

Lyttelton Union Church

The Edgar Henry Jenkins organ currently in the old Lyttelton Union Church was a private commission from Mr Edward Giraud, Superintendent of the Lyttelton Orphanage. The Lyttelton Orphanage was established in the former Lyttelton Hospital in 1870 and in August 1871 the Superintendent, Giraud purchased the 1850 Bevington organ from St Michael and All Angels. He had the Bevington installed in the girls schoolroom in September, and in 1872 Giraud had Jenkins add a full pedalboard and Bourdon rank running throughout¹ and the organ was officially opened on 31 October 1872.² In 1874 a Gamba replaced the Cornopean but on the night of Monday 3 May 1875 the girl's schoolroom and all its contents were destroyed by a fire.³

The Government refused to replace the destroyed Bevington, so in 1876 Giraud ordered a two manual instrument for the Orphanage personally.⁴ It was partially installed in 1877, with the Swell Organ used daily at the services of the institution.⁵ It would seem that the organ was worked on in stages, but was incomplete before Giraud left on 24 August 1878 back to England.⁴ Giraud had one public recital held on the instrument the evening before he sailed, on Friday 23 August, where Mr R. Searell, Mr Morsehead, and Miss Emily Funston played. The reason he held the concert so close to when he left New Zealand was that the metal pipework for the Great had only arrived in Lyttelton on 15 July, and not unloaded until a week later.^{5,6} Unfortunately they could not be voiced and installed in time for the farewell concert. The specification of the organ as listed in July 1878 was:

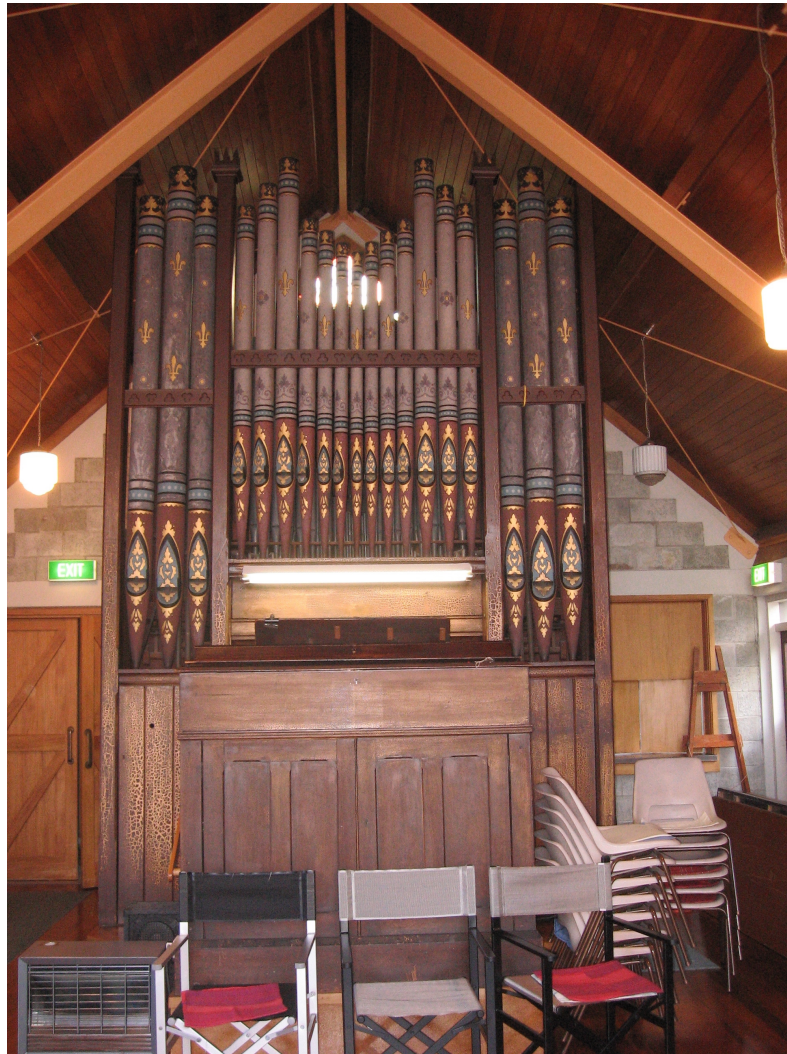
GREAT ORGAN CC to F 54 notes				PEDAL ORGAN CCC to C 25 notes	
Open Diapason	8			Bourdon	16
Stop Diapason Bass	8			Violoncello	8
Claribella	8	TC	†	COUPLERS	
Gamba	8	TC		Swell to Great	
Keraulophon	8	TC		Swell to Pedal	
Principal	4			Great to Pedal	
Flute	4	†		Three composition pedals to Great	
Piccolo	2	†			
Trumpet	8	†*			
SWELL ORGAN CC to F 54 notes				Compass 54/25 (German Pedal)	
Open Diapason	8	TC		Mechanical action	
Stop Diapason	8			Lever swell pedal	
Principal	4	TC			
Hautbois	8	TC			

† Ranks still to be fitted as of 26 August 1878⁴

* Never seems to have been installed, its place being taken by a Dulciana 8.

On 18 January 1879 the organ was advertised for public auction⁷ with newspaper notices going in the *Timaru Herald*, *Wanganui Chronicle*, *Hawkes Bay Herald* as well as the local newspapers. However, it was not until 1880 that the instrument was purchased by the trustees of the Lyttelton Wesleyan Church, and installed in May.⁸

The organ is the second instrument of E. H. Jenkins, and is unique to New Zealand in that it shows the most influence of his time as an installation foreman for Aristide Cavaillé-Coll.⁹ With a detached reversed mechanical console, terraced drawstop jambs, straight and flat pedalboard, it has been stated: "I would say that it was one of the country's most valuable historic organs, as an example of New Zealand organbuilding".¹⁰



LYTTELTON UNION CHURCH (C.T. TEMPLETON 2013)

The Lyttelton Wesleyan Methodist Church originally met in private cottages, before a store was lent for meeting in, then a two room cottage was loaned and converted into one large meeting room. The first purpose built building was erected on David Street and opened on 4 March 1855. At first the congregational singing was led with by a flutist. Less than six years later a second building was started on Norwich Quay, and opened on 1 September 1861. The timber building was cruciform in plan, however it was soon surrounded by business premises, so in 1866 it was moved to the Winchester Street site at a cost of £500. In 1877, it was extended to seat a further 90 more people, then in 1880 again extended to accommodate the new pipe organ - the project costing £500.¹¹

It would appear that the tremulant was added by Herbert Brett before the first World War. A blower was also added to the instrument at some stage. Also at some stage the key ivories have been replaced with the most execrable celluloid key covers.

In 1958 the wooden building was demolished and the current concrete block building erected. When it came to the organ, the original floor was cut, and the new building built around the organ, so that the organ is standing on the 1861 floorboards. The new church was opened on 14 December 1958.¹²

In the 1980s, the organ was tuned by John Dodgshun and the late Maurice Baker, two

Christchurch organists and organbuilding enthusiasts.¹³ After the earthquakes of 2011, the building suffered some minor damage that was repaired and the building brought up to the current earthquake standard. The organ had some minor damage that was stabilised by the New Zealand Organ Manufactory.¹⁴ The Anglican congregation meanwhile joined with the Union Congregation as Holy Trinity Anglican Church was destroyed. With the reinstatement of St Saviour's at Holy Trinity, and the diminishing Union Congregation, it was decided to close the Union building as a worship centre at the present point in time and have the Union Congregation worship with the Anglican Church. The Union Parish of Lyttelton was combined with the Sumner and Redcliffs Parish to form the Port Hills Uniting Parish. The Lyttelton Union building is still used by community groups and it is hoped that it will still be used as a worship centre at some stage in the future.¹⁵



LYTTELTON UNION CHURCH - TERRACED CONSOLE (C.T. TEMPLETON 2013)

GREAT			PEDAL	
Open Diapason	8		Bourdon	16
Stopd Bass	8	CC-BB	Violoncello	8
Claribel	8	TC	COUPLERS	
Gamba	8	TC	Swell to Great	
Keraulophon	8	TC	Swell to Pedal	
Dulciana	8		Great to Pedal	
Principal	4		Tremulant	
Flute	4		Three composition pedals to Great	
Piccolo	2		Lever swell pedal	
SWELL			Compass 54/25 (German pedals)	
Open Diapason	8	TC	Mechanical key and stop action	
Stop Diapason	8			
Principal	4	TC		
Hautbois	8	TC		



LYTTELTON UNION CHURCH (C.T. TEMPLETON 2016)

- 1 *Papers Past – Star*, 10 August 1872, p.2
- 2 *Press*, 1 November 1872, p.3
- 3 *Ibid.*, 5 May 1875
- 4 *Ibid.*, 26 August 1878, p.3
- 5 *Papers Past – Star*, 25 July 1878, p.3
- 6 *Papers Past – Press*, 16 July 1878, p.2
- 7 *Timaru Herald*, 6 January 1879
- 8 *Press*, 1 May 1880, p.1
- 9 Jenkins worked with Cavaillé-Coll 2 April 1860 - 30 June 1863 (information from Paul Joslin)
- 10 Personal comment, J.K. Hargraves, 5 June 2016
- 11 Morley, Rev. William, *The History of Methodism in New Zealand* (Wellington: McKee and Co, 1900), pp. 427-428
- 12 Smith, Jo., *Canterbury Methodist Churches; A Methodist Church of New Zealand Archives Research Project* (Christchurch: Methodist Church of New Zealand Archives, 2014), p.22
- 13 Personal comment, J. Dodgshun, 4 June 2016
- 14 The firm founded in 1998.
- 15 Personal comment, J. Park (Port Hills Uniting Parish), 30 June 2016