

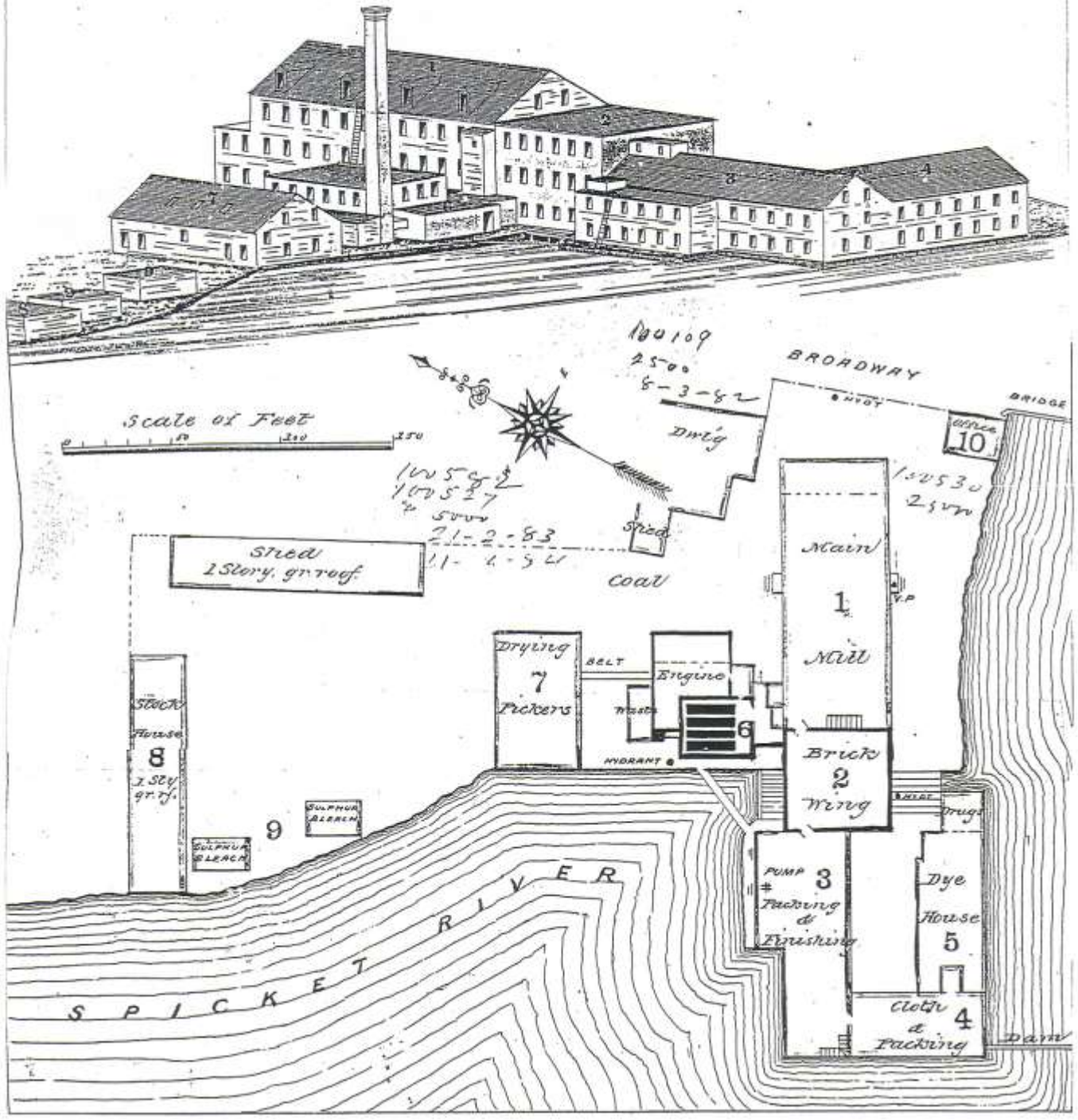
ON THE BANKS ON THE SPICKET RIVER
A Pictorial History of the "Organ Factory" Property

Compiled by
Ed Sampson, President
Board of Trustees
Methuen Memorial Music Hall, Inc.
2015

"In 1824, a saw-mill and grist-mill were built where the Methuen Woolen Mill stands. They came into the possession of Samuel A. Harvey, Esq., by whom the business of the respective mills was carried on for some years. In 1864, a factory was built by the Methuen Woolen Company, and soon put in operation."

"Standard History of Essex County, Massachusetts, embracing a history of the county from its first settlement to the present time, with a history and description of its towns and cities"; written under the supervision of Henry Wheatland, M.D., President of the Essex Institute, by Cyrus M. Tracy, William E. Graves, and Henry M. Batchelder; C. F. Jewett and Company, Boston; 1878; Town Histories: Methuen by Edwin P. Hill; page 297

METHUEN WOOLEN MILL, Methuen, Mass.



No. 3451.

METHUEN WOOLEN MILLS,

METHUEN, Mass.

OWNED by Company, James Walton, Superintendent.

GOODS—Shawls and Cloakings.

STOCK—All wool, work in part of their own waste, sell a part.

CAPACITY—Ten sets.

SURVEYED—October 16, 1874, by J. M. Bancroft.

POWER—Water and steam, the boilers being outside.

DESCRIPTION.

No. 1—MAIN MILL—HEIGHT—three stories and attic, good height each. SIZE—127x50 feet. WALLS—frame, (brick walls with tinned doors at west end). ROOF—slated, and dormers slated outside. CORNICER—small. SCUTTLES—in roof. LADDERS—each side of wood with good balconies. FLOORS—heavy, can be flooded. No inside ceilings. STAIRS—inside, enclosed, belt holes boxed. No elevator. First story, weaving. Second story, spinning jacks. Third story, cards. Attic, jack spinning, tank, wool bins.

No. 2—Brick Wing—Three stories, 50x50, brick, gravel roof. Separated from Nos. 1 and 3 by double tinned doors. First story, weaving. Second story, warping and dressing. Third story, spooling. Basement, scour wool and full goods. One hatchway for hoisting beams, closed when not in use.

No. 3—Two stories and attic, frame, shingle roof, open joists, common floors, wall brick, plastered. Separated from No. 2 by double tinned doors. First story, packing and finishing. Second story, assorting and storage. Attic, store yarns and hard waste.

No. 4—Similar to No. 3, and open to it. First story, cloth and packing room. Second story, storage.

No. 5—Dye House—One story, frame, gravel roof.

No. 6—Boiler and Engine House—Two stories, brick, gravel roof. Connected to mill by frame passage in both stories. First story, boilers and engine, repair shop, hand work only at carpenter's bench, frame partition separates from the engine. Second story, two spinning jacks.

No. 7—Dry and Picker House—One story, frame, shingle roof. Attic used for storage.

No. 8—Storehouse—One story, frame, gravel roof.

No. 9—Sulphur Bleach Houses—One story, frame, gravel roof.

No. 10—Office—One story, frame, shingle roof.

EXPOSURE—Frame dwellings near the mill, are of good style.

SPECIAL FEATURES.

Heating—Steam pipes, well put up.

Lighting—Kerosene, 122 degrees test.

Watchman and watch clock. Sperm oil used in watchman's lantern.

Pickers are in No. 7. Have two common and one burr picker. Power transmitted by belt from mill. Stoppage by shaft in engine house passing through wall. Steam jet, 1 1/2 inch pipe, into each gauze room, valves near those rooms inside the building. No sprinklers. Hydrant outside. Extinguishers in mill. Heat by steam.

Drying—Is done in No. 7 upon two dryers the steam pipes being suspended above the wool. Are about to put in a Stetson dryer in place of these.

Oils—Use lard oil on stock, tallow and spindle oil on machinery. Obtain the very best of oil.

Waste removed daily. Part is kept in frame shed in rear of boilers.

Work 60 hours per week.

Boilers—Four tubular boilers, well set in brick and apparently secure. Fuel coal.

FIRE APPLIANCES.

Fire Pump—One No. 5 Fales & Jenks pump in basement of No. 3, run by an 80 H. P. wheel which can be used upon this alone. Another wheel can also assist. Pump is geared every night. Can be started outside the building.

Vertical Pipe—Two outside each side of No. 1.

Tank—In attic, lead lined, capacity about 400 gallons, with descending pipe in mill with a section of 1 1/2 inch hose attached each story.

Hydrants—Several outside.

Hose—About 600 feet, kept in various places.

Spinklers—None.

Buckets and Casks—Several of each in each story, also water in large sinks.

Steam Jets into picker gauze rooms.

Extinguishers—Three, Babcock.

Lightning Rods on mill.

Ladders of wood, balconies, on iron supports cover two windows.

Auxiliary Aid—Steamer in town.

CHARACTER.

This Mill remains under the same management as in 1867, and is in superior working condition. On occasion of a fire in the night during the night the watchman discovered it, sounded the alarm and lines of hose were laid about 400 feet and a steam thrasher put out the fire.

July, 1879.

METHUEN WOOLEN MILL, ARMROY LELAND,

Sup'l 3451

Run by MR. WALTON, Methuen, Mass.

Mill Building consists of a frame building three stories and attic in height, with a three-story brick addition, with which it communicates by tinned doors each story. Buildings are occupied for weaving, spinning, carding and jacks. Two story boiler house adjoins mill north; two jacks in second story. A one story frame building adjoins boiler house north, is occupied by shoddy picker; no special protection against fire. A two story frame building with wing adjoins brick portion of the mill west, and is occupied by cloth dryer, finishing and wool assorting. A small addition has been made to this building north. Dye House one story, frame, gravel roof, about 10 feet southwest of brick portion of mill. Picker and Dry House two stories, frame, shingle roof, about 25 feet north of boiler house; contains burr and wool picker, duster and wool dryer; protected by steam jets in gauze rooms. A two story extension has been added to east end of frame portion of mill. **Goods**—Cassimeres, &c. **Stock**—Wool, and at times a large per cent. of Shoddy. **Power**—water and steam; 80 H. P. engine; four tubular boilers, space of from four to six feet to floor above. **Heating**—steam; pipes fairly arranged, floors fit too close in places. **Lighting**—kerosene in glass lamps suspended by wires. **Watchman**—nights; pin clock; lard oil in lantern. **Oils**—lard and Elaine on stock. **Fire appliances**—Fales & Jenks pump conveniently located; two vertical pipes outside and one from tank inside, with hose attached each story; three outside double hydrants; from 300 to 500 feet of leather and linen hose; fire pails limited and some out of order; three chemical extinguishers, all out of order; two fixed ladders. Town steamer within short distance. **Character**—Mill has not been running for the past year and is working at present with four sets of cards only, and will but a week or two more. Buildings well constructed and in very fair condition as regards repairs. The appearance of fire appliances other than pump and hydrants does not evince care in their being properly kept.

May, 1883.

METHUEN WOOLEN MILL, AMROY LELAND,

Sup'l 3451

Methuen, Mass.

Mill Building—Three stories and attic, frame, slate roof; three-story, brick, gravel roof addition communicating by tin-covered doors, occupied for carding, spinning and weaving. One high story, brick, gravel roof Boiler and Engine House adjoins mill north. A two-story frame building with wing adjoins brick part of mill west, and is occupied by cloth dryer, finishing and wool assorting. Dye House, one story, frame, shingle roof. Picker and Dry House 25 feet north of boiler house, one story, frame, shingle roof; contains burr and wool pickers, wood gauze rooms, wool dryers with pipes at sides of room. **Goods**—Cassimeres. Ten sets. **Stock**—Wool; sometimes use some colored cotton. **Power**—Water and steam. **Heating**—Steam; pipes in dry room in contact with wood. **Lighting**—Kerosene oil. **Watchman**—Nights and Sundays; watch clock and kerosene lantern. **Oils**—Lard. **Fire appliances**—Rotary pump; three hydrants in yard and one on street; 400 feet of hose; two outside vertical pipes, connected with pump and with public works; vertical pipe in mill, from tank, hose attached in each story; steam jets in gauze rooms; small supply of casks and buckets. Steamer near. **Character**—Buildings are in good repair and kept neat and orderly. Fire appliances appear to be in good working condition.—
[L. M. B.] May, 1883.

NOVEMBER, 1885.

METHUEN WOOLEN MILL, WALTON & LELAND, Sup'l 3451
Methuen, Mass.

Mill Building—Three stories and attic, frame, slate roof. Three story, brick, gravel roof addition communicating by tin-covered doors; occupied for carding, spinning and weaving. One and two story, brick, gravel roof Boiler and Engine House adjoins Mill on the north; wool dryer in second story—heat from boiler room. A two-story frame building with wing adjoins brick part of Mill on the west, and is occupied by cloth dryer, finishing and wool sorting. Dye House, one story, frame, shingle roof. Picker House 25 feet north of Boiler House, one story, frame, shingle roof; contains burr and wool pickers, wood gauze rooms. **Goods**—Cassimeres. Ten sets. **Stock**—Wool, and sometimes a small per cent. of Shoddy and Cotton. **Power**—Water and steam. **Heating**—Steam. **Lighting**—Kerosene oil. **Watchman**—Nights, with Buerk watch and kerosene lantern. **Oils**—Lard. **Fire appliances**—Rotary pump; three hydrants in yard and one on street; 400 feet of hose; two outside vertical pipes; vertical pipe in Mill. from tank, hose attached each story; steam jets in gauze rooms; fair supply of casks and buckets. Steamer near. **Character**—Buildings in good repair and kept neat and orderly. Management appears experienced and careful.—[L. M. B.] November 19th, 1885.



"The Methuen Woolen Company, shown here about 1888, was built in 1864 and produced woolen shawl cloth. Power to run the machinery was provided by a nearly 10-foot drop on the Spicket River at "Harvey's Falls." The property was purchased by Searles around 1889, who established the Methuen Organ Company there in 1892. The wooden bridge in the foreground was replaced by Searles to include a stone arch facade and turrets on the north and south banks of the Spicket River c. 1910."

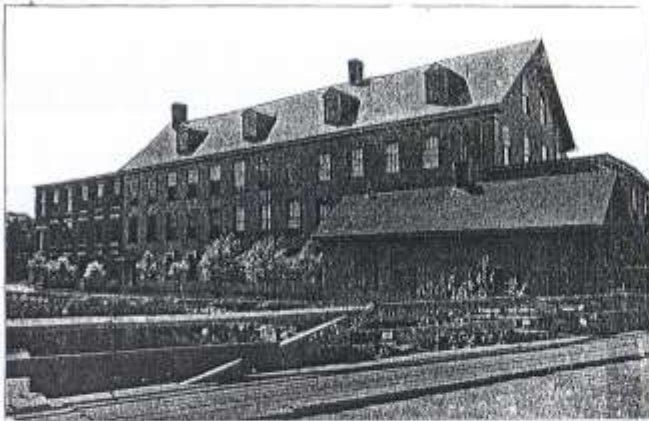
"Images of America: Methuen"; Methuen Historical Commission;
Arcadia Publishing, Charleston, South Carolina; 1999; page 80



A view of the organ company factory building photographed from Broadway in the 1890's.

"The Methuen Transcript"; Friday, July 2, 1926; Methuen, Massachusetts;
Article: "The Great Organ - Serlo Hall"; No. 27; page 1

The United States Tubular Bell Co.,



TUBULAR CHIME BELLS.

The use of harmonic bells has been common throughout Europe for more than three hundred years, and in England their musical notes are heard on every side in town and country, to such an extent that single bells are the exception, but it is comparatively within a short time that the interest in chimes has awakened here.

The reasons for this are obvious. High cost, solidity and size of tower, the necessity of education in ringing and expense of such service combine to delay their introduction and use, and it is fair to state that a small proportion of the owners of this country are familiar with the delightful sound of the chimes as used for church and other service.

The success which these bells have attained in England, where they were first introduced, and later in the United States, is due to their musical character and adaptability to church use, and their value has been enhanced by the fact that they are manufactured by this Company who have for this spared no expense.

The chimes are composed of brass tubes suspended from the end and struck at the top by a hammer which a wire is attached running down to the ringer's room when rung by hand, or to a keyboard when rung by electricity, and played from a small keyboard which may be located in or near the vestibule.

The weight of the largest bell is 230 lbs., the diameter 4 1/4 in., thickness 5/8 in., and length 9 feet 6 inches. A set of 15 bells occupies a floor space of 5 ft. by 7 ft. 6 in. and is 12 ft. high. Weight of bell metal 2,100 lbs., and weight of chime approximates 3,000 lbs.

The quantity of tone produced from these bells is surprising when the amount of metal in vibration is considered, and is vastly more mellow and musical than that of other bells and is sufficient for all ordinary church services. Bells are not needed so much as formerly to call people to church service. Many churches have no bells, proving that a clamorous tone is certainly not a necessity. The best effect of a chime is produced upon the mind of the hearer when, as he approaches the church, the tones of the bells strike the ear. They should have, in some degree, the same result that is intended by the voluntary upon the organ, namely, the preparation of the mind for the religious service which is to follow.

The Tubular Bell is successfully used in connection with "quarter chiming" Tower Clocks, both for public and private use. Aside from the notation of time, a quarter chiming clock is an agreeable musical feature in any location.



Methuen,

Catalogues

Furnished

AND

Correspondence

Solicited.

Mass.



"The United States Tubular Bell Company Advertisement"

"The Methuen Transcript"; Easter Edition, 1896; Methuen, Massachusetts



Panoramic view of Methuen photographed looking southerly in 1898. The Methuen Organ Company factory building can be seen in the upper right.

Mann Collection of the Methuen Historical Commission



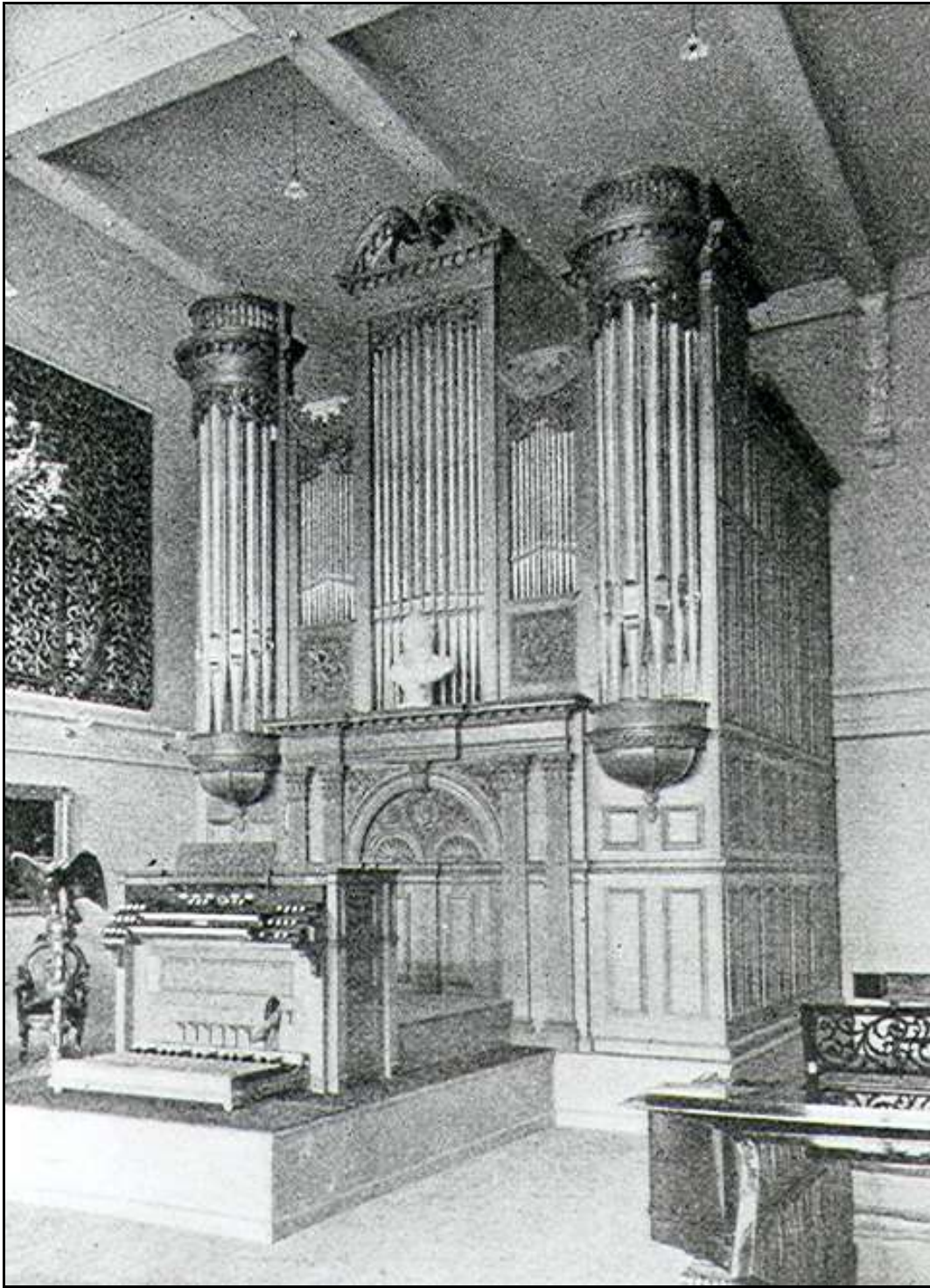
Serlo Organ Hall and the Methuen Organ Company factory building photographed looking southerly on Broadway around 1900.

"New England Magazine, An Illustrated Monthly";
New Series, Volume 23, September 1900 - February 1901;
September 1900, volume 23, number 1;
"Methuen, Massachusetts"; Illustrated; Charles H. Oliphant;
Warren F. Kellogg, Publisher; Boston, Massachusetts; 1900; page 109



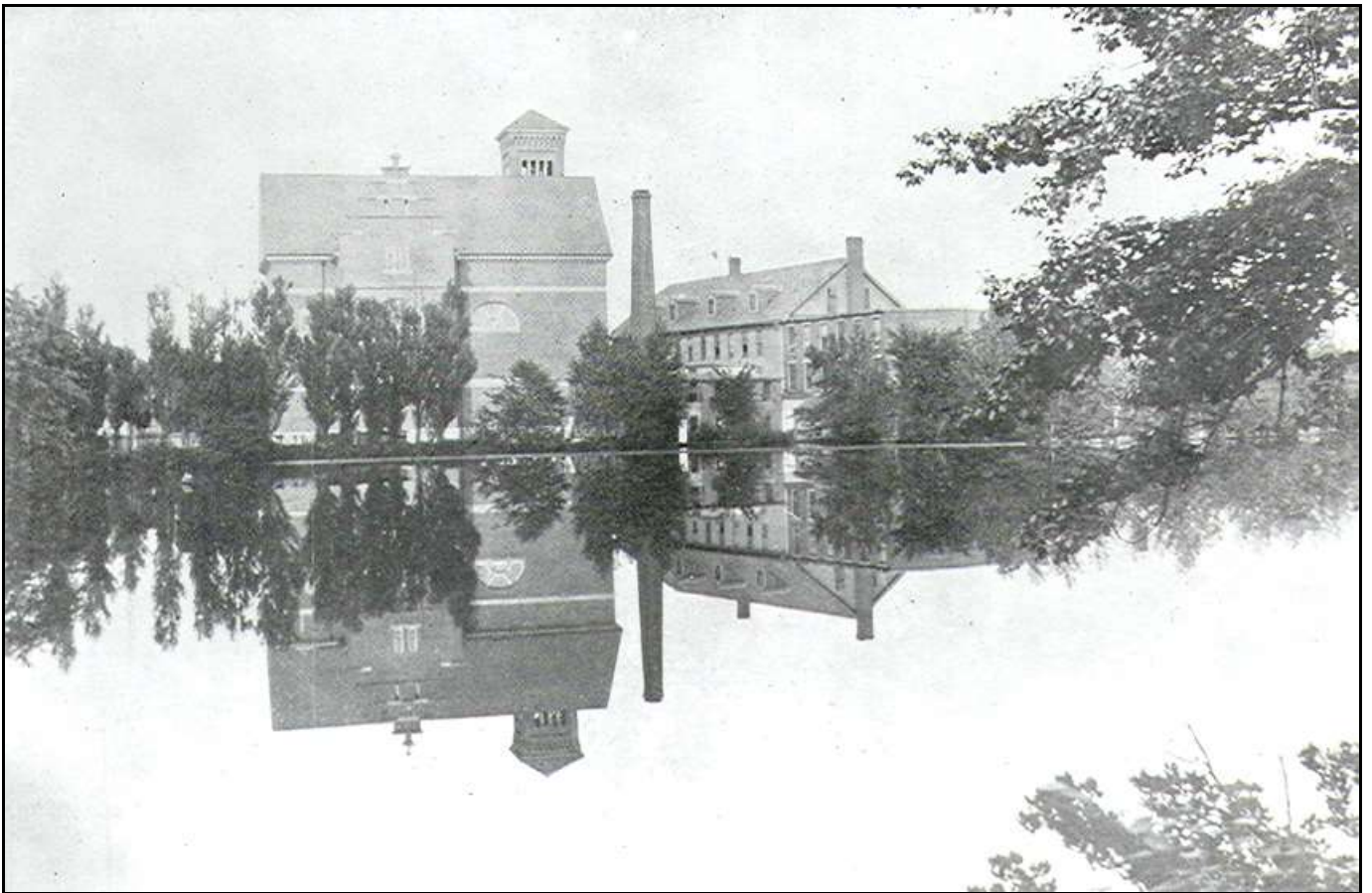
A photograph taken around 1900 of the display room within the Methuen Organ Company factory building.

"New England Magazine, An Illustrated Monthly";
New Series, Volume 23, September 1900 - February 1901;
September 1900, volume 23, number 1;
"Methuen, Massachusetts"; Illustrated; Charles H. Oliphant;
Warren F. Kellogg, Publisher; Boston, Massachusetts; 1900; page 110



The exhibition organ in the display room of the Methuen Organ Company factory building, photographed around 1900.

"New England Magazine, An Illustrated Monthly";
New Series, Volume 23, September 1900 - February 1901;
September 1900, volume 23, number 1;
"Methuen, Massachusetts"; Illustrated; Charles H. Oliphant;
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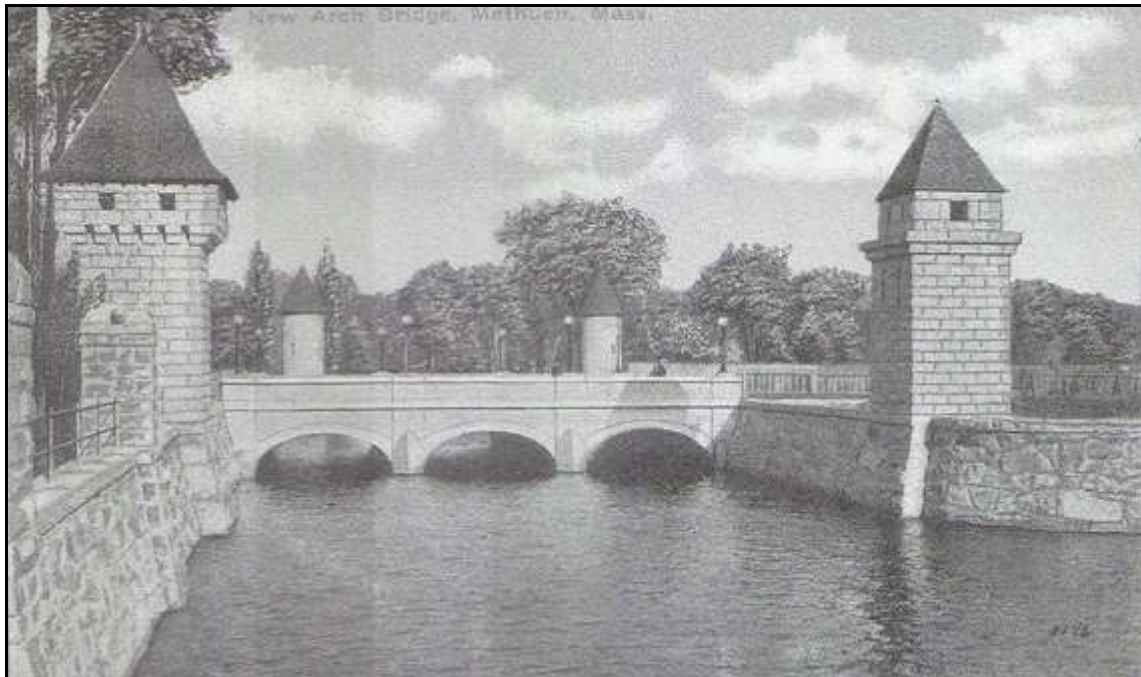


A view of Serlo Organ Hall and the Methuen Organ Company factory building taken from the west bank of the Spicket River around 1903.

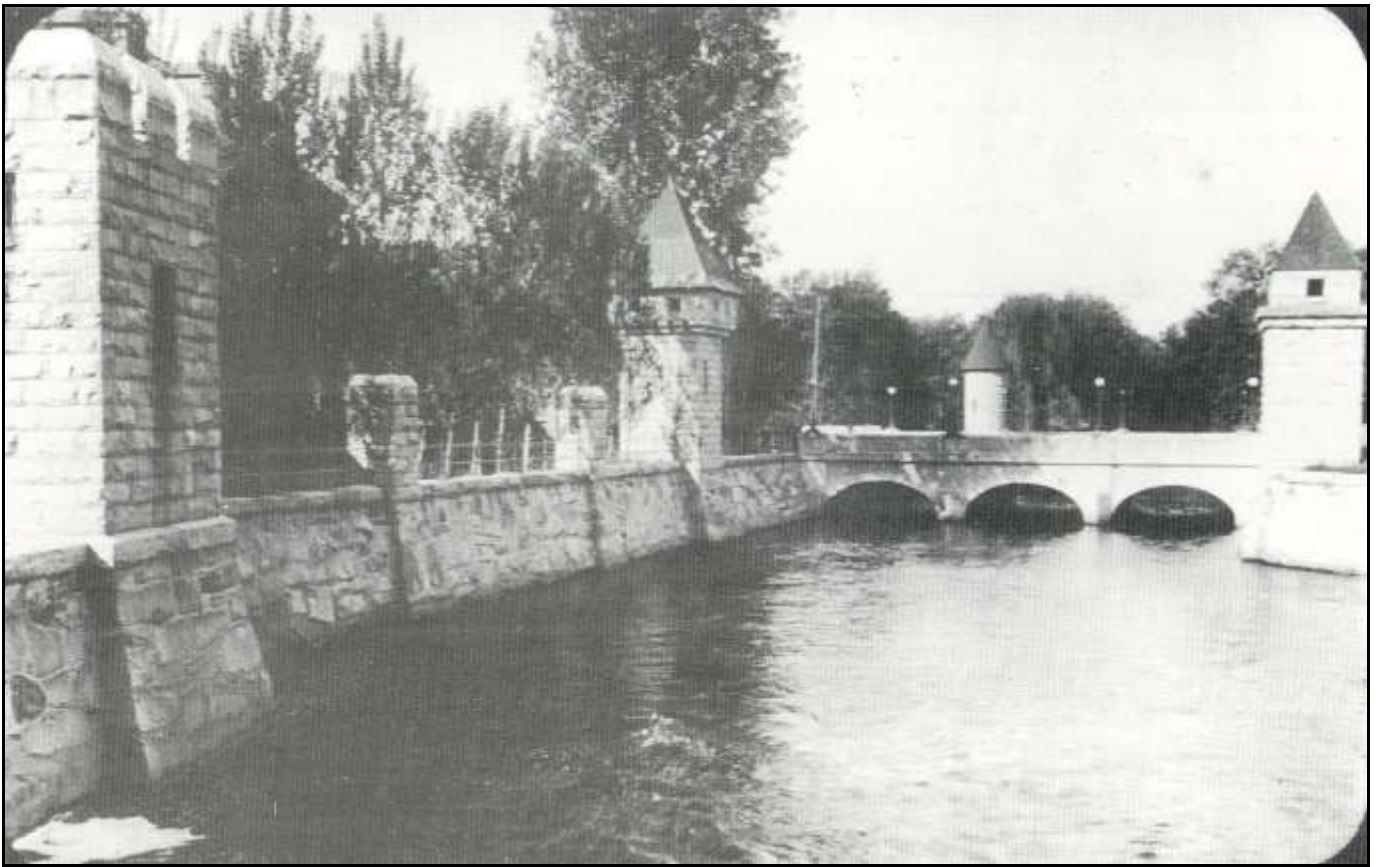
"The Town of Methuen, Massachusetts, in 1903: Pictorial Souvenir,
issued in Connection with the Old Home Week Celebration";
Methuen Transcript Company; Methuen, Massachusetts; 1903; page 71



"Edward F. Searles acquired the old Methuen Woolen Mill near the Broadway bridge, pictured below, in late 1889, and established the Methuen Organ Company there in 1892. He worked in close cooperation with friend and colleague James E. Treat, an organ builder. Two other companies, the Tubular Bell Works, manufacturers of harmonic bells, and the D.M. Bruce Company, suppliers of metal pipes for organs, were also located in the old mill building, above, to the left of the organ hall. The organ factory was abandoned in 1942 and destroyed by fire the following year."



"Images of America: Methuen"; Methuen Historical Commission; Arcadia Publishing, Charleston, South Carolina; 1999; page 16



A stone arch facade bridge over the Spicket River was donated to Methuen by Edward F. Searles in 1912. The turrets on the north and south banks of the river were designed by architect Henry Vaughan. This view is looking easterly toward Broadway.

Mann Collection of the Methuen Historical Commission



A view of the Methuen Organ Company factory building and Serlo Organ Hall photographed in 1915 looking northwesterly from property on the east side of Broadway and south of the stone bridge. The Spicket River can be seen in the foreground.

Mann Collection of the Methuen Historical Commission



Methuen Organ Company factory building and Serlo Organ Hall photographed looking northwesterly from Broadway at the Spicket River bridge in 1929.

Private Collection of William King Covell;
5" by 7" photographic glass plate negative number 1248;
conveyed by Robert R. Covell to Methuen Memorial Music Hall, Inc.



Serlo Organ Hall and the Methuen Organ Company factory building photographed looking southwesterly from Broadway in 1929.

Private Collection of William King Covell;
5" by 7" photographic glass plate negative number 1249;
conveyed by Robert R. Covell to Methuen Memorial Music Hall, Inc.



Serlo Organ Hall and the Methuen Organ Company factory building photographed looking southeasterly from the rear of the property in 1929.

Private Collection of William King Covell;
5" by 7" photographic glass plate negative number 1250;
conveyed by Robert R. Covell to Methuen Memorial Music Hall, Inc.



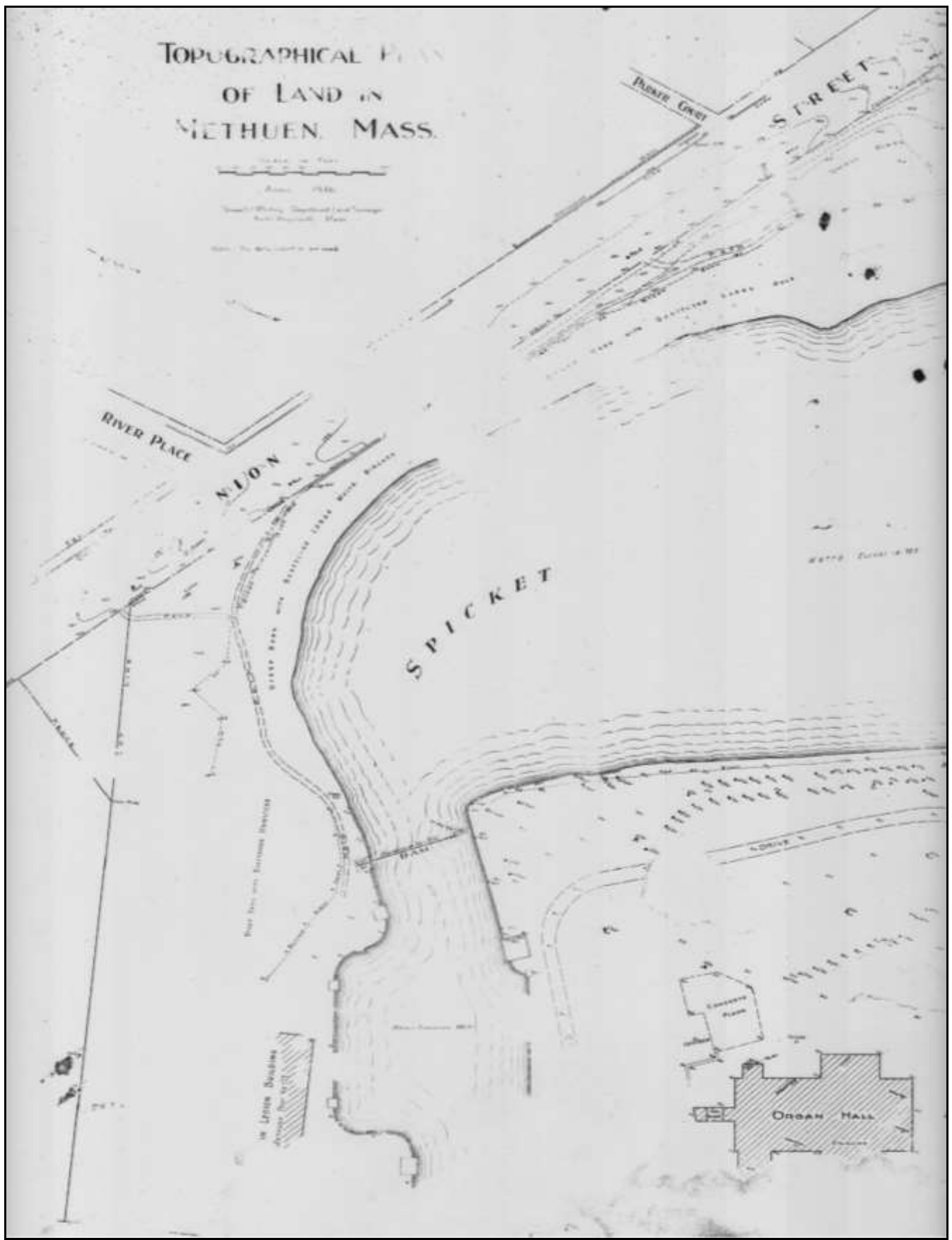
The ruins of the organ factory building photographed the morning after a destructive general alarm fire on June 17, 1943. The conflagration was prevented from spreading to the adjoining Serlo Organ Hall building. The last organs built in the factory were by The Ernest M. Skinner and Son Company during the years 1936 to 1942.

"The Evening Tribune"; Thursday, June 17, 1943;
Lawrence, Massachusetts;

Article: "Famed Serlo Organ Escaped Damage When Factory Building Was Guttled"; page 1

TOPOGRAPHICAL PLAN OF LAND IN METHUEN, MASS.

Scale of Feet
Scale of Feet
Scale of Feet
Scale of Feet
Scale of Feet



PROPERTY TRANSFER RECORD

1946

December 13
From Alfred C. Gaunt to Methuen Memorial Music Hall, Inc.
Essex County Registry of Deeds Northern District
Book 693; Page 51

1946

June 14
From Essex Savings Bank to Alfred C. Gaunt
Essex County Registry of Deeds Northern District
Book 685; Page 302

1943

July 2
From Essex Savings Bank to Essex Savings Bank
Essex County Registry of Deeds Northern District
Book 659; Page 409

1930

August 21
From Lillian Wightman Andrew to Essex Savings Bank
Essex County Registry of Deeds Northern District
Book 554; Page 378

1930

June 17
From Ina Cecil McEachran et alii to Lillian Wightman Andrew
Essex County Registry of Deeds Northern District
Book 554; Page 368

1896

April 27
From James E. Treat to Edward F. Searles
Essex County Registry of Deeds Northern District
Book 146; Page 339

1892

January 7
From Edward F. Searles to James E. Treat
Essex County Registry of Deeds Northern District
Book 116; Page 581

1889

From Amory Leland to Edward F. Searles
Essex County Registry of Deeds Northern District
Book 101; Page 378