

## The Organ and Organists

Although the date 1888 appears on the console of our organ, the greater part of the instrument is earlier than this. The original instrument by Henry Willis, "Father" Willis, being installed some-time between 1855 and 1865. This earlier organ was situated in the West Gallery, the best position for sound, and although only two manual, was quite a large instrument with 25 stops. The removal of the organ from this position to the chancel took place in 1881 and is regarded by many musicians and organ lovers nowadays as a mistake. As a result, the organ could not be heard in the nave, therefore, it was decided to enlarge it and this was done by Henry Willis in 1881.

In 1925, the church was struck by lightning and a fire started which did minor damage to the organ. A thorough overhaul was required, with some mechanical improvements, and these were carried out by Henry Willis III, the organ builder's grandson.

A minor restoration and cleaning were done in 1948, but a more comprehensive renewal of worn-out parts was carried out by Messrs Rushworth and Dreaper in 1976 at a cost of £10,000. To celebrate the restoration on that occasion, a recital was given by the internationally famous organist Nicholas Danby in March 1977.

A nationally known expert on organs said of our organ - "The organ is a superb example of Henry Willis I and as such can be almost classed as a national heritage."

The organ has thirty-nine speaking stops and three manuals.

### Organists

Mr Bridger was the organist when the instrument was in the West Gallery. He resigned at the time when the organ was moved to the South Transept and a Mr E.J. Driffield was invited to play at the opening service after the extension of the church. The congregation were well pleased with his playing and the Vicar, Canon Robson, offered him the position of organist. Mr Driffield also took over the training of the choir and he introduced the chanting of the psalms at the evening services. The morning congregation preferred to simply say the psalms.

Mr Driffield continued as organist until 1890. He was followed by Hairis Eglan and then Mr Bryson. In 1899 Dr C T Reynolds became organist and stayed until 1913. He taught Cyril Scott, the composer, who lived in our parish when he was a boy.

Other musicians who have held the position over the years are:

Drumond Anderson

Dr Teasdale Griffiths

Rhydwyn Jones

David Williams AR.M.C.M.

Mrs Furber

George Smith

Alan Williams

Paul Ferguson

Ian Higginson

Robert Owen

Don Hadfield

David Vaughan Williams

Mary Crawshaw

Richard Sutton

Paul Broadhurst