

ART. VI.—*The Traditions of Crosthwaite Church Belfry, Keswick.* By J. FISHER CROSTHWAITE, F.S.A.
Read at Alston, July 10th, 1884.

THE traditions and records respecting Bells and Bell-ringers of this church may not be unworthy of notice. In the churchwardens' accounts, in 1699, the ringing cost 4s. 6d. per year, and a bell rope 5s. In 1702, for making bell wheels £2 10s. 6d.; for bell hingers 5s.; for ringing the bells 9s. In 1706 the charge for ringing is 16s., and ale for thanksgiving days and 5th November, 7s. 3d. The annual charge for ringing, for several years following, is put down at 12s., which, as there were four bells, was 3s. to each man. The bells were of large size, as will be found by the following elaborate account of the total charge for taking the great bell down and carrying it to Whitehaven, thence to be sent by ship to Dublin; the churchwardens (two of them) accompanying and bringing it back after having been recast.

1714.

The whole charge of y^e great bell in Ireland and elsewhere is - - - - -

£37 2 6½

	£	s.	d.
Taking down y ^e bell. Spent with 8 men - - -	0	6	0
Robert Wren, for 4 day's work - - - - -	0	3	0
For Cart Stangs and Straw at the bottom of y ^e cart -	0	1	0
To Giles Sinogle and Joseph Hodgson for Carriage of y ^e Bell - - - - -	1	3	0
For a Roller to take the Bell down and up with - -	0	1	0
Spent with Mr. Williamson and other officers for preventing custom - - - - -	0	4	0
Spent with Giles Sinogle for carrying y ^e Bell in and out of custom house - - - - -	0	1	0
To y ^e Seamen for carrying y ^e Bell and taking it aboard ship - - - - -	0	1	0
			To

	£	s.	d.
To a Cart for carrying it from y ^e custom house to the ship	0	0	6
For Victuals at Whitehaven, 2 days 1 ^s 4 ^d , and provisions taken aboard - - - - -	0	3	4
To Collecting Clark for Voicing y ^e Bell at Whitehaven -	0	1	6
For the Porters for Weighing y ^e Bell at Whitehaven -	0	1	0
For the Bell's Passage both ways at sea - - - -	0	10	0
For our Passage both ways at sea - - - - -	0	10	0
For a Sufference to bring y ^e Bell ashore at Whitehaven	0	1	6
Spent with Mr. Williamson and other officers for preventing duty - - - - -	0	4	0
Spent with y ^e Saylor for carting y ^e Bell and helping to Bransty - - - - -	0	1	6
For a Cart with y ^e Bell to Bransty - - - - -	0	0	6
For our Diet at our return to Whitehaven - - - -	0	2	0
Irish Expenses. For a Wherry to go ashore 8 ^d , a cart 6 ^d	0	1	2
A Porter 2 ^d , bring up y ^e Bell by water to y ^e custom house key 3 ^s 3 ^d - - - - -	0	3	5
For a Bond making of Conditions about the Bell - -	0	1	6
Spent when agreed with y ^e Founder for Casting the Bell	0	2	6
Spent that night the Bell was cast with Founder and others - - - - -	0	1	0
For Diet and Lodging 28 ^s , for Washing our Linen 1 ^d , Bear 7 ^s - - - - -	1	16	0
For Carrying the Bell in a Cart to y ^e waterside 2 ^s 2 ^d , a Boat 1 ^s - - - - -	0	3	2
For a Cart to attend y ^e Bell a ship board 6 ^d , back again 2 ^d	0	0	8
For Provisions to take aboard when coming home -	0	1	6
For a Wherry to come aboard when coming home -	0	1	0
For a Petition to y ^e Board at the custom house - -	0	1	0
Custom House in Dublin - - - - -	0	1	0
Duty paid for Bell forward - - - - -	1	14	2½
For Voicing the Bell at the custom house - - - -	0	1	6
For Portage and Weighing the Bell at custom house -	0	3	4
For Weighing the Bell when casten at the custom house	0	1	1
The Duty at the custom house when new casten - -	1	19	10
For Entering in y ^e custom house to 2 Clarks at 3 ^s 4½ ^d p ^r clark - - - - -	0	6	9
For Out Voicing at y ^e custom house - - - - -	0	2	0
For a P ^r mit to y ^e shipp master to take y ^e Bell aboard -	0	1	0
For Interest for £34, from y ^e 30th day of Septemb ^r till this p ^r sent day - - - - -	1	6	2

For

	£ s. d.
For our care about y ^e Bell and time, likewise charge for	
undertaking the Bell itself - - - . -	27 11 4

JOSEPH PEARSON, FRANCIS HODGSON, and THOMAS HUTCHINSON,
Churchwardens.

In 1715 we have the following entry : “Spent in ale at the king’s coronation day, 12^s 6^d.

1721. Spent in ale at *Nicholas Graves on y^e 5th November, 5^s.

1738. The 4 ringers had 5^s a year each for their services.

1743. The wage was raised to 5^s 6^d a year each, and continued at that rate until 1774, when it was raised to 8^s 6^d each.

1762. Expenses at coronation and other rejoicings 19^s.

In the year 1775 a public subscription was entered into to procure a peal of six bells, which were ultimately procured from the firm of Messrs. Pack and Chapman, London. The list of subscribers till recently hung in the vestry ; it was headed by Dr. Wm. Brownrigg, of Ormathwaite, (the friend and host of Franklin) with a subscription of £10 10s., and tradition says that Dr. Brownrigg gave a premium of £10 to have the pick of three peals, said to have been cast at the same time for Keswick, Penrith, and Cockermouth. Some say that Workington also had a new peal of bells about the same time. In 1777, the ringers wages were £3 3s. per annum, or 11s. each man.

It would seem that change ringing was not understood, until it was taught by a man from Yorkshire, named Mark Hall. He first came to Keswick with Howe’s caravan, with wild beasts ; he was a shoemaker by occupation, and eventually he settled in Keswick, and having taught the Keswick ringers he went to Cockermouth and settled there, where he also taught the ringers. He was an ingenious man and a good mechanic ; he built an organ

* NOTE 1.—Nicholas Grave was for 56 years parish clerk, as is shown by a headstone to his memory in the churchyard. He also kept an inn at Keswick ; he made wills and other documents, many of which are extant. He seems to have been the factotum of the parish. The church records are mostly in his handwriting, which is remarkably bold and clear.

which

which was used in one of the chapels in Cockermouth at one time. Bell-ringing became popular, when the peal was increased to six bells. Besides the regular paid ringers there were six amateurs, who used to vie with the others, ringing alternate peals. The amateurs were yeomen and tradesmen of good position, whose names have been kept in memory, viz : Mr. Birkett, of Powe House ; Mr. Harryman, of Portinscale ; Mr. J. Bell, of Ullock ; Mr. John Dover, Spade Forge, Keswick ; Mr. Thomas Fleming, Great Crosthwaite ; Mr. John Fisher, Lord of Gillbank, Newlands. George Holmes, now living, and aged 84 years, recollects these amateurs, and he says that in change ringing they never got much beyond the " Old Hunt." But the regular ringers became the best set in the county. George himself was a ringer for 51 years, and for 34 years was " major ;" his predecessor was Mr. Joseph Grave, woollen manufacturer. It is the rule of the " bell loft," that the son, if a ringer, and fit, heirs his father's bell on his decease. Mr. Grave however resigned the great bell to George for a social glass, but continued to ring the 5th bell, while his son, Stephen Grave, was also a ringer. It is curious to observe, how bell-ringing runs in families ; at one time the old sexton, Isaac Hodgson, and his sons Isaac, Joseph, and John were all ringers ; and Joseph Grave's father was a ringer in 1794, and was paid for instructing sundry young people to ring, £1 1s. Thomas Irwin was also a noted ringer, and was also well versed in the theory of change ringing ; he had a remarkable memory and was a good geologist and mineralogist. Thomas Martin was also a good ringer. He was son of the writing-master hereafter referred to, and like the other ringers of his day, he was an intelligent and well-read man.

In 1826 the following orders were written in large Roman characters, and hanging up in the belfry.

ORDERS.

ORDERS.

You Ringers all observe these Orders well.
 He eightpence shall pay who overturns a bell ;
 He who presumes to ring without consent,
 Shall pay one shilling and it shall be spent ;
 And he who rings with either spur or hat,
 Shall pay his eightpence certainly for that ;
 He who in ringing interrupts a peal,
 For such offence shall pay a quart of ale ;
 In falling bells, one penny must be paid
 By him who stops before the signal's made ;
 And he who takes God's holy name in vain,
 Shall pay one shilling and this place refrain.
 You ringers all take care, you must not fail
 To have your forfeitures all spent in ale.
 With heart upright let each true subject ring,
 For health and peace, to country, church and king.

RINGERS.

John Bowe.		
Isaac Hodgson, Sen ^r .	Joseph Slack,	} Churchwardens.
Thomas Martin, Junior.	Joseph Fisher,	
John Hodgson	Joseph Walker,	
Isaac Hodgson, Junior.		
Joseph Grave.		
Joseph Hodgson.		

Written by
 THOMAS MARTIN,
 Writing Master in Keswick,
 1826.
 In the 86th year of his age.

Thomas Martin died at Keswick, in 1835, aged 95 years ;
 in his young days he was writing master at Green Row
 Academy.

In 1854, the ringers in Crosthwaite belfry were in ex-
 cellent training, as the following statement made by
 Mr. George Holmes will show. He says that they rung
 peals on four different styles without stopping, each peal
 occupying

occupying 24 or 25 minutes, one hour and forty minutes in all. The peals were :—

- | | | |
|-----------------------|--|-----------------------|
| I. Oxford Treble Bob. | | III. Kent Treble Bob. |
| II. College Single. | | IV. Single Bob minor. |

The ringers were as follows :—

- 1st Bell, Thomas Martin.
- 2nd „ Isaac Hodgson, Sen. (Sexton).
- 3rd „ Joseph Grave.
- 4th „ John Fleming.
- 5th „ Stephen Graves.
- 6th „ George Holmes.

This achievement was not accomplished without much practice, they tried six times and failed, but went through without a mistake on the seventh time.

In 1851, the ringers account was £14 9s.

In 1855, regular wages £13 1s. Ringing on the victory of the Alma £1 extra.

In 1857, wages raised to £16 4s. per annum, being at the rate of 1s. per day each, including Christmas day and Good Friday.

In 1880, the Rev. T. K. Richmond, M.A., then Vicar of Crosthwaite, (and now Canon of Carlisle) finding two of the bells cracked, was instrumental in having these recast, and having the peal increased to an octave. The Rev. Dr. Raven preached for the fabric fund in that year, and mentioned the condition of the bells. Miss Rooke undertook the cost of recasting one of the bells, and Canon Richmond set about having the work done. In this he was ably assisted by Mrs. Richmond, who collected subscriptions, both in the parish, and also from the descendants of those who subscribed to the peals of 1775. Subscriptions came in from far and near, one from Mr. Hodgson, from South Africa, he being a son of the present senior ringer in the belfry. The tenor is 15 cwt. nearly, and its cost was £115 3s. 1d. when put into its place complete.

complete. Mr. Richmond published a very interesting account in the Crosthwaite Parish Magazine, in the months of September, October, and November, 1882. The total cost of recasting of the fifth and seventh, and a first and tenor altogether new, with new wheels, and the whole re-cung, making the octave, as it is now in the tower, amounted to £350.

The following inscriptions are cast upon the bells :—

- 1.—In memory of Arthur Dover, who died January 30. 1874.

“ I love the bell that calls the poor to pray,
Chiming from village church its cheerful sound.”

SOUTHEY.

- 2.—Although I am both light and small
I will be heard among you all.

- 3.—If you have a judicious ear,
You'll own my voice is sweet and clear.

- 4.—Such wondrous power to music given
It elevates the soul to heaven.

- 5.—Peace and good neighbourhood.

Re-cast 1882.—T. K. Richmond, M.A., Vicar ; J. Fisher Crosthwaite, F.S.A. ; Jonathan Harryman ; Mark Cockbain, Churchwardens.

- 6.—Music is medicine to the mind.

- 7.—In wedlock's banns all ye who join,
With hands your hearts unite ;
So shall our tuneful tongues combine
To laud the nuptial rite.

Re-cast by Mary Sterndale Rooke, 1882.

- 8.—In Memory of James and Joshua Stanger, brothers, Benefactors
of this Parish.

“ Over the vale the heavy toll of death
Sounds slow ; it makes me think upon the dead.”

SOUTHEY.