

Couplers  
 Swell Super Octave Swell to Great  
 Swell Sub Octave Swell to Pedal  
 Swell Unison Off Great to Pedal  
 Accessories  
 Five Thumb Pistons to Swell Organ  
 Five Thumb Pistons to Great and Pedal Organs One Thumb Piston reversing Swell to Great One Thumb Piston reversing Swell to Pedal One Thumb Piston reversing Great to Pedal Balanced Swell Pedal  
 The only other parts of the old organ retained were the manual soundboards.

### Swell Organ

		pipes	
	retained from the old organ		
8'	Open Diapason	58	
8'	Gedeckt	58	24
	from Swell Bourdon		
8'	Salicional	58	49
8'	Voix Celeste, TC	46	
4'	Principal	58	49
	from Swell Diapason		
22/3'	Nazard	58	
2'	Fifteenth	58	
2rank	Mixture 19, 22	116	
16'	Double trumpet	82	
8'	Trumpet	(58 from Double Trumpet)	
4'	Octave Trumpet	(58 from Double Trumpet)	
	Tremulant		
8'	Solo Trumpet	58	
8'	Open Diapason	58	49
	from Small Open		
8'	Chimney Flute	58	
4'	Octave	58	
4'	Wald Flute	58	49
2 2/3'	Twelfth	58	
2'	Fifteenth	58	
3rk	Mixture 22, 26, 29	174	

Neill Bonham,  
 Former Churchwarden

## ORGANS IN THE PARISH CHURCH OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST, GLASTONBURY

### ST DUNSTAN

The Saxon Abbot Dunstan was reputedly an organ builder whilst at Glastonbury in about 960AD. There's a tradition that some of the pipe work from the abbey organs was incorporated in St John's organs after the dissolution of the abbey in 1537.

### MEDIEVAL AND TUDOR ORGANS

It is likely that the original organs were damaged by the collapse of the central tower. When it was removed and the chancel arch built in the 1400s organs were placed on the chancel screen rood loft. The small blocked opening above the chancel arch, 35' up, may have been put there for the organists' benefit, enabling them to follow the service in the Sanctuary beyond.

Our Churchwardens' accounts for 1484 record the payment of '12d for capping the small organs' and later 'for repairing anew, and mending the greater organs which had been broken down - £1.6s.8d. piece work. For carrying the same organs onto the rood loft, with their expenses - 4d.'

The accounts for 1490 and 1497 also record work done by George the Organ Builder and Stephen the Carver on the organs in the choir of the church. In 1584; 'item, for new trimmyng the organes and clensyng the pypes 46s.'

We assume that these were all swept away during the Commonwealth.

### GEORGIAN MUSIC

18th Century expenditure was on singers and instruments. In 1771 a bassoon cost '1.1s.0d and six reeds 4s.6d. In 1788 a new bassoon and 'hobo' cost £5.15s.0d. In 1789 a new pitch pipe for the singers cost 2s.6d. - and cider 10s.6d!

### THE REGENCY ORGAN

In 1817 John Yeoman offered to advance £600 to St John's to purchase an organ upon receiving the interest during his life. The offer was accepted, the Churchwardens paying the cost of carriage and erection. The organ was put on a Regency 'gothick' gallery at the west end of the church for a further £219.8s.6¼d. This gallery was high against the west window, blocking the lower half of it, and projecting into the nave to the first pair of pillars. Henry Wilcox Down was appointed organist for £20 per year and the men and women singers with him in the gallery received £20.4s.0d per year.

## HENRY WILLIS' RE-BUILDING

Sir Gilbert Scott was engaged in 1856 to 'restore' the church. This included the removal of all furnishings including the pulpit, box pews and gallery before re-paving. The organ was taken down in 1857.

In 1859 Henry Willis reported on the state of the organ. There were then 939 metal pipes not counting the trumpet; 464 in the Great Organ, 290 in the Choir and 185 in the Swell. He agreed to 'put up the organ in a temporary way, the permanent situation not having been determined upon - which is as per agreement to be done for the sum of ten or twelve pounds.'

The cost of repairing and rebuilding was to be £82 and to service it for £3 per year. A further £69 was quoted 'to provide an octave and a half of German pedals, an octave and a half of Bourdon pipes, a new Trumpet and three composition pedals.'

The 1860 secretary of the Restoration Committee 'stated Mr. Willis had recommended the organ should be placed in the north transept and read a letter from Mr. Scott sanctioning that arrangement.' A discussion ensued and 'it was ultimately determined to leave the question to the decision to the Bishop.'

## WILLIAM SWEETLAND — REMOVING AND ENLARGING

In 1886 William Sweetland, Organ Builder of Cleveland Place, Bath undertook to:

'Remove the organ to the North Transept - add three new sets of manuals, the fronts made to project 1¼" over the others so that the Organist may reach the top set easier.

Remake the pedals concave with the front on the sharps to form a circle.

Swell organ, add new Cornopea G to top note

Swell organ, add new Oboe G to top note

Swell organ, add new Fifteenth G to top note

Swell organ, add new Bourdon G to top note

Great organ, add new Trumpet CC to top note

Pedal organ, make new soundboard

Add new Pedal Open Diapason from CCC 16feet to F 30, pipes arranged at the Bass end of the organ.

Two composition Pedals to Swell organ.'

All for the sum of £180.

For another £25.10s.0d. he added a zinc pedal Principal from CCC 8' to F (30 pipes) and made a coupler Choir to Swell.

## REST CARTRIGHT ENLARGEMENT AND MOVING

Archdeacon Day, Vicar, and Major Bath, Churchwarden, purchased a number of ranks from various organ builders in 1912. These were assembled by Rest Cartright in 1914, extending the organ from the north transept to the foot of the pulpit steps.

The choir organ and console were in the Lady Chapel and the bellows in the vestry. No case work was provided, perhaps because of the war, and the works were shielded

by waterproof sheeting. The use of a water powered blower caused many drought-time quiet periods.

The Revd. Lionel Lewis, in 1926, after a 18-17 vote in the Church Council, authorised the removal of the organ and choir to the west end of the church. The organ was enlarged again and placed in the western two bays of the north aisle behind screens designed by Bligh Bond (the upper part by Lewis). The four manual console protruded into the Nave from the easterly bay and the choir sang from pews on a raised platform against the tower arch. The new electric blower was housed in a shed on the north churchyard boundary.

## CHARLES SMETHURST REBUILDING

During the fifties and sixties the organ deteriorated badly, partly because of the complicated layout and limited access for tuning and maintenance work. By 1970 it was evident that parts of the instrument were un-usable and the annual cost of repairs was increasing.

In 1971 Charles Smethurst of Manchester proposed a comprehensive rebuild and modernisation which, together with a detached console, cost £5,000. He changed 'a large four manual instrument, containing many low pitched stops which created a "woolly" and comparatively characterless tone, into a smaller two manual instrument that allowed each stop to be usefully employed in many different combinations' - his description.

The console is sited at the foot of the staircase which led to the original organs, close to the north transept and midway between the organ and the choir. The organ blower is in a pit beneath the partition which divides the old organ case into two equal parts; the western half is now occupied by a kitchen and meeting room over. The dedication of the new organ took place in May, 1972.

The Church Council was later able to supplement Smethurst's specification with the addition of an Open Diapason for the Swell and a Solo Trumpet for the Great.

## SPECIFICATION

Two manuals, compass CC to A, 58 notes. Pedals. compass CCC to E, 30 notes.

### Pedal Organ

16'	Violone	54	30
19'	Bourdon	42	
8'	Principal	(30 from Violone)	(12)
8'	Bass Flute	(30 from Bourdon)	
4'	Fifteenth	(30 from Violone)	
16'	Double Trumpet	(30 from Swell Double trumpet)	
8'	Trumpet	(30 from Swell Double trumpet)	
4'	Octave Trumpet	(30 from Swell Double trumpet)	

There are 592 pipes in the Swell (122 from the old organ), 580 in the Great (98) and 96 Pedals (30); a total of 1,286 pipes (250 from before 1972).