

Revealed after a Century: The Model 46 Ruth of 1912

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Introduction

The late Dan Slack constantly sought mechanical musical instrument buying and selling opportunities. His work as a salesman of Cessna propeller aircraft and later Chris-Craft luxury boats took him cross-country, giving him exposure from coast to coast and border to border. He examined many machines, passing on most, buying some, re-selling the majority and holding a few.

After one 1980s trip to California during which he'd bought a prized Model 38 Ruth chassis, he reported spotting another intriguing instrument. Based on the knowledge he'd gained from examining the construction hallmarks of his Waldkirch-built organ Dan was sure it was a Ruth, but he couldn't figure out exactly what model. It baffled him. Even the name on the facade, *Emerincus*, made no sense (Figure 1). Following his untimely passing in 1987, the organ joined the ranks of many forgotten tales told by Dan.¹

The confusion around the mystery instrument continued for over two decades. It passed through two collections and into the possession of Alan Erb. Moved to Carson City, Nevada, it was out of sight for many years, forgotten by most enthusiasts. Across time numerous experts and authorities examined the organ. Despite their good efforts, nothing came of the inspections and discussions. It retained its status as an enigma.

The continuing lack of an accurate identification was perpetuated by the combination of three factors: the absence of documentation about certain European organs in the literature; a published scale labeled incorrectly and encumbered with errors; and the residual effects of not one, but two after-market modifications of the instrument. During the course of our discussions Alan told me "it's probably a one-of-a-kind organ."

That observation came very close to the reality of the situation. There were actually two such instruments, and each was somewhat "unique."

Subsequent to the acquisition, examination of details and further analysis, including accessing European literature on the topic, the make and specific model number of this interesting machine have been confirmed. It is the first of two Model 46 Ruths fabricated in Waldkirch, Germany. Constructed and sold in 1912, awareness of the existence of the organ has been outside the knowledge of contemporary organ enthusiasts everywhere, including both North America and Europe.

The purpose of this monograph is to fill the void about Ruth's unusual Model 46 and to re-count how the identity of the 1912 instrument was revealed after a century of obscurity. Within the narrative, we will provide a context for it in the Ruth line and Waldkirch production. It's also an opportunity to

bring forward some insights on Waldkirch-built organs suited to locations other than the fairground.

Waldkirch Organs for Dance Halls

The European fairground organ market reached saturation toward the end of the first decade of the 20th century. When Gavioli & Cie. in Paris, the flagship of the French trade, collapsed, it was the most significant testimony to the changing circumstances faced by instrument builders. The heyday of the big French fair organ was played out in the few years remaining before the continent was changed forever by World War I. Marengi's successor Gaudin, along with Verbeeck in Belgium, assembled a few large chassis machines. Over in Germany, smaller, powerful fairground machines first introduced about

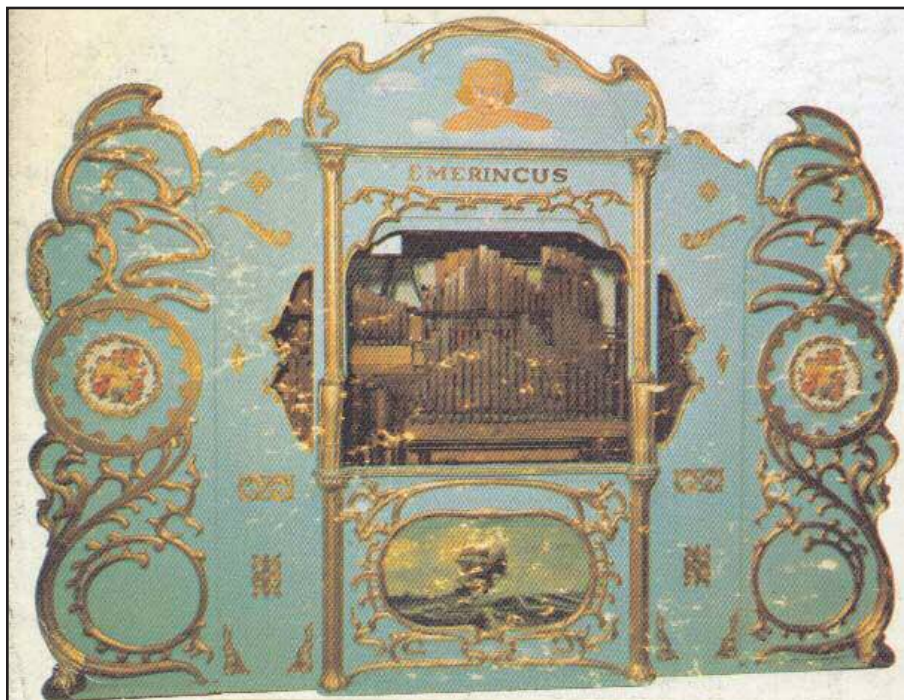


Figure 1. An ugly duckling organ with the enigmatic name *Emerincus* on the façade proved to have a very elusive history and concealed an origin that would not be revealed for several decades.

Author's collection

1908 had brought an end to the fabrication of all but a handful of large fairground organs after the first world conflict.

Late in the first decade of the 20th century the future was brighter in the dance hall organ business. The heritage of these devices dated back nearly as early as the fair organ trade, but has received less attention from researchers until recently. Post-1900 terpsichorean palaces were enlivened by numerous book organs: the 65, 84 and 94-key Gaviolis (introduced between c1902 and c1907); 59, 70, 80-key and larger Marenghis (brought out between 1903 and c1908); and the 67-key Limonaire (first one in 1906). By 1914 Charles Marenghi reached 105-keys and his successor, Gaudin, achieved 114-keys in the 1920s. Beyond simply having different ranks across the organ's pitch range, all had numerous registers to provide considerable tonal variation for the presentation of popular music.²

Some late 19th century Waldkirch cylinder organs were outfitted with mechanical or hybrid registers as utilized in brass horn orchestrions, but they were not common. Parisian makers were outfitting their instruments with automatic registers by 1900, a development witnessed in Paris by the Germans. They took their cue from those keyed machines and moved in another direction. Ruth and Gebrüder Bruder presumably initiated their designing of keyless-style book instruments with multiple pneumatic registers sometime 1900-1902, perhaps even earlier, but the sale of organs incorporating them didn't materialize until 1903. Pneumatic registers are in Gebrüder Bruder's Model 104, 80-keyless shop number #4774, dated by the maker on the façade in 1903.³ Ruth's first Model 38 was issued about June 1903 to Ignatz Lambertz and presumably incorporated a register for an alternate flute voice, but it had no glockenspiel until later.⁴

The French efforts inspired Belgian firms to make similar machines, with inventive effort leading them into their own entirely new tonal and visual developments. The Belgian builders, including Louis Hooghuys and especially Theofiel Mortier, dominated the Belgian halls with instrument designs that later incorporated as many as 101-keys. Other firms also participated in the burgeoning pre-war market.

The fair organ builders in Waldkirch, Germany, encountered limited dance organ sales opportunities. It was difficult to adapt their fairground organs, with powerful reeds and bass, into interior space service. They were inherently well-suited to outdoor applications, where their great volume overcame the noise of the crowds and ride machinery. Their heavy duty books were also much more expensive than simpler paper rolls, cardboard cartridges and other systems in orchestration use. Only rarely did something ship from a Waldkirch factory that resembled a continental dance hall organ. The proliferation of high quality orchestrions made in their country by Bacigalupo/Asmus, Blessing, Dienst, Frati, Hupfeld, Imhof & Mukle, Lösche, Philipps, Poppers, Weber, Weisser, Welte and others in Berlin, the Black Forest, Frankfurt and Leipzig filled those needs at home and elsewhere in Europe and North America. Ruth marketed what were termed "Salon Organs" and "Large Organ Works for Carousel, Panorama and Dance Hall Proprietors," while Gebrüder Bruder listed "Concert Organs" for "Museums, Panoramas, Dance Halls and Streets." All were cylinder-operated. A few examples of these survive today.⁵

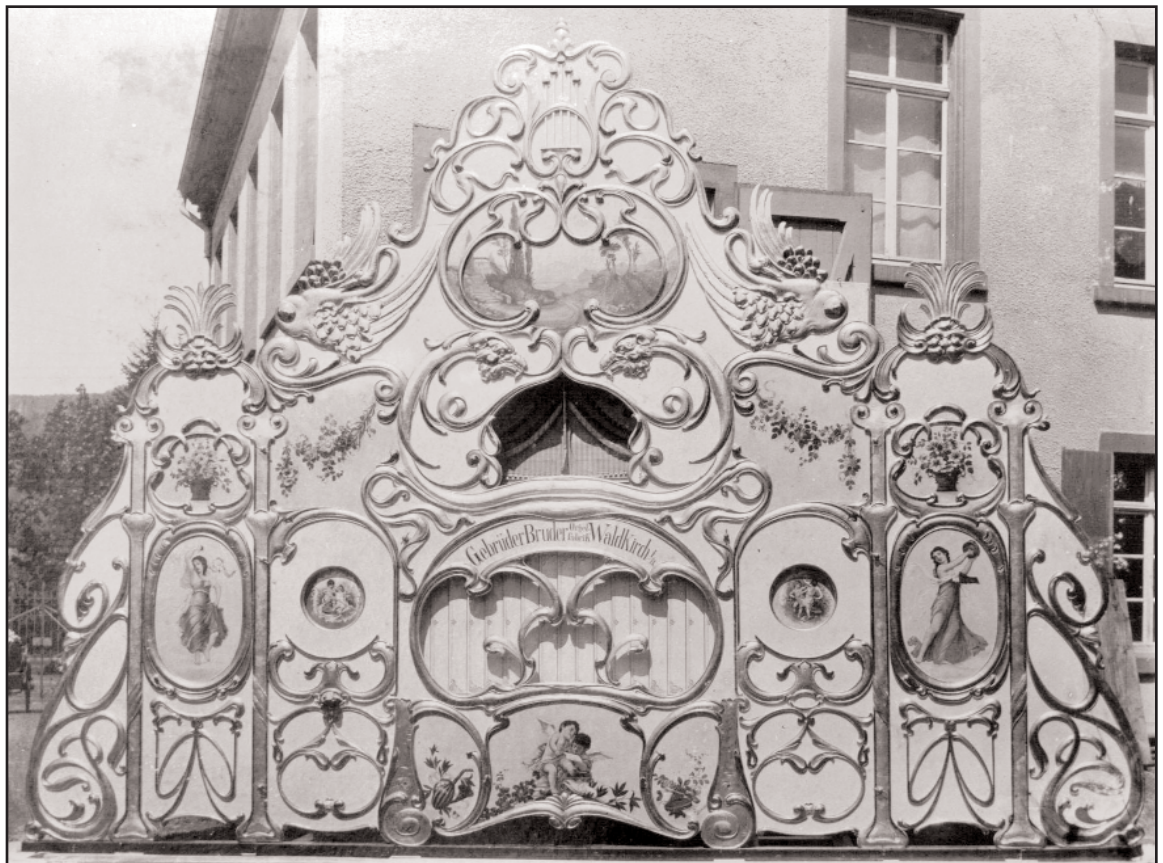


Figure 2. One of the most unusual looking Waldkirch shipments was this circa 1910 Gebrüder Bruder destined for Holland. It had swell shutters and a mechanical stringed instrument above the case, as found on French and Belgian dance organs, and Gebr. Bruder's own 106 keyless *Elite Orchestra* "Apollo." Stefan Fleck collection

A decision not to participate in the dance organ market appears to have been the overt choice of Wilhelm Bruder Sons, despite 1880s representation in the field. We've seen no documentation to suggest they made a 20th century effort to garner dance hall instrument orders. The Waldkirch plant of Gavioli,

... continued from page 26

operated by Limonaire starting in 1908, also seems to have been a non-participant. The Parisian operations were closer to the principal dance hall organ market, but it's surely possible that one or more 57, 65 or 87-key organs shipped out of Waldkirch served in a large hall.

A serious movement to penetrate the dance hall market was first undertaken in Waldkirch by Gebrüder Bruder, the largest builder in the community with the greatest number of exports. The action started without direct awareness of the outcome in 1908, when they introduced their 52-keyless Model 107. It went on to become the most successful of all Waldkirch organs, selling more broadly and in greater numbers than any other design, and remaining competitive until the end of the business nearly three decades later.

As was then becoming common in the instrument trade, Gebrüder Bruder introduced a line of "name" organs, such as the *Jubilaum*, *Pompadour*, *Sirene* and *Terpsichore*. The specific features, if any, which made them different from one another and prior Bruder instruments haven't been discerned. The most popular and significant of these were the *Elite Orchestra* "Apollo" organs (hereafter EOA), with special scales, available by 1911.

They initially came in 69, 80 and 106-keyless sizes, with 96-keyless also mentioned infrequently.⁶

The note quantities (bass, accompaniment, melody and countermelody) in Bruder's popular 107 scale were augmented by the addition of thirteen spaces and became the basis of the 65-keyless version of the EOA concept introduced in 1912. The expansion facilitated a sixth bass note to increase arranger options, along with other registers, functions and percussion. The fifth variation seems to have realized the Bruder firm's vision for the concept and exemplifies the best of the EOA line.⁷ Later, in modified format, as the Wurlitzer Style 165 *Duplex Orchestral Organ*, this design became the most popular of the largest, American-made, roll-operated organs (Figure 3).

A. Ruth & Son, the most favored Waldkirch builder of the largest and most imposing fair organs, followed Bruder's lead and brought out their initial dance hall offering in 1912. They

attempted market penetration with their new 78-keyless Model 46. It was rationally decided that the machine would be comparable in size to others, like the 65-keyless Bruder *Apollo* and earlier Parisian instruments. In a path akin to that taken by the nearby Gebrüder Bruder, Ruth utilized their second most popular fairground scale, the Model 35, and enlarged it to create the Model 46, yielding a design to serve a similar purpose to the most successful Bruder EOA.

The basic 65-keyless Model 35 Ruth scale was retained intact. To facilitate additional register capability, the operational platform was expanded to 78-keyless, a number definitely not chosen at random. It was the same size as their existing Model 36 Ruth design. Thus, the new Model 46 utilized cardboard of the same width as the larger Model 36. The fact that the Bruder 107 had been enlarged by thirteen spaces into the 65 *Apollo* was merely a coincidence.

The expanded specification was unlike anything the Ruth firm had built previously. The experiment, manifest in a pair of instruments, provided a tonal capability beyond any other that the firm had undertaken. Surprisingly, the Model 46 never reached full fruition in terms of utilizing all of the available scale positions. Like Bruder's named organs and the EOAs, the very limited Ruth excursion into the dance organ market did not realize the sales that had been desired when it was inaugurated. The quick rise and fall of the experiment, on the eve of World War I, may explain why further development along the lines of the 46 was never undertaken.

A. Ruth & Son

The story of the House of Ruth has been told adequately well in several prior volumes, which can readily be accessed. Thus, only a summary derived from those texts will be provided for contextual purposes.

The firm was founded in Waldkirch in 1841 by Andreas Ruth (1817-1888), who made a specialty of hackbretts with moving figures and cylinder organs. His son, Adolf I (1845-1907), took over in 1875. During his tenure the firm developed



Figure 3. The carousel organ that typified Coney Island was also the last to be active at the fabled resort. It was this 65-keyless Gebr. Bruder *Elite Orchestra "Apollo,"* one of a pair that was converted to 66-hole B. A. B. rolls. Photograph courtesy Dan Pisark

the tonality for which it was well known. He was aided in that pursuit by former orchestrion builder Lorenz Weisser (1883-1917).

Technically progressive, the Ruth firm accomplished the changeover from cylinder to book operated instruments starting in 1900 utilizing a totally pneumatic keyless system. After the passing of his father, in 1908 Adolf II (1878-1938) continued the firm, his splendid music arrangements augmented by those from the hand of Rudolf Weisser (1878-1952). Further technical improvements were undertaken in the well-established line of book organs, along with model

additions and eventually an awkward movement into roll-operated machines by 1927. It was during the tenure of Adolf II that the firm's two most ambitious attempts to build organs with greater tonal variety, the 78-keyless Model 46 (1912) and 96-keyless Model 39 (1923), were designed and constructed.⁸

Though there was a successor named Adolf Ruth III, who labored at the factory, his talents were in other pursuits. After some collaborative efforts in the 1930s the assets and patterns of A. Ruth & Sohn were sold to Heinrich Voigt (1876-1954) of Höchst (Frankfurt), whose activities were continued by his son, Wilhelm (1904-1992). Voigt Orgelbau continues to accept orders for Ruth and other scale books today (2012), under the ownership of Heinz Voigt.

Ruth's Model Numbering and Variations

A. Ruth & Son's choice of the out-of-sequence model number 46 to designate the new 1912 instrument deserves comment. Why did the firm jump forward eight model numbers, from 38 to 46? We can only hypothesize as to Adolf II's rationale in doing so, an analytical excursion that at the last days of the firm's cylinder organs.

By 1899, Ruth cylinder organ model numbers, identified consecutively in increasing order, reached as high as 34. Extending their numbering rationally by continuing the same practice, a typical manufacturing methodology, Ruth selected the numbers 35, 36 and 37 to introduce their initial three book organs. A catalogue publication issued circa 1900-1901 defined the new instruments as having, in order, 60, 76 and 90-keyless scales.



Figure 4. The Ruth family home and factory stood to the right of the bridge over the Elz River. The Kastelburg ruins remain overlooking the site, and the home is still occupied, but the organ shop was demolished several decades ago.

Author's collection

In 1903, the 96-keyless Model 38 scale, an expansion of the Model 37 with two additional registers, another trombone and one extra hole (sometimes utilized as a cancel) was introduced.

A market for smaller book organs was recognized. To be consistent with the four new book organ identifications, the firm chose numbers sequentially lower. Ruth constructed the 56-keyless Model 34 in 1906, which was Adolf I's last new introduction. It was followed by the 52-keyless Model 33 in 1910, an extremely successful first offering by Adolf II. He also brought out the 45-keyless Model 32 in 1921.

The numbering system wasn't expanded upward again until 1923, when the first 96-keyless Model 39 was fabricated. The manufacturing tooling for the previous Model 38 was utilized, but the scale and tonal specification were entirely different. The Model 31 was introduced in 1929.

Variations on the basic Ruth 33 to 36 scales, reflecting the addition of added features, were indicated by means of an appended suffix letter, A, B, C and X. This methodology went into effect by 1907, with the 36A. One must be cautious in that the letters did not necessarily designate the same features when applied to different model numbers. Additionally, no letter suffix-identified organs were made in the 31, 32, 37, 38 and 39 scales, despite such references in the tertiary literature and popular discussion, nor were any "baritone" variations ever noted in Ruth factory documentation.

Ruth later adopted the prefix designation of "neu," meaning "new," when expanding pre-existing scales. These included: the 34-new, a 56-keyless enhancement of the 33 issued circa 1920; and the 85-keyless 37-new, an expansion of the Model 36 with additional registers, which was introduced by 1930.

Against this articulation of alpha-numeric identification knowledge, how does the choice of 46 fit? On initial consideration, it would seem that Ruth wanted a designation that ended with the digit “6,” to align it with the 78-keyless music width. The 36A designation had been implemented in 1907, the 36B in 1908 and the 36C and 36X in 1910, but these were all slight variations on the standard Model 36 scale. Thus, a different nomenclature approach was seemingly chosen; alteration of the first digit, to signify an entirely new and different scale. The resultant choice would have been 46.

Yet, had this scenario been followed with the new 96-keyless design of 1923, it should have been the Model 48; but, it wasn't, it became the Model 39. Knowing that Ruth's original fairground book organs were numbered 35 to 37, centered on 36, we would hypothesize that 46 was chosen as the initial offering of book-operated instruments for dance hall use. A family of machines, 43 to 48, might have been contemplated, mimicking the 33 to 38 series for fairground machines. Thus, we're more inclined to suggest that the 46 was the harbinger of an entirely new series of instruments that never materialized, rather than something related to the original Model 36 per se.

The Model 46 was the only such identification in the Ruth system. No others in the 40-number series were ever created by Adolf Ruth II before the firm was sold. Fairground organs numbered Model 40 were fabricated by Voigt about three decades later, utilizing the original Model 38 Ruth scale as a basis. For the identification, he picked the next highest number after 39, the last 96-keyless design. No Voigt instruments were designated Models 41 to 45, or higher than 46.

Model 35 Ruth Introduction

Ruth's initial book organ designs were presented in a catalogue known as the “yellow” one, for the color of the paper on which it and reprints were published. The first Ruth book organ wasn't issued until 1900 and the yellow pages don't list the Model 38 brought out in mid-1903. These facts suggest an issuance date of 1901-1902. The Models 35, 36 and 37 were first produced for delivery in 1903, 1900 and 1901. The addition of more features, percussion devices, mechanized facade figures and extra registers, resulted in growth to 67, 79 and 92-keyless scales for the first three book organ designs.

Instrument descriptions in the catalogue refer to fronts finished in black and gold, the style in common use on cylinder organs and the standard before elaborate detachable facades

were introduced. The reprinted catalogue version incorporated two organ illustrations within the body of the publication that differ from the description. The Model 35 was an augmented furniture case facade style, first used in 1903, while the Model 36 featured a front done in Jugendstil decorations, a style that isn't known on Ruths until later, on a 1906 Model 38 and another 36 sold to Italy in 1907 or later. This suggests that the instruments in the two images were originally loose pages, inserted at a later date into the older catalogue when it was given to prospective customers (Figure 5).



Figure 5. The earliest 65-keyless Model 35 Ruths of 1903 featured an expanded furniture case front with attached side wings incorporating the percussion, like this later example.

Image from reprinted Ruth yellow catalogue in author's collection

The Ruth yellow catalogue presented the Model 35 in a 60-keyless format, solely as a loud playing “forte” organ. Unlike the new Models 36 and 37, which are thought to have been based on prior cylinder organ designs (80-key Model 23 and the 90-key Model 24), the Model 35 was an entirely new concept. The experience gained with the initial Models 36 and 37, made and shipped in 1900 and 1901, altered the initial plan for the Model 35.

When first manufactured for 1903, the Model 35 incorporated a larger 65-keyless scale. Two of the added holes were for piano and forte, giving it volume modulation. These keys were not added at the edge, but internally in the body of the scale. In the Model 35 a bandleader hole was also placed inside the scale. Thus, the three controls were added *after* the yellow catalogue was issued and included when the scale was finalized for production. If any prior cylinder scale had been consulted, the key positions were shifted by the inclusion of the two new control positions.

By comparison, for 1903, the new Model 38, derived from the 37, was being furnished with an elaborate detachable

facade, incorporating moving figures and drums. They were activated by holes added in the growth space at the extremes of the original scales. The three drum holes were placed at the outer edge, suggesting their inclusion came after implementation of the basic 92-keyless scale in 1901. The same was true of the E bass added to the 1900 Model 36 scale; it's at the edge and not internal to the scale.

Overall the Model 46 design was on a par with the competing organs, but with more bass capability.

The analysis employed in this paper uses the initial 65-key Model 35 scale for discussion and comparative purposes, since the Model 46 was introduced seven years before the Model 35 was enlarged to the ultimate 67-key scale. In 1919, two additional outer register control places were added to the Model 35 scale, one at each end, for a flute voice and a xylophone.

Model 46 Ruth Scale and Pipework Specification

The new Model 46 organ scale was nominally in the same size and pitch range as the 59- to 70-key Marengi, 65-key Gavioli, 67-key Limonaire, 69/65-keyless Gebrüder Bruder *Elite Orchestra "Apollo"* and the derivative Wurlitzer 165. These were all medium-sized instruments with multiple registers for tonal variation, intended to play standards as well as the ever expanding supply of popular music. Their added features made them more costly than the typical organs of comparable key or keyless size (**Table 1**).

Overall, as revealed in the tabulation in Table 1, the Model 46 design was on a par with the competing organs, but with more bass capability. It also stood out in terms of expansion possibilities. No Ruth document has been discovered that might indicate how the firm intended to make use of the additional holes. The additional keyless positions in the Model 46 were all placed to one end of the scale, presumably to facilitate re-use of existing Model 35 music masters. The masters could be edge-justified as with standard Model 35 music books.

**Table 1
Scales Comparison**

Make	Marengi No. 30/53?	Gavioli ----	Limonaire No. 250	Bruder EOA	Wurlitzer 165	Ruth 35/46
Scale size	59/70 key	65 key	67 key	69/65 kls	69 holes	65/78 kls
Hole uses						
Trombone	R6/R6 ^a	R6	R6	R7/R6	R6	6/6
Contrabass	0/0	0	0	0	0	0/3
Bass	6/6	6	6	7/6	6	8/8
Accomp.	9/9	10	9	16/10	10	13/13
Ctrmel/trmpts	18/17	17	17	12/14	14	5+9/5+9
Melody	17/18	21	21	22/22	22	6+17/6+17 ^b
Registers	5/13+1 ^c	6/7	8+2	7/10	7	2/6+4
Percussion	3/5	3	3	2/2	6	3/3
Figures	0/0	1	1	2/1	0	1/1
Function	1/1 ^d	1	0	0/0	2	0
Swell	0/0	0	0	1/0	2	0/1
Extant organs	1m/1m	4	4	1/2m	11	20+2

Notes:

- a. R = trombones operated by forte register on bass notes
- b. Six alto violins in the Ruth 35 and 46 scales extend the melody violin range lower
- c. +[] are open keys, assumed to be for registers in this table
- d. Function keys are for keyframe muting or roll frame operation

Extant organs: m=modified

59-key Marengi from c1903 converted to 61-keys by Gaudin, Chris van Laarhoven; 70-key Marengi dance organ reconstructed by Ron Hartman; 65-key Gaviolis owned by Bob Gilson, Ken Harck, Jasper Sanfilippo, Utrecht Museum; 67-key Limonaire owned by Bob Gilson, Jasper Sanfilippo, Hall of Halls, Japan, and with PTC #30, Sydney, Australia.

Scales from: Johannes Brink and author's files; Art Reblitz and Q. David Bowers, *Treasures of Mechanical Music*, (Vestal, NY: Vestal Press, 1981), pages 514, 528, 486, 585-586, 554, 556; and COAA *Carousel Organ*, 17, page 16

Maison Costers

The first of two Model 46 Ruth organs was constructed and shipped in October 1912 to a firm identified in Ruth documentation as “Maison Costers,” the House of Costers. According to signage on the front of the façade, a single individual, César J. Costers of Antwerp, served as the general representative for A. Ruth & Son in Belgium and Holland. The spelling of the city name on the façade as Antwerpen conforms to the formal spelling in Flemish (Dutch), and is also the manner of spelling contained in a Ruth document. In Walloon (French) it would have been Anvers.

The fact that the façade from Ruth displayed the name of the agent in a very prominent manner, not seen on any other product from the firm, suggests that it was a field demonstration model. It was apparently furnished with the idea that it could be placed in one or more Belgian dance halls to testify to the quality and reliability of the Waldkirch device. Competition for such applications was fierce. Not only were Gavioli (until closure) and Marengi entrenched in such sales, but Belgian builders like Theofiel Mortier and Louis Hooghuys were very popular in their own homeland, with newer builders like Verbeeck and Fasano starting to service the market.

Knowledge of the Costers family and their activities is sporadic in nature and provides an incomplete picture at this time. There were two men named Costers, probably brothers, involved with the

musical existence of Antwerp, Belgium. Joseph-Florimond Costers was identified as a professor of music in 1905, when he took Alide-Jeanne Melis as his wife.⁹ César and Florimond Costers were identified as “important figures in that city [Antwerp], both as performers, teachers and composers.”¹⁰

In 1906, a firm called Costers Frères was at 11 Marché St. Jacques, Antwerp. The names of the specific brothers were not stated.¹¹ The same firm was at 30 rue de la Commune, Antwerp, in 1912, described as “Violin-lehrer, verkaufen auch Pianos und Sprechm[achinen].”¹² A Costers Frères letterhead postmarked December 12, 1913 and sent to instrument manufacturer Pierre Eich provides the office address as Chaussée de Malines 30, Anvers (Belgian), and Mechelsche Steenweg 30, Antwerpen (Dutch). It bore the headings “Fabriques d’Instruments Music,” and “Orchestrions, Pianos Électriques et Automatiques Diplomes.” The bill head depicts a Philipps Pianella Paganini Violin-Piano No. 3.¹³ **Figure 6**



Figure 6. At the same time C. J. Costers was representing A. Ruth & Sohn, he was also trying to sell German-made orchestrions, by Imhof, Phillips and perhaps others to Low Country customers.

Letterhead image courtesy Hendrik Strengers

location of a popular Belgian restaurant, De Taloorkes, with a specialty book bindery on the second floor.

Attempts by Bjorn Isebaert to trace past ownership have yielded some knowledge of the site. Antwerp city records document three building alterations. On August 11, 1904, E. Lemineur, either the owner or lessee, filed application #1690 to make facade changes. It was reviewed by a governing board on August 26, 1904. Four years later, on October 25, 1910, J. Dries, the owner or lessee, or perhaps an agent or attorney for De Doncker, a brewery, filed application #1945, with the board review accomplished on November 8, 1910. The intent was to make internal changes to the property. Then on March 11, 1911, J. Dries presented De Doncker’s application #2202, with the board review taking place on March 24, 1911. The basis was to receive permission to make general improvements.¹⁵

The floor plan of the Koepoortstraat space suggests that the instrument may well have been overpowering in the limited

Firms named Costers have been identified as an agent for two German manufacturers of orchestrions, Imhof & Mukle and Philipps. The latter connection was definitely pre-World War I. The affiliation with the Vöhrenbach, Germany operation of Imhof was probably in the same time frame. The letter addressed to Pierre Eich suggests other possible associations. Presumably the sale of expensive mechanical musical instruments supplemented income from teaching and performance.

Like other agents and representatives, relationships within the mechanical musical instrument world were often changing, in flux as a result of sales activity, profitability and new developments. The association with Ruth apparently endured no longer than the single instrument. Beyond the indication of the original tunes with the instrument, and the identity of Costers, no other information on the early European existence of the organ has been found.

Florimond Costers was later listed at De Coninckplein 26, Antwerp, in 1924-1926 as a builder of automatic pianos. This was succeeded by F.-J. Costers, builders of automatic organs at Oude Graanmarkt 14-15, Brussels in 1926.¹⁴

A notation in the Ruth book music ledger identified the Maison Costers address or location as Koepoortstraat 61, Antwerp, in the old part of the city. This could have been another Costers location, such as a warehouse, but quite probably it was the installation site of the Model 46 Ruth. In 2012, Lange Koepoortstraat 61 is the

square footage. After arrival and installation it may have been determined that the organ was entirely unsuited to the physical characteristics of the premises. The mismatch of instrument and intended purpose is only our speculation. We don't know for certain exactly what set into motion an uncertain existence that is largely undefined until 1968, when the organ was exported to the United States.

A. Ruth & Son Documentation

The Ruth shop number, 4429, was found in two locations. It was stamped on the top face of the trumpet slider, at the key frame end, and on top of the main chest, immediately behind the 7th and 8th trumpets. No number was found on the crankshaft, which had been modified in the past to work a vacuum pump. The original drive wheel was replaced by a V-belt sheave and was no longer with the instrument. The drive wheel hub is another position where a Ruth number can sometimes be located. Ruth also stamped some valve chest covers with the shop number, but the center section in the organ had been replaced, obliterating where it may have been applied in the past.

The pump was signed and dated at the key frame end, on the inside face of the bottom cover plate. Ruth's pump maker, R. Dvorer, placed his name there, as has been found in other machines. The date was "20/9 1912." That is interpreted to mean September 20, 1912.

These two pieces of data (**Figures 7 & 8**) are consistent with other compiled Ruth data. A Model 38 Ruth, numbered 4401, has a music ledger entry from March-April 1912 and an internal pump date of April 1, 1912.

Only one crate of book music was prepared for shipment with the instrument, as per **Table 2**. The music furnished was presumably chosen to showcase the tonal versatility and musical capability of the machine.

Several observations can be made from a comparison of the Model 35 and 46 music masters at Voigt Orgelbau. Five of the tunes supplied were arranged only for the Model 46, and not the 35. Three of the Model 46 arrangements that are missing do exist as Model 35 arrangements. Perhaps the smaller scale masters were utilized in marking the larger scale books.

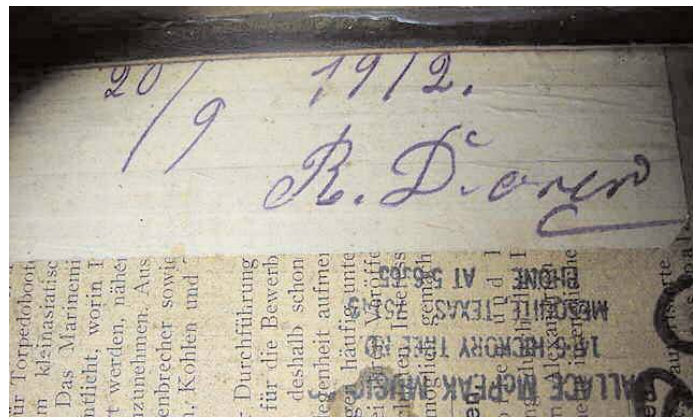


Figure 7 (above). The pump builder's signature and date were intact inside his handiwork. An initial assessment of the pump leather suggests that the original materials may still be in place.

Alan Erb photograph

Figure 8 (below). The Ruth-assigned shop number was found in two places, the trumpet slider stamping shown here. There are at least five places where Ruth placed shop numbers on their instruments.

Author's photograph



In only one instance do arrangements exist for both Model 35 and 46 scales. It may be that the possibilities for the tune were more fully realized in the Model 46 scale, as compared to the 35; or, conversely, the 46 arrangement was not transferable to the Model 35.

Ruth Ledger Listing	Tune Title Translation	Arrangements
Die Regimentstochter Potp.	The Regiment's Daughter Potpourri	46 only
[Die] Irrfahrt Uns Glück Overture	Fortune's Labyrinth. Overture	35 and 46
Nachfalter Mazur	Moths. Mazurka	46 only
Carolinen Mazur	Caroline. Marzurka	46 only
Im Zigeunerlager Marsch	In a Gypsy Camp. March	35, 46-missing
Kind du kanst tanzen W	Child You Can Dance. Waltz	35, 46-missing
Pas de Patineurs Rhl	Skating Rhinelander	35, 46-missing
Moselblümchen Rhl	Little Flower of the Mosel. Rhinelan	46 only
Im Schnellzug Galopp	On a Fast Train. Galopp	46 only



Figure 9. The immense size of the Costers Model 46 Ruth façade isn't apparent until one realizes that the organ case was defined by the area of the swell shutters. It was the biggest front ever shipped from the Waldkirch factory. Photograph courtesy Marcel van Boxtel

The crate of music furnished with the Costers organ may still exist in Europe. It might be properly identified, or it could be mis-labeled as a variation of Model 36 music. It may also have been reduced in width, the additional positions for the Model 46 scale removed, yielding it somewhat suited to playing on a Model 35 Ruth.

The Costers Facade

Another piece of documentation created before the organ was shipped was a record photograph of the completed instrument. Fortunately, numerous such views of Ruth and other Waldkirch organs were commissioned for sales support purposes and many of them remain in existence today, in original or copy format.

Among the views of different organs that were preserved by the Ruth family were photographs of both Model 46 organs. An early issue of *Het Pierement*, VI, 3, (October 1959, page 11), was the first publication that contained a photo of the Costers Model 46. No identification was provided at that time. It was a lightly creased print preserved by long time Waldkirch organ man Carl Öhler, copied and made available to the author

by Marcel van Boxtel in 1986. He inscribed it as being a Model 38 Ruth. It was not until the *Het Pierement* issue of January 1993, when the image was properly identified, via text and a caption, that specific identification of the Costers Model 46 commission was made publicly known for the first time. Those with access to other Ruth documentation had already been able to ascertain that it was the single Ruth shipped to Costers, thereby securing the identification as the first Model 46 (Figure 9).

The instrument was fitted with an immense front. Indeed, it was the largest façade ever provided with a Ruth organ. Scaling of the photograph by utilizing the case dimensions as a basis yields the nominal dimensions at 16'-4" tall and 21' wide.

The façade followed the general baroque style that Ruth embraced in 1903. Only on rare occasion did they issue an instrument with an Art Nouveau style front. The Costers unusual in being more "flat panel" in execution, having somewhat less variation in depth than seen in Ruth's finest fairground pieces

There is a single fixation bolt on each side of the organ case and it's unclear if the façade mounted directly to it or if there were side cases that augmented the central box to also support the front. The facade was split horizontally at the top of the

main case. A horizontal board and visible line in the panels defines the break between the upper and lower pieces. To what degree the upper section may have been dismantled to facilitate easy erection and assembly cannot be discerned from the photograph.

As with typical Waldkirch organs, the principal pipework was concealed. In this instance a set of decorated swell shutters, a true rarity amongst Ruth organs, served the purpose. The only visible set of pipes was a string voice, perhaps a cello, placed atop the case. That positioning, too, was unique amongst Ruth creations. The glockenspiel was installed on a counter placed upon a molding that spanned the center space of the front. It was very French-like in presentation, the bell bars placed horizontally and the mechanism possibly placed underneath, in the protruding belly area.

Heavy baroque scrolls provided most of the decorative design. They are more massive

than those found on many fairground fronts, likely because of the immense size of the piece. A large scenic painting filled the top center area, with faux marble panels employed in six places. A mask was incorporated into the canopy over the bandleader, which was supported by two heavy columns. Two amorini, ruddy cheeked and looking less than joyous provided relief in the abundant scrollwork. Cloth panels filled the openings to the outside of the main case and also behind the exposed pipes.

An unusual detail found on the front was the “icicle” style carvings at the outermost edges. These can be seen with some frequency on later Belgian dance organ facades. Their origin is unknown at this time. The only other Waldkirch organ known to feature them was a Gebrüder Bruder Model 107 depicted in a factory photograph in the Stefan Fleck collection. It is a near twin to the Model 107 formerly owned by Robert Finbow and presented at the Cotton Mechanical Music Museum, England, shop number 4987, a circa 1908 book organ converted to rolls. It would suggest that the icicle detail was already known to the Waldkirch builders, but whether the idea came from prior French or Belgian facades is unknown.

A Demetz-carved Brunnhilde figure with a breastplate and holding a lyre had a right arm motion, perhaps activated by piano and forte actions. Her head and left arm were fixed in

position. Two figures of lesser quality, the left serving as a drummer and the right holding a pair of small cymbals, presumably had arm actions that moved in unison with the snare drum and cymbal.

The big façade could have filled most of an end wall in a modest dancing establishment. When those days came to an end, use of the front in a fairground application would have proven very difficult. Unlike many pieces that had a natural break-line for height reduction, the Costers piece did not. If the front served elsewhere at a later date, it is possible that the carvings were removed and rearranged to provide for a piece of lower height and lesser width. Given the heaviness of the scrolls, adapting them in an artistic manner would have been challenging. To date, no images have been found of an instrument incorporating carvings from this façade.



Figure 10. The splendid Model 46 Ruth of 1913 had an entirely different and superbly elegant Jugendstil façade. It is now owned and presented by Romi and Brigitte Maier of Diepoldsau, Switzerland. Photograph courtesy Romi Maier

The Mrs. Lapp Model 46

J. L. M. van Dinteren’s analysis of Ruth output indicated that the second Model 46 was started in 1912, with completion not accomplished until 1913. In that year the machine was displayed at the Industrie und Gewerbe Ausstellung, a local trade fair highlighting the output of the city of Waldkirch, August 17 to September 22. There it was accompanied by three instruments that demonstrated the prowess of the city’s craftsmen as mechanical organ builders: an 89-key Limonaire Frères & Cie. machine with an Art Nouveau front having incandescent electric lights; a Jugendstil façade, 69-keyless Gebrüder Bruder *Elite Orchestra “Apollo”*; and a deluxe 48-keyless Wilhelm Bruder Sons Model 79 organ.¹⁶ The Turnhalle that housed the trade fair still stands in Waldkirch, across Schillerstrasse from the Elztalmuseum. A close-up of the organ was taken at the event, and the instrument also appears in the background of other views taken of the interior.¹⁷ **Figure 10**

The façade applied to the second Model 46 was an attractive Jugendstil creation, like only a few others previously furnished with Ruth Model 36 and 38 organs. It should be remembered that the builder contracted for the front and the figures with other area craftsmen, presumably approving an artistic proposal before the work was commenced.

The organ was subsequently sold in 1914 to Mrs. Lapp, who placed it in the middle of a swing ride on the fairground. Book music was supplied for use with the instrument at three times. The tunes supplied were listed in the Ruth music ledger. The original tune lists remain intact inside the two crates furnished in 1914. The music supplied was comprised of the following tunes (**Table 3**).

At an unknown date after 1922 the organ was re-acquired by Ruth or the successor Voigt operation. Storage of the instrument continued at Waldkirch or in Höchst, or elsewhere. Wilhelm Voigt eventually sold the organ to Swiss showman Romi Maier. During the course of the restoration that was completed in 1988 several changes were made. Maier started to present his rare organ at events starting in 1988.

Table 3
Lapp Model 46 Ruth Factory Music

Ruth Music Ledger April 1914	Lapp Organ Crate Tune Lists I and II
Waldman March Fantasie aus Cavaleria Rusticana Inpromter Polka Junge Mädchen Tanzen Gern Petite Prinzesse	Waldman. Marsch* Cavalerica Rusticana. Fantasie* Darling Imprompter. Polka** Junge Mädchen Tanzen Gern.* La Petite Prinzesse. Polka*
Mit Schwert und Lanze M Irrfahrt Uns Glück Overtüre Dorfschwalben Walzer Fantasie aus Regimentstochter Postillion Langumsmau (Clar. Solo) ?	Mit Schwert und Lanze. Marsch Die Irrfahrt Uns Glück. Overtüre Clarinet Solo aus Postillion du Lonjumeau. Dorfschwalben aus Österreich. Walzer* Die Regimentstochter. Fantasie
[Bummel] Petrus endlos [endless] Schöneberg endlos [endless]	[separate] [separate]
May 1914 Männer sind Verbrecher	[separate]
Ruth Music Ledger January 1920 104.50 meters	Maier Cassette II Label Titles
Alsace et Lorain M Tille de Madame Angot P Madlon de la Victoire M Brocken Doll Fox trot _____ Madlon M Smiles Fox Trot Lorraine Marsch M'amourische l'armes ?	Alsace et Lorraine** La Fille de Madame Angot** Le Madelon de la Victoire** Foxtrot** [A Broken Doll] Quand Madelon** Smiles** Marche Lorraine**
December 1922 Einzug der Gladiatoren M An der Schönen Blauen Donau W Gestern Nacht Bacarolle aus Hoffmann's Erzählung Mosel Marsch Serenade pas les homesfouts Vals? Der ersten Liebe goldne Zeit Der Wildfand Galopp	Fledermaus Potpourri** Bravour Galopp** Carmen Fantasie**

* tunes recorded on Maier cassette I

** tunes presented on Maier cassette II

Model 46 Ruth Knowledge

When the author and three other Americans visited Wilhelm Voigt at his Höchst shop in 1986, we strolled past a medium-sized Ruth chassis standing outside. At the time there was a total focus for Model 38 heritage and technology and the modest piece was given little notice. Dan Slack had just acquired a 96-keyless 1912 Ruth that had been altered to play 165 Wurlitzer rolls and was desirous of returning it to original condition. Voigt focused upon the business at hand, the opportunity to deal with Dan on Model 38 material, so no reference was made to the organ standing outside. It was late in the day, our flight having been delayed and Voigt being very hospitable by simply receiving us. It was a memorable visitation (**Figure 11**).



Figure 11. Sitting in front of the Voigt shop in 1986 was the Model 46 Ruth sold to Romi Maier. No one had ever heard such an organ play for decades, until the restoration was completed in 1988.

Author's photograph

The unappreciated machine turned out to be the rare Model 46 from 1913, awaiting movement into the Voigt shop. Only by chance were a couple incidental photographs taken of it. Later in the same trip, during a visit with Siegfried Wendel, who had visited Voigt shortly before our encounter, we learned the identity of the then unique instrument. Regret for not having looked at it more closely was immediate, but such experiences aren't uncommon during whirlwind European escapades.

Literally no one in the United States at the time had any knowledge of the Model 46 Ruth. A few Americans were members of the Dutch organ group, the Kring van Draaiorgelvrieden, and they first read about the unique instrument owned by Maier in the October 1988 issue of the group's journal *Het Pierement*. The account followed the initial public playing of the rare Ruth.¹⁸ Two cassette recordings were later issued by Maier, but it is likely that only single copies exist today in the U. S., in the author's possession.¹⁹ The restored Model 46 was first seen and enjoyed by numerous Americans during a 1999 Ron Bopp-organized Bumbling Bruder Tour that visited Maier's winter quarters in Diepoldsau, Switzerland.

In 1981, when Art Reblitz and Dave Bowers published their landmark *Treasures of Mechanical Music*, some scales were included that were not completely known or identified.

Indeed, part of the impetus for the publication was to get scale information into the hands of others who could add to the shared body of knowledge. Thus, on the left side of page 556 was a scale correctly identified as being of Ruth origin, assigned the Model 36 identification because of the 78-keyless size. What was not known at the time was that this was actually a transcription of a Model 46 Ruth scale stick. The second 78-keyless scale on the same page and continued on page 558 was the common Model 36 scale. The information printed in *Treasures* originated in the group of scale sticks that Reblitz had accessed in the B. A. B. Organ Company records preserved by Charles Bovey in Montana. Written at one end of the original stick was "78 Ruth." That identification hardly told the entire story and generally explains why it was identified as a Model 36 in the 1981 volume.

This wasn't the first time that Model 46 knowledge had been unrecognized. Even the maker of the old scale stick didn't have the proper identification. A lack of knowledge also continued in Europe concerning the Model 46. In response to a request lodged by the author, Romi Maier advised in 1990 that he had no scale for the Model 46.²⁰

The presence of the scale in *Treasures* caused two Dutch organ history experts to disagree on the topic of Model 46 organs after Jan van Dinteren published the first analysis of a large body of Ruth documentation in 1993.²¹ Hans van Oost concluded that the existence of the scale in the Reblitz and Bowers work confirmed that a Model 46 had at one time been in service in the United States. Knowing that only two existed and that a second built was then in Switzerland, van Oost deduced the one in America was the Costers instrument.

Another respected Dutch organ history and technology authority, Johannes “Hans” Brink thought otherwise than van Oost. He declared that a dealer in Germany once had books for the Model 46 scale. He thought that Bowers garnered his knowledge of the scale from that source, nullifying the prospects of such an instrument being in the United States.²²

For the Model 46 discussion Brink updated Ruth scales that he’d originally published in 1977 (*Het Pierement*, XXIV, 3, pages 60-61, which had also been reproduced in 1981 in *Treasures*, page 555) and updated circa 1979 (*MGSID Journal*, 3, insert). The new version was the second time someone had placed into print a scale that identified the additions to the Model 35 scale that created the 46. This version was reportedly verified with Wilhelm Voigt, who’d restored the Maier instrument in 1988.²³ Unfortunately, the Reblitz and Brink works didn’t agree on the details. Further, the scale only told part of the internal story of the 46 Ruth. One also needed knowledge of the internal layout of the instrument for complete understanding. Another Model 46 scale was later circulated by Hans van Oost and was received by the author in 2001. It attempted to fill in some of the missing design information.

Our research and understanding of later activity suggests that neither of the explanations provided by van Oost or Brink explanations is valid. There are other possibilities. The one that we favor recognizes actions that were underway in Waldkirch between 1910 and 1914 as well as the commencement of organ exportation to American collectors starting in the 1960s.

Louis Berni and his brother August were two of the most aggressive sellers of European book organs in the United States. Initially on their own, they subsequently opened the New York branch of Gavioli & Co. in 1906. After withdrawing from it they commenced their own businesses anew, ultimately establishing the Berni Organ Company. It brought to this shore many of the great Belgian, French and German organs that were enjoyed by Americans. The Bernis had bought a few Ruth organs, but August’s relationship with the firm was truly solidified in 1911 when he placed orders for the initial Model 33 Ruth organs. The brothers eventually bought 20, six alone in 1914, having anticipated that the war in Europe would eventually spread to include the United States. They stocked up against the loss of imports. The Berni brothers ultimately became Ruth’s all-time best customers, in terms of the number of instruments bought from the factory.

In addition to acting as organ sales agents, the Berni firm also performed routine repairs, re-constructed some instruments and also furnished thousands of meters of keyed and keyless book music. It is our hypothesis that the Bernis secured an agreement with Adolf Ruth II to provide music for the Ruth book organs that were then in America, making it possible for Americans to buy new music domestically at a lower price. To enable the Bernis to do this, we believe that the Ruth firm outfitted them with scales for all of their book organs, from the Model 33 to the biggest, the 96-keyless Model 38. We hypothesize that it was by this action that a Model 46 scale stick ended up in the Berni holdings. A number of the Ruth scale sticks that can be traced to the Berni firm are all done in the same hand and differ from others in the same accumulation.

As indirect proof of the Ruth-Berni affiliation we do know that in 1911 August Berni advertised himself as the “Sole Agent” in the United States for Ruth & Son organs, a claim that was surely backed by some sort of contract and was not subject to questioning in the amusement trade press. At this time there is no other available direct proof of the Berni-Ruth relationship.

In the way of circumstantial proof, we know of no pre-1930 imported Ruth organ in the U. S. that has music with it bearing Ruth factory nameplates. The books that arrived from the Waldkirch factory may have worn out or fallen from favor, and others simply discarded, but it would seem that a Berni supply was a strong possibility. In the author’s possession are some book scraps from a Model 36 that once served Coney Island as well as a Model 33 that went to the World of Mirth Shows. Both are American-made cardboard.

Subsequent to the departure of the Berni brothers from the organ trade, their firm was acquired by several investors. Their relative lack of success in carrying it forward resulted in the book organ part of the trade being acquired by the B. A. B. Organ Company, which came into existence in 1924. Via that transaction the accumulated scale sticks of the Berni shop came into their possession. They remained there and went with the contents of the B.A.B. factory to Senator Bovey in the 1950s. This series of events explains how a Model 46 scale stick could be in the United States without an actual instrument being present, or knowledge gained from a latter day agent holding Model 46 books.

Emerincus, or E. Merincus?

The modified organ with the name *Emerincus* on the façade is the instrument that sparked this saga. As it then existed, in the mid-1980s, it would hardly have drawn any substantial interest. Though it had a relatively large case, the façade was unusual, an obviously expanded assembly, and the interior was in seemingly questionable condition. It didn’t attract a lot of attention from collectors, who had a wide array of choices presented for purchase.

As it turns out *Emerincus* wasn’t the name of the organ, but the *proprietor*. There was a period after the first letter. The correct name was *E. Merincus*, and it was presumably the name of a showman. It was painted over under unknown conditions at a later date. A diligent search for the name, worldwide, has uncovered no identifiable origin. People with the name Merincus were found in Canada, though no current entries of it were discovered in Belgium.²⁴

The Facade

The origin of the façade placed on the chassis was recently identified as being from a Charles Marengi 49-key No. 9 machine, illustrated in the firm’s circa 1908 catalogue. It is one of two examples of the style in existence today. The other is with a Limonaire or Vander Beken organ with a 49-key Limonaire scale on a carousel owned by Dufaux-Annecy [formerly Modeste Foulon-Huy] in France.²⁵ **Figure 12**

The Marengi catalogue issued about 1908 advised the façade measured 2.3 meters tall by 2.35 meters wide, the equivalent of 90.5" by 92.5." To conceal the expanse of the larger case, the small Marengi façade was widened by the insertion of two side panels placed between the center section and the original drum wings. Changes made vertically made it slightly shorter. The alterations yielded a front measuring 87.5" tall by 131" wide.

A critical piece of information was found as part of the façade. The belly area was enhanced by a marine scene executed by a painter who signed his name J. Mertens, the commission dated with the year 1946. Research has turned up an artist named J. Mertens. One of his pieces was purchased in Mechelen, a community equidistant from the cities of Antwerp, Ghent and Brussels. Examples of his landscapes are available in the market at modest prices. One example was dated 1952.

Showmen often turned to painters in the vicinity of their winter quarters to decorate their rides and show fronts. The J. Mertens painting dated 1946 points to the likelihood of the instrument going into service on fairgrounds in the vicinity of Antwerp, Belgium after the conclusion of World War II.

The American Existence

When the author took possession of the Model 46 in late 2010 it was in the state into which it had been modified several decades earlier. Examination of the various components provided at least a partial history of the instrument.

The discovery of the J. Mertens signature and the date of 1946 on the retrofitted façade strongly suggested that the instrument had remained in Belgium through World War II and was prepared for further service the year after the conflict concluded. Showmen who had stored their apparatus and tackle for the duration of the war brought it back out with hopes for economic recovery and accomplishment. Organs were still reliable sources of music in countries where rebuilding from the devastating effects of the conflict kept investment in new technology to a minimum.

There is nothing to suggest that the Model 46 left Europe until the organ collecting movement got underway in the 1960s. Given the rather ungainly looking façade, the alterations to a different scale and the aging of the pump, we think it is quite likely that the organ either remained in service or may have been retired in the 1950s and stored against further use or sale. The arrival of a man from America wanting to spend cash on those decrepit old instruments was looked upon with favor. It has not been possible to determine exactly which American may have been the conduit that facilitated the transfer to the United States.

E. Merincus first became known as such when in the possession of an American collector named Ed McDonald. He gained national fame operating a facility known as Dutch Gardens on the Durrissett Plantation near Newellton, Louisiana. An annual event was the Tulip Show, which started in 1961. His Old Tyme Musical Museum attraction, in existence by 1967, was a collection of mechanical musical instruments.²⁶ The McDonald holdings included: a Josef Riemer's Söhne 54-key cylinder organ; a Mortier 92-key dance organ; Wurlitzer 146, 150 (1912) and 153 (1915, from an Oklahoma City carousel) band organs; Weber *Unika*, *Grandezza* and *Brabo* orchestrions; and several keyboard and keyboardless American coin pianos, such as a Wurlitzer LX, a Seeburg E and K, and Coinola, Western Electric and Nelson-Wiggens machines, in addition to musical boxes, organettes, etc. The sources of McDonald's holdings have remained unknown. The machines are listed and pictured on two LPs that were issued by McDonald.²⁷

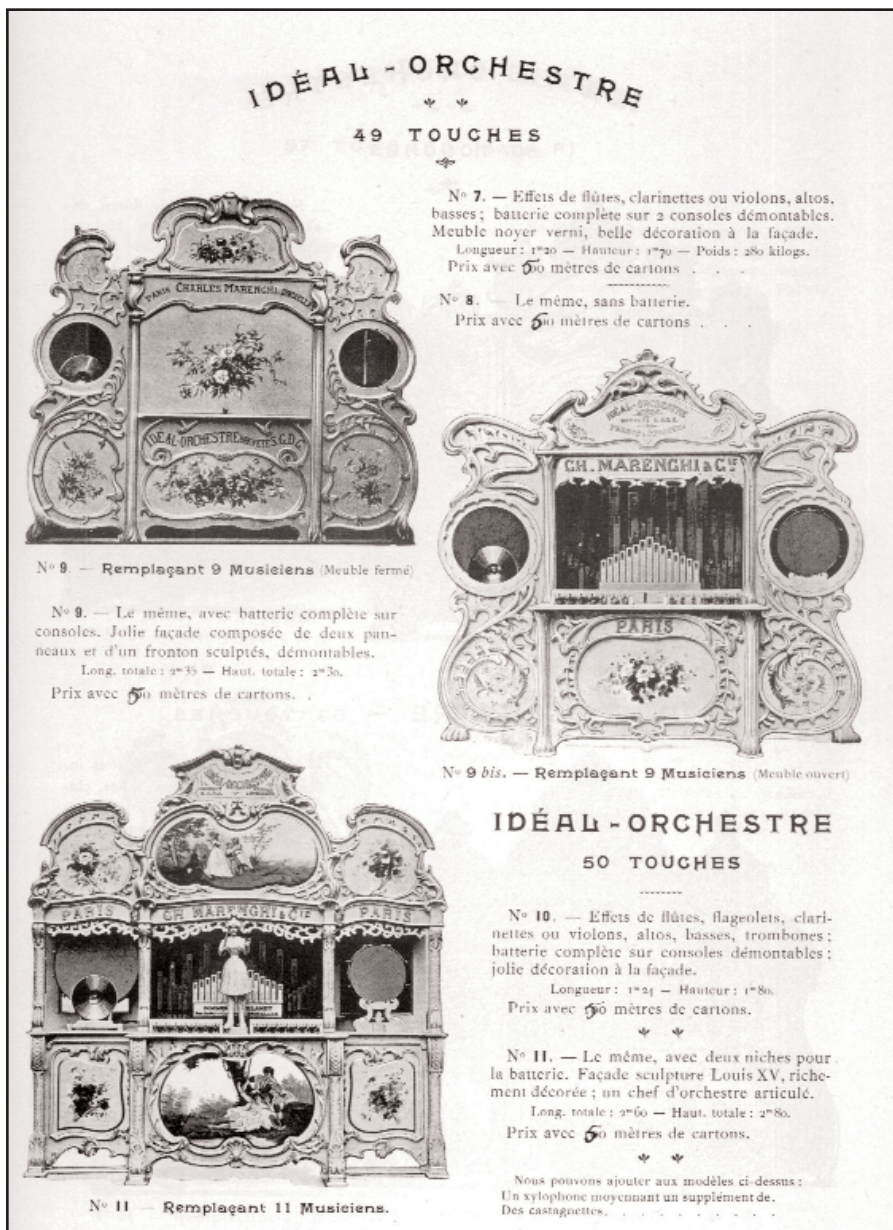


Figure 12. As delivered by Marengi, their 49-key No. 9 organ had a very elegant Art Nouveau styled façade. Much of its appeal was disfigured by subsequent enlargement.

From an original catalogue in Arthur W. J. G. Ord-Hume collection

By 1970, McDonald relocated his Old Tyme Musical Museum to Orlando, Florida. He'd added a Mills Violano Virtuoso to his holdings, along with a 48-key Limonaire and a 68/69-key, Oscar Grymonprez-assembled organ with a Mortier-based façade called *The Oriental*. The dance organ, once at Stone Mountain, Georgia, was said to be based on an 84-key Mortier originally in Ghent, Belgium. McDonald issued two additional LPs at this time.²⁸

Of interest here was the "German Orchestron," which was a band organ with an unusual façade on which the name *E. Merincus* was applied. On the copy of the LP in the author's possession, someone affixed a typed note to the effect that the machine was a Ruth organ that played a Wurlitzer 165 roll. It's the earliest specific knowledge of the instrument that we've been able to locate. When, where and from whom McDonald obtained the organ, as well as who and when it was modified to play Wurlitzer 165 rolls remain unanswered questions.

The ink stamp of long time dealer Wallace McPeak of 1416 Hickory Tree Road, Mesquite, Texas (suburb of Dallas) was found inside the pump (see Figure 7). McPeak was one of several people then growing the large import trade in mechanical music, relying upon American and European sources who knew where to find the devices. His stock included music boxes, coin pianos, orchestrions, band organs and related items. An advertisement in Q. David Bowers' *A Guidebook of Automatic Musical Instruments*, (Vestal, NY: Vestal Press, 1967, Vol. 1, page 331) portrays McPeak amidst a wide array of primarily American machines. No less than sixty were then available. In a recent communication, Don Teach advised that he thought all of the McDonald instruments were sourced from McPeak. Teach is the only person contacted by the author who personally saw the McDonald collection, about 1969.²⁹

It's very likely that the 68/69-key Grymonprez dance organ, Limonaire and Weber orchestrions came out of Belgium via Grymonprez to McPeak, who then sold them to McDonald. The same path could have been followed for *E. Merincus*. It may have been a craftsman retained by McPeak who altered the organ to play Wurlitzer 165 rolls.

McPeak's business was profiled in an article published in the music industry trade publication *Billboard* dated March 16, 1968 (page 21). The coverage was sparked by a recent import of machines that he valued at over \$100,000. He was described as a 36-year old former tool maker who turned to doing importing. Belgium loomed tall in his instrument importations. McPeak discovered a hoard of 21 instruments that had been hidden away for a generation in a railroad depot. Two large dance organs with huge facades were among his finds (20 x 28 and 24 x 32). Among McPeak's many satisfied clients was Jim Miller of Manistee, Michigan, who assembled a very large collection that was sold piecemeal by the Mesquite dealer in 1979. By then he'd relocated to Plano, Texas. A 67-key Mortier in the group was described as having been bought by McPeak from Oscar Grymonprez in 1969 and sold to Miller. A 78-key Decap fairground organ, *De Tovenaar*, once owned by Emil Baude, was also reportedly bought by McPeak in 1969 and sold to the collector.³⁰

Needless to say, McPeak was actively acquiring instruments in Belgium. During the course of the research for this article the author contacted and spoke with Wallace McPeak several times. Unfortunately, he has no recollection of the *E. Merincus* organ that would confirm the means by which it came to the U. S. in the 1960s.

The McDonald operation was closed out early in the 1970s and the entire collection was acquired by dealer G. W. MacKinnon of Charlotte, North Carolina. The holdings, including *E. Merincus*, were offered for sale in his Winter [January] 1972 catalogue (page 23, no lot number) and Fall 1972 issue (page 15, lot M-137). MacKinnon advised that "The organ is probably of German origin," "It has been restored and converted to play the popular 165 rolls." The wording is somewhat ambiguous as to when the conversion took place. "A gem from a tonal standpoint" was a complimentary statement. The McDonald LPs would suggest just the opposite; it could carry a tune, but was hardly inspiring.

By the time that his Spring 1974 catalogue was placed into buyers hands the make of the instrument was confirmed by MacKinnon to be a Ruth (page 8). The instrument was then in California. It was sold to Jerry and Jeanne Cordy of Sacramento, California. Cordy signed his name inside the pump with the year of 1976 beside it. Whether the organ was somewhere other than MacKinnon's warehouse between 1974 and 1976 is unknown; perhaps Cordy had bought it immediately and simply deferred working on the pump until four years later? He, in turn, sold it to Al Kelly and later it was acquired by Alan Erb.

The instrument entered a period of obscurity after it was acquired by Erb. It was stored with numerous other machines that he'd collected, and was eventually removed from California to another location in Carson City, Nevada. The author first learned about the organ after seeing a single picture of some of the front pipework, including Ruth-like violins on a riser. The image, viewed on Erb's website, provided no identification for the organ. A raised chest, situated above the main chest, was puzzling, to say the least. **Figure 13**

While looking very much like a German organ, with the possibility of being a Ruth, nothing else was discernable. Erb wasn't sure what it was and had reportedly asked numerous experts for their opinions. None made any progress in identifying the instrument. Upon request, Erb furnished the author with some photographs and measurements of the case. Stored in a warehouse, the situation made it difficult to gain much knowledge, or additional photographs of the instrument.



Figure 13. This modest image intrigued the author and initiated a four-year correspondence culminating in a visit to examine the instrument.

Alan Erb photograph

The mystery surrounding the organ started to erode when the author happened to look at the photo of *E. Merincus* on the Thomas LP sleeve. That provided a basic identity for the Erb website image. The case dimensions provided by Erb indicated that it was on the order of a Ruth Model 36. The Ruth identity was further confirmed when the contours of the case feet were revealed in a photograph. A giant leap forward came with an image revealing the inscriptions inside the pump. Confirmation of the Ruth status was assured.

The specific identity of the organ as the long missing Model 46 of 1912 became known when the author casually examined a photograph of the Costers façade and recalled that the contour of the pipe opening exactly matched the contours of the front face of the Erb organ case. That could be no coincidence. With that, everything clicked into place. Additional photos and an on-site inspection provided details that confirmed initial hypotheses.

The conclusion that this was the missing Model 46 Ruth (**Figure 14**) of 1912 was supported by:

- the case size similar to the Model 36 Ruth
- 78 valves in the chest
- the matching case pipe opening and façade contours
- the layout of the pipework matching the augmented Model 35 scale used in the Model 46
- the presence of the unusual floating chest, matching that in the 1913 Model 46
- the presence of the additional three contrabass pipes under the case floor
- the date inside the pump that agreed with the manufacturing date in Ruth documentation
- the 4429 shop number on the trumpet slide consistent with other 1912 numbers by Ruth
- a complement of nine trumpets, as in the 1913 Model 46 Ruth



Figure 14. Various additions had been made to the organ case that obscured the heritage of the Model 46 Ruth, but the contour of the pipe opening matched that seen in the photograph of the Costers 1912 instrument.

Author's photograph

Our initial communication concerning the organ was an e-mail on August 15, 2006. The author formally acquired the instrument from Alan Erb on October 31, 2010, with delivery made on November 4 of the same year, concluding a more than four-year long exchange. Good things reward the patient seeker.

Notes:

1. Fred Dahlinger Jr., "Dan Slack (1945-1987) A Pioneer in American Organ Rallies," COAA *Carousel Organ*, 6, January 2001, pages 13-16.
2. The author's papers on 65-key Gaviolis and the Style 250 Limonaire are in COAA *Carousel Organ* issues 26, 27 and 34.
3. Jan L. M. van Dinteren, "Gebrüder Bruder Model 104—seriennummer 4774," *Het Pierement*, 1, 2005, page 15.
4. The Lambertz organ, with a Cocchi, Bacigalupo & Graffigna façade and a tall chassis entirely different from other Model 38s, could be a rebuild of a Berlin instrument. J. L. M. van Dinteren, on page 12 of "A. Ruth & Sohn—Waldkirch," *Het Pierement*, pages 6-23, relates that the first Model 37 of 1901, delivered to Heinrich Ohr, had a "register metallophon," but that was a later addition. A circa 1903 photograph of the organ shows no such device, only an extended furniture case style front with attached drum wings. The glockenspiel addition is documented by Ruth with the phrase "Weiter mit Xylophon (Figurenclavis)." The Ohr instrument was not fitted with a decorative façade featuring moving figures until several years later. See the author's "A Tale of 'Twin' Ruth Organs," COAA *Carousel Organ*, 24, (July 2005), pages 15-26.
5. The entries are in catalogues issued by the two firms early in the 20th century. A unique and robust-sounding 66-key Ruth Salon Organ, with metal trumpets, is in the Waldkircher Orgelstiftung collections, shown on the back of the COAA *Carousel Organ*, 49.
6. There is an unresolved question as to the efficacy of some EOA designs, since most of them were sold and shipped outside of Germany, and generally overseas. It may have been a combination of both their expense and tonal specification that limited their homeland popularity. The 69 and 80-keyless EOAs that have been recently restored have not yet achieved the expectations suggested by their origin, size and diversity of pipework. The issues may relate to aspects of the restoration, voicing and tuning, as well as the new music created for them, which is considerably different than arrangements for comparably-sized fair organs (Models 103 and 104). The only original EOA music known to exist today is with a 69-keyless instrument in Australia, all of which is in distressed condition.
7. One modified, but playing 65EOA is in the late Jerry Doring collection. A nearly original 65EOA will be restored by mid-2014. The original scale will be utilized in a MIDI system, with the 66-hole B. A. B. roll system also retained for service.

8. Accounts of the Ruth family, firm and products are found in:
Herman Rambach and Otto Wernet, *Waldkircher Orgelbauer*, (Waldkirch: Waldkircher Verlagsgesellschaft, 1984); Johannes Brink, “Die Orgeln von A. Ruth & Sohn, Waldkirch (Breisgau),” *Musikhistorische Gesellschaft für Selbstspielende Instrumente in Deutschland e. V., Journal*, No. 3 (circa 1979), pages 38-47; Herbert Jüttemann, Andrew Pilmer, trans., *Waldkirch Street and Fairground Organs*, (Cleckton, West Yorkshire: A. C. Pilmer Automatic Music (Leasing) Ltd., 2002); van Dinteren, Ruth.
9. *Rechtspraak der haven van Antwerpen*, Vol. 49, page 35.
10. Paul Sparks, *The Classical Mandolin*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), page 109.
11. Paul deWit, *Weltadressbuch*, (1906), entry courtesy Hendrik Strengers.
12. Paul deWit, *Weltadressbuch*, (1912), page 404.
13. Costers letter, Henk Strengers collection. None of these locations is on 2012 maps.
14. Stéphane Godfroid, “Bouwers Van Automatonen in Vlaanderen, Proeve van Catalogus,” in *Volksmuziekatelier Jaarboek V*, pages 25-125 (page 43).
15. These actions can be found at:
<http://www.felixarchief.be/Unrestricted/ZoekenBouwdossierResults.aspx?Bouwdossier=True&Milieuvergunning=True&Straat=Lange+Koeportstraat&Huisnummer=61&Aanvrager=&Van=1900&Tot=1930&Maximum=100&SorterenOp=2&SorteerVolgorde=0>.
16. Rambach and Wernet, pages 121 and 130.
17. The close-up was preserved in the Ruth family photo album. The incidental view, showing all four displayed organs, is in Rambach and Wernet, page 129.
18. *Het Pierement*, XXXV, 4, pages 152-153.
19. *Het Pierement*, XXXVI, 1, page 38.
20. Letter from Romi Maier to the author dated January 27, 1990.
21. J. L. M. van Dinteren, “A. Ruth & Sohn—Waldkirch,” *Het Pierement*, XL, 1, pages 6-23.
22. The opposing viewpoints were expressed in *Het Pierement*, XL, 3, page 121. In a March 6, 2010 e-mail to the author, Brink could only recall that the owner of the Model 46 music was a dealer in Heggen, Netherlands. The books have not been located.
23. *Het Pierement*, XL, 2, pages 81-82.
24. Search courtesy Bjorn Isebaert.
25. Image furnished by Bjorn Isebaert.
26. Reading (PA) *Gazette*, March 5, 1967.
27. The recordings bear no manufacturer identification but were likely issued by the Century Custom Recording Service. <http://www.forbid-deneey.com/labels/century.html> identifies Century with Saugus, California, assigning one album number 30780, with an approximate release date of 1968.
28. AR LPMS 2048 and 2049, produced by Americana Recording Studios of Ruston, Louisiana, listed and illustrated some of the instruments. They were copyrighted in 1970.
29. E-mail to author, November 8, 2010.
30. *Antique Trader*, July 18, 1979, page 35. *De Tovenaar* was also listed for sale in MacKinnon catalog 1.

Research continues into the history of the Costers Model 46 Ruth, with the hope that the years between 1912 and 1946 will be resolved, along with the identity of “E. Merincus.” Fred would be most pleased to hear from anyone with further information about the instrument.

Jan L. M. van Dinteren 1930-2011

From the first time I engaged in researching European fair organs, especially those made in Germany, one name stood out as an authority of renown: Jan L. M. van Dinteren of Geleen, Holland. His contributions to the field of European fair organ history are broad in scope and deep in content. A friend since our first meeting in 1986, he passed away on November 22, 2011.

Jan sought organ history first hand as a young man after the war, when travel could be difficult and hazardous. Yet he realized the importance of making personal contacts and preserving original documents or good copies for posterity. Jan located and visited the surviving makers and when they were deceased he went to their survivors. His contacts included Victor Chiappa, Carl Frei Sr., Wilhelm Voigt and relations of the Demetz family, the Richters, Adolf Ruth II, the Wellershaus brothers, Fritz Wrede, and many others. Without his consistent, pioneering efforts we would know far less than we do today. The enduring value of this work cannot be overstated.

A very good writer, Jan shared his archival holdings via many articles in *Het Pierement*, the important journal of the Kring van Draaiorgelvrienden, the pioneering Dutch organ enthusiasts group. His multitudinous contributions, dozens and dozens of illustrated pieces, started by 1955 and continued to the most recent 2011 release. He edited the journal, from 1975 to 1986, putting out great issues filled with wonderful text and images, nurturing its reputation as the leading journal on the topic. Jan’s lifetime of contributions earned him the 2010 Arthur Mills Rose Bowl from the Fair Organ Preservation Society. The museums in Utrecht and Waldkirch benefitted from his largesse, his three organs being donated to them years before his passing.

Jan kept in close contact with many organ restorers and owners. He was often accorded the privilege of writing about the completion of a new restoration or a prized acquisition, bringing forth not only basic data, but other knowledge that enhanced general understanding. Jan was a connoisseur of classical music, especially symphonic pieces that could fully test the capability of a mechanical organ to deliver with high quality. Owners and restorers that got heart-felt thanks from Jan after playing a requested selection knew they’d met his expectations.

He was proud of his expertise and could ardently assert his strong personality when wanting to make a point. A unique man, Jan will be missed and remembered by many friends whenever and wherever European fair organs play their enchanting melodies.

Fred Dahlinger Jr.