

[Inc. 4 Jan 1933]

THE TAYLOR  
BELL FOUNDRY  
LOUGHBOROUGH  
ENGLAND.

THE TAYLOR  
BELL FOUNDRY  
LOUGHBOROUGH  
ENGLAND.

JOHANNES DE STAFFORD, about the middle or later half of the fourteenth century, had a bell-foundry at Leicester, of which town he was Mayor in the years 1366 and 1370. He was probably the predecessor of

WILLIAM MILLER, bell-founder, who was admitted a Member of the Merchants' Guild of Leicester, 1499-1500. His widow married, for her second husband, THOMAS NEWCOMBE, whose son, ROBERT, succeeded to the business and was himself followed by his three sons, THOMAS, EDWARD and ROBERT. In 1585, these latter, in partnership with FRANCIS WATTS, cast the old tenor bell for Loughborough Parish Church.

EDWARD NEWCOMBE had also three sons associated with him in the business, the eldest of whom, ROBERT, was admitted to the Merchants' Guild in 1600. These appear to have been the last Newcombes in the Leicester foundry. One of them, WILLIAM, went to Nottingham, and in partnership with HENRY OLDFIELD, there cast "Great Tom" of Lincoln, in the year 1610.



FRANCIS WATTS, above-mentioned, died in the year 1600, and his place was taken by his son, HUGH WATTS, who soon obtained a high reputation as a founder. He was Mayor of Leicester, 1633-1634, and died in 1643. He stated in his will:—"I give all my tools and implements belonging to the trade of a bell-founder to my son, Hugh Watts." This Hugh Watts the second, was the last of the Watts'.

The business was afterwards carried on at Kettering by the EAYRE family, who thereby added bell-founding to their trade as clock-makers, THOMAS and JOHN (Thomas' uncle) being in partnership in 1717. THOMAS EAYRE died 1757. His brother, JOSEPH EAYRE, migrated to St. Neots, and had as apprentice, EDWARD ARNOLD, who took up the business after his master's death, and who, in 1784, left St. Neots and set up his bell-foundry at Leicester, in a street named Hangman's Lane.

To EDWARD ARNOLD had been apprenticed

ROBERT TAYLOR, born 1759, who carried on the business at St. Neots after the departure of Edward Arnold. Among the first peals cast by ROBERT TAYLOR is the ring of five bells in Bletsoe Church, bearing the date 1786.

ROBERT TAYLOR had two sons, WILLIAM, born 1795, and JOHN, born 1797, who for some time assisted him in the business at St. Neots, but afterwards set up in Oxford, where WILLIAM made clocks also. ROBERT TAYLOR died at Oxford in 1830, and of his two sons, WILLIAM, the elder, died unmarried in 1854, but JOHN, the younger, married in 1825, and went that year to Buckland Brewer, Devonshire, where he built a foundry. Eight years afterwards, however, he returned to Oxford, leaving again in 1840, when he came to

LOUGHBOROUGH, where the foundry has since remained. He died in 1858 and bequeathed the business to his only surviving son, JOHN WILLIAM TAYLOR, born at Buckland Brewer in 1827.

In the energetic hands of this great bell-founder, and with the assistance of his eldest son, JOHN WILLIAM, many noble bells and famous peals were cast. "Great Paul," the largest in the British Empire, was cast in November, 1881, and was installed in its place in the South tower of the West front of St. Paul's Cathedral, London, and solemnly dedicated on Saturday, June 3rd, 1882. The fine ring of twelve bells had been hung in the North tower of the same Cathedral four years earlier.

The Cathedrals of Newcastle-on-Tyne; St. Mary's, Glasgow; St. Mary's, Edinburgh; St. Patrick's, Dublin; Christchurch, New Zealand; and Singapore, owe their peals to this period, as also do the Town Halls of Manchester, Bradford, Halifax, Rochdale, Kendal and Londonderry; the Post Offices of Sydney and Adelaide in Australia; the Universities of Liverpool, Glasgow, Bombay, and Ames (Iowa, U.S.A.) also the Imperial Institute. To this list add "Great John," of Beverley; and the re-casting of "Grandison," the tenor bell of the ring of Exeter Cathedral. This is a roll of which any founder would be justified in being proud.



JOHN WILLIAM TAYLOR died in 1906, and left the business to his eldest son, the above-mentioned JOHN WILLIAM, born 1853, and his fourth son, EDMUND DENISON, born 1864. The former died in 1919, and the business is now in the hands of the latter. He was assisted by his nephew, PRYCE TAYLOR, born 1891, whose early and deeply regretted death occurred at Toronto in 1927 while on a business tour.

In recent years many and great improvements in ringing peals and in stationary chimes have been introduced, as the bells of York, Worcester, Truro, Lincoln, Dunblane and Bradford Cathedrals testify; also Nottingham Exchange; the Custom Houses of Shanghai and Canton; the Town Halls of South Shields and Pretoria; and the Universities of Birmingham in England, and Yale, Berkeley and Durham (Duke University) in the United States of America.

Noteworthy too, is "Great Peter" of York Minster, "Great George" of Bristol University and the bells of Harvard University, U.S.A. and Seoul Cathedral.

Perhaps the most noteworthy feature of all, however, is the immense advancement made recently by the firm in the casting and installing of "CARILLONS," that is, chromatic scales of bells, hung stationary, and played by hand from a keyboard (clavier). The following is a list of the most important of these Carillons:—

	No. of Bells.	Largest Bell weighing.
Mountain Lake Bird Sanctuary, Lake Wales, Florida, U.S.A. ....	71	23,000 lbs.
Richmond War Memorial, Va., U.S.A. ...	66	11,200 "
Indianapolis, Scottish Rite Cathedral, Indiana, U.S.A. ....	63	11,200 "
Albany City Hall, N.Y., U.S.A. ....	60	11,200 "
Durham, Duke University, N.C., U.S.A. ....	50	11,200 "
Sydney University, N.S.W., Australia ...	62	9,455 "
St. Helens, St. Mary's Church, Lancs., England ....	47	9,408 "
Loughborough War Memorial, England ...	60	9,284 "
Rotterdam City Hall, Holland ....	49	9,226 "
Springfield, Trinity M.E. Church, Mass., U.S.A. ....	61	7,918 "
Cobh (Queenstown) Cathedral, Irish Free State ....	42	7,582 "
Birmingham, Christ Church, Cranbrook, Mich., U.S.A. ....	61	6,836 "
Germantown, First M.E. Church, Phil., Pa., U.S.A. ....	61	6,720 "
Hartford, Trinity College, Conn., U.S.A. ....	30	5,600 "
Ames, Iowa State College, Iowa, U.S.A. ...	36	5,600 "
Zwolle, Holland ....	42	5,376 "
Cape Town City Hall, South Africa ....	37	5,313 "
Armagh, St. Patrick's Cathedral, Irish Free State ....	39	4,830 "
Lincoln, First Plymouth Congregational Church, Neb., U.S.A. ....	48	4,700 "
Zutphen, Wine House Tower, Holland ...	36	4,602 "
Bournville Schools, Birmingham ....	42	4,581 "
Morristown, St. Peter's Church, N.J., U.S.A. ....	35	4,495 "
Bathurst War Memorial, N.S.W., Australia	35	3,472 "
Gloucester, Portuguese Church, Mass, U.S.A. ....	31	2,826 "
Loughborough, The Bellfoundry ....	46	2,660 "
Flushing, St. James' Church, Holland ...	33	2,389 "
Andover, The Phillips Academy, Mass., U.S.A. ....	30	2,347 "
Parkgate, Mostyn House School, Cheshire	37	2,128 "
Birmingham, First Presbyterian Church, Ala., U.S.A. ....	25	1,709 "
Bennebroek, Holland ....	23	784 "
Appingedam, Holland ....	25	683 "
Eindhoven, Holland ....	25	602 "
Hattem, Holland ....	25	292 "



ECHO PRESS, LTD.,  
LOUGHBOROUGH.