

Not one Willis but two – an update from Paul Minchinton regarding his article in the December 2014 issue

Since writing the notes on the Willis at Bayford, some further information has come my way:

First of all, I am told that the secondary 8ft stop on a Willis Scudamore organ would more likely be a dulciana than a stopped diapason (though of course this might be changed for an individual customer, and there were several models of Scudamore-type organ in the Willis range).

NPOR entry for Wormley refers to notes by the late Rev. B B Edmonds which include: "Willis 1860: 'Scudamore' organ".

From recent correspondence with William Johnson, organ builder:

"The Scudamore organ from Hitchin St John (now demolished) was moved to Hinxworth by his father (E.J. Johnson) in 1970. 1 manual, 4 stops, with pedal pull-downs".

NPOR notes that Frank Haycroft records it as having come from Ickleford.

However, Frank Haycroft also records an organ from Ickleford as having gone to Hitchin St Luke (date unknown). Willis c 1860 1 manual 3 stops, 884.

An NPOR search for Hitchin St Luke comes up blank. Could this have been confused with Hitchin St John?

Finally, it now seems likely that nothing remains of the Bayford Willis at Bayford. Neither the diapason nor the dulciana pipes, it seems, have a 'Willis' look about them, and while the Great soundboard may date from 1874, those who inspected the Swell soundboard fairly recently say it is actually rather earlier than that in construction, but again not obviously Willis.

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