

## Thomas Cooke, turret clock no. 1— The School at Felling Chemical Works, 1852.

The Cooke catalogues listed their turret clocks up to 1876, giving details of the date of installation, the type of clock, the size and number of bells, the location and if appropriate, the name of the purchaser. The following appeared in all of the company's catalogues:

An eight-day Clock, striking the hours on a bell of 12 cwt, and the quarters on two bells; with four illuminated glass dials, 5 feet diameter; for HUGH LEE PATTINSON, Esq., erected at Felling Chemical Works, Gateshead-on-Tyne.

This clock is now sadly lost. At the time of writing, we were unable to trace any information about the fate of the clock or its three bells, but with help from Chris Pickford and Michael Potts, plus some new information from local newspapers, we are able to tell a little more of this clock's story.



The Felling Chemical Works School from the west photographed in the 1960s long after the school had closed. The dials appear to have been removed. The image is courtesy of Norman Dunn who runs the: East Gateshead Photo Website - <http://www.dunn247.co.uk/east%20gateshead/Page%20183/Page%20183.htm>

Since publication we have discovered that:

1. The Chemical Works and school were closed down in the 1880s; all the contents were sold by auction during 1886 and the whole site was eventually sold in 1894. The school was bought by the Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle and converted into Catholic Schools; it subsequently passed into the hands of the Local Education Committee and ultimately ceased educational use in 1950. The photo above is thought to have been taken in the 1960s and shows the blanked dial apertures. It was thought that the clock could have been removed at the time when it ceased to function as a school.
2. However, Antiquarian Horological Society Turret Clock Group member, Chris Pickford has discovered the fate of the three bells which could throw light on the destiny of the clock. Chris told us: [The turret clock company, Potts of Leeds used two second hand bells – by Mears 1852. which originally belonged to the clock \(with three-bell chime\) at the school built by H.L. Pattinson at his Chemical Works at Felling, near Gateshead. The Whitechapel Bell Foundry records list three bells supplied to Cooke – and evidently for Felling in 1852. The clock at the school must have been altered in about 1911 and Potts bought the bells, using two at the Glusburn Institute and the other for Dog Lane Mills, Stainland.](#)
3. This leaves us to consider whether the clock was sold in 1911 at the same time as the bells or whether it continued in service silently until 1950 or up to the time of demolition later in the twentieth century. We have not found anyone in the Gateshead area who has any further knowledge, but if any reader knows more about the clock, please get in touch. [steveanddarlah@inbeat.org](mailto:steveanddarlah@inbeat.org)