

The early music used in New England churches and concert work on organs was of the nature that the bass was used only to sustain the bass note of a chord or passage; therefore, there were no pedal runs. In the churches organs were primarily used to accompany the singing of Psalms and what hymns they had. Organ preludes were used only in a minimum of cases.

In the homes and public concerts there is evidence that the music used was early American music which long since has died out because of its lack of musical quality. In all of this music for organ or organ accompaniment there was no need for any bass except to give foundation for the music.

From the practical standpoint, big pipes necessary for bass notes are expensive. Consequently, when a short rank of bass pipes could be drawn independently and made to serve adequately with one or more short treble ranks, it saved expense.

Then, too, the early churches and buildings were not large and space given to the organ was insufficient to allow room for the big bass pipes.

It must also be remembered that the air pressure of all organs of this early time was supplied by a human organ pumper. Since it takes considerable more air to sound the bass notes, it would have been practically impossible for the pumper to keep adequate pressure if there were any large number of bass pipes sounding. Therefore, in all early organs we find, particularly on the Swell organ, a number of short ranks and sometimes all ranks on the Swell were divided. This also shows the reasons why the short pedal boards and the few pedals were used on the pipe organs of the early period. This was true, not only of Johnson organs, but of other early builders' works.

From this point the one manual organ expanded by adding the Twelfth and Fifteenth. These are Diapasons of higher pitch --  $2\frac{2}{3}$  ft. and 2 ft. respectively. These completed the Diapason chorus of the smaller organs and were voiced softer than the others so that they would not screech or overpower the 8 foot pitch.

At Montague, Massachusetts, in the Congregational church, the Johnson instrument dates from 1856. This organ is in perfect condition with the original leather and mechanical parts just as they were when they were installed; in fact, the only change that has been made since 1856 is the addition of an electric blower for its wind supply. The specification of this organ is as follows:

#### OPUS 54 - WILLIAM A. JOHNSON

Compass of manual CC - g3 56 keys  
Compass of pedal CCC - BBB 12 keys

PEDAL - 16' Sub-Bass	12 pipes
GREAT - 8' Open Diapason	56 pipes
(bottom 12 stopped)	
8' St. Diapason Treble	38 pipes
8' St. Diapason Bass	18 pipes
8' Viola d'Amour	38 pipes
4' Octave	56 pipes

4' Flute	38 pipes
2 $\frac{2}{3}$ ' Twelfth	56 pipes
2' Fifteenth	56 pipes

Great to Pedal Coupler  
Organ entirely expressive - hook down pedal. (1)

In this specification it is noticeable that the Diapason ranks are the full compass of the keyboard, while the Stopped Diapason Bass supplied the bass for the other manual stops. Also, this organ has for its string the Viola d'Amour, which is similar to a Bell Gamba but voiced more softly.

This one manual organ became the Great of the two manual organs of a relatively small size. It happened that the Stopped Diapason, being a wood stopped pipe, had a smooth tone, but being stopped it lacked some of the overtones in tone quality. Johnson had, therefore, also added the Clarabella to the Great when it became a two manual organ. This was an open pipe of wood which gave the needed overtones and a distinctive mellow quality. The Waldfloete was also added to give more brilliance to the flute chorus.

The Swell organ also had as its basis the Open Diapason 8 ft., and the Octave 4 ft. These were of smaller scale and voice more softly than those on the Great. They resembled more closely the Principal used in general terms. Johnson, however, used the terms Principal, Diapason and Octave interchangeably. Those used on the Swell were smaller scale, but never the less Diapason.

On the Swell he also put a flute, usually the Stopped Diapason. There was also a soft string and usually another string which was more powerful.

The first reed, then as now, was the Oboe. The Johnson reeds were for the low pressures which his organs used - 2 $\frac{1}{2}$  and 3 inches. These were exceptionally smooth and brilliant. The Johnson Oboe was similar to the orchestral oboe, but blended with the full organ and was telling in effect.

The following organ is the earliest two manual Johnson I have been able to locate. It is listed in the Johnson Catalogue of Organs as Opus 46. However, the nameplate on the organ lists it as Opus 47, dated 1855, and located in the White Church at West Springfield, Mass.

(For a slightly earlier and larger example, see Opus 43 at North Presbyterian Church, Syracuse, N. Y., visited and heard by the Organ Historical Society at the 1962 Convention. This may be heard on the 1962 Convention Recording, still available at this writing.)

The stop list of Opus 47 is as follows:

#### OPUS 47 - WILLIAM A. JOHNSON

Compass of manual CC - g3 56 keys  
Compass of pedal CCC - BBB 12 keys

PEDAL - 16' Stopped Diapason	12 pipes
GREAT - 8' Open Diapason	56 pipes
8' St. Diapason Treble	38 pipes
8' St. Diapason Bass	18 pipes
8' Clarabella	38 pipes
8' Dulciana	38 pipes

4' Principal	56 pipes
4' Waldfloete	44 pipes
2 $\frac{2}{3}$ ' Twelfth	56 pipes
2' Fifteenth	56 pipes
SWELL - 8' Open Diapason	38 pipes
8' St. Diapason Treble	38 pipes
8' St. Diapason Bass	18 pipes
8' Gamba	38 pipes
8' Viola	38 pipes
4' Principal	38 pipes
8' Oboe	38 pipes

COUPLERS - Great to Pedal, Swell to Pedal, Swell to Great. (1)

The next expansion of Johnson in terms of ranks of pipe was the further expansion of the Diapason chorus with a mixture usually of III or IV ranks, and a large scale reed on the Great.

On the Swell in this early period, he also expanded the smaller scale Diapason in the upper pitches.

One of the finest examples of a large organ of this period is the organ in Shelbourne Falls, Massachusetts. One should note in the following specification that, besides the list of the pipes and the way they are divided, the pedal is increased to seventeen notes, and the Seventeenth is a separate rank of pipes. This is the only example I know of where the Seventeenth is so treated in Johnson's work.

Here, also for the first time, the 16 ft. flute is added to the Swell manual. This is of a smaller scale than the Pedal 16 ft. This treatment of a 16 ft. on the manual was not deadening nor overpowering; instead, it added richness to the whole ensemble. Note, too, that this 16 ft. did not extend below Tenor F. It may also be noted that from this point on 50% or less of flue pipes were of 8 ft. pitch.

#### OPUS 76 - WILLIAM A. JOHNSON - 1858

##### Baptist Church - Shelbourne Falls, Mass

PEDAL - 16' Diapason	17 pipes
GREAT - 8' Open Diapason	56 pipes
8' St. Diapason Bass	18 pipes
8' St. Diapason Treble	38 pipes
8' Clarabella	38 pipes
8' Viola d'Amore	44 pipes
4' Octave	56 pipes
4' Waldfloete	44 pipes
2 $\frac{2}{3}$ ' Twelfth	56 pipes
2' Fifteenth	56 pipes
1 3/5' Seventeenth	56 pipes
III Mixture	168 pipes
8' Trumpet	44 pipes
SWELL - 16' Bourdon	38 pipes
8' Diapason	38 pipes
8' St. Diapason Bass	18 pipes
8' Viola da Gamba	38 pipes
8' St. Dulciana	18 pipes
4' Principal	38 pipes
4' Celestina	18 pipes
2 $\frac{2}{3}$ ' Twelfth	38 pipes
2' Fifteenth	38 pipes
8' Oboe	44 pipes
Tremulant	

COUPLERS: Great to Pedal, Swell to Pedal, Swell to Great.

Swell enclosed - hook-down swell pedal. (1)

As previously stated, I have been unable to

(1) Visited by the Author



## Notes, Quotes and Comments

We hope you voted! Membership in any organization carries with it certain responsibilities, and in OHS one of the principal activities is the voting of its members in order that elections are operated fairly. Ballots should have been mailed prior to June 30 to Randall Wagner, 119 East Street, Wellington, Ohio. Ballots cannot be cast in person nor at the Convention.

\* \* \*

A new Schlicker organ (2 manual - 34 ranks) will be installed this spring in St. Paul's Chapel, Broadway at Fulton Street, New York, retaining the old case which dates to 1804. The case is hand-

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locate a three manual organ of this early period of Johnson's work that has remained in its original condition.

The two manual organs followed closely the form discussed above with slight variations in accordance with their size.

Johnson's treatment of the Diapason chorus on the Great organ remained unchanged throughout his career. The use of the Stopped Diapason on the Great ended in 1862. After this time it was found only on the Swell. The flute 8 ft. on the Great was the Clarabella.

The Waldfloete 4 ft. ceased to exist on the Great after 1859. Johnson never really settled on a consistent 4 ft. flute during this early period. We find the Chimney Flute, Flute Harmonic and Flute Traverso being used interchangeably on the Great through all this period.

There are instances where the Great reed was a Clarinet in this early period on the two manual organs. Later, this moved to the Choir of the three manual organs.

The Swell organ remained fairly consistent during this period, with the addition of a III rank mixture called Dolce Cornett on organs where size would permit. In some cases towards the end of this period, this mixture, Johnson let the organist decide whether it should be on the Swell or on the Great.

Due to lack of need and the impracticability of a large pedal organ in this age of American organ building, Johnson used only one rank of pedal pipes. This was a Bourdon or Diapason (wood) of large scale. It was so voiced that it could be used with various combinations from mezzo-forte to forte, not overpowering the softer combinations and yet being apparent in full organ. On very soft combinations the use of a divided or short bass rank on a manual coupled to the pedal was adequate.

The organs of this period still in existence are the more brilliant of Johnson history in relation to the size used. The Diapason chorus is remarkable and is an example of what the modern builder speaks of theoretically as a Diapason chorus but seldom attains in actual work.

*(To be continued)*

carved mahogany standing in the rear gallery of this church which dates back to 1766.

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Please note the new mailing address of our Treasurer, David Ashley Cotton. It is 41 Edgerly Road, Boston 15, Mass. All dues, contributions and financial matters such as payment for recordings should be sent to him.

\* \* \*

Articles, news items (especially those concerned with the changes, moving or other work affecting organs of interest to OHS), and descriptions of organs not hitherto displayed in THE TRACKER are requested from all OHS members. The next issue is scheduled for September, and such contributions should reach the editor not later than August 15th.

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The forth-coming 8th annual National Convention of OHS promises to provide some wonderful treats historically, socially, and musically. You should have received a registration form with the March issue of THE TRACKER. But in case you did not, please see the Convention "ad" on page 3 of this issue for details. Register early and be sure of being there!

\* \* \*

It has come to our attention that the British quarterly "Theatre Organ Review" is available through its U.S.A. subscription agent: Robert Grove, 2210 Indiana Avenue, Connerville, Indiana. Since many OHS members are also theatre organ enthusiasts, they may be interested in this magazine.

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Ferd T. E. Rassmann, whose father was "a Roosevelt man", and who learned the art of organ building as apprentice to Bates & Cully, reports that he services a 2 manual Bates & Cully organ in Trinity Episcopal Church, Spring Lake, N. J., and a 2 manual Johnson in First Methodist Church, Lakewood, N. J., both still tracker organs. He continues: "Over in the New Hope-Quakertown area of Pennsylvania are some 'Durner' organs, if you know what farm house to visit. These organs generally were of three ranks, all wood pipes, and supplied with one foot lever to pump the single feeder bellows. They were enclosed in a finely constructed wood framework, generally painted black with gold edges. Durner had his factory in Quakertown, Pa., and built tracker organs. You may find advertisements today stating that 'Fritche Organs' have succeeded Durner, but let me advise you that Fritche never built an organ . . ."

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Enclosed with the last (March) issue of THE TRACKER was another supplement to the membership list. It is wonderful to note the continuing growth of OHS and we are grateful for having been kept up-to-date on the membership. Let us hope that these and others who join between now and September will keep in mind that memberships must be renewed in the summer in order to be assured of receiving the September issue of THE TRACKER.

# Who Were Anderson-Silsby?

by Albert F. Robinson

Some years ago on a visit to Denver, Colorado, I heard of a tracker organ at Asbury Methodist Church but was unable to obtain admission to examine it. Recently I met Edward Horsley, current organist of the church, who supplied the specifications as follows:

GREAT		SWELL	
Open Diapason	8'	Stopped Diapason	8'
Melodia	8'	Violin Diapason	8'
Dulciana	8'	Salicional	8'
Bourdon	16'	Vox Humana	8'
Principal	4'	Oboe-Bassoon	8'
Twelfth	2 2/3'	Violina	4'
Fifteenth	2'	Flute Harmonic	4'
		Tremolo	
PEDAL			
Sub-bass	16'	Great to Pedal	8'
Violoncello	8'	Swell to Pedal	8'
		Swell to Great	8'

The nameplate reads "Anderson-Silsby 1875". No one in Denver seems to remember the firm, and there wasn't time to learn by research whether it was a local builder or otherwise. Does any member of OHS have information on the subject, and are there other examples of this builder's work?

The organ described above is in fair condition, and has evidently had no major changes in these 88 years, although it has been in constant use.

Another tracker organ still extant in Denver is the Farrand & Votey of 1890 in the Chapel of Our Merciful Saviour, All Saints Parish, 32nd Avenue and Wyandote Street. The organist is William Bradley who supplied the following specifications:

GREAT		SWELL	
Open Diapason	8'	Open Diapason	8'
Dulciana	8'	Stopped Flute	8'
Melodia	8'	Salicional	8'
Octave	4'	Harmonic Flute	4'
Flute d'Amour	4'	Violina	4'
Twelfth	2 2/3'	Flute	2'
Fifteenth	2'	Oboe	8'
Clarinet	8'	Tremulant	
PEDAL		COUPLERS	
Bourdon	16'	Great to Pedal	
Flute	8'	Swell to Pedal	
		Swell to Great	

Most people know about the wonderful Evergreen Conference on Church Music, originated by the late Canon Douglas and continued throughout the years. In the main conference building where most classes are held one can find Hilborne L. Roosevelt's Opus 361, dated 1887. It is a one manual and pedal tracker organ that is still in use. The stop-list is:

MANUAL		COUPLERS	
Open Diapason Treble	8'	Manual to Pedal	
Open Diapason Bass	8'	Manual Octaves	

Salicional Treble	8'	There are 58 manual keys and 31 pedal notes.
Salicional Bass	8'	
Doppel Flute Treble	8'	
Doppel Flute Bass	8'	
Gemshorn Treble	4'	
Gemshorn Bass	4'	
Bourdon	16'	

It will be deduced that this article has been pieced together from information gleaned at various times. Undoubtedly there are other tracker organs in the Denver area, and perhaps future visits will permit their discovery. Generally speaking, there is a considerable interest among the musicians and historians of Denver, and we welcome information from any and all of these.

## Tape-Recording Reproductions

Our Recordings Supervisor reports that he has acquired the master tapes of the 1961 and 1962 convention recitals and is planning to issue a series of 'custom duplicated' pre-recorded tapes which will be available about September 1st. This service to OHS members is made through a special arrangement with a firm in Camden, New Jersey. The tapes will be stereo or monaural, depending on the kind of mastertape, and the quality will be very fine. Mr. Roche will have more details at the 1963 Convention.

At the present the following tentative titles are being considered:

- GEORGE BUTLER RECITAL (1961 Boston) 4m E. & G.G. Hook & Hastings
- GEORGE FAXON RECITAL (1961 Worcester) 4m E. & G.G. Hook
- PATERSON AT BOSTON (1961) 3m E. & G.G. Hook
- PATERSON AT SKANEATALES (1962) 2m Mark-love
- ORGAN, STRINGS & VOICES (1961) Old North Church
- ORGAN, STRINGS & BRASS (1962) Ithaca
- WILL O. HEADLEE RECITAL (1962) Syracuse
- BOSTON CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS (1961) same as disk edition
- SKANEATALES CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS (1962) same as disk

## An Audsley Organ

(From page 2)

troit. He built and paid for a magnificent church building and a ring of 14 bells. There were some who objected to the Skinner organ which he offered to give the church. They accepted the large gallery organ, but questioned the small chancel division, intended as a support for the choir procession. So well did he defend his position that a man said, "I'm convinced. Let us have two chancel organs." Thus it is with Dr. Audsley's restoration of mutations and mixtures. Today people say, "Let us have all the mutations and mixtures that Audsley urges, but let us out-Audsley Mr. Audsley. Let's have twice as many as he recommends."



# THE MUSICAL CYCLOPEDIA

BY WILLIAM S. PORTER

**NOTE:** Published in Boston in 1834 by James Loring of 132 Washington Street, this tome is subtitled "The Principles of Music embracing a Complete Musical Dictionary, and the outlines of a Musical Grammar, and of the Theory of Sounds and Laws of Harmony; with direction for The Practice of Vocal and Instrumental Music, and a Description of Musical Instruments." We offer here the first installment and expect to publish other sections in subsequent issues.

**CHOIR**, that part of a church where the singers are placed; the company of singers associated together for the performance of sacred music in a church. The duties of the choir are so to perform their part of the devotional exercises of the sanctuary, as to excite, in the bosoms of the congregation, those emotions which are indicated by the sentiment of the words sung. The duty of the accompanist has been noticed. The failings of the vocal performers, it is equally painful to speak of. Were a spectator, from the celestial world, to come into most of our congregations, he would regard the singing as any thing else than a devotional exercise. The causes of the desecration of this sacred service are various.

1. The singers are too often persons of irreligious or light character, and consequently cannot enter in the feelings of the sacred poet. Their irreverent behavior, during the other services, has been the cause of scandal in many churches. Whoever has frequented the pews of the choir, must have remarked their general indifference to the duties in which they are engaged. The singers busy themselves with the leaves of their music books, or hold conversation in an undertone; while the instrumental performer may possibly be engaged in a pantomimic exercise upon his instrument, eagerly thrumming the voiceless keys. How can it be supposed that such individuals stand in the same relation to God, as the rest of the people? Or, that they differ, in any essential point from the noble instrument around which they congregate?

2. Too great fondness for display. This second cause follows from the first. If a choir cannot affect the feelings of the congregation, as they cannot do so long as their own are unaffected, they will of course wish to arrest attention by conceited flourishes; which they learn from the class next spoken of.

3. The practice of hiring secular singers to perform the singing in a church. It can never be expected of such characters, that they should at once exclude from their minds, the levity, and impurity of their daily occupation, and assume the devotion which is becoming in the house of God. The same fondness for vain and frivolous compositions, the same love for ostentatious decorations, the same desire of human applause, which are fostered by theatrical performances, go with them to the sanctuary; and the approbation be-

stowed by the world, induces a host of weak minded singers to become their imitators.

4. Extreme jealousy of interference; which renders the labors of a reformer a most severe and self-denying duty. The objection to reform is usually compounded of two ingredients, ignorance and self-conceit. It proceeds from an utter misconception of the real design and nature of the service. Singers frequently persuade themselves, that the psalmody is entirely their province: and reprobate any attempt to interfere, as an infringement on their rights. If the clergyman, for instance, wearied out of all patience, by the mummery which has so long passed under the name of psalm singing in his church, presumes to remonstrate, mildly points out what he conceives the nature of the grievance, and proposes a remedy, his choir at first hear him with apparent attention; when alone, however, they put their heads together to measure their opinions and decide the case. Where obstinacy presides, and ignorance and wounded pride are the accusers of plain good sense, the result is soon settled that the 'parson' knows nothing of music. The results, such as leaving the seats, it is needless to particularize.

5. The character and pretensions of the chorister. The same remarks apply to him as above to the choir, only with more force.

6. Bad taste in the choice of tunes and style of performance. In almost every department of art and science, simplicity is the soul of excellence. Now it often happens, that the whole character of a tune, in itself chaste and ecclesiastical, is destroyed by a tasteless performance. The ear is drawn to the performance, to the neglect of sentimental devotion. The same is the case when a tune is selected, incapable of expressing the desired sentiment.

7. The inattention of the congregation, who, by their listlessness, appear to regard the time of singing as a season for relaxation; or an intermission, to give them an opportunity of attending to their little private concerns.

8. The disregard and employment of the clergyman, who is often turning over the leaves of his sermon, or looking out the next hymn, which ought to be done at home, or looking for a chapter in the Bible, or in adjusting the Bible etc. about the pulpit. Can he blame the choir, for handling their books and instruments during prayers, while he sets an example? Or, can Christians censure them for not singing with devotional expression; while they themselves appear to regard the exercise, as any thing else, rather than devotional? We need a general reformation in the moral character of our choristers and choirs, and in our singing school; and also in the conduct of ministers and congregations, before sacred music can become truly the handmaid of religion.

**CHOIR MUSIC**, plain music sung in chorus.

**CHORAL MUSIC**, plain church music, consisting of a combination of different simple melodies, intended to be performed by many singers on each part, or by congregations. Choral music consists of equal and essential notes, and chiefly direct chords; in distinction from figurative music.

**CHORISTER (CHORIST)**, a performer in a choir. In this country, the chorister is the leader of the choir. The office of a chorister is a responsible and sacred one. Next to that of the clergyman, perhaps none is more so. Something more than a mere singer is required; though from common practice we might infer otherwise. It is a lamentable fact, that a conscientious man seldom pays that attention to science, taste, and practice, which is necessary to qualify him for a chorister. He witnesses the instability and levity of choristers generally, and at once concludes that it is all to be attributed to the effect of music: as though the improvement of one of the noblest talents our Creator has given us, tended to dissipate the mind. It is a serious mistake, and one which must be corrected. It is not the cultivation of music, which makes choristers proverbial for their instability and vanity; it is the criminal neglect of their talents. The cultivation of any one talent to the exclusion of others, let that talent be what it may, produces a species of insanity. Another reason why the office of chorister is not desired by men of character, is the little respect usually attached to it. This is the very reason why such men should make it a point of duty to qualify themselves, and enter the office, so as to make it respectable. The office is essentially the most respectable in the congregation, and if it is not made so, the fault lies with those who are capable of making it so. In selecting choristers, we presume none will be found, who will defend the practice of admitting characters openly immoral into the sacred office. Yet, from among those who are not chargeable with undisguised violations of common morality and decency a choice is made of those who too often manifest a lamentable ignorance of the real nature of those services which are rendered unto God. The task is often undertaken as a means of livelihood, or winning human applause. But no thought appears to enter the mind, of the peculiar aim of the duty, the influence it is designed to have over the feelings and character of the people. Hence tunes are selected which are capable of being performed with the greatest display, rather than those of a more simple character, which naturally express devotional feelings.

**CHORUS**, (Lat., a band of singers and dancers), a composition of four or more parts, to be performed by all the voices accompanied by the instruments. A common psalm tune performed by a large congregation forms a splendid chorus.

**CHORUS SINGER**, one who sings in chorus, whether treble, tenor, or base, in distinction from solo singer.

**CHURCH MUSIC**, plain music for the sanctuary, nearly the same as choral music. In church music, few ornaments and accidental notes are admitted, and few divisions used; the notes to some extent are of unequal length, yet seldom more than one to a syllable.

**ORGAN**, a well known wind instrument, containing numerous pipes of various dimensions and powers. The organ is generally used in churches, and is the fittest instrument for sacred music, on account of its tones and its power of sustaining the sounds. Our remarks on the organ will be arranged under the following heads: first, its origin and history; second, its construction; third, description of particular organs; and fourth, its powers and uses.

1. **History of the organ.** Of this noblest of all instruments, as its name denotes, Greek organon, Latin organum, the instrument, by way of excellence, a few historical notices may probably afford some amusement and instruction to the reader. The origin of the organ is involved in much obscurity, chiefly arising from the various senses in which the term was anciently used. St. Augustine, so late as his time, says, "All musical instruments are called organs, not only that which is slender and blown with bellows, but also every one else of a bodily shape, (i.e., wind instruments of all kinds), which is adapted to singing, and which the singer on the account employs."

In Genesis iv: 21, the word means simply wind instruments. The idea of the organ was doubtless at first derived from the Pandean pipes. A Greek epigram supposed to have been written in the fourth century, affords the most ancient proof of an instrument resembling the modern organ. It runs thus: "I see reeds of a new species, the growth of another and a brazen soil, such as are not agitated by our winds, but by a blast that rushes from a leathern cavern beneath their roots; while a robust mortal, running with swift fingers over the concordant keys, makes them smoothly dance and emit melodious sounds."

Of a much later date, was an instrument resembling our organ, termed the hydraulicon or water organ, in which the air in some way unknown to us, was introduced into the pipes by means of water. This was the discovery of Ctesibius of Alexandria, about the year 220, or rather, an improvement of his on the invention of Plato called the clepsydra or water clock, which played the hours of the night on flutes. In the sixth century, the hydraulicon gave place to the wind organ, which Cassiodorus thus describes: "The organ is an instrument composed of divers pipes formed into a kind of tower, which, by means of a bellows, is made to produce a loud sound: and in order to express agreeable melodies, there are, in the inside, movements made of wood, that are pressed down by the fingers of the player, which produce the most pleasing and brilliant tones."

The organ is supposed to have been first introduced into the service of the church at Rome by pope Vitalian in 670. In the next century, the Greek emperor at Constantinople, Constantine Copronymus, sent an organ as a present to Pepin, king of France; Greece claiming the honor of its invention. In the time of Charlemagne, organs were brought from Greece into western Europe, and soon became common. In 812, the artists of that prince built one at Aix la Chapelle, on the Greek model. Before the tenth century, organs found their way into England; and during that century, became common and were spread through

Germany and Italy and England. Being admitted into all the countries of Europe, they served to foster those seeds of musical genius, which, for want of opportunity, had hitherto been buried in monastic seclusion.

To the organ of this period, may be traced the first dawn of harmony. Organs of enormous size were then used, as we may learn from the description of one erected in 951, for the bishop of Winchester, thus narrated by Wolfstan:

"Twelve pair of bellows, ranged in stated row,  
Are joined above, and fourteen more below,  
These the full power of seventy men require  
Who ceaselessly toil, and plenteously perspire,  
Each aiding each, till all the wind be prest  
In the close confines of the incumbent chest,  
On which four hundred pipes in order rise,  
To bellow forth the blast that chest supplies."

This organ, we are told, had but ten keys, with forty pipes for each key. It would thus seem, that as many men and as much exertion were required to work the wind, as would be necessary to man a frigate. It is supposed, however, that the seventy bellows blowers kept not their bellows in action at the time of the performance, but previously filled the huge chest with wind, and then left it to be expanded as occasion required. From this description, we learn what progress had then been made towards its present state of perfection. It is a matter of wonder, that an instrument whose principle of construction is so very simple, however complicated its mechanism when applied to a variety of stops, should have been so many centuries in a state of such imperfection: for the keys are said to have been five or six inches broad, and like the carillons of Holland, must have been pressed down by fist. The pipes made of brass must have been so shrill and piercing as to produce no agreeable sounds. The compass did not exceed two octaves in the twelfth century, about which time half tones were introduced at Venice. It was not until the fifteenth century, that its construction was so far improved that both hands could be used in playing on it.

Registers, without which a variety of stops could not be formed, were not invented until about the year 1600. From all this, we may justly conclude, that an organ in any degree deserving the name, could not have been constructed many years before the reformation. Before this, however, the important addition of pedals was made at Venice, by Bernard, a German; to whose countrymen we owe most of the subsequent improvements in bellows, stops, &c., and among whom its construction has been a work of great repute; and the names of their first organ builders are still remembered with honor.

In England, we find scarcely any mention of organs, from the reformation down to the time of Charles the first. During the wars of his unfortunate reign, it is well known, that in 1640, the organs throughout the kingdom were nearly all sold or destroyed, and the professors of the art of music were driven to other resources for their support, by the furious opposers of cathedrals and episcopacy: so that on the restoration of choral

service, instruments, books, and performers and singers, were equally difficult to be procured. Yet Cromwell himself was partial to the organ; and caused the one at a college in Oxford, to be removed to Hampton Court, where he often entertained himself by listening to it. He also connived at Dr. Busby having choral service with an organ at his house in Westminster, when it was forbidden throughout the realm. At the restoration in 1660, very few organ builders were found in England, which led to the introduction of foreign artists, particularly Bernard Schmidt, commonly called Father Smith, many of whose organs are now in use. His largest organs had about twenty stops; and one of them had two keys to express G<sup>2</sup> and A<sup>b</sup>, and also D<sup>2</sup> and E<sup>b</sup>. From the competition and patronage presented before organ builders, and from the progress of musical science, organs in modern times have been brought to a great degree of perfection. Mr. Liston, an English clergyman, has invented an organ which is capable of rendering every scale perfect. For this purpose, he has introduced pipes for those notes which are a comma too sharp or too flat in the C scale; and has arranged them in a few sets in such a manner, that those of one set will render all the intervals perfect in any particular key. Each set is connected with a pedal, by pressing which, those pipes that are wanted in that key are opened; and all that is necessary in modulation, is to press another pedal.

In this country, the art of organ building has made great improvements. That recently built by Mr. Thomas Appleton of Boston, for the Bowdoin Street church, is probably not inferior to any in the country, and will well compare with the best imported organs in power and effect. Its sub-base is peculiarly grand and solemn. The largest pipe is 24 feet in length, and its pitch is G, two octaves lower than the G string of the violincello. Its cost was \$4000.

*(To be continued)*

## THE JOHNSON LIST

**Ed. Note:** Herewith the third installment of this document. To date no one has come forward with the Eugene Thayer list of Johnson organs. In the meantime we continue as follows:

### 1856

- No. 49 Howe Street Congregational Church, New Haven, Conn. - 3m
- No. 50 Parlor Organ, Windsor Locks, Conn. - 1m
- No. 51 Baptist Church, Malden, Mass. - 2m
- No. 52 First Baptist Church, New London, Conn. - 2m
- No. 53 South Congregational Church, Middletown, Conn. - 2m
- No. 54 First Congregational Church, Montague, Mass. - 1m
- No. 55 Worthen Street M. E. Church, Lowell, Mass. - 2m
- No. 56 First Baptist Church, North Adams, Mass. - 2m
- No. 57 First Congregational Church, Northampton, Mass. - 3m

## THE TRACKER

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- No. 58 First Congregational Church, Albany, New York - 3m
- No. 59 M. E. Church, Natick, Mass. - 1m
- No. 60 Parlor Organ, Augusta, Georgia - 1m
- No. 61 College of Holy Cross, Worcester, Mass. - 1m
- No. 62 M. E. Church, North Adams, Mass. - 2m
- No. 63 Unitarian Church, Brookfield, Mass. - 2m
- No. 64 Baptist Church, Franklindale, N. Y. - 1m

### 1857

- No. 65 North Pearl St. Baptist Church, Albany, N. Y. - 2m
- No. 66 M. E. Church, Portland, Maine - 2m
- No. 67 M. E. Church, Saratoga, N. Y. - 2m
- No. 68 Baptist Church, Chicopee Falls, Mass. - 1m
- No. 69 (?) Church, Meadville, Pa. - 1m
- No. 70 Congregational Church, Litchfield, Conn. - 2m
- No. 71 St. Paul's Church (rebuilt), Albany, N. Y. - 2m
- No. 72 First Presbyterian Church, Milwaukee, Wisconsin - 2m
- No. 73 Williston Seminary Chapel, Easthampton, Mass. - 1m

### 1858 -

- No. 74 First Congregational Church, Collinsville, Conn. - 2m
- No. 75 Wabash Ave. M. E. Church, Chicago, Ill. - 2m
- No. 76 First Baptist Church, Shelburne Falls, Mass. - 2m
- No. 77 South St. Baptist Church, Lynn, Mass. - 2m

- No. 78 Harvard St. M. E. Church, Cambridgeport, Mass. - 2m
- No. 79 German Lutheran Church, Albany, N. Y. - 1m
- No. 80 Parlor Organ - 1m

### 1859 -

- No. 81 Congregational Church, Clinton, Mass. - 2m
- No. 82 Congregational Church, Oswego, N. Y. - 2m
- No. 83 Second Congregational Church, Westfield, Mass. - 1m
- No. 84 Dutch Reformed Church, Kinderhook, N. Y. - 2m
- No. 85 Congregational Church, South Hadley Falls, Mass. - 2m
- No. 86 Presbyterian Church, Penn Yan, N. Y. - 2m
- No. 87 Baptist Church, Holyoke, Mass. - 2m
- No. 88 St. John's Church, Warehouse Point, Conn. - 2m
- No. 89 Congregational Church, Chicopee Falls, Mass. - 1m
- No. 90 Parlor Organ - 1m
- No. 91 Bromfield St. M. E. Church, Boston, Mass. - 2m
- No. 92 Baptist Church, Greenville, Mass. - 2m
- No. 93 St. Mark's Church, New Britain, Conn. - 2m

### 1860 -

- No. 94 Presbyterian Church, Schenectady, N. Y. - 2m
- No. 95 Episcopal Church, Ashfield, Mass. - 1m
- No. 96 Episcopal Church, Hoboken, N. J. - 2m
- No. 97 M. E. Church, Hopkinton, Mass. - 1m
- No. 89 Congregational Church, Chicopee Falls, N. Y. - 2m
- No. 99 M. E. Church, Sanbornton Bridge, N. H. - 1m
- No. 100 St. Peter's Church, Hebron, Conn. - 2m
- No. 101 Congregational Church, Great Barrington, Mass. - 2m
- No. 102 St. Peter's Episcopal Church, Albany, N. Y. - 3m
- No. 103 Church of the New Jerusalem, Bath, Maine - 2m
- No. 104 St. Patrick's Church, New London, Conn. - 2m
- No. 105 St. John's Episcopal Church, Stockton, Calif. - 2m
- No. 106 Fourth Presbyterian Church, Trenton, N. J. - 2m
- No. 107 Episcopal Church, Trenton, N. J. - 1m
- No. 108 Congregational Church, Marlboro, Conn. - 1m
- No. 109 Congregational Church, New Milford, Conn. - 2m
- No. 110 First M. E. Church, Haverhill, Mass. - 1m
- No. 111 St. Mary's Church, Norwich, Conn. - 2m

(To be continued)