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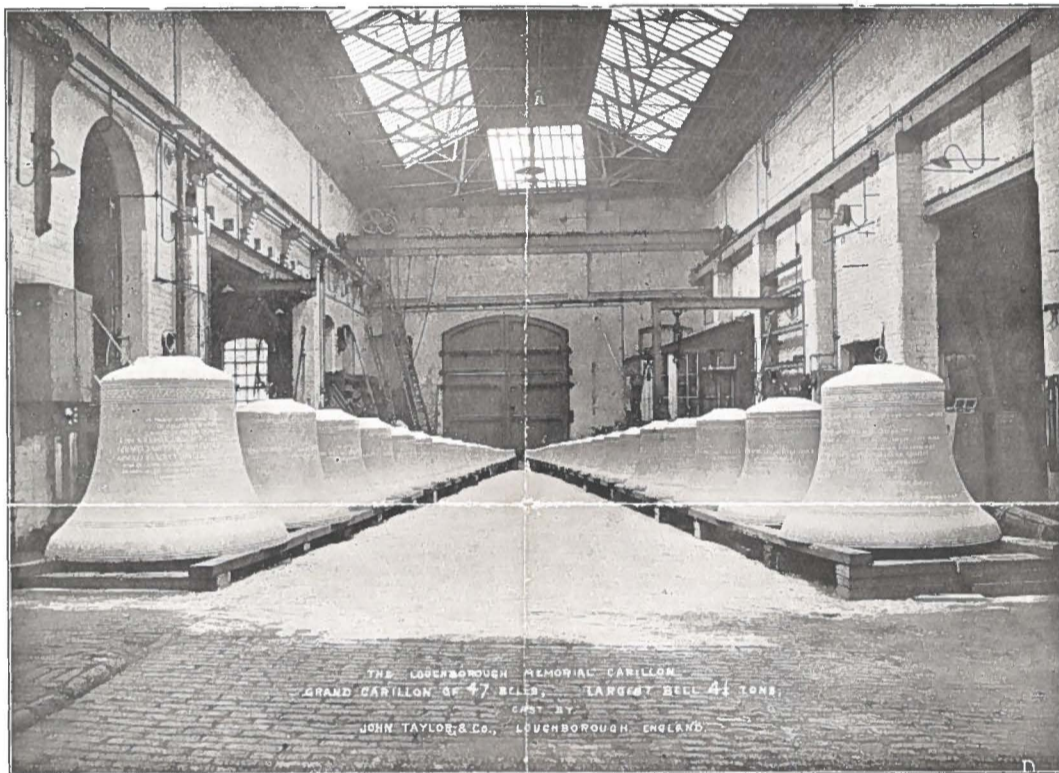
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LOUGHBOROUGH'S ANCIENT INDUSTRIES

THE CASTING OF BELLS



THE LOUGHBOROUGH MEMORIAL CARILLON.
Grand Carillon of 47 Bells. Largest Bell $4\frac{1}{2}$ tons.
Cast by JOHN TAYLOR & Co., LOUGHBOROUGH, ENGLAND.

If there is one industry more than any other which is entitled to be regarded as exclusive, that concerned with the manufacture and hanging of giant bells has assuredly one of the strongest claims to the distinction.

The casting of bells is one of our most ancient industries. Far back in the dim pages of history, when the ordinary surroundings of everyday life were primitive to a degree, when men performed the daily tasks which earned the wherewithal to support the lives of themselves and their dependants, with the aid of tools and implements of the utmost crudity, one reads of great buildings, monasteries and the like, which had their enormous bells.

Messrs. John Taylor & Co., whose Bell Foundry at Loughborough is well-known throughout the world, have an interesting history and an ancient tradition of excellence for their manufactures extremely fascinating to the student of industry. It was as long ago as the middle or latter half of the fourteenth century that Johannes de Stafford first established at Leicester a bell foundry which proved to be the foundation stone, so to speak, of the present Messrs. John Taylor & Co. The next man to handle the business

was William Miller, whose widow, marrying Thomas Newcombe, caused it to pass eventually into the hands of the Newcombe family, into which she had married. It was three grandsons of Thomas Newcombe who, in partnership with one Francis Watts, were responsible for casting in 1585 the old tenor bell of Loughborough Parish Church, while another member of this family, Edward, went later to Nottingham, where, in partnership with Henry Oldfield, he cast the world-famous "Great Tom" of Lincoln in the year 1610.

Thus did this famous business progress from generation to generation until in the latter half of the eighteenth century the name of Taylor first became associated with the concern when Robert Taylor became apprentice to Edward Arnold, the then proprietor of the business. Robert Taylor eventually succeeded to the business, and one of his first accomplishments was the casting of the peal of bells in Bletsoe Church, which bear the date 1786. In 1858 the famous bell foundry came into the hands of John William Taylor, whose energy and ability as a bell-founder were responsible for placing the business in the very front rank of this most exclusive industry, and under the able guidance of

this justly renowned bell-founder many notable bells and peals were cast. One of the most illustrious of the firm's accomplishments at this period was perhaps the casting of "Great Paul," the largest bell in the British Empire, which was cast in November, 1881, and installed in the South Tower of the West front of St. Paul's Cathedral, where it was solemnly dedicated on June 3rd, 1882.

The famous "Great John" of Beverley and the re-casting of "Grandison," the tenor bell of the ring of Exeter Cathedral, were also accomplishments of this period, as were also, among others, the peals of the Cathedrals of Worcester; Newcastle-on-Tyne; St. Mary's, Edinburgh; St. Patrick's, Dublin; and Christ-church, New Zealand; and the Universities of Liverpool, Glasgow and Bombay.


The old traditions of the famous house have not suffered under its present proprietors, rather have they been enhanced. Many great improvements in ringing peals and stationary chimes have been introduced in recent years, and the bells of Truro, Lincoln and Dunblane Cathedrals, South Shields and Pretoria Town Halls, testify to the high specialist qualifications of the firm and the efficiency of the staff and plant of the foundry. The bells of the Universities of Birmingham in England, and Yale in the United States of America, are other outstanding examples of the fine work of the present day firm, while a full account of all the installations for which Messrs. John Taylor & Co. are responsible would occupy much more space than can possibly be allotted to a short article.

One of the most noteworthy accomplishments of the present firm is the great advancement which they have made in the casting and installing of "Carillons." One hears very little of these "Carillons," which consist of chromatic scales of bells, hung stationary, and played by hand from a keyboard or clavier, in this country, though they are fairly common in Holland and Belgium. Messrs. Taylor & Co., in devoting a large portion of their activities to this section of

the industry, have been responsible for giving a fillip to a most fascinating department of musical art, which it is safe to say will have very far-reaching effects in this country. Many readers will remember the prominence recently afforded to the "Carillon" in the daily Press on the occasion, in July, 1923, of the unveiling of Loughborough's famous War Memorial, consisting of a dignified campanile 152 feet in height with a wonderful "Carillon" of 47 bells. Messrs. John Taylor & Co. were responsible for this beautiful "Carillon," which as a War Memorial is unique in this country, and has the additional peculiarity of being provided by a local firm, while two local musicians were appointed as carillonneur and assistant-carillonneur after a period of tutoring in the famed Bell School of Malines. Thus it will be seen that Messrs. Taylor & Co. are largely responsible for the introduction of the beautiful art of bell-music into this country, and now that so large a number of people have had the opportunity for the first time of listening to this wonderful music—it was estimated that something like 100,000 were present at the unveiling ceremony—there is little doubt that the Loughborough installation is only the first of many which this old-established Bell Foundry will be called upon to furnish.

Other "Carillons" which have been cast and installed by Messrs. Taylor & Co. are at Rotterdam Town Hall, Holland; Queenstown Catholic Cathedral, Ireland; Armagh Cathedral, Ireland; Gloucester, Mass., U.S.A.; St. Peter's Church, Morristown, N.J.; The Phillips Academy, Andover, Mass.; The Presbyterian Church, Birmingham, Ala., U.S.A.; Cape Town City Hall, S.A.; The Wine House Tower, Zutphen, Holland; St. James' Church, Flushing, Holland; Parkgate, in Cheshire; and at Bournville, Birmingham. Such achievements in so essentially exclusively an industry speak for themselves, and this distinguished Loughborough house may confidently look forward to a future of well-merited prosperity which will eclipse all previous records.

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