

In 1951, W. Potts & Sons of Leeds were asked to repair the clock, and submitted an estimate for £178. However, they had in stock a much younger clock, made in 1878 by J. B. Joyce, recently removed from Ardern Park in Bredbury, which they could offer to Mottram Church for £278. The offer was accepted, and the clock was installed.

The new clock was dedicated by the Bishop of Stockport on February 10th 1952, the service including the very apt reading from Ecclesiastes printed on the front of this leaflet.

This clock has a four-leg gravity escapement, and a pendulum about 6 foot long, beating once every 2.5 seconds. It is fitted with a striking mechanism, connected by a cable to the belfry above, where a hammer strikes the tenor bell on the hour. This hammer has to be 'pulled off' by the bell-ringers before they ring the bells. The clock also has a westminster chime mechanism fitted, but this is not used.

## The Recent Renovation

The clock has performed well, apart from a repair carried out in 1983. However, by 1999, the two faces were in a very poor state of repair, and the winder had a tendency to jam. Then, in a summer storm, one of the hands on the north face came crashing to the ground. Tameside Council kindly agreed to pay for a complete renovation, and our insurers covered the cost of the new hand.

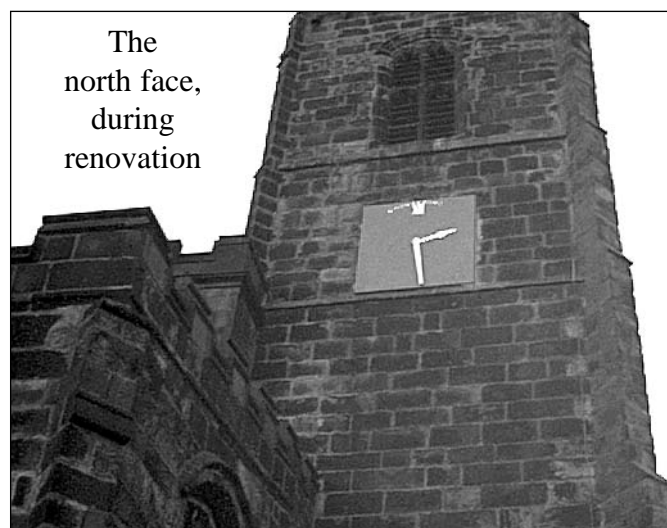
The clock, which had been wound twice a week for the past 48 years at Mottram, was fitted with an electric winder. The old clock weights which used to descend all the way to the bottom of the tower, were replaced by much smaller weights which now drop only 3 feet, and a motor (*at the top of the picture, overleaf*) winds the clock two or three times a day.

## And finally, a mention for the good citizens who have wound the clock:

In 1791, the Churchwarden's accounts mention John Tinker being paid 10/- per year to wind the clock, then in 1816 Joseph Tinker had taken on the job.

Herbert Roebuck, the Verger for many years, wound the clock until his retirement in the 1970's.

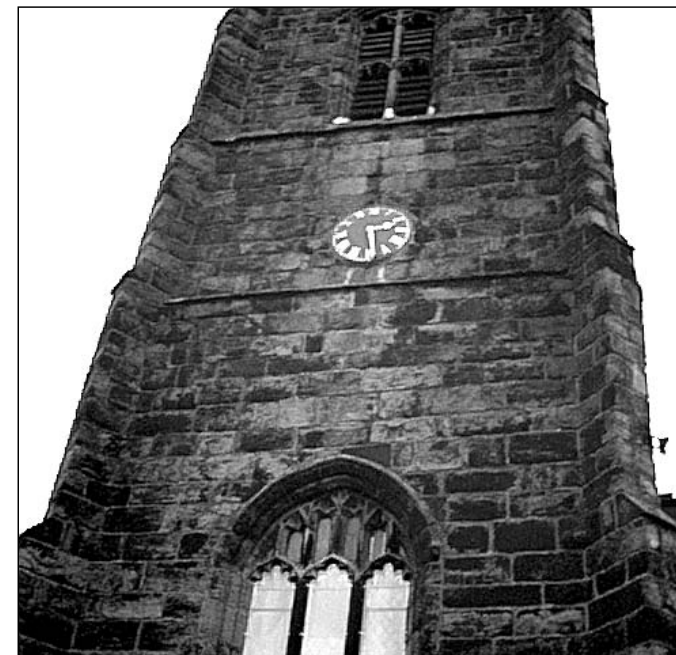
It is not known who took over from Herbert, but Trevor Beard and Fred Robinson did the job from 1983 to 1989, followed by Peter Coxall, assisted by the Vicar and bellringers for the final ten years.



The north face, during renovation

St. Michael & All Angels,  
Mottram in Longdendale

# THE CLOCK



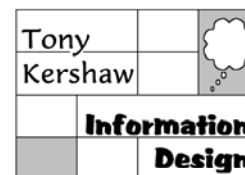
'To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven.  
A time to be born, and a time to die;  
A time to plant and a time to pluck up that which has been planted....'

*Ecclesiastes 3*

## Produced by the Friends of Mottram Parish Church.

With thanks to Joyce Powell who did most of the research, and W. Potts & Sons Ltd for information about the latest clock.

July 2000



01457 765350

**A short history of Mottram's village clock, compiled to commemorate its restoration in the year 2000AD.**

# A Short History of Church Time-keeping

**The following is reprinted from the introduction to the Order of Service for the dedication of the new tower clock, on Sunday February 10th, 1952 by the Revd Canon Edward Tyson, then Vicar of Mottram:**

*‘Long before its division into hours, minutes and seconds, man had been able to measure the larger units of time. Years were noted by the position of the Sun among the Constellations. A month was measured by the revolution of the Moon.. Days and nights would of necessity be known by the light and darkness.*

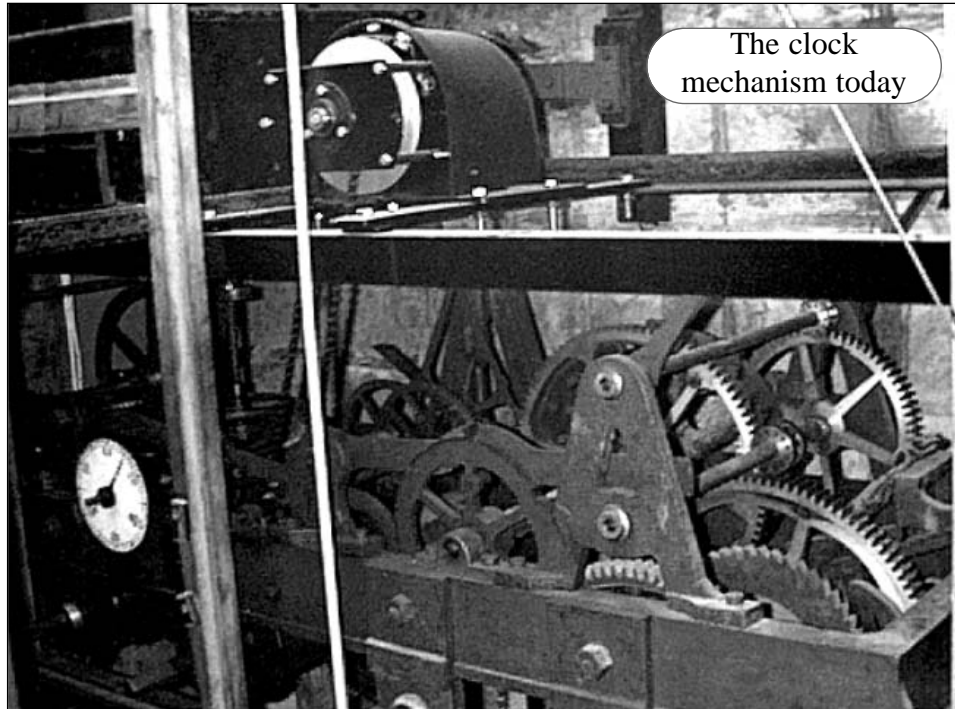
*Perhaps the earliest attempt to measure the passage of time was the use of the simple stilus or upright rod. The length and the position of the shadow indicated the time of day.*

*Sun dials - first on pedestals, and then on walls were a natural development, the latter being probably the first “Church Clocks”.*

*Many churches standing in the 15th century still have their Mass Dials or Scratch Dials. These were really sundials on which a scratch indicated the hour at which the Priest would celebrate the Holy Mysteries. Later forms of Mass Dials had a revolving rod to mark the hour of the Daily Eucharist. When the shadow on the dial reached the “scratch,” or coincided with the shadow of the revolving rod the people were expected to be in church for worship.’*

## Mottram’s First Clock

According to Canon Tyson, a clock was first placed in the tower at Mottram Church in 1761. There is as yet no documentary evidence for this date, but what is certain is that the clock was replaced thirty years later in 1791 by one made by Samuel Ashton of Bredbury. Either that early clock was a particularly poor one, or it was much older than Canon Tyson believed.



The clock mechanism today

## Mottram’s Second Clock

In November 1790, the old clock was in need of replacement, and after paying four clockmakers 5/- each for their advice at a meeting held at Sam Cook’s (the Packhorse) it was decided to pay £57 to Samuel Ashton for a replacement. The new clock was fitted in April 1791, and later that year the job was completed when James Chandley was engaged at a cost of £1 6/- to ‘beautify’ the face.

A description of this second clock printed in the parish magazine of April 1891 reveals that the pendulum was 27 foot long, and made 21 beats per minute. The escapement was Hookes anchor form, which succeeded crown wheel escapement.

By 1808, the face needed repainting, and the hands replacing, the work done this time by John Chandley. During that century, the Churchwardens’ accounts contain many references to payments for repainting the face, repairing and cleaning the clock, including a major restoration in 1872 costing over £30. In quoting for that restoration, W. Batty & Son of Manchester undertook to warrant it for 50 years, provided they were engaged to clean it periodically. They also arranged to fit extra weights on wire cords, so that it could be made to go for a week with each winding.

### The Clock Face Mystery

Note ‘face’ in the previous paragraphs is singular, implying that there was only one face originally. A diamond shaped face can be seen on the west side of the tower in an engraving dated 1819, and the square face now on the north side is present in photographs from around 1860. It is recorded that in 1791, the new clock face was fitted higher than the original. From examining the stonework inside the clock chamber, it can be seen that this was most likely to have been the west face. Thus it is probable that the square north face was added later, but when, between 1791 and 1860, is not known.

## Mottram’s Third Clock

By around 1937, the old clock which had served the parish for 146 years finally ground to a halt, never to go again. Mottram was to be without a public clock for 15 years.