



The Organ in Manitoba

A History of the Instruments, the Builders,
and the Players

James B. Hartman

© James B. Hartman 1997

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Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, 1977

The oldest historic organ in Manitoba, a two-manual, 16-stop instrument made by the American builder George Stevens in 1850, was installed in the balcony of Gloria Dei Church, Winnipeg, in 1977. The early history of the organ up to 1894 is unknown, but from that date until 1973 it resided in the Universalist Church, Rumford, Maine. John Shortridge, an organ builder in Rockport, Maine, purchased the instrument and later offered it for sale through the Organ Clearing House.

When this suburban congregation erected its new church building in 1977, some members of the congregation wanted an electronic instrument, but the

pastor at the time, an American who was interested in church music and organs, knew the sources in the United States where used pipe organs could be obtained, and influenced the congregation in that direction. Some of the men of the congregation retrieved the organ from its location in Maine, transported it to Winnipeg, set it up, and maintained it until a local organ technician took over its care. The Stevens organ remains intact and unaltered in its conservative tonal disposition and is an excellent example of the builder's small organ design.

GREAT		SWELL	
Open Diapason	8	Open Diapason	8
Dulciana	8	Viola da Gamba	8
Clarabella	8	Stop Diapason	8
Stop Diapason Treble	8	Stop Diapason Bass	8
Stop Diapason Bass	8	Principal	4
Principal	4	Oboe	8
Flute	4	Tremolo	
Twelfth	2 2/3		
Fifteenth	2		
PEDAL		Couple Great and Swell	
Sub Bass	16	Couple Pedals to Swell Bass	
		Blowers Signal	

The inaugural recital was played by Lawrence Ritchey, School of Music, The University of Manitoba, on 12 June 1977. The program consisted of a selection of pieces by German, English, and American composers.



Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, Winnipeg.
George Stevens, 1850, 2/16. Installed 1977. The oldest historic organ in Winnipeg.