

Cleveland, Ohio
First Methodist Church / First United Methodist

Casavant Organ, 1953 (Revisions to Opus 1715 of 1943)

NOTES from Dr. Stephen Schnurr, edited by Joe McCabe, 2008

In November 1950, "water damage resulted in most of the Great division being replaced as well as seven other stops." Casavant contracted for repairs and renovations to the organ on January 14, 1952, work to include:

- 1) New Pedal 16' Trombone of 30 pipes;
- 2) New 2' Fifteenth of 61 pipes for Swell, replacing 2' Flageolet, "using old Great drawknob";
- 3) New 8' Viole d'Orchestre of 73 pipes for Solo, replacing pipework there;
- 4) New 8' Viole Celeste of 66 pipes for Solo, replacing pipework there;
- 5) New 8' Geigen Principal for Antiphonal division, replacing pipework there above tenor C;
- 6) New 8' Gemshorn of 61 pipes to replace Great 8' Dulciana;
- 7) New 8' Hohl Flute of 49 pipes to replace pipework of Philomela from tenor C;
- 8) New 8' Open Diapason of 61 pipes to replace Great 8' Diapason No. 1;
- 9) New 8' Principal of 49 pipes to replace Great 8' Diapason No. 2 from tenor C;
- 10) New 4' Octave of 61 pipes replacing Great 4' Octave;
- 11) New 2' Super Octave of 61 pipes to replace Great 2' Fifteenth;
- 12) New III Cymbal (22-26-29) of 183 pipes and new top board to replace old Great III Mixture;
- 13) New IV Fourniture (12-19-22-26) of 244 pipes for the Great with chest, using stop action and knob from Harp;
- 14) Repair of damaged Great mechanics;
- 15) Revoice Swell 16' Double Trumpet and Solo 8' French Horn;
- 16) General cleaning, tuning, and regulating.

The work was to be done in Canada between February and April 1952 and completed in Cleveland by May 15 of that year at a cost of \$9,700.00, payable upon completion. The project was executed in time for a recital by Virgil Fox on the evening of May 18.

On August 26, 1968, the church again contract with Casavant to:

- 1) Provide 32' Contra Bombarde of 32 pipes [10-1/2" at low C], full length, with chest, cables, supports, and windlines at \$3,260, delivered and duty paid, but not installed;
- 2) Supply 1 new reservoir for Contra Bombarde, Great 16' Double Diapason, and the basses of the Great 8' Diapason, for \$295.00, delivered and duty paid, but not installed;

- 3) Casavant would provide labor onsite at an additional cost of \$75 “per man, per 8-hour day, including time and expenses”, to:
 - a. Dismantle and relocate Pedal III Mixture chest, closer to remainder of Pedal division;
 - b. Dismantle and move Great IV Furniture chest to position formerly occupied by Pedal III Mixture chest;
 - c. Installation of parts mentioned in 1 and 2 above;
 - d. General cleaning, tuning, and regulating.

Completion was set for April 1, 1970. The invoice, dated August 31, 1970, for this work totaled \$11,044.93. Casavant eventually declined to make this a 12-pipe extension of the present 16' reed, as “the type shallot giving this type tone, is no longer in use, and the cost to have same made would be considerable. The voicer who did this work is long since deceased, and the personaility [sic] which he impressed upon these pipes is not likely capable of duplication.” In the end, it is not clear who carried out this project.

In 1970, the console was made moveable. The Chimes action was replaced in 1979. In 1985, the console stopknobs were replaced, several having cracked or broken off as the console was rapidly deteriorating. Beginning in the mid-1980's and continuing into the early 1990's, the organ was releathered and the Antiphonal blower replaced (with a Laukhuff Ventus model) by J. A. Hébert & Son, Assoc., of Southfield, Michigan. Also, the Antiphonal division was rewired.

In 1998, a new console was built and installed by the Kegg Pipe Organ Company, then of Uniontown, Ohio. It features drawknobs in French-style terraced design and is on an integral caster system.