

COVER FEATURE
THE E. & G.G. HOOK, OPUS 326
ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, QUINCY, ILLINOIS
QUIMBY PIPE ORGANS INC.



Casework restoration

IN 1863, the organbuilding firm of E. & G.G. Hook of Boston, Massachusetts, constructed a new organ, their Opus 326, for the Congregational Church on Shawmut Street, Boston. The instrument dates from a period when numerous fine craftsmen, such as J.H. Willcox, Frank Hastings, George Hutchings, and Charles Ryder were working for the Hook firm, most of whom later had their own organ companies. Many organ historians argue that the instruments built by E. & G.G. Hook during the 1860s were among the finest instruments ever built in the United States. Opus 326 would probably have been under construction in the Hook workshop at the same time as perhaps their most celebrated organ, Opus 322, built for the Jesuit Church of the Immaculate Conception in Boston, an organ that still survives today. The sound of the two instruments is in many ways very similar. The Shawmut Street Church, however, soon decided that they needed a larger instrument, and in 1866, they purchased Hook Opus 398. Thus, according to the history researched by the late Alan M. Laufman, the Shawmut Street Church traded Opus 326 back to E. & G.G. Hook only three years after it was installed in the church. On the other hand, during the course of rebuilding, Quimby Pipe Organs discovered that there are dates on the pipework ranging from 1862 to 1866, sug-

gesting that the decision to buy a larger organ may have been made while Opus 326 was still under construction, so that the instrument perhaps never made it to the Shawmut Street Church after all. According to that scenario, construction would have been halted part way through and only resumed when a new customer had been found for the instrument.

In 1866, a committee from Pine Street Congregational Church in Lewiston, Maine, bought Opus 326 for their church. The Shawmut Street Church had an organ chamber, and a simple screen sufficed to enclose the organ. The Lewiston Church, however, needed an organ case, and so the beautiful walnut casework that graces Opus 326 was constructed in 1866. A legend that may or may not be true has it that as soon as the contract had been struck between E. & G.G. Hook and the Lewiston committee, the firm received an offer from another church that did not involve building a new case. Mr. Hastings then ran after the Lewiston committee to the railroad station and tried to persuade them to back out of the deal. The committee, however, was resolute, and the organ with its lovely new case went to Lewiston. As originally built, Opus 326 had an all-mechanical action, but in 1923, the original builders, now named Hook, Hastings & Co., rebuilt the organ, making a couple of minor tonal

changes and providing an electro-pneumatic mechanism and a new detached console. Hook & Hastings designated this rebuilt organ as their Opus 2478.

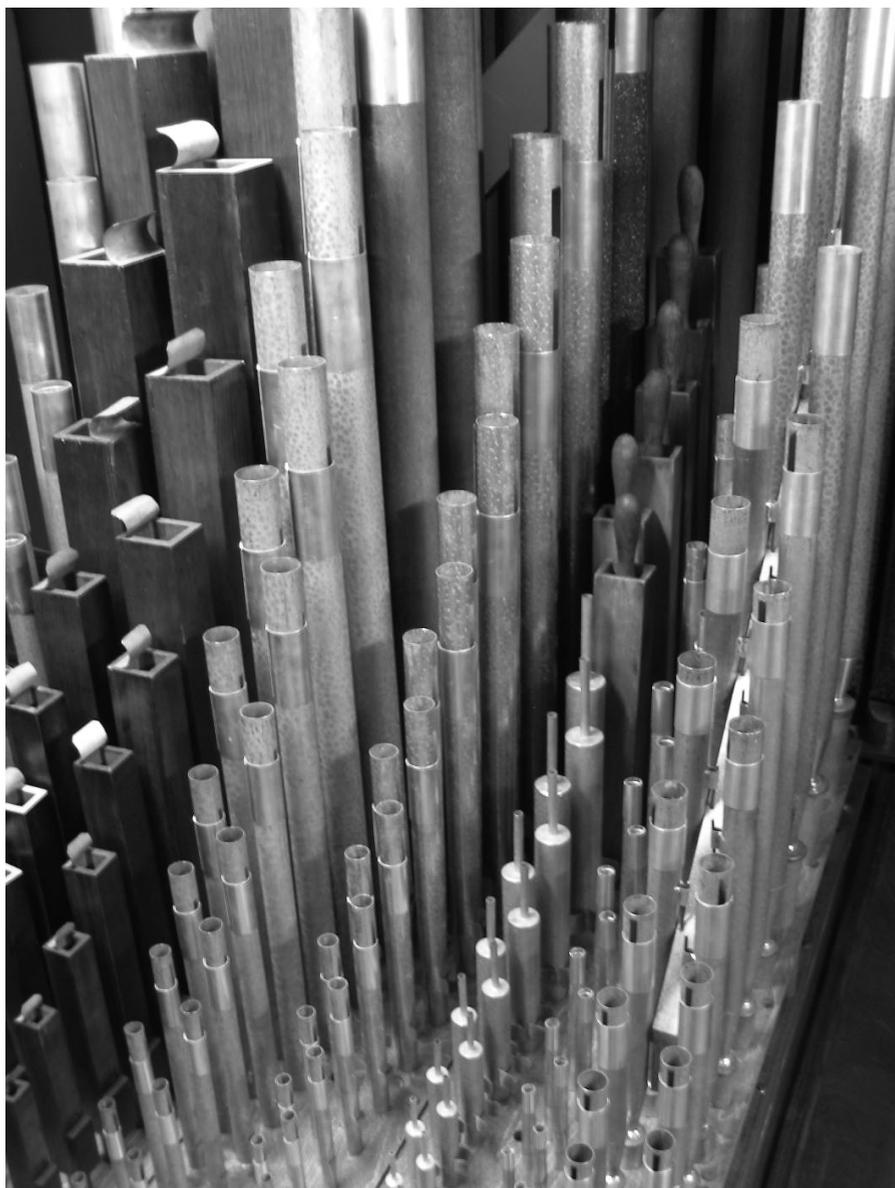
In 1940, the Pine Street Congregational Church in Lewiston merged with the Universalist Church as the Federated Church of Lewiston, and the old Pine Street Church was demolished. At this time, the Foss Street Methodist Church in Biddeford, Maine, was looking for an organ and they purchased Opus 326 from the Lewiston church for \$850. In 1999, the Foss Street church in Biddeford closed its doors because of a dwindling congregation; the building has since been demolished. The late Alan M. Laufman, founder and executive director of the Organ Clearing House, realized what a fine instrument Hook Opus 326 was, and determined to rescue it. The organ was dismantled by the Organ Clearing House and stored in Harrisville, New Hampshire, until a new owner could be found.

The new owner proved to be St. John's Episcopal Church in Quincy, Illinois. The church signed a contract with Michael Quimby of Quimby Pipe Organs Inc. of Warrensburg, Missouri, to rebuild the organ and relocate it to their church. Here it was to replace St. John's original organ, built by the Marshall Brothers of Milwaukee in 1872. The Marshall organ had been rebuilt with a

tubular-pneumatic mechanism by George Kilgen & Son of St. Louis in 1912, and it had been rebuilt again and the action electrified in 1957–58 by the Temple Organ Co. of St. Joseph, Missouri, to the designs of Robert Noehren. By the end of the 20th century, this instrument had, however, come to the end of its useful life and was not considered worth rebuilding. So the Hook organ was procured and moved from Harrisville to Quimby Pipe Organs' storage facility in Warrensburg to await rebuilding. It is very fortunate indeed that the Hook organ was safely in Warrensburg and not in Quincy on the night of August 23, 2002, when lightning struck St. John's and the church interior and roof, including the old pipe organ, burned to the ground. Happily, St. John's has risen phoenix-like from the ashes, and thanks to the acoustical consultants Kirkegaard & Associates has gained three seconds of reverberation in the process, making it an even finer building for music than it was before.

When it came to renovating the Hook organ, the original plan was both to rebuild the original 1863 windchests and to reuse the 1923 Hook & Hastings console. When rebuilding commenced, however, it was discovered that the console was of rather flimsier construction than had been thought, so Quimby Pipe Organs obtained and rebuilt a secondhand Skinner console and fitted it with a new Peterson solid-state control system. They also found that the original Swell and Choir manual slider windchests had been severely water-damaged by roof leaks in the previous church in Maine, and the decision was made to replace them with new Blackinton-style slider windchests without slider seals, fitted with electro-pneumatic pallets. This proved to be just as well, since it was also discovered that the 1923 Hook & Hastings electro-pneumatic pull-down actions were extremely deficient in their design and painfully slow in their operation. The making of new chests provided the opportunity to overcome all these deficiencies in order to provide a rapid and responsive mechanism for the pipes to speak, but in the interests of historical accuracy, QPO was careful to retain the same layout of the pipework on the new Great and Swell slider windchests. QPO also replaced the wooden pipes of the lowest octave of the Swell 16' Bourdon stop, which had like the windchests succumbed to the roof leaks in the Biddeford Church, with twelve pipes from a stop by former Hook employee George Hutchings.

QPO's head voicer, Eric Johnson, took extreme care to ensure that the voicing of the original E. & G.G. Hook pipework remained unchanged. Important in preserving the original voicing was the decision not to lower the pitch, which remains at its original $A = 448$. It is believed that the reeds in particular retain their original sound as voiced by George Greenleaf Hook himself, and in this respect they are a rare survival. The Oboe stop nearly did not survive. Many of the pipes were badly mutilated, so Michael Quimby instructed QPO head pipemaker Tim Duchon to make a replica stop. When he came to work on it, however, Tim Duchon said that he thought he could restore the original stop after all, and in doing so he has succeeded in saving what has proven to be an extremely attractive Oboe. Noteworthy among the reeds is George Hook's Swell Cornopean, which has open English shallots and is fiery and brilliant. Its power is carried right up to



Choir division



Oboe before restoration



Restored Swell Oboe and Cornopean

the top of the keyboard in spite of the fact that it has no harmonic trebles. It is a dead-length reed, but unlike some 20th-century examples, is extremely stable with regard to

tuning. The Great Trumpet is of approximately equal volume but rather darker tone.

The choruses, as well as the reeds, are outstanding. All three Diapason choruses are extremely clear and brilliant in spite of being based on very generously scaled and rich-sounding unison stops. As would be expected, the Great chorus is a little louder than those of the Swell and the Choir, which are of approximately equal power but of very different character. The Swell Mixture was deliberately designed by the Hook brothers to break back more slowly than the one on the Great, so that the Swell Mixture becomes more prominent in the treble and reinforces the brilliance of the reeds. Many of the individual flute and string registers are also noteworthy, including the slightly “nasal” sounding Keraulophone—a string stop that is very rare in organs these days—and the hauntingly beautiful Clarabella.

Although the original tonal character was meticulously preserved, QPO has nevertheless made some minor modifications to the tonal design of the organ as requested by the church. In 1923, Hook & Hastings had replaced the original Swell string stop with a rather poorly designed modern one quite out of sympathy with the original pipework, and QPO has replaced this with another string stop similar to what would originally have been there. The Oboe and Clarinet, which previously ran only to Tenor C, have been made full compass by the addition of twelve new pipes each. The Choir has gained a 4' Principal and 2' Flautino, and the Pedal a 4' Octave stop, all using genuine pipes from another

Hook organ within the same decade as Opus 326. The organ had never previously had a 16' Pedal Bourdon, so the opportunity was taken to add one. This is another Hutchings rank and speaks on its original windchest. QPO has also added a magnificent Victorian 16' Pedal Trombone, made by New York organbuilder Frank Roosevelt. The crowning glory of the instrument is the new QPO Harmonic Trumpet, which is voiced on a wind pressure two-and-a-half times that of the rest of the organ. The original Great Trumpet and Swell Cornopean are carefully matched in their volume and graded in their brilliance, and the new Harmonic Trumpet is specially designed to complement them.

Associates of Quimby Pipe Organs Inc. who participated in the rebuilding of E. & G.G. Hook Opus 326 were Joshua Bach, Mark Cline, Bart Colliver, Tim Duchon, Chris Emerson, Charles Ford, Eric Johnson, Larry Kinder, Wes Martin, Brad McGuffey, Joseph Nielsen, Gary Olden, Michael Quimby, Janille Rehkop, Mike Shields, John Speller, and Elizabeth Viscusi. Gary Olden, who among other things was largely responsible for the restoration of the beautiful Greek Revival walnut case, died suddenly in the summer of 2006, shortly before the rebuilding of the instrument was completed, and a brass plate inside the organ records his contribution to the project. Ken Cowan played the inaugural concert on the rebuilt Hook organ on Sunday, October 15, 2006, with a program of Bach, Karg-Elert, Wagner, Bovet, Roger-Ducasse, and Sowerby.

JOHN L. SPELLER

THE E. & G.G. HOOK, OPUS 326 ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, QUINCY, ILLINOIS QUIMBY PIPE ORGANS INC.

GREAT (3-inch wind pressure; Harmonic Trumpet, 7½ inches)

8	Open Diapason	61 pipes
8	Clarabella	61 pipes
4	Octave	61 pipes
2½	Twelfth	61 pipes
2	Fifteenth	61 pipes
1½	Mixture IV	244 pipes
8	Trumpet	61 pipes
16	Harmonic Trumpet (Tenor C)	49 notes
8	Harmonic Trumpet	61 pipes
4	Harmonic Clarion	12 pipes
	Chimes	
	Zimbelstern	
	Great Unison Off	

SWELL (enclosed, 3-inch wind pressure)

16	Bourdon	61 pipes
8	Open Diapason	61 pipes
8	Stopped Diapason	61 pipes
8	Salicional	61 pipes
4	Octave	61 pipes
4	Flûte Harmonique	61 pipes
2	Mixture III	183 pipes
8	Cornopean	61 pipes
8	Oboe	61 pipes
	Tremolo	
8	Harmonic Trumpet (Gt.)	61 notes
16	Swell to Swell	
	Swell Unison Off	
4	Swell to Swell	

CHOIR (unenclosed, 3-inch wind pressure)

8	Melodia	61 pipes
8	Keraulophone	61 pipes
8	Unda Maris (to Low G)	54 pipes
	(Dulciana re-tuned)	
4	Principal	61 pipes
4	Flûte d' Amour	61 pipes
2	Flautino	61 pipes
8	Clarinet	61 pipes
	Tremolo	
4	Choir to Choir	

PEDAL (3-inch wind pressure; Bourdon 4 inches; Trombone 5 inches)

32	Resultant	30 notes
16	Double Open Diapason	30 pipes
16	Bourdon	30 pipes
8	Dulciana	30 pipes
16	Violoncello	30 pipes
4	Octave	30 pipes
16	Trombone	32 pipes
8	Trumpet	12 pipes ext.
8	Harmonic Trumpet (Gt.)	30 notes

CRESCENDO AND EXPRESSION PEDALS

General Crescendo Pedal, 60 stages, three adjustable settings and one standard setting, fitted with indicator light
Balanced Swell Pedal

INTERMANUAL COUPLERS

8	Great to Pedal
8	Swell to Pedal
4	Swell to Pedal
8	Choir to Pedal
4	Choir to Pedal
16	Swell to Great
8	Swell to Great
4	Swell to Great
16	Choir to Great
8	Choir to Great
4	Choir to Great
8	Great to Choir
16	Swell to Choir
8	Swell to Choir
4	Swell to Choir

COMBINATION ACTION

(Peterson ICS 4000, 99 memory levels)

Great Organ thumb pistons 1–5
Swell Organ thumb pistons 1–5
Choir Organ thumb pistons 1–5
Pedal Organ thumb pistons 1–5
General thumb pistons 1–15
“Next” piston sequencer
“Previous” piston sequencer
Reversible piston for “Great to Pedal,” thumb and toe paddle
Reversible piston for “Swell to Pedal,” thumb
Reversible piston for “Choir to Pedal,” thumb
Reversible piston for “Swell to Great,” thumb
Reversible piston for “Choir to Great,” thumb
Reversible piston for “32' Resultant,” thumb
Reversible piston for “Sforzando,” thumb and toe paddle with indicator light