

Deagan

Chicago, Illinois, USA; 1916-1958

The **J.C.Deagan Company** was undoubtedly the largest manufacturer of tower tube instruments in North America. Before entering this field, Deagan was already well known for a wide variety of tuned percussion instruments, mostly for use in band or orchestra. But the tower chimes which he designed are on a much larger scale. It has been reported that Deagan bought out the U.S.Tubular Bell Company, but it is uncertain when that happened or what it might have contributed to Deagan's entry into the tower chime business. Certainly Deagan's electrical actions bear no resemblance to the mechanical actions of U.S.Tubular (and Durfee) tower chimes. The Deagan company produced about 439 such instruments between 1916 and 1958, though there is some uncertainty in this number because of enlargements, buy-backs, etc. (See list and table.)

The Deagan tower instruments varied in size from 1 to 97 tubes, though the maximum keyboard range was 32 notes. (Those with more than 32 tubes had multiple ranks like a pipe organ, with the sole exception of the 37-note set for the Wanamaker organ.) The deepest note produced was C from a tube about 12 feet long and 5 inches in diameter, weighing about 600 pounds. The majority of these instruments had 10 to 16 notes, and most were installed in the 1920s. All had electric actions, with a variety of manual and/or automatic control mechanisms. Although many of these instruments have been scrapped or simply demolished (some being replaced with other tower instruments), some remain usable, having been repaired or restored in recent years.

Allchimes.org

Electrified Chimes - are played from a keyboard or automatic device.

An electrical impulse activates a relay, a separate power source goes thru the relay and pulls or pushes an electrical solenoid to hit the bell. Some solenoids are mounted at the bell and push a hammer directly into the bell. Others are located anywhere from the first level to the tower level and pull a cable over a transmission, like manual chimes.

Tubular Chimes - not the majority.

The Tubular Chimes are usually hung from a stationery wooden rack, an equal number in two parallel rows. Manually, they are typically played Ellacombe style or **electrically by keyboard**, organ, computer or pre-programmed device. Deagan, Durfee and US Tubular were the big manufacturers. They don't appear to be made any more. Except for Deagans, they seem to have been made as an offshoot to clockmakers tubular bells.