

SOME NOTES ON WURLITZER STYLE NUMBERS



By Gordon Kibbee

Models 100, 105, 108, 109 and 135 piano console with organ pedal. The difference was in the number of stops. Same piano console box was used in all models.

One of the most important items of theatre organ lore to all enthusiasts, and certainly one of the most fascinating, is the Wurlitzer factory shipment list, the third installment of which appears in this issue of THEATRE ORGAN.

Many devotees have expressed a desire for information about the style numbers by which the Wurlitzer factory identifies various sizes and models of instruments shipped through the years. In addition, some of us who have worked around Wurlitzer theater organs for more years than we might like to admit are somewhat prone, on occasion, to become a little vague about the meanings and indiscriminate in the application of the numbers in referring to particular installations. So, in the interest of better, more efficient communication among all of us who share an ardor for these marvelous instruments, and for the further benefit of our newer members to whom the style numbers are rather cryptic, it seems advantageous to use, insofar as is practicable, the factory interpretation of these numbers when referring to instruments which are specific examples of standard models.

To this end I am happy to accept the flattering invitation of the editors of THEATRE ORGAN to compile some data on the subject. The information presented here comes from several sources including a set of stoplists inherited from the dusty files of a local Wurlitzer sales representative, console photographs, personal acquaintance with a number of instruments, and conversa-

Gordon Kibbee is one of the most deservedly loved and admired of all theatre organists. When asked to make the results of his research available to THEATRE ORGAN readers, Mr. Kibbee graciously consented, and this is the beginning of his study. His 'NOTES' are of great value to those who wish to know more about the fabulous Wurlitzer Story and of real help in understanding the meanings of the various model numbers and their designations. Once again we are grateful to Gordon Kibbee for sharing his talent with all of us.

tions with several men who worked on original Wurlitzer installations.

There were some 68 different numbers (or letters) used to designate standard models or those with only slight deviations from standard. In organs in which the differences were very great, and/or for which a stock console shell could not be used, the instruments were usually labeled (for example): special, 3 man, 4 man, or 4 man special. Certain special models, however, were so nearly alike that they could have been given a model number and in some cases later models which were practically identical with a number of earlier "specials" were given a new style number. Instances of this practice will be noted in future issues as these numbers appear in the list.

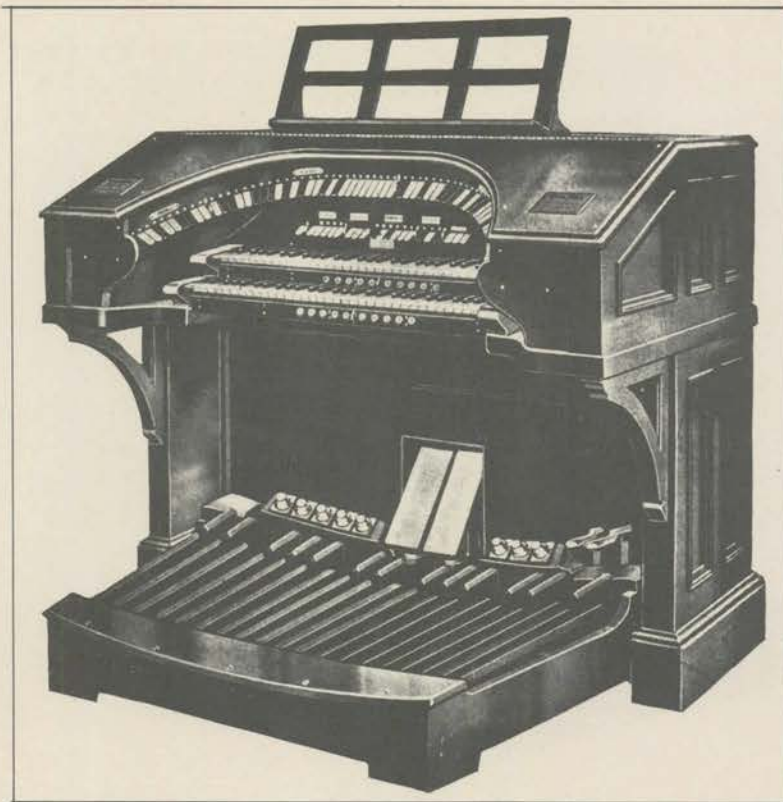
The 68 numbers mentioned above do not include church models but do include 11 models of residence organs, the first of which appeared in 1927.

Some data on each of 25 of the most frequently recurring numbers is summarized here. These 25 models account for more than 1300 of the 2234 shipments of new Wurlitzer organs.

The sequence of numbers used here is according to size, that is: the number of sets of pipes and the number of manuals normal to organs of the particular style indicated. Except where otherwise noted, all sets listed start at CC (eight feet).

A collation of "the list" and factory stoplists in our collection indicates that between 1918 and 1928 some four hundred instruments played from piano consoles were shipped to theatres in all parts of the U. S. These were two manual organs of from three to five ranks of pipes and varied assortments of traps and percussions. In these models the lower manual was the actual piano keyboard with contacts on 61 of the 88 keys for playing the "Accompaniment" stops. A control was provided for muting the piano hammers when it was desired to play organ stops without piano on the lower manual. The upper (solo) manual was a standard 61 note organ keyboard.

The earliest of these (insofar as I have been able to determine) was a style 135, number 172 in the list, shipped 6/3/18. It is possible that some of the



Model 215. Console shell covers non-piano models 108 and 109 - also for models B, D, E, F, 210, H, 215 and 216.

models prior to this also had piano consoles; our information on pre-1919 instruments is very meager.

Models played from piano consoles:

Style 105, 3 ranks

Salicional, Flute-Bourdon 16', Vox Humana, Chimes (first Example: #596).

Style 108, 3 ranks

Same plus Xylophone, Glockenspiel and Snare Drum. Pedal Traps: Bass Drum, Kettle Drum, Cymbal, on second touch (first: #621).

Style 109, 3 ranks

Same plus more traps and effects (first: #611).

Style 110, 3 ranks

Open Diapason, Salicional, Flute-Bourdon 16', Chimes, (no traps) (first: #205).

Style 135, 4 ranks

Trumpet, Salicional, Flute-Bourdon 16', Vox Humana, Percussions, Traps and Effects, Pedal traps on second touch. (135A, 135B, different percussions?) (first: #172).

Style 1 - Earlier version of Style 135 - Vox 8' & percussion on solo manual only.

Style 160, 5 ranks

Trumpet, Diapason-Diaphone 16', Salicional, Viole Celeste (tenor C), Flute-Bourdon 16', Percussions and Traps same as 135 (first: #184).

Models played from regular 2-manual

consoles (a few 3-manual exceptions are noted):

Style 100, 3 ranks

Salicional, Flute-Bourdon 16' Vox, Humana, Chimes. Total number shipped: 14 beginning with #602.

Style B, 4 ranks

Trumpet, Salicional, Flute-Bourdon 16', Vox Humana, Chimes, Xylophone, Glockenspiel, Bass Drum, Kettle Drum, Cymbal, Snare Drum, Tambourine, Castanets, Chinese Block. Second touch on pedal and both manuals. Smallest model with second touch on manuals. Thirteen assorted sound effects controlled by toe studs or push buttons. Smallest model with combination action - 3 pistons for each manual. 209 shipped including 78 specials, 5 divided, and 5 divided specials. (first: #487).

Style 170, 5 ranks

Trumpet, Diapason-Diaphone 16', Flute-Bourdon 16', Vox Humana, Dulciana, same percussions, traps, effects and pistons as Style B. Second touch on pedal and both manuals. Style 170 is smallest model with 16' Diaphone. 15 shipped: first, #387, last, #684 w/celeste.

Style D, 6 ranks

Trumpet, Diapason-Diaphone 16', Tibia Clausa, Salicional, Flute-Bourdon 16', Vox Humana, Same percussions, traps, and effects as Styles B and 170, plus a Chrysoglott. Second touch on pedal and both manuals. Five pistons for each manual.

Smallest regular model to include Tibia Clausa. A very well balanced selection of ranks for a small organ. A total of 201 were shipped including 21 specials and 47 divided. First D in list is #502 and last is #2068

Style 165 -

Beginning with #1878 the D was superceded by the Style 165 with which it was practically identical except that the 165 had the Tibia "unified" at more pitches. #1878 itself, however, as well as #1982, were exceptional examples in that a Post Horn was substituted for the Trumpet. Approximately 17 were shipped.

Style E, 7 ranks

Trumpet, Diapason-Diaphone 16', Tibia Clausa, Violin, Violin Celeste (Tenor C), Flute-Bourdon 16', Vox Humana. Percussions, traps, effects, second touches and pistons as in Style D. The principal difference between Style D and Style E is the substitution of the Violin (large scale) for the Salicional and the addition of the Tenor C Celeste rank.

Beginning with #778 there were approximately 155 including 13 specials and 56 divided.

Style 185, 7 ranks

Tuba Horn-Ophicleide 16', Diapason-Diaphone 16', Clarinet, Viole d' Orchestre, Viole Celeste, Flute-Bourdon 16', Vox Humana, Chimes, Sleigh Bells, Xylophone, Glockenspiel, Chrysoglott, Snare Drum, Tambourine, Castanets, Chinese Block, Triangle, Pedal Second Touch: Bass Drum, Kettle Drum, Crash Cymbal, Cymbal. Second touches also on both manuals. Three toe pistons for Pedal, 10 pistons for each manual. Largest regular model with no Tibia Clausa. Beginning with #197, Reno, Majestic Theatre, 12/21/18, 26 organs of this model were shipped. Last one #748, 12/15/23.

It will be readily apparent upon comparing their stoplists that the 185 with a Tibia Clausa added would be equivalent to a style F, and it seems that it was in this way that the F developed. Only one Style 185 was delivered after the first appearance of the F, and some of the 185's had Tibias added after installation. At least one, #321, was shipped with the added Tibia.

Style 3

From the information at hand it would appear that the Style 185 was merely a newer number for the earlier Style 3, the two being nearly identical in selection of stops. Between 1911 and 1918 there were about 53 organs of this model shipped. The first Style 3 was the eighth organ, built 1911, the last was #187, 10/26/18. An inspection of the list at this point reveals the abrupt disappearance of this number and the first appearance of the Style 185 less than two months later.

Style F, 8 ranks

Tuba Horn-Ophicleide 16', Diapason-Diaphone 16', Tibia Clausa, Clarinet, Violin, Violin Celeste, Flute-Bourdon 16', Vox Humana, Percussions and Traps and effects approximately as in D and E. Tuned sleigh bells. More stops on second touch, 3 toe pistons for pedal combinations, 10 pistons for each manual. Two chambers.

92 shipped including 25 specials, and 7 having 3 manuals. First F# #562.

Style 190, 8 ranks

Trumpet, Diapason-Diaphone 16' Tibia Clausa, Clarinet, Violin, Violin Celeste (Tenor C), Flute-Bourdon 16' Vox Humana. Normally installed divided between two chambers. Percussions, traps, effects, second touches, pistons, approximately the Styles D, E, and F. This was a later model, the first appearing in 1926

as #1395, 43 shipped including 4 specials and 3 with 3 manuals.

Style 210, 9 ranks

Harmonic Tuba-Tuba Profunda 16', Diapason-Diaphone 16', Tibia Clausa, Clarinet, Orchestral Oboe, Violin, Violin Celeste, Flute-Bourdon 16', Vox Humana; Percussions, Traps, effects similar to D, E, and F. Second touch on pedal and both manuals. Three toe pistons for pedal combinations, 10 pistons for each manual, 4 tremulants. Two chambers. Five horse power blower. Approximately 45 shipped. First 210: #208.

Style H, 10 ranks

Harmonic Tuba-Tuba Profunda 16', Diapason-Diaphone 16', Tibia Clausa, Clarinet, Kinura, Orchestral Oboe, Violin, Violin Celeste, Flute-Bourdon 16', Vox Humana, Piano, 85 notes played from organ console by remote action. Other percussions, traps, effects similar to Styles D, E, F, above. Second touch on pedal and both manuals. Three toe pistons for pedal, 10 for each manual. Two chambers. Five horse power blower. Approximately 94 shipped, including 36 specials, 1 with echo, 9 with 3 manuals, 1 special 3-manual. First H: #530 (a 3-manual). First 2-manual H: #561.

Style 215, 10 ranks in 2 chambers

Harmonic Tuba-Tuba Profunda 16', Diapason-Diaphone 16' Tibia Clausa, Clarinet, Kinura, Orchestral Oboe, Viole d' Orchestre, Viole Celeste, Flute-Bourdon 16', Vox Humana. Wood marimba-harp. Other percussions, traps, effects, and accessories similar to D, F, H, 210. 13 shipped. First 215: #697.

3-Manual Models

Style 235, 11 ranks in 2 chambers

Harmonic Tuba-Tuba Profunda 16', Diapason-Diaphone 16', Tibia Clausa (Solo scale), Clarinet, Orchestral Oboe, Kinura, Viole d'Orchestre,



Model 260 - covered models 235, 240, and 260 Special.

Viole Celeste, Salicional, Flute-Bourdon 16', Vox Humana. Piano (remote electropneumatic action). Sleigh Bells (tuned), Xylophone, Glockenspiel, Orchestral Bells (Glockenspiel reiterating), Chryso-glott, usual traps and effects. Second touch on pedal and on Accompaniment and Great manuals. Three toe pistons for pedal, 10 pistons each for Accompaniment and Great. Five or 6 pistons for Solo (3rd manual). Blower: 7 1/2 H. P. 41 shipped. First 235: #353.

Style 235, Special

The above 11 ranks plus usually a brass trumpet and one or two softer stops such as Horn Diapason or Dulciana, and/or a second Salicional (celeste). At least two of these models have a Post Horn instead of Brass Trumpet, plus additional couplers. Some also had 16' Tibia 12 note extension and most had Register Crescendo Pedal. 28 shipped. First 235 special: #846.

Style 260, 14 or 15 ranks, two chambers

Trumpet (Brass), Tuba Horn-Ophicleide 16', Diapason-Diaphone 16', Tibia Clausa 16', Orchestral Oboe, Kinura, Clarinet, String, Viole d' Orchestre, Viole Celeste, Flute-Bourdon 16', Vox Humana, Oboe Horn, Quintadena, Saxophone (omitted in at least one example, #505, Grauman's Egyptian in Hollywood, Cal.). The Diapason and Tuba are larger in scale and on higher pressure than in smaller models. Piano, other percussions, traps, effects as in 235. Second touch on pedal and lower two manuals. Three toe pistons for pedal, 10 pistons for each manual. Among the special features of this model which were not regularly included in smaller organs were (1) Pizzicato touch; (2) 32'

Wooden Diaphone extending into 8' octave to FF, Metal Open Diapason from FF# up; (3) Suitable Bass Tablet (piston under each manual);

(4) register Crescendo Pedal in some later organs of this model; (5) 16' Tibia extension; 12 pipes (6) Indicating keys connected to expression pedals. First 260: #383, Ascher Theater, Cincinnati, O., 1/24/21 Last 260: #1908, Kenmore Theater, Brooklyn, N.Y., 7/17/28 Total: 22 style 260's. Blower 7 1/2 or 10 H.P.

Style 35, 15 ranks

The earlier model (pre-1920) from which the 260 was descended was known as Style 35, and had a 3 manual console with Solo (3rd) manual of 37 notes from Tenor C up. This was a "straight" division with the pipes on a 49-note 6-rank straight chest. The six ranks were: Trumpet (Brass), Tibia Clausa, Orchestral Oboe, Kinura, Oboe Horn, Quintadena. The 49-note ranks provided pipes in the top octave of the manuals when couplers were used. The other 9 ranks were unified on the Accompaniment and Great manuals and on the Pedal, and included: Tuba Horn-Ophicleide 16' Diapason-Diaphone 16', Clarinet, Saxophone, Solo String, Viole d'Orchestre, Viole Celeste, Flute-Bourdon 16', Vox Humana.

Three Style 35 organs shipped; First: Detroit, Broadway Strand, 6/26/15; Second: Oakland, T and D Theatre, 9/13/16; Third: Tacoma, Rialto Theatre, opus 178, 7/31/18.

Style 260, Special 17 ranks (usually)

15 ranks of 260 plus Horn Diapason, and Dulciana. Typical examples: Grauman's Chinese, Hollywood - #1541; United Artists, 9th and Broadway, Los Angeles - #1731; United

Artists, Detroit, Michigan - #1824; Keith Memorial Theatre, Boston - #1115, had 20 ranks, no 32'

In the "Chinese" installation the Saxophone was replaced by a Krumet although the tablets on the console were never changed. In some examples of this style an economy of space and lumber was effected by having only six pipes instead of twelve in the bottom octave of the 32' Diaphone. Each pipe served for two notes, e.g., CCCC and CCCC# were produced by the same pipe, the proper note being obtained by means of a pneumatically actuated tuning flap at the top of the resonator. Register Crescendo Pedal included. The piano was usually omitted. Blower: 10 H.P.

Another famous 260 special, #1757, is in the Mosque, Richmond, Va. This organ contains a Tuba Mirabilis in addition to the Tuba Horn but there is no Dulciana. Complete stoplist of #1757 in "Tibia", Vol. 1, No. 3.

First 260 special in list: #870; Albee Theatre, Brooklyn, N.Y. - 7/30/24. Last: #2085; Seneca Theatre, Buffalo, N. Y. Approximately thirty-two 260 specials.

4-Manual Models

Style 285, 32 ranks, 5 or 6 chambers
Ranks are listed here in order of their placement on manual chest from rear of chamber toward shutters. All stops on 10" wind except as noted.

Main: 9 ranks

Tuba Horn-Ophicleide 16', Salicional, Open Diapason, Viole d'Orchestre, Horn Diapason-Diaphone 16', Viole Celeste, Flute, Clarinet 16', Krumet. All on 10" wind except Tuba on 15".

Foundation: 7 ranks

Diaphonic-Diapason 32' (25" w.), Solo String 16', Tibia Clausa 16' (15" w.), Gamba, Gamba Celeste, Harmonic Flute 4', Vox Humana (6" w.).

Brass: 2 ranks

Tuba Mirabilis 16' (25" w.), English Horn (Post Horn) 16' (15" w.).

Solo: 6 ranks.

Saxophone, Quintadena, Trumpet, Oboe Horn, Orchestral Oboe, Kinura.

Echo: 8 ranks

Oboe Horn, Flute-Bourdon 16', Horn Diapason, Gamba, Gamba Celeste, Viole d'Orchestre, Viole Celeste, Vox Humana (6" w.). Additional set of chimes, snare drum.

Percussion:

Large assortment of special percussions and traps, some in special chamber, others distributed in pipe chambers, varying somewhat in different installations.

Common order of manuals from lowest up: 1, Accompaniment; 2, Great (and Echo); 3, Bombarde; 4, Solo. Second touch on Pedal and first three manuals. Pizzicato touch on Pedal and manuals 1 and 2. Combination Pistons: Pedal, 3 (toe); ten each plus "Suitable Bass" action for Accompaniment, Great, and Bombarde; six for Solo. Four expression pedals and indicating keys. One general expression pedal indicating key with couplers. Register crescendo pedal. The long pipes of the 32' Diaphone were usually unenclosed; in some organs, standing backstage, in others, lying horizontally across the proscenium arch.

Blowers:

25 H. P. for 15" wind 10 H. P. booster for 25" wind.

Another unusual feature of the 285 and other early large models was the inclusion of a device known as "Sforzando Touch" which controlled the swell shutters of the Brass and Foundation Chambers from the manual keys. When the Sforzando Touch tablet was on for any given manual and no keys depressed on that manual, the shutters were open two stages ahead of the normal position with respect to the position of the swell pedal at that moment. When any key on the manual in question was depressed, the added open shutters would immediately close, giving the effect of an accent (or sforzando) to the attack of the first note of a phrase, or to each note if played non-legato.

According to the factory shipping list there were four organs of this model: #402 - Missouri Theatre, St. Louis; shipped 1st carload 3/25/21; 2nd and 3rd carloads 3/28/21; 4th and 5th carloads 4/8/21; #416 - Granada Theatre, San Francisco (now Paramount) 5/16/21; #434 - Chicago Theatre, Chicago 7/18/21; second console 10/12/23; #534 - Grauman's Metropolitan, Los Angeles (now Paramount) 3/31/22.

Any 4-manual Wurlitzer of more than 20 or 21 ranks is frequently referred to as a "285" but this is not in accord with factory records and specifications which list the above

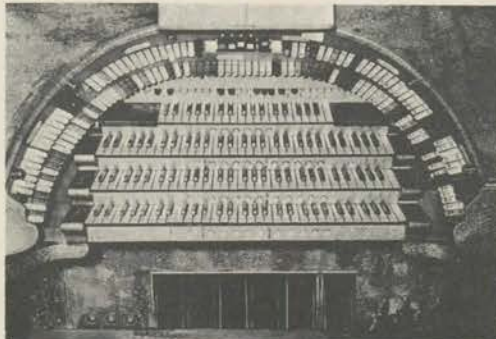
four instruments and no others by this style number. In one factory list the organ in Shea's Buffalo Theatre is shown as a "285" but the complete original list calls it "Spec." (Special). Furthermore, the stop layout of this organ differs markedly in several important respects from that of the above four "285's"; for example: It has 28 ranks rather than 32, and no Echo organ. Disregarding the Echo section, the "285" had 24 ranks including but one Tibia, thus the Buffalo job had four additional ranks in the organ proper. These were Vox Humana Solo, Dulciana, Tibia Plena, and Tibia Clausa Solo, giving a total of three Tibias, two in Foundation Chamber and one in Solo Chamber. In most other respects the pipe content of the Shea's organ was similar to that of the "285's"; however, the stop-tab layout on the console was quite different.

There were several other organs of approximately this size: #1984 - Paramount, Brooklyn. Special 4, 10/30/28-26 ranks; #2101 - Metropolitan, Boston. 4-manual. 3/20/30 - 26 ranks (see THE TIBIA, Vol. II, No. 4, Summer 1958, page 14 for complete stoplist of this organ). #2000 - Mastbaum, Philadelphia. 4-manual. 11/30/28 - 27 ranks.

Precursors of the Style 285 were in the California Theatre, San Francisco, 6/2/17; Isis Theatre, Denver, 6/12/15; #164 Liberty Theatre, Portland, Ore., 2/12/18; #170 Coliseum Theatre, Seattle, 5/22/18. These organs are designated in the list merely as "Special". In those early 4-manual instruments as noted regarding the Style 35, the Solo Organ was "straight", i.e. not playable on other than the top manual except by coupling. These solo ranks were in some cases on a 49 note (from Tenor C) straight chest and included Trumpet, Orchestral Oboe, Kinura, Oboe Horn, Quintadena and usually a second Tibia. For full details of the famous Isis organ see the article in "The Tibia", Vol. 1, No. 1.

Item #138 in list, "Portland, Liberty Theatre, Style 4; 6/2/17" appears to be either an error or a different Liberty Theatre from the one with the 4-manual special.

(To Be Continued)



Early prototype of Model 285 is This San Francisco State Theatre organ. Note unusual short top manual.