



Pipe Organs of the Rich and Famous

Rollin Smith

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Largest and most complex of musical instruments, the organ has traditionally been found in churches—from country parishes to great cathedrals—and, for centuries, small “chamber organs” were found in the homes of the elite, most often, royalty. Then, in the mid-19th century, with the application of mechanical blowing devices, organs entered the private homes of the well-to-do and professional musicians. Automatic player devices provided those who could afford them with a self-playing organ and the opulent mansions of the new American aristocracy offered unlimited space for extremely large instruments. Rollin Smith’s *Pipe Organs of the Rich and Famous* is the story of organs in more than 50 private homes—a few residents being more famous than rich. It recounts a time when the organ was not only a symbol of those who had arrived socially, but was considered the ultimate appointment of the luxurious home, indeed, the Home Orchestra of the Twentieth Century. Here you will visit with royalty, captains of industry, famous organists and composers, organbuilders, and those whose names are less familiar, but who were patrons of the King of Instruments on a lavish scale. Profusely illustrated with more than 300 photographs and engravings, this large-format soft-bound book documents the work of more than 25 organbuilders in the United States, England, France, and Germany; stoplists of each instrument is included.

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