

GEORGE HOLDICH – ORGAN BUILDER

George Maydwell Holdich, the son of a one time rector of Maidwell, was born in the Rectory there on 14th August 1816. After attending Uppingham School he gained a scholarship to Cambridge to study medicine, but before completing his degree he decided that he would prefer a career as an organ builder, and travelled to London to work as an apprentice for the notable organ builder James Chapman Bishop. By the age of 21, possibly assisted by financial help from his family, Holdich had formed his own business in London. From then on, until just before his retirement and death in 1897, his firm built many hundreds of organs for churches throughout the country. His largest organ was that built for Lichfield Cathedral in 1860, but Holdich is mainly remembered today for the modest organs which have survived intact in small parish churches. Thanks possibly to family connections, he was particularly well patronised by churches in the East Midlands and in East Anglia, and it is here that the majority of his unaltered instruments survive. His instruments were always conservative in nature, but possess an admirable forthright tone which is as pleasing today as it was when they were built.

Michael Latham 2005