

Castletown Methodist Church



Gt: 8,8,8,4,4,2,8, Sw: 8,8,8,8,4,8,8, Ped: 16,16,8.

The organ in Castletown Methodist Church was built by the London firm of Norman and Beard in 1912. It is a smaller version of the instrument in St. Ninian's Church, Douglas, which was installed in 1915. It has a powerful, refined

and dignified tone at its loudest (and it can be surprisingly loud) and many attractive solo voices, often orchestral, for use in softer combinations, speaking directly into the building from the two openings of the well-proportioned chamber.



From its solid, pitchpine case and sophisticated pipe displays, to its complex pneumatic action, this is an example of Edwardian organ-building from a firm which, at the time, employed some hundreds of craftsmen.

Pneumatic organ actions were seen as a definite improvement on their mechanical counterparts, as they freed the player from the heavy touch which could be found in even quite small instruments, and that at Castletown (and at St.Ninian's) is of sound design, with a speed of repetition which less accomplished builders could not match.

The pitchpine case fronts support two sets of display pipes which look impressive and conventional, until the unusual planting pattern of the pipes is noticed. (The pattern is not the simple one of placing the pipes to right and left, starting with the largest or smallest.)

Presumably, this was done for reasons of tuning stability.

Originally hand-blown, the organ was later fitted with a water engine which is still in place and in a good state of preservation, though not used for some years.

The organ is in basically original condition, and was looked after by Norman and Beard until its maintenance was taken over by Peter Jones in 1991 when it was cleaned, treated for woodworm and overhauled.



