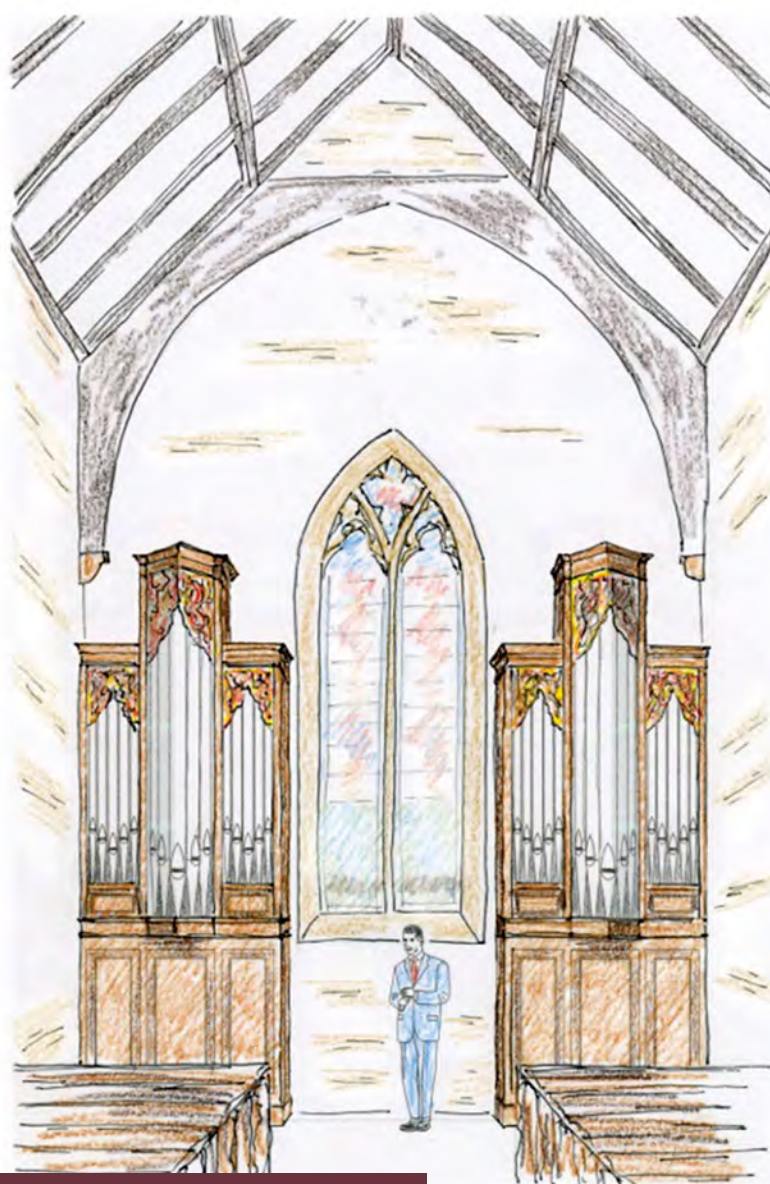


# FROM BASEMENT TO BARCHESTON

Paul Hale

This is the story of the organ now to be found in the delightful Warwickshire church at Barcheston. It begins in 1973, when Longstaff & Jones (Telford-based organ-builders and maintainers) advertised in the organ press that they would like to build a new, small pipe organ. Geoffrey Holroyde had yearned for some time for a small house organ for regular practice, so Longstaff & Jones were soon engaged to build for him a compact instrument, using direct-electric action.

The successful design consisted of four ranks of pipes (and a quiet electronic pedal Bourdon) providing two manuals and pedals, with no couplers thereby avoiding too much extension with its attendant 'missing notes'.



*Tickell case design for Barcheston*



*Barcheston Church looking East*

The carefully chosen vintage ranks of pipes were:

A	Wooden stopped Gedackt	8ft extended to 4ft	68 pipes
B	Open metal (stopped from TC down)	8ft	56 pipes
C	Smaller scale open metal	4ft extended to 2ft	68 pipes
D	Oboe (for the Pedal Organ)	8ft	30 pipes

**Specification:**

Lower manual	B8ft	A8ft	C4ft	A4ft	C2ft		
Upper manual	C8ft (bottom octave from B)			A8ft	C4ft	A4ft	
Pedal	16ft	D8ft	B8ft	A8ft	B4ft	A4ft	C2ft

The opening recital in Geoffrey's house was given by the youthful Edward Higginbottom, who before Cambridge had played for Geoffrey's flourishing choir at St Mary's Collegiate Church, Warwick.

In 1979, Geoffrey and his, by then, large family moved to a spacious Victorian four-storey house. The capacious basement, with its stone floor, contained no soft furnishings and thus proved an ideal new home for the organ (plus two grand pianos and a harpsichord). The extra space called for an enlargement of what had proved to be a very successful small pipe organ.

The rebuilt and enlarged organ (still unenclosed) now boasted eight ranks of pipes and three soft electronic stops on the pedal organ (intended not to be used alone, but to add a little colour and depth). High quality new manual keyboards from P&S Organ Supplies provided a key action which, with its 'top-resistance' touch, felt almost like mechanical action. Once again, there were no couplers.

Eight ranks of pipes, plus three electronic stops, developed into 32 stops:

A	Large scale open metal (bottom octave from C)	8ft
B	Medium scale open metal	4ft
C	Large scale stopped flute (metal; wood bass)	16/8/4ft
D	Small scale stopped flute (wood)	8/4/2ft
E	Small scale open metal	2ft
F	Tapered metal	2/2 <sup>2</sup> / <sub>3</sub> ft
G	Mixture 3 ranks (open metal), 15.19.22	2ft
H	Medium scale reed (Oboe revoiced)	8ft

Three electronic stops on the Pedal Organ:

I	Dulciana 30 notes: a very quiet 'purr'.	16ft
J	Principal 30 notes: intended to strengthen A and C.	8ft
K	Reed 30 notes: to add a little 'growl' to the pedal chorus.	16ft



During tonal regulation

## 1979 Specification

### LOWER MANUAL – GREAT

C	Bourdon	16ft
A	Open Diapason	8
D	Gedackt	8
B	Principal	4
C	Flute	4
F	Twelfth	2 <sup>2</sup> / <sub>3</sub>
E	Fifteenth	2
F	Nineteenth	1 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>3</sub>
E	Octavin	1
G	Mixture	III
H	Small Reed (ten.C)	16
H	Small Reed	8

### UPPER MANUAL – POSITIVE

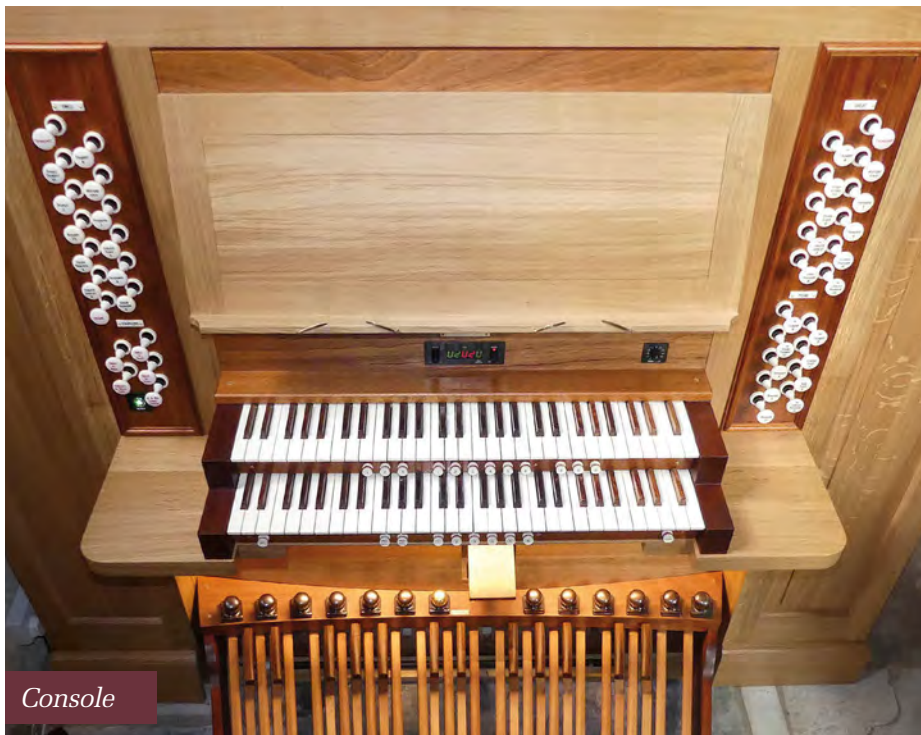
B	Principal (ten.C)	8
C	Stopped Flute	8
D	Gedackt	8
E	Octave	4
D	Flute	4
F	Twelfth	2 <sup>2</sup> / <sub>3</sub>
C	Piccolo	2
H	Small Reed	8

### PEDAL ORGAN

C	Bourdon	16
I	Dulciana	16
J	Principal	8
C	Bass Flute	8
D	Gedackt	8
B	Octave Principal	4
D	Flute	4
F	Fifteenth	2
G	Mixture	III
K	Contra Oboe	16
H	Oboe	8
H	Octave Oboe	4
Direct electric action		
Discus blower		

After decades of satisfaction with his house organ, Geoffrey decided to pass it on to a worthy recipient and selected the church of St Martin at Barcheston. Indeed the church – effectively in the middle of a field – is Barcheston; the village itself having disappeared long since

except for the large former rectory next to the church. Following discussions beginning early in 2014 the organ was donated to Barcheston, to be used as the basis of a new organ designed greatly to enhance the music and liturgy at St Martin's, a church previously



Console



Jonathan Wallace regulating the Great

served by a large but indifferent reed organ. It was removed from Warwick on 3 April 2018 having given great pleasure to very many visitors, and to Geoffrey, for 35 years.

A position either side of the narrow west window was chosen and Kenneth Tickell was invited to design the cases, as he had created highly successful similar divided cases for organs built by his own firm, in churches such as St Andrew's, Headington (Oxford). Tragically, Kenneth Tickell died suddenly, shortly after sending the initial drawings, so the Barcheston case remains his final piece of design, and a worthy memorial. The pipe shades were left vestigial at this early stage, so one of the experienced craftsmen/designers in the Tickell firm, Jeffrey Hubbard (now with his own organ-building company) worked up designs for the pipe shades, in addition to drawing console details for the casework manufacturer. These fine double cases were made by Penny's Mill (of Great Bedwyn, Wilts), a company responsible for several of the UK's most distinguished modern organ cases, including several cathedrals.

Work began to make the organ,

on new direct electric chests with a compact wind system of Groves' well-proven design, in the autumn of 2018. New pipes were made by F. Booth & Son of Leeds; the control system and electronics, stop-knobs, pedalboard and bench were made by Renatus of Bideford. The instrument was assembled during the early months of 2019, and was complete by Easter. The project was managed by the Churchwarden, David Hodges, with helpful contributions from the church organist, David Gardner.

The right-hand case contains the Swell, console and one blower. The left-hand case has the Great, Pedal Bourdon and a second blower. Space, naturally, is at a premium, so, as a softer second 16ft Bourdon was desired and an 8ft bass to the Swell 4ft Geigen rank, these have been supplied by Renatus using digitally sampled pipes.

The console is built in to the side of the right-hand case and uses the P&S manual keys with a pleasant top-resistance touch from Geoffrey's organ; the rest is new. As the key frames were/are mahogany, the stop jambs and other areas have been made to match, the remainder of the console and casework being of European oak. The new front

pipes are of polished zinc, the mouths being gilded.

The Great and Pedal side contains the following ranks:

- A Open Diapason 8ft, 68 pipes (bass new case pipes, treble existing Principal)

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- B Bourdon 16ft, 80 pipes (existing Stopped Flute with Groves stock bass)

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- C Fifteenth 2ft, 56 pipes (existing Great Fifteenth, revoiced)

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- D/ESesquialtera, two ranks, 88 pipes (D existing Nazard, E Groves stock)

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- F/G/HMixture, three ranks repeating, 144 pipes (Walker)

The Swell side contains the following ranks:

- I Geigen 4ft, 68 pipes (Groves stock)

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- J Lieblich Gedeckt 8ft, 80 pipes (existing metal Gedackt)

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- K Salicional 8ft, 80 pipes (Groves stock)

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- L Trumpet 16ft, 68 pipes (Rushworth & Dreaper, revoiced)

In addition, there is a digital 8ft octave for the Geigen rank and a



Paul Hale at the console

digital 16ft octave for the Lieblich Gedeckt rank, four loudspeakers being built into the roof of the Swell box.

The specification (of 30 stops) is derived from these 12 ranks of pipes, using the extension system to provide a colourful tonal scheme despite the limited space available.

The organ was completed by Easter 2019 and first heard in a demonstration recital by Paul Hale on Saturday 4 May, the Opening Recital being given the next day by Prof. Dr Edward Higginbottom, who had inaugurated the original organ back in 1973. It was Dedicated by the Bishop of Warwick at a Choral Evensong on Sunday 19 May sung by a professional choir assembled and directed by Nigel Howells. A series of organ recitals on Sunday afternoons followed, planned by Geoffrey Holroyde, without whose generosity the beautiful organ in St Martin's would never have come into being.



View of the south case

## Specification

### GREAT ORGAN (56 NOTES)

J	Lieblich Bourdon	16ft
A	Open Diapason	8
B	Stopped Diapason	8
J	Lieblich Gedeckt	8
A	Principal	4
B	Nason Flute	4
C	Fifteenth	2
D/E	Sesquialtera	II
	(ten.C)	12.17
F/G/H	Mixture	22.26.29 III
L	Trumpet (encl.)	8
	Tremulant	
	Swell to Great	

### SWELL ORGAN (56 NOTES, ENCLOSED)

I	Geigen Diapason	8
J	Lieblich Gedeckt	8
K	Salicional	8
I	Geigen Principal	4
J	Lieblich Flute	4
J	Nazard	2 <sup>2</sup> / <sub>3</sub>
I	Fifteenth	2
J	Piccolo	2
K	Mixture	15.19.22 III
L	Double Trumpet	16
L	Trumpet	8
	Tremulant	
	Octave	

### PEDAL ORGAN (30 NOTES)

B	Bourdon	16
J	Lieblich Bourdon	16
A	Principal	8
B	Bass Flute	8
A	Fifteenth	4
B	Stopped Flute	4
L	Double Trumpet	16
L	Trumpet	8
L	Clarion	4
	Swell to Pedal	
	Great to Pedal	

Great & Pedal Combs Coupled	
Generals on Swell Toe Pistons	
6 thumb pistons to Great (99 levels)	
6 thumb pistons to Swell (99 levels)	
6 general thumb pistons (99 levels)	
Sw to Gt reversible thumb piston	
Gt to Ped reversible thumb piston	
Cancel and Set thumb pistons	
6 toe pistons to Pedal (99 levels)	
6 toe pistons to Swell (99 levels)	
Gt to Ped reversible toe piston	
Balanced swell pedal	

Direct electric action	
MIDI	
Discus blowers	