

An Account of the Clock and Chimes of the Parish Church of All Saints, Derby.

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THE notices of the clock and chimes of All Saints' Church, are by no means so full as those relating to the bells; but as they contain many interesting facts, and as the sources from which they are obtained are inaccessible to most people, no apology is necessary for laying them before the members of our Society.

We are quite as much in the dark as to when the clock first existed, as we are about the bells, the first entry being one simply for "mendinge the clocke" about 1575; and those that follow, for the next hundred years, are chiefly charges for oil, wire, etc., for keeping the machinery in order. This earliest mentioned clock differed from the present in one external particular, that whereas we now see two clock faces, the old one boasted but one, and, in addition, conveyed the time to the people in the Church by an interior dial. It is also doubtful whether our ancient friend, in its early days, struck the hours, as an entry in 1631 runs—

Itm a litle rope for the clocke plumme.....— 0 — 2 — 4
and one clock weight could only drive the going part; still a charge "ffor wier for ye clocke" in 1639, and succeeding years, and an item in 1670, in Josiah Wheeldon's bill,*

ffor makeinge y^e Clocke hammer..... 00=04=00
shows that this was not always the case; but the absence of any decisive entry leaves the question an open one.

* Journal of the Derbyshire Archæological Society, vol. i., p. 59.

The following are from the Churchwardens' Accounts—

1623	Itm Payed for Francis Renolds winding clock	0—	2—	0
1625	Itm for a rope for the Clocke, & for an 100 nayles	0—	3—	3
1633	p ^d Blagrave for raying & making a new clockhouse *	02	00	0
	P ^d Blagrave for making two wheels for clocke	02	00	0
	P ^d Robt. Bagely for painting y ^e dial in y ^e Church	00	01	4
1637	Paide G. Blagrave for y ^e Diall	3	6	8
1639	ffor wier for y ^e clocke	0	2	0
1640	ffor wier for clock and chime By y ^e yeere	0	2	0
	ffor a Levy (? lever) for y ^e Church Clocke	0	0	8
1657	ffor the clock-dyall in the Church to Ralph Risperton for his worke	02	16	04
	To Naylor for boards of Each side dyall	00	10	00
	To John Vickers for Carpentring worke for the clock house and the dyall, and shifting the stairs, all stuff and workmanship by Bill	81	16	00
	Pd Ed Robinson by Bill in ffeb ^y for Repairing the chimes and wheele and spindles to the Dyall to the Street and lock mending	01	05	06
	Pd for 4lb of Clock wire	00	05	00
1666	for clocke wire and beesoms	00	4	0

From the Book of Orders :—

March 31. 1673.

“Order'd that y^e p^rsent churchwardens make y^t place up wth boards
y is over y^e Dyall.”

From the Accounts.

1673. Pd Barker for whitening y^e boards above y^e Dyall00—04—06

These two last entries of course refer to the inside dial.

The year 1679 brings us to an important addition to the clock,
—the machinery for striking the quarters—but, unfortunately, the
only entry on the subject is the following minute in the Book of
Orders, passed at a Parish meeting on May 12.

“It is further ordered y^e same day, that Jno. Ragg, the p^rsent Sexton,
“shall have fourty shillings paid to him by the p^rsent Churchwardens for
“his charge and paines in setting up y^e quart Clock.”

Fifty-three years later we reach the next phase in the history of
the clock, to wit, the removal of the old one, and erection of a
successor. At a parish meeting held August 29, it was

“Order'd that the Present Churchwardens shall Treat with proper
“Persons about a New Clock for the Church. It is Likewise Order'd
“that the present Church Wardens Do imploy proper Workmen to take
“Down the Clock Loft, and seat the under part of the Loft over it as
“they shall think proper.”

* The wooden case which encloses the clock.

And at a meeting on February 19, 173 $\frac{2}{3}$ it was

“Order’d that George Ashmore shall be paid the sum of Eight Pounds and Eight Shillings, by the present ChurchWardens, for the new Clock, which he lately put up in All Saints Steeple, which is hereby approved by the Parish, and also after the said George Ashmore hath made some Little Amendment in the Quarter Clock, and made an Alteration in the Clock according to Mr. Parkers Directions, shall be consider’d farther as the Parish shall think Reasonable.”

From these two minutes we gather two facts, first, that one George Ashmore was engaged by the Churchwardens to put up a new clock, which he did at a cost of eight guineas, and secondly, that the old clock did not occupy the position of its successors.

It has been previously pointed out in the paper on the bells * that the ringing loft was once under the tower, on a level with the sill of the west window, and it would appear that the “Clockhouse” stood on this loft,† with the “Dyall to the Street,” over the west door, at the base of the window, the “dial *in y^e Church,*” being on the eastern side of it. With the old clock, the clockhouse was removed, and a new one erected on the floor higher up in the tower, where the present clock is, to contain Ashmore’s. The space in the gallery‡ which had been occupied, was then seated.

In spite of its approval by the Parish, the new clock does not appear to have been a good one, having been superseded or greatly altered by Whitehurst, in 1745. Here again, the Parish books do not yield a morsel of information, a circumstance which is most unaccountable, and it is the present clock which tells its own tale—“J. WHITEHURST DERBY 1745.” being engraved on the stop wheel.

This clock No. 3—which is the one now in the tower—is a four-day one, with a three-wheel train, and the dead-beat pin-wheel escapement which was invented by Whitehurst. The pendulum is about 15 feet long, and beats once every two seconds. The barrels on which the weight-ropes are wound are

* Journal, vol. i., p. 64.

† This loft was apparently only partially removed in 1665-6.

‡ The gallery here mentioned is not now in existence.

of great size, hempen ropes being in use at the period when the clock was constructed—the weights are now suspended by wire ones. The going-weight weighs $2\frac{1}{2}$ cwt., the striking-weight 11 cwt., and the quarter-weight 9 cwt. The hammer which strikes the hours on the great bell, is about 50 lbs. in weight. The quarters are struck upon the third and sixth bells. There are two dials, each measuring 9 feet 6 inches in diameter, one on the south, the other on the western face of the tower. Like their brother on the eastern side of S. Peter's, they are decidedly more useful than ornamental, and similarly disfigure the tower of the Church.

The accounts and Books of Orders give the following additional particulars:—

1747. Oct. 20.

“Ordered that Mr. Whitehurst shall have the sum £2 10s. od. for one year, to commence from Michael's last, for his taking Care of the Clock, and keeping it in good order.”

1750. Jany. 22.

“It is ordered that the Sexton of this Parish shall hereafter, together with the other parts of his Duty, constantly clean the Ch: Yard, when, and at such times as it wants; and that if he is not capable to take care of the Clock, then, in such case, the Church Wardens shall have power to pay a Proper Person for such service out of the sallery that is usually paid to the Sexton.”

1751. Sept. 10.

“Ordered that the present Church Wardens do pay Mr. Bassano his Bill for painting and Gilding the Dial Plates fixt upon the steeple, which is Nine Pounds and nine shillings.”

1754. June 13.

“It is Ordered that Mr. Whitehurst shall receive from the Church Wardens of this Parish the sume of three Pounds and three shillings a year for winding up the Clock and keeping it in repair, the Parish to be at the charge of Ropes when necessary, and likewise for the keeping the Chimes in all repairs and cleaning. Mr. Frost to wind up the Chimes, and to allow out of his usuall sallery, to be paid by the Churchwardens to Mr. Whitehurst, of the sume of one Pound, eleven shillings, and six Pence, being half of the sallery now settled upon Mr. Whitehurst for his trouble.”

1778. March 5th.

“That the Churchwardens shall, with all convenient speed, repair and
“ beautify the Church Dial belonging to this parish.”

1810. Dec. 10.

Two guineas per annum was added to Whitehurst's salary for taking care of the clock.

1816. June 27.

“Mr. Dobson for scaffolding to gild the Clock face 5 5 0.”

There is also a payment of £47 16s. 6d. in 1816, to Whitehurst and Son, but the entry does not record what for. Perhaps they relate to the chimes.

There is yet a notice of another means of telling the time of day. In 1655 occurs—

“Itm to Thomas Harrison for worke done at Sun Dyall 00 : 10 : 10”

This antiquated timepiece we believe to have been affixed to the south porch of the old Church, but after the demolition of the latter, it found its way to the southern side of the tower, whence it was in all probability finally removed at the restoration of 1845.

The entries relating to the chimes are more numerous than those respecting the clock, but I do not see why we are to assume that the term “chimes” always denotes the machinery for playing tunes on the bells, it is more probable that the quarters of the clock are meant in most cases, though as the entries are not kept distinct we cannot say which is actually referred to.

The earliest notice occurs 2 Hen. VIII. (1510-11), in the account of John Newton and John Clifton, Churchwardens.

“Itm payed for on C (one cwt.) iron to make the chime vs.”

An interval of about 60 years brings us to the next—

1570-80 pd. to the chimemaker for mackinge the chime and
mendinge the clocke iij^{ij} x ij

What sort of a machine this was, it would be difficult to learn.

The 1620 Book of Accounts is prolific in entries of repairs, etc., the chief points being the setting of the chyme in 1629, and extensive repairs in the years 1640, 1646, 1648, and 1669.

1623	Itm for the rope for the chime.....	0	5	6
	Itm wire for the Chyme and for mending a seatedoor	0	1	4
	Itm for mending a seate door and for worke about the chime	0	1	7
	Itm for a rope to wynd upp the Chyme.....	0	3	0
1624	Itm for wyre for the Clocke and Chyme	0	2	0
1625	Itm for wyre, to the Clocke, and Chyme	0	2	0
1626	Itm paied for yron for Clocke and Chyme	0	2	0
1627	Itm paied Robert Wood for a Chyme rope	0	8	0
1628	Itm paied for grease	0	0	4
1629	Itm laied out for the setting upp of the Chyme	13	11	0
1631	Itm for wire for the clocke and chime p ann.....	0	— 2	— 0
	Itm for irons and other worke about the chime pulley.	0	— 1	— 8
1632	It pd John Shaw for a Chyme rope	0	19	6
1633	pd G. Blgrave for wire for clocke and chimes p an ..	00	02	0
1635	To Blgrave for Chime-wires	0	2	0
	Paid Clem: Spicer for a great chime rope, A little chime rope, and 1 Bell rope.....	1	12	0
1636	To Blgrave for wires for y ^e chimes.....	0	2	0
1640	ffor mending y ^e chymes	1	0	8
1641	Blgrave for wire for y ^e chimes	0	2	0

A yearly allowance was made for wire for repairing the Clock and Chimes.

1646	It paid for reparering the Chymes	6	13	6
1647	It to Edward Daft for mending a clapper and a chyme hāmer	0	4	6
	It for neales, cottars, and other things about the chimes	0	2	3
1648	It for mending Clock and Chymes	0	17	0
1655	Itm to Jno Robinson for mending chimes	00	: 07	: 0
1657	Mending the chymes and Dressing the Clock at beginning of the yeere	00	09	00
	Pd for a long Chyme rope had the last yeer.....	00	09	06
	To Smalley Carpenter, and the Smith for worke at the fflore to Lower and fasten where the Chyme wires Run and Daft for mending A bell Clap all is..	00	16	07
1663	It Hugh Burne pviding chime rope	00	— 04	— 09
1667	It Robert Bourne for a chime rope,.....& klok....	00	: 04	: 02
1669	paid to Nath. Cokcin for mending the chime	2	2	8
1670-1	Nathaniel Cockayne for mending chyme and bells	0	= 11	= 0
	To Nathaniel Cockayne for chimes & other things .	0	— 13	= 4
1679-80	Payd William Litchford a bill for bell ropes & for Chime ropaes	2	— 9	0
1683-4	for wire for the Chimes and shooting the Ropes..	00	: 03	: 06
1684-5	paide John Ragg for Bell work & Chimes	0	— 5	0

From the Book of Orders :—

August 1. 1688.

“Ordered that the Chymes shall be put in order by the psent

“Churchwardens of this Pishe, and when they are put in order the

“Pishe will take care to pay the charges thereof soo as the same

“exceed not the Sume of ffive pounds.”

June 12. 1704.

"It is also ordered that Henry Goulding shall pay John Ragg
"sexton fforty shillings for six years sallary oweing last Easter for
"finding oile and wire for the Chimes and other necessarys."

1735.

"It is Ordered that Mr. Thomas Wragg in consideration of a pro-
"posal which he now makes to give directions for Repairing and
"setting in order the Chimes, shall receive the sum of five guineas for
"his trouble when the same is completed; and the Church Wardens
"do Employ proper workmen to perform the same."

1743. May 2.

"It is Order'd that the Church Wardens shall employ Mr. White-
"house Mr. Thomas Sheppard Mr. John Mannings and Mr. Charles
"Finney to view the work done at the Chimes by Wm. Holden and
"Wm. Moore, and give the vullue of it, and that the Church Wardens
"do pay them for their trouble."

1743. July 26.

"It is ordered that Mr. Storer and Mr. Melland our late Church
"Wardens do pay Mr. Holden and Mr. Moore their Bills for Work
"done at the Chimes and for other Work done for the Parish."

The existing chimes are traditionally asserted to have been made by Whitehurst, at the same time as the clock, but in the absence of any corroborative evidence in the Parish books, the question must be an open one. It has been suggested that Whitehurst presented the Parish with both clock and chimes, and hence the silence of the records—though one would have expected to find even then a votè of thanks—but at the time under notice (1745) his business could not have been a sufficiently prosperous one to have enabled him to have afforded so handsome a gift.

The machinery resembles, in principle, a monster musical box. At the hours of 12, 4, 6, and 9, day and night, the clock releases a catch, which sets a heavy leaden weight of 13 cwt. in motion; this in turn drives a huge wooden cylinder 4 feet in diameter, the circumference of which is set with projecting pins. In front of the barrel is a row of twenty pivoted levers, two for each bell. As the machine revolves, one end of a lever is raised by a pin on the barrel, while the depression of the other extremity pulls a wire which lifts a hammer,

as the barrel continues to revolve the lever is set free, and the hammer falling on the bell produces sound. The apparatus has to be wound up twice daily, and by a movement of the barrel is made to play a fresh tune on each day of the week. The following is the programme:—

Sunday“ *Old 104th (Hanover).*”
 Monday“ *The Lass of Pattie's Mill.*”
 Tuesday“ *The Highland Laddie.*”
 Wednesday...“ *The Shady Bowers.*”
 Thursday ...“ *The National Anthem.*”
 Friday.....“ *Handel's March in Scipio.*”
 Saturday .. .“ *The Silken Garter.*”

Not a very ecclesiastical selection !

Two of these tunes were added in 1762, and the National Anthem in 1794.

The following are the only entries I can find:—

1762	For setting Two Tunes on the Chimes	1 . 1 . 0
	One year Salary for Clock & Chimes	3 . 3 . 0
1781	William Whitehurst for Repairing the Chimes	9 . 19 . 6
1790	Mr. Whitehurst for Ropes for Clock and Chimes, etc. . .	7 . 0 . 0
1794	Paid Mr. Whitehurst's bill for setting a tune on the Chimes—God save the King	5 . 5 . 0

The machinery was overhauled and put right a few years ago, but appears to have again relapsed into its evil ways, dropping a note here and there, and performing other little eccentricities. When they are again put in order—which we hope will be soon—it would be most desirable to alter the clock at the same time, so that the celebrated “Cambridge Quarters” might take the place of the present “ding-dong” arrangement. A ring of ten or twelve bells is requisite to get the proper interval, and as the only question here is one of expense, that little difficulty might easily be got over.*

In the account of the bells in the last paper, I overlooked one curious custom, viz.: the ringing on Sundays and Holy Days, of one bell, at 7 a.m., and two bells at 8 a.m. This, like the

* The Cambridge Quarters are in use at St. Luke's, Derby, but the effect is completely spoiled owing to a ring of eight bells not supplying the requisite interval for the hour-bell.

old 5 o'clock bell, was of pre-Reformation derivation, and a relic probably of the bells for one or other of the various Masses. It is a matter of great regret that this remnant of the past was discontinued under the late regime, which was so disastrous to the old customs and time-honoured arrangements of this ancient Church.