
Features

The Organs of Bristol Cathedral

Bristol Cathedral's organ is arguably the finest Anglican cathedral instrument not from the 'Father' Willis, William Hill or Harrison & Harrison stables. As an almost unaltered example of the early twentieth-century work of J. W. Walker, it is not only a magnificent instrument but also holds unique status as such: there is no other cathedral organ like it.

PAUL HALE



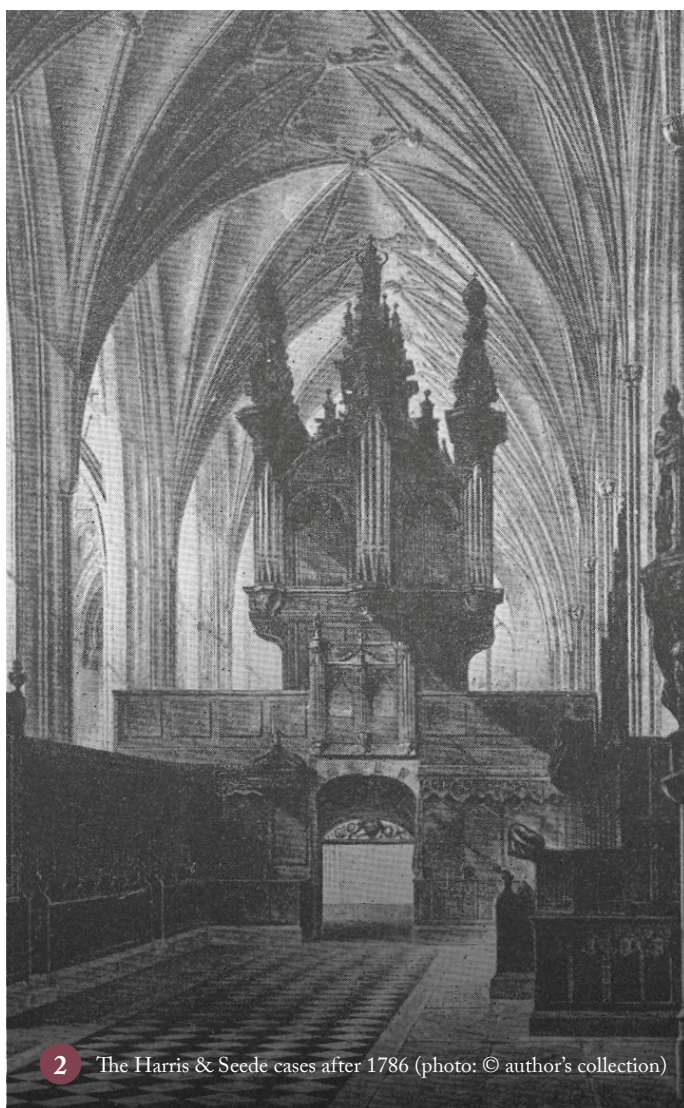
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The ornate left-hand case, with the console (photo: © Paul Hale)



Before examining the Walker, following its recent immaculate refurbishment by Harrison & Harrison, we need to travel back to the year 1542 – during the period of Henry VIII's dissolution of the monasteries in which the Abbey of St Augustine became the Cathedral of the Holy and Undivided Trinity. It was also the year when the first organist, Thomas Denny, was appointed. This momentous period involved changes to the medieval building (which still lacked a nave), one of which was the building of a stone screen, connecting the pillars which now face and back the Bishop's throne. Fletcher's *A History of Bristol Cathedral* (1932) quotes the account of Robert Wright, Bishop of Bristol from 1623 to 1632, which tells us that £258 2s 7d was paid "To Mr Thomas Dalam [*sic*] for making the greate Double Organ and Cheire Organ and to Mr Thomas Hobson by his appointmt for tinn and for other necessary as by bill and acquittances appeareth". This appears to have been shortly before Dallam died (c. 1630), making it probably this famed craftsmen's final major instrument. There may have been an organ on this screen from 1542, as Dallam was allowed £30 for the old instrument when he built his organ. If it had not been on the screen, there would probably have been no necessity to remove it. The Organist from 1585 to 1638 was Elway Bevin, so the final years of his long tenure would doubtless have been enhanced by the advent of the Dallam organ, even though he was described by the Dean & Chapter in 1634 (for Archbishop Laud's Visitation) as "... a very old man who, having done good service in the church, is not now able to discharge the place, but that he is holpen by some other of the quire."

It is more than likely that Dallam's organ was ejected from the Cathedral during the iconoclastic Cromwellian period following the regicide of Charles I. The Cathedral lost many medieval treasures and was turned into a



2 The Harris & Seede cases after 1786 (photo: © author's collection)

Nonconformist meeting house. It took two decades after the Restoration of the Monarchy in 1660 for the Dean & Chapter to commission an organ. Thus it was that, in 1682, the Dean & Chapter gave an order to Renatus Harris for the erection of a “fair great organ”. Barrett’s *History and Antiquities of the City of Bristol* (1789) states “In the years 1681 and 1685 ... £300 or more was laid out in mending the floor and Beautifying the Church, painting the east end of the Choir and other works, and making a fine timber case for the new organ, erected ... at the expense of £550 ... [by] Mr. Renatus Harris, organ-builder.”

This organ was completed in 1685 and had a double case: a highly carved case-front facing east, and a less elaborate front facing west (a ‘back front’). There were three manuals (Great, Choir and Echo), and, in typical Harris style, all the Choir stops were borrowed ‘by communication’ from the Great. Had there been a ‘chaire’ case, of course, this would have been unnecessary; the Choir would have had its own ranks of pipes. The Great (54-note compass) had twelve stops; the Echo (32-

note compass) seven. There were two Open Diapasons and two Principals, the basses of both standing in the two case-fronts, as they do to this day. This organ was played by the young Charles and Samuel Wesley, whose father, the Revd Charles Wesley (1707–1788, the hymn-writing younger brother of John Wesley), lived in Bristol from 1749 to 1771. Charles was also having organ lessons from the Cathedral Organist, Edward Rooke.

In 1786 an independent 5-rank Choir organ in a ‘chaire’ case was added to the east case by Brice or Richard Seede (doubtless at the request of Cathedral Organist Rice Wasborough) and in 1821 an octave and a half of pedals was installed by John Smith (see the specification below), to operate the lowest keys of the Great Organ, with a few Pedal pipes. This was during the period when Rice Wasborough’s son, John, was Cathedral Organist, so evidently both father and son were persuasive in securing funds for improvements to the organ. Wasborough Junior was succeeded in 1825 by John Davis Corfe, who remained in post until 1876 and therefore witnessed the huge changes which were about to transform the building and the organ.

The specification from 1821

Great Organ (54 notes)

Open Diapason (nave front)	8
Open Diapason (choir front)	8
Stopped Diapason	8
Principal (nave front)	4
Principal (choir front)	4
Twelfth	2 ² / ₃
Fifteenth	2
Sesquialtera	III
Mounted Cornet	V
Trumpet	8
Clarion	4

Pedals (18 notes)

Permanently coupled to Great

Echo Organ (32 notes)

Open Diapason	8
Stopped Diapason	8
Principal	4
Twelfth	2 ² / ₃
Fifteenth	2
Hautboy	8
Cremona	8

Chaire Organ (54 notes?)

Stopped Diapason (treble/bass)	8
Dulciana (gamut G)	8
Principal	4
Flute	4
Fifteenth	2

The 1860s were a decade in which a new nave and redesigned choir area (by architects G. E. Street and J. L. Pearson) were in progress. During this work, the organ was rebuilt and enlarged by W. G. Vowles. Vowles was an organ-builder of great skill who was to build or rebuild many significant organs in the area. But he was more than that, as we can link him back to Brice and Richard Seede, and thus to the early history of the present organ, in which remain numerous ranks of Vowles's pipes. Brice Seede began organ-building in Bristol around the year 1760, his son Richard taking over the firm in 1787 – just after they had added the Choir Organ and its case to the Cathedral organ. There was in Bath an organ-builder called John Smith, who opened a workshop in 1815, moved to Bristol in 1818 to work for the Seede firm, also marrying into the family (suggested by Laurence Elvin, *Pipes & Actions* (1995), pp. 164, ff). Smith was an ingenious and inventive organ-builder who helped establish the furnishing of 16ft and even 32ft pipes for the pedalboards being introduced to British organs; it was his stepson, Joseph Munday, who installed ten additional Pedal pipes in the Cathedral during 1838. In 1814 he had set up on his own in Castle Street, eventually taking over the Seede business and clients (including

the Cathedral). In 1848 Munday took over the Smith firm, and ten years later his son-in-law, a young organ-builder called W. G. Vowles, who had trained in the firm, took over the business in turn. Vowles's enterprise flourished and in due course came to employ some 50 workers. On his retirement (or death?) in 1908, the firm carried on under his son, lasting until the mid-1950s, when it was absorbed by J. W. Walker & Sons.

It fell to Vowles to undertake significant work to the Cathedral organ when it had to be removed as part of the rebuilding of the Cathedral. The organ was taken off the screen (which was removed, as an essential element of Pearson's plans) and set up on the north side of the choir, two bays west of the altar. The crowns and mitres were removed from the top, the case was widened below the impost, and the chaire case was dismantled and made into a bookcase for a gentleman in County Durham. A singularly ugly 'chaire' case front was fitted in the organ's new position. In 1956 the remains of the Seede chair case were rescued by Hilary Philip Chadwyck-Healey (1888–1976, a published composer), and some elements of it were made by Harrison & Harrison into a chamber organ, presented to the Cathedral for use in the Lady Chapel.

In his rebuild, Vowles kept Harris's and Seede's wooden pipes, front pipes and a few octaves of other pipes; the rest was new. The Great had 12 stops, the Swell 11, the Choir 7, and the Pedal 3. The Great and Choir went down to GG (61 notes, up to top G) and the Swell to G (49 notes); Pedal CCC, 30 notes.

Specification in 1861/1867

Great Organ (GG–g, 61 notes)

Open Diapason No. 1	8
Open Diapason No. 2	8
Stopped Diapason	8
Clarabella (from gamut G)	8
Principal No. 1	4
Principal No. 2	4
Twelfth	2 ² / ₃
Fifteenth	2
Sesquialtera	IV
Mixture	II
Trumpet (from CC)	8
Clarion (from CC)	4
Swell to Great	
Swell Octave to Great	

Pedal Organ (CCC–f, 30 notes)

Open Diapason (wood)	16
Bourdon	16
Principal	8
Great to Pedals	
Swell to Pedals	
Choir to Pedals	

Swell Organ (gamut G–g, 49 notes)

Double Dulciana	16
Open Diapason	8
Stopped Diapason	8
Principal	4
Harmonic Flute	4
Twelfth	2 ² / ₃
Fifteenth	2
Mixture	II
Cornopean	8
Trumpet	8
Hautboy	8

Choir Organ (GG–g, 61 notes)

Stopped Diapason (treble/bass)	8
Dulciana (from gamut G)	8
Viola da Gamba (from gamut G)	8
Principal	4
Flute	4
Piccolo	2
Clarinet (from tenor C)	8
Swell to Choir	

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3 W. G. Vowles, Ltd advert
(photo: © author's collection)



4 The organ as set up in 1867 by Vowles (photo: © author's collection)



5 The double cases, as set out following J. W. Walker & Sons' work in 1906-7 (photo: © Paul Hale)

Completed in 1867, the rebuilt organ was tuned to equal temperament. In 1876, George Riseley succeeded John Corfe as Organist and evidently found the weight of touch too heavy, so, in 1882, a pneumatic ('Barker') lever machine was added to lighten the touch to the Great and to the Swell to Great couplers. In 1894, the organ was dismantled while further reconstruction in the choir took place. When reassembled, it was moved one further bay west, though still occupying one bay only, the 'back front' being close to the north aisle wall, hardly an ideal position. In 1901, electric blowing was installed, and in 1904 planning for another rebuild began.

In 1906-7, J. W. Walker & Sons built a structurally new organ behind the Harris cases, using Vowles's Great soundboard, numerous flue ranks by Vowles and Seede, and the remaining Harris pipes, principally those in the case-fronts. The organ was divided and moved further west, filling two bays at the west end of the north side of the choir, where it can

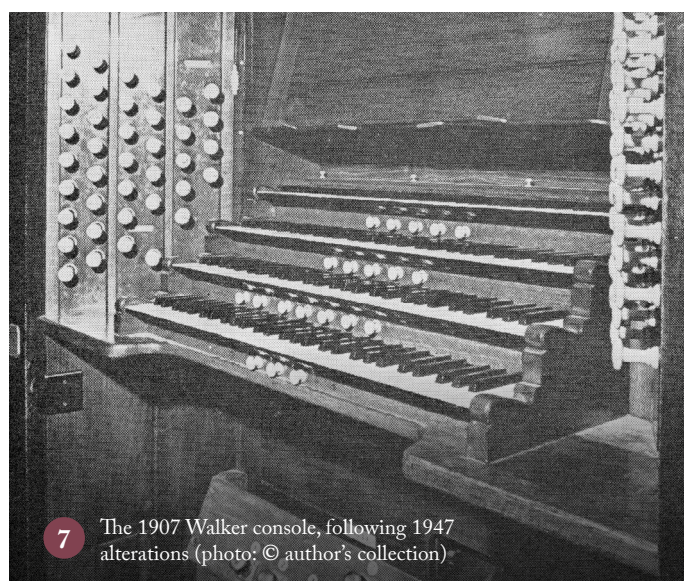
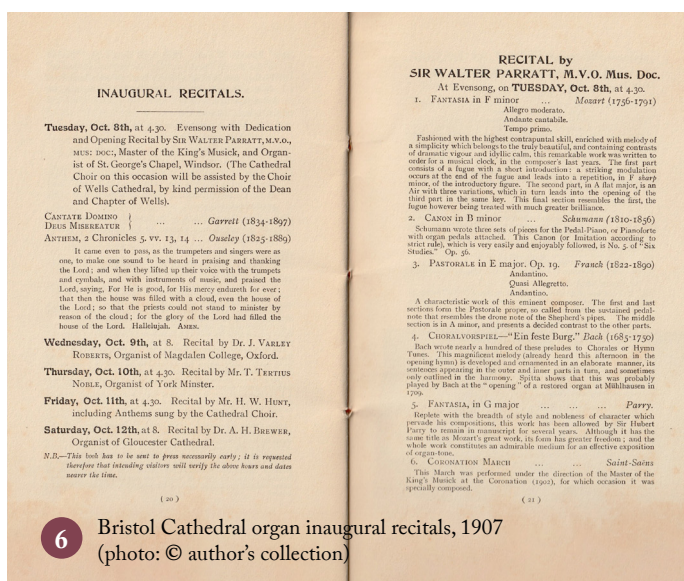
be seen today. Careful inspection of the cases will note that the left-hand case is the more elaborately decorated. We can be sure that this was the east-facing case – especially as the console has clearly always been under it. The case on the right is the less elaborate, and will have faced the nave.

J. W. Walker were a leading London firm, founded in 1827 (and still trading today), building expensive organs of high quality with their own particular character. They had few cathedral clients by the end of the nineteenth century, having lost out to Henry Willis & Son, William Hill & Son, and then, in the next generation, to Harrison & Harrison. The Bristol contract would have been keenly sought and executed as something of a show organ for the firm – rather as St Mary's, Portsea had been in the previous decade, along with several superb large London organs.

The Cathedral Organist (from 1901), Dr Hubert Walter Hunt, was instrumental in the design and concept

of the new organ. Why might he have recommended the Walker firm? I surmise that it was through discussions with his great friend Sir Henry Walford Davies (1869-1941), who, like Hunt, is buried in a small garden on the south side of the Cathedral. They were choristers together at St George's Chapel, Windsor, under Sir George Elvey, later learning the organ from Elvey's successor, Sir Walter Parratt, whom Hunt was to invite to give the inaugural recital at Bristol and who also may well have influenced his thinking. Watkins Shaw (*The Succession of Organists* (1991) p. 41) opines that "Hunt was probably the latest survivor of the type of cathedral organist who took no formal musical examinations and relied entirely on his apprenticeship [to Elvey] as a qualification. He received the Lambeth degree of D.Mus. in 1929 and was made an honorary FRCO in 1919."

The two large 1890s four-manual Walker organs in London (St Margaret's, Westminster, and Holy Trinity, Sloane Street), both designed for



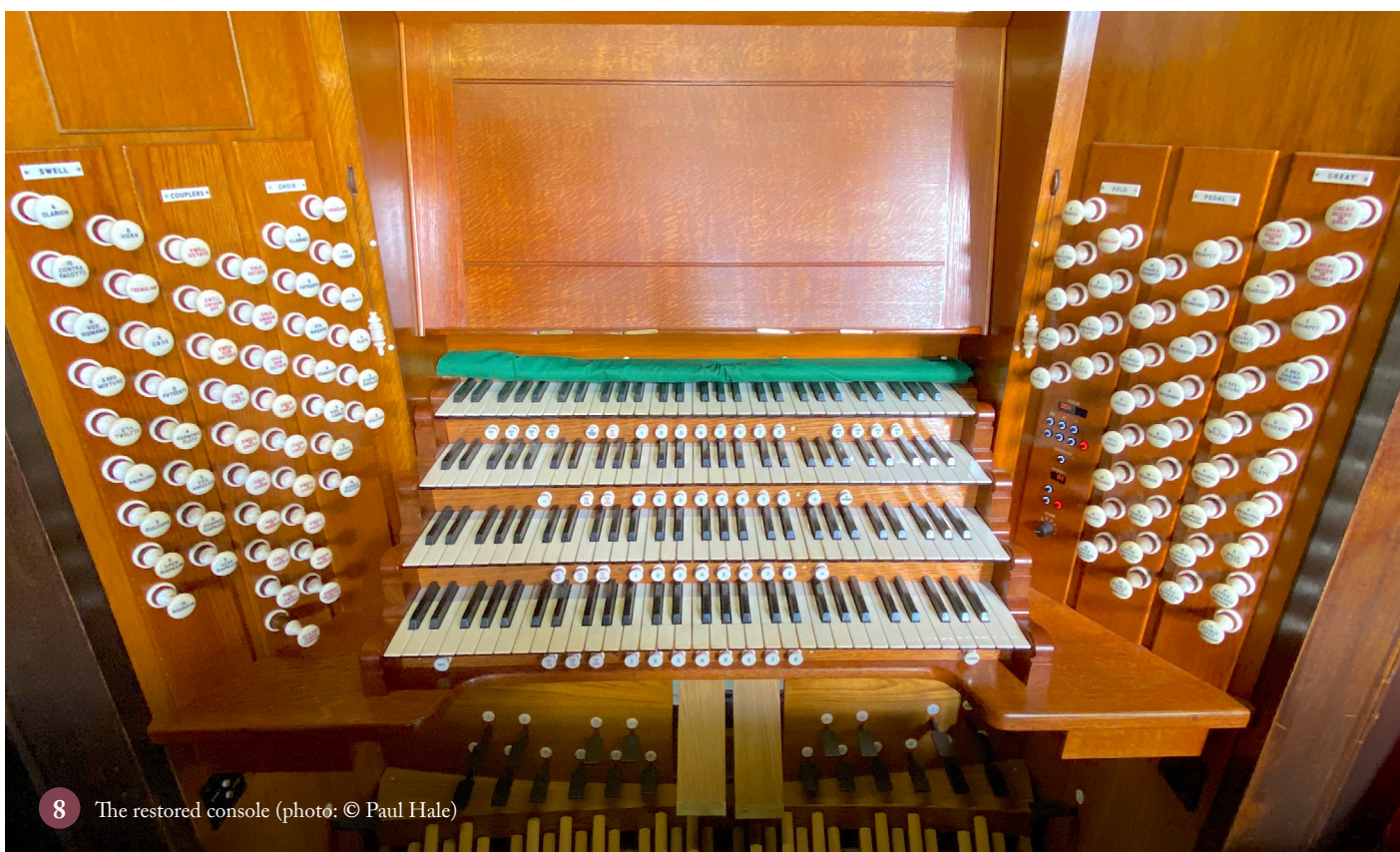
virtuoso Edwin Lemare, plus their superb 1895 four-manual in St Matthew's Northampton, had greatly impressed leading London organists such as Parratt, Bridge (at Westminster Abbey) and Martin (at St Paul's). Their 1901 organ in the Royal College of Music influenced a generation of young players, and enthusiastic reports of their highly effective 1903 organ in York Minster rapidly made their way to London and beyond. This was a pivotal time for organ projects: tonal schemes by Willis and Hill had become too predictable, 'Father' Willis was dead, and Harrison & Harrison had yet to assert themselves, so the Walker firm – then arguably at its best – was widely recommended by influential London organists when asked for an opinion (at Bristol and elsewhere, such as at Rochester Cathedral, which they rebuilt in 1905). £1,800 was gifted by Mr Henry Wills (the tobacco magnate) to help with the cost. The result was the four-manual organ we see today.

The Walker organ was inaugurated on Tuesday 8th October, 1907, at an 'Evensong with Dedication and Opening Recital by Sir Walter Parratt (Master of the King's Musick and Organist of St George's Chapel, Windsor)'. Over the next four days, major recitals were given by Dr J. Varley Roberts (Magdalen College Oxford), T. Tertius Noble (York Minster), Dr A. H. Brewer (Gloucester Cathedral), and Dr Hunt – who concluded his recital with the monumental *Grande Pièce Symphonique* by César Franck. There cannot have been many cathedral organists in 1907 who played Franck's most extended organ work. Hunt remained in post until 1946, when he was succeeded for three years by Alwyn Surplice (who departed in 1949 for Winchester Cathedral, where he remained), Clifford Harker then arriving in 1949 and staying in post until 1983.

Small tonal alterations were made in 1947, c. 1960 and 1970. These included replacing the Swell Vox Humana with a 1ft Siffler, the Choir Clarinet with a 3-rank Cornet (in 1970 modified to a 2-rank Sesquialtera), and transposing the Solo

Cor Anglais to 16ft pitch, with a new bottom octave. The Pedal $10\frac{2}{3}$ Bourdon extension was transposed to $5\frac{1}{3}$ and a 4ft Flute extension added.

Perhaps owing to a lack of funds, the Walker tubular-pneumatic action of 1907 was still in place when the organ came up for a major restoration, carried out by N. P. Mander Ltd in 1989–90, with the advice of consultant Nicolas Kynaston, during the period (1983–1990) when Malcolm Archer (later of St Paul's Cathedral) was Cathedral Organist. This was a time when the conservation of historic organs and their mechanisms was a factor which drove many rebuilds. Indeed, the word 'rebuild' became considered rather a dirty one, as restoration and conservation had generally come to be seen as the more appropriate routes. So it was that the Walker tubular-pneumatic action was scrupulously restored by Mander, who also carried out the other necessary refurbishment work. Tonally, the most aurally evident change made by Mander was to the Great, where a big III-V rank Fourniture was added, it being felt at the time that the organ lacked some of the brilliance one might hope for. The Swell Siffler reverted to a Vox Humana and the Mixture was revised, being given an intermediate break at C^{25} and a final break at C^{37} . Mander also installed an independent Pedal 8ft Trumpet (replacing a Walker extension) and 2ft Piccolo on the Choir (in addition to a 1947 Fifteenth which had replaced the 1907 Piccolo) made of small-scale open wooden pipes (with tapered open metal top notes) to match the 4ft Flute (by Seede), which it does, beautifully. A Pedal 4ft Fifteenth was added, and the 16ft Violone extended up to make an 8ft Cello. Mander had wide experience in restoring pneumatic actions, their most successful example being that of the large Hill organ in Eton College Chapel, a 1987 project with an excellent and much lauded result. Subsequent recent work at Eton has involved further re-leathering, but the tubular action remains working well to this day.



8 The restored console (photo: © Paul Hale)

Sadly, this was not the case at Bristol. The delay occasioned by the sheer length of tubing from the console to the Swell soundboard, which is situated high up behind the right-hand case, led to the speech of that department being behind the rest of the organ. This was particularly noticeable when coupled to the Choir, which sits in front and below it, proving a musical frustration to the organists. In addition, Walker pneumatic actions are generally agreed to have been designed with too many points of adjustment, so can slip out of adjustment with the slightest change in the weather.

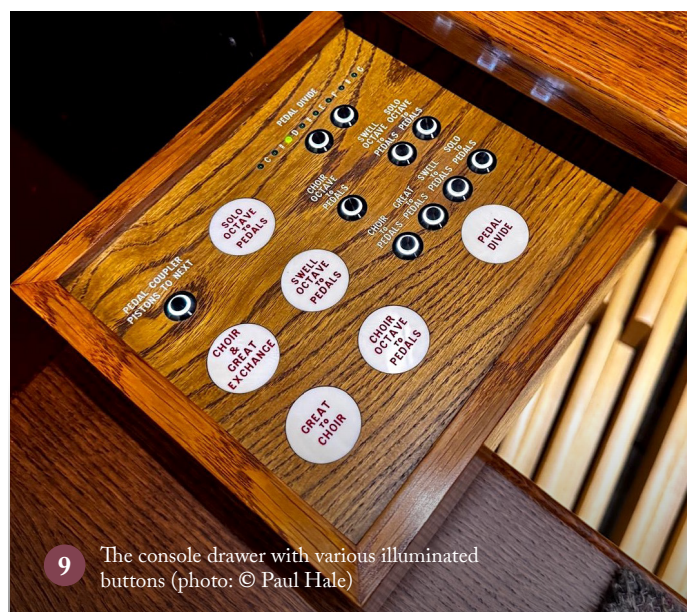
1990 does not seem to some of us very long ago, but it is of course 35 years, and cathedral organs generally need an overhaul every 35 or 40 years, mainly because they are used so heavily. When in recent years the Bristol organ became ready for general restorative work, the question of what to do about the mechanism was at the forefront of everyone's mind. Work had been carried out to the action in 2005 and 2009, but it was never reliable nor responsive, so it was more than time to sort it out, once and for all. Mark Lee was appointed Director of Music in 1998, and soon recognised the problem.

After a great deal of thought, time and experimentation with the action, it was eventually decided that the only sensible route was to convert the Walker actions to electro-pneumatic operation. This work was carried out during 2024/5 by Harrison & Harrison, with Dr William McVicker as the consultant, at the same time as the rest of the organ was cleaned from top to bottom

and fully overhauled. They fitted a three-stage underaction which no longer needed the heavy-pressure wind present in the Walker underactions. Consequently, when the reservoirs were releathered, those formerly supplying the action wind were removed as redundant. The space gained by their removal and by the removal of all the pneumatic equipment which formerly filled the area behind the console allows greater access for maintenance. In addition to all the slider soundboards and unit chests being completely refurbished and fitted with new actions, a new back soundboard was made for the Great reeds, Open Diapason (Large), Principal (Large) and a new Sharp Mixture. New Tremulants were fitted.

Tonal changes are minimal but not insignificant. On the Great, the III-V rank Mander Fourniture has been replaced by a copy of the Walker 1892 3-rank 'Clarion Mixture' at St Mary's, Portsea. Consequently, it sits at the top of the chorus perfectly. The original octave break on middle C of the 1907 Great Mixture has been reintroduced. On the Choir Organ, the 2-rank Sesquialtera has been divided into a Nazard and Tierce (of not particularly fluty tone), and the fitting of a new soundboard grid allowed the addition of a Walker 1907-pattern Clarinet to the division. On the Solo, the 16ft octave of the Cor Anglais (never satisfactory) has been successfully revoiced; no other changes took place. The Pedal $5\frac{1}{3}$ extension of the Bourdon never had any discernible use and so has been returned to its 1907 pitch as a Quint $10\frac{2}{3}$ which all agree will be much more useful. Double-flue ranks have been

The solid oak Walker console, somewhat altered over the years and in recent years looking and feeling very tired, has been completely refurbished. There are new manual keyboards overlaid with the original ivories, their key cheeks given the traditional Walker shape. The adjustable bench is new. Additional couplers such as Solo octave couplers have been added; all couplers are placed in the central jamb plate at the bass end of the console. Having said that, a small handful of the least used couplers and other devices have been placed in a drawer under the bass end of the key-bench, activated by illuminated buttons, engraved to match the stop-knobs; (these remind me of the Compton console at nearby Downside Abbey!). A similar drawer at the treble end contains a small multi-function tablet for controlling the new CCTV equipment, the monitor screen being neatly and unobtrusively hidden behind a panel above the music desk.



9 The console drawer with various illuminated buttons (photo: © Paul Hale)



10 The Swell Organ, with a heavier pressure chest in the foreground; note the 'pepper-pot' reeds (photo: © Harrison & Harrison)

10 The Swell Organ, with a heavier pressure chest in the foreground; note the 'pepper-pot' reeds (photo: © Harrison & Harrison)

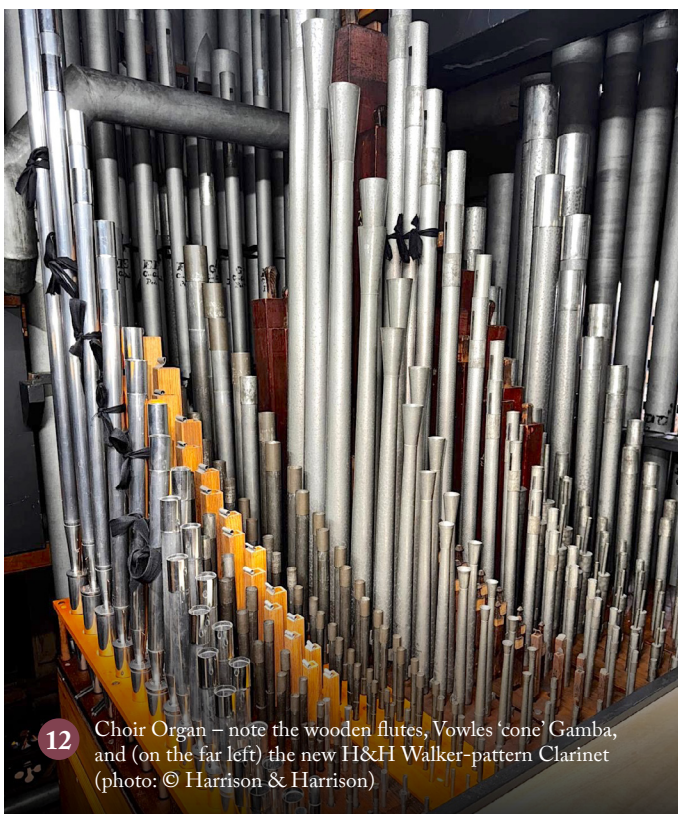
Listening to the organ both in the choir and in the nave, the listener is immediately impressed by its remarkable blend, its rich tone, its powerful and somewhat dark chorus reeds, and by the prodigious scale of the Pedal 16ft wooden and metal Open Diapasons. The new Great Mixture fits in perfectly as the pinnacle of a fine Diapason chorus. The organ is also endowed with a wide range of beautifully voiced *mp* / *p* solo stops, all of which have been sympathetically restored to perfect tone and speech by the Harrison voicers.



11 Enclosed Solo ranks, with orchestral reeds on the right (photo: © Harrison & Harrison)

It will be seen that the Solo boasts both an Orchestral Oboe and a 16ft Cor Anglais, in addition to the Clarinet, which itself is of a broader scale and tone to the new one on the Choir. Orchestral Oboes were something of a Walker speciality, their 1903 specimen at York Minster being a particularly favourite stop of Sir Edward Bairstow and his successor Dr Francis Jackson.

The Choir organ is especially delicious. It's behind the right-hand case at the lower level (formerly of solid panels, but since 1990 of open wooden framing), and as its pipes speak through a row of Contra Dulciana basses before its tone emerges, it has a deliciously delicate and restrained sound yet is plenty loud enough for choral accompaniment and for balancing with the Swell.



12 Choir Organ – note the wooden flutes, Vowles 'cone' Gamba, and (on the far left) the new H&H Walker-pattern Clarinet (photo: © Harrison & Harrison)

Having the Sesquialtera now divided into a Nazard and Tierce is most useful, and the Clarinet on the Choir serves also as a small chorus reed with the full Choir flue ensemble. The flutes throughout the organ are delicious. The Solo harmonic flutes 8 & 4 are large and creamy, slightly louder than the open flutes on the Great which are also very beautiful; having also a Stopped Diapason (Harris) on the Great is vital for accompanimental purposes. The two sets of strings fit their purpose perfectly: calm, restful strings on the Swell, more powerful and characterful strings on the Solo. Now that there are Solo octave couplers and a Solo to Swell (missing before), the Solo strings have far more uses and really come into their own. One must not forget the unexpected ear-tuned (cone) Gamba on the Choir, nor the delightful Dulciana ranks on Choir and Pedal, the 16ft being common to both departments. On the Pedal it provides a clear

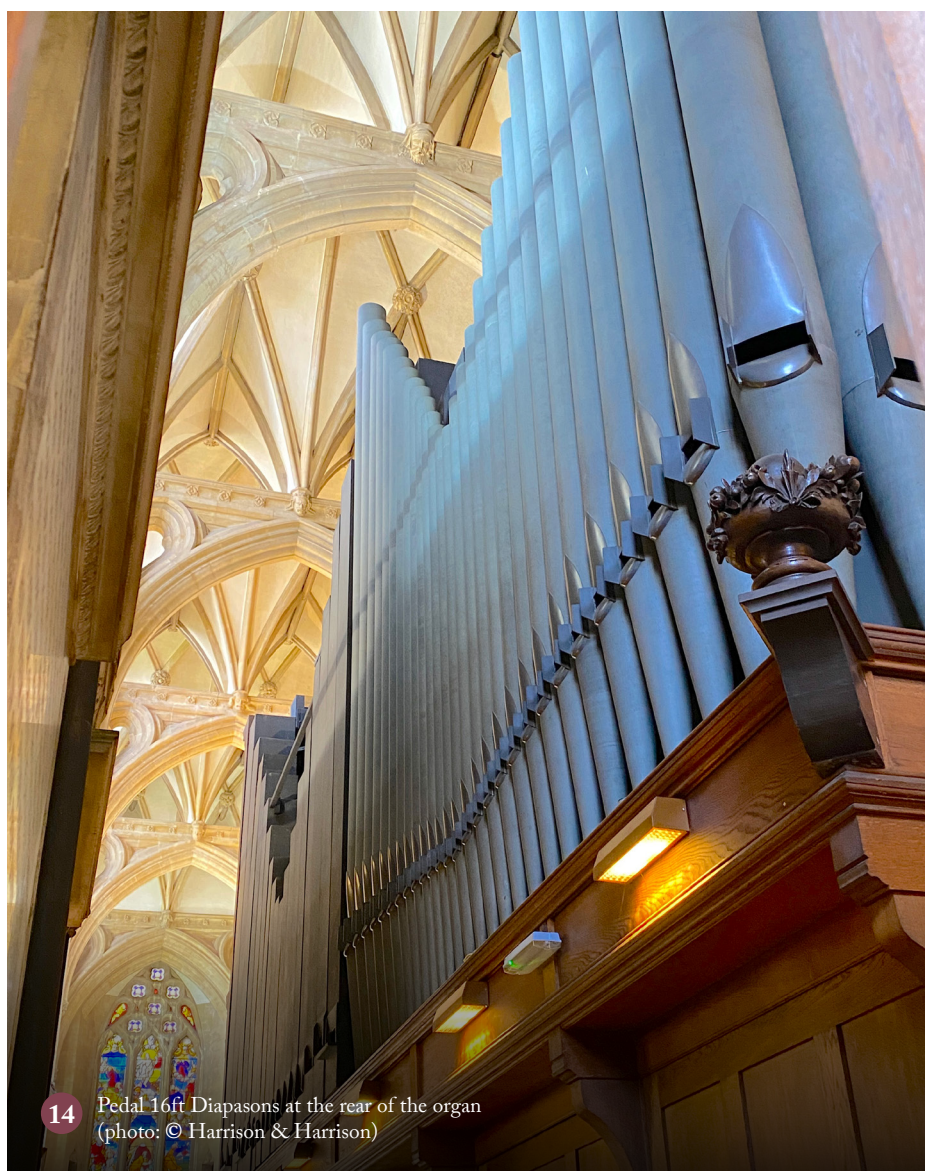
pianissimo tone at 16ft which proves very useful. Quite different is the 16ft Pedal Gamba, a rank not perhaps as useful as the Violone for, being of particularly narrow scale and voiced more as quite a powerful Contra Viole, it lacks blending qualities.



13 Great reeds chest, shared with the 'Large' Diapason and Principal, plus the new Sharp Mixture (photo: © Harrison & Harrison)

The Great Diapason chorus (mainly Vowles pipes), built not on the enormous Walker Open Diapason (Large) and its bedfellow the Principal (Large) but on the Open Diapason (Medium) and Principal (Small), many of whose pipes are by Harris, is particularly musical; when the Double Open Diapason and new 3-rank Mixture are added it extends beautifully at either end, filling the building with tone that does not weary the ear.

This organ does of course need to reach right down the nave, and yet it speaks south across the choir. It is here that the reeds come into their own, particularly the Great reeds which are towards the back of the organ on a heavier-pressure soundboard behind the great flues, which sit in the left-hand case. Their tone helpfully emerges from both the front and the back of the organ. Through the back, the reeds reach down the north nave surprisingly well, as does the tone of the Pedal 16ft metal Open Diapason grouped around the NW corner of the organ; as also do the 16ft wooden Open Diapason pipes further along the back of the organ and speaking at the solid, reflective north wall of the aisle. The metal 16ft is so powerful that there is a risk of it unbalancing the Great. The stop is best left off until the Large Open & Principal are drawn; then it comes into its own. In the choir area, interestingly, the Swell reeds are so powerful that



14 Pedal 16ft Diapasons at the rear of the organ
(photo: © Harrison & Harrison)

there is not a huge difference between them and the Great reeds. However, in the nave it is very much the Great reeds that dominate, the Swell and its reeds retiring somewhat into the distance. Hence the need for these three powerful Great stops. Walker became renowned for their ‘pepper-pot’ chorus reeds. They are called thus because of the construction of the resonators, which have a series of large holes drilled around the top of the pipe and a wooden disc neatly fitted to the top of the tube. This technique is unique to Walker and undoubtedly gives the chorus reeds their own distinctive colour, which some call ‘chocolatey’. Personally, I hear them as ‘imperial’.

Here is a reflection on the project, offered for *OR* readers by Andrew Scott, Managing Director of Harrison & Harrison, to whom we offer our thanks:

In 2012, an investigation led by organ consultant William McVicker was commissioned. Michael Kollmann of Mander Organs and I, representing Harrison & Harrison, were identified to undertake the technical assessment as we both had first-hand experience of complicated Walker key actions: Michael having led the Mander Organs restoration of the organ at Sacred Heart, Wimbledon, and I having tuned and maintained it for over a decade prior to restoration. The investigation at Bristol was undertaken over the course of a year, and in two three-

day sessions of inspection we studied the intricate workings of the pneumatic action, measured wind pressures throughout the system and completely reset the key actions throughout.

Although careful and minute adjustment improved the action’s response temporarily, it was evident that the mechanism was operating at the limits of what could reasonably be achieved. The Walker system was ingenious, but after more than a century of service, its dependability could no longer be assured. Following further consultation, the conclusion was reached that while restoration of the pneumatic system was technically possible, it would not provide the long-term stability the Cathedral required. A decision was therefore taken to electrify the key action to ensure the organ could continue to serve faithfully in daily worship and recital use.

Alongside sympathetic electrification of the key actions, the instrument’s tonal design was carefully preserved, with reversal, reinstatement, consolidation and replacement of pipework at odds with the original tonal architecture, thus retaining the noble voice for which it has long been celebrated. The console was also restored, maintaining its typical Walker aesthetic.

Today, the organ at Bristol Cathedral remains a commanding presence in the building. It stands as an enduring testament to the artistry of Walker’s Edwardian craftsmanship and to the care taken in safeguarding its future for generations to come.

The restored organ is exceptionally comfortable to play, though toe levers on two levels always make me nervous – helpfully, these are all clearly and elegantly labelled. The instrument speaks (for the very first time) as one, impresses by not having a single ugly or extreme tonality, looks (in cases and console) really beautiful, and deserves now to be considered among the most distinguished cathedral organs in the country. It was a privilege to have Cathedral Director of Music Mark Lee demonstrate it so adroitly as I moved around the building to listen, and I’d like to take this opportunity both to thank him and wish him and his colleague Paul Walton many hours of enjoyable playing on this Walker masterpiece.

2025 specification

Great Organ			
1	Double Open Diapason	16	Walker
2	Open Diapason (Large)	8	Walker
3	Open Diapason (Medium)	8	east case pipes Harris, rest Vowles
4	Open Diapason (Small)	8	west case pipes Harris, rest Vowles
5	Wald Flöte	8	Walker
6	Stopped Diapason	8	¿ Harris
7	Principal (Large)	4	Walker
8	Principal (Small)	4	Vowles
9	Flute	4	Walker
10	Twelfth	2 ² / ₃	Vowles
11	Fifteenth	2	Vowles
12	Mixture	3 rks	Vowles, 4th rank removed 1907
13	Sharp Mixture	3 rks	H&H 2025, copied from Portsea
14	Double Trumpet	16	Walker
15	Trumpet	8	Walker
16	Clarion	4	Walker
Swell Organ			
17	Bourdon	16	Vowles
18	Horn Diapason	8	Walker
19	Open Diapason	8	Vowles
20	Stopped Diapason	8	Seede / Vowles
21	Dulciana	8	Walker
22	Vox Angelica (TC)	8	Walker
23	Principal	4	Vowles
24	Harmonic Flute	4	Vowles
25	Twelfth	2 ² / ₃	Vowles
26	Fifteenth	2	Vowles
27	Mixture	3 rks	Vowles, breaks revised Mander
28	Oboe	8	Walker
29	Vox Humana	8	Mander 1990, returning to 1907 spec.
	Tremulant	H&H 2025	
30	Contra Fagotto	16	Walker
31	Horn	8	Walker
32	Clarion	4	Walker

Choir Organ			
33	Double Dulciana	16	Vowles' Swell 16ft Dulciana, Walker bass
34	Open Diapason	8	Vowles' Choir Principal, Walker bass
35	Stopped Diapason	8	?Harris / Seede / Vowles
36	Viola da Gamba	8	Vowles
37	Dulciana	8	Walker
38	Gemshorn	4	Vowles' Choir Dulciana
39	Flute	4	?Harris / Seede / Vowles
40	Nazard	2 ² / ₃	H&H 2025, from Walker 1970 Sesq.
41	Fifteenth	2	Walker 1947
42	Piccolo	2	Mander 1990
43	Tierce	1 ³ / ₅	H&H 2025, from Walker 1970 Sesq.
44	Clarinet	8	H&H 2025, copied from the St Matthew's Northampton Walker
	Tremulant		H&H 2025
Solo Organ			
45	Harmonic Flute	8	Walker, unenclosed
46	Gamba	8	Walker
47	Voix Celeste (TC)	8	Walker
48	Harmonic Flute	4	Walker
49	Cor Anglais	16	Walker, bass c. 1960, revoiced 2025
50	Clarinet	8	Walker
50	Orchestral Oboe	8	Walker
	Tremulant		H&H 2025
51	Tromba	8	Walker, unenclosed
Pedal Organ			
52	Double Open Diapason	32	bass Walker, ext. Open Wood
53	Open Diapason (Wood)	16	Smith / Munday / Vowles
54	Open Diapason (Metal)	16	Walker bass / Vowles treble
55	Violone	16	Walker
56	Contra Gamba	16	Walker
57	Bourdon	16	Vowles
58	Dulciana	16	from Choir
59	Quint	10 ² / ₃	Walker ext. of Vowles Bourdon
60	Principal	8	ext. of Open Diap (metal) Vowles
61	Cello	8	Mander extension of Violone
62	Stopped Diapason	8	Walker ext. of Vowles Bourdon
63	Dulciana	8	from Choir 16ft, reinstated 2025
64	Fifteenth	4	Mander 1990
65	Flute	4	Walker ext. of Vowles Bourdon
66	Trombone	16	Walker
67	Double Trumpet	16	from Great
68	Trumpet	8	ext. of Trombone, reinstated H&H 2025

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Paul Hale is a professional organ consultant, recitalist and choral conductor.

Whilst Organ Scholar of New College Oxford (1971–4), Paul Hale began to write about the organ – his first published piece was in *Organists' Review*, of which he was later to become Reviews Editor and then Editor (1990–2005). A noted recitalist, lecturer and choir trainer, Paul is well-known in the UK, in Europe and in the USA.

As well as being an Organ Adviser for the Dioceses of Southwell and Lincoln, Paul is an accredited member of the AIOA and has designed many new and restored organs throughout the UK. He has been a diploma examiner for the RCO, and has been awarded honorary fellowships by the GCM and the RSCM, and the Archbishop of Canterbury's Lambeth 'Thomas Cranmer Award' for his contribution to church music.

More information is available at www.paulhale.org

Couplers

i	Great Reeds on Choir	2025
ii	Great Reeds on Solo	2025
iii	Great Reeds on Pedals	2025
iv	Choir and Great Exchange	2025, in drawer
v	Great to Pedals	
vi	Swell Octave to Pedals	2025, in drawer
vii	Swell to Pedals	
viii	Choir Octave to Pedals	2025, in drawer
ix	Choir to Pedals	
x	Solo Octave to Pedals	2025, in drawer
xi	Solo to Pedals	
xii	Swell to Great	
xiii	Choir to Great	
xiv	Solo to Great	
xv	Solo to Swell	2025
xvi	Great to Choir	2025, in drawer
xvii	Solo to Choir	1990
xviii	Swell to Choir	
xix	Swell Octave	
xx	Swell Sub Octave	
xxi	Swell Unison Off	
xxii	Solo Octave	2025
xxiii	Solo Sub Octave	2025
xxiv	Solo Unison Off	2025
xxv	Great & Pedal Combinations Coupled	
xxvi	Generals on Swell Foot Pedals	2025
xxvii	Pedal to Swell Pistons	2025, reinstating 1907 control
xxviii	Pedal Divide	2025, in drawer
xxix	Pedal Coupler Pistons to 'Next'	2025, in drawer

Accessories

Eight thumb pistons to the Great Organ	Reversible combination pedals to Great to Pedal, Swell to Great
Eight thumb pistons to the Swell Organ	
Eight thumb pistons to the Choir Organ	Solo to Great, Pedal 32ft Double Open
Eight thumb pistons to the Solo Organ	General Cancel
Eight general thumb pistons	Setter piston
Eight combination pedals to the Pedal Organ	7,992 general piston memory levels and 128 divisional piston memory levels stored in eight libraries, each with 999 general and 16 divisional levels
Eight combination pedals to the Swell Organ (duplicating thumb pistons)	
Reversible thumb pistons to all standard unison couplers	Stepper (with on/off switch), operating the general pistons sequentially, operated by two thumb and one foot 'advance', plus one thumb and one foot 'retard'.
Pedal 32ft Double Open, Pedal 16ft Trombone	