

Addendum No 8 to *Musical Handbells*

JOHN JARRETT OF WORCESTER

One of the founders I discuss on page 42 of *Musical Handbells* is John Jarrett of Worcester. I commented that I had never seen any of his bells, although I had records of three sets. Since the publication of the book another set of ten has come to light and I have before me, as I write, the tenor of this set. I have also had a copy of some interesting genealogical research by Mr Christopher J Pickford, and with his permission I have incorporated some of this into this paper.

The set of ten is owned by Mr Roy LeMarechal from Hampshire. Only the largest bell has any markings. It is a 20E, with a diameter of 162 mm. The exterior has been smoothly turned and polished but the interior is only roughly turned, the crown being left as cast. A deep depression has been cast around the hole for the staple. The fittings are not original.

This photograph shows the inscription engraved on the waist of this bell.



From the 1841 census records for the St John in Bedwardine area of Worcester, Mr Pickford has traced a John Jarrett, a bellhanger aged 40, who was living with his wife, Mary Ann, a 35 year old milliner, and their eight-year old daughter, Mary Ann, at St John's. This indicates that this ring of ten from Hampshire was from about this period of Jarrett's life.

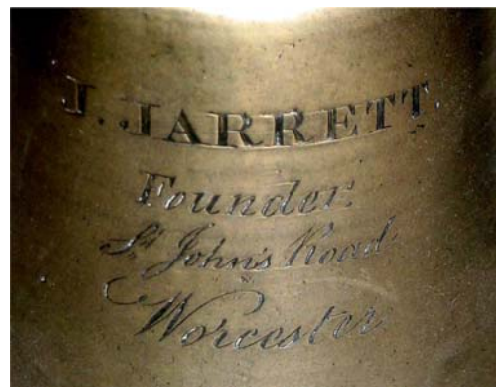
The first of the three sets I noted when I published *Musical Handbells* in 2000 was an octave, the largest bell being size 18G. The bells were all roughly tuned, being hand filed to pitch, and like the Hampshire set, the tenor was inscribed around the waist: J JARRETT / Founder / St John's Road / WORCESTER. This set also dates from the 1840s. A further set of 12, owned at one time by the donor of the Bewdley Folk Museum, had the tenor inscribed in a similar manner but with the address given as Ombersley, Droitwich, Worcestershire. Mr Pickford found John Jarrett in the 1851 census, now aged 50, a carpenter, living with his eight year old son, Thomas, and wife Mary Ann and residing at Ombersley, so these bells date from the 1850s.

The third known set of his handbells was recorded on page ten of *Reverberations*, April 1976. This unique set was owned by the late Mr. John Hinton of Worcester, and comprised of 15 Jarrett bells, mounted without handles in a coffin shaped box and played by tapping with two hammers. This set has been in his family for over 150 years and five generations of Hintons have given public performances upon them.

Summarising the remainder of the biographical details elucidated by Mr Pickford: John Jarrett, son of William and Abigail Jarrett, was baptized at Grafton Fyford on April 26, 1798. He, or another John Jarritt(sic), married Mary Ann Richardson at Whittington, Worcester on March 17, 1825, and this was probably the same John Jarrett at St John's, Worcester, who received a copy of the letter from Thomas Mears on August 19, 1837 that is in the Whitechapel letterbook. The 1841 census lists him as being at St John in Bedwardine, Worcester with his wife Mary Ann and eight-year old daughter of the same name, and the census for ten years later indicates he was a carpenter at Ombersley, Worcester with his wife and eight-year old son, Thomas.

The Whitechapel daybook entry for October 30, 1846, invoiced some bells for Salwarpe to J. Jarrett, Worcester and the 1861 census lists him with his wife and unmarried son, Thomas William, aged 17 – and two Jarrett grandchildren - at Mutton Hall, Worcester. His death was registered in the Droitwich district in the April-June quarter of 1863. The next census showed his widow and son – still unmarried – lived in a caravan in St John's Road in St Clement's, Worcester.

That is a summary of all the information I had on John Jarrett until February 2010. Discussing handbells, books and other ringing ephemera with Mr Fraser Clift he mentioned he had an inscribed Jarrett handbell and asked if I'd be interested in adding its details to my collection, and supplied these photographs.



The address is the earlier one; perhaps his earlier work was with handbells, and his later work was as a carpenter and bell-hanger. This photograph has also proved very useful, for the bell appears to have an original cap, and this shows some previously unidentified leather stamps.



This enlargement of the cap clearly shows the six-pointed stars, approximately 3 mm from point to point, alternating with stars with five bulbous rounded points 11-12 mm across.



I would like to thank Messrs LeMarechal, Clift and Pickford for the loan of their material and valuable help in the preparation of this article, all of which adds to our knowledge of this founder.

William Butler
Revised March 2010