

## Warmington St Michael

By C J Pickford

The western tower of this church contains three bells, originally hung for ringing but recently rehung for swing chiming. The notes of the bells correspond to those of the treble, third and tenor bells of a ring of four in the key of F sharp.

### Bell Inscription

1. T:Robinson C:W:.. H:B:HARISON VICAR + J:BRIANT HERTFORD FECIT 1811
2. + PRAISE THE LORDE 1616
3. (Brasyer cross) E D W A R D E N E W C O M M A D E M E E 1602

Bell	Founder and date	Diameter	Mouldings	Note	Cwt.	Qrs.	Lbs.
1.	John Briant, 1811	34	2:2 - 2:3:2	B	7	0	19
2.	Newcombe, 1616	36¼	2:2 - 2:3:2	G sharp	8	0	3
3.	Edward Newcombe, 1602	39¾	3:2 - 3:3:2	F sharp	9	3	14

The oldest of these three bells is the tenor which, according to the inscription, was cast by Edward Newcombe in 1602. It bears the Brasyer cross and lettering more usually associated with the Watts family, however, and it seems possible that the bell was cast at Leicester by Newcombe and Watts in partnership. The second bell was cast at Leicester in 1616, and it is similar to two bells of the same date at Moreton Morrell which bear the same cross and gothic lettering.

The founder was probably Edward Newcombe. The treble bell was recast in 1811 by John Briant of Hertford, and the churchwardens accounts reveal that the work was done under sub-contract to the bellhanger John Waters of Kings Sutton who rehung the bells in 1810. The old bell was taken to Fenny Compton in July 1809 and transported to Hertford by canal, and the new bell arrived in October 1811. All three bells retain their canons, and they were all quarter turned in 1903 and turned again in 2002.

The oak bell frame was made by John Waters of Kings Sutton whose receipts for a total of £60 'for two beams, a Frame and Hanging a Peal of three Bells' are dated 19 October 1809 and 5 December 1811. The Churchwardens accounts show that Waters' work also included 'new casting one Bell'. The new frame was fetched from Kings Sutton in October 1809 and the bells were hung in April 1810, although the work was not fully completed until the new treble bell was delivered in October 1811. The frame consists of cills, main braces and long frame heads. The treble and second bells swing north to south in adjacent pits, and the tenor swings east to west and hangs to the south of the other bells.

The bells were quarter turned and rehung with new fittings in 1902 by Frederick White and Son of Appleton, Berkshire. The work cost £24, and the bell hangers' account was settled on 16th July 1903. The fittings consist of elm headstock, strap gudgeons (without stock hoops), gunmetal bearings in iron housings, traditional type wheels with iron wheel stays, traditional type stays and sliders and clappers suspended from reversing blocks fixed to the cast-in crown staples. The name of 'F WHITE' is cold stamped on the ironwork by which the bells are secured to their headstocks.

The bells were again rehung in 2002 when Eayre and Smith provided new swing-chiming fittings. These consist of 'pot' type fabricated steel canon-retaining stocks, steel gudgeons, ball bearings, iron chiming levers, clappers and independent crown staples and group pulleys. The bells all have deep resin pads cast on the crowns.

A plaque in the tower records that the clock was 'subscribed for by relatives and friends....of the Rev. W. H. Taylor, Rector, and erected 1888'. The clock was installed by Smith of Derby and it is dated '1889' on the setting dial. It is a three-train flatbed movement with a pinwheel escapement. It strikes the hours on the tenor and ding-dong quarters on the treble and tenor and shows the hours on a single dial on the north face of the tower. It was converted to auto-wind by David R Jones in 2002.

Visited CJP, KCB, 8 April 1973; CJP, CJND, RLJ, 3 August 1979; CJP 1 June 1995 and CJP and HEP 7 August 2004.