

## The present bells

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The central tower contains a ring of twelve bells in the key of B natural with three semitone bells (also hung for ringing) and a bourdon bell (hung dead) for the clock. Details of the bells are as follows:

<i>Bell</i>	<i>Inscription</i>
1.	JOHANNES TAYLOR LOVGHBOROVGH FVDIT MDCCCLXIX <i>Waist:</i> S : MATTHIAS <i>Opposite:</i> THIS BELL IS GIVEN / TO THE GLORY OF GOD / IN LOVING MEMORY OF / MARTIN ABELL / A KING'S SCHOLAR / B.1840 - D. 1928 / ( <i>Taylor's rectangular mark</i> ) / RECAST 1928
2.	JOHANNES TAYLOR LOVGHBOROVGH FVDIT MDCCCLXIX <i>Waist:</i> S : JUDAS JACOBI <i>Opposite:</i> ( <i>Taylor's circular mark</i> ) / RECAST 1928
3.	JOHANNES TAYLOR LOVGHBOROVGH FVDIT MDCCCLXIX <i>Waist:</i> S : SIMON ZELOTES <i>Opposite:</i> ( <i>Taylor's circular mark</i> ) / RECAST 1928
4.	JOHANNES TAYLOR LOVGHBOROVGH FVDIT MDCCCLXIX <i>Waist:</i> S : JACOBVS ALPHÆI <i>Opposite:</i> ( <i>Taylor's circular mark</i> ) / RECAST 1928
4b.	JOHANNES TAYLOR LOVGHBOROVGH FVDIT MDCCCLXIX <i>Waist:</i> S : PAVLVS <i>Opposite:</i> ( <i>Taylor's circular mark</i> ) / RECAST 1928
5.	JOHANNES TAYLOR LOVGHBOROVGH FVDIT MDCCCLXIX <i>Waist:</i> S : MATTHÆVS <i>Opposite:</i> ( <i>Taylor's circular mark</i> ) / RECAST 1928
6.	JOHANNES TAYLOR LOVGHBOROVGH FVDIT MDCCCLXIX <i>Waist:</i> S : BARTHOLOMÆVS <i>Opposite:</i> ( <i>Taylor's circular mark</i> ) / RECAST 1928
6b.	J : TAYLOR LOVGHBOROVGH A : D MDCCCLXXV <i>Waist:</i> S : MARCVS <i>Opposite:</i> ( <i>Taylor's circular mark</i> ) / RECAST 1928
7.	JOHANNES TAYLOR LOVGHBOROVGH FVDIT MDCCCLXIX <i>Waist:</i> S : THOMAS <i>Opposite:</i> ( <i>Taylor's circular mark</i> ) / RECAST 1928

**Bell****Inscription**

8. JOHANNES TAYLOR LOVGHBOROVGH FVDIT MDCCCLXIX  
*Waist:* S : PHILIPPVS  
*Opposite:* (Taylor's circular mark) / RECAST 1928 / THE WORCESTERSHIRE AND DISTRICT / CHANGE RINGING ASSN. GAVE ME
- 8b. JOHANNES TAYLOR LOVGHBOROVGH FVDIT A : D MDCCCLXXV  
*Waist:* S : LVCAS  
*Opposite:* (Taylor's circular mark) / RECAST 1928
9. JOHANNES TAYLOR LOVGHBOROVGH FVDIT MDCCCLXIX  
*Waist:* S : ANDREAS  
*Opposite:* (Taylor's circular mark) / RECAST 1928 / THIS BELL WAS GIVEN BY / MRS. E. THOMAS / AND HER SON / E.P. THOMAS
10. JOHANNES TAYLOR LOVGHBOROVGH FVDIT ANNO DOMINI MDCCCLXIX  
*Waist:* S : JOHANNES  
*Opposite:* (Taylor's circular mark) / RECAST 1928 / TO THE GLORY OF GOD / AND IN MEMORY OF / NORMAN OGILVY, PRIEST / SOMETIME RECTOR OF HANBURY IN THIS DIOCESE / BORN OCT. 6. 1839. DIED JUNE 7. 1903. / AND OF / EMILY, HIS WIFE / BORN NOV. 27. 1841. DIED MAY 12. 1926. / AND OF / ALICE, THEIR DAUGHTER / BORN MARCH 17. 1871. DIED MAY 13 1926
11. JOHANNES TAYLOR LOVGHBOROVGH FVDIT ANNO DOMINI MDCCCLXIX  
*Waist:* S : JACOBVS  
*Opposite:* (Taylor's circular mark) / RECAST 1928 / IN MEMORY OF THE MEN OF WORCESTERSHIRE / WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES IN THE GREAT WAR, / ESPECIALLY J. ROBERT BLAKE & EDWARD S. BLAKE, / SONS OF THE RECTOR OF ST. HELEN'S, WORCESTER.
12. JOHANNES TAYLOR LOVGHBOROVGH FVDIT ANNO DOMINI MDCCCLXIX  
*Waist:* S : PETRVS  
*Opposite:* THIS PEAL OF BELLS / WAS RECAST BY / JOHN TAYLOR & CO. OF LOUGHBOROUGH / IN 1928 / \* \* \* / W. MOORE EDE D.D. / DEAN OF WORCESTER. / JOSEPH SMITH, CLERK OF THE WORKS / OF THE CATHEDRAL.

<b>Bell</b>	<b>Founder and date</b>	<b>Diameter</b>	<b>Nominal</b>	<b>Cwt.</b>	<b>Qrs.</b>	<b>Lbs.</b>
1.	John Taylor & Co, 1928	29"	1468	6	3	8
2.	John Taylor & Co, 1928	30½"	1308	7	1	1
3.	John Taylor & Co, 1928	31"	1235	7	2	20
4.	John Taylor & Co, 1928	32½"	1099	7	3	25
4b.	John Taylor & Co, 1928	33½"	1036	8	0	15
5.	John Taylor & Co, 1928	35"	980.5	8	2	19
6.	John Taylor & Co, 1928	36½"	922	10	0	6

<i>Bell</i>	<i>Founder and date</i>	<i>Diameter</i>	<i>Nominal</i>	<i>Cwt.</i>	<i>Qrs.</i>	<i>Lbs.</i>
6b.	John Taylor & Co, 1928	38"	871	10	2	24
7.	John Taylor & Co, 1928	39½"	823	12	0	1
8.	John Taylor & Co, 1928	43½"	733	14	3	26
8b.	John Taylor & Co, 1928	45"	692	16	1	16
9.	John Taylor & Co, 1928	48"	652.5	20	0	6
10.	John Taylor & Co, 1928	51"	616	25	2	10
11.	John Taylor & Co, 1928	57"	548.5	34	3	4
12.	John Taylor & Co, 1928	64"	488.8	48	0	2

The details of the bells given here are the correct ones. The weights given by Walters in *The Church Bells of Worcestershire* (1932) and for many years displayed in the belfry were adjusted to appear more in keeping with the sizes of the original bells (*see* below), those for bells 1 to 5 (including the flat 4th) having been exaggerated by half a hundredweight and the tenor (quoted as 49-2-0) by a hundredweight and a half.

The main inscriptions and the dedications on the waist are copied from the old bells of 1869 and 1875. They are in the elaborate gothic capitals copied from the set of three mediaeval bells at South Somercotes, in Lincolnshire, one of which is dated 1423. The capitals are decorated with foliage, flowers and human heads and grotesque figures. The added inscriptions of 1928 are in modern Roman lettering in various different sizes. Taylors' inscription book shows the letters OE where Æ is used above. In addition to the wording given above, each bell probably also bears a pattern number cast on the crown. The underlined portion of the inscription on the eighth bell was engraved on the bell after casting. The ornamental borders on the bells are repeated from their predecessors.

The Bourdon or Hour bell was cast at Loughborough on 28 August 1868. Details are as follows:

### *Inscription*

SVRGE QVI DORMIS ET EXVRGE A MORTVIS ET ILLVMINABIT TE  
CHRISTVS / JOHANNES TAYLOR, LOVGHBOROUVGH, FVDIT ANNO  
DOMINI MDCCCLXVIII. / IN VSVM ECCLESIAE CATHEDRALIS CHRISTI ET  
BEATÆ MARIÆ VIRGINIS IN CIVITATE ET COMITATV VIGORNIENSI  
*Waist: (four coats of arms - 1) England, 2) the See of Worcester, 3) the Dean and Chapter of Worcester and 4) the City of Worcester)*

<i>Bell</i>	<i>Founder and date</i>	<i>Diameter</i>	<i>Note</i>	<i>Cwt.</i>	<i>Qrs.</i>	<i>Lbs.</i>
1.	John Taylor & Co, 1868	76¾"	A	82	3	24

The weight given here is as it is now, after retuning in 1928. The original weight was not recorded in the foundry job books – probably because the bell was too heavy for the available scales – but in contemporary catalogues the weight was often quoted as 4 tons 10 cwt (or 90 cwt). The bell arrived in Worcester on Christmas Eve, 1868, and it was on view in the north transept for a while before being hoisted into the tower. It was tolled for service for the first time by Lord Grimthorpe on Sunday 17 January 1869.

Like the other bells, it is inscribed in the South Somercotes lettering. The Latin inscription may be translated as “Awake thou that sleepest and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. John Taylor, Loughborough, cast [me] in the year of our Lord 1868. For the use of the Cathedral Church of Christ and the Blessed Virgin Mary in the City and County of Worcester”.

## History

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By 1830 the tenor had become cracked and it was sent to Gloucester to be recast by John Rudhall. Rudhall’s notebook contains the following entries relating to the job:

Proposals - 10 August 1830, Agreed with the Dean & Chapter of Worcester to take down the broken Tenor Bell of the Peal of 8 at the Cathedral and recast it as near the weight of the old as circumstances will permit and fit Stock, Wheel &c and hang the new bell in the Tower for £70 which includes carriage of old & new. The note of the 7th is rather above F# the stroke above on the pipe

Account of old bells received – [*insertion after note of agreement with the Dean & Chapter*] Received the Tenor Aug<sup>t</sup>. 21, [Diameter] 4.1.0 [49”] ... w<sup>t</sup>. 20C. 1qr. 13lb. Clap<sup>r</sup>. 1qr. 2lb.

Measure, note and weight of new Bells when sent off and by what conveyance - 13 November 1830, Worcester Cathedral Tenor to 8, [Diameter] 4.0.6. [48¾”] ... wt. 20C 3qr 24lb Clap<sup>r</sup>. 35½ lb, Brasses 14 lb, something sharp<sup>r</sup>, than E pipe. Per Bridges Barge

As they existed before the Victorian restoration of the tower, the old eight bells were as follows:

<i>Bell</i>	<i>Inscription</i>
1.	GOD ( <i>floral border</i> ) SAVE ( <i>floral border</i> ) OVR ( <i>floral border</i> ) KING ( <i>floral border</i> ) 1641 ( <i>vine border</i> )
2.	<i>No inscription</i>
3.	+ IN ( <i>stop</i> ) H O N O R E ( <i>stop</i> ) S <u>C</u> I ( <i>stop</i> ) W O L S T A N I ( <i>stop</i> ) E <u>P</u> I
4.	<i>No inscription</i>
5.	[ <i>Not known</i> ]

**Bell****Inscription**

6. + H O C (*stop*) O P V S (*stop*) I M P L E T O (*stop*) I H V (*stop*)  
V I R T V T E (*stop*) F A V E T O
7. Missi De Celis Habeo Nomen Gabrielis (*mark*) (*Royal arms*) (*cross*)
8. RECAST AT GLOUCESTER BY JOHN RUDHALL ANNO DOM. 1830. (*border*)

<b>Bell</b>	<b>Founder and date</b>	<b>Diameter</b>	<b>Mouldings</b>	<b>Note</b>	<b>Cwt.</b>	<b>Qrs.</b>	<b>Lbs.</b>
1.	Thomas Hancox II, 1641 (?)	25 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> "	3:2-2:2:2	E flat	3	2	0*
2.	Unknown, n.d.	c.28"		D	4	0	0*
3.	William Burford, c.1380	30 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> "	3+:3*-1:3+:0	C	5	2	0*
4.	William Burford, c.1380	34 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> "	3+:3*:3+:1*	B flat	7	2	0*
5.	John Rudhall, 1820	38"		A flat	9	3	0*
6.	William Burford, c.1380	43"	3+:3*-1: 3+:1*	G	13	2	0*
7.	John Danyell's successor, c. 1475	44 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> "	3:3*-3:3:3	F	15	0	0*
8.	John Rudhall, 1830	48 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> "		E flat	20	3	24

The three bells attributed to William Burford are all very similar in shape, mouldings and canon profile – the blank bell (no.3) having slightly different details. The inscription on the St.Wulstan bell (no.4) has contraction marks over SCI and EPI, i.e for SANCTI and EPISCOPI. This bell has plain, simple Gothic capitals. The sixth, in contract, has large and elaborate Gothic lettering, stylistically similar but with internal decoration in the letters. The seventh is inscribed with crowned Gothic capitals and blackletter smalls. It bears a fine octagonal cross, the crowned Royal arms and the so-called Brede mark. There is some uncertainty regarding the founder of the treble, but Thomas Hancox II seems to be the most likely candidate.

Five of these bells are now on display in the cloisters. Originally dispersed when the Grimthorpe bells were installed, the four ancient bells which went to Amherst Tyssen's church at Didlington in Norfolk were returned in 1968. The treble went to Holy Trinity, Shrub Hill, and came back when that church was demolished in the 1968. The fifth went to St.Mark's, Wolverhampton, but it was recast by Blews in 1871. The tenor went to Christ Church, Staincliffe, near Dewsbury where it remains. The second was stolen.

The old tenor was installed – with a new clock made by William Potts & Sons of Leeds – at Staincliffe in 1873. A contemporary Potts catalogue records that the clock and bell were given by the late Mrs. Fox, and the bell seems to have been stored at Fox's Mill at Staincliffe for a few years before it was offered to the church. The weight given above is as recorded in John Rudhall's foundry notebook in 1830, but the canons were removed when Taylors rehung it with new fittings – ten years after it was first

installed – in 1883. The canons weighed 0-3-10 and so it is now reckoned to weigh 20-0-14.

The Grimthorpe bells for the Cathedral were cast in 1868-9 – the hour bell or bourdon on 28 August 1868 and the ring of twelve and the first semitone (the flat 4th) between April and September 1869. The bells were hung in the tower in the closing weeks of the year, but they were not rung or “opened” until some time later in 1870. The two additional semitones (the flat 6th and flat 8th) were cast on 20 Jan 1875. Details of the bells were as follows:

<b>Bell</b>	<b>Inscription</b>
1.	JOHANNES TAYLOR LOVGHBOROVGH FVDIT MDCCCLXIX / ( <i>Tudor-flower border all round</i> ) Waist: S : MATTHIAS
2.	JOHANNES TAYLOR LOVGHBOROVGH FVDIT MDCCCLXIX / ( <i>Tudor-flower border all round</i> ) Waist: S : JUDAS JACOBI
3.	JOHANNES TAYLOR LOVGHBOROVGH FVDIT MDCCCLXIX / ( <i>Tudor-flower border all round</i> ) Waist: S : SIMON ZELOTES
4.	JOHANNES TAYLOR LOVGHBOROVGH FVDIT MDCCCLXIX / ( <i>Tudor-flower border all round</i> ) Waist: S : JACOBVS ALPHÆI
4b.	JOHANNES TAYLOR LOVGHBOROVGH FVDIT MDCCCLXIX / ( <i>Tudor-flower border all round</i> ) Waist: S : PAVLVS
5.	JOHANNES TAYLOR LOVGHBOROVGH FVDIT MDCCCLXIX / ( <i>Tudor-flower border all round</i> ) Waist: S : MATTHÆVS
6.	JOHANNES TAYLOR LOVGHBOROVGH FVDIT MDCCCLXIX / ( <i>Tudor-flower border all round</i> ) Waist: S : BARTHOLOMÆVS
6b.	J : TAYLOR LOVGHBOROVGH A : D MDCCCLXXV / ( <i>Tudor-flower border all round</i> ) Waist: S : MARCVS
7.	( <i>Tudor-flower border all round</i> ) / JOHANNES TAYLOR LOVGHBOROVGH FVDIT MDCCCLXIX / ( <i>border all round</i> ) Waist: S : THOMAS
8.	( <i>Tudor-flower border all round</i> ) / JOHANNES TAYLOR LOVGHBOROVGH FVDIT MDCCCLXIX / ( <i>border all round</i> ) Waist: S : PHILIPPVS

**Bell****Inscription**

- 8b. JOHANNES TAYLOR LOVGHBOROVGH FVDIT A : D MDCCCLXXV  
*Waist: S : LVCAS*
9. *(Tudor-flower border all round) /* JOHANNES TAYLOR LOVGHBOROVGH  
FVDIT MDCCCLXIX */ (border all round)*  
*Waist: S : ANDREAS*
10. *(Tudor-flower border all round) /* JOHANNES TAYLOR LOVGHBOROVGH  
FVDIT ANNO DOMINI MDCCCLXIX */ (border all round)*  
*Waist: S : JOHANNES*
11. *(Tudor-flower border all round) /* JOHANNES TAYLOR LOVGHBOROVGH  
FVDIT ANNO DOMINI MDCCCLXIX */ (border all round)*  
*Waist: S : JACOBVS*
12. *(Tudor-flower border all round) /* JOHANNES TAYLOR LOVGHBOROVGH  
FVDIT ANNO DOMINI MDCCCLXIX */ (border all round)*  
*Waist: S : PETRVS*

<b>Bell</b>	<b>Founder and date</b>	<b>Diameter</b>	<b>Weight (1869/1875)</b>	<b>Nett weight (1928)</b>
1.	John Taylor & Co, 1869	28 <sup>7</sup> / <sub>8</sub> "	6-3-19	6-3-13
2.	John Taylor & Co, 1869	30"	7-0-22	7-0-17
3.	John Taylor & Co, 1869	31"	7-2-10	7-2-4
4.	John Taylor & Co, 1869	33"	8-3-0	8-2-21
4b.	John Taylor & Co, 1869	34 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> "	9-2-24	9-2-16
5.	John Taylor & Co, 1869	35 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> "	10-1-21	10-1-12
6.	John Taylor & Co, 1869	36 <sup>7</sup> / <sub>8</sub> "	11-0-24	11-0-13
6b.	John Taylor & Co, 1875	37 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> "	11-1-6	11-0-24
7.	John Taylor & Co, 1869	38 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> "	12-0-0	11-3-19
8.	John Taylor & Co, 1869	42 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> "	15-2-11	15-1-19

The complete tuning figures for these bells were taken in 1928 prior to the recasting. The bells were in the key of D flat, the nominal of the tenor being 549 hz or cps (D flat minus 16.84). The gothic lettering was in two different sizes, a smaller and simpler set being used on the seven smaller bells of 1869 (i.e. bells 1 to 6 and the flat fourth). The weights given here are those as originally recorded in 1869 (and 1875 for the two additional semitones) and the nett weights (after deducting an allowance for waste) as received back at the foundry in 1928.

The installation of the new bells, clock and chimes is recorded on a brass tablet in the north transept near the entrance to the tower. It reads:

“The peal of twelve bells, with the great clock bell and an additional half-tone bell, was cast and erected by Messrs. Taylor and Comp., of Loughborough, in the year 1870, at a cost of £5,000. The subscriptions were collected and the bells designed and placed under the direction of the Rev. Richard Cattley, M.A., Minor Canon, afterwards Honorary Canon of the Cathedral. The two half-tone bells necessary for the completion of the musical chimes were presented in the year 1874 by Mr. C.W. Lea, a son of Mr. Alderman Lea, the donor of the chiming machine”

Shortly after the bells were installed, an Ellacombe chiming apparatus fitted to enable all twelve bells to be chimed by one man. The work was done by Thomas Hooper of Woodbury, Devon, using the system devised in 1821 at Bitton (Gloucs) by the Rev. H.T. Ellacombe. The work was reported in the *Church Times* of 3 May 1872.

At Easter 1893 a set of 31 handbells – cast by James Shaw, Son & Co. of Bradford – was presented to the newly formed Worcester Cathedral Guild of Changeringers by Harvey Reeves. Reeves was a native of Worcester, the editor of the ringers’ newspaper the *Bell News* and a member of the committee of the Cathedral Guild.

The tenor was rehung on a new cast iron headstock by John Taylor & Co in September 1894. The original headstock – a massive wooden stock with continuous or “hoop” gudgeons – remained in the tower until the 1980s when it was lowered to the ground for display in the cloisters. The 1894 headstock was reused when the bells were rehung in 1928 and it remains in use on the present tenor.

The recasting of the bells in 1928 is commemorated on two identical brass tablets, one affixed to the panelling on the north side of the ringing room and the other on the bellframe. These are inscribed:

THE 15 BELLS IN THIS TOWER WERE RECAST / AND THE BOURDON BELL  
RETUNED / BY TAYLOR & CO. LOUGHBOROUGH IN 1928. / THE  
WORCESTERSHIRE AND DISTRICTS / CHANGE-RINGING ASSOCIATION/ GAVE  
THE EIGHTH BELL

The present *clock* is a massive three-train movement in a cast iron flatbed frame, made by Joyce of Whitchurch in 1869. It is fitted with a Grimthorpe gravity escapement. It strikes the hours on the Bourdon bell and the Westminster chimes on bells 7, 8, 9 and 12 of the ring. There are no external dials on the tower, but the clock drives a slave dial in the ringing room and a large dial high up on the east wall of the north transept. Inside the clock case there is a brass plate inscribed:

THIS CLOCK WAS MADE / A.D. 1869 BY J. & J.B. JOYCE / OF WHITCHURCH,  
SHROP- / SHIRE, FROM THE DESIGN / OF E.B. DENISON, Q.C. / F.R.A.S.



The previous clock, made by John Steight of Pershore in 1740, was sold to the Rev. Augustus Sutton of West Tofts, Norfolk, in 1867. At that point Sutton was the possessor of the old clocks from two cathedrals – Worcester and Canterbury! After Sutton's death, the Worcester clock was presented in 1889 by his son to the church at Market Weston, in Suffolk, where it remains in use. (2007)

The *carillon machine* is the original, made by Gillett & Bland of Croydon in 1872. On the frame it is signed with "GILLETT & BLAND / MANUFACTURERS / CROYDON" within a border on the frame, with the date "A.D. / 1872" in the side panels. The machine is of the Imhof type, the hammers being re-set automatically after striking. There are two hammers per bell. The barrels are interchangeable and have small pins. Above the mechanism there is a brass plate inscribed:

THIS CHIMING MACHINE WAS / GIVEN TO THE CATHEDRAL BY / MR.  
ALDERMAN J.W. LEA, IN / THE YEAR 1870, AND MADE BY / MESS<sup>RS</sup>. GILLETT  
AND BLAND OF / CROYDON UNDER THE DIRECTION / OF THE REV<sup>D</sup>.  
RICHARD CATTLEY, / M.A., THEN MINOR CANON, / AFTERWARDS  
HONORARY CANON / OF THE CATHEDRAL.

The installation of the carillon – and its later enhancement with the addition of two further bells in 1874 – is also recorded on the brass tablet (noted above) in the north transept near the entrance to the tower.

*Visited: CJP 1968 onwards passim*