

VOLUME 64, NUMBER 4, OCTOBER 2020

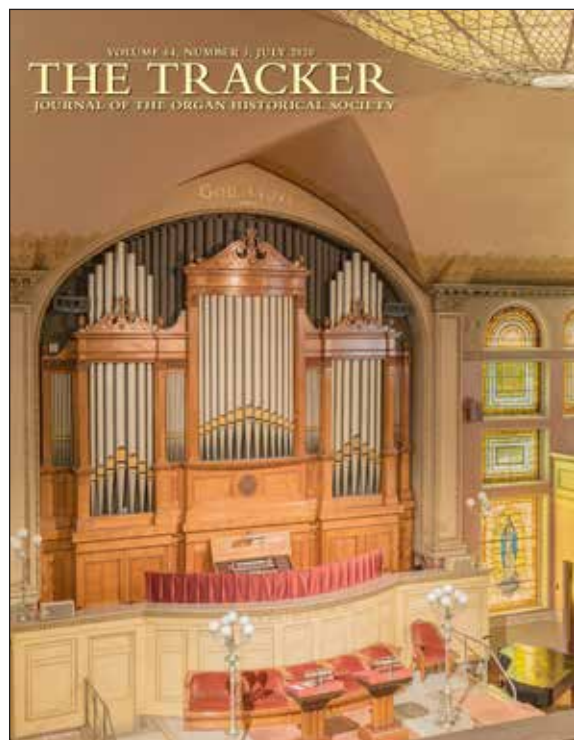
# THE TRACKER

JOURNAL OF THE ORGAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY





# THE OHS ANNUAL FUND – 2020



## DID YOU KNOW THAT...

- ▶ Past issues of THE TRACKER are available online?
- ▶ More than 400+ citations for historic organs have been awarded?
- ▶ The Pipe Organ Database receives 5.5 million page-views annually?
- ▶ The OHS Press is the world's largest publisher of organ books?
- ▶ The Archives storage facility costs \$10K annually?
- ▶ The OHS is preserving 162 reel-to-reel tapes of E. Power Biggs recordings?
- ▶ The OHS is restoring and preserving an 1841 Hilbus cabinet organ?
- ▶ 237 members are Biggs Scholars?
- ▶ Member dues cover one-quarter of the annual operating expenses?
- ▶ \$100 in Annual Fund donations from every member would provide much needed sustainability for the future?
- ▶ In 2021, video blogs featuring items from the Library/Archives collection will be available on our website?
- ▶ You can watch "Live from Stoneleigh" organ recital series making its debut in December?

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### MICHAEL QUIMBY, BOARD CHAIR

For me, the importance of collection and dissemination of knowledge to support the preservation of historic pipe organs in the United States lies at the heart of the OHS. I support the Annual Fund to assure its long-term financial viability.



### ANNE LAVER

I value the community of organ lovers, builders, and organists that is the OHS! As an academic organist, I especially appreciate the resources the OHS offers, such as the Library and Archives, THE TRACKER, and the Pipe Organ Database. I give to the Annual Fund because I know these donations directly support the mission of the OHS. As chair of the finance committee, I understand just how much our budget depends on annual gifts from members!



### CAROLE TERRY

Donations to the Annual Fund of the Organ Historical Society are critical to support its continued health. Our support ensures that future generations can continue to appreciate the lineage of the American organ. The Library and Archives and the Pipe Organ Database offer a wealth of information about organs that has been curated throughout the years. This stands as a superb example of the dedication and commitment consistent with our mission and goals.



### LYNN DOBSON

Being a member of OHS allows me to become a part of the celebration of the rich nearly four-century-long American organ musical scene and the uniquely American organbuilding history. Supporting the Annual Fund helps the organization to pursue ever more ambitious programs documenting and promoting the pipe organ in America.



### GREGORY CROWELL

To me, the OHS is about inspiration, community, collaboration, love of our history, excitement about our future, and most of all, music. I support the Annual Fund because I believe the OHS is taking the lead not only in celebrating old organs, but in keeping the pipe organ as a musical instrument before the public.



### NICHOLAS DANIELS

OHS is my musical home and the organization that best connects me with other pipe organ enthusiasts. I support the OHS Annual Fund to promote my passion for preserving historic pipe organs in America.



### MICHAEL DIORIO

What I love about the OHS is that it promotes a well-informed understanding of the instrument as opposed to touting the prowess of a performer. It reveres the organ as performer. The OHS is singular in offering its members in-person education, superb literature, and research. Especially important are the opportunities that the Biggs Scholars program offers to younger organists. Being an active beneficiary of an organization encourages active stewardship. Such reciprocity of sustenance ensures the vitality and continuance of both mission and offering.



[WWW.ORGANHISTORICALSOCIETY.ORG](http://WWW.ORGANHISTORICALSOCIETY.ORG)

***Giving is not just about donating, it is about making a difference!***



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# On the Cover

ON OCTOBER 8, we celebrate the 150th anniversary of the birth of the great French organ composer Louis Vierne, best known for the finale of his First Symphony and the *Carillon de Westminster*. His six organ symphonies have few equals in the repertoire.

For 37 years, Vierne was the organist of Notre-Dame Cathedral, probably the most famous church in the world. During that time, he played one of the masterpieces of French organbuilder, Aristide Cavaillé-Coll and memorably suffered a fatal heart attack at its console on June 2, 1937.

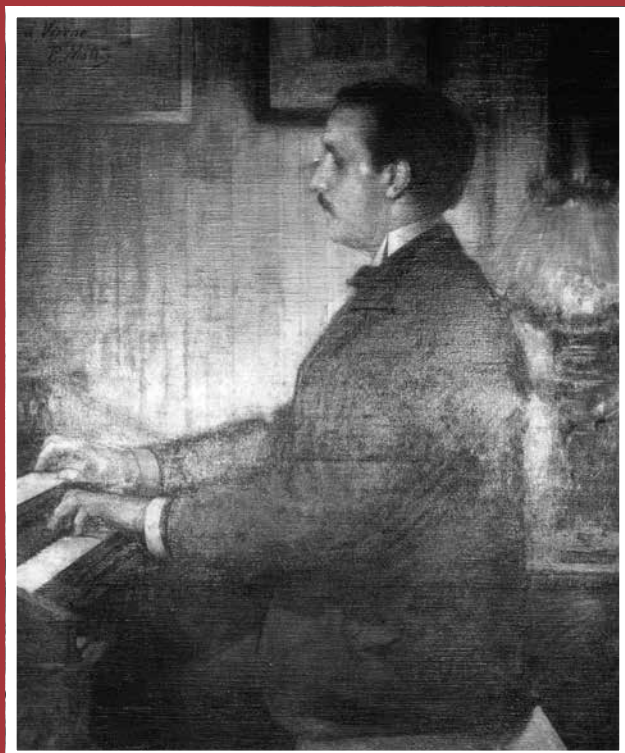
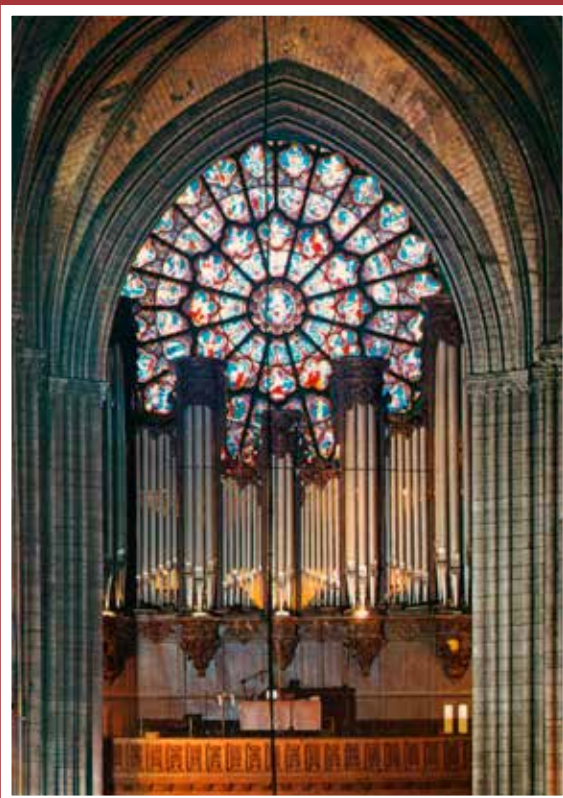
Vierne married Arlette Taskin on April 22, 1899. She was the daughter of Alexandre Taskin, a noted baritone at the Opéra-Comique who had created roles in operas by Delibes, Offenbach, and Massenet. French musicologist Brigitte de Leersnyder recently discovered that the noted painter Paul Mathey (1844–1929) lived in the same apartment building as the Taskins, 159, rue de Rome, and knew the Taskin family well. On the cover of this issue is a reproduction of an oil painting by Paul Mathey that depicts the young Vierne at his new Mutin-Cavaillé-Coll *orgue de salon*. This painting does not appear in the catalog of Mathey's works and must have been painted as a gift to the newly-weds after the couple set up housekeeping in their apartment at 3, rue Coëtlogon, in 1899 or 1900.

After Vierne's death, the painting was in the possession of his executor, Madeleine Mallet-Richépin. In 1974, her husband, Dr. Lucien Mallet, gave it to the Musée de Notre-Dame. When the museum closed in November 2008, the painting was sent to the Médiathèque de l'architecture et du patrimoine, where it remains in storage.



Notre-Dame Cathedral, 1912

The organ case and western rose window of Notre-Dame Cathedral



Louis Vierne at his Mutin-Cavaillé-Coll *orgue de salon*. Painted by Paul Mathey, ca. 1899

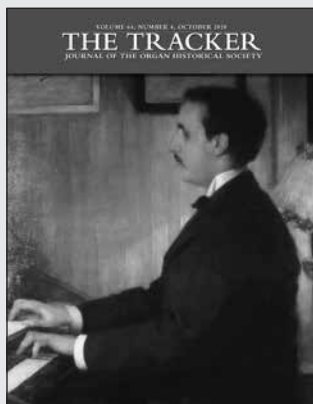


# THE TRACKER

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### ON THE COVER

Louis Vierne at his Mutin-Cavaillé-Coll *orgue de salon*. Painted by Paul Mathey, ca. 1899

## EDWARD MCCALL | From the CEO

IN THIS VIRTUAL WORLD where online meetings, FaceTime reunions, and social distancing are the new norm, I have been pondering our collective sense of *belonging*. A recent Facebook messenger “chat” with a friend brought some much-needed clarity to my deliberations. As the mother of two teenaged children, she suffered with online education in the spring and naturally is worried about the immediate future regarding the opening of schools. But despite all the magnified stress of life, she told me that this period of quarantine has “been a really good time with my children bonding with me”—a ray of sunshine under otherwise cloudy and stormy skies.



As humans, we long to belong. Whether that belonging is to our family, our faith community, our circle of friends, our professional colleagues, or a society of like-minded individuals, the yearning to be connected is a universal condition. Belonging is an integral component promoting a strong sense of self. The act of being with others gives us happiness, security, and pride. Perhaps that is why this global pandemic has torpedoed much of society because of its distancing requirements, lack of communal gatherings, and isolation.

But across this country and around the world, communities are coming together in novel ways to give to those in need and to provide hope and a reason to believe in the future. That is what strong, healthy, and vital communities do. They help one another and, in the process, lift everyone up. The American businessman and author Brian Solis reminds us of this important message: “Community is much more than belonging to something; it’s about doing something together that makes belonging matter.”

These are the thoughts swirling within me on this steamy, sultry late-July afternoon. And I cannot help but apply them to the current state of the Organ Historical Society as we look to the future. What are we doing collectively as a community that makes us proud and happy to belong? Surely, belonging is not just what we “get” out of being a member. The benefits of an OHS membership are well established. But how will we ensure that our belonging has a real impact, a real advancement of our mission and dreams?

Helen Keller wrote, “Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much.” What can we do together? Now is the time to make your positive impact by giving generously to the Annual Fund. Now is the time to state with certainty that our belonging is not solely about getting but about giving. The act of giving makes our interpersonal connections that much more secure.

Why is the Annual Fund such a cornerstone of our community? Currently the OHS is transforming into a mature

# From the CEO | CONTINUED

not-for-profit association, adhering to best practices of accounting, governance, and mission-driven operations. Let us examine exactly how we function and why your support is not only needed but appreciated.

In the summer of 2020, the Organ Historical Society has approximately 2,100 active members. We are led by the seven members of the Board of Directors, a management team of four (two full-time and two part-time), and two independent contractors who oversee publications and internet technology. Additionally, the OHS boasts an array of volunteers who, as of this writing, have donated well over 2,000 hours of their time since January 1.

At the headquarters in Villanova, our management team is responsible for membership services, producing THE TRACKER, planning annual conventions, signing contracts for convention appearances, running the online store and purchasing merchandise for it, producing the monthly newsletter *OH!*, maintaining and reporting monthly accurate records of accounts to the Board, preparing government financial reporting documents, attending all monthly and bi-monthly committee meetings, negotiating with vendors, settling accounts payable, researching and submitting grant applications, managing the Biggs Scholars program, overseeing the database, acting as advertising managers for THE TRACKER and the newsletter, supervising Library and Archives activity, maintaining and updating the Library and Archival services, organizing and preparing the OHS annual calendar, answering member requests, planning future symposia, reviewing materials for OHS publications, maintaining and updating the website, seeking new student chapters, engaging in strategic planning, forecasting the budget, courting major donors, and keeping an eye on our mission to celebrate and promote the pipe organ across America.

We do not and cannot accomplish all this work alone. The OHS does not and cannot function on membership dues alone. We function at our best when the community of members demonstrates a true sense of belonging with the generosity of their hearts, minds, and means. With funding security in place, many more good things can happen. Case in point:

In December 2017, the OHS took possession of a rare Hilbus cabinet organ donated by the Strawberry Banke (yes,

that is how it is spelled) Museum in Portsmouth, N.H. This donation was secured by Bynum Petty, the librarian and archivist on staff at the OHS. Hilbus built his first organ in 1815 for Christ Episcopal Church, Alexandria, Va., and that organ is now at the Smithsonian. Only two other Hilbus organs are known to exist, one at St. John's Church in the Broad Creek area of Fort Washington, Md., and the one now in the possession of the OHS. Again through the efforts of Bynum Petty, the OHS has secured enough funding from a single donor that we can restore this rare historic instrument and have it permanently on display at the OHS headquarters in Villanova, Pa. A cause for celebration indeed!

The transformation continues. As of this writing, 162 reel-to-reel tapes recorded by E. Power Biggs for his radio broadcasts are being preserved and digitized, a project led by the OHS management team and supported by all professional pipe organ associations. With your support, the OHS plans to further the cause of sustainability of our precious holdings in the Library and Archives. We expect to receive the entire collection of the American Theatre Organ Society, originally located on the campus of the University of Oklahoma. Virgil Fox archival material also will be coming to the OHS.

Published in this issue of THE TRACKER are the annual reports from our committee chairs, as well as a brief overview of our financial status. This reporting is provided in lieu of the customary Annual General Meeting which cannot be held because of restrictions during the public health emergency.

Doing the good work on behalf of the community of members for the Organ Historical Society is an honor and a privilege. We need your continuing support that allows us to concentrate on the projects and plans of paramount importance to the pipe organ world. ***Thank you for giving generously to this year's Annual Fund. Our pledge to you is faithful, focused stewardship of your trust in us.*** Together we belong to a community of great history and untapped potential. Stay safe and healthy. Even apart, we will accomplish great things!

Sincerely,  
**Ed**

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The Organ Historical Society celebrates, preserves, and studies the pipe organ in America in all its historic styles through research, education, advocacy, and music.

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COLUMBUS, OHIO • July 17–22, 2022

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THE TRACKER, Journal of the Organ Historical Society, is published four times a year. It is read by over 4,000 people who shape the course of the art and the science of the pipe organ. For nominal cost, you can support the publication of THE TRACKER and keep your name before these influential readers by advertising. For additional information, contact us at advertising@organhistoricalsociety.org.

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**SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY**  
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*We welcome three new student chapter of OHS, and all of the students enrolled in fields of organ study with outstanding members of OHS at these leading institutions. Membership is very easy and inexpensive; meetings are optional, and every new member receives access to THE TRACKER magazine on our website, and the other benefits of membership in OHS. If you have questions about starting a student chapter, please contact Marcia Sommers at the OHS office in Villanova.*

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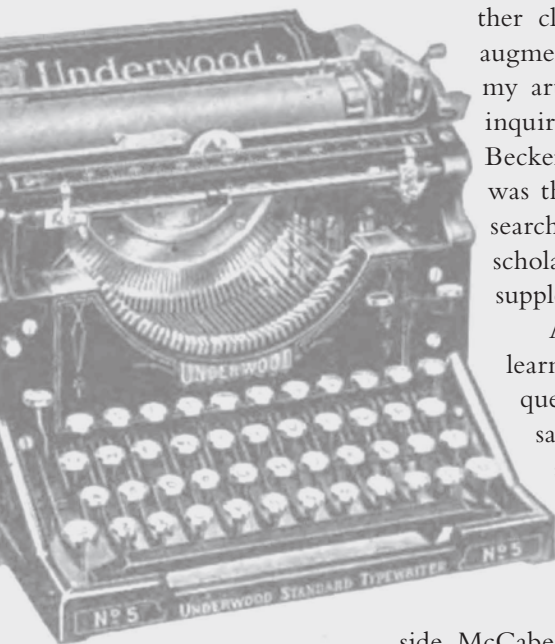
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## BECKERATH AND HOLTKAMP

THE PUBLICATION of “Retrospective: Walter Holtkamp Sr.” by Joseph McCabe in the July 2020 issue of *THE TRACKER*, which was in part a commentary on my article, “Cleveland Welcomes a North German Voice” (April 2020), necessitates further clarification. McCabe augments material found in my article with additional inquiry into Holtkamp. Beckerath, not Holtkamp, was the subject of my research, and thus McCabe’s scholarship adds valuable supplementary material.



As a scholar, I have learned to ask plenty of questions. It is safe to say that there are “two sides to every coin” in scholarship and it is important not to impart opinionated language on either side. McCabe attempted to answer

many of the questions that I left to the reader at the end of my article, but in doing so, he publicly challenged aspects of the validity of my work. Just as I cannot draw precise conclusions about Holtkamp or Beckerath, neither can anyone else. Only Holtkamp and Beckerath know their truths, and unfortunately, they are both deceased. Because we are left with unanswered questions, I intentionally ended my article with questions for us all to ponder, allowing each of us to draw our own conclusions. A great benefit of the Organ Historical Society is that its members can share theories and assumptions without casting a partial verdict.

Much of my information on Holtkamp came from his biographer, John Allen Ferguson. McCabe asserts a falsehood in my article in the line, “because of the slow Depression-era economy, Holtkamp did not pursue this avenue of organ building any further.” “This avenue” refers to Holtkamp’s quest into mechanical action. McCabe divorces my words from their context and implies that they describe Holtkamp’s organbuilding in general, which is not the case (please see page 37 in Ferguson’s book, *Walter Holtkamp: American Organ Builder*). If McCabe wishes to challenge this information further, then his argument is with Ferguson.

Finally, there is one error in McCabe’s article; the Cleveland Beckerath incorporates four manuals, not three (page 22). This is worth pointing out because it affirms a significant difference between Beckerath and Holtkamp: Holtkamp chose to be more economical in his organbuilding approach and never built an organ larger than three manuals, while Beckerath was comfortable with accepting projects on a grander scale, with several four-manual installations in addition to his magnum opus five-manual instrument at Saint Joseph Oratory in Montréal. Aside from this, I welcome and appreciate McCabe’s research and I encourage us all to welcome, acknowledge, and support the collective work of our organization. As a former student at Yale, I had the great fortune of knowing intimately the work of Walter Holtkamp (Battell Chapel) and Rudolf von Beckerath (Dwight Chapel). Their organs are located on the same city block and are magnificent manifestations of two parallel organ movements (*European Orgelbewegung* and American Organ Reform Movement), that had the same goal in mind but radically different approaches.

RUSSELL J. WEISMANN, DMA, AAGO

The correspondence on this subject is ended.

EDITOR

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*info@organhistoricalsociety.org*

THE EDITOR ACKNOWLEDGES WITH THANKS

THE ADVICE AND COUNSEL OF  
CHARLES N. EBERLINE, NILS HALKER,  
AND BYNUM PETTY

## PUBLICATION DEADLINES

### EDITORIAL

THE EDITORIAL DEADLINE IS  
THE FIRST OF THE  
SECOND PRECEDING MONTH

April issue closes . . . . . February 1  
July issue closes . . . . . May 1  
October issue closes . . . . . August 1  
January issue closes . . . . . November 1

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CLOSING DATE FOR ALL ADVERTISING  
MATERIAL IS THE 15TH OF THE  
SECOND PRECEDING MONTH

February 15 . . . . . for April issue  
May 15 . . . . . for July issue  
August 15 . . . . . for October issue  
November 15 . . . . . for January issue

# Annual Reports |

## LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES

Jeffrey Fowler, chair; Gregory Crowell, Nathaniel Powell, Damir Spritzer, and James Wallmann; Edward McCall and Bynum Petty, ex officio

The Library and Archives Advisory Committee was reactivated March 9 after a period of inactivity. Because of my work with the Philadelphia AGO Chapter Archives and the fact that I live nearby, Ed McCall requested that I assume the duties of chair of this committee. As of this writing, the committee has met twice via Zoom. Besides the continual need for funding, the committee is concerned with current archives as well as the proposed acquisition of associated archives in need of a home and, of course, the maintenance and growth of the library.

James Wallmann has supplied the committee with a list of rare books about the organ, most not available in North America, and is working on a strategy to procure them for the Library. The OHS Library and Archives has acquired the Boston AGO Library. Most of this library has been the work of Barbara Owen, and it includes the files of E. Power Biggs, Arthur Howe Bradford, and T. Tertius Noble, among others. Shipping of the American Theatre Organ Society Archives has been stalled by the pandemic. Funding for the monumental task of cataloging material incorporated into the OHS Archives is an ongoing consideration for the committee. An application for an archives grant has been submitted to the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). The OHS Archives, in partnership with Natural Lands and Stoneleigh, the 42-acre public preserve where the OHS resides, is exploring a relationship with OrgelKidsUSA.org. Through an ingeniously designed kit, "Lego minded" children assemble a working pipe organ, coming face-to-face with the instrument and its art. A Mellon Grant proposal written by Edward McCall, with input from committee members, has been submitted for this project.

## FINANCE COMMITTEE

Anne Laver (chair), David Stone, David Stettler, Michael Quimby; Patrick Summers (treasurer, ex-officio)

The OHS Finance Committee met monthly to review profit and loss sheets prepared by the OHS accountant Annette Lynn, and made regular reports to the Board of Directors about the OHS's finances. In fall 2019, it worked closely with CEO Edward McCall to draft and recommend a budget that was subsequently approved by the board. It reviewed documents detailing the status of the society's restricted funds prepared by the OHS treasurer. The committee provided counsel to the CEO and board regarding the significant financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on OHS finances.

## ARCHIVIST'S REPORT

Bynum Petty

The most significant activity begun shortly after my June 2019 report was the submission of our Implementation Grant application to the National Endowment for the Humanities. We were informed on April 1, 2020, that our application was not accepted. Because of the NEH's limited awards budget in the present political environment, funding was provided to only 19 percent of the 210 applications received. On April 2, 2020, Willis Bridegam, Ed McCall, and I began revising our application for \$350,000 funding, which was submitted to the NEH before the July 15 deadline. Awards will be announced on April 1, 2021. The Wyncote Foundation will provide an additional grant of \$150,000 if NEH funding is granted.

Another significant activity of the past twelve months was the October symposium at Stoneleigh celebrating the installation of Aeolian-Skinner, No. 878. The over-subscribed event was an undeniable success. The Library and Archives thanks the Joseph G. Bradley Charitable Foundation, the Bryn Mawr Trust, and the Schantz Organ Company for their generous financial support of this event. The spring book sale raised more than \$2,000 to benefit the Library and Archives. Earlier this month, we received funding to digitize the radio broadcast tapes of E. Power Biggs held by the Library of the Boston AGO Chapter. These nationwide radio programs were broadcast on CBS from 1942 to 1958.

Daily activities of fulfilling research requests continue to grow. Because of our expanded worldwide presence through WorldCat.org and the Inter-library Loan program, international queries are becoming more frequent, even during the current COVID-19 pandemic.

## CEO REPORT TO MEMBERS

W. Edward McCall

The past twelve months have seen tremendous activity within the Organ Historical Society. At the conclusion of the 2019 convention in Dallas, all eyes turned toward Columbus, Ohio, as the next venue for our annual organ conventions. We know now how the world has changed since then, but the OHS continues to thrive:

- ▶ The number of sustaining memberships has tripled.
- ▶ A Youth Advisory Panel was created; its work is at an early stage.
- ▶ We obtained tax-exempt status with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and anticipate a refund of all sales taxes paid in 2019 and 2020.
- ▶ Several grant proposals have been submitted to foundations.
- ▶ The Library and Archives Advisory Committee was reactivated to assist Bynum Petty and the OHS on Library and Archives matters.

- ▶ We have successfully applied for the Payroll Protection Plan because of COVID-19.
- ▶ Dr. Nicholas Daniels (2 years) and Dr. Michael Diorio (4 years) have been nominated and appointed to the Board of Directors.
- ▶ The Pipe Organ Database has been completely overhauled to make it more streamlined and effective. Editors continue to volunteer thousands of hours annually; the database receives 5.5 million hits per year.
- ▶ 162 reel-to-reel tapes of E. Power Biggs radio broadcasts have been submitted for digitization and safekeeping.
- ▶ We have negotiated an agreement to receive and house permanently the archive collection of Virgil Fox and the entire collection of the American Theatre Organ Society. The OHS Library and Archives is truly at the apex of historical research opportunities on the pipe organ.
- ▶ The monthly *OH!* newsletters have been delivered to the membership.
- ▶ All registrants for the Columbus convention have been contacted and informed of its postponement.
- ▶ We have continued to plan for the 2021 convention in Toronto, Ontario, Canada.
- ▶ Improvements to the OHS online store and catalog have been made. New inventory has been added and popular stock items have been refreshed
- ▶ We have sought new sources of funding through donations and grants to provide sustainability for the future.
- ▶ A contract for the complete restoration of the 1841 Hilbus organ donated to the OHS has been signed; this is a two-year project.
- ▶ Faithful stewardship of financial resources has been maintained.
- ▶ Strategic plans have been made regarding budgets, human resources, staffing, and projects into 2022.



*The Living Room at Stoneleigh set up for a meeting*



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July 1, 2019 – July 31, 2020

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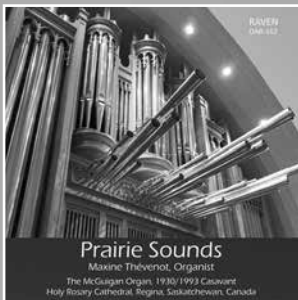
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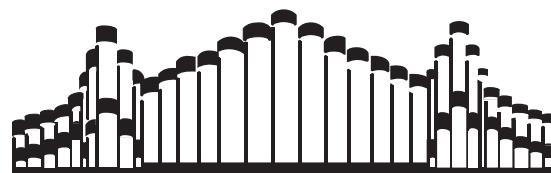
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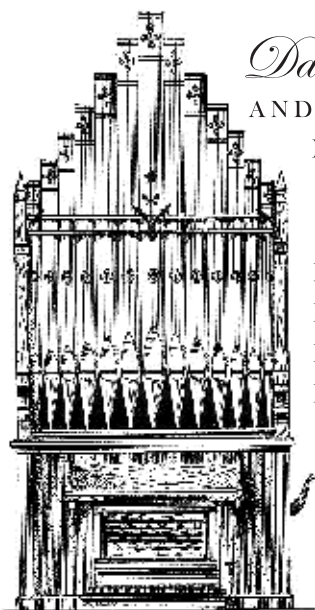
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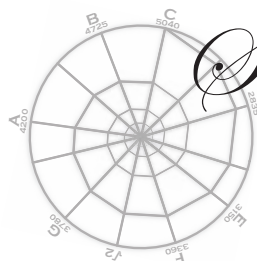
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# Louis Vierne's Dream Organ for Notre-Dame Cathedral

ROLLIN SMITH



Vierne at Notre-Dame console, PHOTO Ernest M. Skinner

WHEN LOUIS VIERNE was appointed organist of Notre-Dame Cathedral in Paris in 1900, he was assistant to Alexandre Guilmant in the organ class at the Paris Conservatory, and his First Symphony for organ had just been published. Like most new organists, he desired changes to his instrument, and in 1903, Charles Mutin, successor to the organ's builder, Aristide Cavaillé-Coll, made a few: he replaced the Récit 8' Bourdon with a large-scale Diapason, the 4' Dulciana with a 4' Octave, and the Clarinette with a four-rank Fourniture. Zinc basses were added to the Récit Gambe and Positif Salicional; and the old tin basses of the Recit 16' Bombarde and 8' Trompette, which had probably collapsed, were replaced with full-length zinc resonators.<sup>1</sup> During the next 30 years, the venerable cathedral experienced many vicissitudes, from the great flood of 1910 to German bombings during World War I. The organ suffered as well, and with only intermittent maintenance, it was in deplorable condition by the mid-1920s. In 1927, Vierne came to America on a recital tour, during which he enjoyed the opulence of American organs and the comfort of their consoles (he played only the biggest and best, of course).

Vierne arrived in New York on January 27, 1927, and was feted that evening by the American Guild of Organists with a reception and dinner at the Waldorf-Astoria attended

by 75 of New York's prominent organists. He lost no time in discussing the condition of the Notre-Dame organ, and the next afternoon at a luncheon, the AGO council voted to open a Guild subscription for its rebuilding. By March, Vierne wrote that he had been informed that a subscription had been opened and that the members of the American Guild of Organists and the short-lived National Association of Organists "had decided to contribute four dollars<sup>2</sup> each to it. Mr. Skinner, the organbuilder, offered to build a modern console just like that at Trinity Church, Boston."<sup>3</sup> What happened to any money raised by the subscription is unknown. It was never mentioned in *The Diapason*, *The American Organist*, or the minutes of the American Guild of Organists.

Vierne sailed for France on April 20, and immediately wrote an extensive three-part article, "Musique en Amérique,"<sup>4</sup> describing his sojourn in the United States and Canada, the wonders of American organs, and, in particular, the comfort and extremely easy management of American organ consoles. Although he had kind words for organbuilders, he said nothing about his aural impressions. This is notable because, in considering rebuilding and modernizing the organ

2. About \$60 in today's currency.

3. Rollin Smith, *Louis Vierne: Organist of Notre Dame Cathedral* (Hillsdale, N.Y.: Pendragon Press, 1999), 272.

4. *Le Courrier Musical* (June 1, 15, and July 1, 1927), translated and annotated by William Hays as "Music in America," in Rollin Smith, *Louis Vierne*, 694–712.

1. Pierre J. Hardouin, *Le Grand Orgue de Notre-Dame de Paris* (Tours: Bärenreiter, 1973), 39.



Console of the Skinner organ in Trinity Church, Boston

at Notre-Dame, he was generally satisfied with its sound and wanted only to be able to control it with greater facility.

Vierne wrote that about a year later (his memoirs are imprecise, and dates are frequently incorrect) he had been “informed that the subscription was being filled rapidly and that an expert was being sent to determine the exact sum necessary to restore and enlarge the instrument.” He identified the expert as the organist of King’s Chapel, Boston, who would have been Raymond Clark Robinson (1884–1945). They made an appointment to discuss the project, but Robinson never appeared, and according to Vierne, had been circumvented by a third party (believed to have been either Charles Mutin or Marcel Dupré) who gave Robinson the impression that the situation had been exaggerated and that France could take care of its own restoration without help from foreigners.

Meanwhile, Vierne formulated a plan to rebuild his organ at Notre-Dame and typed “Project for a Great Modern Electric Console and the Addition of Some Stops for the Grand Orgue of Notre-Dame de Paris” in which he described tonally and mechanically renovating Cavaillé-Coll’s masterpiece, “making it possible to play all early and modern organ music efficiently and without the help of an assistant.”<sup>5</sup>

He proposed adding the following stops “in order to complete the present organ”:

#### GRAND-ORGUE

8 Cor harmonique (It is unclear what this Harmonic Horn is. In the Aria of his Sixth Symphony, mm. 79–87, Vierne specifies the *Récit Cor française ou Ophicléide* for the left hand against the sub- and super-couplers on the Positif Salicional and Unda maris. This may indicate that Vierne intended a difference between a *Cor harmonique* and *française*.)

#### POSITIF

8 Principal  
8 Cor anglais

#### GRAND-CHŒUR

16 Principal taken from the Positif  
8 Open Diapason (English style). The present 8' Principal will be moved to the Positif.  
8 Violoncelle  
8 Doppel Flute

#### PÉDALE

16 Bourdon (the present Sous-basse was to be made into a 16' [open] Flûte, presumably with an added bottom octave of 16' pipes)  
8 Bourdon (borrowed from the Grand-Orgue)

Tremolos on Récit, Positif, and Grand-Orgue

*I still remember those magnificent timbres... the marvelous touch of the instruments of this very great builder.*  
*I have retained an unforgettable joy in them.*  
*L. Vierne*

Vierne's autograph endorsement for Skinner organs

In order that Cavaillé-Coll's voicing be respectfully and scrupulously preserved, “the new additions should be calculated to blend perfectly into the ensemble without altering either its nobility or its purity.”<sup>6</sup> He was naïve in thinking that this would be the case, with the Grand-Orgue and Positif divisions, as well as the Récit, enclosed.

This design was inspired by the organs he had played on his tour of the United States and Canada, particularly those built by the Skinner Organ Company, the preeminent American organbuilder. On March 4, 1928, Vierne typed a long letter to Ernest M. Skinner, noting:

Not a day passes that I don't dream about your magnificent instruments I played over there; their marvelous touch, their fine tone, their perfect and sensitive action haunt me. It seems as though I were dreaming when

5. Louis Vierne, *Méthode d'Orgue*, Cahiers et Memoires, no. 37 (Paris: Les Amis de l'Orgue, 1987), 49–53.

6. Vierne, *Méthode d'Orgue*, 51–53.



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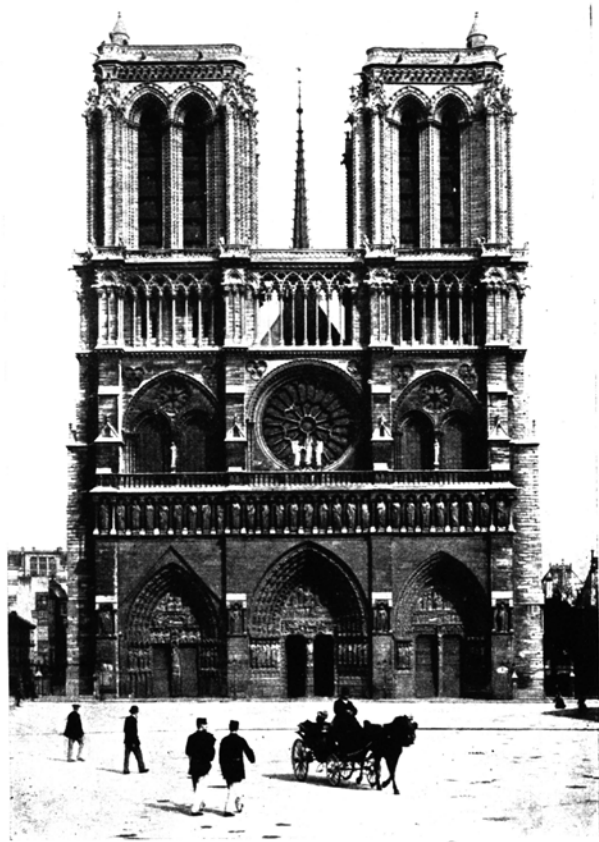
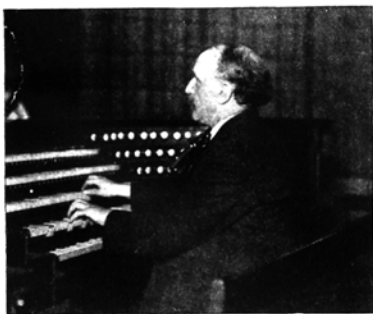
During the last few months in a long tour from the Atlantic to the Pacific, I have played on many organs. Wherever I have found an organ from your house, and these have been many, large and small, old and new, I have experienced profound admiration and complete joy.

Everywhere I have found the greatest mechanical perfection, perfect and smooth control, excellent functioning and perfect arrangement of combinations. Even the feel and touch of the keys is a delight.

In variety of voice, distinction of tone and powerful sonority, they are unequalled.

These instruments, artistic to the last degree, do you the greatest honor and justify fully your reputation for excellence which extends even to Europe.

Please accept then, my sincere admiration for your artistic achievements and my complete devotion.



Notre Dame de Paris, Paris, France

*L Vierne*

*organiste de Notre Dame de Paris*



Page Forty-Seven



I think of Trinity Church, Boston, of St. John's<sup>7</sup> and Hollywood High School<sup>8</sup> in Los Angeles, Williamstown,<sup>9</sup> and Utica.<sup>10</sup> I also very often recall the visit to your factory in Boston; what I saw there sends me into rapture. The reed curving machine is like a magic tool.<sup>11</sup>

He mentioned the Notre-Dame organ and the funds being raised for it in the United States. Vierne wrote that "I am already completely overwhelmed by all the trouble you took to interest generous *amateurs* in my organ, and also your having favored me by inscribing yourself as one of the donors—by your spontaneous gesture in putting your own name at the head of [the list of] contributors."

With the letter he included a plan he had drawn up for an ideal organ (designed without any practical considerations), the specification of the Notre-Dame organ, and a drawing of the console. He wrote extensive explanations of "certain mechanical resources that will seem perhaps luxurious until their practical application is found in existing music and which, in the future, could greatly help to provide more varied and flexible registration."

### THE CONSOLE

The manuals were to be reordered with the "standard" arrangement of ascending Grand-Orgue, Positif, Récit, and Solo (Bombarde), with the Grand-Chœur at the top. The latter two manuals were seldom played on but were coupled to the Grand-Orgue for crescendos.<sup>12</sup>

Stopknobs were to be arranged on two 45-degree angled jambs on either side of the keyboards, in six vertical columns of two rows, each separated by a space. On the left were to be:

7. The 1923 Skinner No. 446 in St. John's Episcopal Church had been enlarged to 56 ranks in 1925. Vierne did not play a recital on this organ, but he probably attended a recital by Roland Diggle, the church's organist, on Sunday, March 27.

8. Skinner No. 481 had been enlarged in 1926 to 33 ranks. On Friday morning, March 25, Vierne played before an audience of 2,500, 80 percent of whom were high school students, who were no doubt required to attend.

9. Skinner No. 195 in Chapin Hall, Williams College in Williamstown, Mass., had been dedicated in November 1912. Vierne's recital was played on February 11, 1927.

10. Skinner No. 488 in Grace Church, Utica, New York. The 58-rank organ had been dedicated on May 16, 1926. The last recital of Vierne's American tour was played on Easter Monday, April 18.

11. This letter was in the possession of the late Henry Karl Baker, proprietor of the Organ Literature Foundation, who kindly provided a copy.

12. Cavaillé-Coll arranged the manuals in descending order of their contribution to the ensemble. Thus, the Récit, the softest division, was at the top, with the Grand-Orgue and Grand-Chœur at the bottom. As the Récit became increasingly important in organ literature, its position so far away from the player became uncomfortable. In 1903, Widor had the Récit and Bombarde manuals exchanged on the organ at Saint-Sulpice. Unfortunately, this brought the Récit only one manual nearer. Vierne was fortunate that his Récit could be brought down to the third manual, with the Positif below it.



*Notre-Dame Cathedral, Paris*

Récit; Positif; Pédale; on the right jamb: Grand-Orgue; Bombarde; Grand-Chœur. "This is so that the most frequently-drawn stop combinations can be most easily pulled by several fingers in a simple thrust, taking into consideration families, pitch, and strength."

Accessories included indicator lights for the Crescendo Pedal, the two Tutti, and the blower, and an All Swells to Swell tablet, coupling all the expression pedals to the Récit swell pedal.

It would be infinitely desirable if the coupler tablets, stopknobs, and combination pistons were colored: a color is more readily seen than the name of the manual. In this case, the colors should be in pastel shades and not dark colors. Here is the best order that I encountered in Germany and in America: Grand-Orgue, pink; Positif, green; Récit, white; Bombarde, light yellow; Grand-Chœur, light blue-gray; Pédale, orange. The coupler pistons and the two Tutti pistons could be light mauve; the general pistons, ivory. (Except for the last two, these are the colors of the stops on the present Notre-Dame console, so the shades could be reproduced exactly.)

On the coupler rail the [intra-manual] unison tablets would be the color of that manual; the [inter-manual] unison couplers would be divided vertically into two equal parts corresponding to the color of each of the manuals coupled, that of the one being coupled to the left, that of the one to which another manual is being coupled, on the right. Example: Récit to Grand-Orgue 8', half white/half pink, the white on the left. The tablets that couple a clavier on itself at sub- and super-octave would be the color of that clavier. Couplers from other manuals would

be divided horizontally in two equal parts in the direction in which the coupling is done. For example: Positif 16' to Grand-Orgue, tablet half-green, half-pink—green on top;<sup>13</sup> Récit 4' to Positif, tablet half-white/half-green—white on top, etc.

This idea was inspired by the consoles of the Wanamaker stores in New York and Philadelphia (which maintained duplicate color schemes), but Vierne's was more involved: whereas the Wanamaker organs' couplers were all duo-toned horizontally, Vierne suggested that the unison couplers be divided vertically. He also wished to retain the color of the original Cavaillé-Coll porcelain stopknob faces on the Notre-Dame console, although it would have been impractical or impossible to re-use the stopknobs themselves on the new console. The only similarity to the Wanamaker colors was the green of the Positif (Choir).

Colors of the manual coupler pistons and pedal reversible in the key-slips and of the labels of the toe studs were to be identical to the tablets on the coupler rail. Labels above the coupler rail, stop columns, and groups of pistons were to be little strips of green leather with gilt lettering.

The engraving on the stop faces would be in color: black for the foundation stops, dark blue for mutations, dark red for reeds. If the colors of the backgrounds are sufficiently light, the three indicated colors will stand out perfectly.<sup>14</sup>

He felt that with a console made as described there would be no need for an assistant to pull stops, and that "in improvisation, such a console permits an infinite variety of coloration that would be of utmost benefit to those who have a horror of the monotonous drone of unchanging registration during performance."

Finally there was the old-fashioned swell mechanism operated by a *cuillière*, or spoon-shaped pedal. Maurice Duruflé recalled the inconvenience in playing on the top manual and trying to lend expression to the sound:

Of the five keyboards, the highest was unfortunately the Récit. The swell shutters were controlled by a *cuillière* with only two intermediary positions. It was placed at the right, completely beyond the pedalboard. One can imagine the very uncomfortable position of the organist, with both hands on the Récit, his left foot on low C of the pedalboard, and this right foot on the *cuillière*. For all practical purposes, it was necessary to play with the swell box either open or closed.<sup>15</sup>

13. Vierne mistakenly wrote "bottom" here.

14. Vierne, *Méthode d'Orgue*, 52.

15. Maurice Duruflé, "Mes Souvenirs sur Tournemire et Vierne," *L'Orgue*, no. 162 (Apr.–June 1977): 6.

## COUPLERS

Vierne's priority was couplers, and he wrote that "The ensemble will be rendered incomparably clearer and more brilliant by the addition of super-octave couplers." He envisioned characteristic effects: "Grand-Orgue 16' Bourdon with the super-octave; Positif Gambe coupled at the super-octave to the Grand-Orgue; Récit Voix humaine coupled to the Grand-Orgue at 16' and 4'."

The Grand-Orgue sub-octave coupler would transform the 4' Prestant into a small 8' Diapason, thinner than the real 8' Diapason and useful for certain solo effects or combinations. The 8' Trompette would become a 16' Bombarde that would considerably reinforce the ensemble. The Grand-Orgue super-octave would transform the 16' Bourdon into one of 8', valuable as an accompaniment and also useful in certain combinations, for example, open [the Grand-Orgue was to have been enclosed] and coupled to the Récit Voix Humaine, closed, etc. The 4' Prestant would become a 2' Doublette, the 8' Trompette a 4' Clairon, etc.<sup>16</sup>

Vierne was fascinated with the Unison Off couplers found on American organs. In addition to novel registrational effects possible, he considered them as manual switches that operated identically to the *pédales de combinaison* that connected the Barker levers to the manuals of French organs, for example, *Copula Grand-Chœur sur machine*. He was confused about activating the Unison Offs, and since he was to operate them with tablets, was the unison taken *off* when it was brought *on*, or was the unison always *off* unless the tablet were put *on*? He explained:

I find it more natural to have this coupler function as the others. It would do for each manual what is already done by the pneumatic machine: in order for the wind to enter the chest and consequently for the stops to sound, it would be necessary to depress the pedal that controlled said pneumatic machine. Usually, before beginning to play the organ, the pedal in question would be depressed. It would be necessary first to tilt the Unison tablets of each manual before any of the others.<sup>17</sup>

Such a system was contrary to contemporary American organbuilding practice<sup>18</sup> and would have made it necessary always to make sure the Unison was *on* before touching a key.

16. Letter of March 4, 1928, from Louis Vierne to Ernest M. Skinner, postscript.

17. Ibid.

18. Hook & Hastings, however, in its 1927 organ for the Riverside Church, New York City, had seven "floating" divisions that could be coupled to any manual. These divisions had no "home" manual, and the additional motion required to move a coupler any time a stop was brought on drew constant criticism.

Vierne listed the couplers he wanted—tilting tablets arranged horizontally along the coupler rail above the top manual:

#### PÉDALE

Pédale Unison Off  
Grand-Orgue au Pédale 8, 4  
Positif au Pédale 8, 4  
Récit au Pédale 8, 4  
Bombarde au Pédale 8, 4  
Grand Chœur au Pédale 8, 4  
Grand-Orgue au Pédale 8, 4

#### GRAND-ORGUE

Grand-Orgue 16, Unison Off, 4  
Positif au Grand-Orgue 16, 8, 4  
Récit au Grand-Orgue 16, 8, 4  
Bombarde au Grand-Orgue 8  
Grand-Chœur au Grand-Orgue 8

#### POSITIF

Positif 16, Unison Off, 4  
Récit au Positif 16, 8, 4  
Bombarde au Positif 8  
Grand-Chœur au Positif 8

#### RÉCIT

Récit 16, Unison Off, 4

#### BOMBARDE

Bombarde 8, Unison Off, 4  
Grand-Chœur au Bombarde 8

#### GRAND-CHŒUR

Grand-Chœur Unison Off

### PISTONS

Vierne was particular that the combination system visibly move the stops and not be blind, as on the Philadelphia Wanamaker console. There were to be eight pistons on each manual, eight general pistons (under the Positif), and eight coupler pistons (under the Récit); reversible pedal pistons were to be located conveniently on the keyslip under each manual, with the 8' reversible on the left, the 4' reversible on the right. Unison couplers were to be duplicated by toe pistons, "when the hands are busy but a foot is free." Toe pistons (*champignons*) were to be divided into two rows on either side of the expression and Crescendo pedals. In addition to pistons for stops, he envisioned general pistons that would act on couplers as well.

In lieu of the American *Sforzando* or Full Organ pedal that instantaneously brought on all stops and couplers, Vierne devised a practical way of using the Crescendo Pedal to achieve Full Organ (bringing on only the stops and the 8' couplers). He augmented it with two toe pistons (Tutti 16' and Tutti 4') that added sub-octave and super-octave couplers. Because he disliked 32' tone in the manuals, he suggested that "the Grand-Orgue 16' Bourdon be excluded from the Tutti 16' and not to be affected when this Tutti is brought on so as not to have the effect of 32' in the hands." In tutti passages, Vierne preferred either 16' stops or sub-octave couplers—not both.

The Notre-Dame organ had only one 32' flue stop—a Pédale Principal—and Vierne considered the advantage of having a 32' Acoustic Bass, "really a luxury, but it would give the instrument great weight." He described the importance of the join between the last note of the Quinte and low C of the 16' Bourdon. "Everything depends on the Quinte; it must be kept rather soft. It is heard when played by itself, naturally, but when the 16' is added, it disappears completely and gives the illusion of a 32' Bourdon continuing down."



Organ case of Notre-Dame

In his ideal console Vierne forsook French organ registration practice completely. There were to be no traditional *pédales de combinaison* and apparently no division of stops between *fonds* and *anches*. The chests may have remained the same, but their control was to be strictly according to the American system—through pistons, toe studs, and Crescendo Pedal. The Grand-Orgue division was to be expressive—not just the Récit and Positif, but the three principal divisions of one of Cavaillé-Coll's greatest instruments.

By this time, Vierne and Charles Mutin were no longer on friendly terms. Mutin had retired in March 1924, and the new talent in the French organbuilding world was Victor Gonzalez, who was being encouraged by those organists of a neo-classical persuasion. Vierne considered him the foremost voicer of the time, wanted him to rebuild the organ, and initiated correspondence with him.

After Vierne wrote up his specification for the new console, he wanted many other changes, which are enumerated in two estimates written by Victor Gonzalez, the first dated May 5, 1928, the second undated. In the first reply to Vierne's requests, pneumatic machines were to be eliminated, the Grand-Orgue was to be made expressive, and it would be necessary to move the chests to the top of the organ behind the end towers of the case. To make the Positif expressive, the pipes were to be located inside the towers. The 16' Contre-basse was to be



voiced louder and to have rollers added for prompter speech. The 32' Principal-basse was to be put on a separate chest with twelve pipes added to make a 16' extension. An 8' Bourdon was to be added, which, with the 16' Sous-basse, would make a soft pedal. The removal of the pneumatic machines and the move of the Grand-Orgue would make room in the center of the organ for a new 16' Grosse Flûte. For this work Gonzalez gave an estimate of approximately 450,000 francs, about \$17,647 in 1928 (at 25½ francs to the dollar) or \$267,612 in today's currency.

In the second estimate, Gonzalez expressed strong reservations about making the Grand-Orgue and Positif expressive, so that plan was abandoned. The new console, with a 32-note pedalboard (with additional pipes added for all the stops) and electrification, was still on the table, however, and there were to be a number of changes and new additions. The Grand-Orgue Cymbale and Fourniture harmonique were to be moved to the Bombarde on an enlarged chest and replaced with a new Cymbale and Fourniture whose composition and voicing were to be modeled on the mixtures of the Grand-Orgue of Saint-Sernin de Toulouse. The Plein jeu harmonique of the Positif was to be moved to the Grand-Chœur with the chest enlarged and was to be replaced by a new Plein jeu modelled on that on the Positif at Saint-Ouen de Rouen. In addition, the Positif 1' Piccolo was to be replaced by a Nasard.

Vierne wanted a Cymbale added to the Récit and the 8' Quintaton (which he identified as a *Cor de nuit*), 4' Dulciana, and 8' Clarinette, stops that had been replaced in the 1903 renovations, returned to the division. However, with the Récit enlarged by four stops, the swell box would have to be completely rebuilt.

Three new stops were to be added to the Bombarde: 8' Trompette and 4' Clairon placed en chamade on a vertical chest and a 2' Clairon-Doublette to crown the treble of the reed chorus; one to the Grand-Chœur: 8' Flûte; and three to the Pédale: 16' Violoncelle, 8' Bourdon, and a five-rank Mixture.

Even with these tonal changes, Vierne felt he was leaving one of Cavaille-Coll's masterpieces untouched. That he succumbed to 20th-century organists' desire for clarity and brilliance is evident from his recommendation that every rank of the Grand-Orgue, Positif, and Récit be extended to 73 pipes so he would not run out of notes when using super-octave couplers.

Although Vierne's ideal console was that built by Ernest M. Skinner, whose comfort and appointments had impressed him, he envisioned customizing it with duo-toned coupler tablets, an idea borrowed from the two Wanamaker consoles, as previously noted. His interest in color-coded couplers, indicator lights, dials, and gauges is curious for an organist with one-seventh normal vision in only one eye, and his desire to have Unison Off couplers work in reverse of traditional operation was asking for trouble that surely would not have been long in coming. Furthermore, every time Vierne played on an elaborate console in America, his amanuensis, Madeleine

Richepin, made all registration changes for him, frequently with unintended results.

Until June 1930, Vierne expected Victor Gonzalez to do the work at the cathedral, and the "Agrandissement" was announced.<sup>19</sup> Unfortunately a commission was set up to expertize the rebuilding of the organ, and Charles Mutin's successor, the Société Cavallé-Coll, was given the contract. Vierne's desires were ruthlessly scaled back. In the end, after all his planning and writing, Vierne ended up with only four new stops (six ranks) and two substitutions. After the renovation, the following changes had been made:

A 16' Violoncelle and an 8' Bourdon (to balance the 16' Sous-basse) were added to the Pédale.<sup>20</sup>

An 8' Flûte was added to the Grand-Chœur.

A three-rank Cymbale was added to the Récit.

The sixteen-foot partials were removed from the Positif Plein jeu, and the 1' Piccolo was replaced by a Nasard.

The Grand-Orgue 4' Clairon was replaced with a 4' Soprano to carry up the 16' and 8' Bassons.

The manuals were rearranged in the following order: Grand-Orgue, Positif, Récit, Solo (formerly Bombarde), and Grand-Chœur.

A Tirasse Récit was added. When the Grand-Chœur manual was moved up and replaced by the Positif, its tirasse became the Positif au Pédale.

A Récit au Positif coupler was added with tubular-pneumatic action. Originally each manual coupled only to the Grand-Chœur.

Six pedal pistons were added to operate the pneumatic stop combinations, thus giving double control over them.

The swell pedal was moved to the center of the console, replacing the old two-notched *cuillère*.

The *Anches Pédale* combination pedal was pneumatically connected to the *Tutti [collectif] des anches*. It had been separated from the manual *Appel des Anches* by the five Octaves Graves.<sup>21</sup>

Vierne was defeated by the impracticality of two more expressive divisions, the action was never electrified, and he never received a new American console.

Few organists do not dream of an ideal instrument, larger and more elaborate than the one at their disposal. Louis Vierne was no exception and, with unlimited funds, would have continued to experiment with the organ for the rest of his life. Who knows what great works he might have conceived with such an instrument?

19. "Constructions et Restaurations d'Orgues," *Bulletin Trimestriel des Amis de L'Orgue* (June 1930): 3.

20. The chest and pipes were mounted on the roof of the case.

21. The Anches Tutti was between the Appel des Anches and the manual couplers, not the Octaves Graves.

## CATHEDRAL OF NOTRE-DAME DE PARIS

Compass: Manuals, 56 notes: C–g<sup>3</sup>Pédale, 30 notes: C–f<sup>1</sup>\*denotes *jeux de combinaison*

Stops in [brackets] are those altered in 1903

Stops in *italics* were added in the 1932 renovation

## PÉDALES DE COMBINAISON

## ANCHES ET TIRASSES DU PÉDALIER

Effets d'Orage [Récit]

Tirasse Grand-Chœur [Positif]

Tirasse Grand-Orgue

Anches Pédale

## ACCOUPLEMENTS D'OCTAVES GRAVES

Grand-Chœur

Grand-Orgue

Bombardes

Positif

Récit expressif

## APPEL DES JEUX DE COMBINAISON

Grand-Chœur

Grand-Orgue

Bombardes

Positif

Récit expressif

Tutti collectif

ACCOUPLEMENTS SUR LE 1<sup>er</sup> CLAVIER COLLECTIF

Grand-Chœur

Grand-Orgue

Bombardes

Positif

Récit expressif

Expression [du Récit]

Trémolo [du Récit expressif]

## REGISTRES DE COMBINAISON

Grand-Chœur

Grand-Orgue

Bombardes

Positif

Récit expressif

Pédale

Sonnette (Bellows signal)

## I. GRAND-CHŒUR

8 Principal

8 *Flûte harmonique*

8 Bourdon

4 Prestant

2 $\frac{3}{4}$  Quinte

2 Doublette

1 $\frac{3}{4}$  Tierce1 $\frac{1}{4}$  Larigot1 $\frac{1}{2}$  Septième

1 Piccolo

16 Tuba magna\*

8 Trompette\*

4 Clairon\*

## II. GRAND-ORGUE

16 Violon-basse

16 Bourdon

8 Montre

8 Flûte harmonique

8 Viole de gambe

8 Bourdon

4 Prestant

4 Octave\*

2 Doublette\*

Fourniture harmonique II–V\*

Cymbale harmonique II–V\*

16 Basson\*

8 Basson-hautbois\*

4 Clairon\* (4' *Soprano*)

## III. BOMBARDE

16 Principal-basse

16 Sous-basse

8 Principal

8 Flûte harmonique

5 $\frac{1}{2}$  Grosse Quinte

4 Octave

3 $\frac{1}{2}$  Grosse Tierce\*2 $\frac{3}{4}$  Quinte\*2 $\frac{1}{2}$  Septième\*

2 Doublette\*

Cornet II–V\*

16 Bombarde\*

8 Trompette\*

4 Clairon\*

## IV. POSITIF

16 Montre

16 Bourdon

8 Flûte harmonique

8 Bourdon

8 Salicional

8 Unda maris

4 Prestant

4 Flûte douce\*

2 Doublette\*

1 Piccolo\* (2 $\frac{3}{4}$  *Nasard*)

Plein jeu III–VI\*

16 Clarinette-basse\*

8 Cromorne\*

4 Clarinette aiguë\*

## V. RÉCIT EXPRESSIF

16 Quintaton

8 Quintaton [8' Diapason]

8 Flûte harmonique\*

8 Viole de gambe

8 Voix céleste

4 Dulciana [4' Octave]

4 Flûte octaviante\*

2 $\frac{3}{4}$  Quinte\*

2 Octavin\*

Cornet III–V\*

*Cymbale III*\*

16 Bombarde\*

8 Trompette\*

8 Basson-hautbois

8 Clarinette [Fourniture IV]

8 Voix humaine

4 Clairon\*

## PÉDALE

32 Principal-basse

16 Contre-basse

16 *Violoncelle*

16 Sous-basse

10 $\frac{3}{4}$  Grosse Quinte\*

8 Flûte

8 *Bourdon*

8 Violoncelle

6 $\frac{2}{4}$  Grosse Tierce5 $\frac{1}{2}$  Quinte\*4 $\frac{1}{2}$  Septième\*

4 Octave

32 Contre-Bombarde\*

16 Bombarde\*

16 Basson\*

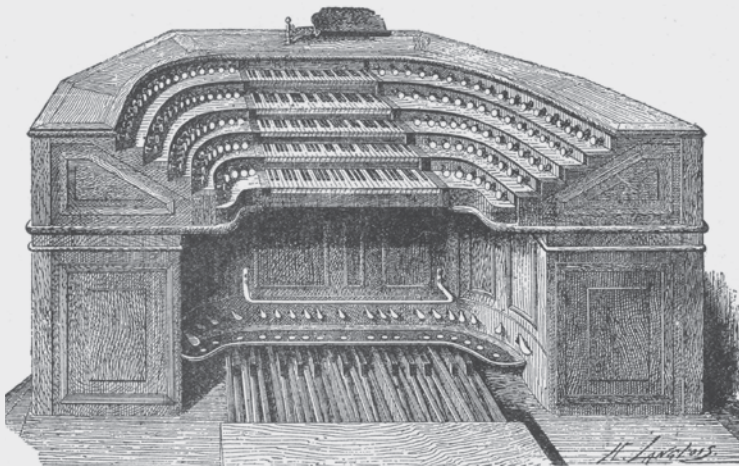
8 Trompette\*

8 Basson\*

4 Clairon\*

## SOURCE

Pierre Lamazou, "Composition des jeux, des registres et des pédales de combinaison," *Grand Orgue de l'église métropolitaine Notre-Dame de Paris reconstruit par M. A. Cavaillé-Coll* (Paris: Plon, 1868).



# Documented Pipe Organs

## *Müller & Abel of New York City, 1893–1902*

STEPHEN L. PINEL

Location	Church or Institution	STATE	Manuals	Date
<b>CALIFORNIA</b>				
San Francisco	St. Dominic's Church, R.C.		3	1898 <sup>1</sup>
<b>CONNECTICUT</b>				
Hartford	Farmington Ave. Congregational Church		3	1899 <sup>2</sup>
Manchester	South Congregational Church			1901
Southport	Trinity Church, P.E.		2	1895 <sup>3</sup>
<b>DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA</b>				
Washington	Franciscan Monastery, R.C., Brookland		1	1900 <sup>4</sup>
<b>NEW JERSEY</b>				
Bound Brook	Congregational Church		2?	1894 <sup>5</sup>
Glen Ridge	Congregational Church			1902 <sup>6</sup>
Holmdel	Holmdel Baptist Church		2	1896 <sup>7</sup>
Holmdel	Holmdel Reformed Church		2	1900 <sup>8</sup>
Jersey City	Lafayette Reformed Church, Communipaw Ave.		2	1898 <sup>9</sup>

1. "Front View of the New Organ for the Dominican Church," *San Francisco Chronicle* 67, no. 88 (Wednesday, April 13, 1898): 5; "A Big Organ for St. Dominic's," *SFC* 67, no. 86 (Monday, April 11, 1898): 14; and Louis J. Schoenstein, *Memoirs of a San Francisco Organ Builder* (San Francisco: [Cue Publications, 1977]), 261–66.

2. "New Church Organ," *The Hartford Courant* (Monday, November 20, 1899): 7; and *A Half-Century History of the Farmington Avenue Congregational Church, Organized as the Pearl Street Congregational Church in Hartford, Connecticut, 1851–1901* (Hartford: Published by the Church, 1901), 72.

3. "Trinity Organ. The Scheme for the New Instrument," *The (Southport, Conn.) Chronicle* 5, no. 13 (Thursday, February 14, 1895): 3.

4. "District of Columbia," *The (Baltimore) Sun* 128, no. 33 (Tuesday, December 25, 1900): 2; and Records of the Kinetic Engineering Co., OHS Library and Archives, Villanova, Pa.

5. "The Eick Organ Recital," *The (Plainfield, N.J.) Daily Press* (Saturday, March 17, 1894): 3.

6. "Petitions in Bankruptcy," *New York Times* (August 22, 1902): 7.

7. "New Organ," *Keyport (N.J.) Weekly* 27, no. 18 (Saturday, May 2, 1896): 2; "Church Buys Pipe Organ," *Long Branch (N.J.) Record* 18, no. 16 (Friday, April 20, 1900): 7; "Holmdel News," *Red Bank (N.J.) Register* 18, no. 45 (Wednesday, May 6, 1896): 12; "Holmdel News," *RBR* 18, no. 46 (Wednesday, May 13, 1896): 12; and Records of the Kinetic Engineering Co.

8. "A Church's New Organ," *Red Bank (N.J.) Register* 22, no. 43 (Wednesday, April 18, 1900): 1; "Holmdel's New Organ," *(Freehold, N.J.) Monmouth Democrat* 67, no. 19 (Thursday, May 10, 1900): 3; and Records of the Kinetic Engineering Co.

9. Records of the Kinetic Engineering Co.



Long Branch	St. James's Church, P.E., 300 Broadway	2	1913 <sup>10</sup>
New Brunswick	First Reformed Church	2	1898 <sup>11</sup>
New Brunswick	St. John-the-Evangelist, P.E., Church of		1897 <sup>12</sup>
Newark	St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church	2	1897 <sup>13</sup>
Princeton	Princeton College, Marquand Chapel	2	1897 <sup>14</sup>

## NEW YORK

Bronx	St. John's German Lutheran Church, Fulton Ave.		1894	Opus 77 <sup>15</sup>
Bronx	St. Augustine's Church, R.C., 167th St.	2	1902	Opus 61 <sup>16</sup>
Brooklyn	Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Marion St. near Reid Ave.	2 <sup>17</sup>		
Brooklyn	Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, Ditmas Ave. at 22nd	3	1896	Opus 14 <sup>18</sup>
Brooklyn	New Brooklyn Reformed Church, Herkimer St.	2	1902	Opus 62 <sup>19</sup>
Brooklyn	St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Washington Ave.	2	1895	Opus 7 <sup>20</sup>
Brooklyn	St. Luke's German Evangelical Lutheran Church	2	1895 <sup>21</sup>	
Brooklyn	St. Paul's Church, R.C., Court and Congress Sts.	3	1897 <sup>22</sup>	
Brooklyn	Zion German Lutheran Church, 132 Henry St.	3	1901	Opus 56 <sup>23</sup>
College Point	St. Fidelis's Church, German, R.C., 14th Ave.	2	1895 <sup>24</sup>	
Katonah	Methodist Episcopal Church	2	1900	Opus 45 <sup>25</sup>
New York	Ascension, R.C., Church of the, 107th St.	3	1898	Opus 36 <sup>26</sup>
New York	Beloved Disciple, Church of the, East 89th St.	2	1901 <sup>27</sup>	

10. Likely second-hand at this location; see "New Pipe Organ Recital Tonight," *Long Branch (N.J.) Daily Record* 12, no. 47 (Thursday, February 27, 1913): 6; and Records of the Kinetic Engineering Co.

11. "Another New Organ. It is to be Built in the First Reformed Church," (*New Brunswick*) *Daily Times* 48, no. 584 (Tuesday, May 25, 1897): 8; "Muller & Abel Gets the Contract," *DT* 48, no. 586 (Thursday, May 27, 1897): 4; "To Prepare for the New Organ," *DT* 48, no. 647 (Monday, August 9, 1897): 5; "Organ Recital [Ad]," *DT* 48, no. 711 (Tuesday, October 26, 1897): 4; "Organ Recital Tonight," *DT* 48, no. 718 (Thursday, October 28, 1897): 4; Records of the Kinetic Engineering Co.; and J. David Muyskens, *"The Town Clock Church": History of the First Reformed Church, New Brunswick, N.J.* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Published by the Consistory, 1991), 63–64.

12. "St. John's New Organ," (*New Brunswick, N.J.*) *Daily Times* 48, no. 512 (Monday, April 5, 1897): 5; "New Organ Used Tomorrow," *DT* 48, no. 522 (Saturday, April 17, 1897): 8; and "A Grand Organ," *DT* 48, no. 563 (Friday, April 30, 1897): 1.

13. Records of the Louis F. Mohr Co.

14. "The condition of the Chapel organ....," *The Daily Princetonian* 21, no. 173 (Wednesday, March 24, 1897): 3; "A New Organ for Marquand Chapel," *The Alumni Princetonian* 4, no. 5 (Thursday, April 29, 1897): 2; "The instrument is a Two Manual....," *Princeton Press* (Saturday, August 7, 1897): 2; and Stephen L. Pinel, *Old Organs of Princeton: Being an Historical Chronology and Description of all the known Pipe Organs Installed in the Town of Princeton, New Jersey, from 1760 to 1925, including Photographs and Stoplists when available, as well as Accounts from Newspapers, Church Records, Histories, and Diaries* (Harrisville, New Hampshire: The Boston Organ Club Chapter of the Organ Historical Society, 1989), 40–45, 92–95.

15. Records of the Kinetic Engineering Co., and Records of the Louis F. Mohr Co.

16. Records of the Kinetic Engineering Co.

17. Records of the Kinetic Engineering Co.

18. Berry, "Muller and Abel, 3.

19. Letter from the Rev. Daniel James Meeter, March 22, 1990; and Chester H. Berry, "Müller and Abel: Successors to the Roosevelt Tradition," *The Tracker* 14, no. 2 (Winter 1970): 4–5.

20. Chester H. Berry, "Müller and Abel: Successors to the Roosevelt Tradition," *The Tracker* 14, no. 2 (Winter 1970): 3.

21. "Building a Fine Organ for St. Luke's German Evangelical Church," *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle* 55, no. 40 (Sunday, February 10, 1895): 5.

22. "City Church Improvements," *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle* 56, no. 248 (Sunday, September 6, 1896): 5; and "Catholic Church News," *BDE* 57, no. 9 (Sunday, January 10, 1897): 17.

23. "An Organ Dedication," *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle* 61, no. 276 (Saturday, October 5, 1901): 20; "Sacred Concert and Recital," *BDE* (Thursday, October 25, 1901): 3; "Zion Church Concert," *BDE* 61, no. 298 (Sunday, October 27, 1901): 26; "Organ Recital at Zion Church," *BDE* 61, no. 309 (Thursday, November 7, 1901): 8; Heinrich Arend Kropp, *Hundert Jahre Deutsche Evangelisch-Lutherische Zions-Gemeinde in Brooklyn in Wort und Bild* (Brooklyn Heights, New York: [F. Brendecke,] 1955), 108–109; and Chester H. Berry, "Müller and Abel: Successors to the Roosevelt Tradition," *The Tracker* 14, no. 2 (Winter 1970): 3–4.

24. "Artistic Organ Building," *The Irish World and American Industrial Liberator* 25, no. 1,304 (Saturday, August 24, 1895): 8.

25. "Dedication of the New Methodist Episcopal Church," *The Katonah (N.Y.) Times* 21, no. 48 (Friday, March 30, 1900): 5.

26. Chester H. Berry, "Müller and Abel: Successors to the Roosevelt Tradition," *The Tracker* 14, no. 2 (Winter 1970): 18.

27. Records of the Kinetic Engineering Co.




Müller & Abel, Op. 36 (1898) in Ascension R.C. Church, New York City



Müller & Abel, Op. 23 (1898) in the Twelfth Church of Christ, Scientist, New York City



Müller & Abel, Op. 62 (1902) in the New Brooklyn Reformed Church, Brooklyn, N.Y.



O. Müller.      G. Abel.

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"O. Müller / G. Abel," The Luther League Review 13, no. 2 (February 1900): 2.

New York	Epiphany, P.E., Church of the, 2nd Ave.	2	1894 <sup>28</sup>	
New York	Reformed Church, East 68th St.	2	1897	Opus 34 <sup>29</sup>
New York	Holy Name, R.C., Church of the, Amsterdam Ave.	2	1900 <sup>30</sup>	
New York	St. Joachim's Church, R.C., 26 Roosevelt St.	2	1902	
New York	St. Joseph's Church, R.C., East 87th St.	2	1895	Opus 9 <sup>31</sup>
New York	St. Mark's Lutheran Church, 323 East 6th St.	2	1893	Opus 1 <sup>32</sup>
New York	St. Vincent de Paul, R.C., 123 West 23rd St.	3	1896 <sup>33</sup>	
New York	Twelfth Church of Christ, Scientist, 147 West 123rd St.	2	1898	Opus 23 <sup>34</sup>
Northport, L.I.	First Presbyterian Church	2	1902	
Riverdale	First Presbyterian Church	2	1902	

## PENNSYLVANIA

Ashley	St. Leo's Church, R.C.	2	1898 <sup>35</sup>	
Carbondale	St. Rose of Lima Church, R.C.	2	1900 <sup>36</sup>	
Pittston	St. John's Church, R.C.	3	1899 <sup>37</sup>	
Wilkes-Barre	St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception, R.C., Church of	3	1901 <sup>38</sup>	
Wilkes-Barre	St. Nicholas's Church, German, R.C.	3	1900 <sup>39</sup>	
Williamsport	St. Bonifacius' Church, German, R.C.	2	1896 <sup>40</sup>	

## MÜLLER &amp; ABEL SUSPECTS

## NEW YORK

Mount Vernon	St. Paul's United Lutheran Church <sup>41</sup>			
New York	St. Agnes's Church, R.C., 43rd St.	2?	1898 <sup>42</sup>	
Yonkers	St. Andrew's Memorial Church, P.E.	2?	1900 <sup>43</sup>	

28. Records of the Kinetic Engineering Co.

29. Records of the Kinetic Engineering Co.; and Chester H. Berry, "Müller and Abel: Successors to the Roosevelt Tradition," *The Tracker* 14, no. 2 (Winter 1970): 18.

30. Records of the Kinetic Engineering Co.

31. "Artistic Organ Building," *The Irish World and American Industrial Liberator* 25, no. 1,304 (Saturday, August 24, 1895): 8; "St. Joseph's New Organ," *The New York Herald* No. 12,650 (Sunday, December 1, 1895): 8; and Chester H. Berry, "Müller and Abel: Successors to the Roosevelt Tradition," *The Tracker* 14, no. 2 (Winter 1970): 14.

32. Records of the Kinetic Engineering Co.; and Chester H. Berry, "Müller and Abel: Successors to the Roosevelt Tradition," *The Tracker* 14, no. 2 (Winter 1970): 18.

33. "A Magnificent New Organ. The Church of St. Vincent de Paul's Acquisition," *New-York Tribune* (Monday, November 2, 1896): 5.

34. Chester H. Berry, "Müller and Abel: Successors to the Roosevelt Tradition," *The Tracker* 14, no. 2 (Winter 1970): 3.

35. Henry C. Johnson, "Pennsylvania's Wyoming Valley," *The Tracker* 17, no. 3 (Spring 1973): 11; and Records of the Kinetic Engineering Co.

36. "A Fine Organ," *Carbondale (Pa.) Leader* 29 (Saturday, October 20, 1900): 5; and Records of the Kinetic Engineering Co.

37. "Pittston," *Wilkes-Barre (Pa.) Times* (Tuesday, December 12, 1899): 7; and "St. John's Church, Pittston," *WBT* (Friday, December 22, 1899): 5.

38. Letter from Mark Ignatovich, Organist at St. Mary's, July 17, 1997; "St. Mary's Choir Concerts," *Wilkes-Barre (Pa.) Times* (Wednesday, May 15, 1901): 5; "New Organ Here," *WBT* (Monday, November 11, 1901): 6; "The Great Instrument at St. Mary's, an Organ Triumph," *WBT* (Monday, January 27, 1902): 2; "This Evening's Recital," *WBT* (Tuesday, January 29, 1902): 5; and "Masters Touch on Superb Organ," *WBT* (Thursday, January 30, 1902): 5.

39. "A Large New Organ. Being Placed in St. Nicholas German Catholic church," *Wilkes-Barre (Pa.) Times* (Wednesday, April 4, 1900): 8; "A Handsome New Organ," *WBT* 13, no. 403 (Saturday, August 4, 1900): 5; and "St. Nicholas New Organ. Heard to Good Advantage at the Recital Last Evening," *WBT* (Wednesday, September 12, 1900): 8; and Henry C. Johnson, "Pennsylvania's Wyoming Valley," *The Tracker* 17, no. 3 (Spring 1973): 10.

40. Original dedication program [includes the stoplist], July 21, 1896.

41. Frederick R. Webber, "The Webber Correspondence—II," *The Tracker* 26, no. 3 (Spring 1973): 11.

42. "St. Agnes's Church Fire," *New York Times* (Monday, December 5, 1898): 12.

43. Frederick R. Webber, "The Webber Correspondence—II," *The Tracker* 26, no. 3 (Spring 1973): 13.



# In THE TRACKER

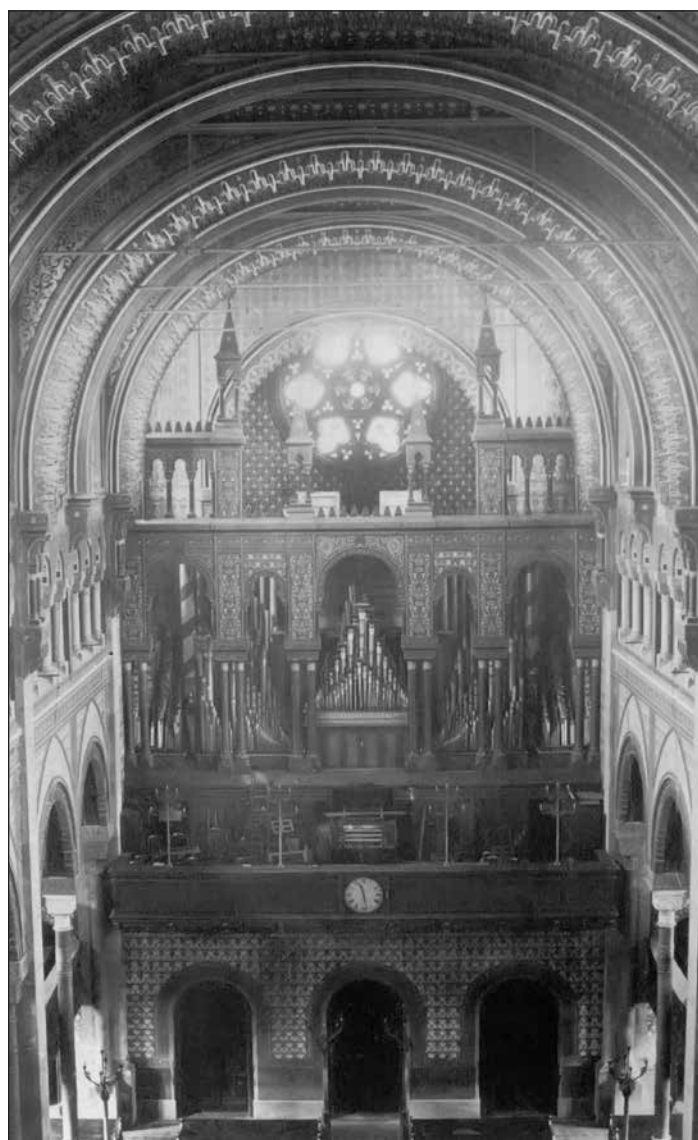
## *50 Years Ago*

SCOT L. HUNTINGTON

Back issues of THE TRACKER are searchable at  
<http://TheTracker.OrganHistoricalSociety.org>

VOLUME 15, NO. 1, FALL 1970

WE PAUSE TO REMEMBER the passing of Peter Cameron on April 27, one of the Organ Historical Society's most avid researchers into the history of New York City builders and the world's authority on the Jardine company, past editor of this journal, organbuilder, Distinguished Service Award recipient, and gentleman. It is timely that the cover article in this issue was Cameron's landmark study of the recently discovered business records of Hall, Labagh & Co., a firm that was Henry Erben's chief competition at the time and involved his brother-in-law, former mentor/teacher, and former business partner. This was installment two in a six-part series, the longest in TRACKER history, and covered the ledger entries for 1868–1873, arguably the period of the firm's most illustrious projects. Its signature work in this period was the four-manual, 64-stop concert organ for New York's Temple Emanu-El in 1868, one of the landmark structures of the renowned architect Leopold Eidlitz. The Organ had 25 ranks of mixture work, including a five-rank Mixture in the eleven-stop Pedal division (which also contained a 32' Open Diapason and a 32' Bombarde, the first 32' reed in an American church organ), 17 ranks of reeds (including a Tuba chorus), Crescendo Pedal, fistfuls of eight-foot tone (but, for reasons to be discussed in another essay, no celeste, even though that stop had been introduced



*Hall, Labagh & Co., Temple Emanu-El, New York City*

in the United States by Jardine more than a decade earlier), and most astonishing of all, an exposed and decorated “form follows function” of the organ’s unenclosed pipework, beating George Jardine’s spectacular circus-pole organ at Saint George’s, Stuyvesant Square, by one year. The \$23,000 cost of this organ was astronomical by the standards of the day, when a normal-sized organ cost under \$5,000.

The account ledger records evidence of mundane activities that kept a medium-sized shop busy. This company was building organs at a rate of two or three per year (unlike the 35 organs the Hooks built in 1868), and repairs or modifications were part of the firm’s bread and butter. New York’s Trinity Church was a regular client of Hall, Labagh & Co. after it was done with Henry Erben, beginning in 1853, when the firm started making modifications to the Erben organ. During the next decade, the company was in charge of the organs there as well as the corporation’s chapels of St. Paul’s and St. John’s.

Cameron's research into this treasure trove remains the standard on this subject to date.

Robert Rowland of Ossining, N.Y., was well into his fourth decade in organbuilding when he shared a series of letters about his experience with antique organs in central New York State. He began his career with Clarence Morey in Utica in the 1920s (the last of the great builders to work in this city with a century of organbuilding history). When Morey went exclusively to electric action, he allowed Rowland to share part of his shop in the 1930s on the condition that Rowland would build only tracker-action instruments that would not compete with Morey's. Rowland built his last new organ in 1979 and trained Sidney Chase, an organbuilder still active in Worcester, N.Y., who carries on his legacy.

Robert Coleberd Jr., another avid researcher and organbuilding economist, described the 1891 two-manual organ built by Philipp Wirsching for the Railroad Chapel in Chicago, which the famous organist and composer Wilhelm Middelshulte called the finest organ on the South Side. There is tragically little left of Wirsching's innovative work. German technical and tonal innovations enjoyed a brief renaissance in the late 1880s and early 1890s through the work of Roosevelt and Hook & Hastings in the East, and Schuelke, Wirsching, and Pfeffer in the Midwest. Wirsching's organs were distinguished by high quality and excellent voicing, and being German trained, he was an advocate of vented cone chests (*kegellade*) and early embraced tubular action. The II/30-rank Railroad Chapel organ was based on a 16' Diapason and had a mixture and trumpet on each manual.

Donald Paterson's series on Watkins Glen, N.Y. (at the southern tip of Seneca, the longest of the legendary Finger Lakes) and its hometown organbuilder William King continued, with part two. Paterson's work on King was sponsored by Cornell University, where Paterson held the post of university organist with distinction. To this day, Paterson's work remains the seminal research on the subject. Once an apprentice of Erben, King traveled to Elmira to install an organ for the company, was beguiled by the natural beauty of New York's southern tier, (following the southern border with Pennsylvania from Binghamton to Jamestown and the vein of Marcellus shale now locked in hydrofracking controversy), and saw a golden business opportunity in its numerous sizable cities and several railroad lines connecting them. King's instruments were well built and tonally quite fine in a classical vein without the excesses of the Gilded Age, but he was content to be a regional builder serving western New York and the adjoining regions of central Pennsylvania. Sadly, here too, little remains of a distinguished career.

Notice was made of a II/10 Felgemaker of 1888 that was completely unrecognizable after about 200 of its pipes were incorporated into a new Baroque organ. The organ exists in this form today, and while little remains except the name-

plate, the church treasures its historic organ. The II/33 Flentrop built for the historic 1844 meetinghouse of the UCC church in Branford, Conn., was listed in the "New Tracker Organ" column. It replaced E. & G.G. Hook No. 492 (1869), repaired and enlarged in 1906 and ruined in 1938 by Hall Organ Co. of New Haven. The new organ made quite the splash in its day in spite of the dry acoustics. The organ was renovated by Flentrop in 2004.

In its 15th year of operation, the OHS was developing some financial security: total assets were \$12,124. The Extant Organs Committee had circulated extensive lists for four states to local members for cross-checking, early seeds of the present OHS Database.

A 50-year look back is particularly poignant in these days of pandemic uncertainty. The 1960s had their kinds of disquiet, with race riots, political unrest over the Vietnam War, and high inflation, but our corner of the world was still thriving: churches were well attended, and issues of *The Diapason* showed that organ shops were busy. Several firms had backlogs of two years or more, although 1970 was the last year of the September "Annual Two Manual Issue" because builders were seeing a reduction in the number of orders for large organ and an increase in the number of two-manual instruments. A family could still make a living from a small farm and the smallest rural communities were still able to support a general store, a post office, and a church or two, many of which were preserving the organs the OHS held most dear. In TRACKER editorials, column features, council minutes, and letters, there is a confidence and optimism that was the afterglow of a post-WWII political realignment and a powerful U.S. economic engine.

The intervening 50 years have seen the demise of a sustainable small farm, the outsourcing of American manufacturing jobs, and the erosion of many small-town economies. Mainstream church attendance has declined for years, and many churches, both large and small, have closed over the past two decades, leaving more orphaned organs than anyone knows what to do with. Just as the economy and the organbuilding business in particular were getting back on their feet after the 2008 collapse, a virus appeared that put a lid on life as we knew it, and when the pandemic is over, we will not be the same. Churches are under enormous strain as they conduct business electronically, with congregations disrupted and income reduced by forced inactivity. This is especially worrisome for rural or inner-city parishes that were just trying to maintain the status quo and often were protecting the 19th-century instruments we have cherished for so long. My own church is struggling, and its cloudy future and the fate of my beloved 1870 Hook No. 558 keep me awake at night—the suddenly real thought of it disappearing from my life is incomprehensible. The work of the OHS has never been more important in its history than it is now.

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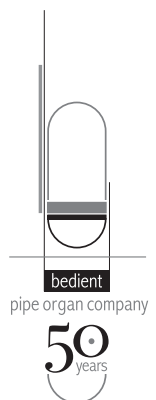
THE smell of burning tapers, whisperings of prayer, songs of triumphant hope. Thus were inspired those oratorios, masses and motets that brought late fame to Cesar Franck — But to the cloistered organist of Sainte Clotilde the world itself was not forgotten. In many of his most inspired compositions one still breathes the lusty air of mountain top and sea — Such is the breadth of musical thought—an appreciation of which has produced in the Pilcher Organ an instrument capable of complete and diversified expression.

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**C**AROLYN FIX died at her home in Vienna, Va., on May 20, 2020, at age 97. Carolyn Elizabeth Fix was born on November 28, 1922, in Utica, N.Y., and grew up in New Hartford, N.Y. After high school, she studied Italian, German, newspaper printing, and wood working under the New Deal's National Youth Administration. Excelling in machine work, she was one of the first four women hired at Savage Arms Company. At age 20, she enlisted in the new Women's Army Corps of the U.S. Army and served until she was discharged as a staff sergeant on June 30, 1948.

Fix used her GI bill benefits to earn a BS in biology from Utica College and an MS in geology from Syracuse University. In 1953, she was hired as a geologist by the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) in Denver and later studied on a Fulbright Scholarship at the University of Queensland in Brisbane, Australia.

In 1963, Fix left the U.S. Geological Survey and transitioned to the science publications field, where she was a science magazine/book editor and an editor-indexer with the American Geological Institute. Before retirement, she was the first woman public health inspector in Fairfax County.

Carolyn Fix was a woman of abundant curiosity, a Renaissance woman: scientist and writer, talented amateur singer, photographer, model maker, and wood worker. A long-time member of the Northern Virginia chapter of the WAC Veteran's Association, she was also a member of American Legion Post 180 in Vienna, the Women in Military Service for America (WIMSA) Foundation, which supports the memorial located at Arlington National Cemetery, and the OHS.

**C**HARLES RUSSELL KRIGBAUM died on April 30, 2020, of complications from COVID-19. He was 91. He tested positive for the disease on April 10 and was admitted to the Beverly (Mass.) Hospital, only to be released later, having apparently recovered. He received his BA (1950) and MFA (1952) degrees from Princeton University, where he studied organ with Carl



Weinrich. Upon graduation, he received a Fulbright grant to study at the Hochschule für Musik and at the Goethe University in Frankfurt, Germany, 1956–1958, his teachers being Helmut Walcha and André Marchal.

Joining the Yale faculty in 1958, he became a persuasive advocate for the Newberry Memorial Organ in Woolsey Hall (Hutchings, 1903; Steere, 1915; Skinner, 1928), recording the major works of Widor and Messiaen. A spectacular unedited recording of Krigbaum's live performance at the 1974 OHS convention was released as a two-disc LP set *An Evening at Woolsey Hall*. A best-selling recording, it was reissued on compact disc by the OHS in 1995.

In 1971, Krigbaum collaborated with Rudolf von Beckerath on the design of the Bozyan Memorial Organ in Dwight Chapel, on which he recorded Bach's *Art of Fugue*. In 2007, a new three-manual Taylor & Boody in the gallery of Marquand Chapel at Yale Divinity School, commissioned by the Yale Institute of Sacred Music, was inaugurated and named the Krigbaum Organ in his honor.

Charles Krigbaum retired from Yale in 1995 after 37 years. He is survived by his daughters Ruth Rich and Mary Krigbaum, his son, John, and four grandchildren.

**H**AMPSON SISLER, MD, an ophthalmic surgeon, organist, and composer, passed away on May 25, 2020, at the age of 88. Born in 1932, Sisler began playing in church when he

was eleven, and at the age of 16 was the youngest person to earn the American Guild of Organists' Fellowship certificate. As an organ recitalist, he performed at venues in and around New York City, including the Cathedral of St. John the Divine and St. Patrick's Cathedral. Dr. Sisler was a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons.

Sisler was named "one of the significant composers of contemporary America" by the British journal, *The Organ*. His first works were published at age 19 by H.W. Gray; later works were published by Jos. Fischer & Co., Belwin Mills, E.P. Adams, World Library of Sacred Music, Laurendale Associates, and MorningStar. He had more than 100 works to his credit, including pieces for organ, voice, choir, concert band, and chamber and symphony orchestra. His works have been premiered and recorded by leading orchestras in the United States, as well as in Argentina, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hong Kong, Israel, the Philippines, Portugal, Russia, and the Ukraine, under the direction of conductors who have included Linus Lerner, Kirk Trevor, Marlon Daniel, Arkady Leytush, and Samuel Wong.

Dr. Sisler was predeceased by his spouse, Gene Iacovetta, in 2019. Survivors include a nephew, Thomas Sisler, two nieces, Carrie Kozikowski and Nancy Westphal, and a cousin, William Nodine.



## Identify, Preserve, and Restore the OHS Hilbus Organ

ON WEDNESDAY, JUNE 27, 1956, a group of ten persons attending the 23rd national convention of the American Guild of Organists in New York City met in the choir room of Saint Bartholomew's Church. Barbara Owen suggested a meeting of persons interested in early American organs, and Kenneth Simmons agreed to moderate the meeting. Those present were Horace Douglas, Dorothy Ballinger, Robert Clawson, Albert Robinson, Barbara Owen, Donald R.M. Paterson, Kenneth Simmons, Charlene Simmons, Homer Blanchard, and Randall Wagner. Minutes of the meeting were recorded in the first issue of *THE TRACKER* (the unofficial newsletter of the unofficial Organ Historical Society). The purposes for which the gathering was called were three-fold: "To determine if there were enough persons interested to establish an organization of any kind. To see if a central file could be kept of information concerning old organs that are to be sold or scrapped, in order to prevent these examples of early American organbuilding from being lost or destroyed. To possibly to work out a newsletter or publication whereby notes of interest to this group and other data could be mutually exchanged."<sup>1</sup>

Of special interest is the second purpose—an act that has saved innumerable historic American pipe or-

gans since the organization's founding in 1956, and one that continues today. In 1973, George S. Pitts of New Castle Island, N.H., donated a small cabinet organ to Strawberry Banke Museum, Portsmouth, N.H., where the instrument remained in storage until December 2017, when the museum deaccessioned the organ and donated it to the Organ Historical Society.<sup>2</sup> Since that time, it has been in the Society's environmentally stable warehouse in Warminster, Pa., awaiting restoration.

Fortunately, funds have now been pledged for the restoration of this rare instrument, one of only three known extant organs built by Jacob Hilbus (1787–1858). At the age of 21, he emigrated from Westphalia, Germany, to Alexandria, Va., then part of Washington, D.C.,<sup>3</sup> where, he established himself as one who "will repair and tune organs, piano fortes, violins, &c."<sup>4</sup> Two years later, he relocated to G Street, near the Treasury in Washington, and described himself as an organbuilder.<sup>5</sup> When Hilbus hung out his shin-

gle, Washington was at best a provincial capital with little to offer in music and the arts, although there was a small but growing market for pianos and organs. Upon his arrival in Alexandria, he immediately faced competition, as Joseph Billings had set up shop in 1803,<sup>6</sup> and John Sellers in 1804.<sup>7</sup> But during those early years, Hilbus was better known as a piano tuner, a practice that he continued until near his death in 1858. For more than 30 years, he was the favored piano tuner for the White House, from the administrations of James Monroe to that of Franklin Pierce.<sup>8</sup> In 1855, Hilbus was honored for his tuning prowess by John Esputa,<sup>9</sup> who composed *The Tuners Polka* dedicated "to the veteran tuner of Washington, D.C." Hilbus's portrait on the front cover of the sheet music shows him as an uncommonly unattractive man.

Perhaps his reputation as a good piano tuner provided an opportunity to build and sell organs, the first of which was for Christ Church, Alexandria, between 1811 and 1814. During this time, he took on a partner, Henry Howison,

2. "Deaccession and Disposal Record," Strawberry Banke Museum, December 18, 2017. Organ Historical Society Library and Archives. Villanova, Pa.

3. Pierce Gaul and Barbara J. Owen, "A Hilbus Chronology." Organ Historical Library and Archives, Villanova, Pa.

4. *Alexandria Daily Gazette* (April 6, 1810).

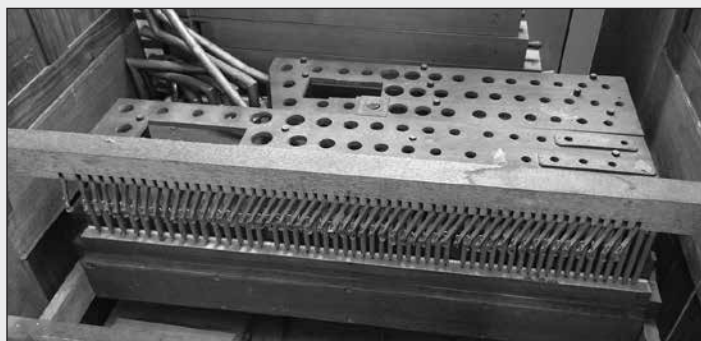
5. *Daily National Intelligencer* (September 24, 1812).

6. *Alexandria Daily Advertiser* (June 24, 1803).

7. *Alexandria Expositor* (May 25, 1804).

8. Elise K. Kirk, *Music at the White House: A History of the American Spirit* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986), 72.

9. John Esputa is better known as an early teacher of John Philip Sousa. See *Handbook, 1914* (Lake Placid, N.Y.: Lake Placid Club, 1914), 894.



OHS Hilbus Windchest



OHS Hilbus backfalls and stickers



*Hilbus organ in Saint John's Church, Broad Creek*



*Hilbus organ from Christ Church, Alexandria, Va., now in the Smithsonian Institution*



*Jacob Hilbus*

a cabinet maker.<sup>10</sup> The Christ Church organ was restored by C.B. Fisk, Inc. in 1967 and is in the musical instrument collection at the Smithsonian. Similarities between this organ and the OHS Hilbus include cabinet construction of walnut and walnut veneer, windchest construction of walnut, and stopped pipes of eastern white pine.

The second known extant organ built by Hilbus is found at Saint John's Church, Broad Creek, located south of Washington near where Broad Creek meets the Potomac River. Donated to Saint Paul's, Rock Creek Parish, Washington, by Elizabeth Stone in 1890, the one-manual instrument was used for the church's Sunday school until 1928, when it was given to Saint John's Church, Broad Creek. The wooden wind trunk is inscribed by "Jacob Hilbus, 1819."<sup>11</sup>

Presently, little is known about the background of the OHS Hilbus,

but Pitts family oral history suggests that the organ was built for a ship captain and placed on a merchant marine vessel that regularly traveled from the Washington-Baltimore area to New England,<sup>12</sup> which may account for the significant amount of damage to the organ's metal pipes (rough seas). Finding aids for the Frost Family Papers, housed in the Portsmouth Athenæum, show considerable correspondence between Thomas Bell Frost and John Pitts.<sup>13</sup> Thomas Frost was the captain of the *Sally*, a ship that sailed along the Atlantic coast.<sup>14</sup> Further study may reveal a familial relationship between the Frost and Pitts families.

Once restored, the little organ will be placed in the second-floor stair hall of Stoneleigh, headquarters of the Organ Historical Society.

12. Conversation with Elizabeth Farrish, Chief Curator, Strawberry Banke Museum, July 12, 2017.

13. Portsmouth Athenæum, "Frost Family Papers, ca. 1660–1992, MS 034," <https://portsmouthathenaeum.org/frost-family-34/> (accessed July 14, 2020).

14. Greg H. Williams, *The French Assault on America's Shipping, 1793–1813: A History and Comprehensive Record of Merchant Marine Losses* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland & Co., 2009), 315.

10. John Fesperman, "Six Important Organs in the Smithsonian Collection," *The Diapason* 86, no. 4 (April 1995): 14.

11. "St. John's Church Broad Creek," *Organ Historical Society, Inc. Ninth Annual National Convention: Washington-Virginia Area, June 30–July 3, 1964: Headquarters at Truro Episcopal Church, Fairfax, Va.* (York, Pa.: Organ Historical Society, 1964).

## THE HILBUS ORGAN

Keyboard: 54-notes, C–f<sup>3</sup>

Windchest: 53 notes, C–f<sup>3</sup> with short bottom octave (no C<sup>#</sup>)

[8'] Open Diapason  
1–24 stopped wood of eastern white pine, remainder metal

[4'] Principal  
1–13 stopped wood of eastern white pine, remainder metal

Walnut case measuring 30<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>" deep x 44<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>" wide x 55<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>" high

Hinged keyboard that folds out of sight into organ case

Swell pedal, lifting the hinged lid of the organ case

Bellows pump lever

Slider stop-action controlled by rocking foot levers

Walnut wind chest measuring 16" deep x 38" wide x 7" high



## CDS

**Versus. The Garnier Organ, Elgar Concert Hall, University of Birmingham; Henry Fairs, organist; Regent Records REGCD516.** After a long dry spell, receiving this CD for review was welcome. Despite predictions that the CD format is doomed to extinction, I suspect it may hang on, at least for organ recordings. There is just so much more to be enjoyed in these productions than a mere listen. We want to know the pieces, the composers, the performers, and, yes, the instruments. There is no more elegant way to provide this knowledge than a beautifully designed booklet to nestle in the jewel case with the CD. Regent's issue 516 is a case in point, even if its title has a couple of mysteries to be explained. The producers are to be complimented for also including the registrations heard on the disc, still another benefit of the CD format.

The first mystery of the title, *Versus*, simply refers to a new work of that name by Austrian composer Franz Danksagmüller, commissioned for the opening of the organs featured on this disc. It is five verses on the chorale "Erbarm dich mein, o Herre Gott."

Two new organs are featured—separate instruments but close together (I think), and entirely different in purpose and scope. Danksagmüller's work features the smaller instrument, which is tuned in meantone and features a short bottom octave. The stops are divided into bass and descant and the division point is movable by a lever, but we are not told how far the division can be moved. One assumes that it is at least from  $b / c^1$  to  $c^1 / c^\sharp$ , if not farther. The notes on the music point out that the decidedly modern writing exploits the qualities of Meantone. For myself I heard this only in the ending notes, but perhaps my ear is not as well tuned as it might be. The "small organ" is heard only in this piece.

The word "Garnier" in the title will be self-explanatory to those who know the work of organbuilder Marc Garnier. I enjoyed reviewing a CD of Bach works performed by Masaaki Suzuki on Garnier's splendid instrument in the French Classic style for the Shoin Chapel, Kobe, Japan.

Garnier described the new organ for Elgar Hall as a compromise between "the rich plenum of northern Germany and those of Central Germany," with some elements of late Baroque and early Romantic styles. It is a three-manual instrument of *huit pieds*. Despite the lack of a 16' Principal, it has *Gravität* to spare, due especially to a solid 16' Trompette on the Hauptwerk. Indeed there was possibly a bit more of this quality than I really needed in some of the registrations. In the Schumann *Sketches* for pedal piano, even though they were not muddy, I felt the thick 16' registrations somehow too much.

The CD's program of music is well suited to bring out the capabilities of this fascinating instrument. Bach's Toccata, Adagio, and Fugue in C Major, BWV 564, and the Praeludium in C Major, BWV 566a, begin and end the recording. In between are Bruhns's "Nun komm, der heiden Heiland," the aforementioned *Versus*, *Via crucis* by Norwegian composer Jon Laukvik, and Schumann's *Four Sketches* for pedal piano. Both Bach works are played with great verve. The Bruhns is elegantly and lovingly played, his luscious harmonic language enhanced by the sweet voicing of the softer stops.

Marc Garnier founded his firm in 1972, and it is being carried on by his sons, Boris, Ivo, and Matthieu. The sounds on this CD indicate that they are doing a fine job of continuing the excellence their father is known for. You should have this CD in your collection. It beautifully documents an important stream of organbuilding style in our time.

**Timothy Parsons plays the organ of Exeter Cathedral, The English Cathedral Series Vol. XX; CD, Regent Records REGCD523.** If you are a fan of English cathedral organs, you'll be delighted with this, the twentieth in Regent Records' *English Cathedral Series*. If you don't know whether you're a fan, listen to this CD and you will become one for sure.

The present organ at Exeter begins with John Loosemore's instrument of 1665, the largest immediate post-Restoration English organ. The main thing still surviving of this instrument is the striking case. Is it extremely beautiful, or is it frightening? It is well proportioned to its location, although it has been raised higher than its original position. But the eerie thing is that one can imagine it as a ghostly face framed by long white hair at the sides, a white mustache curving round the nose, a white beard below, and two cadaverous, blind eyes.

In 1891, Henry Willis fitted essentially a new organ in the Loosemore case. The smaller choir case on the nave side of the organ is original.

On the somewhat similar east face Willis provided a similar choir case to house his Solo division. His version of the organ is undoubtedly a strong basis of its tonal architecture to this day, but Harrison & Harrison made alterations and mechanical improvements in 1933. In 1965 renovations, a fiery Trompette was added to a division located in a minstrels' gallery on the north wall of the nave. The stoplist of this division suggests that it was added to support congregational singing in the nave distant from the main organ. The most recent changes were completed in 2013, comprising some rearranging in the main case to improve tonal egress and facilitate tuning access. When I read about the alterations organs like this have undergone through the ages I'm reminded of a quote from Barbara Owen:

“Sometimes you just have to make a good organ out of it!”

The opening sounds of the Mendelssohn Sonata No. 3 in A proclaim that indeed a good organ has been made of it. A brilliant blare of reeds completely melded into an ensemble of Diapasons and Mixtures sends chills of pleasure down one’s spine. And from here on we are in for a delightful experience. Young organist Timothy Parsons sees it as his duty to show us all the sonic treasures this organ contains. He is not afraid to orchestrate. Some may play this Mendelssohn on a single registration; he is constantly making adjustments that heighten the excitement of this work.

The play-list goes on to a voluntary by Matthew Locke and a *Larghetto* by Samuel Sebastian Wesley; both composers were once organists at Exeter. Vierne’s *Carillon de Westminster* gives us a French piece no Englishman can resist. Parsons’s organ teacher, Mark Blatchly, wrote a lyrical *Andante Sostenuto* for TJYP, Parsons’s initials providing the melodic motif. Another British crowd pleaser is Elgar’s *Imperial March*, Op. 32. Yet another work with an Exeter connection is American composer Nico Muhly’s *The Revd Mustard His Installation Prelude*, written originally when his friend James Mustard became minister of East Barnet in London, but played again when he was installed as canon precentor of Exeter Cathedral.

The program is rounded out by four chorale preludes from Brahms’s Opus 122, *Joie et clarté des corps glorieux* of Messaien, and Duruflé’s *Prélude at Fugue sur le nom d’Alain*.

You will note that there’s no Bach. I’m sure he can be wonderful on this organ, but we have myriad recordings of Bach on every kind of organ imaginable.

Yes, get this CD. It includes a couple of delightful compositional débuts,

and the organ is wonderful, beautifully recorded, and played with intense musical engagement.

**Saint Louis Premieres, The Saint Louis Chamber Choir, Philip Barnes, director, Regent CD REGCD541.** Founded in 1956 by Ronald Arnatt, the Saint Louis Chamber Choir has had only one other director, Philip Barnes. Both directors are from Great Britain, so the ensemble of 40 or so voices has an affinity for English choral music, but it also makes contemporary music a key component of its repertoire. A “composer-in-residence” program has elicited many fine new works, and almost all performances feature one of these or commissions from today’s leading composers. That is the focus of this CD, a collection of fascinating music premiered by the Chamber Choir.

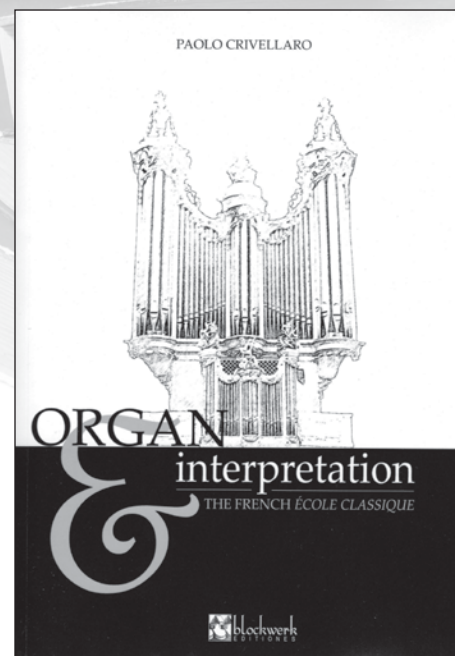
About half of the offerings have been published. The others were performed from the composers’ manuscripts. All are unaccompanied. The opening and closing numbers are of various moods and textures, all beautifully realized by the composers and the choir. In the center of the program is a section inspired mostly by ale, but also by wine. This opens with an arrangement of the traditional “Drink to me only with thine eyes” and moves from there to Robert Walker’s *The Ale Songbook*, five settings of poems ranging from an anonymous Elizabethan ode to another in praise of ale by Edgar Allan Poe. This bibulousness is closed by advice from Proverbs 31:4–9, “It is not for kings, Lemuel,” in which leaders are admonished to leave the drinking of wine to those who are perishing and in anguish.

Altogether a delightful musical treat that deserves a place in your collection of fine choral music.

Most of these CDs are available at <https://ohscatalog.org>.

GEORGE BOZEMAN

## BOOK



**Organ & Interpretation: The French École Classique. Paolo Crivellaro. 355 pages, paperback. Amazon.com: Blockwerk Editiones. 2020. \$46.50.** During the long reign of Louis XIV—*le Grand Siècle*—all branches of art and philosophy flourished. From his ascension to the throne at the age of five in 1643 until long past his death in 1715, the court of *le Roi soleil* created an environment in which music was interpreted as an expression of the harmony of humankind, nature, and the cosmos. This sense of grandeur was expressed in the preface of *Pièces choisies de la composition de M.<sup>r</sup> Piroye, professeur de musique, & Organiste à Paris* (1712):

The sciences have long made France their most gentle and honorable resting place; the Fine Arts, which are pleased to accompany or follow them, enjoyed a similar triumph under the reign of Louis le Grand. They had established their most brilliant empire in the Capital of the whole world, and they needed all the protection with which this Great Monarch honored them . . .

Among the greatest of the musical arts were the pipe organ and its composers. Indeed, the most ethereal moments in *École classique* are those in which the organ and its music, architecture, and ambient acoustics are fused into an exquisite union in which the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Both organbuilders and composers wrote detailed instructions on how the organ and its music should be played, but our appreciation of them is flawed by misunderstanding, lack of enlightenment, and even by those early masters whose conflicting instructions concerning combinations of stops, ornamentation, and tempo bewilder the inquiring mind.

From the outset, there was disagreement regarding ornamentation: “There is extreme freedom in the choice of ornamentations, and in the pieces studied, one can insert them in places where they are not marked, or suppress those indicated if one thinks they do not go well with the piece, and replace them with others at will.”<sup>1</sup> Twenty years later, François Couperin took issue with this freedom: “I am always surprised (after all the care I took to mark the ornaments that are appropriate for my pieces . . .) to hear of people who studied the pieces without observing them. This is an unforgivable negligence. I therefore declare that my pieces must be performed as I wrote them.”<sup>2</sup>

During the second half of the 20th century and well into the 21st, more than a dozen scholars have addressed the problem of performance practice during this golden age, from Fenner Douglass’s *The Language of the Classical French Organ: A Musical Tradition before 1800* (Yale University Press, 1969) to David Ponsford’s *French Organ Music*

*in the Reign of Louis XIV* (Cambridge University Press, 2011). Thus it would appear that the subject has been exhaustively studied and that any other attempts would be superfluous, but Paolo Crivellaro has turned that notion on its head.

*Organ & Interpretation: The French École Classique* will soon gain a place as the sine qua non of organ studies of *le Grand Siècle*. Rather than provide new material, Crivellaro has created a reference book organized by date and genre, taking his authorities from an abundance of primary source material from the early 17th century (Eustache du Caurroy, Jehan Titelouze, and Charles Guillet) through the mid-1700s (Guillaume-Gabriel Nivers, André Raison, Pierre Dandrieu, François Couperin, Louis Marchand, Nicolas de Grigny, and others) to the end of the epoch (Louis-Claude Daquin, Michel Corrette, and Claude Balbastre). No fewer than 20 manuscripts are cited and described, along with 28 treatises and 35 *Livres d’Orgue*. Crivellaro’s exhaustive, systematic analysis of this large body of material leaves nothing to speculation.

Couperin’s cheeky 1722 remark about *notes inégales* that “we write differently from the way we perform: this means that foreigners play our music less well than we play theirs. . . . On the contrary, Italians write their music using the true note values that they intend; for example, we play in a dotted way several eighth-notes in stepwise succession, and yet we write them *égales*!” frightens many away from even attempting to understand the practice. *Notes inégales* may be the most misunderstood and most difficult-to-master aspect of the French Classic period. How Crivellaro handles this is representative of his scholarship and organizational skills: he takes the reader straightaway to primary sources for guidance after providing a description

of the phenomenon and historical context. In this chapter, the author states that the common thread running through the sources is that *inégalité* should not be a rigid succession of long-short, long-short, but rather varying rhythmic gradations, at the performer’s discretion. The genius of Crivellaro’s method is that he quotes the sources in chronological order, with textual and musical examples, thereby documenting the evolution of performance practice over time: “The manner of singing quarter notes . . . is to sing them in groups of two, dwelling a little longer on the first of the two notes.”<sup>3</sup> Sometimes the composer indicates the *inégalité* only at the beginning of the piece, leaving the organist to continue the dotted rhythm. (Figure 1)

But Loulié suggests that the rhythmic opposite—the Lombardic rhythm—is also appropriate: “The first semi-beats are performed in yet a fourth way, that is, making the first shorter than the second.”<sup>4</sup> (Figure 2)

With similar detail and primary source examples, Crivellaro devotes an extensive chapter to ornaments, citing in full D’Anglebert’s instructions on how 30 *agrèments* should be played. It is probable that J.S. Bach was familiar with this table of ornaments and used it as a model for his *Clavier-Büchlein für Wilhelm Friedemann Bach* (ca. 1720), in which the elder Bach begins with an explanation of clefs and a guide to playing ornaments. (Figure 3)

In addition to composers notating ornaments on the score, the practice of improvising was widespread and was an understood part of good keyboard practice, as Titelouze explains in his *Hymnes* of 1623:

3. Loys Bougeois, *Le Droict Chemin de la musique* (Geneva, 1550).

4. Étienne Loulié, *Eléments ou principes de musique* (1696).

1. Michel de Saint-Lambert, *Pièces de Clavecin* (1702).

2. François Couperin, *Troisième Livre de Pièces de Clavecin* (1722).





Figure 1: Jacques Boyvin, "Grand Dialogue Second Ton," Premier Livre d'Orgue (1690)



Figure 2: Nicolas Gigault, "Récit à 3 parties du 8e et 6e Ton," Livre de Musique pour l'Orgue (1685)



Figure 3: Jean-Henri D'Anglebert, Pièces de clavecin (1649)

Observation of bars and ornaments is recommended, as much for the voices as for the instruments: the bar regulates the tempo and the ornaments animate the melodic line of the different parts. . . . As for the ornaments, the difficulty of placing symbols for so many notes, as would be required, is such that I leave it to the judgment of the player, as I do for the trills, which are of a common sort, such as everyone knows.

Given the instructive details of ornaments and rhythm, it is not surprising that both composers and organbuilders left directions on registration or *mélanges*. Certainly in no other national school is organ registration more critical than that of 17th- and 18th-century France, for ignoring the required timbres risks diminishing the subtle beauty of organ music of *le Grand Siècle*. Crivellaro meticulously takes the reader through the *mélanges* of the *Plein jeu*, *Grand jeu*, *Jeu de tierce*, *Fond d'orgue*, *Jeux doux*, *Fugue*, *Duo*, *Trio*, *Récit de dessus*, and *Récit en taille*, citing historical documents with an abundance of musical and registration examples.

We should be grateful to Paolo Crivellaro for this comprehensive study of French Classic organ literature because through his systematic examination of historical evidence, he has clarified the interpretation of organ music during the epoch of Louis XIV. This reference book is indispensable reading for organists and organ scholars who seek understanding of this magnificent era of French organ music. *Organ & Interpretation: The French École Classique* is truly a landmark of musicological enlightenment.

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## MANDER ORGANS

IT IS WITH GREAT SADNESS THAT I MUST CONFIRM THE CLOSING and bankruptcy of Mander Organs. You will readily understand my sadness, annoyance, and great disappointment.

When I gave the firm to the workforce in the form of an Employee Ownership Trust on November 1, 2018, it had a year's worth of work (one contract was signed shortly after the hand-over) and £93,000 in cash in the bank. One would have thought that this would be an adequate basis for the firm to launch to new heights. It was well equipped with some machinery not found elsewhere in the UK, and I think I can say that it had a halfway-decent reputation. It also had an intelligent workforce, both regarding their work in the company and their individual outside interests.

But, 15 months later, the money in the bank was spent and they asked for (and received) a £15,000 loan from me to tide them over. Unfortunately, it was not enough. I don't really know what went wrong.

I thought I had set up the ideal form for the future of the family firm by establishing a different form of family. I offer my apologies to all our past clients. I offer my heartfelt condolences to my erstwhile colleagues. I hope you all find useful and enjoyable employment elsewhere. I also hope that once the understandable anger has subsided, you will remember the sometimes tough, but also enjoyable and rewarding times we have had together. On my side there were many that I miss in retirement and now will miss so much more. There is little more I can say, but I feel a great deal more.

JOHN MANDER

## ESTEY ORGANS

BETWEEN 1900 AND 1960, THE ESTEY ORGAN COMPANY produced 3,261 pipe organs, some of which are still in use (including No. 1, on which I once played a short recital at an ROS meeting). Some replaced older organs, others have been replaced by newer ones, but in any case they can be of interest to researchers.

What perhaps is not well known is that when the company closed, 150 boxes of correspondence and business material were given to the University of Vermont, where they were organized and given on permanent loan to the Brattleboro Historical Society. All the Estey factory buildings still exist, mostly unoccupied. In the attic of one of these was recently found a collection of internal technical records (blueprints, drawings, installation notes, and even photos), dealing with roughly half of the organs built (where the rest are, nobody knows). But much of this material was in bad condition. Recently, a retired professional archivist from California (whose church has Estey No. 2886, now being restored by Schoenstein) contacted the Estey Organ Museum in Brattleboro and got so interested that she came to the museum

and spent several days with staff and volunteers, beginning the proper restoration of this material and instructing the volunteers on materials and procedures. Since the Estey Museum is a pretty low-budget and mostly volunteer operation, volunteers and donations are always welcomed.

For those interested, the Estey Organ Museum's website is [www.esteyorganmuseum.org](http://www.esteyorganmuseum.org). Like everything else, the museum is closed to the public now, but it is worth a visit in the future. The office is in the Engine House, 108 Birge St., Brattleboro, VT 05301 (near Route I-91 and the Massachusetts border). There is even a YouTube presence, "Estey Organ Complex Drone Footage."

BARBARA OWEN

## Scattered leaves ... from our Sketchbook



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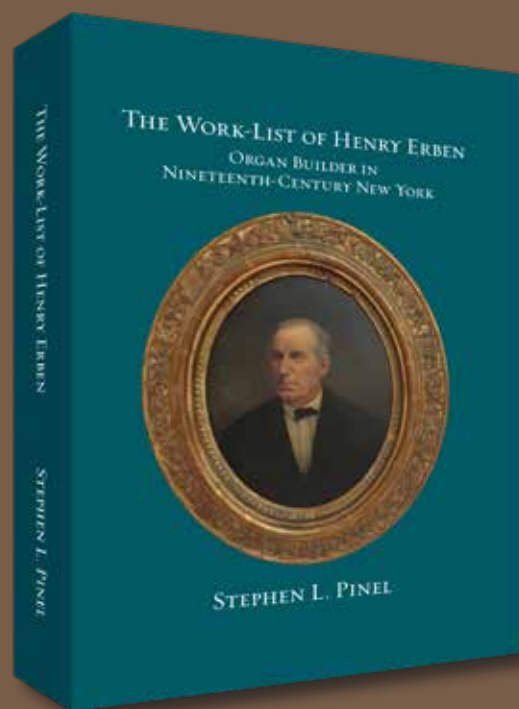
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## THE WORK-LIST OF HENRY ERBEN



THE OHS PRESS is pleased to announce the publication of *The Work-List of Henry Erben: Organ Builder in Nineteenth-Century New York* by long-time OHS archivist, Stephen L. Pinel. The culmination of 35 years of research, this hard-bound, limited edition tracks his work with copious annotations, documentation, and stoplists, accompanied with spectacular photography by Len Levasseur and William T. Van Pelt. The volume also includes facsimiles of many of Erben's published lists and catalogues, most never seen by modern historians. With more than a million words of text, this hefty 600-plus page book is a must for every collector of American organ history. The cover features Henry Erben's magnificent portrait in full color, courtesy of Charles S. Gosse and the Erben family.

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ROLLIN SMITH

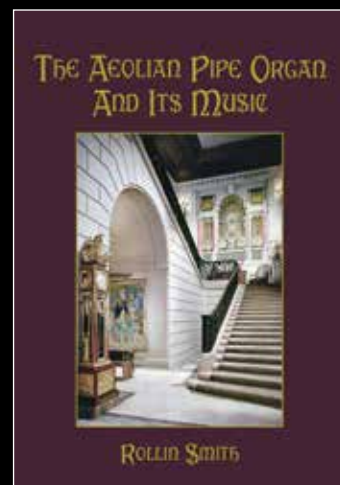
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