

ART. XIX.—*Church Bells in the Archdeaconry of Furness : Colton, Kirkby Ireleth, Broughton, Woodland, and Seathwaite.* By HARPER GAYTHORPE, F.S.A., Scot.

*Read at Kirkby Stephen, Aug. 29th, 1901.*

COLTON CHURCH.—HOLY TRINITY.

UNTIL the Year 1887, when Mr. J. P. Burns, of Springfield, Colton, discovered the antiquity of this bell, there was little except a mere local interest shown in it. Since then, some attention has been given to it by a former Vicar, the Revd. A. A. Williams,\* by Mr. H. S. Cowper, F.S.A.,† and others.‡ My own account of the bell appeared in a local paper, Dec. 1900. Further investigation leads me to amend that account as I now give it.

The following are the dimensions of the bell :—

Diameter at the brim	...	...	...	...	22 inches.
Height to crown...	...	...	...	...	19 $\frac{1}{4}$ „
Circumference below the shoulder where the inscription is placed	...	...	...	...	39 $\frac{1}{4}$ „
Thickness where not struck with the clapper	...	...	...	...	1 $\frac{1}{2}$ „
Thickness where struck	...	...	...	...	1 $\frac{3}{8}$ „
Note sounded by the bell, E.					

The inscription (Plate I.)  $\frac{1}{2}$  full size, in decorated Lombardic letters is preceded by a cross patonce, and reads as follows :

✠ CAMPANA ≡ BEATI ≡ IOHANNES ≡ APPLI.

The bell of Saint John the Apostle.

\* These *Transactions*, vol. xiii., p. 434.

† *Hawkshead*, p. 174.

‡ *North Lonsdale Magazine*, 1901, p. 107.



PLATE I.—INSCRIPTION ON THE COLTON BELL.

(TO FACE P. 282).

The form of the inscription is an early one.\* The Cross is similar in form to that on the "Potter" bell in Holy Trinity Church, Micklegate, York, and on the bell at Long Marston,† in the Diocese of York; but quite unlike that at Dacre, in Cumberland,‡ or at Sproatley, in Holderness, Yorkshire, although the bell has been thought to have been cast by the same founder. The letters are of an ancient type, but do not compare exactly in form or ornamentation with any I have yet traced, and are unlike those on the "Potter" bell (casts of which were kindly lent to me by Mr. J. Eyre Poppleton, of Pontefract); or on the second bell at Dacre, the treble bell at Cumrew, the old Renwick tenor, or the treble at Threlkeld—all in Cumberland. According to the Revd. H. Whitehead,§ these bells came from the foundry of John de Kirkham, in the 14th century, and have been compared with the bells at Sproatley Church. As these latter bells were not illustrated in the *Yorkshire Archæological Journal*, I followed up the reference to them, and after a long search obtained copies of the crosses and stops on the Church Bells at Sproatley, Easington (third), Elsternwick, Long Riston and Winestead, all in Holderness. Casts of these crosses and stops, &c. (still unpublished) were made 25 years ago by the Revd. C. W. Boulter, F.S.A., of Evesham, and are now owned by Mr. W. L. Hutton, of Ormskirk, a relative of the Revd. R. S. Hart, a former Vicar of Colton. The form of all these crosses and stops is unlike those on the Colton bell and I am thus unable to identify the founder as John de Kirkham, but judging by the shape of the bell, its long waist, the peculiar shaped stops, and letters of ancient form, I should say this bell was cast early in the 14th century.

---

\* *Church Bells of Surrey*, pp. 77, 140, Chaldon.

† *Notes on the Bells in the West Riding of Yorkshire*, by J. Eyre Poppleton, Part I, p. 5, and Pl. 6, No. 39.

‡ These *Transactions*, vol. ix., pp. 493, 496.

§ These *Transactions* vol. xiv., pp. 260, 272.

The initial cross, letters and stops, are each moulded upon square or oblong *patera*, and the cross is not contained in a circle as is the cross on the bell at Dacre.\* In form, the stop is unlike any I have traced, and resembles three pairs of horns. These are curved at the points, thickened in the middle, and enlarged and conjoined at the wide ends. The intervening stop on the Renwick, Cumrew, and Threlkeld bells is a fleur-de-lis, and the same stop is on the bell at Sproatley, but at Dacre there are three roundlets for the stop as at Winestead.

Round the cross and letters there is a fine line, and the spaces are filled up with a three-leaved diaper pattern in low relief, not unlike that on the *patera* of the "Potter" bell. The error of E for I in "Iohannes" and two P's in "Appli" is noticeable; the second P seems to have been crowded in when the moulder placed the letters in position, as the spaces between the letters in the last word are much smaller than in any other part of the inscription. The two oblique indents in the line above the second P in "Appli" are intended to show the mark of abbreviation. A study of the inscription also shows that the I in "Iohannes" and "Appli" is inverted, the bottom of the three-leaved ornament, with horizontal base on the left hand side in the illustration (Plate I.) being at the top. The second stop is also inverted.

Although the Church is dedicated to the Holy Trinity, the bell is inscribed to St. John the Apostle. The Church is first mentioned in 1531 as follows:—

Item, the said abbot (Alexander Banke), haythe desayvyd the kynges grace in takyng a subsyde or a taxe of serten of hys pore tenants dwellyng nye Colton Chapelle, in Furnace, gederyd by two of his tenantys than being constablys of that place in Furnace, the on namyd George Dogeson, the other namyd Robert Skabe, dwellyng at Twate Mosse. . . . Summa iij.li. ij.s. iij.d. †

---

\* These *Transactions*, vol. ix, p. 493.

† Beck, *Annales Furnesienses*, p. 312.

Colton Church is not named in the Inventories of Church Goods in 6. Edw. VI., but from a document in the Parish Chest I learn that this

Parochiall Chapell of Colton was consecrated by Edwin Sands, Archbishop of Yeorke, ye last day of August, Anno Dom̃i 1578, and in the second year of the said Archbishop's Consecration. \*

As to the history of the bell nothing appears to be definitely known, but from its age and the inscription it seems very probable that it originally came from Conishead Priory. At the dissolution of Conishead Priory in 1536, the goods and chattels, lead, bells and timber, were sold for £333 6s. 3½d. As William Sandys (father of Archbishop Sandys) was then the Receiver General of the Liberties of Furness, and his son William was Bailiff of the same, and resided at Colton Hall † (situated about half a mile from Colton Church) till he purchased the Priory of Conishead in 1548-9, it seems most probable that one of the Sandys family would use his influence in favour of this bell being sent to Colton Church, either by purchase or gift, or it may have been sent there when the Church was made parochial in 1578.

The canons of the bell are fixed by iron straps to an oaken headstock, much worm-eaten. The bell is rung by a rope attached by a short chain to an iron lever about 3 feet long. ‡ At some past time the crown staple has been broken off, probably in 1775, when 15s. 7d. was paid for mending the bell. § Two holes have been drilled through the crown, and in place of the crown staple an iron bar with bolts at the ends has been fixed inside and secured with nuts outside. The clapper is now attached to the iron bar.

\* *The Rural Deanery of Cartmel*, p. 83.

† West's *Antiquities of Furness*, 1774, p. 272; *Close's Edn.*, 1805, p. 325.

‡ See Lukis' *Church Bells*, pl. xiv., p. 120.

§ *The Rural Deanery of Cartmel*, p. 84.

## RINGING CUSTOMS.

The bell is rung by the Sexton on Sundays at 10-15 a.m. for five minutes as a "first" bell, and again at 10-25 a.m. for five minutes as a "second" bell. It is also rung in the same way before afternoon and evening service, and is simply tolled at funerals.

During May, 1901, the old oaken headstock and fittings showed signs of giving way and caused much vibration to the beams to which they were fixed. A new headstock made out of an oak beam given by Mr. T. Cragg, Churchwarden, and, strengthened with broad iron hoops and other fittings, was firmly fixed to the bell, and the iron lever attached as before. The beams were also strengthened and the bell re-hung by Mr. H. Coulton, of Haverthwaite.

I am indebted to the Revd. T. P. Hartley, Vicar of Colton, for his kindness in sending me notes of the Ringing Customs and of the recent alterations to the bell-fittings; also for permission to investigate the bell, in company with Dr. T. K. Fell. The photograph of the plaster casts of the inscription were taken by Mr. S. B. Gaythorpe.

## KIRKBY IRELETH.—ST. CUTHBERT.

In the Inventory of Church Goods at "Kirkebe Irelethe and the chapells in the same psshe, 6. Ed. VI. (1552). Churchwardens: Mathew Ascue, John Tomkynson, James Ascue, and Geffray ffox," it is stated that there were "fyve belles, and thre hande belles, . . . belongyng to the said psh church."

Of these five bells, two and probably three were then at Kirkby Church, and the others at the Chapels of Broughton and Seathwaite.

As to Kirkby Church, Dr. Barber in the *North Lonsdale Magazine*, July, 1866, states:—

The tower was re-built and the Church repaired in 1829. It is said that the old tower fell down some years before, and the larger of the

two bells it contained was removed to Dalton, because they had nowhere in Kirkby Church to suspend it. The other bell was placed in a small turret, temporarily erected, until the funds necessary for the re-building of the tower were forthcoming.

In the same *Magazine*, September, 1866, Mr. Edward Coward adds:—

The inscription on the old bell, formerly belonging to the Church, was in hexagon characters, and underneath, hanging in a chain of hexagon links, was a grotesque figure having the head of a lamb with the body of an ass. The Church was pewed for the first time in 1827,\* and the tower built in the same year on the foundation of one that fell in 1657, when the bells were ringing for morning service. At this time there were three bells, two of which were broken with the fall, one of these was sold to Dalton and re-cast, † the other was re-cast in 1681, and placed in the turret along with the one inscribed.

It is thus clear that in 1552 there were at least two, and in 1657 there were three bells at Kirkby Church, and that a turret existed there in 1681, in which two bells were hung.

So far I find no other evidence that a tower, as the word is usually understood, ever existed at Kirkby Church before 1829. The old Parish Register which began in 1607, might have contained information to that effect, but it has been lost. There are now no Churchwardens' accounts or other records earlier than the Parish Register which commences in 1681 and it contains no reference to the old tower. The only evidences of restoration are a carved red sandstone, 20 by 17 in., dated <sup>ANO</sup> 1657 built into the east wall of the bell chamber, and a modern undated stone lying on the window sill in the vestry inscribed WHEN THE OLD STEEPLE FELL in letters similar to those on a stone in the bell chamber dated 1829.

As to the evidence of old Kirkby folks, I learn from

---

\* 1829 the correct date.

† Probably at Kendal.

Mrs. Jane Shaw, of Wallend, aged 95 years, that she recollects the old bell turret with two bells previous to the present tower which she saw when it was being built.

The Parish Clerk, Mr. H. D. Deason, informs me that the old tower was said to have laid in ruins for years and the people walked over it to Church. This could hardly have been so if the structure had been anything more than a turret.

In the following extract from the Overseers' accounts for 1827 and 1828, kindly supplied by Mr. J. T. Winder, Clerk, we get a glimpse of the bell turret and two bells:—

Church Expenses at Kirkby Ireleth for the two years ending 25th June, 1828, Edward Coward, Daniel Jenkinson, James Frearson, and John Knight, Church Wardens; John Cragg, Vestry Clerk.

Paid William Casson for two bell chains - - - - 16s. 6d.

At this time one of the oaken headstocks was cracked and the gudgeons loose. These were repaired by Mr. William Winder, who also fixed the chains and found it to be a very dangerous job. The bell chains then hung outside the Church, but in 1754, ropes were supplied by John Askew, of Moss Side, for ringing the bells.\*

In a dark corner of the bell-chamber there is a grey sandstone, size about 38 by 29in., evidently referring to the present tower. It does not appear to have ever been fixed up, but is inscribed as follows:—

REBUILT IN 1829	
BY {	EDWARD COWARD, DANIEL JENKINSON, GEORGE MASON,
	CHURCH WARDENS.
-----	
JOHN MASON.	
JOHN MASON, JUNR.	
WILLIAM WALES.	
WILLIAM WILSON.	
THOMAS TODD.	

\* See Agreement in Notes on *Broughton Church Bells*, post.



The absence of the Vicar's name is very noticeable. He was then about 80 years of age, and evidently the Churchwardens managed the business, the work being done by Thomas Wilson. Having erected the new tower what could be more natural than the wish to have a peal of bells. On the 18th January, 1831, the Vicar, the Revd. Thomas Pearson, died, aged 82 years; and shortly afterwards there is in the Vestry Book the following account of a Meeting about the Church Bells, a copy of which was kindly supplied to me by the present Vicar, the Revd. C. F. Husband :—

1831, April 13th.—At a Public Vestry Meeting held this day, pursuance to notice, to see if the Parishioners would allow the Churchwardens and Committee the two old bells in lieu of five new ones, the following persons attended and agreed to allow them :—

Edward Coward, in the Chair.  
 John Mason.  
 John Mason, Junr.  
 Edward Coward.  
 Thos. Todd.

In the same year a peal of five bells was cast by William Dobson, of Downham Market, in Norfolk.\* Only one of the two old bells, that cast in 1681, was sent to Downham in part payment of the new bells supplied from that foundry. The other old bell

Appears to have remained in the Churchyard as a worthless object for some time, none caring to devote any attention to it, until at last it disappeared, and all traces of its existence and connection with the old edifice were forgotten.†

Messrs. Mears & Stainbank, of the Whitechapel Foundry, London, informed me that they were unable to give any particulars respecting the bells supplied by W. Dobson for Kirkby Ireleth Church between 1831 and 1833

---

\* Not mentioned in the "List of the Peals of Bells cast by William Dobson," p. 249—*Church Bells of Norfolk*.

† *North Lonsdale Magazine*, 1866, p. 14.

as, unfortunately, none of the books of that time have been preserved.\*

In the year 1851 an inscription in antique characters almost resembling Anglo-Saxon runes, purporting to be copied from a bell in Kirkby Ireleth Church, was exhibited at Ulverston among other relics and curiosities of the district.†

The following is a reduced fac-simile of the inscription :—‡

It was submitted to Mr. T. Wright, the eminent Antiquary, who was of opinion that the characters were merely fanciful forms of Roman letters. He took the letter which looks like K to be E, and assumed the legend to read *hic senate (us) merlehode pro nobis*, and to refer to the senate or elders of the lordship.§

The inscription was deciphered by the Revd. Francis Evans, of Ulverston, as follows :—

HOC + SANCTA + MARIAH ORA + PRO + NOBIS.

By this, Holy Mary, pray for us.

Evidently the copy referred to was very imperfectly made, but it seems quite clear that the letters were Lombardic and not "Anglo-Saxon" or "hexagon," in form. The descriptive word "hexagon" may have been

\* Thomas Osborn, of Downham Market, Norfolk, 1741, was partner with Robert Patrick, of Whitechapel. T. Osborn died in 1806. His grandson, William, continued the foundry at Downham. Thos. Mears, of Whitechapel, purchased William Dobson's business in 1833. William Dobson died in London in 1842. See *Church Bells of Suffolk*, by J. J. Raven, D.D., pp. 153-4.

† *North Lonsdale Magazine*, 1866, p. 14.

‡ *North Lonsdale Magazine*, 1866, p. 15. *Furness, Past and Present*, vol. I., p. 151.

§ *Idem*, p. 15.

---

---

† S A N C T A † M A R I A † O R A † P R O † N O B I S †

---

---



PLATE II.—SUGGESTED RESTORATION OF THE KIRKBY IRELETH  
BELL INSCRIPTION.

taken from the shape of the letter S. in the copy, or have been incorrectly written for "Saxon" or "Anglo-Saxon" by some copyist. The letters C. T. and M. are evidently sketched from Lombardic originals. The letter H. at the beginning of the copy inscription and after Maria may well be omitted, and in place of the H. after Maria there would be a cross.

On Plate II. I give an amended sketch of the inscription, and of the "grotesque figure" which was probably a founder's mark, the Golden Fleece. If so, this bell may not have been cast before 1430, for in that year the Order of the Golden Fleece was founded by Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy. \*

Subsequent investigation from a reliable source brings to light the following particulars about the old bell:— After the new peal of bells was obtained in 1831 the old bell lay in the Churchyard among the nettles until the year 1844. At that time, Mr. James Tyson occupied the blacksmith's shop adjoining the Church yard, and near the Punch Bowl Inn. One of his workmen, then about 40 years of age, who was rather fond of drink, wanted some charcoal iron and asked my informant, then a boy of 14, to help him one night to get the iron work off the bell. Turning over the bell the clapper hit the side, so he got it out first, and then removed the iron straps, &c. The headstock and the bell were left in the Churchyard among the nettles. The boy told his uncle of the circumstance, and the latter cautioned him, for if the Vicar or Churchwardens knew of it, he would be sent over the seas. About two or three weeks afterwards my informant was surprised to find the old bell had gone; and it was his opinion that, after the bell was reduced in bulk by removing the partly-rotten headstock, straps and clapper, the workman had disposed of it to some potters

---

\* The Revd. H. A. Fielden, Vicar of Kirkby Stephen, suggests that the "grotesque figure" might be a rebus for the name Haslam. Possibly the name of the founder or donor was Haslam; or Lamas, now Lomas, both local names.

or gipsies who came round with their carts and had been to Kirkby a short time before. One person could not lift the bell. It would be about 20in. in diameter, 18in. high, and weighed about 2 cwt., but he could not recollect if there was any inscription on it.

DESCRIPTION OF A PEAL OF CHURCH BELLS  
AT KIRKBY IRELETH, CAST 1831.

1.— ∴ 1831 ∴ Diam. 27in., height 20 $\frac{5}{8}$ in., thickness 2 $\frac{1}{16}$ in. Note F.

2.—CAST BY WILLIAM DOBSON, DOWNHAM, NORFOLK, 1831. Diam. 28 $\frac{1}{2}$ in., height 21in., thickness 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. Note E $\flat$ . This bell has not been rung since 1891.

3.— ∴ 1831 ∴ Diam. 29in., height 21 $\frac{1}{2}$ in., thickness 2 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. Note D $\flat$ .

4.— ∴ 1831 ∴ Diam. 29 $\frac{1}{4}$ in., height 24 $\frac{1}{2}$ in., thickness 2 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. Note C. This bell has not been rung since 1888. The wheel is broken.

Tenor.—CAST BY WILLIAM DOBSON, DOWNHAM, NORFOLK, 1831. Diam. 36 $\frac{1}{2}$ in., height 26in., thickness 2 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. Note A $\flat$ .

The notes sounded by the bells were kindly supplied by Mr. Edward N. Lewis, Organist, who states that except for No. 1, the peal is very fairly in tune. No. 1 is very flat, less than  $\frac{1}{4}$  tone between 1st and 2nd. Nos. 2, 3, and 4, slightly sharp, and tenor almost exactly true.

RINGING CUSTOMS.

I have been unable to trace any records of early ringing customs, but Mr. Matthew Deason, of Beckside, informs me that he rang the tenor bell in 1859, and in 1884 when the Revd. Charles H. Lowry was Vicar, he got together a set of ringers for twelve months who rang the five bells. When the schoolmaster left, one and another of the ringers dropped off, and thus it was 30 years, except during 1884, since the five bells were rung. His father,

Mr. James Deason, formerly Parish Clerk, once told him that a bell used to be rung at Harvest time. This would probably be the Gleaning bell.

Mr. H. D. Deason, Parish Clerk, and a bell-ringer at Kirkby since 1876, informs me that the tenor bell and the third are now rung for both morning and evening service on Sundays for 15 minutes, and then chimed for 10 or 12 minutes; afterwards, the third bell is rung for 3 or 5 minutes till the Vicar leaves the Vestry—this is called ringing in. The Vicar now rings the third bell at 9-15 a.m. for service, every day except Wednesday and Friday, when he rings it at 10-30 a.m.

The bells are only rung at special Weddings. Until 1840 it was the custom at Weddings for the school children to repeat a homily or "homminy" as they stood hand in hand in a semi-circle round the porch outside the Church door. The smaller children were arranged near the wall and the larger boys in the middle. After repeating the "homminy" of good wishes, if no coins were scattered the children ran before the newly married couple to the Church gate, and if none were scattered there, another "homminy" was repeated and the wish expressed that they might have no good luck and no offspring. The last "Bidden Wedding" in Lancashire took place at Kirkby Ireleth about 1775.

It was formerly the custom for the five bells to be rung on Christmas morning before the breakfast, which was provided for the ringers at the Punch Bowl Inn. Only two bells are now rung on Christmas mornings from 5 to 7 o'clock, and 2/- are given instead of the breakfast.

On 31st October, 1840, it was agreed that the Ringers to be paid out of the Church Rate.

Charles R. Graham, Vicar.

On receiving notice of a Funeral, the Clerk (or sometimes his wife), tolls the tenor bell 12 or 14 strokes for a man, the same number of strokes on the 4th bell for a woman, and similarly on the third bell for young women,

or children up to 14 or 15 years of age, and on the first bell for small children.

The tenor bell is also tolled as soon as a funeral procession appears in sight of the Church, and, afterwards, when the mourners come to the grave, the same bell is tolled again until the Vicar returns from the service, and it ceases when he goes into the Vestry.

#### BROUGHTON-IN-FURNESS.—ST. MARY MAGDALENE.

The early history of the bells of Broughton Church is involved in much obscurity. When the Inventory of Church Goods 6. Edw. VI. (1552) was taken, there was one bell at Broughton, and there may have been two, but at what date the second bell was obtained is conjectural.

Up to the year 1869 there were two old bells. The one used was then sent to be melted down, and it now forms part of the tenor bell cast by John Warner & Sons, London. The tenor bell weighed 11cwts. 1qr. 11lbs., and cost £79 8s. 9d. \*

Through the foresight of Lord Cross, the other old bell, a remarkable one of pre-Reformation times (cracked and broken) was preserved, and it is now at Eccleriggs, his lordship presenting, in exchange, the tenor bell.

That these two old bells were hanging in a turret in 1754 is shown by an Agreement made in that year. I am indebted to the Incumbent of Broughton, the Revd. James Cropper, for a copy of this Agreement and for copies of other records from the Vestry Book and Parish Registers.

March 29th, 1754. Agreement made by and between the Chapelwardens of Broughton and Dunnerdale and John Askew of Moss Side (That is to say) The said John Askew promises to provide good and sufficient Bell ropes for the said Chapel and one Bell rope for Kirkby and deliver the same as often as is necessary in the respective Churchyards at four shillings and three pence yearly during his the said Life Time he having the old Bell ropes to his use.

---

\* Messrs. Warner's Records were burnt in the great Cripplegate fire, 1897.

The Original Agreement made with W. Watters  
to be found upon the file am<sup>st</sup> other papers.

Witness,  
John Casson.

Wm. Myers,  
his mark  
John I Askew,

} Chapel Wardens  
for the time being.

This Agreement was maintained for at least 16 years,  
as appears by the following Memorandum :—

June 12th, 1769. I do accept and promise to perform the above  
during my life. John High.

That, at some time, there was only one bell at Broughton, we have other evidence in the stones which formed the turret in which the pre-Reformation bell would be hung. Some of these stones were noted by the late Vicar of Broughton, the Revd. F. A. Malleeson, as being visible in the belfry of the old tower. My attention was first drawn to them by Mr. Wilson Butler, of Broughton, who, throughout my researches has showed me no ordinary kindness. An examination of these stones, as they lay in the Churchyard, shows that the archway in the turret measured 3 feet across, and thus would only be wide enough for one of the two old bells to swing in.

Having traced the two old bells in 1754, we will now get a glimpse of them 8 years afterwards.

11th June, 1762. Whereas the sum of thirteen shillings is given by the Division of Broughton and Dunnerdale as a gratuity to John Ormandy for being an Assistant to the Clerk of Broughton in Ringing the Bells (he being unable) the said sum of thirteen shillings being an entire gratuity and no way claimed by the said Clerk.

As Witness our hands,

Nicholas Pritt.  
Samuel Askew.  
W. Watters (Surgeon)  
Ferdo. Muncaster.  
Wm. Croudson.  
Thomas Towers.  
John Casson.



About the year 1781 the old bell turret was taken down and a "plain tower" erected instead.\* The bells would be re-hung and doubtless rung in harmony in honour of the Patron Saint and of King George III. I could trace no record of the cost of the new "steeple," but the following Memorandum shows the business-like completion of the arrangements:—

25th January, 1782. An Assessment was made in order to raise the sum of Thirty-seven Pounds three shillings and sixpence to discharge the amount due to the several persons concerned in erecting the said steeple.

	W <sup>m</sup> . Croudson.	Anth <sup>y</sup> . Crosby.
James Hancock.	Fardy Myers.	James Addison.
George Ryliff.	Adis. Ireland.	Ed. Taylor.
Myles Dixon.	W <sup>m</sup> . Atkinson.	Jas. Lancaster.
	W <sup>m</sup> . Denny.	Jn <sup>o</sup> . Smith.
	Dan <sup>l</sup> . Kitchin.	J <sup>n</sup> . Robinson.
	James Ormandy.	John Casson.
	Isaac Pritt.	
	Rob <sup>t</sup> . Robinson.	

No other entry occurs until 1830 when I find

Paid for Bell Ropes      ...      ...      ...      4d.

and again in 1837

2 Bell Ropes      ...      ...      ...      3s. 6d.

This last item seems to show that the pre-Reformation bell was not cracked at the time of our late Queen's accession to the throne, and in further support of this, Mr. William Myers, a former bell-ringer at Dalton (now aged 80 years), informs me that he saw the two bells and heard them ring 'ting, tong,' when he was a boy.

Between the years 1552 and 1754 the bell, which now forms part of the tenor bell, was obtained. The turret

---

\* The statement in *Furness: Past and Present*, vol. 1., p. 171, that the tower was built in 1829 on the foundation of one that fell in 1657, is an error.

would then be enlarged and the two bells doubtless hung side by side. In support of this statement I may say that two triangular-shaped stones which formed part of the old turret are built into the new tower, one of them above the vestry doorway, inside, and the other in the South wall, outside. Other stones, parts of the old turret referred to before, have also been preserved.

In 1869 the two old bells were taken down from the old tower by Mr. James Butterfield, contractor for the bell-frame and erecting the new peal of bells 1901. Both old bells were about the same size. One with a Latin inscription on it was found to be cracked. Mr. Butterfield thought there was lettering on both bells, but as he made no memorandum, and as it was thirty years ago, he was not certain.

In an account of the Church Bells of Broughton the interest chiefly centres in the pre-Reformation bell. The accompanying illustration (Plate III.) of that bell is from a photograph taken by Mr. Wilson Butler, and that of the inscription (Plate IV.)  $\frac{1}{2}$  full size, is from a photograph of plaster casts taken by Mr. S. B. Gaythorpe.

The following is a description of this bell:—

Diameter at brim	...	...	...	...	20 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches.
Height to crown	...	...	...	...	15 "
Circumference below the shoulder where the inscription is placed	...	...	...	...	36 $\frac{1}{2}$ "
Thickness where not struck with the clapper	...	...	...	...	1 $\frac{7}{8}$ "
Thickness where struck	...	...	...	...	1 $\frac{5}{8}$ "

The inscription on the bell (Plate IV.) is as follows:—

✠ IOHANNES I EST I NOMEN I MEVM ☩

(John is my name).

Below the word "Mevm," a piece measuring 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. long and 2in. deep has been broken out of the brim, and a

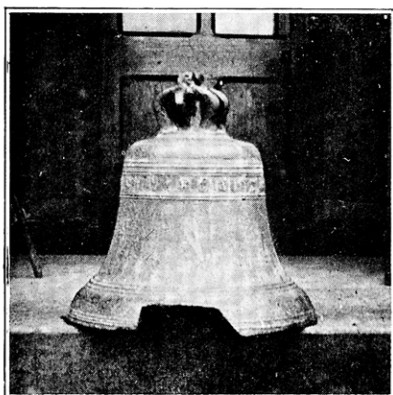


PLATE III.—PRE-REFORMATION BELL,  
BROUGHTON-IN-FURNESS.

(TO FACE P. 298).

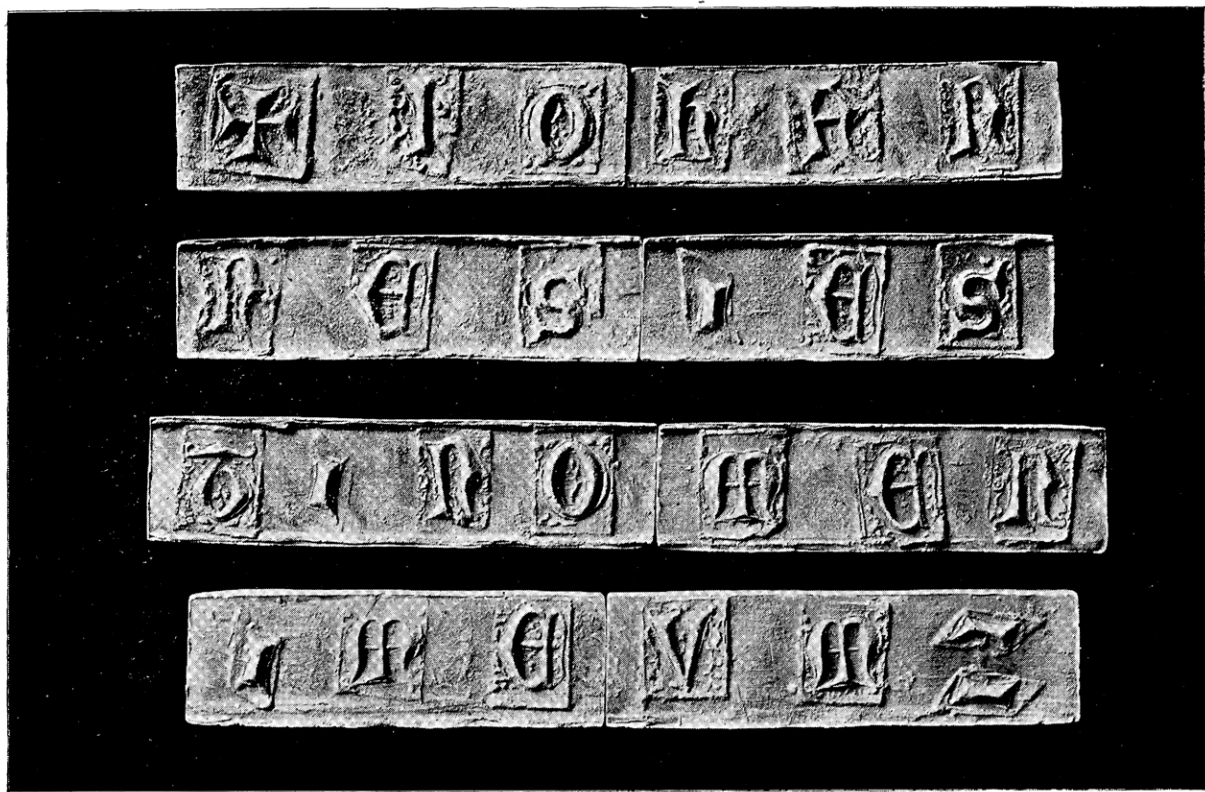


PLATE IV.—INSCRIPTION ON THE BROUGHTON BELL.

(TO FACE P. 299).

crack extends up the waist. Where worn smooth the metal is light in colour, about the same shade as german-silver, or of a new bell of to-day. The canons have rounded edges, and with use have been worn  $\frac{1}{4}$  of an inch below the level. They are similar in shape to those on the pre-Reformation bells at Colton, Whicham, and Eskdale. The crown staple and clapper are gone, and at some past time two holes,  $\frac{1}{2}$  an inch in diameter, have been drilled through the crown at the base of the canons, evidently to insert an iron bar to act as a staple, and which would probably be fastened by nuts, as at Colton.

The initial cross *pateé* is ornamented at the angles, and is surrounded with a fine line as are the letters and stops. All the letters are floriated Lombardic and seem to belong to different dates. The ornamentation or diaper on the *pateræ* varies, and consists mainly of scrolls, though in the T in EST and the O in IOHANNES and NOMEN there is a trefoil design—in the first O this is inverted. The I in IOHANNES is larger, more worn, and has quite a different diaper pattern. The H in IOHANNES is more clearly defined and compares with the M in NOMEN and MEVM. The A in IOHANNES is reversed, and all four N<sup>s</sup> in the inscription, especially the first two, are much worn. The broken *pateræ* of the E and S in IOHANNES are very noticeable, and afford strong evidence that these letters had been a long time in use. The letter M in each case has a horizontal bar, and the side strokes curve outwards, differing from those on the Colton bell. The letters H, A, N, E and V, are curled at the ends of the strokes and are finished with a scroll, especially noticeable in the letters E and V. The letter A, unlike the A on the Colton bell, has the vertical stroke the full length of the other letters. The stops are shaped like a letter I, somewhat reduced in height, and have *pateræ* in form like a rhomboid. I have been unable to trace a similar stop in any book on Church bells.

One's first thought on seeing the inscription would be

that this bell was probably cast in the 14th century. But on studying the form of the bell, its comparatively short waist, and more especially the forms of the letters—some old and worn, others newer and more clearly defined, and the *pateræ* worn or broken at the corners, one cannot but conclude that the unknown and probably local founder was “long established” but, in respect of the letters he used, hardly “up-to-date.” It is far more likely that the lettering should be considered as a survival than that the founder was in advance of his time in adopting a shorter form of bell. A date about 1400-1450 or even later, would therefore be a more probable one, and in this I am supported by Dr. Raven who wrote me as follows:—

“Contemplating its shape I am inclined to put the later date (15th century) to it and to regard the lettering as a survival.”

I am much indebted to Lord Cross for his kindness in affording me every facility to investigate this bell.

#### RINGING CUSTOMS.

Since 1869 the Tenor bell has been rung on Sundays for morning and evening service, commencing to ring at 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. for 10 minutes, then, after a pause of 10 minutes, it was rung for another 10 minutes until service commenced. The bells are now chimed.\*

A survival of the Matin bell existed at Broughton. The tenor bell being rung at 8 a.m. until the new peal was obtained.

In February, 1900, the late Chancellor Ferguson issued a faculty for taking down the old Church tower of 1781 and to build a new tower and place a peal of bells therein. Messrs. Paley & Austin, of Lancaster, prepared the designs for the tower, the entire cost of which was borne

---

\* The full peal of eight bells was rung for the first time on Sunday, 8th December, 1901, and on the 11th December the formal opening by the Dalton ringers took place.

by the Right Hon. Viscount Cross, G.C.B. The new tower and peal of bells were dedicated by the Lord Bishop of Carlisle on Whit-Monday, 27th May, 1901.

#### WOODLAND CHURCH.—ST. JOHN EVANGELIST.

In Bishop Gastrell's *Notitia Cestriensis*, compiled 1714-1725, it is stated that "there was no Chapel at Woodland in 1547, but the inhabitants of Broughton, Seathwaite, Dunnerdale, and Woodland were allowed to repair to Broughton Chapel for hearing Divine Service and receiving y<sup>e</sup> Sacraments." In a foot note, the Editor, Revd. Canon Raine, adds, "The Chapel was built before the year 1577," his authority for that statement being apparently Saxton's Map of Lancashire, engraved by Remigius Hogenbergius, 1577.\* I find Woodland Chapel along with Walney, Lowick, Torver, Blawith, and Graythwaite Chapels on this Map, and the same Chapels, omitting Torver, are named on another Map dated 1598, published with Gregson's *Portfolio of Fragments* in 1821.

Woodland Chapel is again referred to in the Parliamentary Survey of 1650. In 1689 it was re-built "by the landowners in that division of Kirkby." Above the doorway of the Porch, inside, is a carved red sandstone about 16 by 8 inches, with the date 1689.

I find no evidence of any bell at Woodland Chapel until 1744 when the present bell was first erected.

#### DESCRIPTION OF THE BELL.

Diameter at the brim	...	...	...	...	18 inches
Height to crown	...	...	...	...	14 "
Circumference below the shoulder where the inscription is placed	...	...	...	...	30 "
Thickness where struck with the clapper	...	...	...	...	1 $\frac{1}{8}$ "
Thickness where not struck	...	...	...	...	1 $\frac{1}{4}$ "

Note, G.

---

\* *British Topography*, by R. Gough, 1780, p. 508.

The bell has no founders mark. The canons are fixed to a wooden headstock to which a lever is attached and the bell is rung inside the Church.

#### INSCRIPTION ON THE BELL.

∴ W · Stratford · LLD · Commifsary · of Richmond · 1744

The stop before W is formed of five heart-shaped dots about  $\frac{1}{8}$  to  $\frac{3}{8}$  of an inch in size, and arranged in a square with one dot in the centre. Between the words in the centre is a similar heart-shaped dot. From a comparison of the letters and especially the figures in the date on this bell with the letters, figures, and stops on a bell at Urswick Church, cast by Luke Ashton, of Wigan, in 1724,\* it seems evident that this bell was cast by one of his successors.

In a paper on Bell-Founders in Lancashire and Cheshire, and the adjacent Counties in the 17th and 18th centuries, † read by Mr. J. P. Earwaker, F.S.A., he says :

Mr. Luke Ashton was probably the last of the Wigan bell-founders, for in 1732 the bells of Wigan Church were sent to Gloucester to be re-cast by Mr. Abraham Rudhall of that place, which would hardly have been the case had there been any good foundry in that town.

The date 1744, on the Woodland bell, seems to show that there was a foundry at Wigan at that time, but possibly the Wigan bells were not satisfactory and there may have been a prejudice against a local man.

Very few records relating to the bell are in the old Chapel Vestry book. Through the kindness of the Rector, the Revd. J. Park, I extracted the following :—

---

\* *Furness Lore*, pl. ix., p. 100.

† *Transactions of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire*, 1892.



Jan. 15th 1769 then ases<sup>d</sup> for the use of the Chaple the sum  
of 1 : 12 : 11½ which money is Distributed as followeth

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

To Isable Hellen for Ringing Bell and Washing	£	
Surplice five years      ...      ...      ...      ...	0 : 10 :	
	7 : 0	
	0 : 17 : 0	

June 29th 1788

An account of the money received and Disbursed for the  
use of the Chapel from the year 1782 until the year 1788 by  
Jn<sup>o</sup>. Kendal \* Minister of Woodland

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

Disbursed for Ringing Bell and Washing Surplice	£	s	d	
6 years †      ...      ...      ...      ...      ...	1.	4.	0	

In 1882 the Chapel was enlarged and the Chapel-yard  
fenced in. These alterations cost £73.

In 1865 the Church was re-built in the Early English  
style. A bell-turret surmounts the gable at the west end.  
At this time the bell was taken to Coniston to be  
repaired, the old clapper having fallen out.

#### RINGING CUSTOMS.

The bell is rung for about 10 minutes before service at  
10-45 a.m. and at 6-30 p.m. The evening service is held  
on alternate Sundays with a service at Grizebeck Mission  
Room. It is also rung now at 8 a.m. for Easter  
Communion.

\* The "Wrestling Parson." He used to attend the fairs at Broughton and  
challenge all comers to the local sport of wrestling. *North Lonsdale Magazine*,  
1899, vol. 3, p. 139.

† To Joseph Ellen, who was evidently Clerk and husband of Isable Hellen.

## SEATHWAITE CHURCH.—HOLY TRINITY.

No direct evidence can be obtained that one of the 5 bells mentioned in the Inventory of Church Goods at "Kirkbie Irelethe and the Chapells in the same psshe" 6. Edw. VI. (1552) was then at Seathwaite. Presumably there was a bell at Seathwaite in 1547 as a chapel existed there at that date. Evidence in support of this is in an Award, dated 2nd March, 1565, made by William (Downham) Bishop of Chester. This Award refers to certain duties between Kirkby Ireleth, Broughton, Seathwaite, and Dunnerdale, and the inhabitants of Seathwaite and Dunnerdale were by it, after a dispute lasting 18 years, decreed to pay 3s. 4d. every 3 years for Bread and Wine for ye Sacr. In the copy of this Award, reference is also made to a License granted by way of Dispensation, by Thomas (Cranmer) Archbishop of Canterbury, out of his Faculty Office, 7th June, 1547, and Confirmed by the King, in which it is stated that the inhabitants of the said Broughton \* should have free License for all Sacraments in their Chapel, founded in honour of the Holy Trinity, on condition that they contribute dues to Kirkby Ireleth, namely, 11s. 4d. at Easter, to be paid once every 3 years for Holy Bread Silver. I am indebted to the Revd. S. R. M. Walker, Vicar of Seathwaite, for this hitherto unpublished extract from the Award referred to, which was copied by the Revd. Edward Tyson, a former Minister at Seathwaite, into the Parish Register.

In 1650 "Seathett Chapell" is mentioned; it is named again in 1675, also in 1684 when the Registers begin, and in 1696, that date having been carved on the old Pulpit. One hundred years later, in 1796, the Chapel—"a remarkably humble fabric of one story, with a small campanile"—was pewed. At that time "the little Chapel bell sent

---

\* It is evident that this is a mistake for Seathwaite, as Broughton Church is dedicated to St. Mary Magdalene.

forth its sharp sound, not much louder than a mountain cuckoo, but distinctly enough to be heard." "The bell was not much larger than a sheep bell" and the bell rope then hung down outside the Chapel.

In 1828, the old bell was re-cast. It was inscribed ROBERT CASSON, CHURCHWARDEN, 1828, and was not quite so heavy as the new one. When the Chapel was being re-built in 1874-5, the bell was hung on the branch of a tree and was cracked whilst being rung by a mason, who struck it with a hammer.

In 1875, May 17th, the new Church was re-consecrated under its former dedication to the Holy Trinity, by the late Bishop of Carlisle (Dr. Harvey Goodwin).

The bell was again re-cast in 1881. It is fixed to a wooden headstock and rung inside the Church with a rope attached to a wheel.

#### RINGING CUSTOMS.

The bell is now rung half an hour before morning and evening prayer—morning at 10-30, afternoon at 2-30 to 3 p.m. in Winter, and at 6 p.m. in Summer. It has a very pure tone.

The old bell of 1828 was always considered by Seathwaite folks to have a tone superior to the bell at Ulpha. It could be heard at Moor House, about half way between Seathwaite and Ulpha, when the Ulpha bell could not.

The Revd. Robert Walker, Minister of Seathwaite, 1735-1802, "A Pastor such as Chaucer's verse portrays" loved old customs and old usages, but few remain. The bell is tolled for funerals, and formerly "Ringing the Year" seems to have been a regular institution, this being done at Christmas and Easter. At Christmas time the parishioners passing the Chapel gave the bell-rope a pull.

Formerly, "Bidden" Funerals were the rule, and they still have them in a way. The one who 'bid' would go

round to the parishioners houses, knock at the door, and say in a sepulchral tone "Two are bidden from this house to ——'s funeral." The relatives were the bearers, and when the corpse was brought into the Church the mourners sat round it during the service, bent over in a conventional attitude, and in an absorbed state. Since the Church was altered, all this has gone, the arrangements inside the Church do not admit of the corpse being placed in the same position, nor is there room for the mourners to sit round it. After the funeral, the mourners went up to the house and made a kind of funeral feast. The custom is now dying out, and in a few years will disappear.

It was also customary for the mourners, both men and women, to wait until the second Sunday after the funeral before attending Chapel, in order to get suits of clothes made.

My thanks are due to Mr. John A. Tyson, of Barrow, for his kindness in obtaining rubbings of the bells at Woodland and Seathwaite. Without his help it would have been very difficult for me to have got the information which the bells, in almost inaccessible turrets, alone can supply.

In conclusion, about half-a-dozen pre-Reformation bells are now known to exist in Furness and Cartmel, three of which, in all probability, came from Furness Abbey or the Priors of Cartmel and Conishead. These have already been described and illustrated in *Furness Lore*. Two of the three bells at Aldingham Church were cast by Richard Mellor, of Nottingham, about 1488, and one at Urswick Church was cast by an unknown founder about the middle of the 15th century.

---