

The Hook Organ

The following article is taken from the notes in the four CD collection "Historic Organs of Michigan - Thirty-four historic pipe organs, Detroit to Battle Creek" produced by the Organ Historical Society in 1998. This essay as well as a color photograph of the organ are also present on the music section of the parish website, www.holycrossonline.net

THIS ORGAN WAS BUILT for St. John's Episcopal Church in Detroit at a cost of \$3,000, with several stops prepared for. Before the organ was shipped J.H. Wilcox, "exhibited its orchestral and solo capabilities with his usual skill." The instrument was opened in Detroit with a recital by the organist at St. John's, Thomas Yarnley, who delighted his audience with works of Mendelssohn, Haydn, Handel, Bach, Rinck, and others. In 1891, Hook & Hastings rebuilt the organ, moving it from the gallery to the chancel, abandoning the 1861 chestnut case, supplying a new detached keydesk and a Barker Lever, enlarging the old short compass Swell division to full compass, and making some tonal alterations. (The present nameplate on the instrument indicates that the Hook & Hastings work was done in 1894, but it was in fact done in 1891.) Within a few years, however, the organ was "found inadequate," and the Hutchings-Votey Organ Co. of Boston installed a new organ at St. John's in 1904. Holy Cross Church purchased the old Hook organ for \$1,500. The 1891 facade woodwork was left behind in Detroit (the 1861 case disappeared in 1891), and new casework to the impost was supplied. The most that could be said for it was "that it concealed the innards of the organ."



Image by William T. Van Pelt, courtesy of Pipedreams.org Photo Album

In 1976, Bozeman-Gibson & Co. carried out a careful renovation and enlargement of the instrument. The project included the design and construction of a new case in the style of the 1860's, shaped in part by demands of the original case pipes and limits of available height; complete mechanical restoration with retention of the wind system; tonal restoration with some additions, and new mechanical key action without the Barker Lever. The present stoplist is essentially that of 1861 with the following exceptions: those stops marked with an asterisk were added in the 1976 rebuilding. The Violoncello in the Pedal was originally planned as a Principal, but was installed in 1891 in its present form. The Trombone in the Pedal and the Clarion and Hautbois in the Swell were prepared for, and the first two seem never to have been installed. These stops are provided with new pipes. The Hautbois may date from 1891, and the pipes have been retained. Other new pipework includes the Swell Fifteenth, the original having disappeared many years ago, and a new bottom octave for the Choir Flute 4', which had been transferred to the Swell. The facade of the organ originally included eleven silent pipes intended for the Great Double Open; these have been supplemented by seven stopped pipes for the lowest notes and new metal pipes from tenor F. Apparently, the Double Open had never been installed, but the case had been provided with facade pipes intended for eventual use with the stop. For a complete account of the project and the various tonal changes, see "The Hook on the River," *The Tracker*, Vol. 39, No. 1, 1995.

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E. & G. G. Hook

Boston, Opus 300, 1861

Rebuilt by Hook & Hastings,
Boston, 1891

Rebuilt by Bozeman-Gibson & Co.,
Lowell, Mass. Opus 9, 1976

**stop added in 1976*

GREAT 56 notes
16' Double Open Diapason*
8' Open Diapason
8' Clarabella
4' Principal
3' Twelfth
2' Fifteenth
1 3/5' Seventeenth*
III Mixture [2']
III Sharp Mixture [2/3']*
8' Trumpet
Swell to Great
Choir to Great

CHOIR 56 notes
8' Open Diapason
8' Stop'd Diapason
8' Gamba
4' Fugara
4' Flute
2' Piccolo
Swell to Choir

SWELL 56 notes
16' Bourdon
8' Open Diapason
8' Stop'd Diapason
8' Keraulophone
4' Principal
2' Fifteenth*
III Mixture [2']
8' Cornopean
8' Hautbois (1891)
4' Clarion*
Tremolo

PEDAL 27 Notes
16' Open Diapason
16' Bourdon
10 2/3' Quint*
8' Violoncello
4' Flute* (*Principal*)
III Mixture [2 2/3']*
16' Trombone*
Great to Pedal
Swell to Pedal
Choir to Pedal

Five combination pedals

Great: mp, mf, f

Swell: p, mp

Great to Pedal reversible