

## HAPPY 150<sup>th</sup> BIRTHDAY!

In a rare surviving 1868 Estimate Book of Wm. Hill & Son, a list of proposed stops for a new organ for St. Martin's Church, Salisbury is given and a price quoted as £380. Four stops marked with an X were added later in 1875 by son Thomas Hill. Further pipework was added in 1897 by nephew Arthur George Hill making this a real family affair!

The organ would have been built and assembled by William Hill during 1868 then brought to Salisbury, most probably by rail, re-assembled, voiced to the building and tuned ready for the opening services on the 17<sup>th</sup> January 1869. William Hill sadly died in the following year, 1870.

The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 9th January 1869, ran this paragraph: 'ST. MARTIN'S, SALISBURY. THE OPENING of the NEW ORGAN, by Messrs. Hill and Son, is fixed for Sunday, Jan. 17<sup>th</sup> when SPECIAL SERMONS will be preached, and COLLECTIONS made in aid of the ORGAN FUND. The Morning Sermon will be preached by the Rev. H. T. Armfield. M.A., Minor Canon of the Cathedral; that in the Afternoon, by the Rev. W. W. Tatum, M.A., Rector; and that in the evening by the Rev. C.F. Hyde, M.A., Vicar of Dilton Marsh. Mr. Theodore Aylward will preside at the Organ.'

This coming January, a birthday celebration in the form of a talk and recital (and probably some cake), by the present organist Robert Fielding will take place exactly 150 years to the day on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> January 2019 at 7.30pm. Pieces from around 1869 will be played. Brahms, Mendelssohn, Smart, Stanford come to mind.

The organ continues to impress worshippers, recitalists, students and visitors to the church with its glorious sounds and robust construction. During 2019, the Hill will be dismantled and cleaned by Stephen Cooke Organs of Westbury with some voicing and work to the actions. It will be important to maintain the integrity of the instrument and ensure that we are handing on what is a real gem in the city to those who will play and pray with the organ for the next 150 years!

Robert Fielding

*A book by Robert, 'Organs & Organists of St. Martin's Church, Salisbury' is available from Amazon UK. Robert has aimed to provide a work for those interested in what has taken place in St Martin's since records begin in 1567 with regard to the people that have spent time there as musicians and the instruments that have appeared and disappeared in a procession that brings us to the present inherited 1869 William Hill organ.*