

## Notes on the Bishop & Son organ at the Church of the Most Precious Blood



A faculty has been granted to remove and sell the “Chancel” organ from the Church of the Most Precious Blood, The Borough, London SE1. The organ has been used for 4 years in the Church largely to accompany plainsong and congregational hymns for services held during the week. The organ is being removed because it restricts access to an Emergency exit and a new stone floor is being installed in the first half of 2018 so this is the ideal time to move the organ.

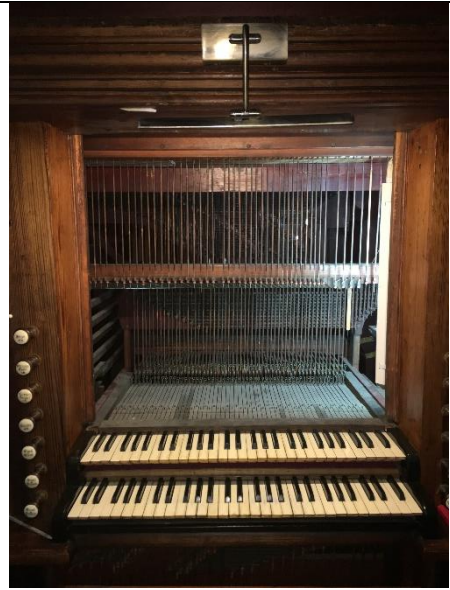
Built by Bishop and Son in 1881 it is a fine example of Victorian organ building in Great Britain. Each stop is distinctive and colourful. On the Swell there is a characterful Lieblich Gedact 8, a keen-toned Gamba and smooth Harmonic Flute 4'. The Oboe 8' on the Swell is a telling stop which adds great colour and not a little power to the chorus. The Great Diapason 8' together with the Principal 4' produce a commanding tone, rich and full. The

Principal is, usefully, voiced to be “bright” in the treble. The Dulciana 8' on the Great is very delicate in tone whilst the Clarabella 8' makes a wonderful solo stop or blends well with diapasons. The Pedal Bourdon 16' speaks promptly and is surprisingly effective at underpinning both quiet registrations and full organ. This is a versatile organ with a relatively small footprint which packs quite a punch when needed! There is a recording available on the parish website.

Currently, larger services are accompanied using a Makin electronic organ in the west gallery where the Choir is located. There is a 3 manual Lewis & Co organ in storage awaiting the funds to build it in the gallery and the proceeds of the sale of the Chancel organ will go towards that project and the development of our Junior Choir.

Organs are always difficult to value. We are looking for expressions of interest and/or offers above £6,000. The purchaser must also undertake to pay all costs associated with the dismantling, packing and transportation of the organ. Ideally, the organ would be removed by the end of February 2018 but some flexibility is possible. Enquiries should be made in the first instance to the Director of Music, Mr Christopher Smith, by email to [christopher.smith@preciousblood.org.uk](mailto:christopher.smith@preciousblood.org.uk).





## History

Information from the record books of Bishop & Son (from telephone call with Dr Maurice Merrell)

- Built by the Bishop & Son in 1881 for Praed Street Chapel, Paddington
- Serial number 1273
- Wind pressure 3"
- Oboe to tenor C, bottom octave prepared for (now complete)



The organ started life in the Praed Street Chapel, Paddington which had opened in 1834. The organ was installed there in 1881 but by 1910 it had become an "Electric Theatre" and it seems reasonable to suppose that the organ was sold and moved, sometime between 1908 and 1910, from Paddington to Chandos Street Chapel, Hereford (pictured left).

The organ was moved to the Catholic Church of the Most Precious Blood in 2013 from Hereford. Larger parts of the organ, when dismantled in Hereford, were found to have the remnants of railway freight labels glued to them.

### Work done when the organ was moved to Most Precious Blood included:

- A new wind trunk (designed and fabricated by Renatus Ltd.) from the blower which feeds into the underside of the reservoir whilst avoiding the pedal trackers which run under the reservoir
- New and adjustable pedal action linkage to the pedalboard
- All pipework was cleaned and new tuning slides installed throughout
- Provision of a new passage board to make tuning access easier
- Soundboards cleaned, minor splits pinned and glued and all pallet springs re-tensioned.
- New pulldown wires to each pallet
- The bottom octave of the Oboe stop was completed using second hand pipes of similar scale and vintage and voiced to match by Booths.
- Many leather buttons replaced on the action

The leather of the reservoir (double rise) is in good order although it may be prudent to take the opportunity to re-leather when moving the organ. There is one concussion bellows which was not re-fitted when the organ was moved to MPB because it needed re-leathering. However, the winding has proved to be sufficiently stable not to require it although, again, it would be nice to re-leather and reinstall it when the organ is moved. Since its move to Most Precious Blood the organ has been in the care of Gary Owens <http://www.go-organbuilders.org.uk/> and tuned and action regulated twice per year.

## Specification

The pitch, measured at the current location, is slightly sharp at 528.1Hz at 60F.

<b>Pedal</b>	Key action <b>Tr</b> Stop action <b>Me</b> Compass-low <b>C</b> Compass-high <b>f1</b> Keys <b>30</b>		
	1 Bourdon	16	
<b>Great</b>	Key action <b>Tr</b> Stop action <b>Me</b> Compass-low <b>C</b> Compass-high <b>g3</b> Keys <b>56</b>		
	2 Open Diapason	8	
	3 Clarabella	8	
	4 Dulciana	8	
	5 Principal	4	
	6 Blower		Not used
<b>Swell</b>	Key action <b>Tr</b> Stop action <b>Me</b> Compass-low <b>C</b> Compass-high <b>g3</b> Keys <b>56 Enclosed (trigger)</b>		
	7 Lieblich Gedact	8	
	8 Gamba	8	
	9 Harmonic Flute	4	
	10 Oboe	8	

Couplers: **Sw to Gt**, **Sw to Ped** and **Gt to Ped**. Two combination pedals (disconnected)

## Shape, layout and dimensions

The organ is of a very compact and elegant design. The maximum height is 3.75m. Other dimensions are shown on the diagram which shows how it is currently located in a shallow transept at the Chancel end of the Church. The organ stands 32cm away from the wall to allow access to the action at low level. At soundboard level there is a passage board attached to the wall to provide access to the Swell division for tuning. The swell shutters are mounted vertically and open as shown in the diagram. All display pipes are speaking pipes. The blower is single phase.

