

The Masonic Lodge Pipe Organ:

Another neglected chapter in the history of pipe organ building in America

R. E. Coleberd

Introduction

This article is the second in a series exploring the role of the King of Instruments in American culture. The first article, "The Mortuary Pipe Organ: A Neglected Chapter in the History of Organbuilding in America," was published in the July 2004 issue of *THE DIAPASON*.¹ (Others to follow will discuss organs in hospitals, hotels, soldiers' homes and war memorials.) The era of the Masonic Lodge pipe organ, embracing close to 700 instruments, began in the 1860s, reached its zenith in the first three decades of the twentieth century, and with certain exceptions ended shortly after World War II.² In the religious, ritualistic format of the Masonic movement, the pipe organ made a statement. It was deemed essential to crown the ambiance of the journey through the several chapters of the order (Blue Lodge, Royal Arch, Scottish Rite, Shrine and other "Rites"), and it complemented the majestic buildings, often architectural masterpieces, which contributed significantly to an attractive urban landscape. A closer look at the market, the instrument, and the builders reveals key features of this fascinating epoch, which surely belongs in the rich and colorful history of pipe organ building in America.

The Masonic Lodge

The Masonic Lodge was a broad-based, worldwide social and cultural movement with origins in antiquity, which counted the St. John's Lodge in Boston, established in 1733, as its beginning in this country. George Washington and Benjamin Franklin were Masons.³ Encompassing immigration, urbanization, social solidarity and individual identity, it satisfied a desire to belong. Lodge membership was a mark of recognition and status in the community, and a transcending emotional experience in ritual and décor in the otherwise anonymous atmosphere of urban life. A noted German sociologist, Max Weber, visiting America in 1905, spoke of voluntary associations "as bridging the transition between the closed hierarchical society of the Old World and the fragmented individualism of the New World" and saw them performing a "crucial social function" in American life.⁴ The well-known

social commentator and newspaper columnist, Max Lerner, in his epic work *America as a Civilization*, saw one of the motivations behind "joining" as "the integrative impulse of forming ties with like-minded people and thus finding status in the community."⁵ Ray Willard, organist at the Scottish Rite Cathedral in Joplin, Missouri (M. P. Möller Opus 3441, 1922), observes that membership embraced all walks of life: from business and professional men, many of them community leaders and perhaps well-to-do, to everyday citizens.⁶ Masonic membership paralleled population growth and reached a peak in the first three decades of the twentieth century. New York State counted 872 lodges and 230,770 members in 1903.⁷ Pre-World War II Masonic membership in the United States totaled 3,295,872 in 1928.⁸

Of special interest is the long-recognized connection between the railroad industry and the Masonic Lodge. Railroad men were lodge men, and railroad towns were lodge towns. The railroad was the predominant conveyance in freight and passenger travel in the first decades of the last century. In 1916, railroad mileage in this country peaked at 254,000 miles, and in 1922, railroad employment reached over two million workers, the largest labor force in the American economy.⁹ These totals reflected the number of trains and crews, station, yard, and track workers, and the maintenance demands of the steam locomotive. The comparatively well-paid railroad workers were no doubt important in building Masonic temples. In 1920, average wages in the railroad industry were 33 percent above those in manufacturing.¹⁰ In one of what must have been numerous examples, Masonic employees of the Big Four Railroad in Indianapolis donated eight art-glass windows on the east wall of the second floor foyer of the Scottish Rite Cathedral there (q.v.).¹¹

The market

The Masonic Lodge market differed significantly from other pipe organ markets. For the larger facilities in metropolitan locations, the Masonic building was typically a matrix of rooms, often on several stories, and each with a different décor, e.g., Corinthian Hall, Gothic Hall, Ionic Hall. Each chapter room



1915 console, Austin op. 558, Medinah Temple, Chicago (Photo by William T. Van Pelt)

required a pipe organ to support the ritual proceedings. The centerpiece of the building was the auditorium, manifestly different from a church sanctuary. Typically square in layout, it featured a large curtained stage in front, cushioned opera-chair seating on the main floor, and perhaps side and end balconies. The pipe chambers were quite often in the proscenium above the stage, with other divisions almost anywhere—in back of the stage, above a side balcony, in a rear balcony, etc. Occasionally, chambers with a pipe fence flanked either side of

the stage. The organ console was on the floor in front of the stage.

It was especially important that the auditorium instrument look large. Just as an upright or spinet piano would have been out of place on the stage, so too would a two-manual organ console be inappropriate on the floor in front of the stage. It must be a concert grand piano on the stage and a three-manual, better yet a four-manual console on the auditorium floor, with lots of drawknobs or stop tabs for everyone to see. To achieve this image of "bigness" within the limitations of chamber space or perhaps budget, builders often resorted to extensive unification and duplexing.

The Masonic Lodge pipe organ era began in 1860 when E. & G. G. Hook built one-manual instruments for temples in Massachusetts: in Lawrence, 14 registers, Opus 275, and in New Bedford, 12 registers, Opus 281.¹² In 1863, William A. Johnson built a one-manual instrument of nine registers, Opus 144, for the lodge in Geneva, New York.¹³ In 1867, Joseph Mayer, California's first organbuilder, built an instrument for the "Free Masons" in San Francisco.¹⁴ The three organs built by Jardine in 1869 for New York City, in this case for the Odd Fellows Hall, marked the beginning of what would become a salient feature of the lodge market: multiple instruments for one building, often under one contract and several with identical stoplists.¹⁵ (See Table 1.) One particularly interesting example was the three instruments Hutchings built for the Masonic Lodge in Boston in 1899. The stoplists were identical (q.v.), but each one was in a different case to conform to the décor of the room. Wind from a single blower was directed to one instrument by a valve opened when the console lid was raised, turning on the blower.¹⁶

The pinnacle of the multiple contract practice came first in 1909, when Austin built twelve organs for the Masonic Lodge in New York City; in 1927, when Möller built nine for a temple in Cincinnati,

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1915 Austin op. 558, Medinah Temple, Chicago. Organ has five manuals, 93 ranks, 74 stops, and was removed by the Austin Organ Co. and stored at an unknown location before the building was gutted in late 2000 to become a department store. Photo taken in 1984. (Photo by William T. Van Pelt)

Ohio. Eleven of the twelve Austins were identical two-manual instruments, eight of the nine Möllers.¹⁷ An Austin stock model that found its way into the Masonic market was the Chorophone, introduced in 1916. Austin sold nine of these instruments to Masonic Lodges. Opus 896 was exported to the lodge in Manila, the Philippine Islands, in 1920.¹⁸

The instrument

R. E. Wagner, vice-president of Organ Supply Industries, points out that the Masonic Lodge pipe organ followed closely—tonally and mechanically—the evolution of the King of Instruments in this country: from the one- and two-manual classic-style tracker organs of the nineteenth century to a brief sojourn with tubular-pneumatic action at the turn of the century, followed by the symphonic-orchestral tonal paradigm and sophisticated electro-pneumatic windchest and console action in the 1920s. It also

followed a return to the American classic style beginning later in that decade.¹⁹ The liturgy-based nature of Masonic ritual would suggest a church-type instrument, one in which eight-foot pitch predominated. This was true in the beginning and in smaller instruments.

The three Hutchings instruments in Boston (q.v.), Opus 475–477, were each fourteen ranks.²⁰ The eleven identical Austin instruments for New York City in 1909 had five ranks: an 8' Open Diapason on the Great with four ranks duplexed from the Swell (8' Stopped Diapason, 8' Dulciana, 8' Viol d'Orchestra, and 4' Harmonic Flute). There was no pedal. The twelfth organ on this contract was a 17-rank, three-manual organ with the Choir manual duplexed entirely from the ten-rank Swell manual. The seven stops of the Pedal organ were all extensions of manual stops.²¹ Austin's two-manual Chorophone comprised four ranks—Bourdon, Dolce, Open Diapason and

Table 1. Multiple contracts, Masonic Lodge pipe organs

Year	Builder	Location	Number	Identical	Opus Numbers
1869	Jardine	New York City	3		
1874-5	Erben	New York City	8		
1891	Johnson & Son	Buffalo, NY	2	2	767-768
1894	Kimball	St. Louis, MO	5		
1899	Hutchings	Boston, MA	3	3	475-477
1909	Hook & Hastings	Baltimore, MD	2		1949-1950
1909	Austin	New York City	12	11	233-244
1909	Estey	Baltimore, MD	5		709-713
1909	Felgemaker	Indianapolis, IN	6	6	1002-1007
1913	Hillgreen-Lane	Memphis, TN	4	2	356-359
1917	Reuben Midmer & Son	Brooklyn, NY	6		
1918	Möller	Akron, OH	3	2	2540-2542
1922	Möller	Kokomo, IN	2	2	3429-3430
1922	Möller	Chicago, IL	6	4	3289-3294
1923	Pilcher	Savannah, GA	2		1169-1170
1923	Kimball	Oklahoma City, OK	3	2	
1924	Möller	Chicago, IL	2		3946-3947
1924	Möller	New York City	4	3	3960-3963
1925	Kimball	Detroit, MI	2		
1925	Möller	Chicago, IL	2		4125-4126
1926	Austin	Allentown, PA	6	4	1389-1394
1926	Möller	New York City	2	2	4405-4406
1926	Möller	Chicago, IL	2		4594-4595
1927	Austin	Evanston, IL	2		1438-1439
1927	Austin	Chicago, IL	2		1533-1534
1927	Möller*	New York City	14	13	4862-4875
1927	Möller	Cincinnati, OH	9	8	4842-4850
1927	Henry Pilcher's Sons	Dayton, OH	4	4	1350-1353
1928	Möller	Brooklyn, NY	3	2	5140-5142
1928	Henry Pilcher's Sons	Chicago, IL	2		1446-1447
1928	Rochester Pipe Organ	Rochester, NY	2	2	
1929	Möller	Troy, NY	2		5468-5469
1929	Votteler, Holtkamp, Sparling	Cleveland, OH	2		1528-1529
1930	Austin	Scranton, PA	2		1712-1713
1945	Möller	Baltimore, MD	2		7164-7165

*Pythian Masonic Temple

Source: George Nelson, *The Organs of the United States and Canada Database*.

Viole—unified into 27 speaking stops from 16' to 2'.²²

By the 1920s, the Golden Age of the Masonic Lodge pipe organ, the three- or four-manual organ in the lodge auditorium was frequently an eclectic instrument, embracing theatre stops and even toy counters in addition to traditional liturgical stops. Add to this a “quaint” stop now and then, i.e., a bugle call. Did you ever hear of Solomon's Trumpet? (See

1926-2000 Kimball, Guthrie, Oklahoma q.v.) As Willard points out, these instruments were designed to play the marches, patriotic selections, and orchestral and opera transcriptions used in ritual work, as well as theatre organ and popular music of the day when the auditorium was used for entertainment.²³

The mixing of liturgical and theatre stops reflected the fact that in the 1920s the concept of organ music was broadly

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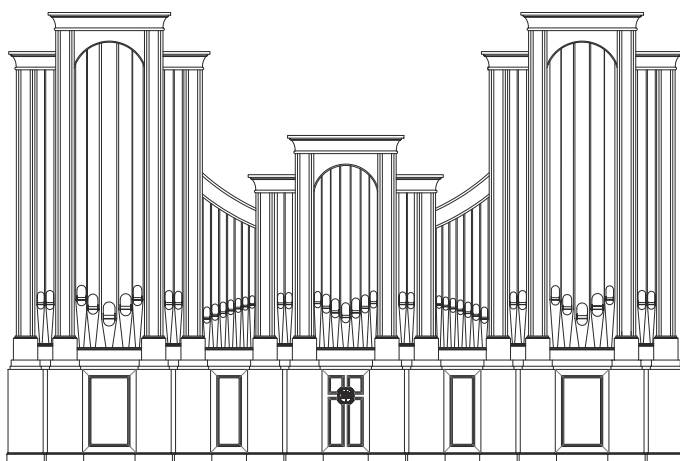
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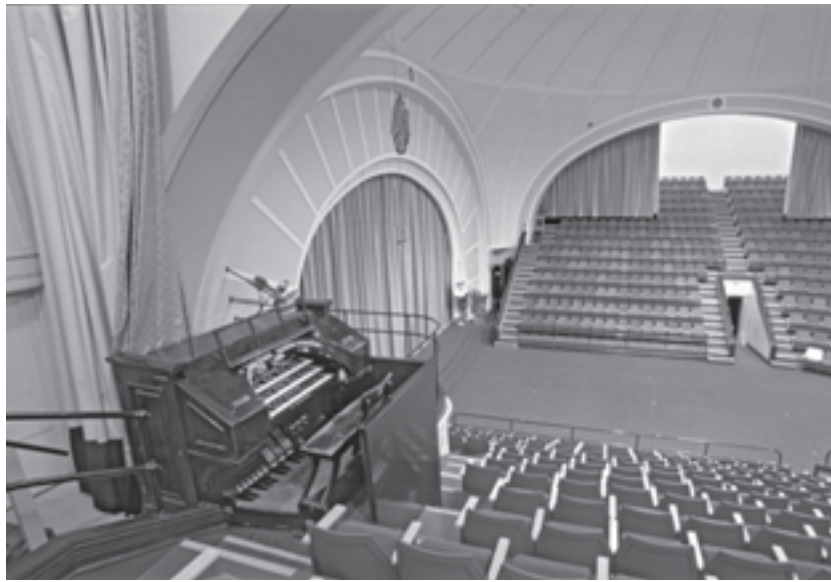
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defined, and with the introduction of the theatre organ, the distinction between liturgical and theatre voicing and sound was blurred. If anything, the eight-foot pitch tonal palette of the church organ, characterized then by wide-scale diapasons and flutes, narrow-scale strings, high-pressure reeds, and the absence of mutations and mixtures, served to further obscure this distinction.

Two stops particularly symbolic of this era and that disappeared until recently, the Stentorphone and the Ophicleide, were found in large lodge organs. Manuel Rosales, well-known California organbuilder, believes they can best be explained as items of fashion. "As the Hope-Jones ideas influenced the times with very large diapasons, the idea of the Stentorphone being a sort of superstar of the diapason family found its way into legitimate specifications. It was placed on the Solo manual rather than being put on the main divisions, and in that capacity wouldn't destroy the balance between the stops on the Great. Couple the Solo to the Great and it works to beef things up."²⁴ With the tremolo on the Solo, the Stentorphone could also be used as a solo stop.

The ophicleide, a 19th-century brass orchestral instrument, was said to have been invented in Paris about 1817. It was popular in symphony and opera orchestras and in military bands of the 1830s and 1840s, being eventually replaced by the modern tuba. As a fashionable organ stop, the Ophicleide might appear on the Great manual as a powerful, high-pressure reed, a double tuba which, when coupled to the customary 8' Tuba on this manual, formed a chorus.²⁵

The predominant characteristics of the three- and four-manual Masonic Lodge pipe organs, with the exception of those built by E. M. Skinner, seem obvious when viewed from the stoplists discussed below. They confirm our assumption that the Masonic Lodge instrument differed markedly from other pipe organs. Beginning with extensive unification and duplexing, the number of stops is double or more the number of



W. W. Kimball Co. op. 6781, Scottish Rite Masonic Temple ("Denver Consistory"), Denver, Colorado, photo 1998 (Photo by William T. Van Pelt)

ranks of pipes. Pedal divisions with only one or two independent ranks were typical, and duplicate consoles, the second perhaps a two-manual to control two divisions, were found. Sometimes second touch and a roll player were added to the console. The high-pressure reeds of the day, Ophicleide and Tuba, found on the Great division, required higher wind pressure than the flues to achieve their desired tone quality and power—ten inches versus six inches—and therefore were placed on a separate windchest. The Vox Humana was often placed in its own enclosure. Each manual division had a tremolo, and often individual stops such as the Diapason, Tibia and Vox Humana had separate tremolos. The entire instrument was often totally enclosed. Duplexing and unification were made possible by the complex and sophisticated switching in windchest and console innovations that marked the American builders during this period and that made their product by far the most technologically advanced in the world.

The three-manual Kimball organ, Opus 6781, in the Denver Scottish Rite Cathedral, now Consistory, with 19 ranks, 50 stops and 1,459 pipes, illustrates these features (see stoplist). On the Great division, five ranks comprise eleven speaking stops—four ranks with extensions—and only the 8' Tuba is an independent (one pitch) voice. The Diapason and Tuba each have their own tremolo. The Solo (second) division comprises 10 ranks and 20 stops, with the Gedeckt unified into six stops, from 16' to 1 3/4'. The third division, designated the Accompaniment manual, counts four ranks and seven unit stops duplexed from the Great. The organist, Charles Shaeffer, comments that the English Horn on the Accompaniment manual is unique to Kimball, voiced closer to the Oboe in contrast to an English Horn on theatre organs, which resembles an English Post Horn. He adds that the Marimba on the Solo is "reiterating," meaning that it repeats rapidly and therefore contrasts with the single-stroke Harp on the Great.²⁶ The String Mixture is wired from the Salicional, and the Orchestral Oboe from the Gedeckt and Viol d'Orchestra. The Tibia Clausa is independent and has its own tremolo. The nine-stop Pedal organ is entirely duplexed from the Great and Solo divisions. The bugle call is played by buttons above the keyboards. The manual compass is 73 pipes, adopted by many builders during this period to forgo upperwork and achieve brilliance through the 4' coupler, a primary registration aid.²⁷ All divisions are enclosed, and each manual has at least one tremolo. The toy counter and pedal second touch complete the instrument.

The 8' Wald Horn on the Great, a departure from traditional pipework nomenclature, requires an explanation. A Wald Horn is customarily a chorus reed with English shallots, voiced somewhere between a Trumpet and an Oboe.²⁸ In this example, unique to Kimball and employed briefly, 1922–1924, it is a spotted-metal tapered (one-half) open flue rank of medium scale. With more definition than a stopped flute, but with limited harmonics, it is horn-like and perhaps best described as a heavy spitzflute.²⁹ Noteworthy in Kimball organs, and a lasting legacy of this builder, are the superb strings, the work of the legendary voicer George Michel. As the late David Junchen commented: "Michel's strings set the standard by which all others were judged. Their richness, timbre and incredible promptness of speech, even in the 32' octave, have never been surpassed."³⁰

Four and five manuals

The four- and five-manual Masonic Lodge era began in 1912, when Hook & Hastings built a 53-rank, 62-stop, five-manual instrument for the Scottish Rite Cathedral in Dallas. Far less unified than later work and with a 61-pipe compass for manual stops, it reflected the church organ background of this eastern builder. But it did contain a Stentorphone and Ophicleide, two consoles, and a player mechanism.³¹ The next year, 1915, Aus-

Scottish Rite Temple, Denver Consistory W. W. Kimball, Opus 6781, 1925 3 manuals, 19 ranks, 50 stops, 1,459 pipes

GREAT

5 ranks, 11 speaking stops

16'	Bourdon	12 pipes
8'	Diapason Phonon	73 pipes
8'	Tibia Minor	61 pipes
8'	Wald Horn	61 pipes
8'	Viola	61 pipes
4'	Gemshorn (Wald Horn)	12 pipes
4'	Octave Viola	12 pipes
4'	Flute (Tibia)	12 pipes
2 3/4'	Twelfth (Tibia)	12 pipes
2'	Fifteenth (Wald Horn)	12 pipes
8'	Tuba	73 pipes
	Harp	
	Chimes F	
	Chimes P	
	Snare Drum Tap	
	Snare Drum Roll	
	Tremolo – Diapason	
	Tremolo – Tuba	
	Tremolo	

SOLO

10 ranks, 20 speaking stops

16'	Gedeckt	12 pipes
16'	Salicional Bass (TC)	49 notes
8'	Horn Diapason	73 pipes
8'	Tibia Clausa	73 pipes
8'	Viol d'Orchestra	73 pipes
8'	Violes Celestes II	146 pipes
8'	Echo Salicional	73 pipes
8'	Concert Flute (Gedeckt)	61 pipes
4'	Orch. Flute (Gedeckt)	12 pipes
4'	Violin (Salicional)	12 pipes
2 3/4'	Nazard (Gedeckt)	12 pipes
2'	Flautina (Gedeckt)	12 pipes
1 3/4'	Tierce (Gedeckt)	61 notes
III	String Mix 12,15,17 (Sal)	61 notes
16'	Bassoon	73 pipes
8'	Trumpet	73 pipes
8'	Orch Oboe (Ged, VdO)	61 notes
8'	Oboe	12 pipes
8'	Vox Humana	61 pipes
4'	Oboe Clarion	12 pipes
8'	Marimba (reiterating)	
4'	Marimba (reiterating)	
	Vox Vibrato (Tremolo)	
	Tremolo	

ACCOMPANIMENT

4 ranks, 10 speaking stops

16'	Contra Violo (Gt)	61 notes
8'	Wald Horn (Gt)	61 notes
8'	Tibia Minor (Gt)	61 notes
8'	Viola (Gt)	61 notes
8'	Unda Maris II	122 pipes
4'	Octave Viola (Gt)	61 notes
4'	Solo Flute (Tibia Gt)	61 notes
8'	Musette (syn, Gt-Bdn,Vla)	61 notes
8'	Clarinet	73 pipes
8'	English Horn	73 pipes
8'	Harp	49 bars
4'	Harp	
	Tremolo	

PEDAL 9 stops

32'	Acoustic Bass (resultant)	32 notes
16'	Diaphone (Gt Diap Phon)	32 notes
16'	Bourdon (Gt)	32 notes
16'	Contra Viola (Gt)	32 notes
16'	Gedeckt (Solo)	32 notes
8'	Bass Flute (Gt Bourdon)	32 notes
8'	Still Gedeckt (Solo)	32 notes
4'	Flute (Solo)	32 notes
16'	Bassoon (Solo)	32 notes
	Bass Drum Stroke (second touch)	
	Bass Drum Roll (second touch)	
	Cymbal Crash (second touch)	
8'	Chimes	
	Snare Drum Roll (second touch)	

Standard couplers

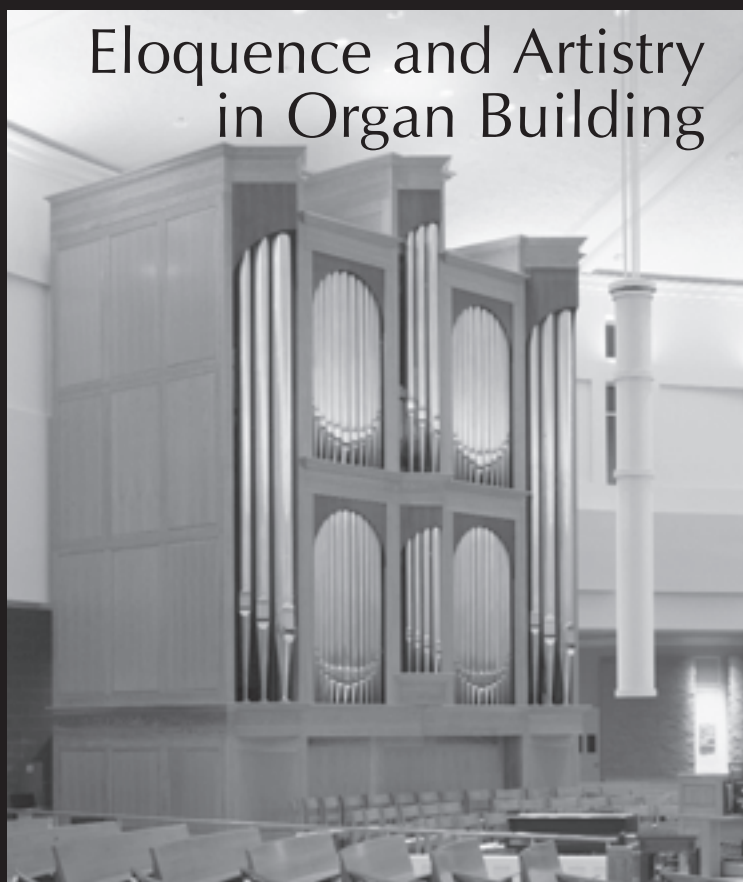
Toy Counter

Chinese Gong (thumb piston)	
Bugle Call F, B-flat, D, F (on buttons)	
Sforzando (toe lever)	
Chimes Sustain (toe lever)	
Thunder (toe lever)	

Source: Ivan P. Morel & Assoc. (Rick Morel)
Charles F. Shaeffer, Shaeffer Piano Service

tin built a five-manual, 74-rank, 89-stop, 4,860-pipe organ, Opus 558, for the Medinah Temple in Chicago. Now in storage, this instrument was for many years the largest Masonic Lodge pipe organ in America and was, perhaps, the best known among the organist fraternity.³²

The four- and five-manual market was largely the province of the nationally known major builders Austin, Estey, Kimball, Möller and Skinner (see Table 2). They used large lodge installations in their sales pitch, and buyers were no doubt influenced by them in their choice of builder. Describing their four-manual Möller, Opus 3441, 1922, in Joplin, Missouri, the Scottish Rite Cathedral states:



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Table 2. Representative four-manual Masonic Lodge organs

Year	Builder	Location	Temple	Opus	Ranks	Stops	Pipes
1912	H & H*	Dallas, TX	Scottish Rite Cathedral†	2310	53	62	3,245
1915	Austin	Chicago, IL	Medinah Temple†	558	74	89	4,860
1919	Austin	Cleveland, OH	Masonic Temple	823	41	52	2,789
1921	Pilcher	Shreveport, LA	Scottish Rite Cathedral	1061	48	47	3,148
1921	Möller	Memphis, TN	Scottish Rite Cathedral	2977		101	
1924	Kimball	St. Louis, MO	Scottish Rite Cathedral	6763	54	113	3,576
1924	Möller	San Antonio, TX	Scottish Rite Cathedral	3853	50	91	3,563
1925	Estey	Buffalo, NY	Scottish Rite Temple	2301	57	60	3,746
1926	Estey	Oakland, CA	Lake Merit Scottish Rite	2639	39	61	2,716
1926	Kimball	Guthrie, OK	Scottish Rite		67	72	5,373
1926	Skinner	Dayton, OH	Masonic Temple	624	59	58	3,920
1926	Skinner	Detroit, MI	Scottish Rite Cathedral	529	64	66	4,352
1927	Möller	Cincinnati, OH	Auditorium				84
1928	Möller	Rochester, NY	Cathedral Hall	5260	54	77	
1928	Skinner	Rochester, NY	Auditorium/Theater	711	56	63	3,725
1929	Skinner	Indianapolis, IN	Scottish Rite Cathedral		65	68	4,365
1930	Austin	Scranton, PA	Scottish Rite Cathedral	1713	53	84	3,777

*Hook & Hastings

†Five-manual

Source: George Nelson, *The Organs of the United States and Canada Database*.



Scottish Rite Cathedral, Indianapolis (Photo by William T. Van Pelt)

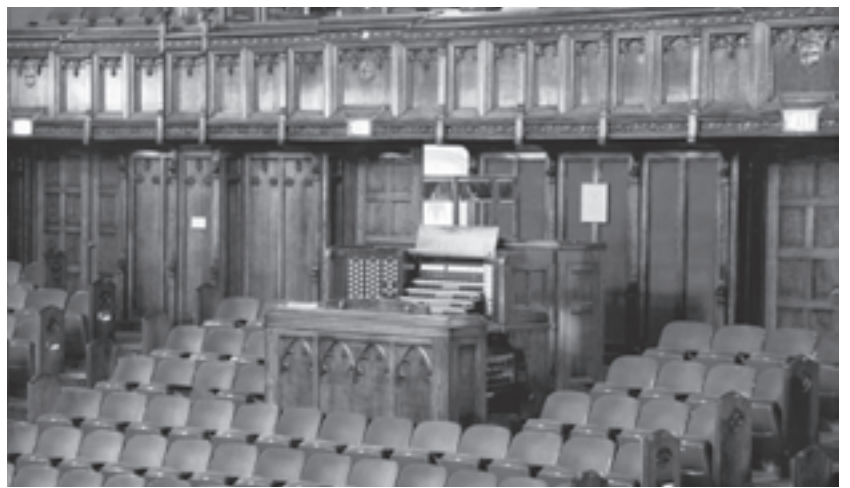
“There were five four-manual organs built by Möller in the early 1920s similar to the Joplin organ. They are in the United States Military Academy, West Point, N.Y., the Scottish Rite pipe organ in San Antonio, Texas, Temple Beth-El, New York City, and the Masonic Building, Memphis, Tennessee.”³³ Michael Brooks, recent Sovereign Grand Inspector General of the St. Louis Scottish Rite Cathedral, points out that his temple is the proud owner of one of four Kimball four-manual lodge organs. The others are Guthrie, Oklahoma (q.v.), Minneapolis (now in storage), and Oklahoma City.³⁴

The lodge market also reflected the work of John A. Bell (1864–1935), a prolific designer, who in 1927 was said to have drawn up specifications for over 500 pipe organs in the eastern United States. Bell, a Mason, was organist at the First Presbyterian Church in Pittsburgh for over 40 years.³⁵ Allen Kinzey, Aeolian-Skinner veteran, says Bell’s stoplists typically included a large-scale, heavy-metal, leather-lipped, unenclosed 8’ Diapason on the Great. Also, all manual stops of 16’ and 8’ pitch (excluding celestes) had 73 pipes, while stops of 4’ pitch and above had 61.³⁶ Bell designed instruments for Masonic temples in Cincinnati and Dayton and the Scottish Rite Cathedral in Indianapolis.³⁷ (q.v.)

Indianapolis

The Skinner/Aeolian-Skinner five-manual, eight-division, 77-rank, 81-stop, 5,022-pipe organ in the Scottish Rite Cathedral in Indianapolis, Opus 696-696B, is the largest instrument in the Masonic movement in America today (see stoplist). The building’s title is appropriate because it is most likely the largest such edifice ever built in this country and is beyond doubt the most lavishly appointed, replete with Masonic symbolism at every turn: stone carvings and figurines, 70 art glass windows, and elevator door decoration. This architectural masterpiece is crowned by a 212-foot main tower, housing a 63-bell Taylor (Loughborough, England) carillon. The Medieval Gothic interior features imported Carpathian white oak, Russian curly oak, and Italian, Tennessee and Vermont marble.³⁸

This signature instrument was built in 1929 by E. M. Skinner, with four manuals, 65 ranks, 68 stops, 4,365 pipes.³⁹ Skinner had defined his instrument in building church organs and he stayed very close to this paradigm in his lodge installations. With comparatively limited unification and duplexing, this organ features a mixture, mutations and principal chorus on the Great. This organ reflects the influence of John Bell (q.v.). Manual compass is 73 notes for founda-



1929 E. M. Skinner Organ, Scottish Rite Cathedral, Indianapolis (Photo by William T. Van Pelt)

Scottish Rite Cathedral, Indianapolis, Indiana
E. M. Skinner, Opus 696, 1929, Aeolian-Skinner Opus 696-B, 1949
77 ranks, 81 stops, 5,022 pipes

GREAT (enclosed) 18 ranks, 13 stops, 1170 pipes

16’	Open Diapason	73 pipes
8’	Principal Diapason	73 pipes
8’	Second Diapason	73 pipes
8’	Gross Flute	73 pipes
8’	Melodia	73 pipes
8’	Erzähler Celeste II	134 pipes
4’	Octave	61 pipes
4’	Harmonic Flute	61 pipes
2’	Fifteenth	61 pipes
V	Mixture	305 pipes
16’	Ophicleide (HP)	61 pipes
8’	Tuba (HP)	61 pipes
4’	Clarion (HP)	61 pipes
	Tremolo	
	Cathedral Chimes (Echo)	
	Celestial Harp	

SWELL

19 ranks, 15 stops, 1291 pipes

16’	Bourdon	73 pipes
8’	Open Diapason	73 pipes
8’	Gedeckt	73 pipes
8’	String Celeste II	146 pipes
8’	Salicional	73 pipes
8’	Clarabella	73 pipes
4’	Octave	61 pipes
4’	Chimney Flute	61 pipes
2’	Flageolette	61 pipes
IV	Cornett	244 pipes
16’	Posaune	73 pipes
8’	Cornopean	73 pipes
8’	Oboe	73 pipes
8’	Vox Humana	73 pipes
4’	Clarion	61 pipes
	Tremolo	

CHOIR

10 ranks, 10 stops, 694 pipes

16’	Gamba	73 pipes
8’	Open Diapason	73 pipes
8’	Concert Flute	73 pipes
8’	Dulciana	73 pipes
8’	Unda Maris (tc)	61 pipes
4’	Flute d’Amour	61 pipes
2’	Piccolo	61 pipes
8’	Clarinet	73 pipes
8’	Orchestral Oboe	73 pipes
8’	English Horn	73 pipes
	Tremolo	

SOLO

7 ranks, 6 stops, 499 pipes

8’	Stentorphone	73 pipes
8’	Orchestral Flute	73 pipes
8’	Gamba Celeste II	146 pipes

4’	Rohr Flute	61 pipes
8’	French Horn	73 pipes
8’	Tuba Mirabilis (HP)	73 pipes
	Tremolo	
	Cathedral Chimes (Echo)	

ECHO (playable from Solo) 8 ranks, 6 stops, 548 pipes

16’	Lieblich Gedeckt	73 pipes
8’	Chimney Flute	73 pipes
8’	Spitz Flute Celeste	134 pipes
8’	Vox Angelica II	134 pipes
4’	Traverse Flute	61 pipes
8’	Vox Humana	73 pipes
	Tremolo	
	Cathedral Chimes	25 tubes

PEDAL

7 ranks, 23 stops, 308 pipes

32’	Resultant	32 notes
32’	Bourdon	12 pipes
16’	Open Diapason	32 pipes
16’	Metal Diapason (Gt)	32 notes
16’	Contra Basse	32 pipes
16’	Violone	32 pipes
16’	Bourdon	32 pipes
16’	Lieblich (Sw)	32 notes
16’	Lieblich Gedeckt (ext Stage)	32 notes
16’	Lieblich Gedeckt (ext Balcony)	32 notes
16’	Contra Gamba (Ch)	32 notes
8’	Major Flute	12 pipes
8’	Gedeckt	12 pipes
8’	Dolce Flute (Sw)	32 notes
8’	Gamba (Ch)	32 notes
8’	Viole	12 pipes
II	Mixture	64 pipes
32’	Bombarde	12 pipes
16’	Trombone	32 pipes
16’	Ophicleide (Gt)	32 notes
16’	Contra Posaune (Sw)	32 notes
8’	Tromba	12 pipes
4’	Clarion	12 pipes
	Cathedral Chimes (Echo)	

STAGE ORGAN

4 ranks, 4 stops, 256 pipes

8’	Open Diapason	61 pipes
8’	Concert Flute	73 pipes
8’	Dulciana	61 pipes
4’	Flute d’Amour	61 pipes

BALCONY ORGAN

4 ranks, 4 stops, 256 pipes

8’	Open Diapason	61 pipes
8’	Concert Flute	73 pipes
8’	Dulciana	61 pipes
4’	Flute d’Amour	61 pipes

Source: THE DIAPASON, April 1928, vol. 19, No. 5, pp. 1–2. Alan G. Lisle and Charles G. Fromer, *A Guide to the Scottish Rite Cathedral*, 2000, pp. 23–24. Organ Historical Society, *Organ Atlas 2007*, pp. 203–212.

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tion stops, 8' and below, and 61 notes for 4' stops and above. The First Diapason on the Great is 38 scale, heavy metal and leather-lipped. The Second Diapason is 40 scale, a customary scale for the first diapason. These two stops plus the 16' Open Diapason and 8' Gross Flute are unenclosed. The tremolo on the Great is described as high and low wind, reflecting the difference in wind pressure between the flues and the reeds. The Great reeds are on 12-inch wind as is the entire Solo manual, the latter likely because of the Stentorphone there, also 38 scale, heavy metal, and leathered. The Solo Tuba Mirabilis is on 20 inches of wind and not affected by the tremolo. The Diapason on the Swell is also 40 scale and leathered. The 4' Celestial Harp on the Great is subject to sub and super (octave) couplers. The Cathedral Chimes on the Echo has 25 tubes, from tenor C. A description in THE DIAPASON commented: "Couplers and pistons will increase the number of playing devices at the command of the performer to 158."⁴⁰ In 1949, Aeolian-Skinner enlarged this instrument with two new divisions of four ranks each.⁴¹ A new five-manual console by Reisner was installed in 1969.⁴²

St. Louis

The four-manual Kimball in the Scottish Rite Cathedral in St. Louis, now awaiting restoration, illustrates other features of the lodge pipe organ (see stolist). With 113 speaking stops from 54 ranks of pipes, a virtually complete toy counter plus piano, marimba, xylophone, harp, chimes and orchestral bells, it is perhaps the apex of the four-manual lodge instrument, a veritable music-making machine. In this organ, the basic manual stop compass is 61 notes and the 8' pitch dominates the tonal palette. Among the 24 stops from ten ranks on the Great, the Principal Diapason is wood and the Twelfth and Fifteenth are taken from the Waldhorn (q.v.). This instrument doesn't have a mixture on the Great or pretend to have a principal chorus; it is a collection of orchestral colors, including the luxury of three 16' open flues on the Swell, all oriented to fundamental tone as illustrated by the Phonon Diapason there, which emphasizes the eight-foot tone.⁴³ The unit Gedeckt on the Swell speaks as six stops, from 16' to 1 1/2'. The Swell has separate tremolos for the Tibia Clausa and the strings. The Vox Humana vibratos on the Swell and the Echo are a tremolo. The Pedal organ counts 25 stops derived from two ranks; a 32' Bourdon, and a 32' Bombarde with three extensions. The rest are borrowed from or extensions of manual stops.

The builders

The lodge market was important to American builders in new installations, repeat sales, replacing trackers with modern instruments, additions and upgrades. The bulk of these organs were, not surprisingly, two-manual instruments, and some were stock models, designed to accommodate what we have elsewhere called the commodity segment of the market.⁴⁴ For small instruments, there was scarcely any brand preference or

real or imagined product differentiation to the buyer. To these lodges an organ was an organ and the sooner the better. As in other markets, a second-hand trade emerged with instruments sold to Masonic Lodges from elsewhere.

Table 3 portrays the work of thirteen builders, names familiar today. The larger firms—Austin, Estey, Kimball and Möller, well known coast-to-coast through numerous installations and with aggressive sales representation—accounted for the majority of lodge instruments. Factory production dominated the industry during this period, and these builders could meet any requirement: budget, placement and timetable. Regional builders Hillgreen-Lane and Pilcher also enjoyed lodge business, as did many local firms. In 1917, Reuben Midmer & Sons counted six organs for the Masonic Temple in Brooklyn. Lewis & Hitchcock built instruments for Washington, D.C. and Baltimore.⁴⁵ In California, an early last-century firm, the Murray M. Harris Company, built lodge organs for Fresno, Oakland, and San Francisco, California as well as for Santa Fe, New Mexico.⁴⁶ In 1928, the Rochester Pipe Organ Company built two identical three-manual, 20-rank instruments for the Masonic Temple in Rochester, New York.⁴⁷ In 1908, the Adrian Organ Company rebuilt a nine-rank, one-manual organ, from two prior locations, for the Masonic Temple in Adrian, Michigan.⁴⁸

The lodge market also figured in the locational history of the American organ industry. In 1859, the Pilcher Brothers, then in St. Louis, built a one-manual organ for the Golden Rule Lodge there. In April 1863, perhaps in search of a market opportunity, they moved to Chicago where, in September, they contracted to build a one-manual organ for the Oriental Lodge there.⁴⁹ In 1919, the Reuter-Schwartz Company of Trenton, Illinois built an instrument for the Masonic Temple in Lawrence, Kansas. This prompted their move to Lawrence, having found a source of capital in the Russell family who, in turn, found a business opportunity for their son Charlie, just graduated from the University of Kansas. Charlie Russell became the bookkeeper at Reuter, and the Russell family owned Reuter for many years.⁵⁰

Many of the larger instruments, sources of pride for these lodges, are regularly serviced and updated as needed, perhaps with major funding from prominent members. When the signature 1926 Kimball in the Scottish Rite Masonic Center in Guthrie, Oklahoma (four manuals, 67 ranks, 72 speaking stops, 5,373 pipes)⁵¹ required renovation in 1990, Judge and Mrs. Frederick Daugherty financed the project. The work, by long-time curators McCrary Pipe Organ Company of Oklahoma City, included solid-state switching and relays, new keyboards, and new stop and combination action. A digital recording and playback unit was installed, so the instrument can be played for tours of the building—a common practice in large temples. Completing the project was installation of a full-length 32' Pedal Bombarde, built by F. J. Rogers in Eng-

Table 3. Masonic Lodge pipe organs by 13 selected builders

Builder	5-manual	4-manual	3-manual	2-manual	1-manual	Total
Austin	1	4	6	48		59
Estey		2	2	71		75
Felgemaker				18		18
Hall			1	14		15
Hillgreen-Lane				14		14
Hook & Hastings	1		1	21	5	28
Kilgen			3	12		15
Kimball		4	5	31		40
Midmer-Losh				12	8	20
Möller		8	18	140	1	167
Pilcher		1	4	29	3	37
Skinner		5	1	6		12
Wurlitzer				10		10
Total	2	24	41	426	17	510
Percent of Total	.4	4.7	8	83.6	3.3	100

Source: George Nelson, *The Organs of the United States and Canada Database*.

land, and a horizontal trumpet, dutifully called Solomon's Trumpet, reflecting the role of King Solomon and his temple in Masonic ritual.⁵²

Summary and conclusions

The Masonic Lodge pipe organ is another illustration of the role of the King of Instruments in American culture. The Masons, a culturally and socially prominent feature of American life, found the instrument an economic and efficient vehicle in meeting the musical needs of their ritual proceedings. The tonal resources of the larger instruments afforded almost unlimited capabilities in the full spectrum of instrumental music. This was made possible by technological advances in organbuilding, which mark a singular achievement of the American industry. In many locations, these magnificent instruments enjoy the respect and admiration of today's Masonic membership, and in the larger organ world are recognized as a vital segment in the rich and colorful history of pipe organ building in America. ■

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Notes

1. R. E. Coleberd, "The Mortuary Pipe Organ: A Neglected Chapter in the History of Pipe Organ Building in America," THE DIAPASON, vol. 95, no. 7, July 2004, pp. 16-19.
2. This paper focuses exclusively on pipe organs in Masonic Lodges. The author acknowledges that there were also instruments in Odd Fellows, Knights of Pythias and Elks lodges.
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4. Max Lerner, *America as a Civilization*, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1957, p. 630.
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21. Richard G. Taylor, *Austin Organs, Inc.*, letter to author, September 21, 2006.

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25. Don Michael Randel, ed., *The New Harvard Dictionary of Music*, Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1986, p. 570. Steuart Goodwin, e-mail to author, November 3, 2007.

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29. Rick Morel, e-mail photo to author, October 4, 2007. Kurt Schakel, description to author, September 20, 2007.

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35. John A. Bell, THE DIAPASON, July 1927, p. 20, cols. 2-3.

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45. Nelson, op. cit., pp. 40, 9, 28, 29.
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50. Dorothy Schaake, "The Reuter Organ Company: 75 Years of Organbuilding," *The American Organist*, March 1992, p. 58.
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Scottish Rite Cathedral, St. Louis, Missouri
W. W. Kimball, Opus 6763, 1924
4 manuals, 54 ranks, 113 stops, 3,576 pipes

GREAT (enclosed with Choir)
10 ranks, 17 stops, 670 pipes

- | | | |
|--------|-----------------------------|----------|
| 16' | Major Diapason (Eng Diap) | 12 pipes |
| 16' | Bourdon (Concert Flute) | 12 pipes |
| 8' | Principal Diapason (wood) | 61 pipes |
| 8' | English Diapason (metal) | 61 pipes |
| 8' | Clarabella | 61 pipes |
| 8' | Waldhorn | 61 pipes |
| 8' | Concert Flute | 61 pipes |
| 8' | Gamba | 61 pipes |
| 8' | Gemshorn | 61 pipes |
| 4' | Octave (Eng Diap) | 61 pipes |
| 4' | Traverse Flute (Concert Fl) | 12 pipes |
| 2 3/4' | Twelfth (Waldhorn) | 61 notes |
| 2' | Fifteenth (Waldhorn) | 12 pipes |
| 16' | Double Trumpet (Harm Tpt) | 12 pipes |
| 8' | Harmonic Trumpet | 61 pipes |
| 8' | Tromba | 61 pipes |
| 4' | Clarion (Harm Tpt) | 61 notes |
| 8' | Marimba (wood bars) | 61 bars |
| 8' | Harp (metal bars) | 61 bars |
| 8' | Chimes | 12 tubes |
| 8' | Chimes (Echo) | 12 tubes |
| 8' | Piano | |
| 4' | Piano | |
| 4' | Xylophone Marimba Tremolo | |

SWELL (enclosed)
16 ranks, 26 stops, 1,136 pipes

- | | | |
|--------|-----------------------------|-----------|
| 16' | Open Diapason (Horn Diap) | 12 pipes |
| 16' | Lieblich Gedeckt (Gedeckt) | 12 pipes |
| 16' | Contra Viole (Viol d'Orch) | 12 pipes |
| 8' | Diapason Phanon | 61 pipes |
| 8' | Horn Diapason | 61 pipes |
| 8' | Tibia Clausa | 61 pipes |
| 8' | Gedeckt | 61 pipes |
| 8' | Flute Celeste | 61 pipes |
| 8' | Viole d' Orchestra | 61 pipes |
| 8' | Viole Celestes II | 122 pipes |
| 8' | Salicional | 61 pipes |
| 8' | Voix Celeste | 61 pipes |
| 4' | Octave (Horn Diap) | 12 pipes |
| 4' | Flute (Gedeckt) | 12 pipes |
| 4' | Tibia (Tibia Clausa) | 12 pipes |
| 4' | Violin I (Viole d' Orch) | 12 pipes |
| 4' | Violins II (Viole Celestes) | 24 pipes |
| 2 3/4' | Twelfth (Gedeckt) | 61 notes |
| 2' | Flautino (Gedeckt) | 12 pipes |
| 1 3/4' | Tierce (Gedeckt) | 4 pipes |
| III | Soft Mixture | 183 pipes |
| 16' | Contra Fagotto (Oboe Horn) | 12 pipes |
| 8' | Posaune | 61 pipes |
| 8' | Oboe Horn | 61 pipes |
| 8' | Vox Humana | 61 pipes |
| 4' | Oboe Clarion (Oboe Horn) | 12 pipes |
| 8' | Celesta (metal bars) | 61 bars |
| 4' | Celesta (metal bars) | 12 bars |
| | Tibia Clausa Tremolo | |
| | String Tremolo Fast | |
| | String Tremolo Slow | |
| | Vox Humana Vibrato | |
| | Tremolo | |

CHOIR (enclosed with Great)
6 ranks, 13 stops, 390 pipes

- | | | |
|-----|--------------------------|----------|
| 16' | Waldhorn (Great) | 12 pipes |
| 8' | English Diapason (Great) | 61 notes |
| 8' | Tibia Minor | 61 pipes |
| 8' | Concert Flute (Great) | 61 notes |
| 8' | Waldhorn (Great) | 61 notes |
| 8' | Viola | 61 pipes |
| 8' | Dulciana | 61 pipes |
| 8' | Unda Maris | 61 pipes |
| 4' | Waldhorn (Great) | 61 notes |
| 4' | Traverse Flute (Great) | 61 notes |
| 2' | Piccolo (Great) | 12 pipes |
| 8' | Orchestral Oboe | 61 pipes |
| 8' | Clarinet | 61 pipes |
| 8' | Harp | |
| 8' | Piano | |
| 4' | Harp | |
| 4' | Xylophone | |

- | | | |
|----|------------------|--|
| 2' | Orchestral Bells | |
| | Glockenspiel | |
| | Chinese Block | |
| | Tom Tom | |
| | Castanets | |
| | Tambourine | |
| | Snare Drum Roll | |
| | Snare Drum Tap | |
| | Tremolo | |

SOLO (enclosed)
9 ranks, 11 stops, 573 pipes

- | | | |
|-----|----------------------------|----------|
| 8' | Diapason Stentor | 61 pipes |
| 8' | Melophone | 61 pipes |
| 8' | Cello | 61 pipes |
| 8' | Cello Celeste | 61 pipes |
| 16' | Tuba Profunda (Tuba Son) | 12 pipes |
| 8' | Tuba Mirabilis | 61 pipes |
| 8' | Tuba Sonora | 61 pipes |
| 8' | French Horn | 61 pipes |
| 8' | English Horn | 61 pipes |
| 8' | Kinura | 61 pipes |
| 4' | Tuba Clarion (Tuba Sonora) | 12 pipes |
| 8' | Chimes (Echo) | |
| 8' | Marimba | |
| 4' | Marimba | |
| 2' | Glockenspiel | |
| | Orchestral Bells | |
| | Tuba Tremolo | |
| | Tremolo | |

ECHO (enclosed)
5 ranks, 5 stops, 305 pipes

- | | | |
|----|--------------------|----------|
| 8' | Viola Aetheria | 61 pipes |
| 8' | Vox Angelica | 61 pipes |
| 8' | Fem Floete | 61 pipes |
| 8' | Corno d'Amour | 61 pipes |
| 8' | Vox Humana | 61 pipes |
| | Vox Humana Vibrato | |
| | Tremolo | |

ANTIPHONAL (enclosed)

6 ranks, 12 stops, 390 pipes

Great 3 ranks, 4 stops, 195 pipes

- | | | |
|-----|---|----------|
| 8' | Open Diapason | 61 pipes |
| 8' | Claribel Flute | 61 pipes |
| 8' | Gemshorn | 61 pipes |
| 4' | Forest Flute (Claribel Flute) | 12 pipes |
| | Swell, 3 ranks, 6 stops, 195 pipes | |
| 16' | Bourdon | 61 pipes |
| 8' | Claribel Flute (Ant Gt) | 61 notes |
| 8' | Viola | 61 pipes |
| 4' | Forest Flute (Ant Gt) | 61 notes |
| 2' | Piccolo (Ant Claribel Gt) | 12 pipes |
| 8' | Horn | 61 pipes |
| | Tremolo | |
| | Pedal 0 ranks, 2 stops, 0 pipes | |
| 16' | Bourdon (Ant Sw Bourdon) | 32 notes |
| 8' | Flute (Ant Sw Bourdon) | 32 notes |

PEDAL

2 ranks, 25 stops, 124 pipes

- | | | |
|-----|------------------------------|----------|
| 64' | Gravissima (Sw Tibia Clausa) | 32 notes |
| 32' | Acoustic Bass (Gt Prin Diap) | 32 notes |
| 32' | Contra Bourdon | 32 pipes |
| 16' | Open Diapason Wood (Gt PD) | 32 notes |
| 16' | Waldhorn (Gt Waldhorn) | 32 notes |
| 16' | Contra Tibia Clausa (Sw) | 12 pipes |
| 16' | Violone (Solo Cello) | 12 pipes |
| 16' | Contra Viole (Sw Viole) | 32 notes |
| 16' | Bourdon (Gt Bourdon) | 32 notes |
| 16' | Lieblich Gedeckt | 32 notes |
| 8' | Octave (Gt Eng Diap) | 32 notes |
| 8' | Flute (Gt Concert Flute) | 32 notes |
| 8' | Still Gedeckt (Sw Gedeckt) | 32 notes |
| 8' | Violoncello (Solo Cello) | 32 notes |
| 8' | Cellos III (Sw Vd'O, VC II) | 32 notes |
| 4' | Super Octave (Gt Eng Diap) | 32 notes |
| 4' | Flute (Sw Gedeckt) | 32 notes |
| 4' | Violins III (Sw Vd'O VC II) | 32 notes |

- | | | |
|-----|-----------------------------|----------|
| 32' | Contra Bombarde | 12 pipes |
| 16' | Bombarde | 32 pipes |
| 16' | Tuba Profunda (Solo TuSo) | 32 notes |
| 16' | Trombone (Gt Doub Trum) | 32 notes |
| 16' | Bassoon (Sw Contra Fagotto) | 32 notes |
| 8' | Tromba | 12 pipes |
| 4' | Clarion | 12 pipes |
| | Cymbal | |
| 16' | Piano | |
| | Chimes | |

Standard couplers

Miscellaneous Mechanicals

- Chinese Gong (manual piston)
 Birds (manual pistons): Echo, Main, Antiphonal
 Bugle Call (manual pistons): F, B-flat, D, F
 Thunder Loud (toe)
 Thunder Soft (toe)
 Sforzando (manual and toe)
 Mezzo (manual and toe)
 Five expression shoes w/slider panel
 Master Pedal hookdown
 Register Crescendo (programmable)
 Strings to Crescendo
 Flutes to Crescendo
 Diapasons to Crescendo
 Reeds to Crescendo

Wind pressures

- Great 10", Swell 10", Choir 10", Solo 10",
 Echo 10", Antiphonal 10", Pedal 10"
 Pedal Bombarde 25", Solo Tuba Mirabilis 25",
 Swell Vox Humana 7 1/2", Echo Vox Humana 7 1/2"

Source: Michael Brooks, Scottish Rite Cathedral, St. Louis, to author, September 23, 2006.

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