

William Frank Co. Cornets

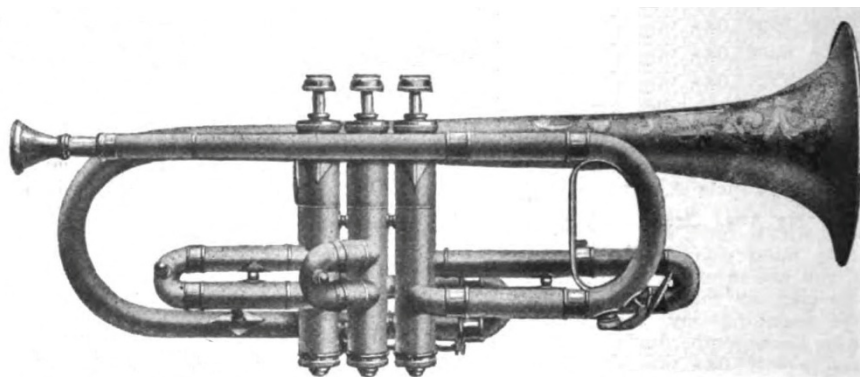
Chicago & Barrington, Illinois

- 1909 This date was claimed in advertising as the start. In 1909 and 1910, William and brother Jesse were both working for Frank Holton so perhaps were doing some work from home.
- 1911 The business was located at 542 South Dearborn (photo 1).
- 1915 The National Band Instrument Co was incorporated in July at #227 West Austin Ave in Chicago. By December they had changed the name to William Frank Co. This is the first capital stock raised so may have been the true start of production.

Change of Name.

The National Band Instrument Co., of 227 West Austin avenue, has changed its name to the William Frank Co.

- 1916 Ads this year showed the National Long model cornet by the William Frank Co (below).



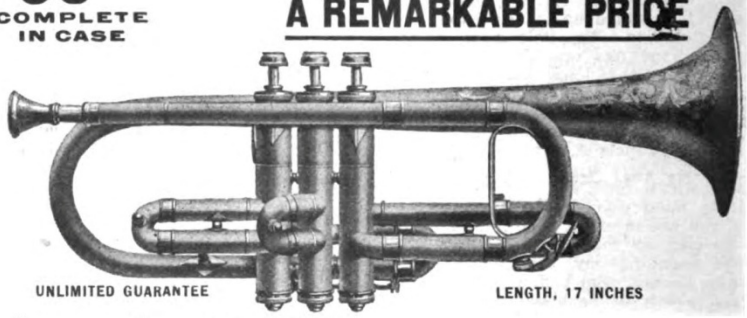
#10046 is the only matching example found so far (below & r.).



1916 Ad

\$35.00
COMPLETE
IN CASE

A REMARKABLE CORNET
A REMARKABLE PRICE



UNLIMITED GUARANTEE LENGTH, 17 INCHES

Here you see illustrated the NATIONAL Long Model Cornet. A strictly high-grade Cornet—every inch of it. A Cornet built to realize an ideal—A Cornet that must not and can not be judged from the standpoint of its astounding low price.

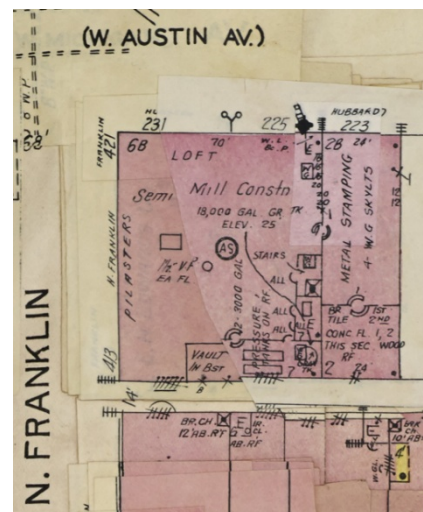
It has and always will be the purpose and policy of this Company to achieve a standard of quality and value—not merely a standard of price.

We might attempt to tell you about its tone and quality, its ease of blowing, its perfect tune, but we much prefer to have you try the Cornet for six days, free, and establish the facts for yourself. Then, and only then, will you realize what a wonderful Cornet the NATIONAL Long Model really is. For the first time, perhaps, you will experience the indescribable sensation of playing on a Cornet that is absolutely faultless.

Space will not permit us to name even one-half of the surprisingly good features embodied in its construction. But—accept our assurance—there is a tremendous surprise in store for you when you first try this Cornet. Then, we predict, your first query will be—“How is it possible to build such a Cornet for \$35.00?”

Send for Catalog number four.

WILLIAM FRANK & COMPANY
Makers of High-Grade Band Instruments
229 W. AUSTIN AVE. CHICAGO, ILL.



1917 Ad

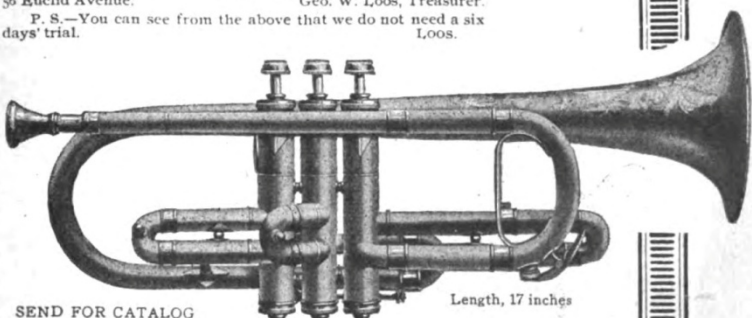
READ THIS AND THEN TRY A

HADDONFIELD, N. J., July 22, 1917.
MESSRS. WM. FRANK CO., Chicago, Ill.

Dear Sirs: The "National" Long Model Cornet you sent me for trial came duly to hand last Monday, July 16th, in good shape. The instrument is a beauty, and I do not see how you do it for the money, especially when everything is so very high now. We gave it a try-out at our band rehearsal last Friday night and it was "Johnny on the Spot"—O. K.

Thanking you for prompt delivery and hoping we may do some more business with you in the future, I remain,
Yours very truly,
HADDONFIELD CONCERT BAND,
Geo. W. Loos, Treasurer.

56 Euclid Avenue.
P. S.—You can see from the above that we do not need a six days' trial. Loos.

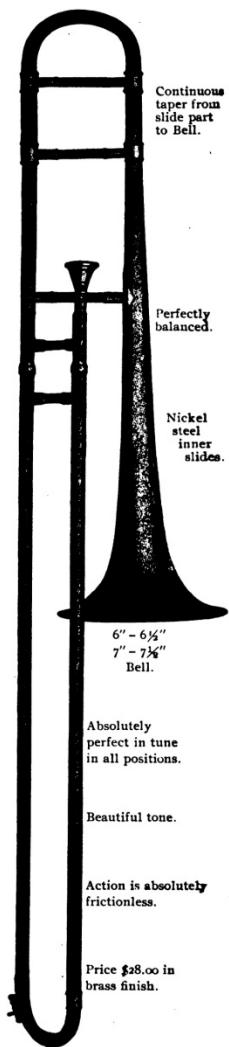


Length, 17 inches

SEND FOR CATALOG
WM. FRANK COMPANY, 229 W. Austin Ave., Chicago, Ill. Makers of High-Grade Band Instruments

West Austin factory in Sanborn map (top right).

THE NATIONAL



Continuous taper from slide part to Bell.

Perfectly balanced.

Nickel steel inner slides.

6" - 6 1/4"
7" - 7 1/4"
Bell.

Absolutely perfect in tune in all positions.

Beautiful tone.

Action is absolutely frictionless.

Price \$28.00 in brass finish.

Send for catalog number four containing complete description of finishes and prices of the NATIONAL Trombone. We will gladly send the NATIONAL in comparison with any on the market—regardless of price. Make it a point to send for one today, without obligations, and then we predict you will ask again and again, how can we do it for the price.

Write us and know more about this remarkably different Trombone—it will pay you.

WILLIAM FRANK COMPANY
229 W. Austin Avenue
CHICAGO, ILL.

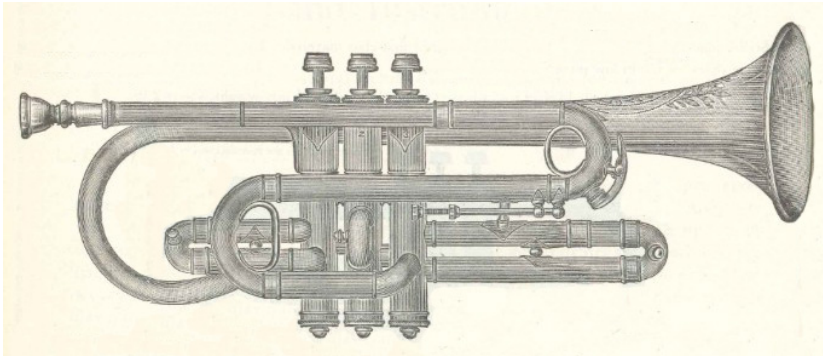
Makers of High-Grade Band Instruments for thirty-three years.

One possibility for early Frank production were the American Professional models sold by Lyon & Healy of Chicago. Cornet #10214 below shares many details with National cornet #10046 above, including the valves.

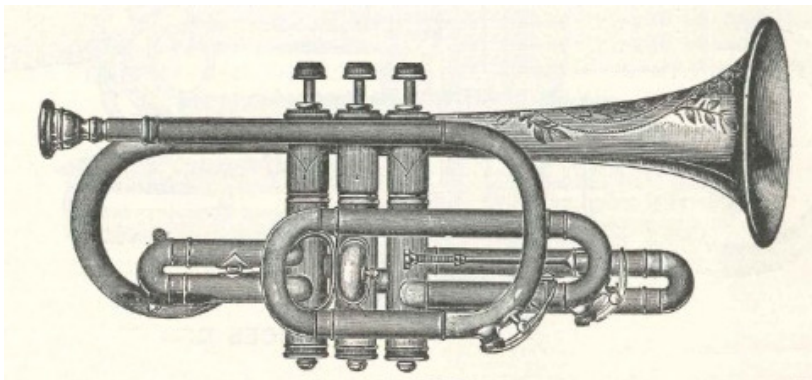
L&H #10214



This matches their 1912 catalog for the new Long model as well as other examples with #11511 (photo 1) and #8871 (photo 2).



They also offered a regular model in 1912 (below).



This matches examples with serial numbers 516 (photo 3), 1364 (photos 4 & 6), and 8810 (photo 5). It's not certain if the serial numbers are in sequence with Frank or if it's a separate list. More Lyon & Healy catalogs are needed to establish what years these were offered.

Stencil horns like these may be why very little shows up with the Frank name until the 1920s. A 1926 article in *Music Trade Review* said that production started in 1911.



The next Frank cornets found are the Long model in 1922.



Long model #3022



This Paramount Artist model #3048 was a slight variation.



Photos 3 & 4 at right are Paramount Artist #3280.

One variation of the L&H Long model is this Premier American cornet #2010 as sold in the 1931 Montgomery Ward catalog.



This gives us a clue as to when this was made, yet if these are Frank serial numbers; it's hard to match up the 1912 L&H cornets in the 500 to 11500 range, the 1920s Long model in the 3000 range, and 1930s Excelsior and Premier American models in 0 to 10000 range.

Here is a summary of all Frank models with the serial number ranges found:

The National	10046
Excelsior	11-10000
Paramount (Artist)	776-10000
New Era	1489-6698
The Classic	1672-the end
Tempertone	1819-8989
Intruscala	2438-5896
American Prep	2500-10000, 100000-111000
Utona	2849-70000 (TM 1 st use in 1928)
Long Model	3022
Americana	3411-7266
Bel Canto	4138-5501
Frank name only	10000-16000
Artist	11000-12415 ("New" in 1946)
Biltmore	11000-12000, 111000-end

Up to WWII should be up to 10000.

The Barrington plant seems to have been started for wartime contracts, then later used for Classic, Standard, and American Prep models.

New Era model cornet #4263 is another Long model variant.



This Americana cornet #3411 is an early example of the American Prep student model design #2 sold for many years.



Americana #4210



American Prep model #4380 (below & #2 at right)
This design matches the 1920s Long model.



The *New Langwill Index* said that the American Prep line of student instruments started in 1934. The lowest serial number I have found is around 2500.

American Prep #4500



Am. Prep #4880

American Prep #5125 changed to design #2.



New Era model #5173



New Era #5868 (below & #3 at right)



New Era #6234 (below & #4 at right)



Tempertone model #6421 (below & #1 at right)



The Tempertone was a new cornet design with examples found as early as #1819. This had a more balanced, modern design and was likely their intermediate model.

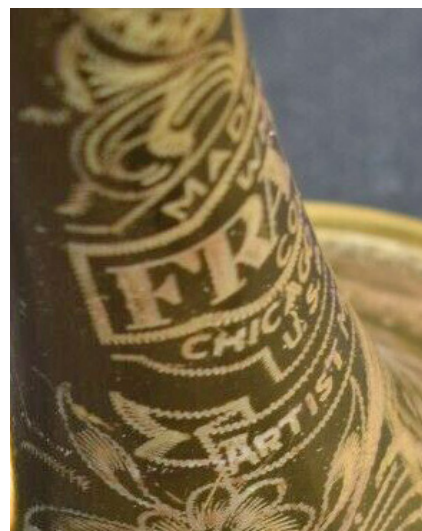
American Prep #8026



Excelsior model #8958 (below & #2 at right)



Artist model #11692 advertised as a “new” model in 1946.



All the Artist models found have been marked from Chicago and range up to #12415. It appears from bell markings that all production moved to Barrington around 1954 at serial #14900 in the more expensive models and at 106000 in the American Prep models.

Another interesting development around WWII was the start of valve casings and pinky hooks matching those made by Harry Pedler & Sons of Elkhart and shown in cornet #11692 above. It's possible that Frank stopped making valve sets when they moved to Barrington.

1930s trumpets and cornets had valve spring towers marked with "WIDE" so that the valve guides could be installed properly (below & #1 & 2 at right, author's photos).



#13321 made in Chicago



At right #11879, 13347, & 13539.

Photos from Horn-u-copia.net or internet auctions.



1944 ad showing two cornet models.



THERE GO YOUR BAND INSTRUMENTS

High in the sky, over Berlin and Tokio, go your band instruments . . . for every ounce of brilliant FRANK craftsmanship and superb mechanical equipment is now devoted to the production of war materials for the Allied Nations and we shall continue to build vital war parts until the day that Hitler and Hirohito yell "quits."

★

Experiments and research to produce better band instruments have been going on at the FRANK plant for some time. This, coupled with the skill of working to close tolerances with the finest of modern equipment, cannot fail to bring the best band instruments in the land, as soon as production is permitted.

ESTABLISHED 1904

William Frank Company

Manufacturers High Grade Band Instruments

2033 CLYBOURN AVENUE • CHICAGO 14, ILL.



A 1951 ad listed Classic, Standard, & American Prep models.

William Frank • **BAND INSTRUMENTS** •

WILLIAM FRANK
"CLASSIC"
Bb CORNET



WILLIAM FRANK
"STANDARD"
Bb CORNET



WILLIAM FRANK
"AMERICAN PREP"
Bb CORNET



Standard #13884 from Chicago



Utona model #28639 c.1942

This appears to be a stencil by the Ohio Band Inst. Co.
The Frank trademark for this claimed first use in 1928.



After reaching 10000, the American Prep model switches to serial 100000 in Chicago. The first ones marked Barrington come at 104000 and the last Chicago at 106000.

American Prep #100999 (top right)

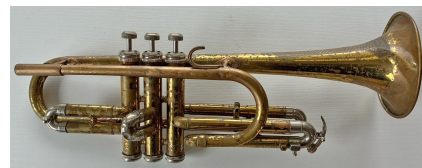
American Prep #103287 (below)



American Perfection #103960 with no Frank mark



Penzel Mueller Artist #104053 (photo 2) & Sherwood Standard stencils (photos 3-6).



American Prep #105871 from Barrington

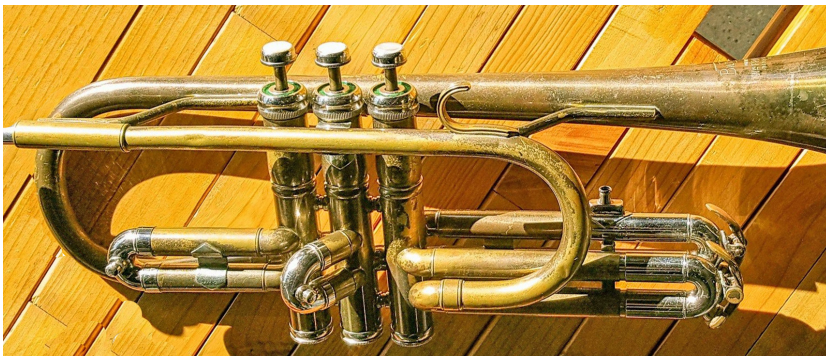


The Biltmore was a new model replacing the American Prep.

Biltmore #111210



Biltmore #111842



Biltmore #112080



The company ended production by the end of 1955 and the property was sold in early 1956.

