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Some time between 1924 and 1931 the H. N. White Company started to manufacture brass Clarinets. All three brands of the company carried Clarinets with the King brand comprised of sterling silver bells. The H. N. White Company made all of its own Silver Clarinets and did not stencil any for other companies. In later years, the company did import some wooden Clarinets for the both Cleveland and American Standard brands. In 1940 the company launched a Clarinet that had a silver lining, and after World War II it was reintroduced and named the "Micro-sonic" and later changed to "Silversonic". By 1963 The "Silversonic" and Sterling bells were dropped, but The H. N. White Company continued to manufacture Silver Clarinets until it was sold in 1965.

After metal replaced wood in the manufacture of flutes in the late 1800's, manufacturers began making metal clarinets as well. The same rationale applied: metal flutes and clarinets are impervious to changes in weather, temperature and moisture. Wood tends to absorb moisture and if exposed to changes in temperature or humidity, could expand and crack ruining the instrument.



1931 White Way News Catalog #3



1940 White Way News Catalog #12



1946 White Way News Catalog #14



1958 White Way News Catalog #20

When manufactured with the same care and precision as high-quality wooden instruments, metal flutes and clarinets were shown to be more stable to stay in tune better and to have clearer intonation and more power. Sometime between 1924 and 1931, HN White began manufacturing high-quality metal clarinets. As with his other musical instruments, Mr. White strove for perfection. The three HN White brands; King, Cleveland and American Standard all featured metal construction, but the top-of-the-line 'Silver King' featured solid sterling silver bells.



1940 Ad



1932 Goldman Letter

White proudly manufactured all metal clarinets 'in house' and contrary to some reports did not sell any 'stencils' to other manufacturers or distributors. The H. N. White Company made the following brands: King, American Standard, Gladiator (1940-1941, 1946-1953), and Cleveland. In later years, White did import some wood clarinets for sale under the 'Cleveland' or 'American Standard' brand name. Silver Kings however, were always made at the factory in Ohio and

always sold under the "Silver King" name. The name "Silver King" is held in high esteem as among the best, if not the best, metal clarinets ever made. For more information on Silver Bells [Click Here](#).

In 1940, White introduced a very special version of the Silver King that had a silver lining. In 1945 this instrument was named the "King Microsonic" then later renamed the "King Silversonic" clarinet. This instrument marked the epitome of HN White's metal clarinet-making ability.

Today, although wooden flutes are rare, well-made metal clarinets are rare. Starting in the 1920's, as metal clarinets caught on in popularity, unfortunately, many manufacturers introduced cheap and shoddily made instruments into the market. Although a handful of manufacturers such as the HN White Company steadfastly maintained superior quality, the overwhelming flood of cheap metal clarinets influenced people's perception such that today metal clarinets are virtually unheard of. However, many professional jazz clarinetists, collectors, and music historians still revere the HN White and "Silver King" name to the point that sales of pre-owned "Silver King" clarinets of any vintage are much sought after today and command the highest prices.

E-mail our official H. N. White Clarinet Guy!

Clarinet aficionado

[Brant Chaisson](#)



Special thanks to Brant Chaisson for all the extra help and ideas!





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