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THE TRACER
JOURNAL OF THE ORGAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

A Survey of Kentucky Organbuilders by Michael Fisen
From 1851, Kentucky Organbuilders Worked in Covington, Lexington, Louisville, Newport and Owensboro

The Life & Work of Charles F. Durner by John Speller
After 13 Years in Germany & France, Charles Durner Arrives in America, Building Fine Organs In Pennsylvania 1859-1914

Reviews of Recordings
Jennifer Bate, From Stanford to Wesley, Six CDs of 18th Century English Organs and Music, Reviewed by John Speller
Ian Tracey & Noel Rawsthorne Play on Three CDs from Liverpool Cathedral, Reviewed by Jonathan Ambrosino, with an Enlightening Discussion of the 1926 Willis Organ

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Donors & Gifts, 1992-93

EDITORIAL

Historical Performance & American Organs

Over a year ago, we editorialized in the subject of American organs and historical organs in America (36:1). The piece continues to draw response in the “Letters” columns. In consequence of that editorial and a subsequent guest editorial by Jonathan Ambrosino, which also elicited some comment, we suggested a discussion of some sort on the several aspects of performing standard literature on early American organs in a historically and aesthetically appropriate manner.

Your editor and managing editor considered devoting a whole issue to the topic and concluded that such was impracticable, given the varied interests in the Society’s membership. Similarly, a series of articles in successive issues would in all probability prove awkward and cumbersome. And finally, a recorded symposium—give-and-take discussion by a selected group—seemed similarly impracticable for logistical reasons (in context, we can scarcely resist contemplating the results, albeit tongue-in-cheek, of a historically “authentic” Classical symposium, with the flow of philosophical insights adequately inspired by the flow of wine). In any event, we have decided on a single or even double article-length format combining several short papers of about 500 words each (two-pages of double-spaced typescript) on various aspects of the subject. These aspects might include, but are certainly not limited to, such things as registration, acoustics, considerations of tempo, repertoire, and so on. We would prefer to avoid, at least insofar as is possible, tangential issues such as contending philosophies of historical or contextual performance practice in general that are being aired quite adequately and even fulsomely in other journals.

So in the parlance of the trade, we are calling for papers on the aspects of the subject by any who may wish to contribute, but especially those who are primarily or significantly interested in performing organ music and the problems of doing so in a contextual manner on early American organs. We would also ask that those who wish to contribute let us know the aspect they intend to address and when we may expect their submission so as to help us plan the layout and scheduling of the issue.

I rest my case.

Peter V. Picerno
Memphis, Tennessee

Biggs Fellowship Deadline Approaches

The deadline for application for E. Power Biggs Fellowships is January 31, 1994. These fellowships are awarded each year to assist individuals in attending the OHS National Convention, which will be held June 19-25, 1994, in the New Haven-Hartford area.

The Fellowship is open to anyone who is genuinely interested in historic pipe organs, who has never attended an OHS convention, and who could not afford to do so without financial assistance.

OHS members or non-members are invited to nominate themselves or others. Request applications from the chairman of the Biggs Fellowship Committee, Julie Stephens, 10 South Catherine St., La Grange, IL 60525.

LETTERS

Editor:

I was heartened to read the first two paragraphs of your editorial in The Tracker (37:2). I would be very interested in a symposium on historical performance on early American organs, and I would imagine (and fervently hope) that there would be many others who share this interest.

Regardless of the pontifications of those who would deprecate performance practice of any nature, I would submit the opinion that it is inexcusable for any truly modern musician to choose to remain ignorant of historical performance practice of any era. As musicians and performers, we are naught but the vehicle through which a composer communicates his or her ideas to the listener. As such, it is most important that we seek to understand and to re-create those ideas within the context, certainly, of our own musicianship. Once the intent and context of a composition is understood, we have the artistic license and necessity to adapt the composer’s wishes to our own performing situations. But to begin with the premise that music is ours to do with as we please with no regard (or, worse, with a deliberate choice to have no regard) for the circumstances which surrounded its birth is to exploit the music simply for the purpose of gratifying the performer’s ego. Such performances tend to be quite exciting, flashy, and shallow. In presupposing that performance practice renders music dull and pedantic, one only betrays one’s own failure to have grappled in depth with a composer’s works. One can truly understand, and thus interpret, the works of a composer only when one understands every aspect of the music and its intended performance itself. For example, it would be as wrong to ornament a movement of a Widor symphony as it would be not to ornament a slow movement of a Handel concerto. Yet, if one subscribes to the theory that performance practice is simply to be eschewed, ornamenting Widor is certainly within the realm of possibility — not to mention a whole galaxy of other permissible (and mind-boggling) barbarisms! To quote Stravinsky’s Poetics of Music (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1942, 1974): “The more art is controlled, limited, worked over, the more it is free” (p. 63), “The idea of interpretation implies the limitations imposed upon the performer or those which the performer imposes upon himself in his proper function, which is to transmit music to the listener” (p. 122). “... One has the right to seek from the interpreter ... a loving care — which does not mean, be it surreptitious or openly affirmed, a recomposition” (p. 124).

I rest my case.

Peter V. Picerno
Memphis, Tennessee
it may be inevitable that we trace the same problem child to different parents.

The performance approach of which I reminisce is one which the entire nineteenth and early twentieth centuries took for granted. If Mr. Spacht believes this approach to have been the foundation of our mid- and late-century's "cookie-cutter" playing, I confess that I had the scintillating performances of Josef Hoffman, Sergei Rachmaninoff, Alfred Cortot, and Arthur Rubinstein in mind. All were firmly grounded in a basically late-Romantic tradition, and each player offered breathtakingly original and different interpretation of the same corp of music. Possible counterparts in the American organ world might have been Lynnwood Farnam, Charles Courboin, and Palmer Christian. As I see it (and again Mr. Spacht may disagree), it was probably Lynnwood Farnam's students (the Ernest Whites and Carl Weinrichs) together with E. Power Biggs who were most responsible for the rise of a new aesthetic. Many factors guided this movement, but its motive force was anti-Romantic, and thus reactionary: more a reproachful shedding of old clothes that the weaving of new.

Eventually, this approach resulted in extremes within extremes. It is curious that the two big names of period (Fox and Biggs) could offer us such highly different styles and, simultaneously, the best and worst examples in these styles. We can hear Fox being utterly tawdry on one record but grippingly dramatic on the next; we have the singular charm of Biggs' Handel and (some) Bach at certain times, while at others, his absurd "hot-stove" exaggerated articulation is possibly the best example of what that period considered "authentic."

As I reread my editorial, I find in it no discouragement of historical exploration, merely an assertion that such study has monopolized music-making, rather than becoming a tool in a musician's training and background. And when I wrote about unintended possibilities, I was thinking once more of Hoffman and his special propensity for creating new melodies from within the accompanimental fabric of familiar pieces. To listen to his Chopin displays its wares only for that audience who will appreciate the "rightness" of the effect. The exercise is sometimes a highly musical one, but too often it is not — again, the trappings of erudition. He and others like him demonstrated how imagination might be regulated by training and taste — not the other way around. Thoroughly grounded in his style, Hoffman reached beyond the merely stylistic and created his own.

Such musical substance is ultimately the language to which all great performance subscribes, in spite of stylistic differences. The potential danger, as I see it, with the performance practice aesthetic is that it too often puts style ahead of the music itself, and then displays its wares only for that audience who will appreciate the "rightness" of the effect. The exercise is sometimes a highly musical one, but too often it is not — again, the trappings of erudition. I certainly don't doubt the sincerity of the movement's practitioners, but I question whether we are really learning anything about music-making which is actually resulting in more great music-making. Our knowledge of music seems to have increased; our documentation can be trusted, the twentieth-century organ has offer us such highly different styles and, simultaneously, the best and worst examples in these styles. We can hear Fox being utterly tawdry on one record but grippingly dramatic on the next; we have the singular charm of Biggs' Handel and (some) Bach at certain times, while at others, his absurd "hot-stove" exaggerated articulation is possibly the best example of what that period considered "authentic."

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Perhaps in a similar mode of "reaching beyond," the greater lesson may be not to take stock in our opinions, but instead to seek and identify musical substance and to create performances which are authentic insofar as they sound the ring of truth. If recordings and documentation can be trusted, the nineteenth-century organ has seen two performers who did this consistently: for the classical organ, it would appear to have been Lynnwood Farnam and for the theatre organ, it can only be George Wright. Perhaps my writing is motivated by a youthful impatience for their successors and a curiosity that no one has been able to produce magic on their scale.

Jonathan Ambrosino
Guilford, Conn. & Los Angeles

Editor:

As chairman of the 1993 OHS national convention in the Louisville area, I would like to express my appreciation to everyone who participated in the convention. Hosting an OHS convention in Louisville was a dream come true for me, and it could not have been accomplished without the assistance of friends and colleagues who shared that dream. To my wonderful committee members, those who played excellent recitals, those who worked on organs nearly
round the clock, and those who helped in great and small ways, I
thank you from the bottom of my heart.
I also express my gratitude to everyone who attended the
convention. Numerous times throughout the week conventioneers
commented to me that it must take a tremendous amount of work
to host an OHS convention. This certainly is true, but seeing
everyone enjoying the convention events made every minute of that
work very worthwhile and I certainly would do it all over again.

Finally, I have a favor to ask. Our Kentuckiana OHS Chapter is
assembling a convention scrapbook. We all were so busy with
convention details that there was little time to take pictures. We
would certainly appreciate any photos that conventioneers might
be willing to share with us.

Our conventions to me are really "family reunions with organ
recitals," and I look forward to seeing everyone in Connecticut next
summer for what promises to be another memorable gathering of
our OHS family. Thanks again to everyone for your support of OHS '93.

Keith E Norrington
629 Roseview Terrace
New Albany, IN 47150

Editor:

Thank you for running the editorial regarding the need for the
kind of education provided by OHS (36:4). Too often local chapters
of the AGO have deans who do not have the educational back­
ground to provide the sort of education needed in the organ world
today. As you pointed out in your editorial, this sometimes leads to
some serious mistakes which take a long time to correct because
the leaders are the only people willing to assume responsibility in
the chapters.

I feel that the way to correct this situation is for the leadership
of the OHS to become highly visible in local AGO chapters and to
assume leadership roles. When a problem arises as it did in the
chapter you mentioned, attend your local AGO board meetings and
local annual meetings. If this does not happen, the electronic
salesmen may be at our doors and church board meetings in
numbers not seen before.

James Moore

OBITUARIES

William F. Brame, 68, died July 29, 1993, at his home in
Kinston, North Carolina, after a long battle with heart problems. A
native of Alabama, he began working in the organ business around
1939 and continued until his death, having served as Sales Manager
of the pipe organ department at Estey Organ Co. and later as a sales
representative for Aeolian-Skinner, Petty-Madden, Austin, and
Goulding & Wood. Brame also directed the music at a number of
churches as organist and choirmaster, among them St. Mary's
Episcopal Church, Kinston, where he served for 25 years. He was
an active member of OHS and served on the advisory board of the
Friends of the Wanamaker Organ. He is survived by his wife, Mary
Hunter Hackney Brame, and four sons, six grandchildren, and two
brothers.

Brian F. Thomas of New Orleans, Louisiana, died May 23,
1993, at age 39. A member of OHS and the New Orleans Chapter,
Thomas served on the 1989 Convention Committee. An active
preservationist, he was a board member of the Preservation
Resource Center of New Orleans and was employed by the Vieux
Carré Commission. His wife, Barbara Phillips Thomas, and son,
Matthew, survive him.

William E. Waters, 66, died suddenly June 28, 1993, in
Hendersonville, North Carolina. On the faculty of Eckerd College,
St. Petersburg, Florida, since 1962, he was widely known for his
choral work with the Eckerd College Choir. He had also worked in
the choral program at Duke University and with the outdoor
pageant The Common Glory in Williamsburg, Virginia. Born in
Roanoke Rapids, N. C., he served many churches in North Carolina
and St. Petersburg, finishing in 1992 with 14 years service as
organist/choirmaster at Trinity Lutheran Church, St. Petersburg. In
addition to his wife Yvonne, Waters is survived by a brother, son,
daughter, and three grandchildren.
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FOR SALE: 300 pipe organs, mostly old, varying sizes, condition; mechanical and electric action. Send $6.00 in stamps for lists. Alan Laufman, Executive Director, Organ Clearing House, P. O. Box 104, Harrisville, New Hampshire 03450-0104.


CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING

RECORDINGS: Recordings

Jennifer Bate, *From Stanley to Wesley*, 18th-century organ music played on period instruments at Adlington Hall, The Dolmetsch Collection, St. Michael's Mount, Kenwood House, Killerton House, Everingham Chapel. 6 CDs on the Unicorn-Kanchana label, DKP 9096, 9099, 9101, 9104, 9105, and 9106. Available from OHS, $17.98 per CD +$1.85 p&h

These CDs are possibly the finest recordings of eighteenth-century English organs and organ music ever issued. Ms. Bate makes use of six historic organs, each of which appears on each CD. The instruments featured are a very representative and carefully chosen selection of late seventeenth through early nineteenth-century English organs. The original organbuilders and the recording engineer deserve high praise for the excellent recorded sound and in spite of the instruments being in relatively small, acoustically dry rooms.

The important late-seventeenth-century Adlington instrument, possibly the work of “Father” Smith, has a delightful, piquant, sweet sound. Many claims are made about organs supposed to have been played by Handel, but this instrument is one of very few where this claim can be substantiated.

The 1764 Snrztler bureau organ from the Dolmetsch Collection is the smallest of the instruments featured. Despite its diminutive size it gives a very fine account of itself.

St. Michael's Mount is a romantic medieval castle situated on an island a mile off the coast of Cornwall. The organ is the work of John Avery, a colorful eighteenth-century English organbuilder who spent much of his career behind bars of one kind or another. He died in the Marshalsea, the London debtors’ prison. Avery was notorious for the practice of “borrowing” pipes — taking pipes from his earlier organs to complete later instruments. His surviving work is, however, extremely fine, as represented by the St. Michael's Mount organ of 1786. The situation of this organ in a fortress entirely surrounded by ocean probably helped to protect it from marauding pipe borrowers. It features lovely rich diapasons and a brilliant silvery chorus.

The Kenwood Hall instrument is to me the least satisfying of the six, largely because its condition detracts somewhat from my enjoyment of the recordings. A number of sagging languids are apparent, particularly in Band 1 of Disc 1 and Band 4 of Disc 6. It may even be that the wind pressure has been set a little on the high side. The tuning of this instrument also seems a little off in places, especially in Band 12 of Disc 4 and Band 18 of Disc 6. This is hardly to be attributed to the unequal temperament, since A minor and C minor are not particularly remote keys. George Pike England was, nevertheless, one of the finest organbuilders of the period, and it is good that his work is represented here.

Killerton Hall is in Broadclyst, a picturesque Devon village situated on the main road between Taunton and Exeter. In the nineteenth century the house was owned by Sir Thomas and Lady Lydia Acland (not Ackland as the name is incorrectly given in the booklet.) Lydia Acland was one of Samuel Sebastian Wesley's organ pupils, and he dedicated to her two sets of *Three Pieces for a Chamber Organ* (1838). The pleasant William Gray organ of 1807 at Killerton Hall was doubtless the chamber organ Wesley had in mind in his title, and Ms. Bate suggests that Wesley and Lady Ackland may have played duets on it. Like the Avery instrument it was fine, rich diapasons.

The organ of 1839 in the Everingham Chapel in Yorkshire was built by Charles Allen, a little-known organbuilder from what is now the red light district of London, Soho. The instrument was recently restored by N. P. Mander Ltd. and has not until now received the attention which it deserves. For its size and date it is quite extraordinarily fine, and the trumpet can only be described as stupendous. It must be heard to be believed!

The English composers represented are John Reading, John Stanley, George Frideric Handel, Thomas Roseingrave (Rose-in-grave), John Travers, William Wollond (pronounced Wollond, not Wayland), Samuel Long, James Nares, William Russell, Samuel Wesley, Maurice Greene (Morris, not More-ree), William Croft, Charles Sanders, Dupuis, William Boyce, Henry Heron, Samuel Stublely, and James Hook (James Hook, incidentally, was the father of Dr. Walter Farquhar Hook, an
English cleric who wrote an early history of the Episcopal Church of the United States. He was Vicar of Leeds when S. S. Wesley was organist there from 1842 to 1849 and was a pioneer in the introduction of full choral services in parish churches.

The choices of music by all these composers are excellent. Stanley, for example, is represented by twenty two of the thirty voluntaries in Op. 5, 6, and 7. The selection includes all of the interesting voluntaries and none of the boring ones!

The problem with much of the eighteenth-century English repertoire as it is commonly played is inherent in the nature of the music, much of which was written for organ or harpsichord. Many players do not seem to be able to tell which of the two instruments they are playing. This is not a new problem. John Snetzler, on hearing Dr. Robert Wainwright play at Halifax in the 1760s ran round the church screaming, “Te tevil, te tevil, he run over te key like one cat, he vii not give my piphes room for to shpeak!” Mr. Snetzler would not, I think, have had any complaints about Ms. Bate’s playing of his little bureau organ in these recordings, or indeed, about her performances on any of the other instruments. Among recordings of eighteenth-century English organ music I think the only ones which bear comparison with Ms. Bate’s are those made by the late David Lepine of Coventry Cathedral in the 1960s. Several recordings have been made, for example, of Stanley’s Op. 5, No. 8, but Ms. Bate’s is the first I have ever heard which is both brilliant and elegant. She pays careful attention to phrasing and her playing throughout is animated and thoughtful.

Jennifer Bate is also to be congratulated for her excellent notes in the booklets which accompany each of the six CDs. She has taken the trouble to write a different piece about each composer in each booklet (although this does have the slight disadvantage that to extract all the information on, say, John Stanley, one has to read all six leaflets!) Stoplists and historical details are given for all six organs in each leaflet.

I commend this most worthy series of CDs to one and all. Is it too much to hope that Jennifer Bate will make further recordings of the same type?

John L. Speller, St. Louis, Missouri

Three recordings from Liverpool Cathedral are reviewed here by Jonathan Ambrosino.


Liverpool Encores, Ian Tracey plays transcriptions on the Willis Organ of Liverpool Cathedral. Tielman Susato: Mohrentanz; Tomaso Albinoni: Adagio in g; Antonio Soler: Minuet (6th Concerto for 2 organs); J. S. Bach: Bist du bei mir and Sinfonia from Cantata 29; William Boyce: Gavotte from Fifth Symphony; Jeremiah Clarke: Trumpet Voluntary; Haydn: Three pieces for musical clocks; W.A. Mozart: Fantasia in F (K608); Fauré:
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ments, so that a miniature but complete minor full organ might be drawn for lesser occasions. The organ also develops tonal families to a high degree of completeness. If you see a given 8' stop, there is likely a 16' and 4' to go with it, as in the case of the Swell Geigen, Salticorns and Lieblich Gedeckts; Choir Violas; and Solo Viols and Hohl Flutes. (This may have been a pointed response to the Hope-Jones theory of unification.) After the Choir, Swell and Great are all drawn, the Solo has a family of keen Trombas (in fact, broad Trumpets with plenty of edge) and the Bombarde organ features beautiful ringing Tubas at 16', 8' and 4' plus a ten-rank Grand Chorus. While the full Swell or Great alone is substantial, even devastating, no single division will really fill the room by itself. Start coupling them together, and watch the building's acoustic begin to stir. Fully drawn with the three 32' flues and two 32' reeds in stereo (one on each side), there are few ensembles to match it. While perhaps not the loudest, Liverpool is one of the largest and grandest ensembles, and the clarity with which it permeates this huge building is a remarkable achievement.

The organ has known just three masters. Harry Goss-Custard reigned from 1924 to 1955, succeeded by his pupil Noel Rawsthorne, who served his twenty-five years before being followed by his pupil Ian Tracey in 1980. (Two years later, Tracey was also appointed Master of the Choristers.) Each player has certainly known how to cope with a big sound in a big room. Goss-Custard's playing, well-preserved on 78s, brims with majesty and drama, as in his "Funeral March" from Chopin's Second Piano Sonata. And, as discussed later, Rawsthorne has no difficulty cutting the room to size. Ian Tracey's playing is unmistakably his own. Its hallmarks are relentless energy, crispness, and a reliance upon rhythmic rather than dynamic methods of phrasing. Tracey uses extremely precise articulation and a mostly staccato touch, probably since the principle of "duration equals intensity" is exponentially magnified in a room this size. As with the best theatre organ players, one's impression is that each note is struck, held and released with perfect unanimity and for precisely the duration intended. When Tracey sinks into a chord, and the tone finally has a chance to stir the huge acoustic, there is no escaping the visceral punch. In this way, Tracey holds the organ's (and building's) power in reserve, while overcoming difficulties of clarity and projection. As a colorist, Tracey will explore the whole organ in characteristic pieces, but his definitions of the chorus can be limited in louder works. Tracey's playing of transcriptions treats the orchestral score as organ music, rather than striving to reproduce its orchestral nuance and sonority. In this way, Tracey follows a tradition more W. T. Best than Edwin H. Lemare and carries it off in fine style.

Both Organ Recital and Liverpool Encores are a layman's showcase of organ and literature. Organ Recital is a straightforward collection of favorite organ music and transcriptions, and a fine introduction to Tracey's exuberant playing. The Handel, Purcell and Cocker all display spirited, clean-cut performances in which a good chorus accompanies the Tuba Magna, later building to nearly full organ and a rousing close. "Crown Imperial" receives similar treatment, relieved by the middle sections. Tracey's Widor is stately and regular; once again, his precise attention to left-hand articulation propels the piece without actually accelerating it. The Fiocco "Allegro," the "Badinerie," Purcell "Air," and the Yon feature various flute possibilities, both singly and in combination. (Be warned: the Solo 2' Piccolo is actually a 1', which will explain much right-channel activity.) Tracey's Bach is colorful, clear and dramatic, and in the "Badinerie," he displays a real talent for phrasing with his feet. In the Mulet Noël, he uses his own registrations, not Mulet's; combined with a leisurely tempo, the piece becomes more a gentle lullaby than a verse. The "Tu es petra" is similar to the Widor performance, where Tracey's left-hand precision keeps the piece especially focused.

There is something straightforward about the above performances. The more interesting music-making happens in the Bossi, Thalben-Ball, Mulet, and Reger. The Bossi "Scherzo" presents continually repeated phrases on quieter flutes, reeds and foundations; the alternations grow to a large climax and then recede, whence the cycle repeats. Small episodes take place, alternating Clarinet with flute combinations, or chunky chords on the minor Swell reeds, or the 16 and 8 Choir Clarinets. These build-ups relieve the
otherwise massive chorus combinations; one can hear the ensemble without the heroic Grand Chorus mixture, which Tracey otherwise regularly draws to the Great. The Thalben-Ball again highlights the foundations, clearly displaying the unusual edge which the double-language Great First brings to the discharges. Eventually full Swell is added, and Tracey builds to a powerful climax, reducing back to almost nothing. Following Sir George's request for a "warm ending," the final chord is given on the exquisite Choir Melodia and Unda Maris with soft 32'.

The Reger seems especially at home on this organ, a piece that keeps demanding more, and from an organ which has no trouble supplying it. After a huge introduction, Tracey begins the Passacaglia on a soft pedal with 32' Violone and quiet string-and-flute combination, changing at each variation to flutes, then foundations against mixtures in the toccata variation, and eventually building through the various reed choruses to a heraldic close. With its variety of moods and colors, this performance is especially satisfying. The principal criticism of Organ Recital is its close-miked sound, which prevents the listener from hearing the organ's real color and the acoustic's true drama. Instead of hearing sound interact with room, we hear cause and effect. The dry, one-dimensional result begs for a wider variety of ensemble sounds, in that all the mixtures tend to sound the same. Liverpool Encores addresses these issues handsomely: It offers a more interesting variety of repertoire (this time entirely transcriptions), a more stimulating use of the organ, and a superb and realistic recorded sound. Mirabilis's recording engineer David Wyld has created his label specifically to produce recordings which create an on-location effect. As he notes in the jacket, "Liverpool Cathedral is one of the largest enclosed spaces in the world, and this amazing acoustic produces 'washes' of sound that are often overwhelming and moving. Mirabilis has simply recorded the sound on a 'what-you-hear-is-what-you-get, warts and all' basis."

As with Organ Recital, Encores has its share of trumpet tunes. The Susato is the best, an overwhelming introduction to organ and room. Those early-music buffs weary of sakbutts and krumhorns may welcome nearly full organ in dialogue against Tuba Magna here. The Soler features fanfares on other reeds; either the Solo Trombas or Bombarde Tubas, they are much more beautiful than the sometimes-coarse Tuba Magna. The Boyce and Haydn display more sprightly flutes, as well as an occasional episode on the sometimes-coarse Tuba Magna. The Boyce and Haydn display more sprightly flutes, as well as an occasional episode on the sometimes-coarse Tuba Magna. The Boyce and Haydn display more sprightly flutes, as well as an occasional episode on the sometimes-coarse Tuba Magna. The Boyce and Haydn display more sprightly flutes, as well as an occasional episode on the sometimes-coarse Tuba Magna. The Boyce and Haydn display more sprightly flutes, as well as an occasional episode on the sometimes-coarse Tuba Magna.

The Liszt B-A-C-H is the most prone to this syndrome, not helped by the piece's tendency to sound like a series of vignettes. Hearing Rawsthorne's recording has little glitz or puff, instead a mature sampling of staple romantic repertoire. Though a less energetic player than Tracey, Rawsthorne is no less dramatic and often more subtle, through a wide range of touches and a tastefully generous rubato which never avoids the tortured extremes of so many precious young American players. He also seems to enjoy displaying numerous permutations of the organ's ensemble. Where Tracey seems to use certain basic ensemble combinations, Rawsthorne constantly makes the current large chorus sound subtly unlike the previous one. If there is one drawback, it is cautious tempi. Some restraint is often welcome in these oft-rushed pieces, but the music occasionally demands more speed than Rawsthorne seems willing to give it.

The Reger seems especially at home on this organ, a piece that keeps demanding more, and from an organ which has no trouble supplying it. After a huge introduction, Tracey begins the Pas-
Rawsthorne’s registrational imagination intensifies the piece’s more delicate moments. From the delicious opening line on the 16 and 8 Choir Clarinets, Rawsthorne haunts us with the organ’s eerier colors. The middle section features dialogues between clarinet and trumpet solos, as well as cameo appearances by the French horn. Where Reubke indicates Harmonica, Rawsthorne does not limit himself to one registration, but offers us various flute colors, and eventually the French Horn — highly suitable for the last such phrase.

Rawsthorne’s Froom is somewhat conservative. His registrations are the originals modified. For example, the opening ensembles of the a minor Choral include mixtures, while the choral sections are played on flues only with no trumpet. While solid, these performances lack the creativity and spontaneity of the Reger and Reubke. Part of the difference lies in dynamic phrasing. Where Rawsthorne lends dynamic interest through registrational changes in the German pieces, the Froom offers less opportunity. Rawsthorne phrases so beautifully with the box that one wishes he did it more often.

This disc is well worth having; for the durability of its performances, the insightful Reger and Reubke, and the fine recorded sound. While not as atmospheric as the Mirabilis recording, the effect is entirely plausible and the organ sounds magnificent. A tribute to both of these players is their mastery of the Infinite Speed and Gradation Swell engines, far from the normal sort of expression device. Developed in 1933 by Aubrey Thompson-Allen (later Curator of Organs at Yale University), these complex swell motors were designed to permit an infinitely slow box opening, while also allowing for instantaneous open and shut for accents. An unusual swell pedal controls these motors. The pedal rests in a halfway open position, spring-loaded in either direction. Pressing the pedal open causes the box to open, at a speed relative to how far the pedal is depressed. Press the pedal a little way and the motor will operate at its slowest speed; pressing the pedal entirely will snap the box open. A gauge indicates the shade position. As can be imagined, these boxes require a great deal of practice for good phrasing.

Two final thoughts on Willis III. First, our three largest Cathedrals — New York’s St. John the Divine, Washington’s National and San Francisco’s Grace all received Skinner or Aeolian-Skinner organs. As each Cathedral has been finished, each organ has been found to be inadequate and has received considerable rebuilding and enlargement. While the Liverpool organ has had minor modifications, such as the remodeling of the original unenclosed Choir into a Positif and minor alterations and exchanges, the full ensemble remains essentially intact. Several reports indicate that it was deafening in 1926 (when only about a third of the Cathedral was built); now that the building is complete, Willis appears to have been right all along.

Second, consider Willis’s letter to G. Donald Harrison after Willis spent three weeks in America during September, 1952. In three quick pages, Willis summarizes Harrison’s career, succinctly identifying the successes and failures, and pointing to dangerous and unmusical tendencies in Harrison’s latest work. It is not merely a demonstration of Willis’s remarkable ability to absorb the whole style after exposure to merely a few examples. Forty years later, Willis’s assessment is still candid, entirely accurate, and a viewpoint many Harrison scholars have come to adopt. Perhaps because we cannot look past Willis’s III pomposity, we might be overlooking his best lessons.

Jonathan Ambrosino, Los Angeles
The Ford Museum in Dearborn, MI, has de-accessioned a handsome chamber organ built ca. 1830 by an unknown American artisan, probably in upstate New York. Now owned by organbuilder Susan Tattershall of Rinebeck, NY, the organ is for sale completely restored for $18,500. The case of cherry features four black chinoiserie columns in the base and gold leaf on the cornice. The three stops are Open Diapason 8', Stopped Diapason 8', and Principal 4'.
A Survey of Kentucky Organbuilders

by Michael D. Friesen

The “Southern” States of this country are not particularly known as centers of organbuilding prior to the 20th century. This region was less populous than the New England, Atlantic, and Midwestern states, and had more of an agrarian economy. During this time only a few cities in this area saw the presence of organbuilders.

Kentucky, traditionally thought of as a southern state, had a number of builders, mostly concentrated in the cities of the Ohio River Valley, blurring the “southern” distinction, since there is considerable evidence of the migration of such craftsmen between northern Kentucky and southern Ohio or Indiana. The total number of organbuilders was relatively small, and they did not produce organs in large volume, rarely installing them outside of the area. The Pilcher firm of Louisville, Kentucky, is the exception in terms of quantity and geographical coverage.

Since very little has been discovered about most Kentucky organbuilders, this survey is appropriate as a first step in addressing the gap in published organ history. The primary sources used for this study were city directories and state gazetteers, combined with selected U.S. census information. In some cases other documentation was used and is so noted. A reasonable effort was made to trace the paths of various builders from state to state based on available clues, but an exhaustive search beyond Kentucky was not pursued. Builders and other persons directly connected with the organ trade are presented here in roughly chronological order. This overview is limited to the 19th and early 20th centuries.

John Conkey, Louisville

The first known Kentucky organbuilder was John Conkey, who appeared in the 1851 Louisville directory as John Koenke, “organ and piano maker.” His address was given as the north side of Jefferson Street between Jackson and Hancock Streets. He appeared in the 1855 directory as John Conkey, an “organ maker” on Preston Street, between Gray Street and Broadway. Although he was not found in the 1858 directory, the 1859 edition showed him as an “organ maker” on the south side of Green Street between Clay and Hancock Streets. The 1859 gazetteer provided the same infor-

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An Explanation of the Sources and Finding Aids

Because this article relied heavily on three major types of sources, the reader is provided here with a brief explanation of the documentation. It is important to understand that the availability of sources and finding aids sometimes limited the presentation.

CENSUSES

At the present time, the following census finding aids exist, published by private companies: complete indices for Kentucky censuses through 1870, and for Ohio censuses through 1860, then 1880. The Soundex was otherwise employed for the 1880 and 1900 through 1920 censuses as applicable. It is possible that some additional information may come to light when full indices become available. In some instances a line-by-line search for enumerations was made anyway because of the deficiencies of the finding aids.

CITY DIRECTORIES

Louisville city directories were published as early as 1832, followed by sporadic editions in the years 1836, 1838, 1841, 1843, 1844, 1845, 1848, 1851, 1852 (a reprint of 1851), and 1855. A directory of only businesses was published in 1850 as well. Starting in 1858, publication became more regular, with annual directories by one publisher or another through 1870 except for the years 1861, 1862, 1863, and 1868 (the directory with the cover date of 1861 is a duplicate of the 1860 edition). A directory of only businesses was also published in 1864. In 1871 and thereafter, Caron’s yearly directories were consistently released. Similar situations apply to directories published for other cities where organbuilders lived.

Each directory was searched in three places: the residential section, the business section, and the “names too late” columns, sometimes also referred to as “additions, corrections, and removals” or variants thereof.

STATE GAZETTEERS

State gazetteers, which identified firms and tradespeople throughout a state by city and type of business, are an aid to finding organbuilders who might otherwise escape the attention of historians. Unfortunately, such tomes were often considered as ephemera, and today they are hard to come by, although they are a valuable research tool for evaluating social, economic, and commercial activity. However, they too have their limitations. Ostensibly the gazetteers listed all firms and proprietorships, but in reality this may not have been true. Although it was said that receipts from advertising and from the sale of the books themselves covered the cost of their compilation, it appears that there actually may have been a charge to be listed, just as there was for being listed in many of the biographies in county histories published at the time. The author has found various instances in which known organbuilders were not listed; perhaps they declined to pay for an entry.

Kentucky gazetteers, found under variant titles, such as “gazetteer and shipping guide” or “gazetteer and business directory,” were published irregularly. The author found editions for only the years 1859, 1865, 1870, 1872, 1879, 1881, 1883, 1891, 1895, and 1907. Based on the volume numbering of the principal publisher, R.L. Polk & Co., there should have been other editions dated around 1877, 1887, and beyond 1895, but none are known to exist. Similar comments apply to gazetteers of other states. Because of the gaps, readers should keep the limitations of the sources in mind when references to years are made.

HOLDINGS

Searches were conducted in the Louisville Free Public Library; the Filson Club Library of Louisville (akin to a historical society for Louisville); the Kentucky Department of Libraries and Archives and the Kentucky Historical Society, both located in Frankfort; the Cincinnati Public Library; the Kenton County Public Library in Covington; and in Chicago, the Newberry Library and the Regional Branch of the National Archives and Records Administration.

Webb & Co., a music dealer. Announcing the availability of organ building services, it was couched in such a way that the meaning plausibly included pipe organs (see illustration). However, neither Henry J. Peters nor Benedict J. Webb, the partners, were organbuilders, nor was any employee having that function identified. A careful cross-reading of the two city directories nearest in date to the 1850 compilation was undertaken, but led only to circumstantial evidence. The 1848 directory yielded no clues, but in the 1851 edition a business listing appeared for two piano makers, Thomas P. and Timothy Cragg, who had set up a shop on the east side of 5th Street between Main and Market Streets. However, a separate venture entitled “Peters, Cragg & Co., piano forte manufacturers,” also appeared, located on the north side of Market Street between Jackson and Hancock Streets, which was clearly a partnership of two of the above-named men. The Peters, Webb & Co. advertisement in the 1851 directory announced the manufacture of pianos, but not of organs. Since the Peters, Cragg & Co. location was very near that of Koenke (within the same cross streets and just a short block
north), there may have been a connection among all three entrepreneurs, and thus Koenke might have been the organbuilder meant by the 1850 announcement. Future research may solve this mystery.

No specific Koenke/Conkey material could be found in local archives, so neither his training nor the extent of his work is known. A review of individual church records would undoubtedly turn up documentation of instruments he built. There is evidence of at least two Conkey organs, built for Second Presbyterian Church in New Albany, Indiana, and for St. Boniface R.C. Church, Louisville, both dating from the 1850's.3

Joseph Wekerle, Louisville

The firm of "J. Wekerle & Co., organ builders" appeared in the 1855 edition of the Louisville directory at Fourth Street between Main and Market Streets. However, the partners of the company (if there were any) were not listed, nor was Wekerle's first name. That directory listed employers for most persons, but a line-by-line reading of the entire residential section did not result in anyone being clearly identified as a Wekerle employee. William D. Gotshall, a music dealer, had his store at "101 Fourth Street, between Main and Market," wherein a connection might lie. However, he did not previously appear in directories, and had died by 1858, when the next edition appeared, since his wife Mary was listed as a widow. No other information about Gotshall could be found.

The Wekerle name was not found again until 1860, where "Joseph Wekerle" was listed only in the residential section of directories as a "piano maker" living on Market Street between Sixth and Seventh Streets. Since there was no entry in the business section, it would appear that he was working for a piano manufacturer at the time, rather than as an independent maker. Thereafter he disappeared from directories. He was also never listed in state gazetteers.

He could not be found in the 1860 Kentucky census, but in the 1870 enumeration of Louisville, there was a John Wekerle listed as a cabinetmaker, age 50, born in Württemburg. He lived in a boarding house with two other men, Jacob Runell and Levi Cole, both shown as piano makers.4 Runell was not listed in city directories at that time, but Cole worked for Hinzen & Rosen, a Louisville piano manufacturer. The Wekerle surname is unusual enough that one wonders if Joseph and John were one and the same. No connection is evident from the limited documentation available.

The Prante Family

Joseph Prante, who arrived in Louisville about 1856, was the third organbuilder known to have come to Kentucky. He and his later descendants, especially his son August Prante, became well-known in Louisville. The Prantes are covered in a companion article which appeared in the previous issue, 37:2:8.

John F. Scheinhoff, Covington

Scheinhoff came to Kentucky from Ohio, and had trained with Matthias Schwab and then Johann Koehnken & Co. of Cincinnati, just across the river from Covington.5 The spelling of his surname alternated between Scheinflöpp and Scheinhoff in sources, but "Scheinhoff" was correct.

He was first listed in Cincinnati directories in 1856 as "Jno. Schenhoff," living at 139 Plum Street, but with no occupation given. Thereafter he was listed as an "organ maker" or "organ builder" at 555 Sycamore Street (the address of Schwab, and later Koehnken), residing at 543 Race Street in 1858 and at 537 or 535 Sycamore Street thereafter.

John moved to Covington in 1867, where he spent the rest of his career. He established a shop and residence on the south side of Sixth Street, three doors west of Washington Street, which became addressed as 57 W. Sixth Street in 1869. This location was alternately referred to as the "north side of Pike Street, third door west of Washington Street." Inasmuch as Pike was the next cross street south of 6th Street, the block is clearly identifiable. Indeed, an 1877 city atlas clearly shows that his property had a house fronting on 6th Street and a second building, undoubtedly the shop, at the rear. His manufactory was literally in the shadows of Mother of God R.C. Church, since it was in the fifth (albeit larger) lot west of
emigrated to the United States in 1839. By 1870 he had $6,000
value of real estate and $600 value of personal estate. His sons John
M. (sometimes referred to as John Jr.), born in 1855 in Ohio, and
Frank, born in 1862 in Ohio, also became organbuilders, working
with their father. John and his wife Margaret also had four
daughters, but details about the female members of the
family are not recounted here.

John apparently retired from organbuilding about 1888, as
that year he was listed only as a piano tuner, and his
entries in the 1890 and subsequent editions gave no occupa-
tion. He died on January 19, 1905, and was buried at Mother
of God Cemetery in Covington.7 John Jr. was listed as an
organbuilder only through the 1882 edition; thereafter he
became a hostler, then a fireman. He died in 1933. Frank
was listed alternately in directories as an organbuilder and as
an employee at the wire works, but his last connection
with the family business appeared in the 1886 edition;
thereafter he became a letter carrier, then a carpenter. He
died in 1937.

The Pilcher Family, Louisville

The most famous and prolific Kentucky organbuilders
were undoubtedly the Pilchers. Because of the complicated
family chronology and because of their prominent position
in Kentucky organbuilding, the Pilchers will be treated in
greater detail in separate articles by other authors. However,
a brief summary here is appropriate.

Henry [Sr.] (1798-1880), the patriarch of the family,
came from England to the United States in 1832 to ply the
organbuilding trade, working in New York, New Jersey, and
Connecticut in various years. His sons, Henry [Jr.] (1828-
1891) and William (1830-1912), moved to St. Louis in 1852
to build organs, and he joined them shortly thereafter. In
1863 the firm relocated to Chicago, and Henry returned to
New Jersey for his retirement. While not burnt out in the
Great Chicago Fire of 1871, the Pilchers apparently suffered
financially due to the unsettled business conditions, so they
decided to relocate. Henry [Jr.] and his sons moved to
Louisville to build organs, and William and his sons moved
to various cities in the South before ending up in New
Orleans by the early 1880s.

The Louisville business was formally established in 1874,
and was styled “Henry Pilcher & Sons,” the partners being
However, no entry as such appears until the 1877 directory.
Henry was first listed as an organbuilder in only the residen-
tial section of the 1875 directory, living at 656 Portland
Avenue near 25th Street, and in 1876 he had both a shop
and home at the same address. The sons were not listed those
two years. In the 1877 edition, the firm was shown at 5 34th
Street, near Water Street in the Portland section of Louisville.

Washington Street. “Mutter Gottes Kirche,” as it was titled on the
atlas, acquired a large organ from Koehnken & Grimm in 1876 (see
back cover of The Bicentennial Tracker), and Scheinhoff was a
member there. John remained at this location the rest of his life.
The building no longer exists; the site is now part of a parking lot
for the church.

He was usually listed as an “organ builder,” although with these
exceptions: in the 1872 state gazetteer as an “organ builder and
musical instruments repairer” (the only gazetteer in which he was
ever to be found); in the 1874 Covington directory as an “organ
builder and piano tuner”; and in the 1880 edition of the directory
as an “organ builder and repairer, tuner of pianos and all kinds of
musical instruments.”

Organbuilding and allied arts seem to have been a family
enterprise. Unfortunately, no details about Scheinhoff’s instru-
ments are known, and none are believed to survive. Some informa-
tion about the family has been gleaned from 1870, 1880, and 1900
Kentucky census information. He could not be found in the 1860
Ohio census finding aid, although that may be due to nothing more
than garbled orthography, since such proved to be the case in
Kentucky.8 John was born on September 30, 1821 in Bavaria, and
emigrated to the United States in 1839. By 1870 he had $6,000
value of real estate and $600 value of personal estate. His sons John
M. (sometimes referred to as John Jr.), born in 1855 in Ohio, and
Frank, born in 1862 in Ohio, also became organbuilders, working
with their father. John and his wife Margaret also had four

This drawing of an unidentified organ appears with a section describing the Pilcher firm
in Illustrated Louisville, Kentucky’s Metropolis, published in Chicago, 1891, by the
Acme Publishing & Engraving Co.
John McMahan, Newport and Louisville

The first evidence of McMahan is found in Cincinnati, where he was listed in the 1876 city directory in both the business and the residential sections as an "organbuilder," with his business at 107 E. 5th Street and his residence in Covington. He first appeared in the business section of the 1878 Newport directory as an "organbuilder" at 232 Bellevue Street. However, in the residential section, he was stated to be a "reed organ builder" with his shop at 230 Bellevue Street and his home at the adjacent 232 location. (Newport is a community adjacent to Covington and thus also across the Ohio River from Cincinnati.)

In 1880 McMahan's occupation was given as "rat traps," and he lived on the north side of Southgate Street between Columbia Street and Central Avenues. He was not listed in the 1879 or 1881 gazetteers, nor could he be found in Newport in the 1880 census.

John then moved to Louisville, where the 1882 directory showed that he lived at 525 E. Market Street and worked as a carpenter for William M. Gage, proprietor of the Green Street Planing Mill at 737-39 W. Green Street. In the 1883 directory his entry read "organs, etc.," and he lived on Catalpa Street at the southeast corner of Dumesnil Street in the Homestead section of Louisville. The 1883 gazetteer listed him as an "organ builder" in "Homestead." The 1884 and 1885 directories stated his occupation to be "organ builder"; he moved his residence to the north side of Bismarck Avenue (now Hale Avenue) between 26th and 27th Streets in the latter year. He was not listed thereafter. All of these entries were in the residential section of the directories only; he never appeared under the "Organ Builders" category of the business sections. No details about his training or the instruments he built could be found.

Owing to the fact that his surname is rather unusual, it seems likely that John was related to James F. McMahan, who received Patent No. 166,214 on August 3, 1875 in Oxford, Ohio for a reed organ stop action. However, no one with that surname could be found in the available Ohio census indices. Directories were usually quite clear in the use of the term "organ builder" to mean pipe organs, so based on the evidence presented above McMahan probably worked at both reed and pipe organ manufacture. A definitive answer awaits further discoveries.

Edward Bernhardt, Louisville

Bernhardt appeared as an "organ builder" at 443 Preston Street in an 1884-85 Courier Journal Business Directory of Louisville, although he was not in the regular city directory for the same year. The 1885 city directory gave the same information under the residential headings, but he was listed under "musical instruments" in the business section. That same year a Herman Bernard, possibly a relative, was shown at 156 E. Jefferson Street as a musical instrument manufacturer, with an identical entry for 1886. Nevertheless, Edward was no longer in directories after 1885, and no other details have been discovered.

The Bernhardt appearance seems almost uncanny, as one "Edward Bernhardt" was listed in New York City as a musical instrument manufacturer in 1885 and 1886. The surname was likely misspelled in New York directories, as "Bernhardt" is not typical German orthography. This was probably the same person as the "Edw. Bernhardt" reported as a New York organbuilder in the 1870 census. Since the name Bernhardt has not been otherwise found elsewhere in American organ history, one wonders if the Louisville and New York men were one and the same, particularly since there is also the possibility of Edward having been related to a Hartman Bernhardt, who was an organbuilder in New York from 1873 to 1891. However, no other details about Hartman are known.

Foerg & Ollesch, Louisville

The partnership of Benjamin Foerg Jr. and William Ollesch first appeared in the 1903 directory, located at 45 Stoecker Avenue, which was the Foerg residence. It was a short-lived venture, lasting only until 1904.

Little is known about Ollesch. The 1903 entry was the first appearance of Ollesch in Louisville, and his prior background has not been determined. In 1905 Ollesch took a position as carpenter with Louis Keller & Son, a contracting and building business, and left organbuilding. From the 1910 census, it is known that he was then age 40, yielding a birth year of c.1870, and born in Germany. However, the rest of the record's ink is so badly faded that no further information can be gleaned from the microfilm.

Foerg and his family had lived in Louisville for many years, the males primarily working in either carpentry or blacksmithing. They had resided since 1884 at 45 Lost Alley, which was renamed Stoecker in late 1902 or early 1903. Directory entries routinely went back and forth between "Bernard" or "Bernhardt" and "Benjamin" for his or his father's given name. The 1900 census information gives "Benjamin Jr.," while the name "Bernard" appears in the 1910 enumeration. Perhaps one or the other was a middle name and used interchangeably by family members, although "Benjamin" seems to have been the preferred version.

Benjamin Jr. was undoubtedly trained by August Prante, as the 1895 directory listed his occupation as "cabinetmaker, A. Prante," and the 1896 edition showed him as "organ builder, A. Prante." While in 1897 he had a non-organ-related employer, it is possible that the carpentry or cabinetmaking entries in subsequent years included work for Prante, perhaps as a casemaker. In 1905, after the 1903-04 partnership with Ollesch, Benjamin Jr. was shown as...
a "bellows maker" rather than as an organbuilder. However, it is not clear if he was doing so independently, if he was perhaps working for the Prantes, or even if this meant forgemaking while working with the blacksmith members of his family.

From 1906 to 1909 Foerg’s occupation was given as an independent organbuilder. The 1907 gazetteer did not list him. The 1910 directory gave no occupation for Benjamin; in 1911 he was a laborer; in the 1912 edition and thereafter he was shown as a carpenter. Interestingly, in 1933 and 1934 he was listed as an organ repairman, and in 1935 his occupation was “organbuilder.” However, no business addresses or employer indications were given. No catalogs nor organs of Foerg or the partnership are known to exist, so further details of the scope of his work are lacking.

The only other member of the Foerg family specifically listed as working in organ building was August, Benjamin Jr.’s brother. He was previously shown as a carpenter, then as an organbuilder working for Foerg & Ollesch in 1903 and 1904. However, August died in November 1904. Benjamin, his father, was a cabinetmaker, and two other brothers, Frank and Joseph, were blacksmiths. Anton, another brother, had been a brewer but a listing in the 1891 directory stated that he had moved to Brooklyn, New York.

The 1900 Federal census revealed that Benjamin, then age 70 and widowed, emigrated to America in 1850. Born in Germany in the month of January 1830, he was a naturalized citizen and his occupation was stated as “old carpenter,” meaning “retired.” He owned a home free of a mortgage. His sons were all born in Kentucky. Benjamin Jr. was born in March 1865 and shown as a house carpenter; Joseph was born in April 1867 and listed as proprietor of a blacksmith shop; Frank was born in January 1872 and shown as a blacksmith helper; and August was born in March 1876 and listed as a “day carpenter.” The 1910 census showed that the oldest brothers all remained single and in the same occupations, although “Bernard” (Benjamin Jr.) was stated to be age 50, yielding a birth year of about 1860 instead of 1865. Benjamin was listed as late as 1947 in directories, and may have died about then, but it was not possible to pursue Kentucky vital records from that time to determine accurate birth and death dates.

J. Benjamin Wagner, Covington

Wagner first appeared in the 1902 Covington directory as a piano tuner living at 159 E. 12th Street. In the subsequent 1904, 1906, and 1908 directories (they were usually published only biannually), he was shown as an “organbuilder” living at three different addresses, respectively: 1342 Bank Lick; the northeast corner of 14th Street and Bank Lick; and 145 W. Robins Avenue. By 1910 he had became a piano retailer under the name of Ben J. Wagner at 82 Pike Street. An advertisement for this endeavor accompanied this article.

The 1910 census listed Wagner at 1132 Bank Lick Street, and gave his age as 40, yielding a birth year of c.1870. His birthplace was shown as Kentucky, and his occupation as “dealer, pianos.” However, he died on June 28, 1910 of pneumonia. The obituary stated that he was 39 and had been in the piano business for many years, but made no mention of organs. It is possible that Wagner was thus not an organbuilder, but may have sold reed organs. No other details have been determined.

Julius F. Holzknecht, Louisville

Holzknecht was first listed in connection with the organbuilding trade in the 1904 Louisville directory, where he was shown as an “organ builder” with Henry Pilcher’s Sons, and he resided at 3217 Bismarck Avenue. He had been listed for several previous years as a woodworker or cabinetmaker for the Hegan Mantel Company. Holzknecht’s position with Pilcher was usually listed as “organ builder” through the 1914 edition, except for 1907 when he was shown as a “woodworker,” and in 1909 and 1910 where the entries read “cabinetmaker.” In 1905 he had moved to 1739 Bayless Avenue (renamed Bolling Avenue in 1911) and resided on that street thereafter at various addresses.

Census information is somewhat fuzzy. The only “Holzknecht” in the 1900 soundex was a Julius “Holscknecht,” but the actual schedules showed that man to be a tailor. The 1910 census, however, listed Julius “Holzknecht” as age 23, born in Kentucky, and an organbuilder. He had been married for two years to Rosalie, who was 27 and also born in Kentucky. They had one son, Herman, age 1 year, 6 months, born in Kentucky. Being age 17 in 1904, he could have begun an apprenticeship with Pilcher then. His father Herman and his mother Dorothea lived with them. Herman was age 57, born in Germany, and a cabinetmaker. Dorothea was 49, also born in Germany; they had been married for 26 years, and Julius was an only child.

The 1915 directory showed Holzknecht as an independent organbuilder at 1798 Bolling Avenue for that year only. That home, in a modest but solid working-class section of Louisville at the time, still exists. In 1916 Julius and Herman established the Art Cabinet Works at 1792½ Bolling, near their home, but the venture lasted only about a year, as no such entry appeared in the 1917 directory. Herman remained in Louisville in other occupations, but Julius was no longer listed, and no other details about him have been ascertained.

Other Louisville Firms

Two other organ firms were active in Louisville in the early 20th century: the Louisville Organ & Orchestration Company, and the Louisville Pipe Organ Company. Both enterprises were marked by partnerships of various members of the Prante family with other organbuilders, and thus are more appropriately discussed in the companion Prante article.

OTHER INDIVIDUALS RELATED TO ORGANBUILDING

William H. Dolbeare, Louisville

Dolbeare first appeared in the 1895 Louisville directory as an independent organ tuner at 1701 Baxter Avenue. His home address was 1104 Christy Avenue. He was almost certainly the William H. Dolbeer who worked c.1886 for George A. Ryder, organbuilder of Reading, Massachusetts, and thus presumably was related to the A. R. Dolbeer who was manager of Estey's Chicago office in 1930. Perhaps he simplified the spelling of his surname to reflect its pronunciation.

Beginning in 1897 Dolbeare became an organ tuner for Henry Pilcher's Sons, and was also shown as such in the 1898 edition. His residence was 1006 E. Breckenridge Street. He was not listed thereafter, and his later whereabouts have not been traced.

Wright Brothers, Louisville

Edward and John Wright formed a partnership in Louisville in 1896, styled the “Wright Bros.” for the purpose of manufacturing metal organ pipes. The shop was located at 1701 Baxter Avenue. However, the venture was short-lived, being listed only that year. John’s residence was given as 2013 Bardstown Pike, and Edward was shown as boarding at the same address.

Both men had extensive, almost nomadic, careers as pipemakers, which are not otherwise recounted here due to this article’s focus on Kentucky. John (1869-1934) trained with Edwin Hedges, pipemaker of Westfield, Massachusetts. Edward (1862-1927) apprenticed with Samuel Pierce, pipemaker of Reading, Massachusetts. Because Dolbeare shared the same address with the Wrights at the same time, it appears that Edward Wright's and William Dolbeare's Reading connections led them to mutually decide to relocate to Louisville. It is not clear where each of the brothers went directly after leaving Louisville.
John A. Myers, Louisville

Myers had been in Louisville for several years as a manufacturer and purveyor of hydraulic motors. He was specifically listed in the 1895 gazetteer as a manufacturer of water motors for organs. An advertisement for his firm which accompanies this article shows that such was not his only specialty, and of course he was not the "sole" manufacturer of organ motors. This was the only time that Myers advertised in this fashion, but he was doubtlessly trying to capture some of the church organ water motor market, which was in full swing by the 1890's. He was listed for many years thereafter as a manufacturer of hydraulic motors.

JOHN A. MYERS,
MANUFACTURER OF
HYDRAULIC MOTORS, FANS, BEER PUMPS, ETC.
SOLE MANUFACTURER OF MOTORS FOR ORGANS.

THIRD FLOOR 252 W. MAIN STREET,
LOUISVILLE, - - - KENTUCKY.

Summary

As was typical in many states, or even regions, Kentucky was home to numerous organbuilders, but only a couple out of that group, Prante and Pilcher, rose to become relatively well-known firms. The fame of the Pilchers is reflected in the large number of contracts they enjoyed. In the case of the Prantes, so little has yet been discovered about their work that it cannot be said if they had a particularly large trade, but they had good reputations.

For all builders, factors such as timing, accidents or attributes of geography, and economics often had a more significant role in the survival of a business than did the talents of the owner. Except for the death or retirement of a principal, seldom do organ historians know the reasons why an organbuilder "came and went," or why some businesses thrived and others were short-lived. Nevertheless, this chronology demonstrates that numerous people in Kentucky pursued the American Dream in the field of organbuilding, and gave some culture and stability of old-world traditions to the chase to expand into this country's frontier.

The author expresses appreciation to William H. and Mary Bill Bauer for contributing suggestions and clarifications for this article.

NOTES


4. 1870 U.S. Census, Roll M593-475, Jefferson County, Kentucky, City of Louisville, 8th Ward, Page 9 [Sheet 72A], Line 22.


7. The Cincinnati Enquirer (Covington News Section), 20 January 1905, p. 9; some dates herein obtained from tombstones. The brief obituary stated that he was "the oldest organbuilder in this vicinity" but unfortunately gave no other details about his work.


9. Louisville changed its street numbering system in 1909, principally on north-south streets; east-west numbers were changed only a little or not at all. The 1909 city directory gave both the former and the new addresses; for example, the Pilcher factory, on an east-west street, was listed in the 1909 directory as 914-920 Mason Avenue becoming 908-914. The author could not ascertain which block Harry's address was on at that time in order to determine what building might be there now.


11. This source, like other such irregularly issued compendiums, was not available among accessible holdings of city directories. The author thanks William H. Bauer, who discovered this organbuilder, for pointing out the information.


14. Personal research conducted by the author in New York, unpublished.

15. 1910 U.S. Census, Roll T624-484, Jefferson County, Kentucky, City of Louisville, 26th Precinct, Vol. 45, E.D. 59, Page 17 [Sheet 224A], Line 39. His surname is given as "Ollesh." The family members' details are not recounted here.


17. 1910 U.S. Census, Roll T624-483, Jefferson County, Kentucky, City of Louisville, 1st Ward, Vol. 44, E.D. 39, Sheet 17A, Line 14. (This was a supplemental page; they were enumerated out of sequence.)


21. Fox, p. 86.

22. The Diapason, June 1934, p. 32.

23. The Diapason, October 1927, p. 42.

24. For a summary of this organ-related industry, see Michael D. Friesen, "Organ Blowing: A Brief History and Selected Chronology," The Stop Diapason (July 1987), 8:3:3-32.
The Life and Work of Charles F. Durner

by John L. Speller

IN 1913 THE COOPERSBURG SENTINEL published an interview with seventy-five-year-old Quakertown, Pennsylvania, organbuilder Charles F. Durner. Under the heading, "Quakertown's Oldest Organbuilder," the article relates how Durner came from a long line of German organbuilders dating back to the beginning of the eighteenth century. His great-grandfather "built a handsome organ in 1790 for the Evangelical Lutheran Church at his home in Weilheim, Germany, claimed to be one of the greatest organs in Germany, at that time." The instrument was described as being "of massive proportions and had angels carved of wood standing on each side, on heavy capitals with trumpets in their mouths." The keyboards had boxwood naturals and white sharps, and the instrument took three years to build.¹ From this information the most likely candidate for being Durner's great-grandfather is Johann Andreas Goll (1751-1823). Goll built an organ of twenty-three stops (hardly, "one of the greatest organs in Germany") in 1792-95 for the Pfarrkirche in Weilheim, and the instrument still exists. The Goll firm was founded in Weilheim in about 1740 by Johann Ludwig Goll, who would have been Charles F. Durner's great-great-grandfather.² At the beginning of the present century there was also a Goll firm in Switzerland, responsible for a one-hundred-and-thirty-five stop organ in Engelberg,³ and it would be interesting to know if the Swiss Golls were also related to Durner.

Charles F. Dürner (he dropped the umlaut around 1890) was born in Württemburg, Germany, on April 3, 1838.⁴ At the age of fourteen he was apprenticed to his uncle for six years without pay, after which he worked for an additional seven years "in leading organ factories in Germany and France." In 1857 Durner's parents came to the United States and settled in Zion Hill, Pennsylvania. Two years later, in 1859, Charles F. Durner decided to join them and "after a stormy voyage of thirty-six days" he landed in New York. Durner first set up business as an organbuilder in Zion Hill, Pennsylvania, but the following year, 1860, he moved to Quakertown, Pennsylvania, where he remained in business until his death in 1914.⁵

Durner's workshop was situated at the corner of Front and Juniper Streets in Quakertown, opposite the North Pennsylvania Railroad depot (later the Reading Company depot) on the main line between Philadelphia and Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. The workshop...
1881 Charles F. Durner organ
Zion Lutheran Church, Lancaster, Penn.
From Quarterly Free Press, 12 Nov. 1881, courtesy John Johnston

GREAT 61 notes
16' Bourdon
8' Open Diapason
8' Dulciana
8' Gamba
8' Melodia
4' Octave
4' Flute d'Amour
2'/4' Twelfth
2' Fifteenth
III Mixture 2'
8' Trumpet
SWELL 61 notes
8' Violin Principal
8' Salicional
8' Stopped Diap.

had machinery driven by an overhead system of belts, initially operated by a steam engine and later by an electric motor, as is apparent from a photograph taken in the workshop around 1925. The Durner residence was in the same block as the workshop, at No. 36 South Front Street in Quakertown.

Throughout the existence of the Durner firm much of the output was of “parlor” or reed organs, but there seems little doubt that Durner’s real love was for the pipe organ, and pipe organs represented a fair proportion of the company’s products, particularly during the years 1890 through 1910. During its three quarters of a century of existence the Durner company probably produced around one hundred and fifty pipe organs, and the eighty or so of these known to the present writer are listed in the partial opus list which follows this article. This was an output similar to that of other small-to-moderate sized builders such as John G. Marklove or the Moline Pipe Organ Company. Durner, indeed, had much in common with the two latter companies in that he produced high quality instruments comparable with those of more famous builders such as Johnson & Son or Hook & Hastings.

Like the products of Augustus B. Felgemaker of Erie, Pennsylvania, Durner organs were characterized by a solidity of construction which was practically unrivalled. Durner and Felgemaker appear to have subscribed to the view that tracker organs should be built to be capable of withstanding extraordinary wear and tear. In the case of Durner, however, this extreme solidity was combined with a standard of tonal design and voicing which was, in my opinion, considerably superior to that of Felgemaker and perhaps equal to the work of builders like Johnson & Son or the Roosevelts.

Charles F. Durner’s son, Charles E. Durner, was born in Quakertown in 1863 and succeeded to the firm on his father’s death on December 8, 1914. Apart from a handful of tubular-pneumatic organs built between about 1895 and 1915, the output of the Durner firm was exclusively tracker until about 1917, after which electropneumatic action became standard. By this time the output of the firm had dropped to one or two pipe organs a year; this clearly represents a decline, since the output at the turn of the century had been two or three times greater. Moreover, from about 1917 onwards, Charles E. Durner increasingly subcontracted his pipe organ work, perhaps because he was either unwilling or incapable of keeping abreast with contemporary advances in electropneumatic mechanisms. In the late teens much of the work was subcontracted to Harold T. Depue of Kensington, Maryland, a builder who held a number of patents for innovations in electric action. In the early 1920s the work was largely subcontracted to Jacob Gerger, who later founded the present firm of Jacob Gerger & Sons. The organ at St. Peter’s Church, Wind Gap, Pennsylvania, which was built as tubular-
The Durncr workshop in Quakertown had substituted electric for steam power to drive its overhead shafts by ca. 1925 when this photograph was made.

Pneumatic by Durner in 1916 and electrified in the 1920s, actually bears a nameplate, "Charles E. Durner, Jacob Gerger, Organ Builders, Quakertown, Pa." After 1926 what little pipe organ work that remained was subcontracted to Paul and Rudolph Fritzsche. Paul Fritzsche founded an organ firm in Allentown, Pennsylvania, which claims to have succeeded to Durner's interests. In the case of the very last Durner organ, at Liberty High School, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, contracted for in 1930 and completed in 1933, the work was entirely subcontracted to Fritzsche by an agreement which split the profits equally between Fritzsche and Durner.10

Charles E. Durner died on November 29, 1932, after which his wife succeeded to his estate and wound up the business. The records of the Durner firm remained in the attic of the Durner homestead until 1978 when, through the efforts of Carolyn Fix and James R. McFarland, they were donated to the OHS American Organ Archives by Edna Viola Durner (Charles E. Durner's widow), Mary Jane Himmelsbach (Charles E. Durner's granddaughter), and C. Thomas Himmelsbach (Mary Jane's husband).11

The zenith of the Durner firm was in the Charles F. Durner years of 1859 to 1914. While Durner constructed the very solid chests and mechanisms of his organs in his own workshop, the

The Durner family home at 36 South Front Street, Quakertown

This 1870 Durner organ at St. John's Reformed Church, Richlandtown, Penn., was photographed before it was rebuilt in 1937.
pipework was generally obtained from supply houses. The suppliers are not known in the earliest period, but at the beginning of the twentieth century the wood pipes were obtained from the Mansfield Organ Pipe Works, Mansfield Depot, Connecticut, and the metal pipes from Edwin B. Hedges of Westfield, Massachusetts (best known, of course, as the pipemaker for Johnson & Son). The voicing, however, was done by Durner himself and his instruments exhibit a tonal refinement comparable with the work of the best Boston and New York builders.

So far as tonal design is concerned, a marked development is discernible in Charles F. Durner's organs between 1859 and 1914. Roughly speaking, Durner's instruments may be divided into three stylistic phases - Period I from 1859 to ca. 1880, Period II from ca. 1880 to ca. 1900, and Period III from ca. 1900 to 1914. During Period I, organs were tonally well-developed with considerable upperwork but sweet and gentle rather than loud and impressive. During Period II, although retaining much of their brilliance, Durner's organs became louder and more substantial in their sound. Finally, Period III displays a tendency towards over-refinement and the elimination of upperwork, resulting in a generally duller sound than in the two earlier periods. Similar trends may be discerned in the work of some of Durner's contemporaries, although not necessarily over precisely the same time-spans. James R. McFarland suggests that the Period I Durner organ is basically a mid-nineteenth-century German-style instrument and that the trend in Periods II and III is towards an "Americanization" of Durner's organs. Not only the tonal design but many features of the construction of Durner's instruments became much more like Boston organs in Period II, although some unusual details, such as the continued use of the *tremblant doux* form of tremulant, remained. By Period III, however, Durner's organs were practically indistinguishable from other polished, well-built instruments from the turn of the century. Perhaps "Americanization" is not the best word to describe this process of assimilation, since the influences for it were widespread and diffuse, including, for example, more recent German practice as mediated through Walcker's Boston Music Hall organ, as well as contemporary American practice as found in the

Charles F. Durner built this organ ca. 1885 for the A. C. Borhek Memorial Chapel at the Moravian Theological Seminary in Bethlehem, Penn.
work of E. & G. G. Hook & Hastings, Johnson & Son, and others. Bearing this caveat in mind, nevertheless, it may be helpful to refer to a process of “Americanization” or “Bostonization” in Durner’s organ designs. It must be stressed also that the changes in Durner’s tonal design took place gradually, and the division into three periods should not be pressed too far. In particular, Period II might almost be split into IIA and IIB at about 1890, since Durner’s voicing in the 1890s already displays some of the over-refinement found in his Period III instruments.

Not a great deal is known about the earliest days of Durner’s firm, although he claimed to have been awarded the First Premium for his organs at the Allentown Fair of 1861. It may be, however, that this was for his reed organs. The oldest surviving Durner pipe organ of any size, and indeed the most important instrument to survive from Period I, is the 1868 Charles F. Durner organ at St. John’s United Church of Christ, Boalsburg, Pennsylvania. This instrument was originally installed in a five-section case in the rear gallery of the church but was moved by Elmer E. Palm of Mount Penn, Pennsylvania, in 1902 to a chamber at the front of the church.

Parts of the original casework survive in the 1902 case. It may also be that it was then that the Boalsburg organ acquired its most unusual and attractive Vox Humana (actually a cut-down Clarinet rather than a true Vox Humana). The organ with its detached, reversed console was rebuilt in 1971 by the Hartman-Beaty Company of Englewood, New Jersey, who replaced the original reservoir and made a number of changes to the action using non-traditional materials. These changes have been reversed in a 1990 restoration by R. J. Brunner & Co. of Silver Spring, Pennsylvania.

In an extravagant gesture which probably won him less fame than he deserved, Charles F. Durner built a two-manual and pedal pipe organ for the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition of 1876. The instrument had an elaborate “prickly gothic” case (including gothic embellishments on the swellbox, which protruded above the top of the case) and a detached, reversed console. Considerable confusion surrounds the subsequent history of this instrument. It has sometimes been claimed that the instrument was sold to St. Peter’s Lutheran Church, Hilltown, Pennsylvania. This, however, is not the case. Durner stated quite clearly in his brochure of 1895 that the Centennial Exposition organ was sold to the Episcopal Church in Clarksville, Tennessee, and this is confirmed by the Musical Courier. The instrument did not go to Tennessee, however, until it had been exhibited again at the State Fair in Allentown in 1878, and at the State Fair in Philadelphia in 1879, where it won the First Premium. It was only after this, in 1879, that the instrument went to Clarksville, according to the Courier report. The case survived in Clarksville until recently, although the rest of the instrument had long since disappeared; the case has now been disposed of by the church. Eugene McCracken thought that the 1879 State Fair organ was different from the Centennial instrument of 1876, and the 1879 instrument was the one which went to Hilltown.

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The Courier report disproves this, but photographs of the Hilltown case nevertheless show it to have been practically identical in appearance to the Clarksville case; it seems likely that the specification was also similar since one account refers to the Hilltown organ as “a Centennial Exposition organ” (not the), suggesting that it was a replication of the Centennial Exposition organ. Unlike the Centennial organ, however, which had a reversed console, the Hilltown console was not the case. Durner stated quite clearly in his brochure of 1895 that the Centennial Exposition organ was sold to the Episcopal Church in Clarksville, Tennessee, and this is confirmed by the Musical Courier. The instrument did not go to Tennessee, however, until it had been exhibited again at the State Fair in Allentown in 1878, and at the State Fair in Philadelphia in 1879, where it won the First Premium. It was only after this, in 1879, that the instrument went to Clarksville, according to the Courier report. 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At Salem United Church of Christ in Allentown, Penn., this Durner organ was dedicated on October 11, 1885.

This Durner seems to have been photographed in 1904 at an unknown location.

Clarksville case had a shipping label from the 1876 Exposition labeled “Owner M. P. Möller.” Although the organs of Hillborne Roosevelt, E. & G. G. Hook & Hastings, and E. F. Walcker may have outclassed Durner at the 1876 Centennial Exposition, he seems to have felt the experience sufficiently worthwhile and was still capitalizing on the publicity of having been an exhibitor several decades later.

Durner organ in the Lutheran Church of the Transfiguration, Pottstown, Pennsylvania
The finest Durner instrument surviving from Period II and perhaps the finest extant Durner organ of all is the eleven-stop two-manual and pedal instrument originally built in 1886 for St. Paul’s Methodist Church in Mauch Chunk, Pennsylvania. Built to wrap around a rose window, the organ was rebuilt beneath an archway by Durner in 1901. The instrument has been out of use for many years and is currently in storage.

During Period II, around 1895, Charles F. Durner issued a comprehensive catalog of organs, including sample stop lists and photographs of some of his installations. The only known original was destroyed by fire, but fortunately a photocopy still exists. The Period II organs were more forthrightly voiced than Period I instruments like Boalsburg and were also more plainly clothed, pipe fences having replaced multi-compartment “prickly gothic” cases. Durner stated his philosophy at the beginning of the brochure:

> We are not a cheapest-in-price concern, making cheap goods at a cheap price, but my constant effort is to produce such work as will give the best possible satisfaction, and at the lowest price that the highest grade of work and material will permit.

Among the sample stop lists, Model No. 4 was a one manual and pedal organ of nineteen speaking stops.

In the brochure this stoplist is followed by a photograph of the organ in the A. C. Borhek Memorial Chapel, Moravian Theological Seminary, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, built ca. 1885, and it seems likely that this was a Durner Model No. 4. The 1886 one manual Durner in St. John’s Episcopal Church, East Mauch Chunk (now Jim Thorpe), Pennsylvania, also appears from photographs to have been a Model No. 4.

At the larger end of the range was Model No. 10, a fair-sized two-manual and pedal instrument of nineteen speaking stops.

The largest known Charles F. Durner organ surviving in substantially unaltered condition is the 1891 instrument in Fritz Memorial Methodist Church, South Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, which was unknown until discovered by this writer in 1985. This instrument also contains the only known surviving Durner reed stops, which sound very much like contemporary Boston examples. Apart from minor differences in orthography (weak aorist “Stopped Diapason” instead of strong aorist “Stopt,” etc.), the stop list of this instrument is identical to Model No. 10 except for the omission of the Swell 8’ Geigen Principal.

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### No. 4 Price: $...

One Manual, Compass CC to A, 58 notes, (61 when desired.) Compass of Pedal CC to D, 27 notes. All the pipes except the Open Diapason and Ped. Bourdon enclosed in an effective swell.

**MANUAL**

1. Open Diapason . . . . 8 ft. (lowest notes wood stop) metal 58 pipes
2. Dulciana . . . . 8 ft. (lowest notes wood stop) metal 58 pipes
3. Stop Diapason . . . . 8 ft. metal 58 pipes
4. Melodia . . . . 8 ft. wood 58 pipes
5. Fiiige d’Amour . . . . 4 ft. wood 58 pipes
6. Principale . . . . 4 ft. metal 58 pipes
7. Twelfth . . . . 3 ft. metal 58 pipes
8. Fifteenth . . . . 2 ft. metal 58 pipes

**PEDAL**

9. Bourdon . . . . 16 ft. wood 27 pipes
12. COMBINATION PEDALS.
   1. Forte-Combination.
   2. Piano-Combination.
Wind indicator for the organist over the manuals.
Organist’s seat with receptacle for music.

### No. 10 Price: $...

Two Manuals, Compass of Manuals CC to A, 58 notes, (61 when desired.) Compass of Pedals CC to D, 27 notes. 24 stops and 982 pipes.

**GREAT ORGAN**

1. Bourdon . . . . 16 ft. wood 58 pipes
2. Open Diapason . . . . 8 ft. metal 58 pipes
3. Dulciana . . . . 8 ft. metal 58 pipes
4. Viol de Gamba . . . . 8 ft. metal 58 pipes
5. Melodia . . . . 8 ft. wood 58 pipes
6. Principal . . . . 4 ft. metal 58 pipes
7. Twelfth . . . . 3 ft. metal 58 pipes
8. Fifteenth . . . . 2 ft. metal 58 pipes
9. Trumpet . . . . 8 ft. reeds metal 58 pipes

**SWELL ORGAN**

10. Geigen Principal . . . . 8 ft. (lowest notes wood stop) metal 58 pipes
11. Viol . . . . 8 ft. metal 58 pipes
12. Aemilia . . . . 8 ft. metal 58 pipes
13. Stop Diapason . . . . 8 ft. wood 58 pipes
14. Flute Harmonic . . . . 4 ft. metal 58 pipes
15. Violinola . . . . 4 ft. metal 58 pipes
16. Oboe . . . . 8 ft. reeds metal 58 pipes
17. Bassoon

**PEDAL ORGAN**

18. Bourdon . . . . 16 ft. wood 27 pipes
19. Violincello . . . . 8 ft. metal 27 pipes

**MECHANICAL REGISTERS**

20. Swell to Great Coupler
21. Swell to Pedal Coupler . . . . Pisan knobs when desired
22. Great to Pedal Coupler
23. Tremolo (Swell Organ)

**COMBINATION PEDALS**

1. Forte-Combination Great Organ.
2. Piano-Combination Great Organ.
3. Forte-Combination Swell Organ.
4. Piano-Combination Swell Organ.
5. Reversible Movement to operate No. 22.
Wind indicator for the organist over the manuals.
Organist’s seat with receptacle for music.
Most of the surviving Period III Durner organs are two-manual and pedal instruments of around ten ranks and appear to represent the standard model organ of the first decade of the twentieth century. To gain some impression of the decline in upperwork which took place at the turn of the century, it is instructive to compare the stoplist of Model No. 5 from the ca. 1895 catalog with the stoplist of the ca. 1905 Durner organ at the Portland United Methodist Church, East Bangor, Pennsylvania. The only 2' stop on the ca. 1895 instrument has in ca. 1905 given way to a 4' flute, and the only Swell 4' stop has given way to an additional 8' string. This trend was carried even further by Charles E. Durner after his father's death in 1914. In the organ built for St. Thomas United Church of Christ, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, dedicated November 1, 1923, the Great 4' Principal has gone, replaced by a second string. At the same time, tracker action gave way to electro-pneumatic. Furthermore, the voicing in Charles E. Durner's time lacked the character and polish of his father's work, and it may be that the son brought in much of his pipework ready voiced from supply houses. This represents a sad decline from the Durner organs of the last forty years of the nineteenth century, when Charles E. Durner's work compared favorably with that of the best Boston and New York builders for its quality of construction and tonal finish.

NOTES

This article is based partly on the Durner company records, now housed in the OHS Archives and supplemented from other sources, including considerable research by James R. McFarland, John Speller, and other members of the Tannenberg Chapter of the OHS. Some portions of this material are published in the Dieffenbuch.


2. I am grateful to Martin Kares for his assistance in making the identification of Durner's great-grandfather.


5. Cooperstown Sentinel, 16 June 1913.


7. Death notice in Durner materials, OHS Archives.

8. James R. McFarland made this estimate in the Dieffenbuch 3:2:4. It seems plausible on the basis of the partial opus list which follows this article.

9. The Dieffenbuch (3:2:4) refers to him as H. J. Depue, but this is probably a mistake for H. T. It is by no means clear how far Depue, Gerger, or Fritzsche were working on Durner's premises or elsewhere; nor is it clear to what extent the firms of Gerger and Fritzsche can claim to be Durner's 'successors.'

10. Legal contract in Durner company records.


12. Advertisement in The Industries of Pennsylvania (Philadelphia, 1881). Records of the payment for this advertisement also exist in the Durner company records. It is possible that "1861" was a misprint for "1881" since otherwise it is difficult to explain why Durner omits to mention his 1878 prize.

13. It was long believed that Durner himself was responsible for the 1902 rebuild since a proposal from him for carrying out the work exists in the church archives. John Jens Johnson has recently discovered, however, that the church accounts show that payment was actually made to Palm.


15. This brochure, a photocopy of which is in the OHS Archives, is discussed in detail below. Many of the photographs which appeared in it are also found as originals in the Durner records, and some have been used to illustrate this article. The history of the Centennial organ is discussed in the Musical Courier (May 15, 1889, p. 203), which confirms the version given in the brochure.


17. Allen S. Fisher, Lutherans in Bucks County (Tinicum, Pa., 1935), p. 59, where there is also an illustration of the Hilltown Durner case.

A Partial Opus List of Durner Organs

The only partial opus list of Durner organs published in America is compiled by James R. McFarland and appeared in the Diéffenbach 3:4-8:10. This listed about seventy instruments with brief statements as to which instruments were known to be extant. The present list is an expansion by John Speller of the McFarland list; additional information was gathered & marked with an asterisk (*) and the original list has been annotated to give much more information on the status of the instruments where known. Data on other Durner organs would be welcomed.

DATE LOCATION SIZE
1866 Lewisburg, Pa., Bucknell University 1-3
1868 Boalsburg, Pa., St. John's U.C.C. 2-13
1869 Philadelphia, Pa., Emmanuel Lutheran 2-4
1869 East Greenwich, Pa., New Goshenhoppen 2-13
1870 Quakertown, Pa., St. John's Lutheran 2-13
1870 Richlandtown, Pa., St. John's U.C.C. 2-13
1875 New York City, St. George's Episcopal Church (basement) 1-4
1876 Philadelphia Centennial Exposition 2-12
1878 Hilltown, Pa., St. Peter's Lutheran 2-12
1881 Lancaster, Pa., Zion Lutheran 2-2
1884 West Salisbury Township, Lehighton County, Pa., Jerusalem Union Church 1-4
1888 Bethlehem, Pa., Holy Infancy R.C. 2-21
1889 Allentown, Pa., St. Paul's Church 1-15
1889 Allentown, Pa., Salem U.C.C. 2-2
1885 Lancaster, Pa., First U.C.C. 2-4
1886 Mauch Chunk (now Jim Thorpe), Pa. 2-11
1886 Bethlehem, Pa., Moravian Theological Seminary, A. C. Borhek Mem. Chapel 1-8
1886 Hurley, Pa., Lafayette Chapel 2-1
1886 Lancaster, Pa., Zion Lutheran 2-1
1886 Mauch Chunk (now Jim Thorpe), Pa. 2-11
1886 Kutztown, Pa., St. John's Union Church 1-8
1890 New Tripoli, Pa., Weisenberg Union Church 2-10
1890 Unionville, Pa., Union Church 2-10
1892 Bath, Pa., Christ Reformed Church 2-10
1892 Fogelsville, Pa., St. John's Reformed 2-10
1893 Zionsville, Pa., Lutheran 2-14
1894 Northampton, Pa., Our Lady of Sorrows 2-3
1893 Obelia, Pa., St. Andrew's (Keller's) Lutheran 2-10
1894 Greenup, Pa., United Church 2-10
1895 East Bangor, Pa., Portland United Methodist Church 2-10
1896 Telford, Pa., Little Zion Lutheran 2-11
1897 Zion Hill, Pa., Zion Union Church 2-10
1897 Mauch Chunk (Jim Thorpe), Pa. 2-2
1897 Peterville (or Emmanuelville), Pa. 1-8
1897 Erwinna, Pa., Tinsun Union Church 2-13
1899 Testament, Pa., St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran 2-7
1900 Catawauqua, Pa., St. Mark's Lutheran 2-7
1900 Bethlehem, Pa., St. Mark's 2-7
1900 Bethlehem, Pa., St. Mark's 2-7
1901 Bethlehem, Pa., South Bethlehem 2-7
1901 Allentown, Pa., St. Luke's Lutheran 2-7
1902 Bethlehem, Pa., Zion Lutheran 2-7
1903 North Wales, Pa., St. Peter's Lutheran 1-10
1903 Bethlehem, Pa., West Side Moravian 2-10
1904 Bethlehem, Pa., St. Peter's Ev. Luth. 2-10
1904 Philadelphia, Pa., Zion Lutheran 2-10
1905 East Bangor, Pa. 2-10
1906 Telford, Pa., Little Zion Lutheran 2-11
1907 Zion Hill, Pa., Zion Union Church 2-10
1907 Mauch Chunk (Jim Thorpe), Pa. 2-10
1908 Peterville (or Emmanuelville), Pa. 1-8
1909 Bethlehem, Pa., Holy Infancy R.C. 2-21
1910 New Tripoli, Pa., Weisenberg Union Church 2-10
1910 Unionville, Pa., Union Church 2-10
1912 Bath, Pa., Christ Reformed Church 2-10
1912 Fogelsville, Pa., St. John's Reformed 2-10
1913 Zionsville, Pa., Lutheran 2-14
1914 Northampton, Pa., Our Lady of Sorrows 2-3
1915 Bethlehem, Pa., Zion Lutheran 2-10
1917 Philadelphia, Pa., Emmanuel Lutheran 2-10
1918 Bethlehem, Pa., St. John's Lutheran 2-18
1918 Bethlehem, Pa., Second Lutheran Church 2-10
1919 Bethlehem, Pa., St. John's Lutheran 2-18
1919 Bethlehem, Pa., St. John's Lutheran 2-18
1920 Philadelphia, Pa., Zion Lutheran 2-18
1920 Bethlehem, Pa., Grace Lutheran 2-19
1922 Bethlehem, Pa., Grace Lutheran 2-19
1922 Philadelphia, Pa., Zion Lutheran 2-18
1922 Bethlehem, Pa., St. Thomas U.C.C. 2-13
1922 Bethlehem, Pa., Grace Lutheran 2-19
1923 Bethlehem, Pa., Grace Lutheran 2-19
1924 Bethlehem, Pa., Grace Lutheran 2-19
1925 Bethlehem, Pa., Grace Lutheran 2-19
1926 Schoeneville, Pa., Christ Lutheran & Reformed 2-1
1926 Bethlehem, Pa., Zion Lutheran 2-18
1926 Bethlehem, Pa., Zion Lutheran 2-18
1928 Bethlehem, Pa., Masonic Temple 2-1
1928 Bethlehem, Pa., Zion Lutheran 2-4
1930 Bethlehem, Pa., Liberty High School 3-3
1940 Lower Saucon, Pa., unknown church 2-2
1945 residence of Charles Henderson?
1950 residence of Charles Henderson?
1950 Franklin, Pa., First Baptist Church 2-10
1950 Franklin, Pa., Presbyterian Church 2-10
1950 Franklin, Pa., St. John's Episcopal Church 2-10

NOTES TO OPUS LIST
1. This organ is described in the Diéffenbach, 9:6-8:10
2. This organ is described in the Diéffenbach, 4:6-8:10
3. This organ is described in the Diéffenbach, 4:2-5
4. See "Organ Update," The Tracker, 30:4-17
6. This organ is described in the Diéffenbach, 5:2-8, 7. A description of this organ in its present state is given in The Tracker, 4:4-5:10
8. The organ is described in the Diéffenbach, 4:1-10. This organ is described in the Diéffenbach, 6:3-11:10, 10. A description of the Hook & Hastings organ, with notes and pictures, outlining the history of the Durner rebuild, is given in The Tracker, 5:3-8:10, 11. J. McCracken.
12. According to A History of Franklin, Franklin, Pa., (c.p., n.d.), these three Franklin churches had Durner organs.
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