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Bruce McInnes, Organist & Choirmaster  
Grace Church (Episcopal)  
802 Broadway  
New York City 10003

Dear Bruce,

## SKINNER ORGAN OP. 707

Thank you again for the invitation to visit Covenant Presbyterian Church in Albany, Georgia, for the purpose of examining the condition and status of Skinner Organ Opus 707, originally in the gallery of Grace Church New York.

Unfortunately, I didn't get to see James Barnett on this trip, nor view the original 707 Skinner console in his possession. The reason revolves primarily around the fact that Mr. Barnett is in failing health, and I am told he is not particularly welcoming to casual visitors. I was hoping to make contact with Mr. Barnett through David Bottom, curator of organs at University of Kentucky at Lexington and an old friend of Mr. Barnett's. Mr. Bottom has expressed a desire to visit with me (which would greatly facilitate such a visit), but has asked that since he had already tentatively scheduled a visit to Mr. Barnett in mid-September, he was hoping I could delay until then. Further conversations have led us to a tentative visit date of September 12, next Friday.

I have honored Mr. Bottom's request for two reasons. First, under the circumstances and after consulting with Doug Hunt, it seemed a much better entrée to Mr. Barnett than going on my own. Second, from our conversations it has become clear Mr. Bottom has quietly acquired from Mr. Barnett much of the pipework from Skinner Opus 201, Grace Church's original chancel organ, as well as a considerable collection of Skinner and Æolian-Skinner pipework. Respecting Mr. Bottom's wishes in this regard, and engaging his collegiality, seems prudent for anyone who might hope to create a vintage Skinner instrument.

#### HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF OPUS 707

Most Skinner organs have fascinating histories attached to them, and Grace Church's is no exception. It is perhaps one of the lesser known organs, not being mentioned alongside the Skinners at Princeton, Yale, Harvard or Ann Arbor, but its influence on 20th-century organbuilding is perhaps greater than these other instrument. It is one of a few particular Skinner organs whose excellence was at a pinnacle, and whose prominent location allowed it to exert a significant cultural influence. To explore that influence requires a review of the cultural and musical context of the 1920s, the historic connection between music, organs and churches, and that long-standing artistic tension between Boston and New York.

Ernest Mitchell may be the greatest unsung hero of New York church music in the era between the World Wars. If one considers the "big five" Episcopal churches from that era (St. Thomas, St. Bartholomew's, St. James' Madison Ave., the Cathedral and Trinity Wall Street), the feeling that emerges of Grace Church is that it remained an ultimate bastion of good taste and resolutely prominent, refusing to be eclipsed by the new, fashionable midtown churches. Mitchell, his Skinner organ and his choir of men and boys played an unquestionable role in this public standing.

In the arena of men-and-boys choirs, however, the name known across the country was that of T. Tertius Noble at St. Thomas Church. In 1913 Noble had been brought from York Minster to establish old-world Anglican traditions on Fifth Avenue, where he enjoyed the best of everything: a new 1913 Skinner organ, the immediately famous Cram and Goodhue church, and a choir school erected shortly thereafter. Here was the national model for men-and-boys choirs, led by a man who was the very image of his name.

Noble's public stature was unquestionably high, but was his musical standing equal to it? During the course of Skinner research, the topic of New York church music is inescapable; any serious student of the organ made his or her way either to New York or Philadelphia during the 1920s and '30s in search of erudition. Many would later become forces in the organ world—Robert Noehren, Alan van Zoeren, Richard Purvis, Thomas Richner. While they accord proper recognition to those such as Tertius Noble, any serious mention of organ-playing and men-and-boys' choir quickly turns to Ernest Mitchell and Grace Church.

From these men it is hard to tell whether they were more captivated by the superlative all-around musicianship of Ernest Mitchell, or the arresting quality of the Skinner organ, particularly the nave section. But it is clear that Mitchell's music at Grace had an important influence on the future of organ and church music in this country. His devotion to good singing, his training of the boys, his introduction of new singing methods and chant styles, coupled to a broad knowledge and proficiency of organ repertoire, made him an exalted model for a new generation of church musicians. Just as Farnam exerted considerable influence on the generation of organists he taught, so too would Mitchell make his statement. Everyone went to hear the music at the midtown churches, but the cognoscenti knew that "Grace was the place."

Prior to his coming to Grace Church, Mitchell had been organist of Trinity Church, Boston, the famous Richardson church at the heart of Copley Square. Mitchell's tenure at Trinity overlapped with the Boston residence of Lynnwood Farnam, the most renowned organist of his time, an uncommonly engaging artist whose music-making was in many respects similar to that of the pianist Josef Hoffman. Although Farnam stayed in Boston barely more than a

year from 1917 to 1918, he was responsible for a large double organ at Emmanuel Church on Newbury Street (a few blocks over from Trinity), built by the prestigious Canadian firm of Casavant Frères. Being Canadian, an intellectual and something of a perfectionist, Farnam may well have felt more comfortable entrusting Casavant to providing the proper ensemble he wanted. Surely this was an affront to Ernest Skinner, America's premier organbuilder located right in Boston. Skinner's factory may have been only two miles away from Newbury Street, but Skinner was several years removed from an artistic re-evaluation that would lead him to strengthening the ensembles of his instruments.

Farnam and Mitchell are said to have grown close during the Boston years, mostly on account of their common love of the organ literature, often meeting at one or the other's church to play through new compositions. According to both Noehren and Purvis, Mitchell's organ technique was the equal of Farnam's, but he did not seek a solo concert career as Farnam did. His love of organ music may have been a more personal endeavor—the private sessions with Farnam an ideal vehicle for exploring new and old music with a like-minded colleague.

While at Trinity, Mitchell signed a contract with the Skinner Organ Company for Opus 573, an entirely new gallery organ and minor revisions to the chancel organ, together with an impressive new console with specialized means for flexibly controlling the two organs as one giant instrument. But Mitchell would not remain to preside over the result, leaving prior to 1926 to come to Grace Church. Could Farnam, or Farnam's example, have persuaded Mitchell that New York's a better musical landscape than stodgy old Boston? Certainly this feeling was not unknown in the 1920s; where if Boston represented a stronghold of tradition, New York was the Mecca for all things progressive.

Ernest Skinner knew this same tension. From his earliest days as an independent organbuilder, Skinner devoted considerable energy to keeping an active New York presence. Moreover, all of Skinner's significant early work occurred in New York: CCNY, the Cathedral of Saint John the Divine, Grace Church, Saint Thomas, and Fifth Avenue Presbyterian—all these instruments within a span of just seven years. Apart from his 1909 instrument at Kings

Chapel, Skinner enjoyed only occasional prominence in Boston until well into the 1920s. A sense develops that New York was viewed as the center for both the ecclesiastical and concert world: the key to success in these times for builders and players alike.

Upon moving to New York, Farnam did not end up serving one of the more prestigious churches, but instead he eventually settled at Church of the Holy Communion. Like Grace Church, Holy Communion also had an early Skinner organ (1911). The low visibility allowed Farnam time to tour on recitals and to conduct his teaching. Where Mitchell followed Farnam's lead in spirit, it was to the much more established and grand presence of Grace Church on lower Broadway: a prime center with a strong tradition, and an excellent venue for musical excellence.

One of Mitchell's first tasks was to repeat the process he had begun at Copley Square: the acquisition of a new gallery organ, together with a complex and ingenious new console to control both organs as one. The large chancel organ, built by the Ernest M. Skinner Company in 1912 as Opus 201, was unquestionably broad in scope. But confined to its long and narrow chamber, this otherwise comprehensive instrument may not have been the most adequate means for leading congregational singing. On the other hand, the gallery was the ideal location for communicating with the gathered, but the gallery organ was not up to the standard of either the chancel instrument or modern taste. Although a collection of possibly interesting historic material (Erben, Roosevelt and a small Skinner solo section), the gallery organ may also have been unreliable and in need of replacement.

Mitchell's interest in organ music and his friendship with Farnam indicate a strong love of the classical organ ensemble, that battery of tone unique to the organ—the diapasons—topped by stops of great brilliance called *mixtures* and crowned by trumpet reeds with great depth and fire. Moreover, Mitchell's designs for the new gallery organ were most unusual, even chaste, representing a foretaste of neo-classicism in the twilight of the Romantic age. There would be no "pretty" stops: no strings of any kind, no celestes, and only those orchestral colors (French Horn and bright English Horn) not contained in the front organ. Theodore Gilbert, Mitchell's assistant in the late 1930s and early 1940s,

has pointed out that the front organ, with its plentiful string, celeste and woodwind tone, already addressed such needs. Therefore, Mitchell conceived the nave organ as an ensemble instrument, one that could powerfully charge the room with tone and hopefully incite a riot of congregational singing.

In these desires, Mitchell and his timing could not have been more fortuitous. The contract for Skinner Opus 707 (the number assigned to the gallery organ and new console) was signed in mid-1928, one year after the legendary arrival of G. Donald Harrison. English by birth and trained at Henry Willis & Sons, the venerable English organbuilding dynasty, Harrison joined the Skinner Organ Company for the purpose of developing a brilliant "English Cathedral" tone in Skinner organs.

In the late 1920s American organists like Farnam and Mitchell were re-evaluating their instruments and their repertoire. After several generations of orchestral transcriptions and symphonic-style playing, this younger school wanted to turned backward to Bach and his precursors, whose music required a clarity and transparency that Skinner's symphonic organs was not intended to provide. The brilliant English ensemble was certainly one step toward a clearer polyphonic result, and Harrison was welcomed as the exponent of that tradition.

Harrison infused the Skinner organ with sounds familiar to him from his formative years in England. In Skinner instruments built between 1927 and 1931, one can hear elements of Father Willis, Henry Willis III, T.C. Lewis, and Harrison & Harrison (no relation). Diplomatic to the core, Harrison gradually assimilated himself into the American organ culture. His diffident quality, coupled with deep musical understanding and an ability to let his clients express their wishes freely, won him a quick following. At the factory, Harrison's praise of American technological progress and initial deference to Ernest Skinner adroitly forged the groundwork for future experiments.

Harrison's first important jobs were for the academy: the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor and Ralph Adams Cram's new Chapel at Princeton University. Most New York and Philadelphia organists got a chance to hear the Princeton organ in October of 1928 when the Skinner company hired special railway cars to transport them for a "demonstration" featuring six

organists (Farnam among them) and nearly two hours of organ music. The organ was received as a sensation, the full fruit of all the best of Skinner and Harrison rolled into one elegant 99-rank organ.

At that very time, the pipes for the Grace nave organ were being voiced in the Skinner factory. Harrison had not only taken care in the scaling, but had revised other details along the way: altering pressures here and there, reconsidering the role of the Great First Diapason, and revising his ideas about precisely the kind of tone the Solo Tubas should assume.

Just as noteworthy as the organ itself was the extraordinary console, designed by Mitchell and Skinner vice-president William E. Zeuch. The challenge was to provide the greatest number of controls in the least possible space, without the results being uncomfortable to play or confusing to behold. Long before the 1948 console at Riverside Church became the icon of the large yet miniaturized "Manhattan console," Mitchell's design for Grace brought forward every idea from Trinity Boston into a new realm of innovation. Increased numbers of general and divisional pistons, reduced knob size, specially-lowered stopjams and cut-away sills, narrow swell shoes and double crescendo pedals—all of these details combined to create a revolutionary concept for controlling a double organ, while still allowing the organist to conduct his choir.

With its forthright tonal and technological statement, Opus 707 was an instant success, marking to New York the first instrument of a new generation of organbuilding thought. Here was Princeton in a nutshell, in whose mere 38 independent stops resided the powerhouse ensemble of a hundred-stop giant, all a mere taxi ride—not a train journey, like Princeton—from Skinner's Fifth Avenue studio opposite St. Thomas Church.

Mitchell was delighted: indeed, it was the organ of his dreams, and continued to be so. So too was Farnam, who on May 3, 1929, wrote to Harrison's old boss in England, Henry Willis III, saying "...It is a great delight to me to note the results Donald Harrison's coming has produced in Skinner's work. The new Grace Church, New York instrument is simply splendid with its fine build-up, cohesion, brilliance, bearded Pedal Open and other fine points." With an endorsement like this, Harrison's future was secure.

Of the younger gentlemen previously mentioned (Noehren, van Zoeren, Purvis and Richner), all were students in New York during the 1930s. Although these men ended up pursuing different avenues of organ design and playing, their opinions rest on one common ground: the gallery organ at Grace Church and the great influence of Ernest Mitchell as a leader of choirs and as an interpreter of organ literature. All recount the stories of how Farnam and Mitchell would get together in the evenings to play to each other at Grace Church (perpetuating their old Boston habits). It is quite likely that many new compositions (Vierne's Fifth Symphony, to cite one example) received their first, informal performances at Grace, with Farnam and Mitchell taking turns sight-reading the fresh scores.

Farnam's death in November of 1930 marked a great loss to the organ world, forever changing its complexion and passing the beacon of progressive playing to his prominent students (for example, Ernest White at the Church of Saint Mary the Virgin, Alexander McCurdy at the Curtis Institute). It cannot have been easy for Mitchell, losing this special musical colleague and a personal outlet for exploring organ music. But although there may have been equals in other styles, no finer church music could be found than Mitchell's at Grace, with what many have considered was the finest men and boys choir of the day. For this exacting discipline, it is most likely at Grace Church, not elsewhere, where national standards were established, met and raised.

In sum, Opus 707 was more than just another organ and more than just another Skinner. It was G. Donald Harrison's triumphant New York debut in an early landmark of organ reform in New York City. It was the fulfillment of Mitchell's Trinity Boston dream in a far more spectacular form. And in a more private sense it celebrated the musical friendship of Farnam and Mitchell: a new musical laboratory to nourish the artistic spirit of two old Boston colleagues, now reunited in Manhattan and spreading their own quiet gospel. Few organs are so aristocratic, beautiful or compelling that they transmit such impact and meaning.

The original specification of Opus 707 was as follows:



## GREAT ORGAN 6" pressure

16' Diapason  
 16' Bourdon (from Pedal)  
 8' First Diapason  
 8' Second Diapason  
 8' Gross Flute (Harmonic Flute)  
 4' Octave  
 4' Flute  
 2 $\frac{2}{3}$ ' Twelfth  
 2' Fifteenth  
 v Mixture (15.17.19.21<sup>b</sup>.22)

on 15" pressure in Choir box

16' Ophicleide  
 8' Tromba  
 4' Clarion

## SOLO ORGAN 15" pressure

8' Flauto Mirabilis  
 4' Flute (orchestral)  
 8' Tuba  
 4' Clarion  
 Tremolo  
 Chimes

on 25" pressure

8' French Horn  
 8' Tuba Mirabilis

CHOIR ORGAN 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ " pressure

16' Dulciana  
 8' Diapason  
 8' Gemshorn  
 8' Melodia  
 4' Flute  
 2' Piccolo  
 8' English Horn  
 Tremolo  
 Harp & Celesta

## SWELL ORGAN 6" pressure

8' Diapason  
 8' Geigen  
 8' Gedeckt  
 4' Octave  
 4' Triangle Flute  
 2' Fifteenth  
 v Mixture (15.19.22.26.29)  
 8' Oboe  
 8' Vox Humana (*from Roosevelt?*)  
 Tremolo

on 10" pressure

16' Waldhorn  
 8' Cornopean  
 4' Clarion

## PEDAL ORGAN 6" pressure

32'	Diapason	DIAPASON
16'	Diapason	
16'	Second Diapason	GREAT
16'	Bourdon	
16'	Dulciana	CHOIR
10 $\frac{2}{3}$ '	Quint	BOURDON
8'	Octave	DIAPASON
8'	Diapason	GREAT
8'	Gedeckt	BOURDON
8'	Dulciana	CHOIR
4'	Super Octave	DIAPASON
4'	Flute	BOURDON
16'	Second Trombone	GREAT
16'	Waldhorn	SWELL
10 $\frac{2}{3}$ '	Second Trombone	GREAT
8'	Second Trumpet	GREAT
8'	Waldhorn	SWELL
4'	Second Clarion	GREAT

on 20" pressure

32'	Bombarde	TROMBONE
16'	Trombone	
8'	Trumpet	TROMBONE
4'	Clarion	TROMBONE
	Chimes	SOLO

## EXISTING CONDITIONS IN ALBANY, GEORGIA

When Mr. James Barnett purchased the Grace Church organ in the early 1960s, the following things appear to have occurred:

- He removed, or arranged to remove, much if not all of the organ himself. The organ was shipped to Albany, Georgia.
- The windchests and possibly the entire chassis of the chancel organ were discarded in this process.
- All of the nave organ was retained.
- Opus 707's console was retained, and is presently at the home of Mr. Barnett. It is said that much of its inner electro-pneumatic switching and drawstop actions have been removed (hopefully this can be confirmed next week).
- The Opus 201 pipework was stored under questionable circumstances, and, as stated above, much of it is believed to have been sold to David Barnett. *BOTTOM*

Opus 707 is now the nucleus of the pipe organ at Covenant Presbyterian Church, Albany, Georgia, a county seat in the southwestern portion of the state. The organ was rebuilt by the Tellers Organ Company of Erie and installed in 1965. The Church already owned a small Steinmeyer instrument, which was made into an Antiphonal division. The 1937 Æolian-Skinner console from St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Philadelphia was re-fashioned to control the entire instrument.

The arrangement of the organ will be more readily apparent from the accompanying video (with many apologies for the great unsteadiness of hand), and therefore only bears a basic description here. The Great organ and 32' Bombarde are located in a narrow and tall loft directly above the chancel. At either side are organ chambers containing the expressive divisions. On the left are the Choir and Solo, with Choir at the front and Solo at the rear, while the Swell organ occupies the entire righthand space. The pipe façade is comprised of the former Swell Diapason and the Great Double and Second Diapasons.

The organ was rebuilt with moderate changes to its chassis and tonal scheme. Most of the changes appear to have been carried out when the organ was installed, while others appear to be more recent. Within the last year, the Church has had additional work performed on the organ, including electrification of the console and the introduction of solid-state switching. The work was carried out by Madison Lindsey and Troy Scott, organ technicians from Laurel, Mississippi. The Church's organist, Richard Miller, said that this work cost somewhere in the vicinity of \$80,000, but that there is probably more to do. For example, the 32' Bombarde does not play at present, since its reservoirs and chest need to be restored.

The salient existing conditions can be summarized as follows:

- Almost all of the pipework exists in good restorable condition.  
In fact, only seven stops cannot be accounted for:
  - a. *Great reeds (Ophicleide, Tromba, Clarion)*
  - b. *Choir Melodia*
  - c. *Solo Clarion, Solo Tuba Mirabilis*
  - c. *Pedal wood & metal Diapason, 56 pipes*
- All manual chests exist and are in excellent restorable condition, including original double primaries, primary linkages between chests, and wood-cap magnets. Although one stop action (Solo) has been rebuilt with modern magnets, otherwise this vital feature of Skinner technology remains essentially original.
- All bass chests exist, although they have been rebuilt as unit chests. (This is not the best, but easily remedied.)
- The swell shades appear to be extant, albeit in somewhat reconfigured patterns. In certain cases, the original metal and wood linkages exist.
- Significant portions of the mechanism were replaced. These include:
  - a. *Blower (excellent Spencer blower from early 1960s was installed)*
  - b. *Wind system (mostly Tellers, some new reservoir units)*
  - c. *Tremolos*
  - d. *Swell engines (mostly Organ Supply concertina engines)*

The present specification of the organ is:

## GREAT ORGAN

16' Quintaton  
 8' First Diapason  
 8' Second Diapason  
 8' Harmonic Flute  
 4' Octave  
 4' Flute  
 2 $\frac{2}{3}$ ' Twelfth  
 2' Fifteenth  
 v Mixture (15.19.22.26.29)

## SOLO ORGAN

8' Flauto Mirabilis  
 4' Flute (orchestral)  
 8' Tuba  
 4' Clarion  
 Tremolo  
 Chimes  
 8' French Horn

## CHOIR ORGAN

16' Dulciana  
 8' Gemshorn  
 8' Gemshorn Celeste  
 8' Gedeckt  
 4' Principal  
 4' Flute  
 2' Piccolo  
 16' English Horn  
 8' Clarinet  
 Tremolo  
 Harp & Celesta

## SWELL ORGAN

16' Bourdon  
 8' Geigen Diapason  
 8' Gedeckt  
 8' Viola da Gamba  
 8' Viola Celeste  
 8' Flauto Dolce  
 8' Flute Celeste  
 4' Octave  
 4' Triangle Flute  
 2' Flautino  
 v Mixture (15.19.22.26.29)  
 8' Oboe  
 8' Vox Humana  
 Tremolo

*on 10" pressure*

16' Waldhorn  
 8' Cornopean  
 4' Clarion

## PEDAL ORGAN

32'	Resultant	BOURDON
16'	Diapason	
16'	Bourdon	SWELL
16'	Dulciana	CHOIR
8'	Octave	
8'	Gedeckt	SWELL
8'	Dulciana	CHOIR
4'	Super Octave	
4'	Flute	SWELL
16'	Waldhorn	SWELL
16'	English Horn	CHOIR
8'	Waldhorn	SWELL
8'	English Horn	CHOIR

*on 20" pressure*

32'	Bombarde	TROMBONE
16'	Trombone	
8'	Trumpet	TROMBONE
4'	Clarion	TROMBONE
	Chimes	SOLO

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Seeing Opus 707 in its new home is something of a bittersweet joy. On the one hand, so much of it exists that the hope of getting it back to Grace is a distinct possibility. Those things that would be very difficult to replicate are extant; those items that are missing are much easier to build afresh in period style (wind system, tremolos and swell motors). Vintage pipework could be found for the few missing stops. Moreover, those stops, as well as additional mechanical items, may exist in storage and still be in possession of Mr. Barnett.

Also, now that we have learned about Mr. Bottom's collection, including a sizable cache of original Grace Church pipework, it is in no way unrealistic to think that an instrument could be created that would contain *an extremely high percentage of Grace Church's original Skinner pipework*. One of my goals in visiting Mr. Barnett with Mr. Bottom is to learn more about the extent of Mr. Bottom's holdings and to report back to you.

On the other hand, it is clear that Covenant Presbyterian Church is extremely proud to own the old Grace Church nave organ. In their weekly bulletin, they proudly announce the organ's pedigree and history. The fact that they have just spent a not-insignificant amount of money on it further distances them from the possibility of pursuing a new organ. It was Mr. Miller's sentiment, expressed several times, that Covenant is proud to own what they feel is one of the finest organs in the Southeast. Moreover, the church's technicians have valued the entire organ at \$803,000. Deducting perhaps \$100,000 for the Antiphonal section, the Church is nevertheless perfectly well aware of the financial value of the instrument for insurance purposes. Convincing the authorities that market value and replacement value are two very different things will require expert political navigation and an extremely generous spirit from all sides.

If Opus 707 had been so radically rebuilt that any hope of recapturing it would have proven an academic exercise, I would unhesitatingly tell you so and dissuade any further notion about pursuing this lead. But this is not the case. The organ is readily restorable. Its excellence and general high regard surely indicate that any attempt to reinstall it at Grace is no mere archaeological

endeavor, but a desire to recapture a great instrument for very real artistic reasons. What this organ did for Grace is just as valid now as it was in 1928.

Therefore, while it may be a shot in the dark, it is a shot nonetheless: I strongly recommend that you pursue some kind of dialogue with Covenant Presbyterian Church about the possibility of purchasing the organ. The worst thing they can say is "No thank you!", and you will have at least satisfied your curiosity about this entire matter. In the balance, it is an inexpensive insurance against any future regret.

#### DETAILED FINDINGS

Here is an item-by-item summary of my inspection.

##### BLOWER ROOM

- Blower: Spencer serial #30600, 10hp, 1150rpm, twin outlets  
CFM 3100, 850, likely at 10" and 25" pressure  
Motor: General Electric 220V 3 phase, 10hp
- Two static "reservoirs": no valves, tops chain-linked to Spencer butterfly valves in ducts that feed them

##### GENERAL CHASSIS

- All manual windchests extant.  
All wood-cap magnets in place (no dag magnets in evidence)  
All double-primaries extant; shared primaries in original condition.  
All borrow actions extant in original condition.  
Stop actions are extant and in original condition,  
except Solo 4-stop 15" chest (new bung, new Reisner magnets)

The windchests have almost entirely new bottomboard and stop action bungs screws, occasionally with cup washers. In some cases the screws are deeply inset. It is highly unlikely that the chests have ever been regasketed. Most chests are on the original bearers; all are on roller bearings in the Skinner manner.

Racking throughout the organ is a combination of old and new. Most reeds stops are no longer pinned but tied; however, the hooks still remain on the resonators.

- All reservoirs are either Tellers or new from Organ Supply Industries.
- All tremolos are either Tellers or newer
- All swell engines are of the Organ Supply Industry concertina variety.
- All Skinner swell shades appear to be intact. The linkage in the Solo appears to be original; the Swell and Choir shades have new linkages. A combination of vertical and horizontal shades indicate that reference back to the engineering documents would be helpful in reestablishing the patterns. Also, this organ was built in that transitional period when Skinner was moving from exclusive use of vertical shades to exclusive use of horizontal. Some other organs from this period (such as Princeton University) contain both styles.
- All offset bass chests have been made into electropneumatic unit chests. I assume that these individual block unit primaries are a Tellers feature. Some additional bass chests have been provided for new stops, such as the Swell Gambas.
- The entire facade is on a new unit chest of Tellers. A few additional unit chests have been provided for added stops, such as the Swell Flute Celeste.
- The unit chest which currently houses the French Horn in the Solo may be from Opus 201, or another Skinner organ. But the discovery of the two-stop HP Solo chest for the Tuba Mirabilis and French Horn (contradicting all the factory documentation) tells us that this unit chest is certainly from a different instrument.
- The Harp/Celesta unit and the Chimes are in original condition. The Harp is no longer winded, and lives at the back of the Choir chamber. The Chimes are in the Solo, have a pneumatic action and sound wonderful.

- The Second Diapason from the 201 Great is lying loose in the Great and Swell chambers.
- Below is listed a summary of chestwork and tonal pedigree.



## GREAT ORGAN

Back chest (marked "Gt Back 707")

16' Quintaton                      new pipes, new rack, 12 offset, on original  
16' Diapason, (originally 18 would have  
been offset)

4' Octave                          original pipes on original slot, marginally  
revoiced. Recoverable.

2-2/3' Twelfth                      original pipes on original slot.

V Mixture                          recomposed with new pipes, new rack;  
many original pipes extant and not  
significantly altered

## PASSAGE BOARD

Front chest (marked "Gt Front 707")

2' Fifteenth                          original 70 scale pipes, original slot

4' Flute                              original #2 harmonic flute, original slot

8' Second Diapason                  Choir Diapason now in place of original  
pipes. 12 offset

8' Harmonic Flute                      original pipes on original slot, 8 offset

8' First Diapason                      This stop was to have been a 40 scale,  
hence 14 offset pipes. The present stop is  
42 scale 1/4 mouth lead, marked "5982, 42  
OP, CC". Possibly changed either during  
construction or after. A 42 scale open  
would have had only 12 notes offset, indi-  
cating that this change happened at some  
point after the chest orders were placed.

SWELL ORGAN

High pressure chest

16' Waldhorn

original on original slot, 6 notes offset  
(entirely metal) "English"

8' Cornopean

an English Trumpet, 4-1/4" scale @ CC,  
original on original slot

4' Clarion

ostensibly original, although some pipes  
have been put on long boots (like a Vox  
Humana)

PASSAGE BOARD

Two-stop chest from Solo (original French Horn and Tuba Mirabilis)

8' Gamba

from 201 Choir organ, flared two notes  
from tenor C, bottom 12 straight sided. 6  
notes offset on brand new unit chest

8' Gamba Celeste

from 201 Choir organ, as prime rank. 6  
notes offset on the same unit chest

PASSAGE BOARD

SWELL ORGAN, cont.

Low Pressure Chest

- |                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| 8' Geigen         | original on original slot, bearded, 10 notes offset (note to Doug: this is precisely as the Academy's, 48 scale, wide mouth, bearded quite a ways up)   |
| 8' Diapason       | 201 Swell Flauto Dolce on original Diapason slot, 10 are offset (correct for a 45 scale Diapason, as it was originally)   |
| 4' Triangle Flute | original pipes on original slot   |
| 4' Octave         | original pipes on original slot   |
| 8' Gedeckt        | 1-12 original wood, remainder new, 8 notes offset   |
| 2' Fifteenth      | original 70 scale on original slot  |
| V Mixture         | original C-4 on original slot   |
| 8' Vox Humana     | original on original slot. Pipes are painted, and thus it's difficult to tell pedigree. This is possibly a stop either from Erben, Roosevelt or 1902 Skinner work. But the Skinner reed voicing log suggests the pipes were new in 1928. This is a conflict of documentation. |
| 8' Oboe           | original on original slot; pipes in unusually poor condition  |

Added Unit Chest contains the Flute Celeste (tenor c) from the 201 Swell organ.

## CHOIR ORGAN

### Low Pressure Chest for Choir Organ

16' Dulciana	original on original slot, 12 offset 48 scale
8' Gemshorn	original on original slot, 8 offset
8' Gemshorn Celeste	old 201 Great Erzähler on original Diapason slot (pipes now moved to Gr.)
8' Stopped Diapason	1-12 original, remainder are the 707 Swell Chimney Flute (Willis-Lewis style, stoppers original)
4' Flute	#2 harmonic original, on original slot
2' Piccolo	original on original slot
8' English Horn	new 4' Principal in its place

## PASSAGE BOARD

### High Pressure Chest for Great Reeds

4' Clarion	a Cromorne was in this slot and is now lying in a box in the Swell. Empty.
8' Tromba	now an 8' Corno di Bassetto, quite likely the Choir 201 Clarinet. 2-1/2" @ CC with bells (pipes are painted, hard to find any scribe marks)
16' Ophicleide	now the 707 English Horn (Heckelphone scale) with a bass added (possibly the 1-12 of the 201 Swell English Horn? again, pipes are painted), 6 offset

## SOLO ORGAN

### Low Pressure Chest

8' Flauto Mirabilis	original on original slot, 1-12 offset
4' Flute	original wood Orchestral Flute on original slot
8' Tuba	now a French Horn, as much as can fit. I think this one is the 707 French Horn.
4' Clarion	now the 8' Tuba, as much as can fit. This arrangement is decidedly peculiar.

Unit Chest (Skinner)	with another French Horn on it, this one double-scrolled and rather Gottfried-looking.
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## EXISTING PEDAL CHESTS and PIPES

16-8-4 Bourdon, 61 pipes, stopped wood to 49, new stopped metal pipes 50-56, original open metal 57-61.  
3 chests 1-12, 13-24, 25-61 (this one was shared with open metal 29-56)

32' Bombarde, 1-12 wood, 10"x10" scale internal diameter at CCCC, 20" pressure, two chests CCCC-FFFF, FFFF#-BBBB. First seven pipes are sectioned, first six pipes are mitred.

16-8-4 Trombone, 1-56 metal, 20" pressure, 8" diameter at CCC, two chests, 1-12 and 13-56. Presently located in Solo chamber. Excellent stop.

16' Great Diapason	exists as present Pedal 16' Diapason
8' Great Second Diapason	exists as Pedal 8' Octave
8' Swell Diapason	exists as Pedal 4' Choral Bass

Jonathan E. Ambrosino

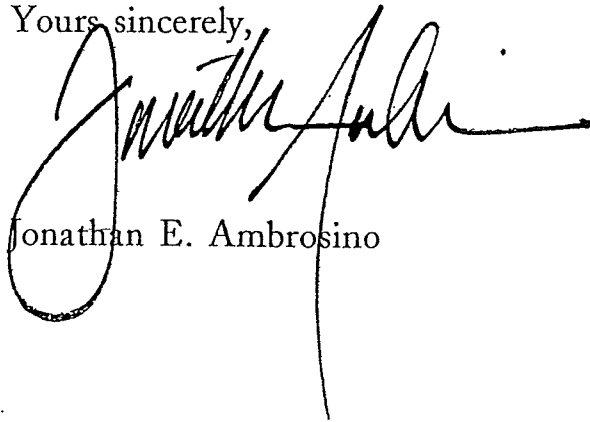
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to Bruce McInnes • Skinner Organ 707

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If you have any further questions about the above material or the video, please do not hesitate to contact me. Meanwhile, I will be in touch regarding the second trip to Albany to see James Barnett and those items in his possession.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jonathan Ambrosino', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Jonathan E. Ambrosino

-/jea

enc.: videotape  
invoice  
receipts