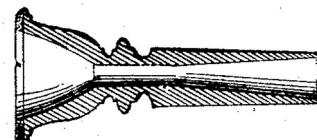


## C. G. Conn Cornets - 1875 to 1942

Charles G. Conn started in the instrument business in 1875 by making rubber-rimmed cornet mouthpieces on the top floor of McGreggor & Sons woolen mill. He also established a brass foundry next door in order to make his own mouthpieces. Below is a view of that foundry from a Conn 50th anniversary publication in 1925.



Conn applied for a patent on his mouthpiece design on December 5, 1874 and received #160,164 on February 23, 1875. Below is the patent drawing.



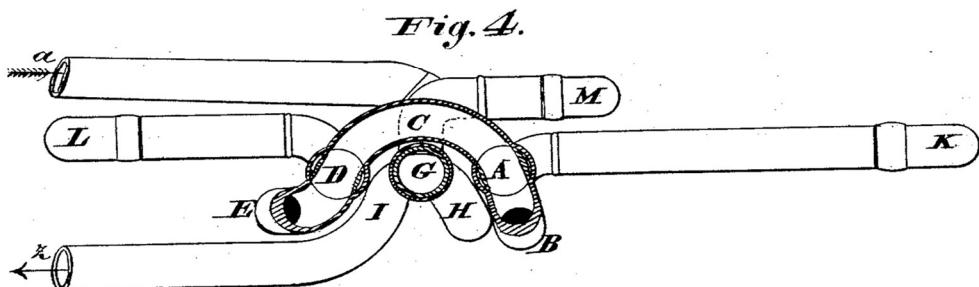
Here is an example of an early Conn cornet mouthpiece with the 1875 patent mark.



In 1875, they came in size 1 (deep cup), 2 (shallower cup), and 3 (deep V).

In 1876, Conn convinced Eugene Dupont, an employee of Henry Distin, to join him in Elkhart and start producing cornets. Their first product was the 4-in-1 model, which allowed one to play in Eb, C, Bb, and A. They filed for a patent on January 17, 1877 and received #199,516 on January 22, 1878. The patent drawing below shows the unique valve port arrangement.

C. G. CONN & E. DUPONT.  
Cornet.  
No. 199,516. Patented Jan. 22, 1878.

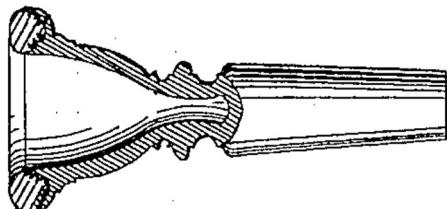


Below is #545 from about the time they received the patent.



[HornCollector.com]

Conn later improved the mouthpiece design by adding a groove around the top to aid in giving the rubber a better grip on the mouthpiece. He filed for a patent on March 22, 1877 and received #190,558 on May 18, 1877. Below is the patent drawing.



Here is another example of the 4-in-1 model with serial #8xx dating to c.1879.



[DeCarlis]

Conn & Dupont also produced their "Superior Class" cornets including an Eb model with serial #471 c.1878, which can be found in the Sterns Collection.

Here is Eb Superior Class #991 dating to c.1880.

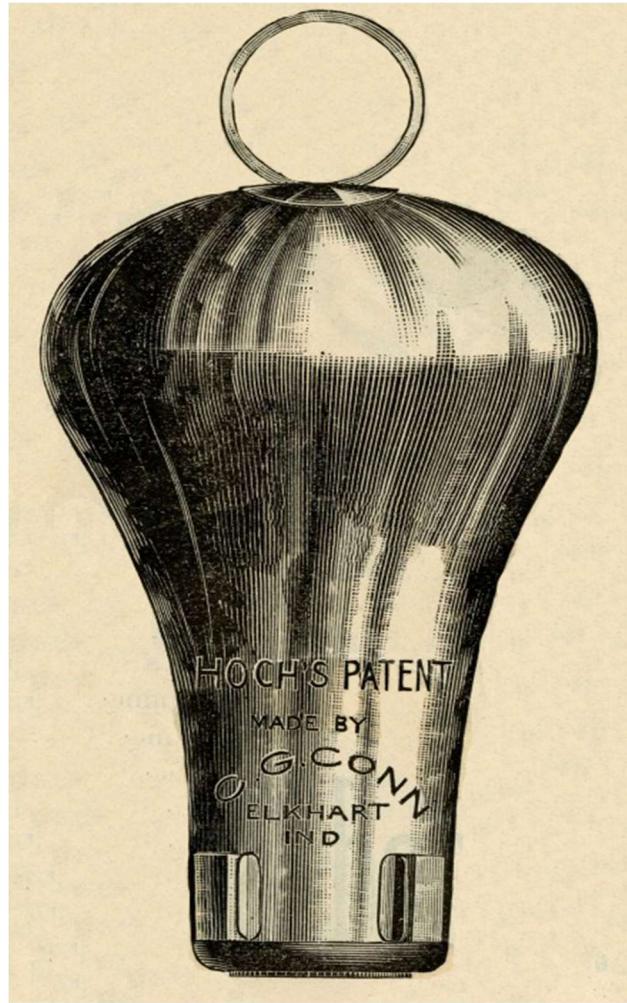


[Horn-u-copia.net]

Here is an unusual tuning bell model, serial #1161, c.1880.



[Horn-u-copia.net]



1879 introduces Hoch's patent cornet mute (no real patent found). **Theodor Hoch** (1842-1906) was a world-renowned cornet soloist who came to the US from Germany in 1872 and lived in New York until his death in 1906. He was naturalized in 1891 and lived for many years at #1055 Halsey St. in Brooklyn. In addition to his playing, he also wrote many pieces for cornet and is said to have taught C. G. Conn how to play. In 1888 he was given a presentation Conn cornet by the city of Elkhart that was said to be worth \$1,000 and had an engraving that took two months.



Conn and Dupont filed for a new type of clear-bore valve arrangement on September 17, 1879 which was granted patent #222,248 on December 2, 1879. Sometime after this, Dupont leaves the partnership and passes away in 1881. By the time that this Superior model cornet, #1207, was made in 1880, only Conn's name appears on it. This one appears to play in either Bb or C.



[Horn-u-copia.net]

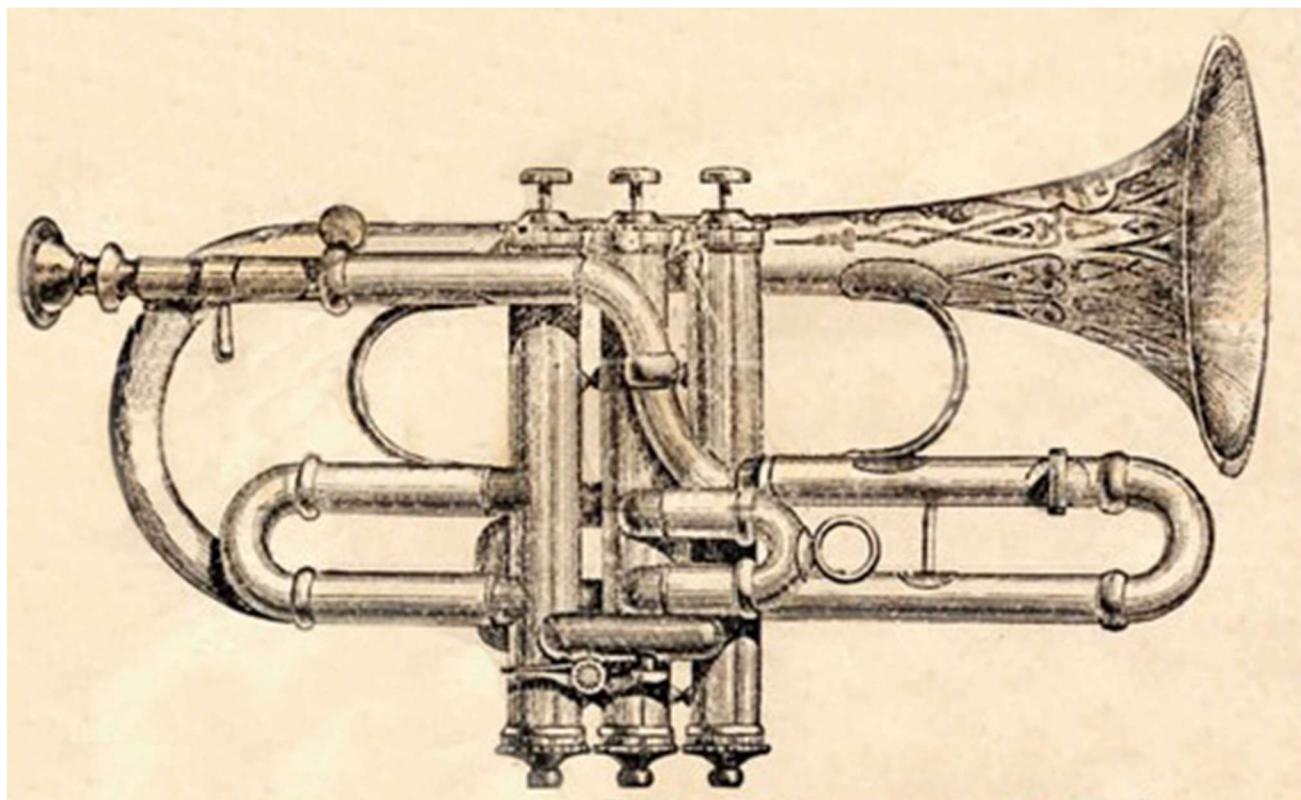
Conn also designed cornets to match popular models of Europe such as this Besson model below with serial #1211 dating to c.1880.



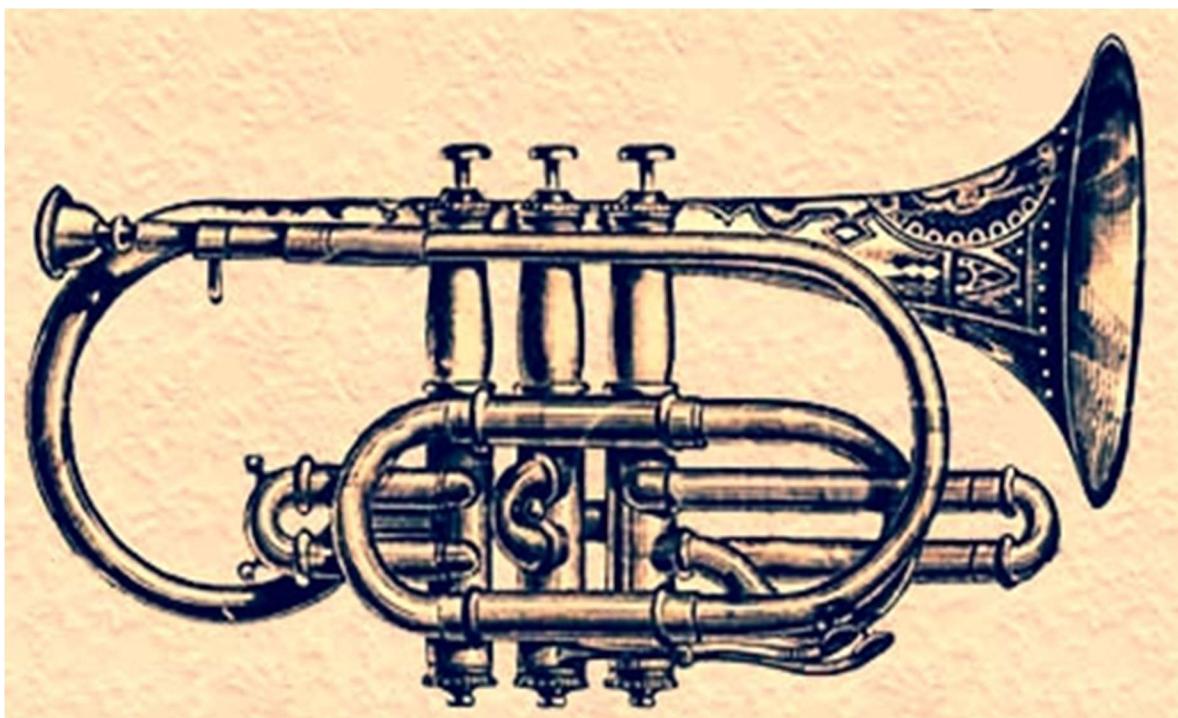
[Horn-u-copia.net]

By the time of the 1881 catalog, Conn had expanded to at least ten different cornet models. These were the 4-in-1, Artist's, Besson, Courtois, Distin, Vocal, Solo, Light Valve, Pupil's and several Ebs. Mouthpieces were #1 (amateur), #2 (very brilliant), #3 (orchestra), #4 (Brass band), and #5 (large cup). They also made artist models Arban, Arbuckle, Koenig, and Levy. These were made with or without the rubber face.

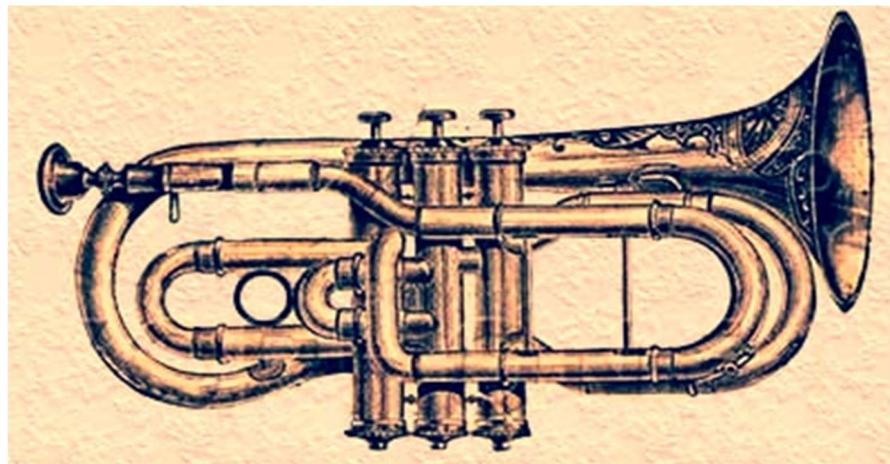
1881 Four-in-One Cornet



1881 Artist's model with Equa-Tone valves



1881 Clear Bore Vocal model

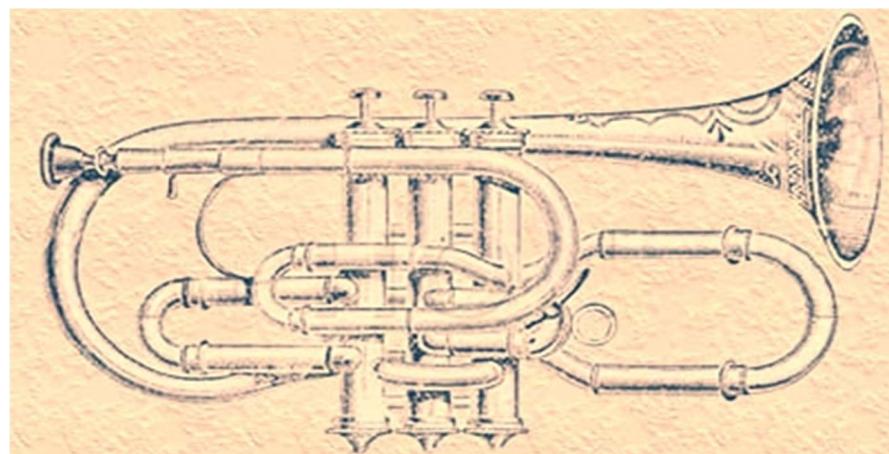


Vocal #28xx c.1883

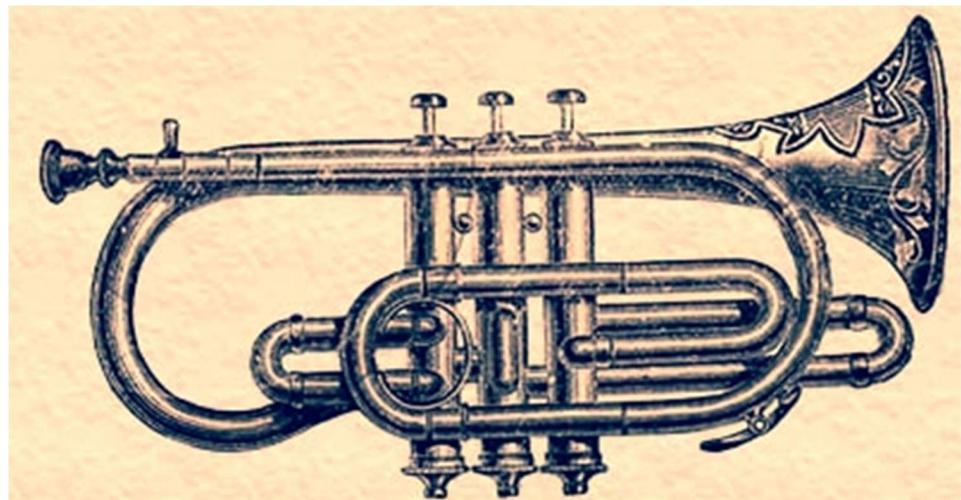


[Faust]

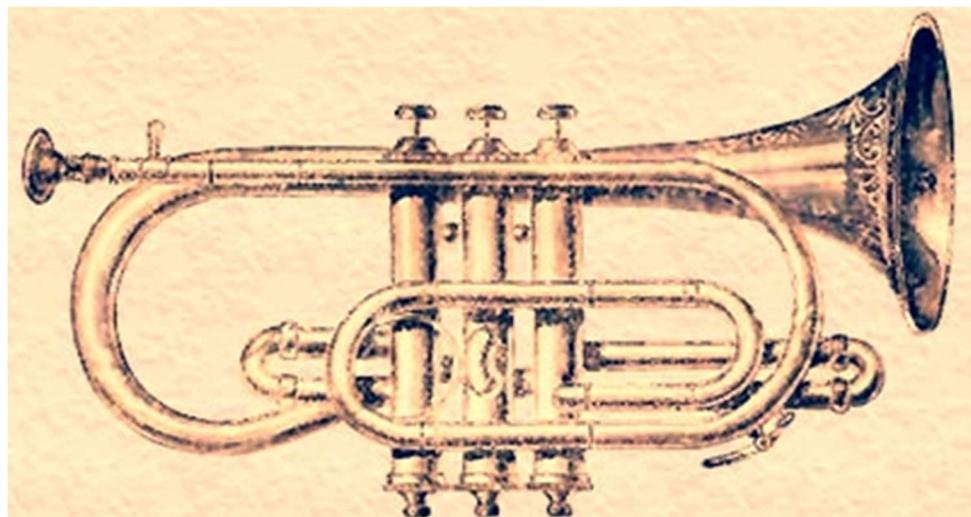
1881 Solo model



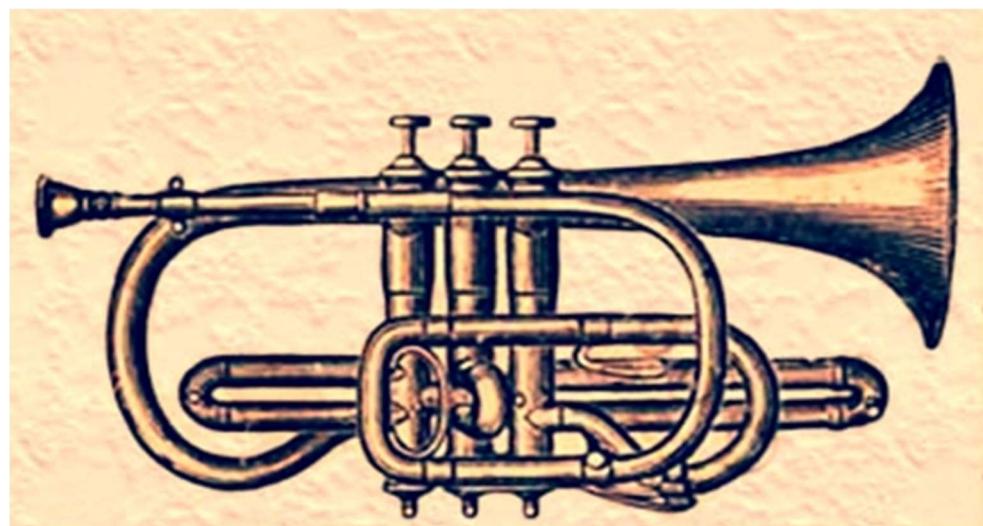
1881 Superior Class Besson model



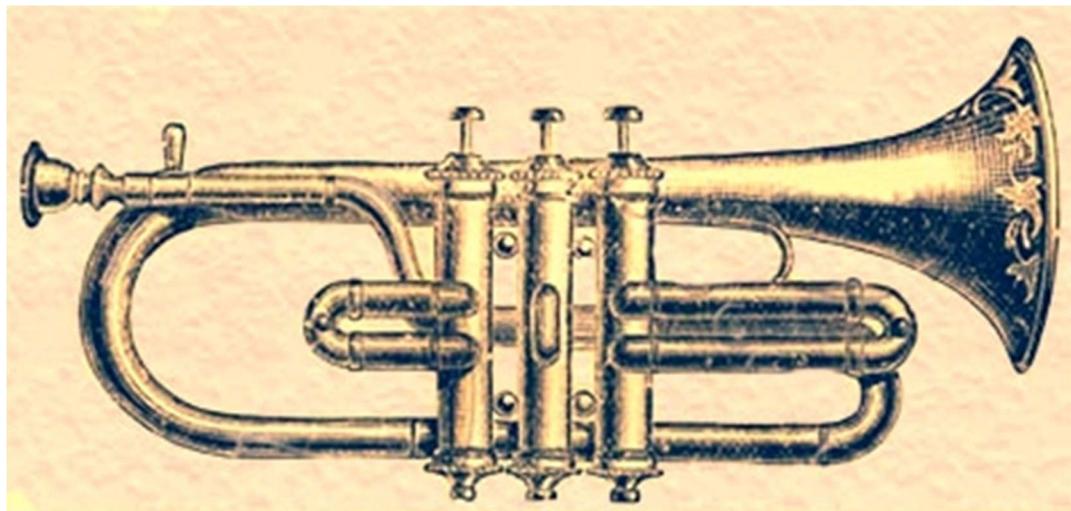
1881 Superior Class Distin model



1881 Superior Class Courtois model



1881 Courtois model Eb



4-in-1 #2033 c.1883



[Horn-u-copia.net]

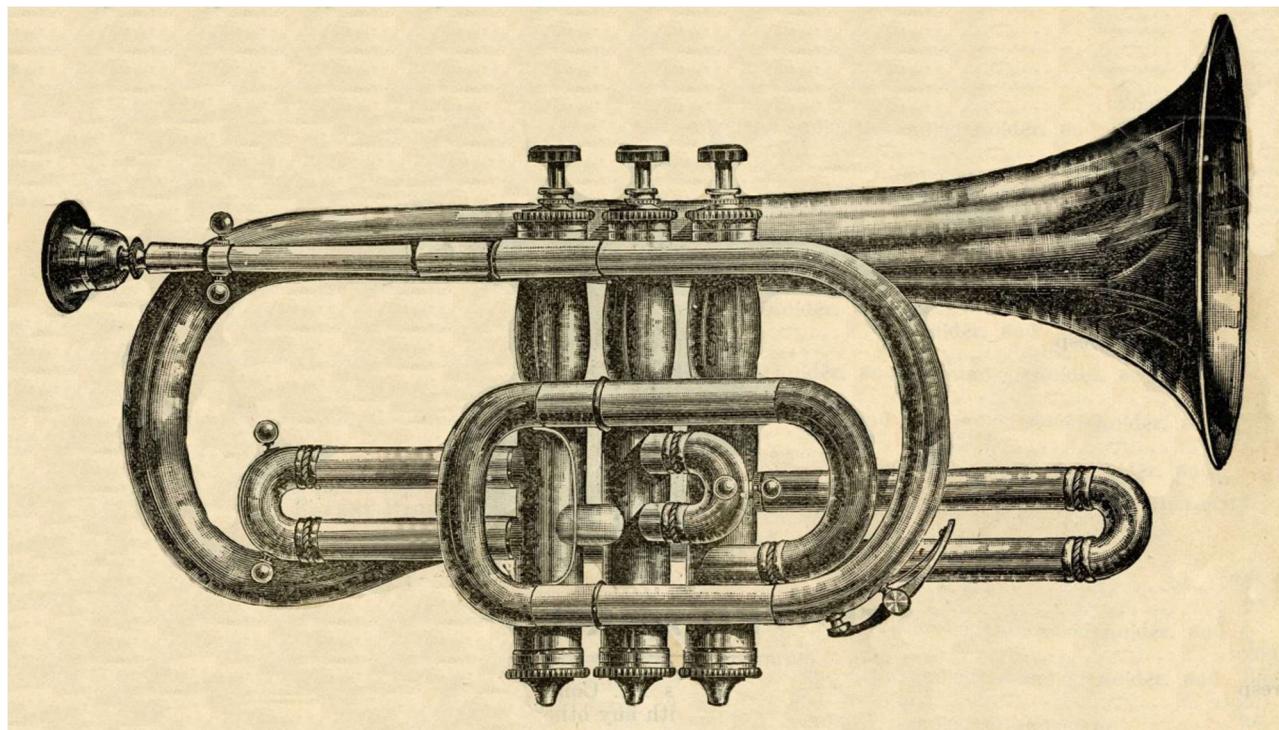
1882 adds this new "Combination" mouthpiece with an adjustable throat.



Vocal model #307x c.1883

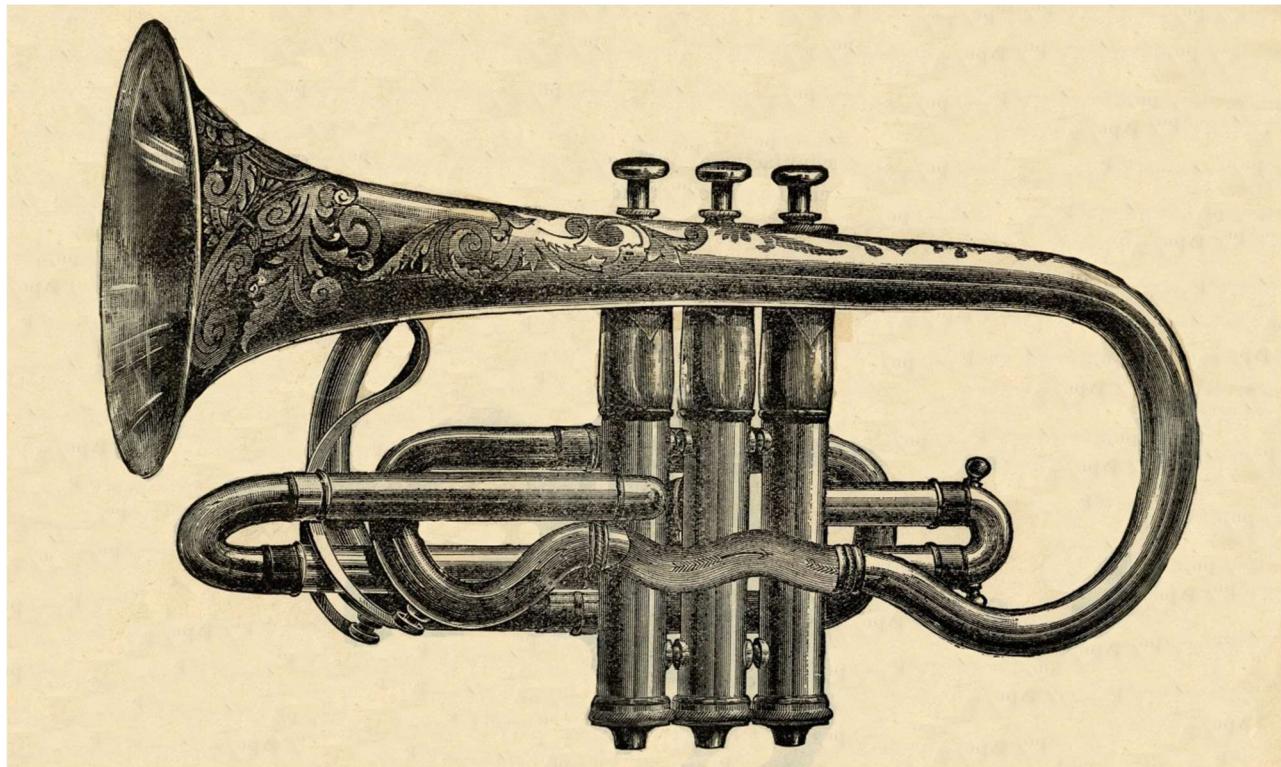


1884 - New Conservatory model Bb cornet w/Ultimatum valves



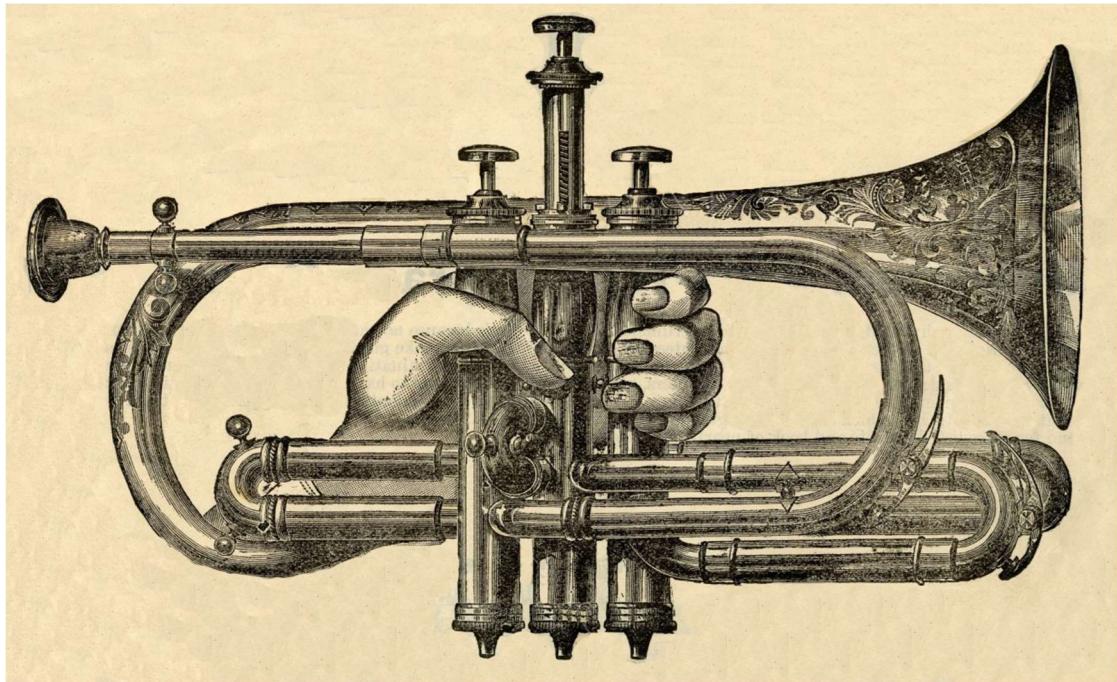
New 1884 Levy Perfection model - Patented April 1, 1884

(If anyone finds this patent, please send it to me. Perhaps the date explains it.)



Check out that water key lever!

New 1884 Ultimatum Equa-Tone Solo Cornet in Bb & A



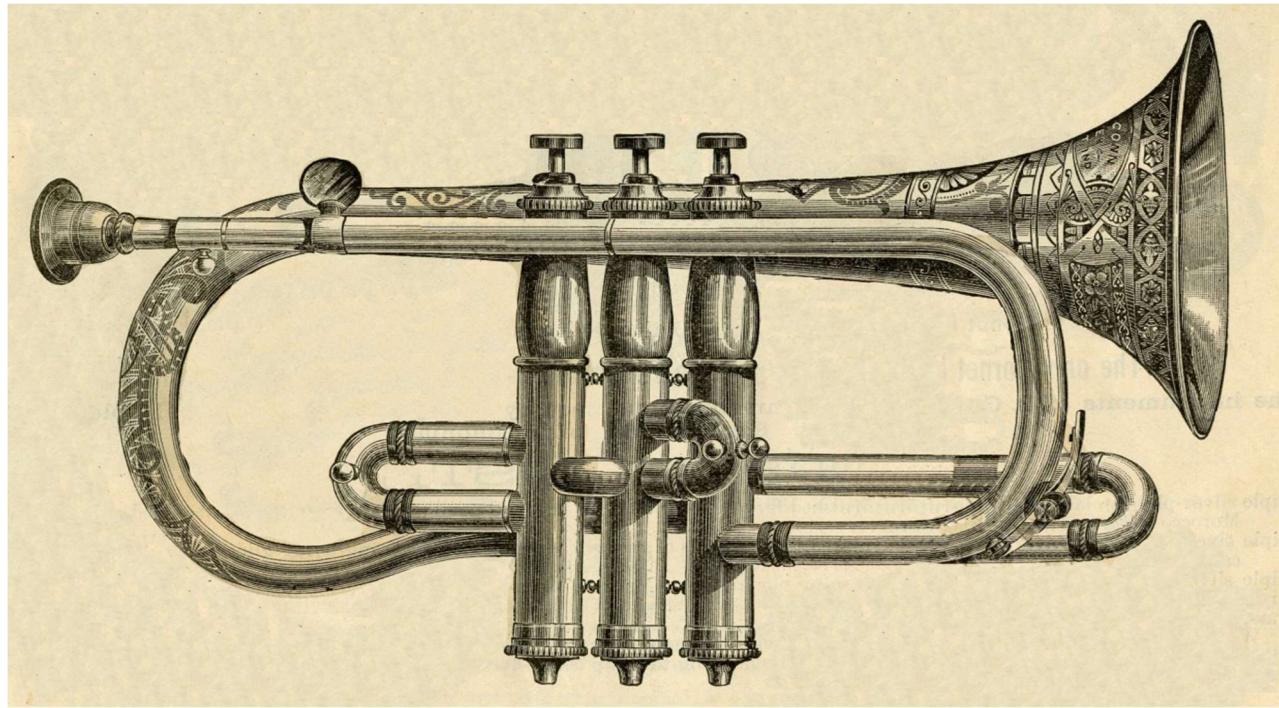
Ultimatum #47xx c.1884

In this example, the lead pipe enters from above the second slide rather than below.



[DeCarlis]

New 1884 Ultimatum Eb

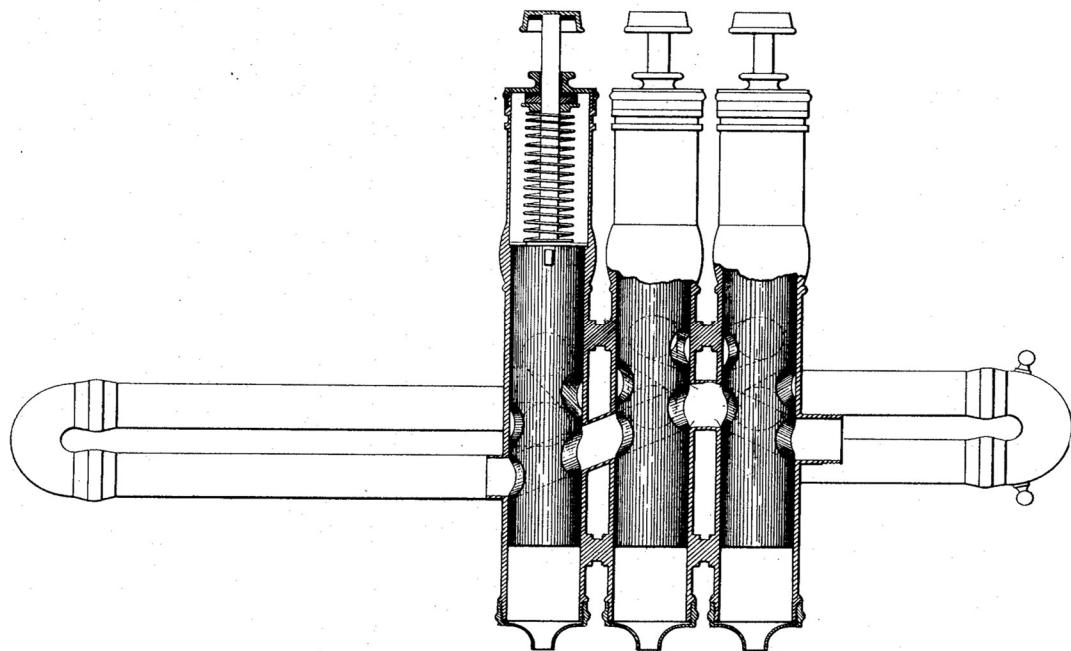


The 1884 artist model mouthpieces are now Arban, Koenig, Levy, & Liberati.

Ultimatum Eb #756x c.1885



The next development at Conn was the Wonder valve design. They filed for a patent on August 28, 1885 and received #343,888 on June 15, 1886. This patent was to be marked on Wonder cornets for many years to come, as it became a very popular design. Below is the patent drawing. In 1886, Conn also purchased the Isaac Fiske factory in Worcester, Massachusetts, and started marking cornets "Elkhart & Worcester". This corresponds with serial numbers around 12000.



Ultimatum #105xx, c.1886



Ultimatum #126xx, c.1887



Wonder #171xx, c.1887



# To the Musicians of America.

I take great pleasure in announcing that I have purchased the Isaac Fiske Band Instrument Manufactory at Worcester, Mass., including all of its tools and Machinery, which, together with my extensive Factory at Elkhart, Indiana, will enable me to fill all future orders promptly and to the satisfaction of all of my patrons. During the last year, the rapidly increasing demand for the WONDER CORNET AND BAND INSTRUMENTS AND MUSICAL MERCHANDISE of my manufacture, has compelled me to refuse many orders for instruments and to cancel others which I had accepted and promised to supply. This thrifty condition of trade has been very flattering in its financial results, but the disappointment incurred to many of my friends, whose orders I was obliged to refuse, has been a constant source of vexation, and now with the increased facilities acquired in the purchase of the Fiske manufactory I can safely promise, in future, all orders will meet speedy shipments from the best productions of both the Elkhart and Worcester Factories.

Reports, from a creditable source, have reached me that certain would-be competitors, for the purpose of influencing the sales of their instruments, have been circulating statements that I manufacture a special grade of instruments for the celebrated artists who use and recommend the C. G. Conn Instruments. THIS STATEMENT IS ABSOLUTELY FALSE. Any one of the WONDER CORNETS I am manufacturing to-day is equally as good in tone, tune and intonation as the WONDER CORNETS used by Liberati, Emerson, Bent, Hoch, Hutchins, Knoll or any others of the Celebrated Soloists who use my instruments, and I will guarantee them to be as perfect in every respect.

Yours Respectfully

ELKHART, INDIANA, May 1st, 1887.

C. G. Conn



The Wonder Solo Cornet in Bb and A.

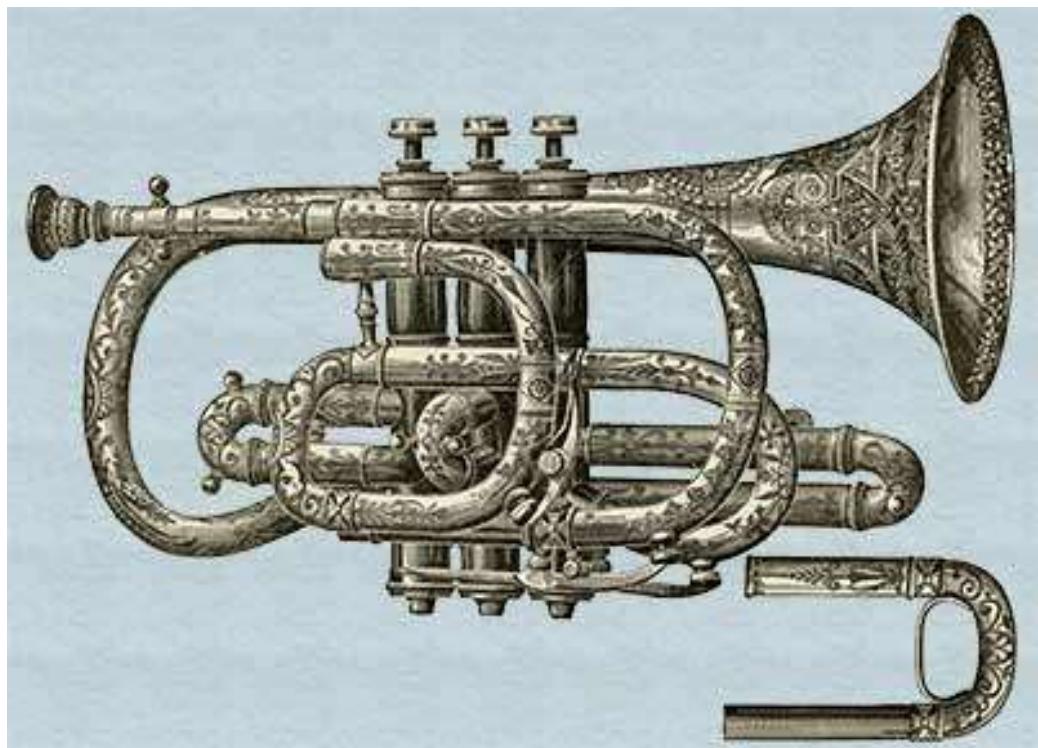
Patented by C. G. Conn, June 15th, 1886.

Which has been pronounced by all Artists, Musicians and Soloists who have given it a trial the most wonderful invention of the age, and superior in every respect to any other cornet ever manufactured, for the following reasons, viz: It has a noiseless valve action and the lightest ever known. It is perfectly in tune in all keys. Its tone is brilliant and free in its entire register from lower pedal C to C above the staff, and no cornet in the World is so capable of being blown with perfect ease as the WONDER CORNET. Our Factories are thoroughly equipped with NEW AND MODERN MACHINERY. Address,

C. G. Conn, Elkhart, Ind., and

13 Mechanic Street,  
Worcester, Massachusetts.

Cornets listed in the 1888 catalog are the Wonder Solo in Bb & A (with C attachment, shown below), New Wonder in Eb, and the Parlor or pocket model. Mouthpieces are the Koenig, Arban, Levy, Liberati, and the same #1-5 standard sizes as in 1881.



Wonder model Cornet #17146, c.1887



Wonder model Cornet #21512, c.1888 (author's photo)

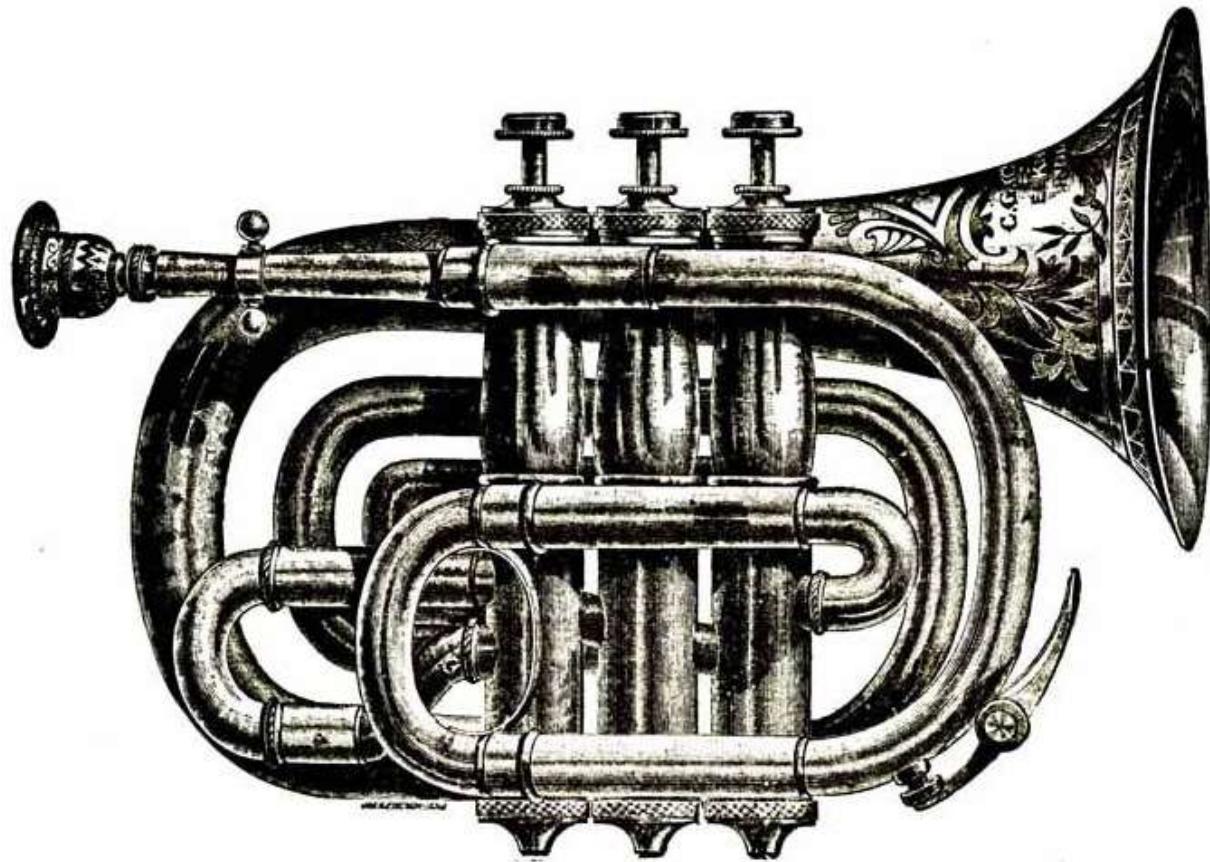


American Orchestra Cornet #24326, c.1889



The American model orchestra cornet, with a quick change from Bb to A, was patented on December 16, 1890. At this time, professional musicians would have encountered times where switching to the key of A would be better for them. The quick slide was one of several ways makers invented to accomplish this.

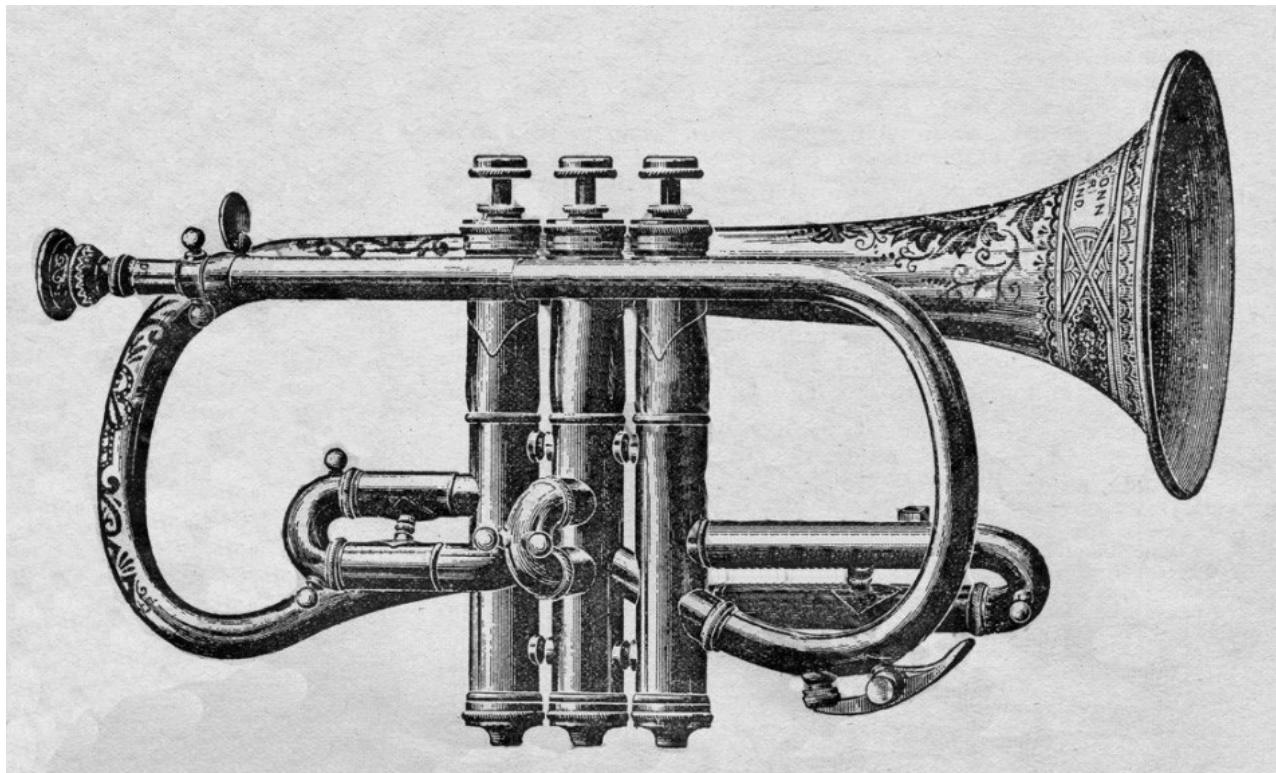
Parlor Cornet illustration from 1890



c.1887 Parlor model bell [DeCarlis]



1893 Eb Wonder Cornet



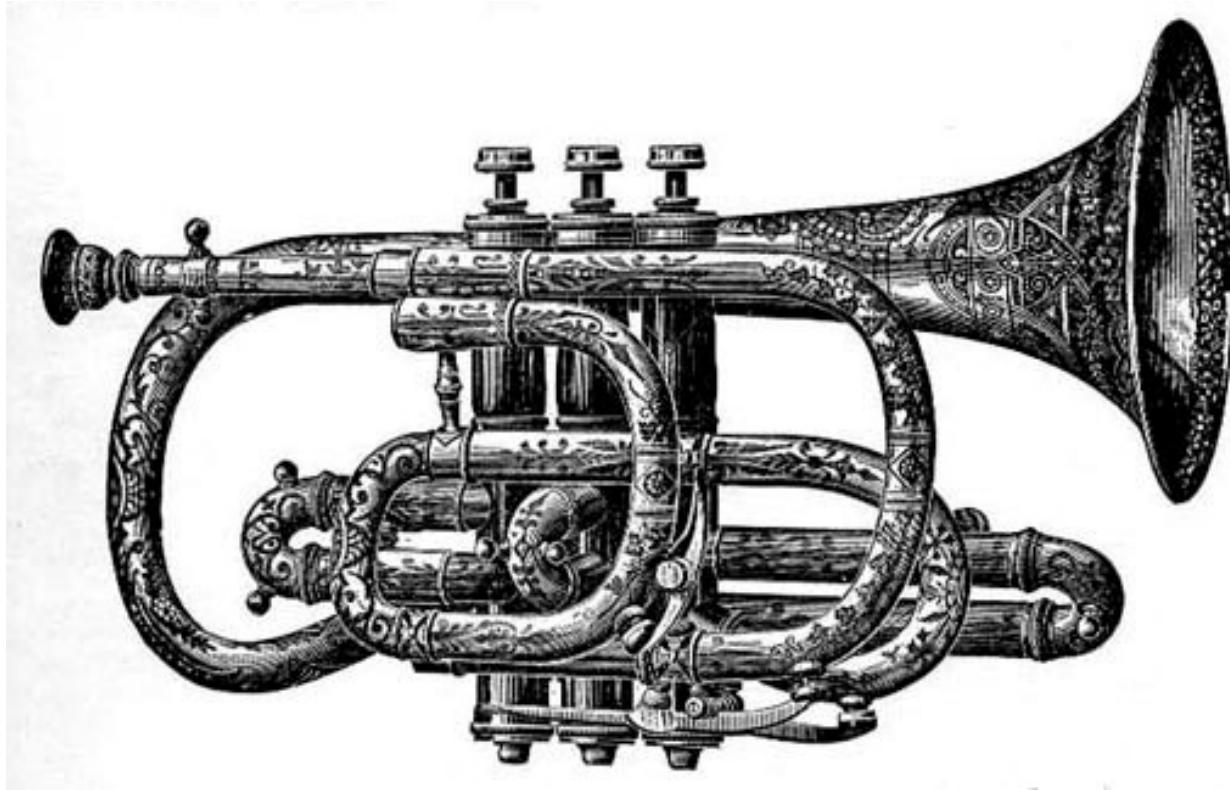
Eb Wonder #310xx c.1890



Bb Wonder #32900 c.1890 (author's photo)

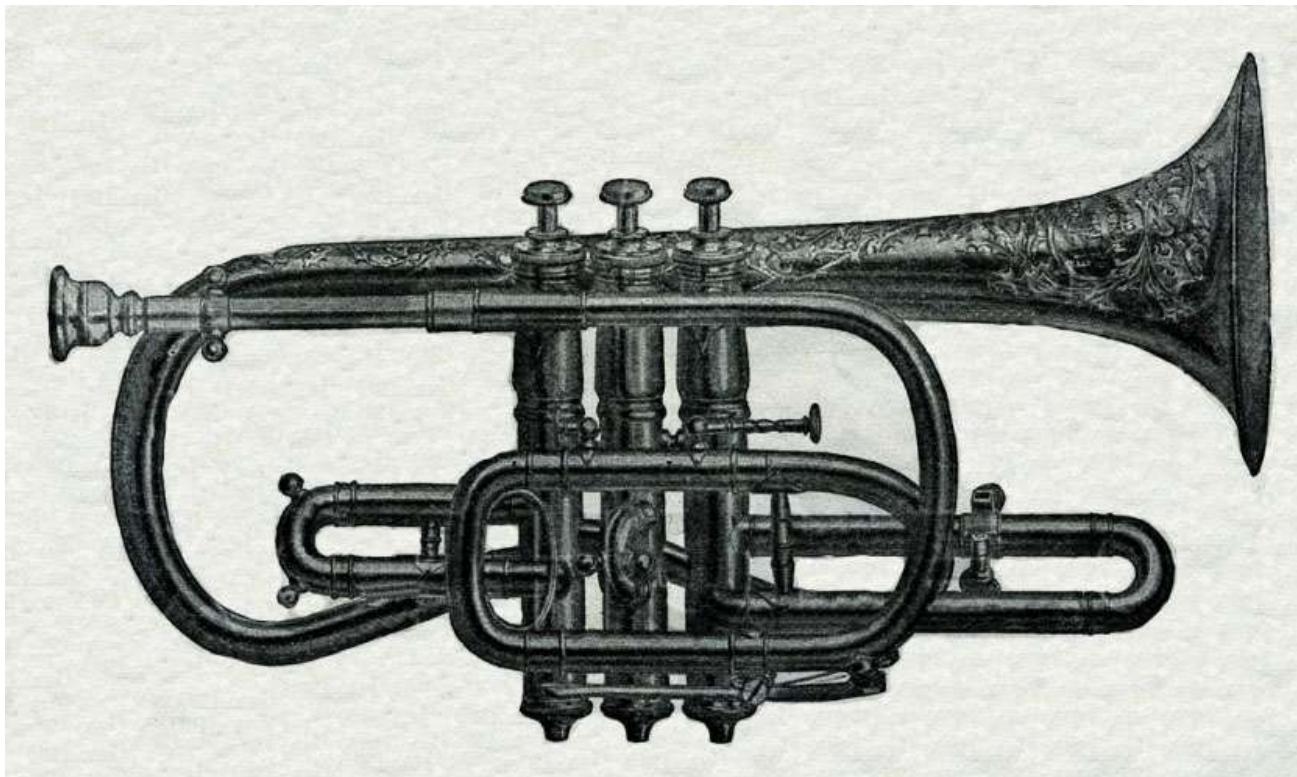


1895 Wonder Solo illustration



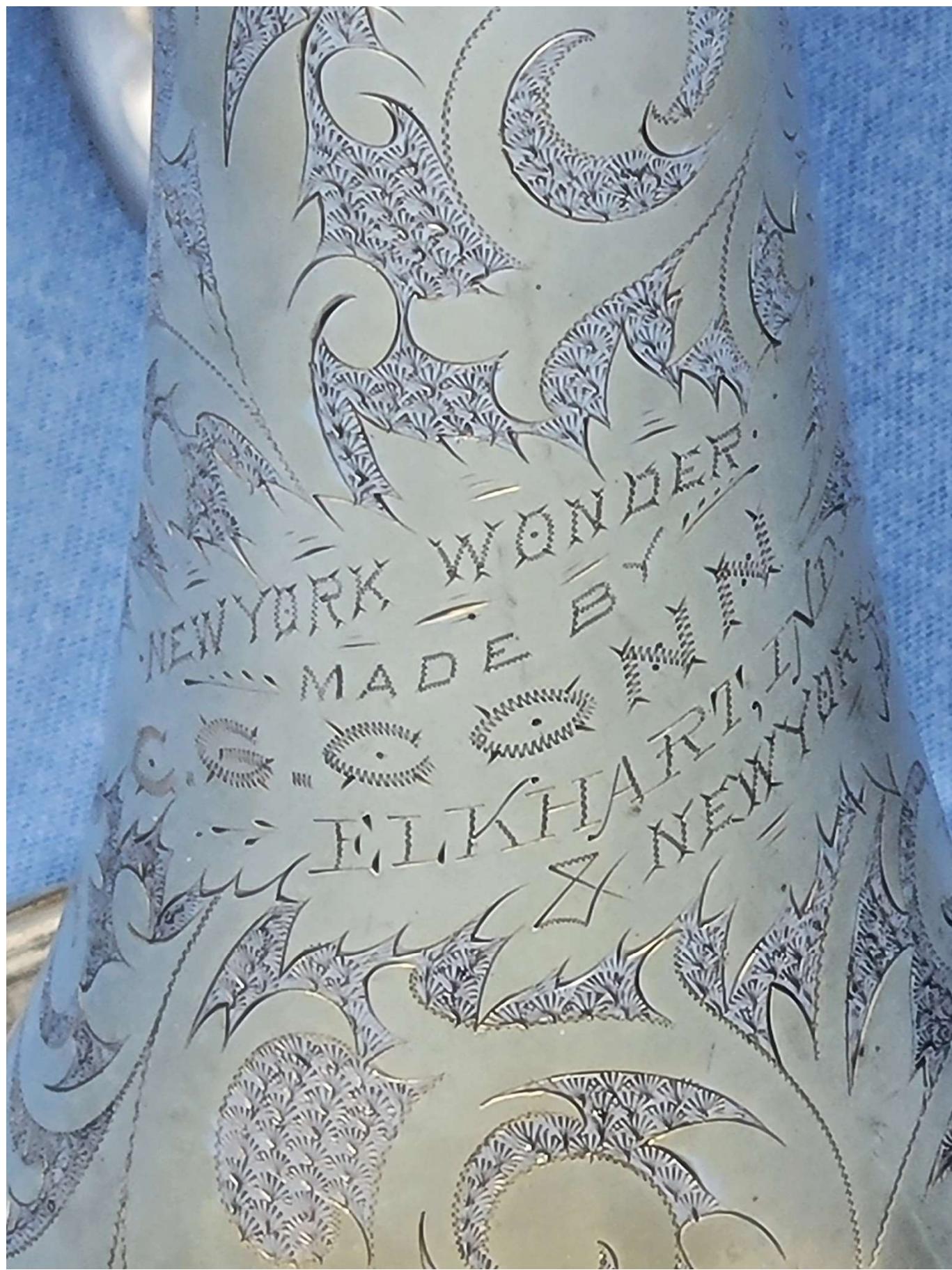
In 1897, the Worcester plant is phased out and the New York store is added. Cornets have the New York Wonder name on them starting at around serial #61000.

1899 New York Wonder illustration

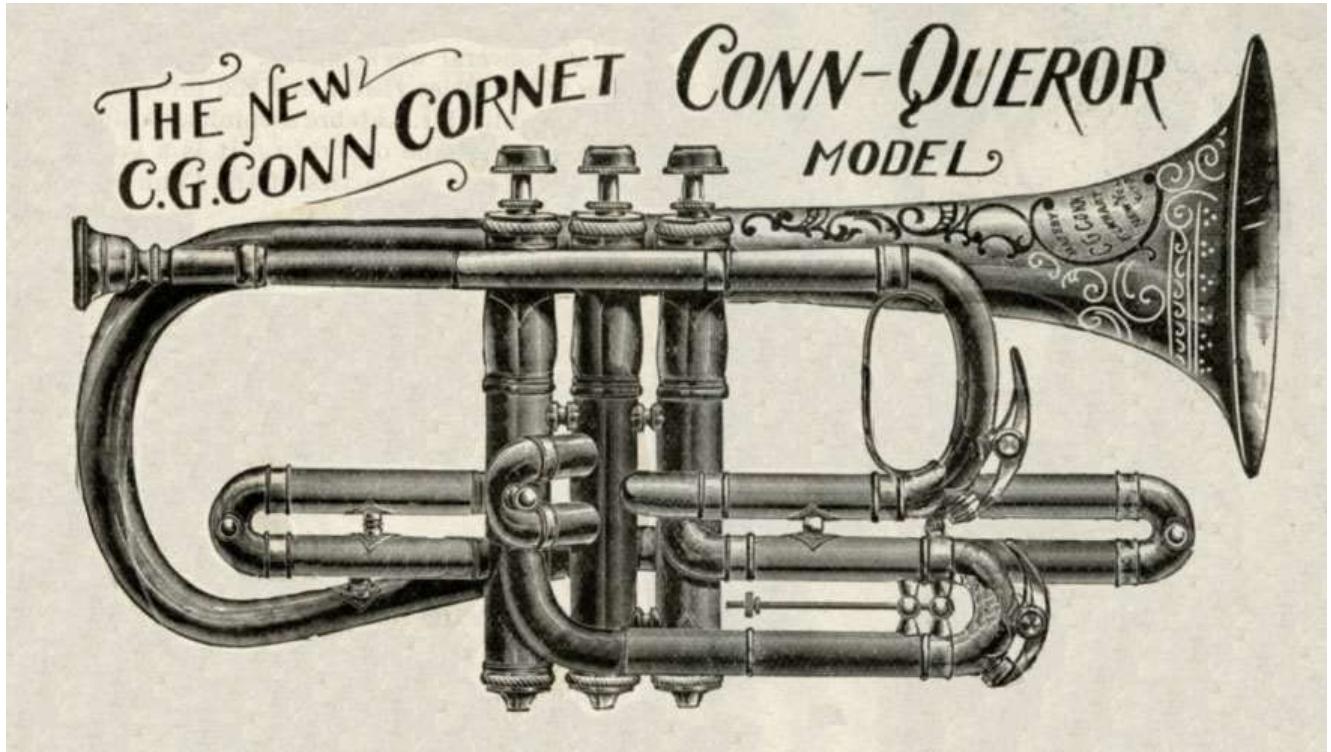


New York Wonder #65210 c.1898 (author's photos)





In 1901, Conn introduces the Conn-Queror Cornet.

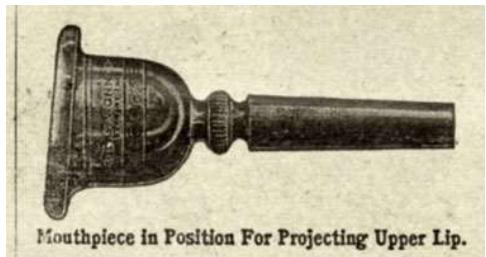


Conn-Queror #779xx c.1903



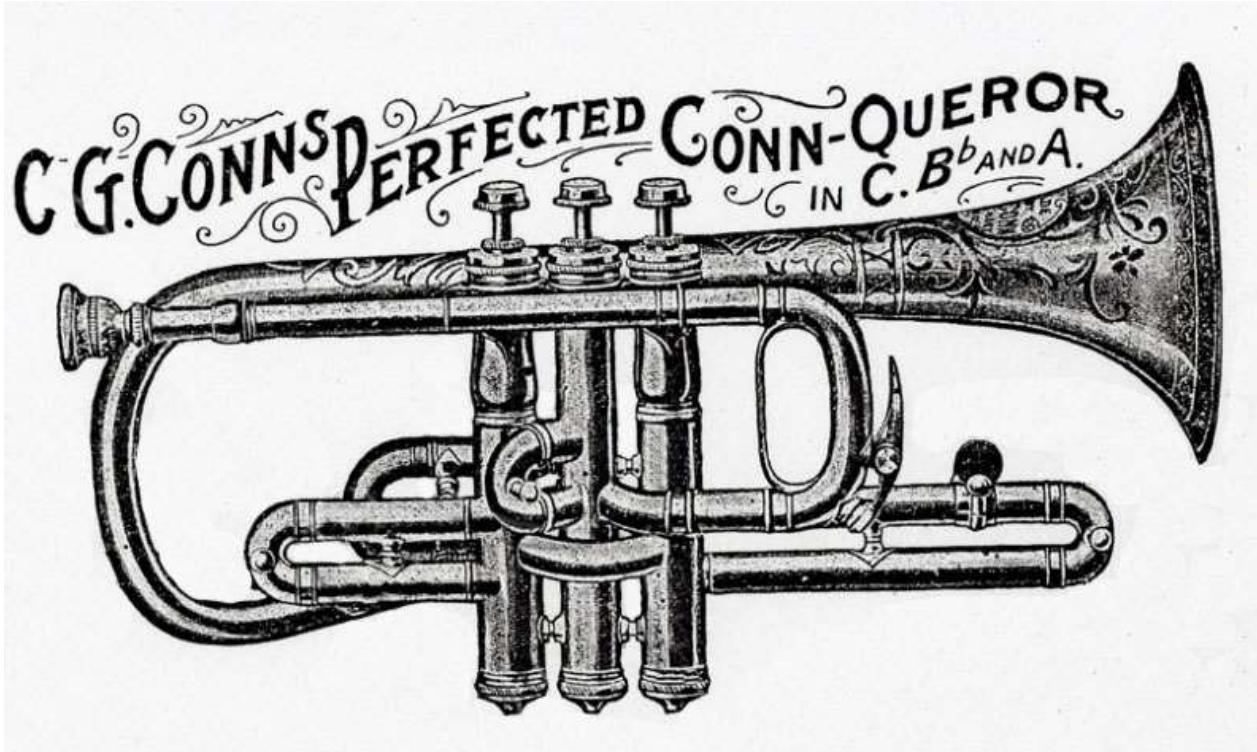
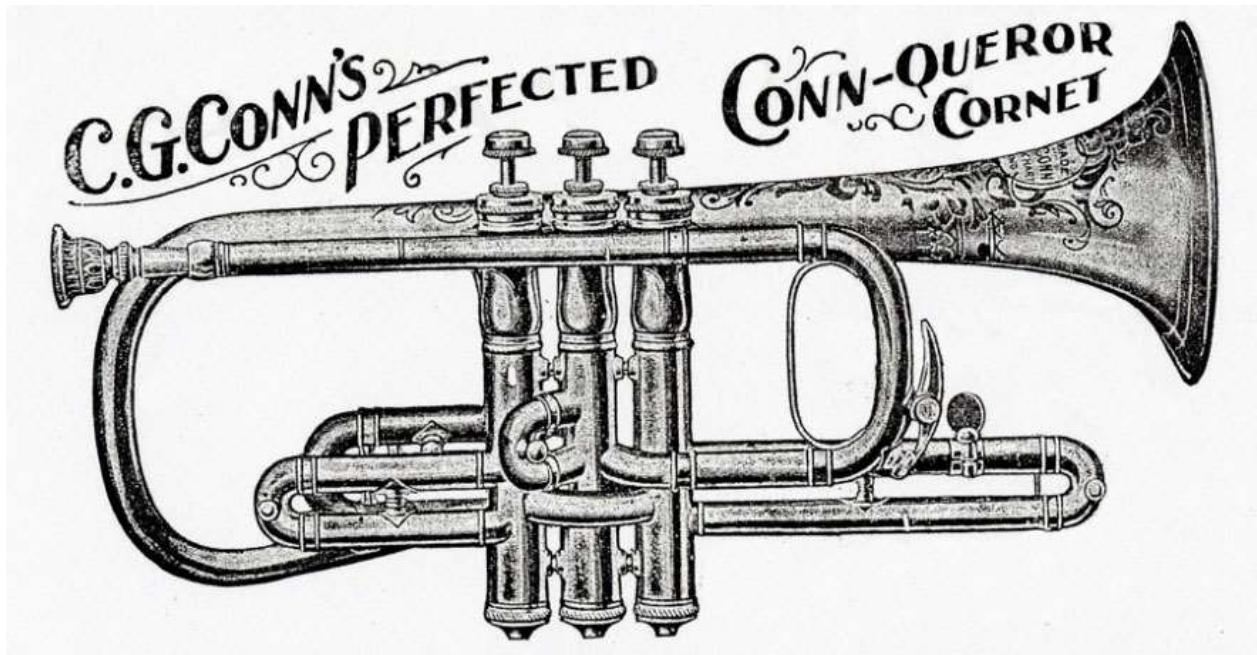
The 1901 catalog lists the cornet models as Conn-Queror, New York Wonder Vocal, and New York Wonder Bb and Eb. By 1902, they have added a Vocal model to the Conn-Queror line up that plays in C, Bb and A.

The 1902 catalog lists this new “compensating” cornet mouthpiece with angled face.



Mouthpiece in Position For Projecting Upper Lip.

In 1904, the Perfected Conn-Queror design comes out in both Solo and Vocal versions.



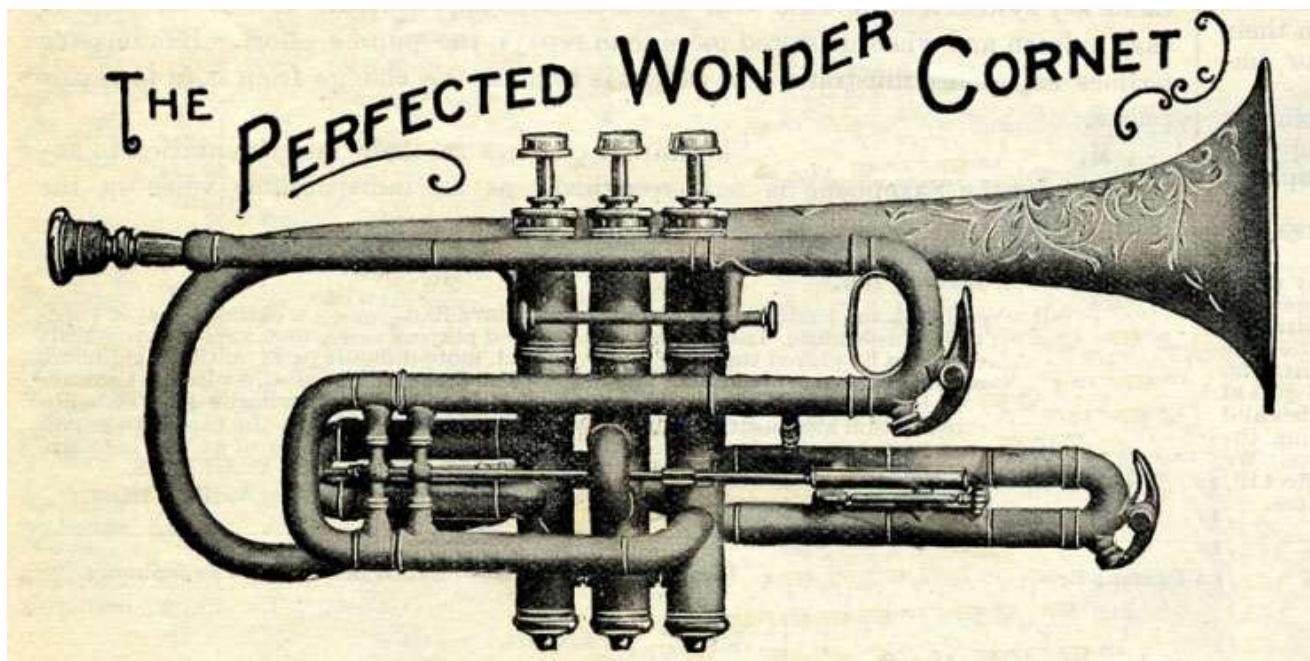
Conn-Queror #841xx c.1904



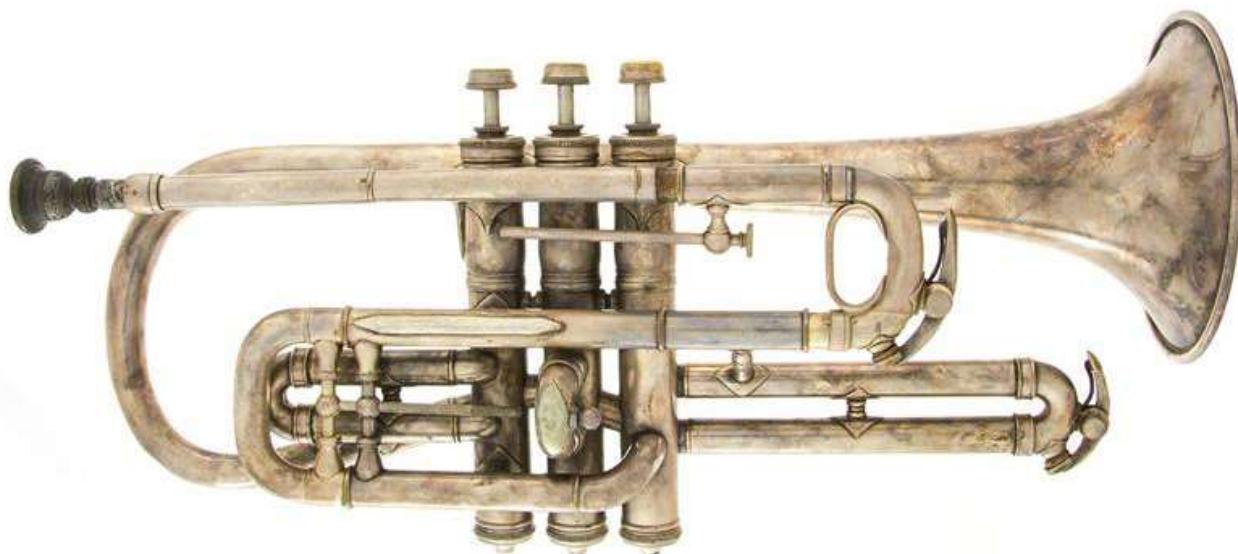
Conn-Queror #934xx c.1906 (author's photo)



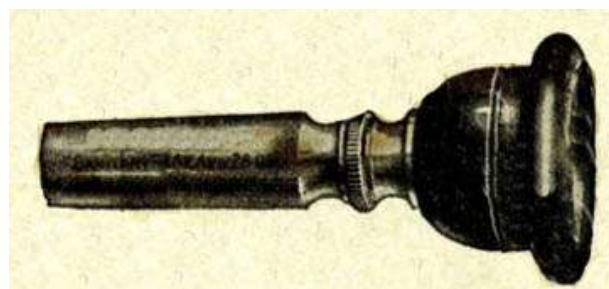
In 1905, the new Perfected Wonder Cornet was introduced. Conn said that nearly 50,000 Wonder models had been sold.



Perfected Wonder #940xx c.1906



New "Sanitary" mouthpiece, with rubber rim & bowl, patented on August 28, 1906.



Conn-Queror #1002xx c.1907 (author's photo)



Perfected Wonder #1005xx c.1907

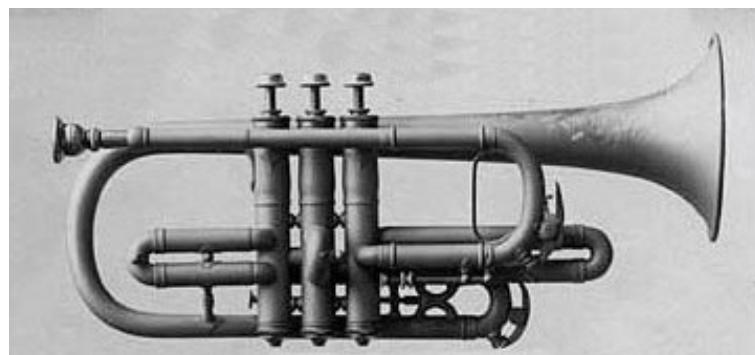


Conn introduces the new Perfected Wonderphone in 1909.

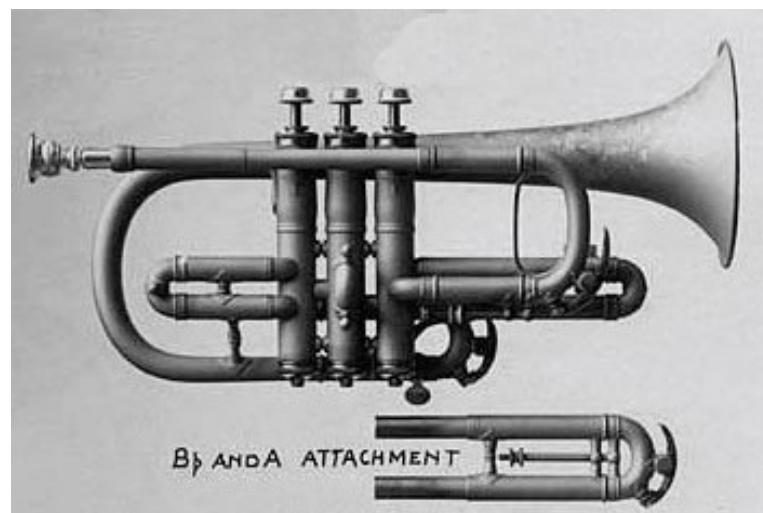
Wonderphone #1077xx c.1909



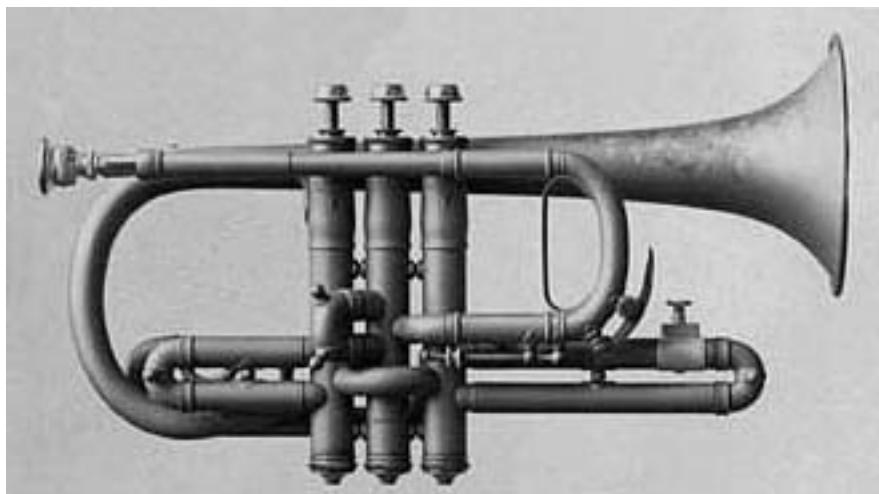
1910 Perfected Wonderphone Solo



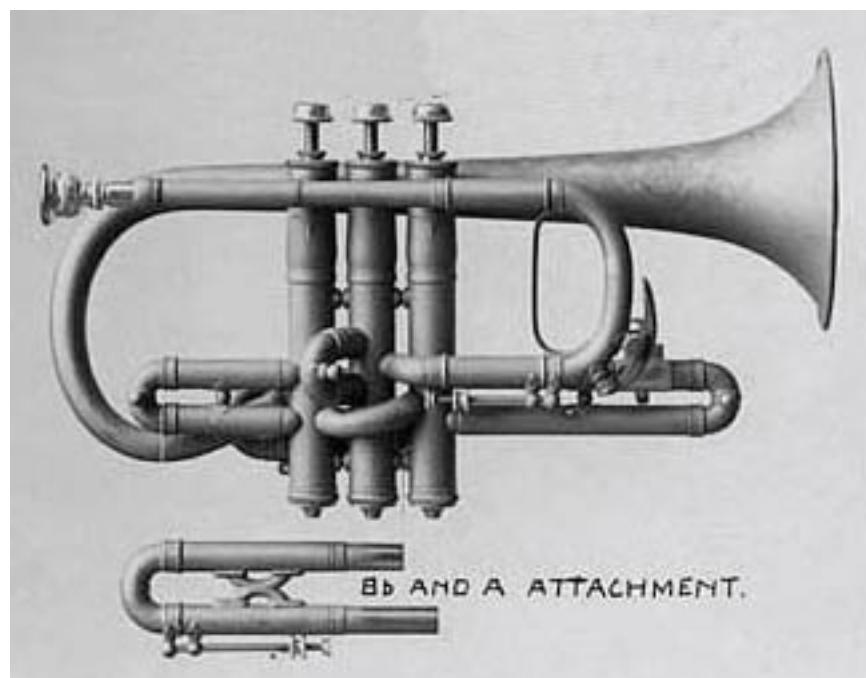
1910 Perfected Wonderphone Vocal



1910 Perfected Conn-Queror Solo



1910 Perfected Conn-Queror Vocal

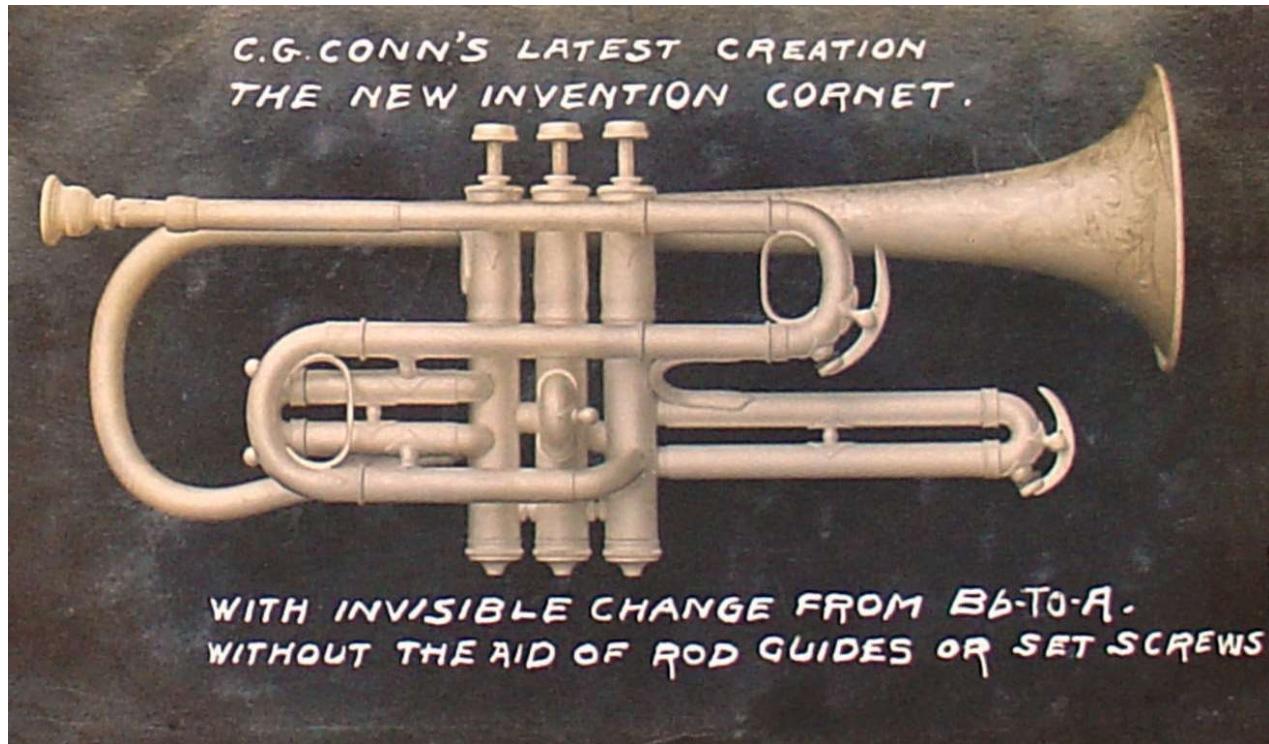


1910 Perfected Wonder Solo



On May 22, 1910, a fire destroyed the factory and all production was stopped until the new one was completed in late October. The Perfected Wonder cornet then changes to the New Invention with the Circus Bore version adding a Bb/A stop rod.

Conn introduces the New Invention cornet in 1911.



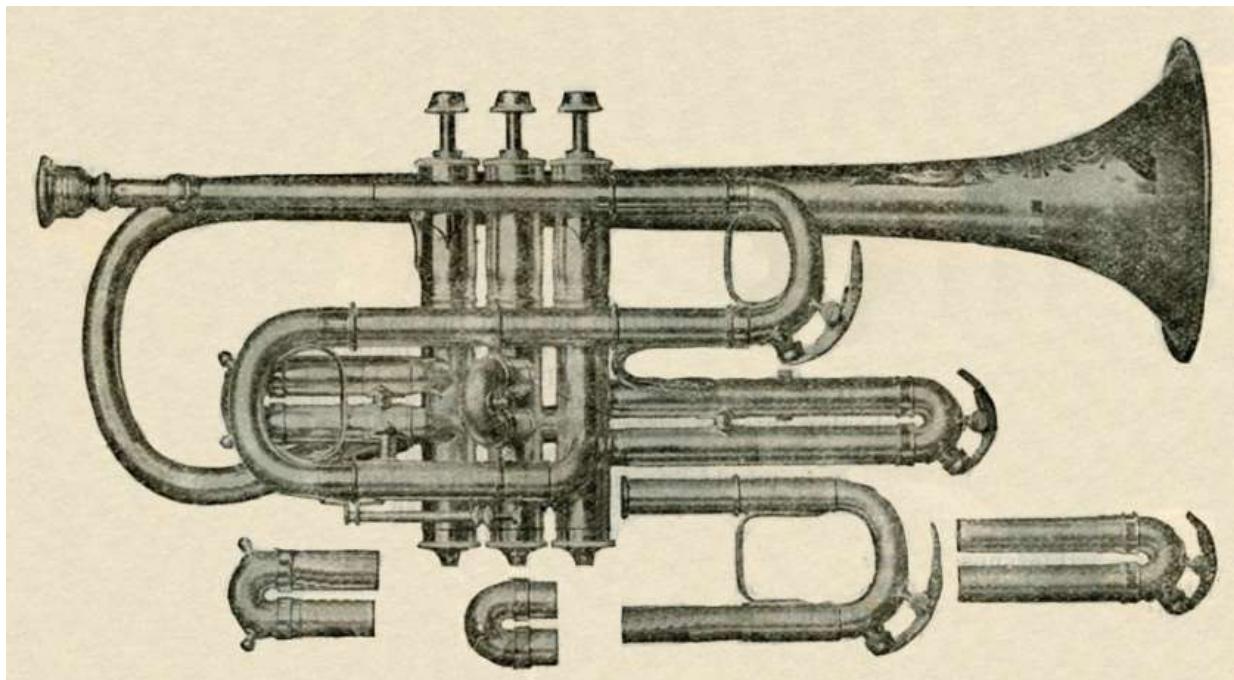
New Invention Circus Bore #1211xx c.1911



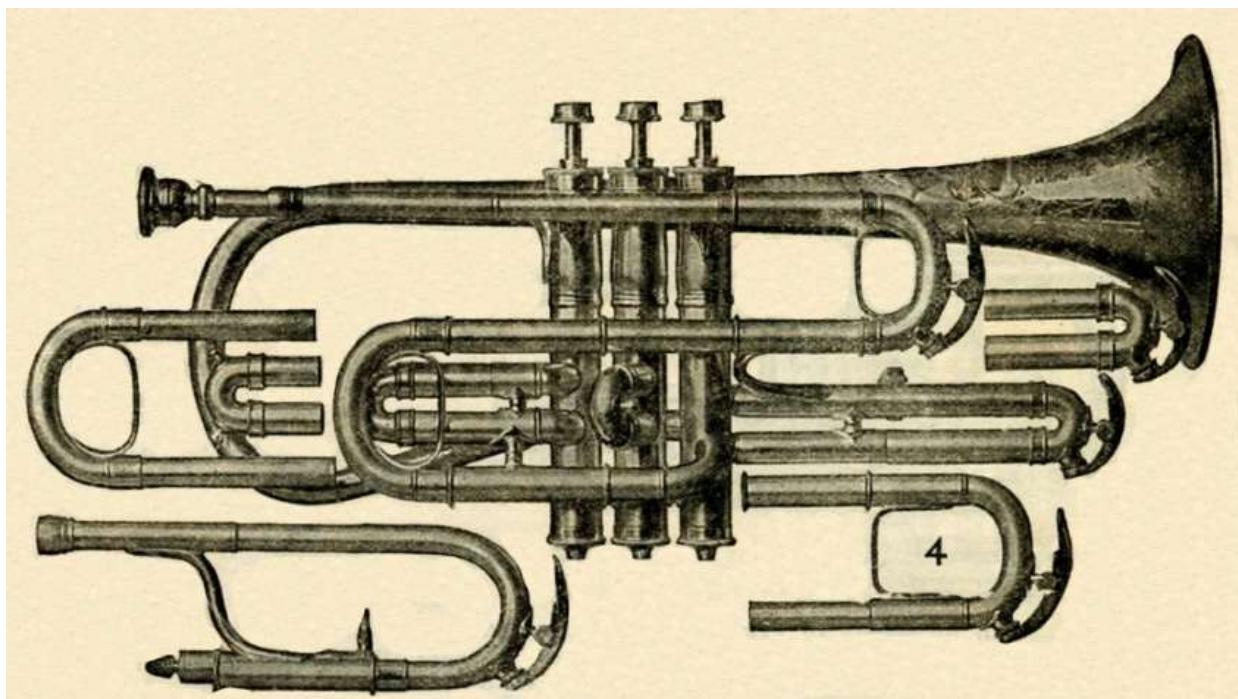
Cornet mouthpieces for 1911 were the "Clark" model A, "Correct" model B, Liberati model 1, Levy model 6, Conn Wide Rim model 6, and the Conn model 7.

The cornet models for 1913 were the New Invention Circus Bore, New Invention in Bb & C, Parlor, and Slide. The long list of available cornet mouthpieces were #1 Liberati, #2 Courtois, #3 Amateur, #4 Emerson, #5 Besson, #6 Levy, #6 Conn Wide Rim, #7 Conn, #8 Hoch, #9 Hutchins, #10 Knoll, #13 Ward, #14 Freeman, #15 Hi Henry, #16 Mygrant, #17 Chambers, #18 Conn, #19 Kryl, the "Common Sense" with concave rim, and the new "EZ Playing" model with a patent applied for and a cut away shape to the rim.

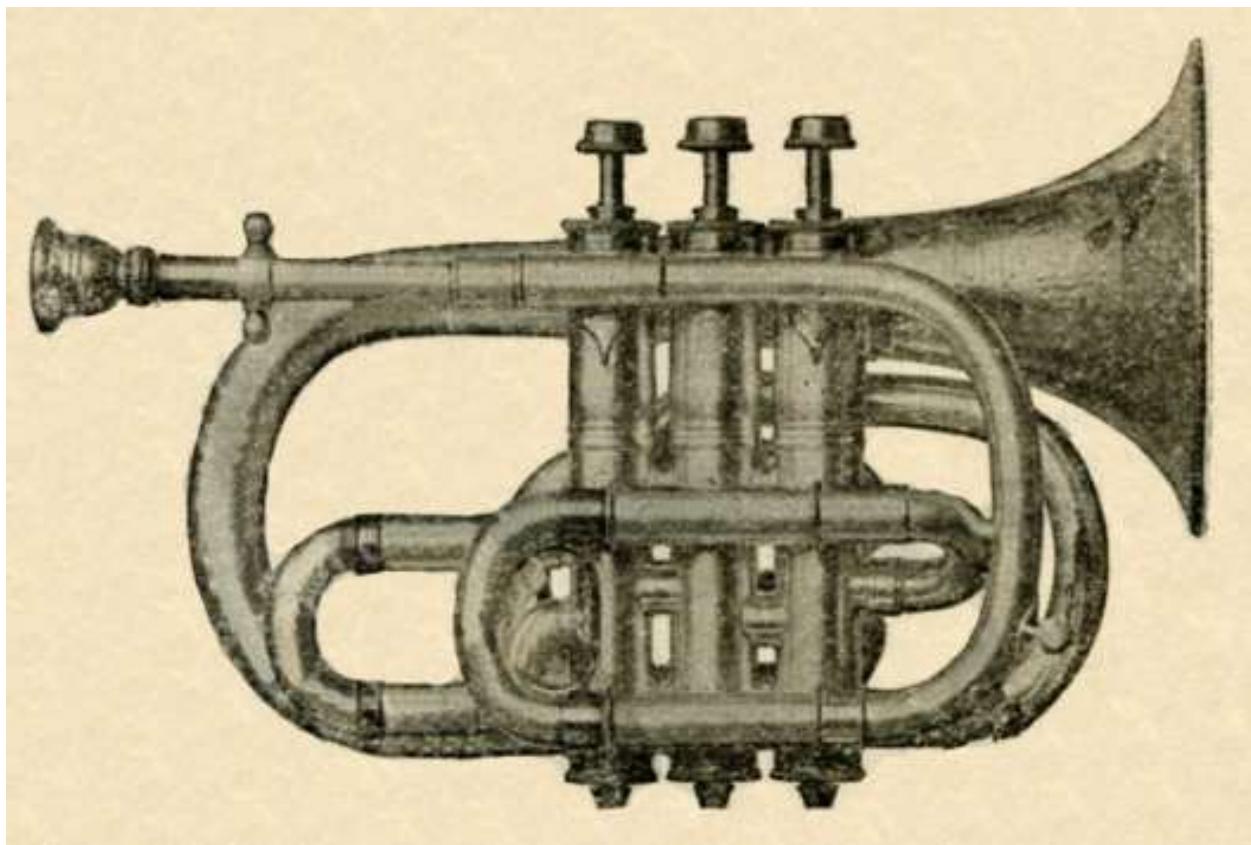
1913 New Invention Circus Bore



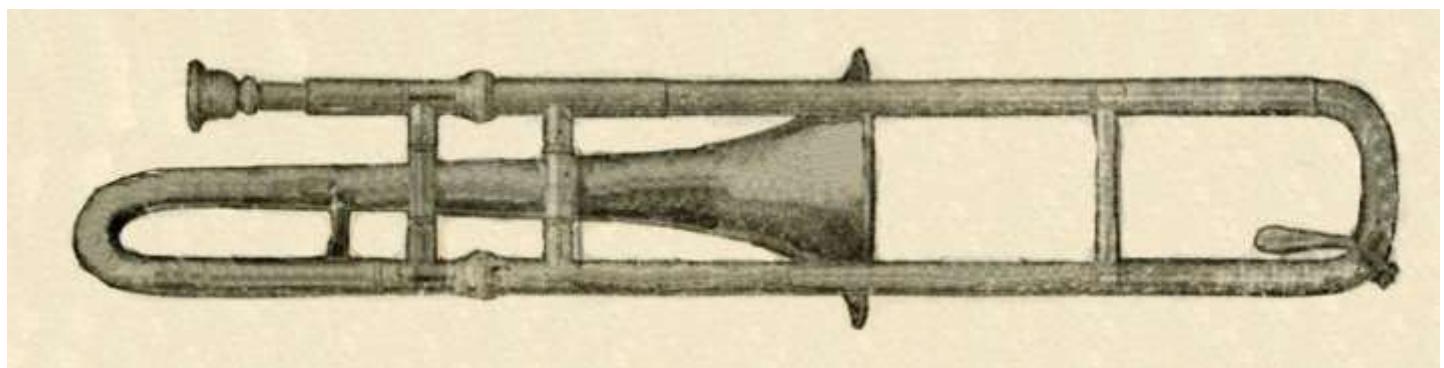
1913 New Invention with C attachment



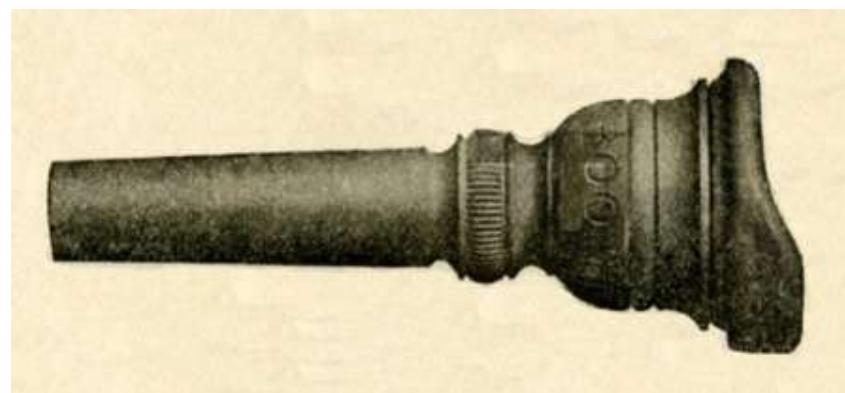
1913 Parlor model



1913 Slide Cornet in Bb



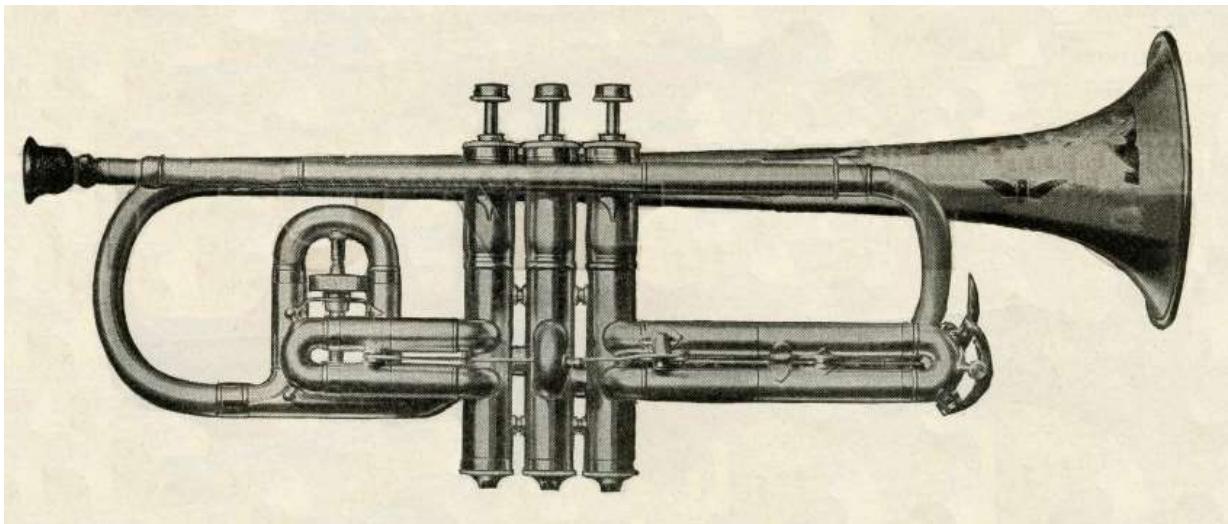
New EZ Playing mouthpiece



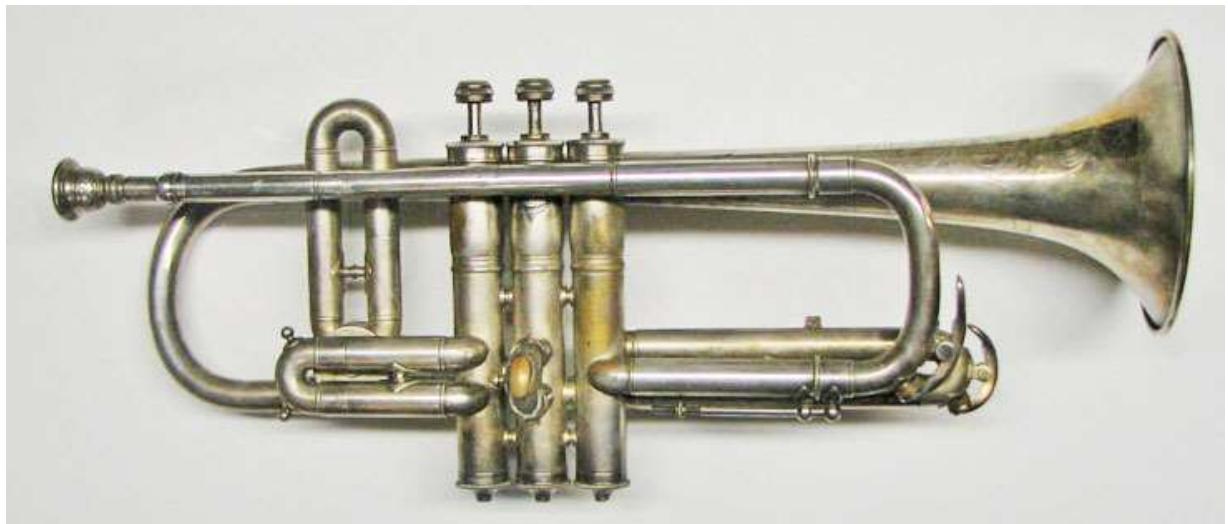
New Invention #1350xx c.1913



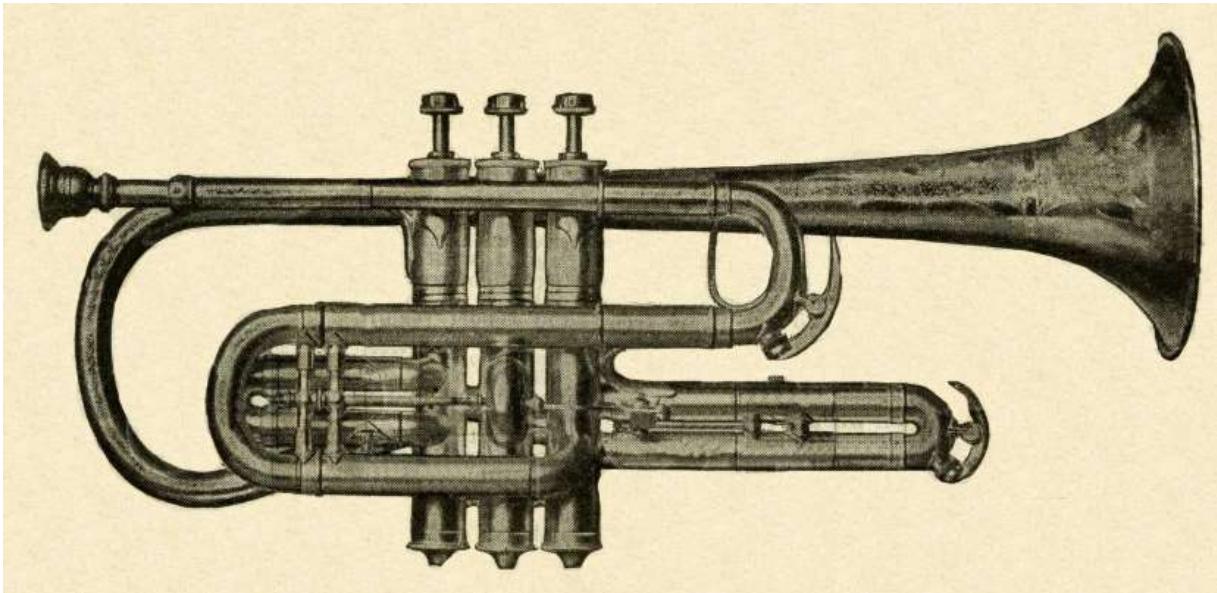
Conn introduces the New Wonder cornet in 1914.



1914 New Wonder Vocal #139xxx



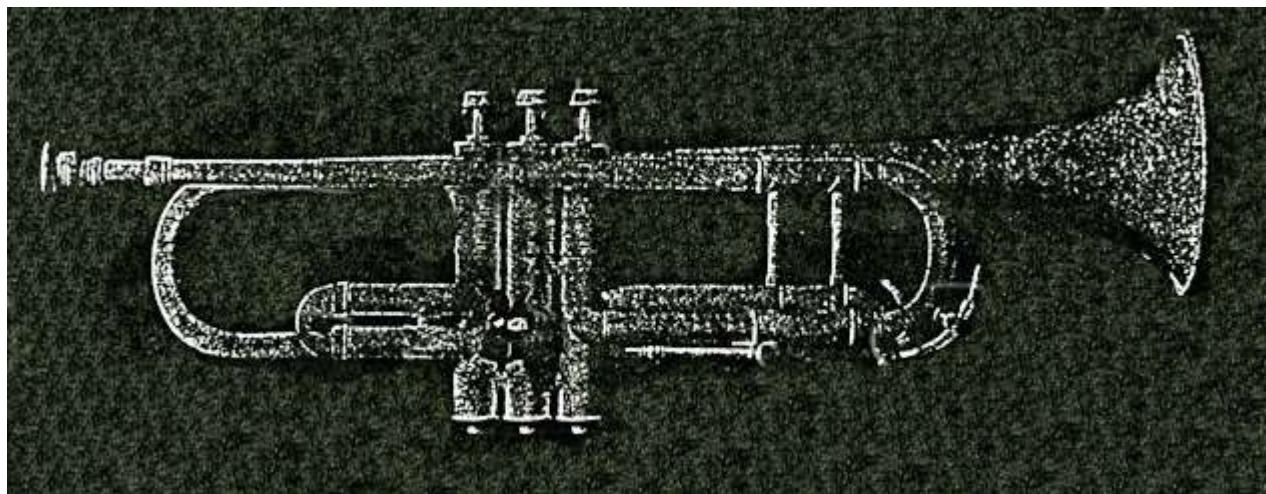
New 1914 Circus Bore Business model w/slide rods.



Circus Bore Business model #135393 c.1914 (courtesy D. Winters)



"The Booster" trumpet model cornet from March 1914 "The Truth."



This was said to play either as a trumpet or cornet and came with an interchangeable-rim mouthpiece. It produced a larger sound than a normal cornet and had a straight-through air passage. These were made with the 2-1/2 bore at 0.484".

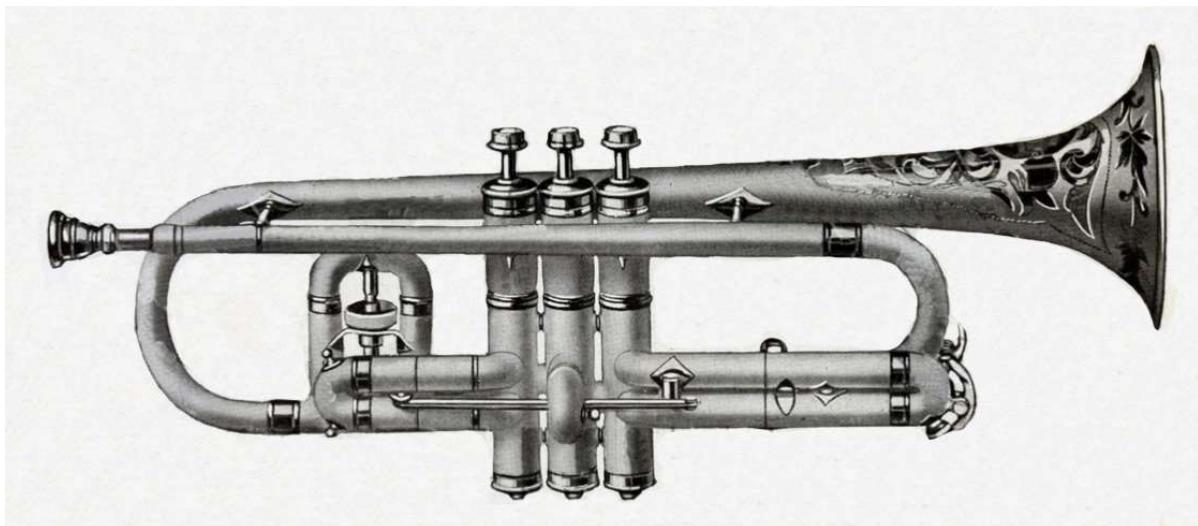
Booster Cornet #124135 c.1912 (author's photo, 1<sup>st</sup> slide saddle & pinky ring added)



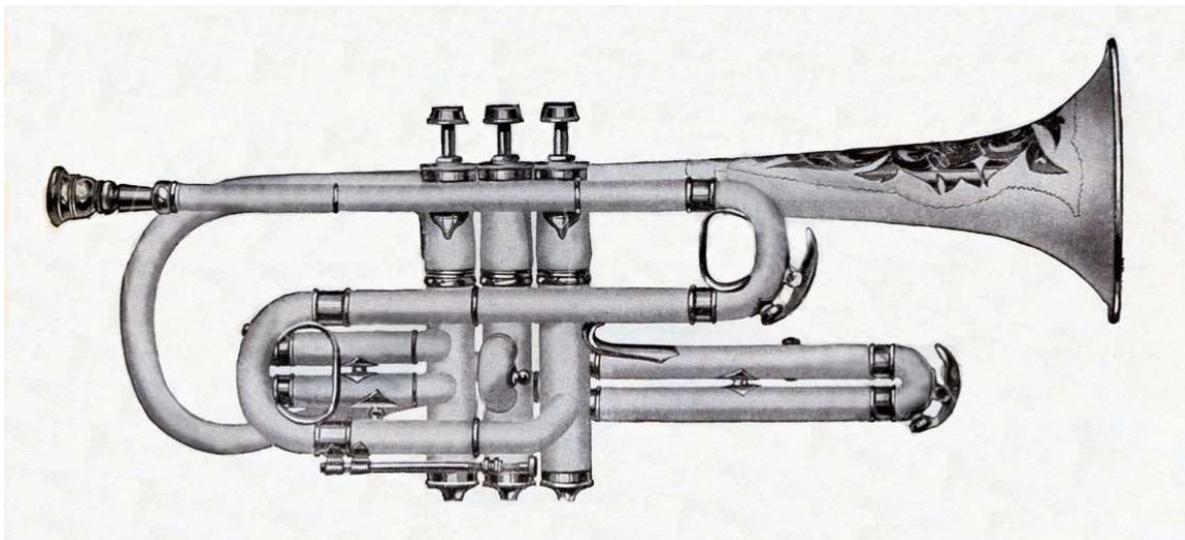
1917 New Wonder #1542xx



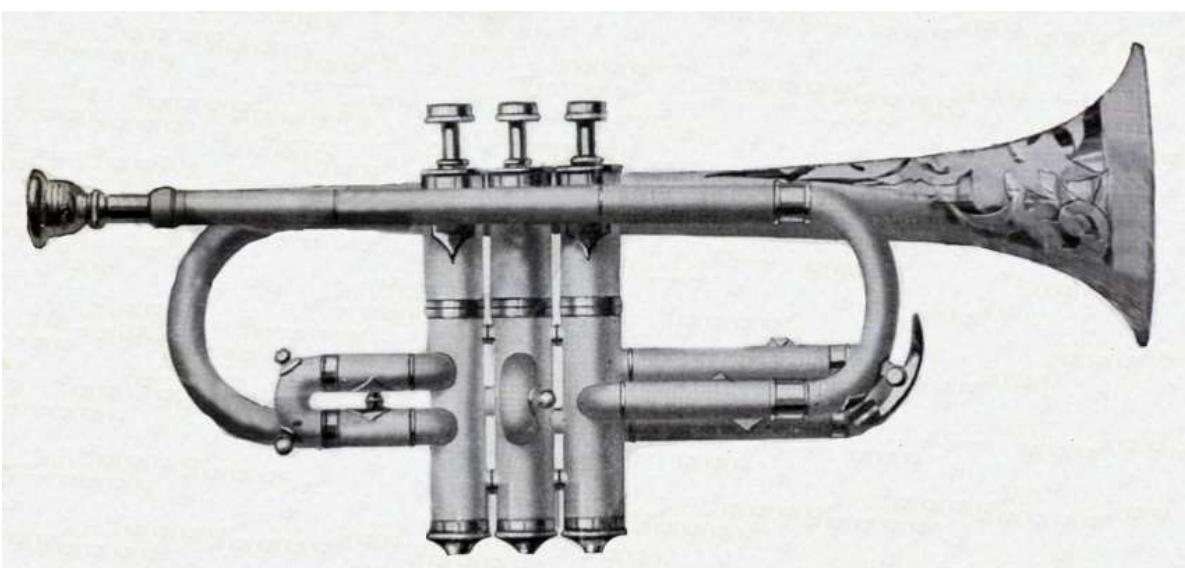
In 1918, the New Wonder becomes the Victor New Wonder.



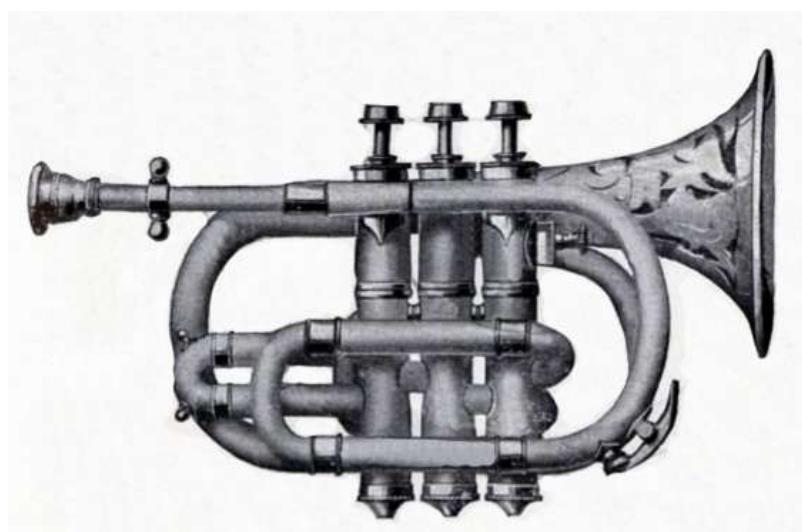
1919 Circus Bore



1919 New Wonder Eb



1919 Parlor Cornet



Parlor Cornet #1589xx c.1918



1919 Bb Slide Cornet



Circus Bore #169239 c.1921 (author's photo)



Victor New Wonder #182332 c.1921 (author's photo)



Victor New Wonder #1825xx c.1921



Victor New Wonder Vocal #1887xx c.1921



In 1922, Conn started using model numbers along with the names. They also dropped the "New Wonder" label. Here are the designations for 1922:

- 4-A: Victor small bore, Low pitch
- 5-A: Victor small bore, High pitch
- 6-A: Victor original, Low pitch
- 7-A: Victor original, High pitch

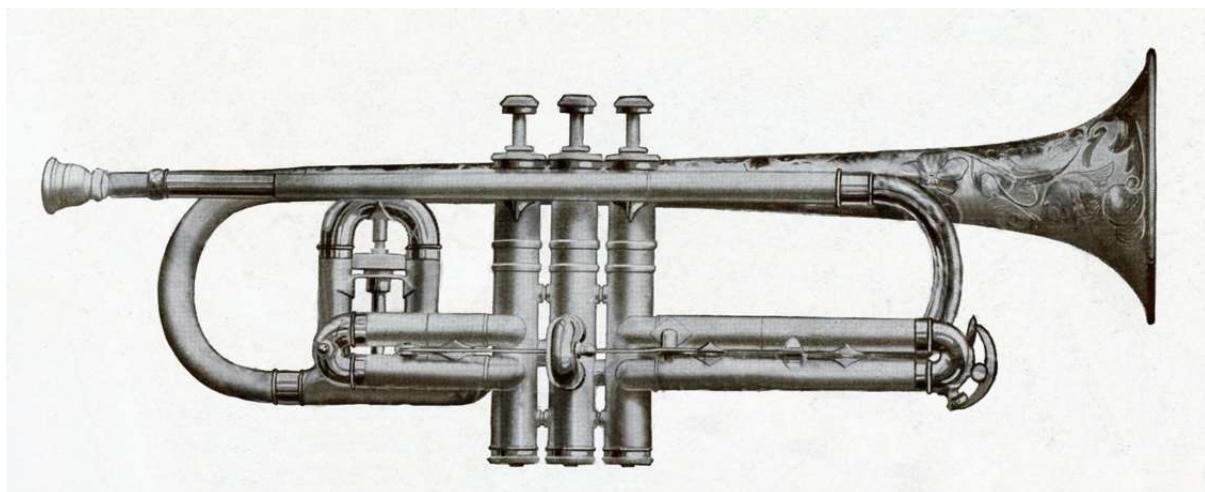
New Conn Visible Embouchure mouthpiece.



The 1924 model listings:

- 2A: Eb, low pitch
- 3A: Eb, high pitch
- 8A: Circus Bore, low pitch
- 9A: Circus Bore, high pitch
- 10A: Vocal, low pitch
- 11A: Vocal, high pitch
- 12A: Parlor, low pitch
- 13A: Parlor high pitch
- 16A: Slide, low pitch
- 17A: Slide, high pitch
- 80A: Victor, low pitch, regular bore
- 81A: Victor, high pitch
- 90A: 1925 Victor, low pitch, graduated small bore
- 91A: 1925 Victor, high pitch

1924 Victor 80A



1926 adds the 92A cornet, a Victor small bore without the Bb/A change.

The 1927 lineup had some minor model changes:

2A: Eb, low pitch; 3A = HP

4A: Victor, small bore w/mechanism, low pitch

6A: Victor, small bore wo/mechanism; 7A = HP

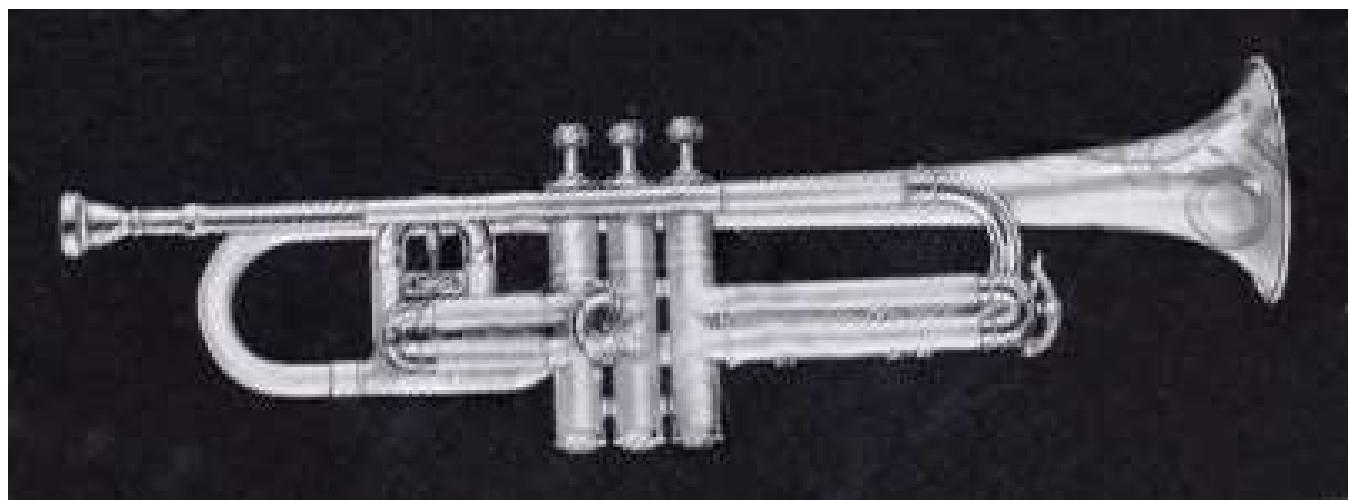
10A: Vocal in C/Bb/A, low pitch; 11A = HP

16A: Slide in Bb/A low pitch; 17A = HP

80A: Victor, large bore in Bb/A; 81A = HP

There are no changes in the cornet lineup until 1931 with the introduction of the 8A Slender Victor cornet and 26A Director. They also have an 82A model which is a large bore Victor without the Bb/A tuning slide mechanism.

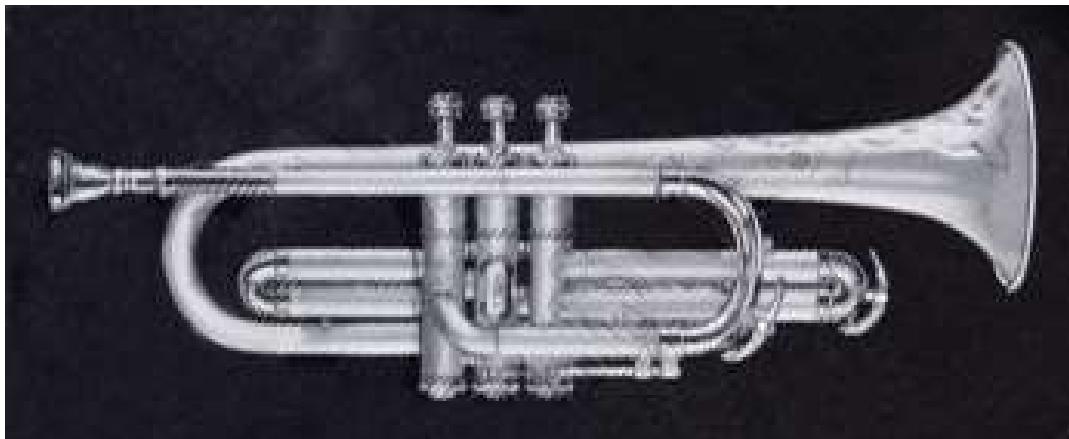
1931 8A Slender Victor



8A from 1932



1931 26A Director



26A #2798xx c.1930 (DeCarlis)



The big news in 1932 was the new 40A Connqueror Cornet with rimless bell.  
These had a new-style mouthpiece that was to be used for many years.



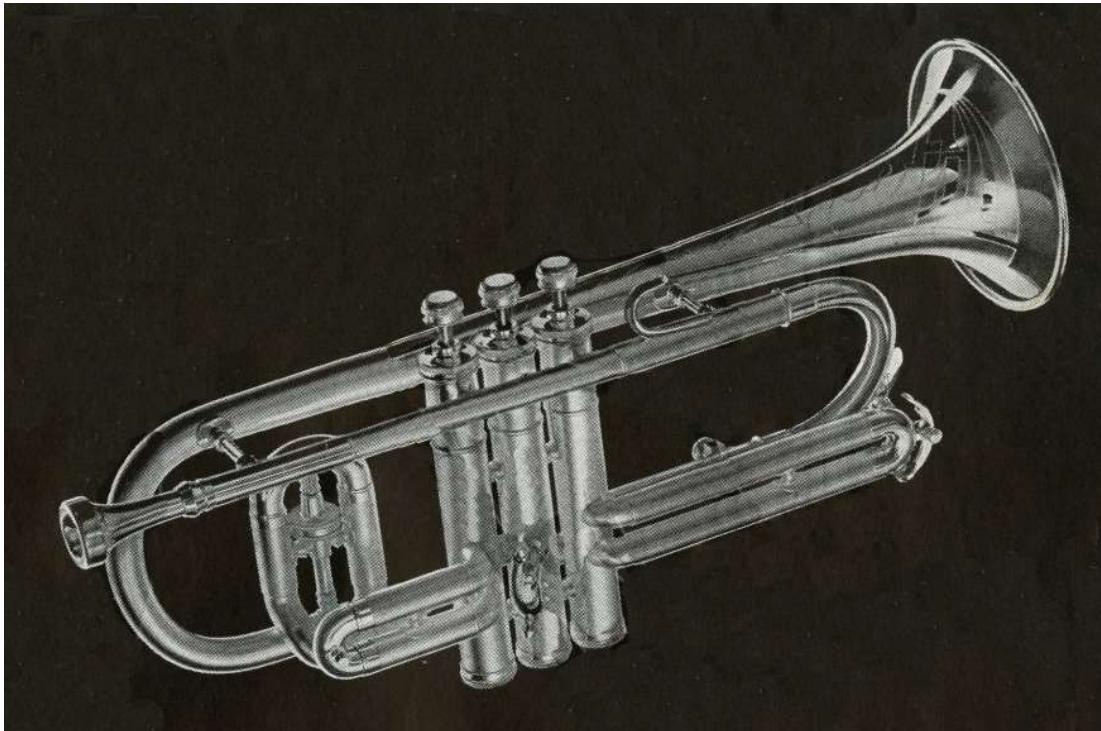
80A and 8A models for 1935



40A #3036xx from 1935 (DeCarlis)



New for 1936 was this model 38A Victor with a small bore.



8A #3212xx from 1937



New in 1938 was the 48A Connqueror Cornet.



The 1938 cornets were the 8A, 26A, 38A, 40A, 48A, & 80A.

In 1939, they introduced this 12A cornet with Coprion bell.



12A Cornet from 1940



The 1940 cornets were the 8A, 26A, 38A, 48A, 80A Victor, & the Victor Special.

The new Victor Special in 1940.



Victor Special #3299xx from 1940



80A Victor #3313xx from 1940



8A Victor #3351xx from 1940



New for 1941 was this 36A Concert Grand in medium bore.  
Very similar to the popular King Master model.



The 1941 cornets were the 8A, 12A, 26A, 36A, 38A, 48A, 80A, & Victor Special.

We then entered WWII with Conn serial numbers ending around 350000.