

Cover feature

**J.H. & C.S. Odell, East Hampton, Connecticut, Opus 647
St. Ann's Roman Catholic Church,
Nyack, New York**

The picturesque village of Nyack is situated on the western bank of the Hudson, less than 20 miles north of Manhattan. Home to 19th-century realist painter Edward Hopper, the village was perhaps better known for its sandstone quarry and as a locus of shipbuilding. These industries declined after 1900, though there was renewed shipbuilding activity during the world wars, with submarine chasers being built there as late as 1948. In the postwar years, the completion of the Tappan Zee Bridge contributed to significant growth in population and commerce. The village underwent a major urban revitalization project to commercialize the downtown area and to expand its economy in the 1980s; today the village center is home to many new business establishments.

I took note of this downtown revitalization when I first visited St. Ann's Church on a warm spring day in 2006. I had been contacted by Jennifer Pascual in her capacity as chair of the organ committee for the New York Archdiocesan Music Commission. Several weeks prior, Dr. Pascual had asked that I meet with the staff of St. Ann's, survey the organ, and make recommendations.

On entering the building, to my delight I discovered a well-appointed church sanctuary with terrazzo floors, high ceiling, and best of all, an organ located in the gallery on the central axis. Finally a room that we could work with instead of against! I quickly set about my work, dutifully examining the pipe organ.

Little is known about the life and work of Francis John Newton Tallman, a builder who, according to David A. Fox's *A Guide to North American Organbuilders*, based his operations in Nyack from 1894 to 1903, during which time the organ for St. Ann's was built. In addition to his organ factory, Tallman also maintained a music store in Nyack village. Prior to life in Nyack, Tallman was employed by the Roosevelt firm, and when he left Nyack in 1904 he reportedly relocated to Brooklyn to work with Reuben Midmer.

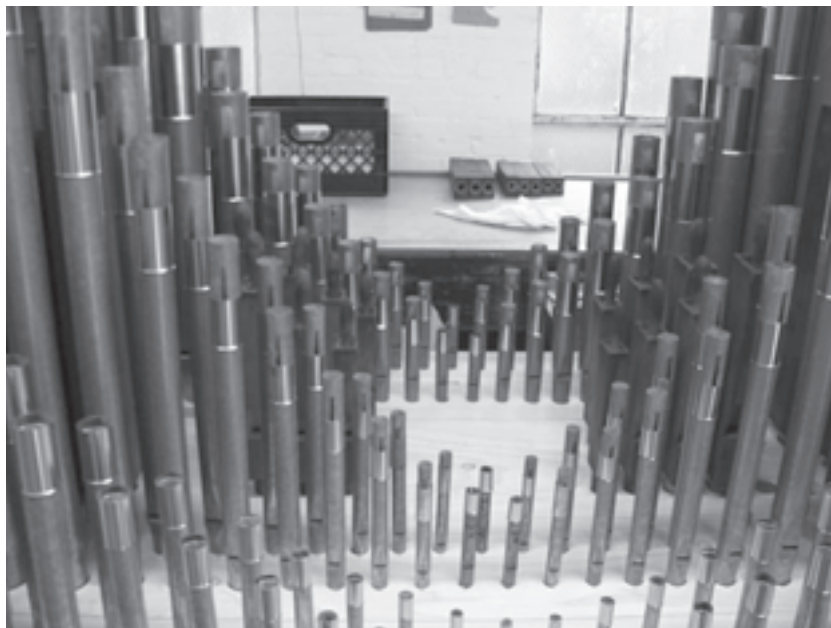
The organ Tallman built for St. Ann's was originally a two-manual instrument with mechanical action, and of his surviving instruments, St. Ann's was purportedly among the largest. There was evidence that the original keydesk was situated *en fenêtre*; the panel that replaced the keydesk's entry point into the case was without the lancet molding treatment found in the rest of the case, as well as being from an entirely different species of wood. The interior layout of the organ suggested a backfall action had been employed for the Great, with squares and trackers for the Swell. The Pedal was divided, on vented chests.

In the 1930s, the organ's action and winding system were removed by local service people as part of the process of introducing the organ to the benefits of electricity. Pneumatic pulldown systems were connected to the slider chests, with a similar arrangement for the Pedal, though the vented system was retained. The organ continued this way until the 1960s, when a supply house console was installed by well-known New York organ man Louis Mohr (also a former Roosevelt employee). Thereafter some minor changes were made to the specification, but otherwise the original pipework survived intact. Apart from decay and neglect, most damage to the metal flues was from "aggressive" cone tuning. Even with the mechanical alterations, tuning access was difficult. When I inspected the organ, most of it, save for a portion of the Great, was inoperable.

As we often restore 19th-century pipework, there were few surprises. Scaling and voicing of flue pipes were very much in line with our own 19th-century practices. While restoration and remedial voicing work were certainly required, in



Odell Opus 647, St. Ann's Roman Catholic Church, Nyack, New York



Looking over pipes in new Great windchest

general workmanship we saw little to improve upon. From a modern tonal standpoint, the only serious deficits were in the Swell, which lacked an Oboe and an undulating rank of any variety. Certain ranks—such as the Swell Diapason 8', Salicional 8', and Bourdon 16'—omitted bottom octaves as was often the custom with smaller instruments of this vintage. The Pedal division was spare, but the basics were in evidence, with a suitably scaled Open Wood and Bourdon.

Mechanically, things were far less clear cut. The collection of cone-valve style regulators that replaced the original winding system were arranged in a way that frustrated access to the mechanism. They were also not terribly well built. The slider chests and the pulldown systems installed were all in very bad shape. Both manual chests had runs and frozen sliders. With so many changes of questionable provenance, we felt it was best

to save the case and pipes and start over.

With this as a departure point, the members of the Archdiocesan Organ Committee requested we consider some additions. The possibility of the use of digital voices was discussed, though we made clear our preference for a pipe-only design, concentrating instead on filling out a more conservative two-manual specification rather than stretching the limits for a three. Our proposal was accepted, and design work commenced in the fall of 2006.

The mechanical design of the organ is entirely new from the ground up: new conventional wind reservoirs and windchests, all of our own design and construction. We designed and built a new Swell enclosure to accommodate our additions to the division. We also constructed a new two-manual console using our popular terrace-jamb design in quarter-sawn white oak, incorporating a solid-



New Pedal Trumpet 16'



New and old: Swell Bourdon BBB and CC



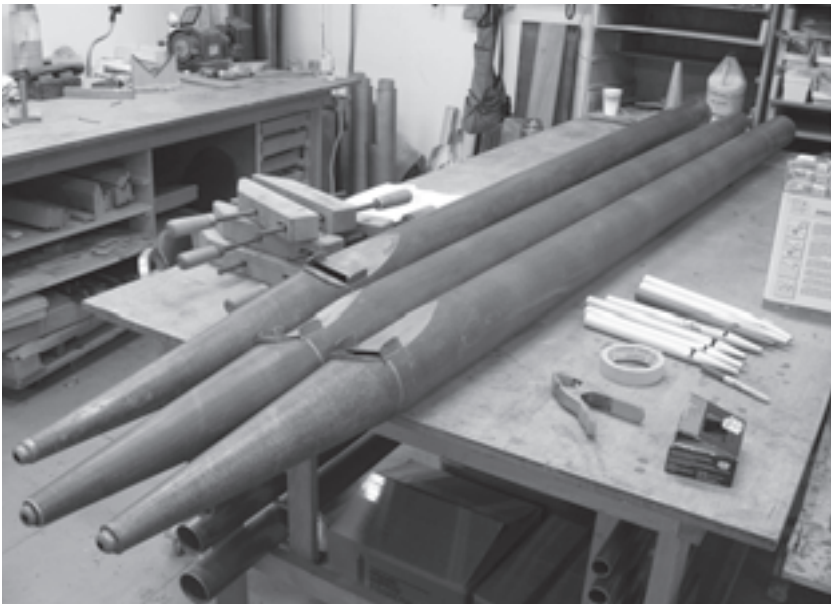
Wood pipes prior to voicing

state capture and control system with our standard complement of accessories and relief carving for the music desk.

The Great division of the organ is unchanged but for the addition of a principal-scaled Seventeenth to fill out the chorus. In the Swell, the Bourdon 16' has been made full compass with a bottom octave built and scaled in our shop to precisely match its 8' octave. The Diapason 8', which originally shared a stopped bass, now has its own bottom octave. Other additions to the Swell include an entirely new Oboe (available at 16' and 8'), a GG-compass Celeste, a new 2' Flute and Mixture III based on 2' pitch. Additions to the Pedal include extending the Great Trumpet with a new 16' octave and a fully independent Principal 8'.

Members of our staff who contributed to this project include: Edward Odell (mechanical design, console), Holly Odell (flue voicing), shop foreman John Williams (windchests, reservoirs, pipe-setting, electrical), Curt Goettlich (finishing, wooden pipe fabrication, cabinet work, expression enclosure), Stewart Skates (metal pipemaking and repair), and Tristan Bowen, with assistance from Richard Hamar and William Harper. Reeds were voiced by Sam Hughes.

We are grateful to the Archdiocesan



Façade pipes being stripped and repaired



Console carcass



Curt Goettlich sanding the new console carcass



Holly Odell shaping upper lip of Swell Bourdon 16'



Shop foreman John Williams brushing toe holes in one of four new manual windchests

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Opus 647
St. Ann's Roman Catholic Church, Nyack, New York**

GREAT

8'	Open Diapason	existing, restored, common metal from 4' C	61 pipes
8'	Viola di Gamba	existing, restored	61 pipes
8'	Doppel Flute	existing, restored, wood	61 pipes
4'	Principal	existing, restored, common metal	61 pipes
4'	Chimney Flute	existing, restored, common metal	61 pipes
2 1/2'	Twelfth	existing, restored, common metal	61 pipes
2'	Fifteenth	existing, restored, common metal	61 pipes
1 1/2'	Seventeenth	new, matching scale, common metal	61 pipes
8'	Trumpet	existing, restored and revoiced	61 pipes
	Chimes	new	21 tubes

SWELL Expressive—in reconfigured expression chamber

16'	Bourdon	new, extension 8', custom matching scale	61 pipes
8'	Open Diapason	existing, restored with new bottom octave	61 pipes
8'	Stopped Diapason	existing, restored	61 pipes
8'	Salicional	existing, restored with new bottom octave	61 pipes
8'	Voix Céleste	new, GG compass, 55% tin to 4' C	54 pipes
4'	Violina	existing, restored	61 pipes
4'	Harmonic Flute	existing, restored, harmonic at middle C	61 pipes
2'	Harmonic Piccolo	new, matching scale to 4', harm. at middle C, 55% tin	61 pipes
III	Mixture	new, 15-19-22	183 pipes
16'	Bassoon	new, dual taper resonators, tapered shallots	12 pipes
8'	Oboe	new, dual taper resonators, tapered shallots, 49 reeds	61 pipes
8'	Trumpet	from Great	—
	Tremulant		—

PEDAL

16'	Open Wood	existing, restored	32 pipes
16'	Bourdon	existing, restored	32 pipes
8'	Octave	new, zinc to 4' G, remainder 55% tin	32 pipes
8'	Gedeckt	new, extension Bourdon 16'	12 pipes
4'	Choralbass	new, extension Octave 8'	12 pipes
16'	Trumpet	new, matching scale to 8', tapered shallots	12 pipes
16'	Bassoon	from Swell	—
8'	Trumpet	from Great	—
4'	Clarion	from Great	—

Mixture composition

1 to 25:	15-19-22
26 to 44:	12-15-19
45 to 61:	8-12-15

12 general pistons, 6 per division
12 toe studs with black porcelain heads in raised, curved, wooden bolsters
32 levels of capture memory
12-step transposer
MIDI interface, record and playback
Programmable sforzando and crescendo

Couplers and accessories

Great to Pedal 8 (reversible)
Great to Pedal 4
Swell to Pedal 8 (reversible)
Swell to Pedal 4
Great to Great 16
Great Unison Off
Great to Great 4
Swell to Great 16
Swell to Great 8 (reversible)
Swell to Great 4
Swell to Swell 16
Swell Unison Off
Swell to Swell 4

Music and Building Commission, as well as the staff of St. Ann's Church, especially Father Robert Henry and George Bryant, for the opportunity to create something of lasting musical beauty for this parish.

—Edward Odell
J.H. & C.S. Odell

During this bicentennial year of the Archdiocese of New York, St. Ann's Church in Nyack, New York is blessed to have a newly renovated pipe organ. I had the privilege of playing this organ prior to its renovation, as the winner of the George Bryant Scholarship, which was used towards continuing organ education. Mr. Bryant is the current director of music and organist of St. Ann's Church, and this parish is lucky to have such a dedicated and talented musician leading its liturgical music program.

Prior to its renovation, the organ at St. Ann's had many problems; there were many dead notes, missing pipes, and the overall tone was in need of serious remedial work. The console, installed in the 1960s, was also problematic: many pistons were non-functional and there were dead contacts everywhere. Even if the organ itself were in better condition, the console limited the ability to control it effectively.

Director of music, George Bryant, and the pastor, Fr. Robert Henry, saw the obvious need to renovate this instrument, which has served the parish for over 100 years, but had never had a comprehensive rebuild of any kind. After contacting the Archdiocesan Building Commission and Music Commission and taking the necessary steps to proceed with such an endeavor, St. Ann's Church awarded the contract to renovate the organ to J.H. & C.S. Odell.

After making his survey, Edward Odell listened to the needs of St. Ann's parish and submitted his proposal. Working with the pastor and organist of St. Ann's, members of the organ committee for the New York Archdiocesan Music Commission reviewed the proposal as well as vet-

ting proposals from other builders.

The ongoing mission of the New York Archdiocesan Organ Committee is to ensure that the pipe organs of the archdiocese are properly cared for. In our work, we use our combined knowledge and experience to advise pastoral staff who are in need of guidance with regards to their instruments. This committee consists of Meredith Baker, director of music at Holy Trinity West Point, New York; Christopher Berry, director of music at the North American College in Rome, Italy; Daniel Brondel, director of music at St. Malachy's Church/The Actor's Chapel, New York City; Jared Lamenzo, director of music at Old St. Patrick's Cathedral, New York City; and Lawrence Strohm, organist at St. Phillip the Apostle, Pasadena, California, with myself as chair.

Throughout the organ renovation project for St. Ann's Church, Edward Odell has been in touch with everyone every step of the way, giving detailed updates, sending pictures, and giving honest suggestions when unexpected discoveries came up. It has been my observation that attention to detail and highest quality outcome is of the utmost importance to everyone of the Odell organ firm. Edward and his staff are meticulous craftspeople; it is clear they bring dedication, concern and skill to their work and desire to deliver only the best results.

It should be noted that over the last 150 years, J.H. & C.S. Odell has built many of the organs housed in churches in the Archdiocese of New York, a good number of which still serve their parishes today. Their reputation as builders of fine instruments has existed for five generations, and their work today continues to support liturgical and concert music in the archdiocese. It pleases me to say St. Ann's Church is now fortunate to be among the fraternity of churches that house the fine work of J.H. & C.S. Odell.

—Jennifer Pascual
Chair, New York Archdiocesan Organ Committee