

The Fort Wayne Organ Company & the Packard Legacy

Volume 1: Nuts, Bolts, & Other Tidbits



ca. 1885 Salesman's Display

Charles A. Robison

Pictured below and on the cover are photos of a ca. 1885 Packard Orchestral Organ salesman's sample of a Style 16. The actual parlor organ listed for \$280 in the 1885 catalog.

In April 2006, this sample sold at the Rich Penn Country Store Auction for \$20,000. The auction provided the following description:

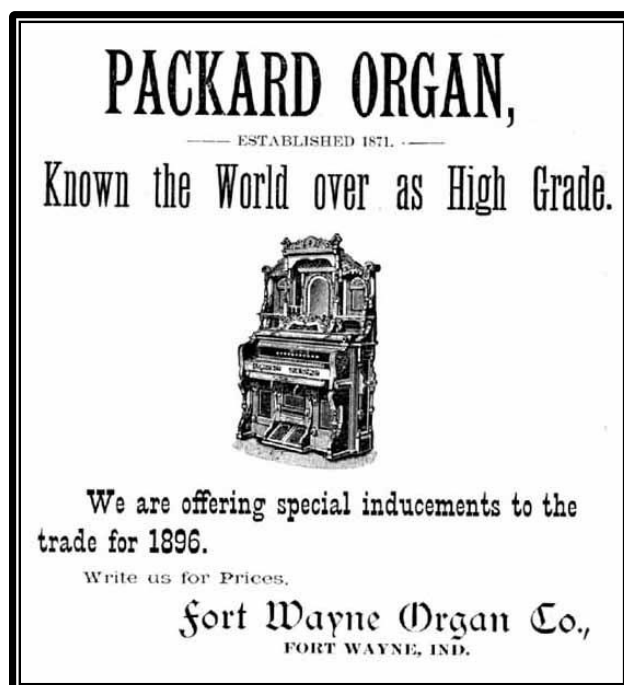
Salesman's sample parlor organ, Fort Wayne Organ Co., walnut w/lots of burl, simply spectacular detail, keys do not move or it would probably play, c.1885, a Very Rare salesman's sample, one professional repair on small pc. of upper trim, otherwise in Mint original condition, 28"H x 18"W x 9"D.



(Photos used with permission of Rich Penn Auctions, Waterloo, Iowa.)

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REED ORGAN SOCIETY

AN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION

PO Box 47, Independence MO 64051 USA



This original family photo contains no written information. One can only surmise the importance of each item that has been carefully selected for inclusion. What is known is that the parlor organ is a

Fort Wayne Organ Co. Packard, Case 390 ca. 1891.

Membership Directory 2015

I joined the Reed Organ Society in 1989. I no longer remember how I heard about the organization, but when a gathering was announced to be held at Heiss Haus in Nashville, Michigan, in 1997, I was determined to go. I persuaded my wife, Pam, that it would be a fun adventure, and she reluctantly agreed.

What transpired became a transformative event for us. Not only did I have a wonderful time, but Pam became hooked as well. We have not missed an ROS event since!

Without our experiences within the organization, there is no doubt in my mind that this history would never have been written. We have met and made many wonderful friends whose support and encouragement made this journey possible. To the organization and the people who brought it to life, I want to shout out a big THANK YOU!

Volume 1 Overview

I begin with a one-page timeline of the company's history, noting its major milestones. This is followed by the organization of the Fort Wayne Organ Company during its first three years, ending with the death of its namesake, I. T. Packard.

Isaac Turner's biography follows. While he held many patents, I have included only one, the one that was frequently desired by buyers of his instruments. I say "his instruments" because Isaac saw organ production as simply the continuation of his former business ventures dating back several decades. Sadly, his time in business in Fort Wayne was all too brief.

Chapters four through twelve are divided into the various features that make a Packard a Packard. Included are numerous catalogs and photographs of various instrument designs. I have broken down the catalog chapters into three primary time periods: the early years, 1872-1887; the decade of Hill case designs, 1888-1897; and the closing years of organ production, 1898-1914.

Following these chapters are two sections identifying mechanical features and designs that can be useful in dating a Packard organ.

The data chart is one I have created by tracking organs for about 15 years. On many of the organs I collected the information myself, either by inspecting others' instruments or from ones I purchased directly. Other folks have sent me information about their organs via my website, *packardorgan.com*. Still other information came from friends who have also become aficionados of the Packard brand.

I close out the book with a brief chapter "The Handwriting on the Wall," that leads into *Volume 2: Justice – The Secret of Good Business*.

I have made no attempt to write a narrative of the company's history from beginning to end. I have not had the time or skills to enter into the research for such a task. I will leave to others in the future the pleasure of delving deeper into the fascinating history of this significant company. My primary concern has been to make available all of the knowledge and primary materials that I have collected over the years before my time on this earth is ended. Selfishly, I don't want it to be lost. I feel I owe that much to the memory of those who have gone before.

The Fort Wayne Organ Company's instruments found their way into many homes, churches, schools, and other locations, delighting generations with their music. The legacy continues to linger in the instruments that are collected and brought back to life in this generation. The pianos and organs that have survived are a testament to the quality of workmanship instilled in each one. My hope and desire is that I have been faithful in helping to preserve the workmen's legacy, a legacy of which they can rightfully be proud.

Style 571—Action 43. Eleven Stops. Five Octave. P Scale.
 BASS. TREBLE. THROUGHOUT.
 Diapason, 8 ft. Melodia, 8 ft. Vox Humana.
 Viola, 4 ft. Celeste, 8 ft. Full Organ, [Knee Lever].
 Violina, 4 ft. Celestina, 8 ft. Knee Swell.
 Dulcet Bass, 8 ft. Dulcet Treble, 8 ft.
 Bass Coupler. Treble Coupler.
 Having two sets of two octaves each, and two sets of three octaves each.

Style 572—Action 49. Twelve Stops. Five Octave. Same as Style 571, with the following additions:
 BASS.
 Harp Angelica, 2 ft. (Two sets opened by this Stop).
 Having four sets of two octaves each, and two sets of three octaves each.

Style 573—Action 51. Twelve Stops. Five Octave. Same as Style 571, with the following additions:
 BASS.
 Sub-Bass, 16 ft. [One octave].

Style 574—Action 77. Fourteen Stops. Five Octave. Same as Style 571, with the following additions:
 BASS. TREBLE.
 Harp Angelica, 2 ft. (two sets). Pipe Diapason, 8 ft.
 Forte. (Flute, 4 ft. in place of Celeste, 8 ft.)
 Having four sets of two octaves each, and three sets of three octaves each.

Style 576—Action 73. Eleven Stops. Same as Style 571, but is a Six Octave.

Style 577—Action 74. Twelve Stops. Six Octave. Same as Style 576, with the addition of either Flute 4 ft., or Cello 16 ft., in the Treble.
 Having two sets of two octaves each, and three sets of four octaves each.

Style 578—Action 79. Twelve Stops. Six Octave. Same as Style 576, with the following additions:
 BASS.
 Harp Angelica, 2 ft. (Two sets opened by this Stop).
 Having four sets of two octaves each, and two sets of four octaves each.

Style 579—Action 79 C. Thirteen Stops. Six Octave. Same as Style 578, with the addition of the Cello in the Treble.
 Having four sets of two octaves each, and three sets of four octaves each.

For style of Case see opposite page

**EVERY PACKARD ORGAN WARRANTED
 FOR FIVE YEARS**

PACKARD ORGANS-17



Case 570

DIMENSIONS.—Length, 60 inches; Depth, 24 inches; Height, 72 inches.

This Case made in Quarter-sawn Oak only

1888-1897 (ca. 1893 Catalog)

Style 581—Action 43. Eleven Stops. Five Octave. P Scale.
 BASS. TREBLE. THROUGHOUT.
 Diapason, 8 ft. Melodia, 8 ft. Vox Humana.
 Viola, 4 ft. Celeste, 8 ft. Full Organ, [Knee Lever].
 Violina, 4 ft. Celestina, 8 ft. Knee Swell.
 Dulcet Bass, 8 ft. Dulcet Treble, 8 ft.
 Bass Coupler. Treble Coupler.
 Having two sets of two octaves each, and two sets of three octaves each.

Style 582—Action 49. Twelve Stops. Five Octave. Same as Style 581, with the following additions:
 BASS.
 Harp Angelica, 2 ft. (Two sets opened by this Stop).
 Having four sets of two octaves each, and two sets of three octaves each.

Style 583—Action 51. Twelve Stops. Five Octave. Same as Style 581, with the following additions:
 BASS.
 Sub-Bass, 16 ft. [One octave].

Style 584—Action 77. Fourteen Stops. Five Octave. Same as Style 581, with the following additions:
 BASS. TREBLE.
 Harp Angelica, 2 ft. (two sets). Pipe Diapason, 8 ft.
 Forte. (Flute, 4 ft. in place of Celeste, 8 ft.)
 Having four sets of two octaves each, and three sets of three octaves each.

Style 586—Action 73. Eleven Stops. Same as Style 581, but is a Six Octave.

Style 587—Action 74. Twelve Stops. Six Octave. Same as Style 586, with the addition of either Flute 4 ft., or Cello 16 ft., in the Treble.
 Having two sets of two octaves each, and three sets of four octaves each.

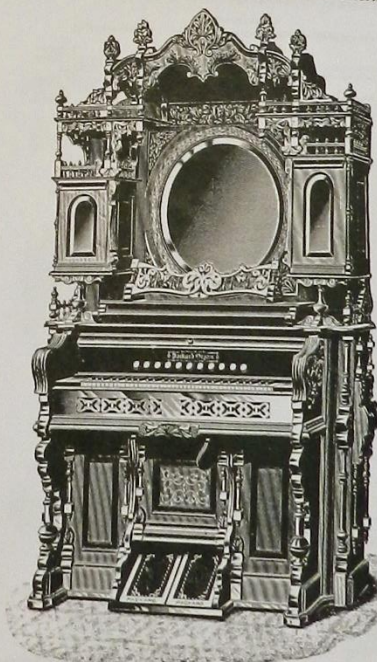
Style 588—Action 79. Twelve Stops. Six Octave. Same as Style 586, with the following additions:
 BASS.
 Harp Angelica, 2 ft. (Two sets opened by this Stop).
 Having four sets of two octaves each, and two sets of four octaves each.

Style 589—Action 79 C. Thirteen Stops. Six Octave. Same as Style 588, with the addition of the Cello in the Treble.
 Having four sets of two octaves each, and three sets of four octaves each.

For style of Case see opposite page

**EVERY PACKARD ORGAN WARRANTED
 FOR FIVE YEARS**

PACKARD ORGANS-19

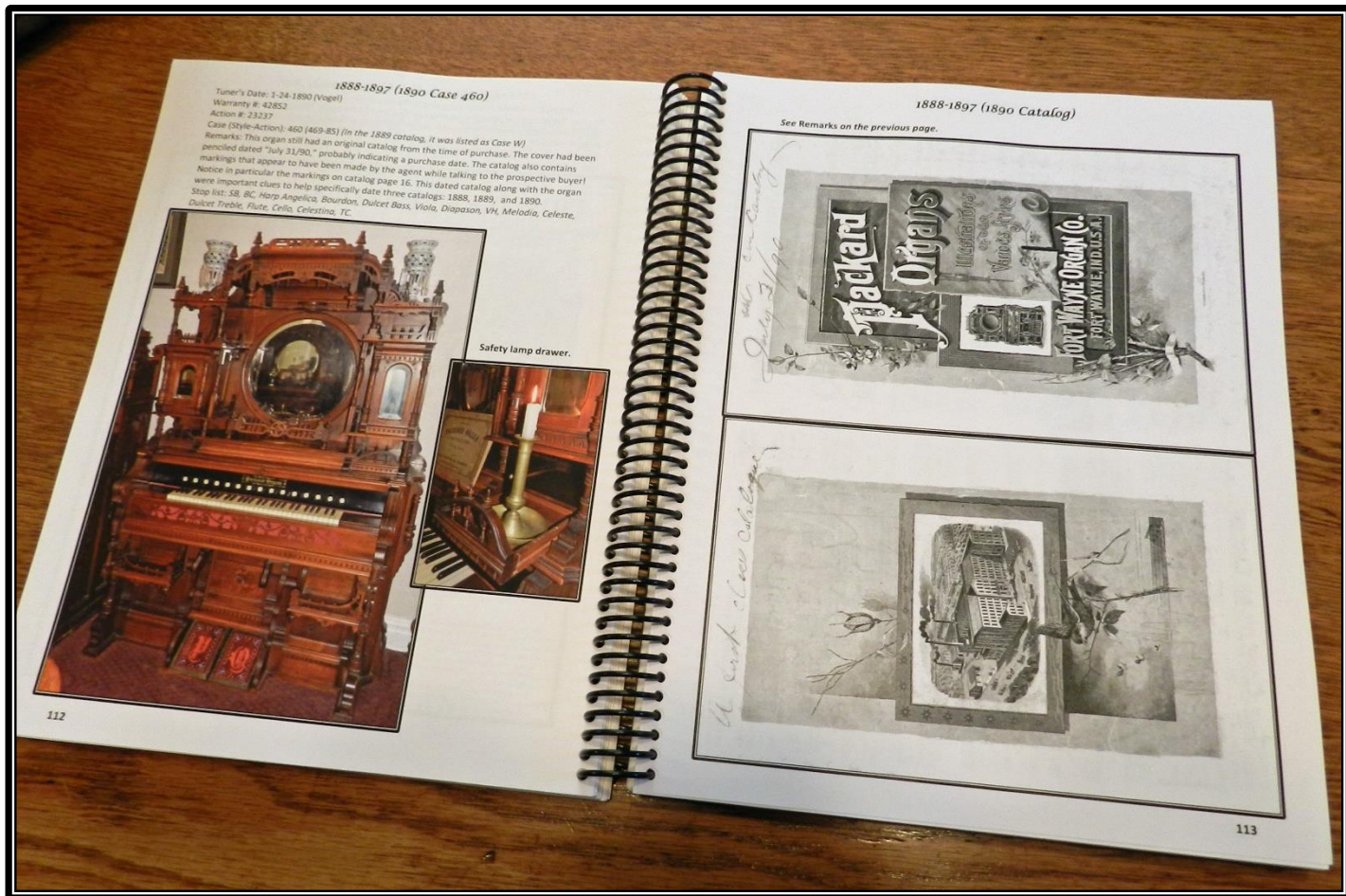


Case 580

DIMENSIONS.—Length, 59 inches; Depth, 24 inches; Height, 87 inches.

This Case made in Black Walnut only

1888-1897 (ca. 1893 Catalog)



										98155
(nd)		340 (340-?)				10 stops.				
1906		480 (480H-80H)	5	E		Restored for Tusculum Railroad Museum, AL. Stops: SB, OC, Diapason 8', Dulcet Bass 8', Cornet 2', Violetta 4', Viola 4', Humanola 8', VH, Flautina 4', Flute 4', Cello 16', Piccolo 2', Dulcet Treble 8', Melodia 8'.	67626		98793	
(nd)		340 (346-73)	6	G					99051	
(nd)		360 (366-73)	6	E-3					99206	
(nd)		340 (341-43)	5	E-3			68406		99761	
(nd)		340 (346-73)	6	E-3			68320		99762	
1906? (9-27)	Sabin	480 (480-80)	5			Version 3.	68696		100355	
Australia		280 (287-55)	5	G					101243	
France		700 (707.H)	5	E-2		Stops: BC, Harp Angelica 2', Cornet Echo 2', Viola 4', Violina 4', Diapason 8', Dulcet Bass 8', VH, Dulcet Treble 8', Melodia 8', Vox Jubilante 2' & 8', Dulcet Pipe 8', Humanola 8' patent, TC. Rare Humanola action.			101264	
(nd)		340 (346-73)	6	G			69316		101388	
(nd)		340 (341-43)	5	G					101655	
1907 (9-5)	WF Sabin	370 (374H. and H.)	5	E-2		Humanola action; has "Royalty Stamp REED PIPE No. 1599 Patent No. 545100 August 27, 1895 WILLIAM SEYBOLD Registered"; stops: BC, Harp Angelica 2', Cornet Echo 2', Viola 4', Violina 4', Diapason 8', Dulcet Bass 8', VH, Dulcet Treble 8', Melodia 8', Vox Jubilante 2' + 8', Dulcet Pipe 8', Humanola 8', TC. No reeds in the last octave of the 2' reed set in the treble.	66956		101675	
1907	(nd)	280 (281-43)	5	G		Rescued from church fire in 1914.				
		480 (485-85)				Stops: Subbass 16', OC, Harp Angelica 2', Viola 4', Bourdon 16', Diapason 8', Dulcet Treble 8', Melodia 8', VH, Cello 16', Flute 4', Celestina 8', Celeste 8', Delicato 8'.	69656		101688 (Fig. 10)	
							69644			

Figure 7. Ca. 1885 trade card featuring a Packard Grand organ. The agent listed on the back is a woman.

**The Packard Orchestral Organ.**

Manufactured by this Company, it is known throughout this country as an instrument which has no superior, and few, if any, equals. Especially is it unrivalled in the quality of its tone, which is, and ever has been, its strong point, and has rendered it victorious in many a sharp contest for public favor.

The factory was constructed and fitted up especially for the manufacture of the Packard Orchestral Organs. It is thoroughly supplied with every facility for the production of first-class work. The spacious yards connected with the factory are always well filled with every kind of lumber needed, and a large and improved dry-house is kept in constant use to complete the seasoning process.

Only one grade of work is made, and the purchaser of the Packard can always depend upon getting the best of material and the finest of workmanship.

This organ can be bought of Mrs. E. J. Thrapp, who is general agent, 25 per cent. cheaper than any other first-class instrument in the country. You are respectfully invited to call at the residence of S. T. W. Thrapp, in Ulysses, and see for yourself.

Mrs. E. J. Thrapp, Gen'l Agt.
N. B.—Special inducements are offered to all cash customers. All these instruments are warranted for 5 yrs.

Figure 8. Small newspaper ads, left to right: Case O (The Youth's Companion, June 13, 1889); Case W (The Echo, September 1892); Case 560 (Farm and Family—Western Edition, December 15, 1895).

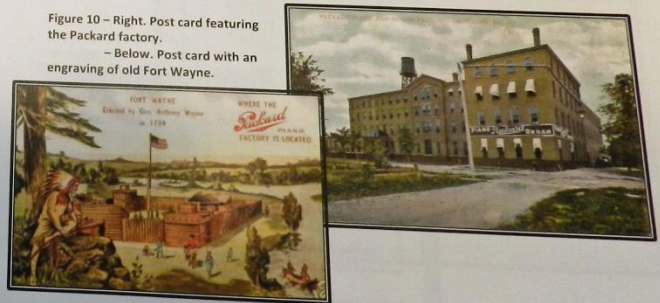


Figure 9. Rare bookmark and 1900 pocket calendar featuring both organs and pianos.



Figure 10—Right. Post card featuring the Packard factory.

Below. Post card with an engraving of old Fort Wayne.

**10. Stopboard Designs and Features**

The designs of stopboards changed a number of times over the years. Beginning in 1872, only Packard's name appeared on the stopboard (Figs. 1a-c). The name of Fort Wayne Organ Company was nowhere visible. It was only stamped on the small warranty certificate that was tacked in the back of the organ.

Things changed when Packard died in 1873. The Fort Wayne Organ Company name now appeared on the stopboard by itself for a brief period (Fig. 2). By 1874, both names, Fort Wayne Organ Company and Packard, appeared on the stopboard (Fig. 3).

Beginning in 1875 the company name and the name Packard Orchestral were stenciled onto the organ case itself (Fig. 4). The company name was visible when the keyboard cover was closed. Opening the keyboard cover revealed the Packard Orchestral stencil on the music rest.

Around 1887 both names transferred back to the stopboard where they remained (Figs. 5-12). Examples of the various stopboards are shown below along with approximate years of use. Because a stopboard was stored with a given action, it was possible for an older action to appear later after the design had changed. In general however, the years of a stopboard's use can help determine the age of any particular instrument by comparing its design to the list. (Minor variations of designs are known.)

The codes listed with each design are the codes used in the data chart in column "STB."

Figure 1a. ca. 1872 (Code 1a).



Figure 1b. ca. 1872 (Code 1b).



Figure 1c. ca. 1873 (Code 1c).



Figure 2. ca. 1873-74 (Code 2).



Figure 3. ca. 1874 (Code 3). Variations have been seen where the positions were reversed.

**Stopboard Designs and Features**

Figure 4. ca. 1875-86 (Code A). The company name is stenciled on the upper case. Packard Orchestral is stenciled on the music rest and is visible when the keyboard cover is open.



Figure 5. ca. 1888-92 (Code B).



Figure 6. ca. 1893-98 (Code C).

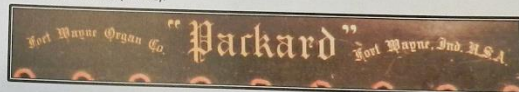


Figure 7. ca. 1899 (Code C-A). Just before the name change in 1900, the same stencils used on Packard pianos was used briefly on organs. This poor example is all I could find.



Bonus: In 2015, my wife and I sponsored the Reed Organ Society's gathering in our hometown of Independence Missouri. We featured the Packard organ as well as other aspects of reed organs. As part of the gathering, we had reproduced 6 items of early Packard literature. While supplies last, I am including a set of the following reproduction items:

1. 1899 Packard Carnival March sheet music
2. 1910 The Packard Combination Organ Style 485 Humanola catalog (12pp with additional inserts)
3. 1890 Catalog (24pp)
4. 1893 Chicago World's Fair flyer printed in the same color as the original (8pp)
5. 1872 Price list and description of organs available (Folded flyer)
6. ca. 1885 Packard Orchestral Organ trade card (two sided...the agent was a woman who had Packard organs displayed in the residence of her husband!)

