

Richard Hird (Durham DOA) Notes on Redundant H.S. Vincent Organ (grade II*) Closed church of
Darlington St John, Diocese of Durham



Description: Standard details of the organ are in National Pipe Organ Register: [NPOR | Survey \[N12161\]](#)
Organ has a BIOS Historic Organ Certificate Grade II*.

This is a "grand" organ: an early example of builder **H.S.Vincent's** work, built in 1890 when he was aged 29.* The organ was restored and slightly modified by H.E.Prested of Durham in 1970, and has been maintained in very good order latterly by Brian Brighton.

Dimensions: The chamber to the North of the chancel is difficult to access, and the organ tightly packed in there, and sits in a pit [down to nave floor level]. There are large arched openings to the chancel [covered by the case front with central in effect "perched" console], and to the North aisle [opening occupied by an array of large scale 16ft open metal basses on a 3ft high plinth, presumably containing action motors]. Chamber Measurements are difficult to obtain, particularly left/West side space occupied by the pedal ranks.

The main bulk of the organ - Great, and Swell in a box behind, both on a frame with reservoirs below - is all sitting in a pit 33in deep, down to nave floor level. The main footprint seems to be:

Front to back: Front case to rear of Sw. box = **135in.**, with v. small gap [5in] to rear of Sw. box.

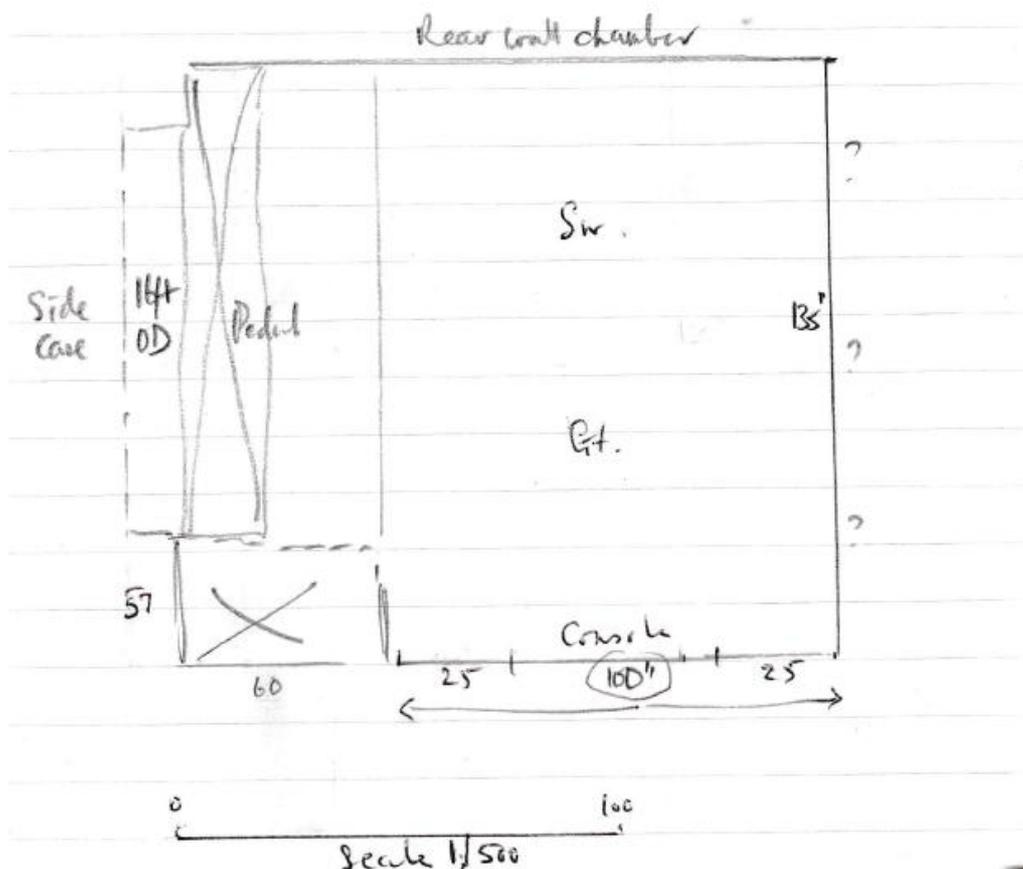
Width [W side to E side] = **100in.** [across front = 25in + console of 48in + 25in]

Height: perched console floor level to top of front case = **228in [19ft]**, but organ in chamber behind is in a pit of **33in.[3ft]** depth. The top of the Swell box is at height of front arch, with case top higher in front of arch. The West side case was measured at **204in** high.

The Pedal chests are laid out front to back in a space to the West of the main frame space, behind the solid block of stonework [E/W 60in x S/N 57in] where the North chancel wall abuts the East nave wall, filling the large archway to the North aisle. This Pedal area must add a **60in x 80 in** footprint to the West side of the main rectangular footprint of the organ.

The **electric blower** is external to the chamber, located and connected from a cupboard in the vestry behind.

A **simplified sketch plan** illustrates these dimensions.







IN MEMORY OF
WILLIAM B. NATTRESS
ORGANIST AND
LIFELONG MEMBER
OF THIS CHURCH

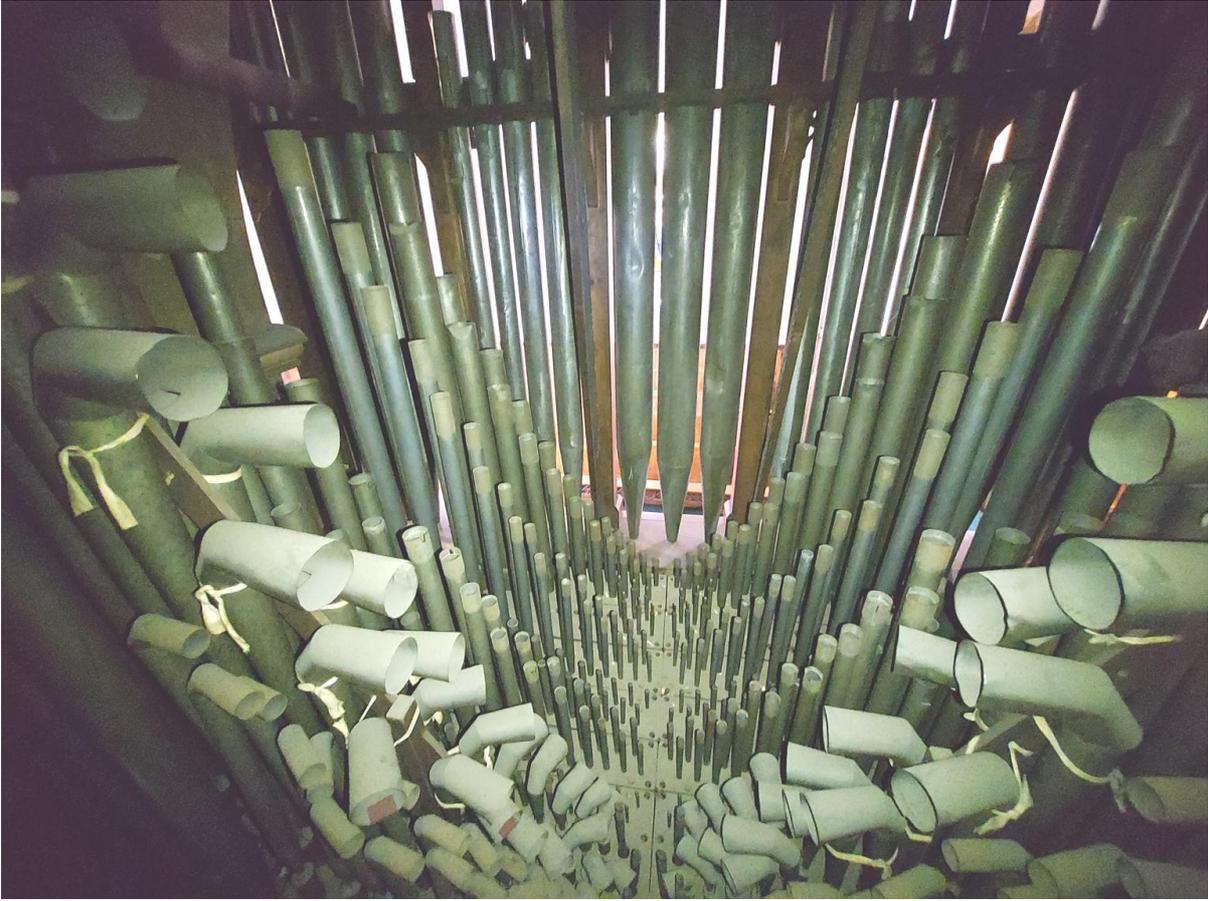
16TH JAN. 1973

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Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan Spraggon". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font.

Dan Spraggon.
Church Buildings Support Officer
The Diocese of Durham