



Notes and Queries

RELATING TO BERKS, BUCKS AND OXON.

Communications are invited upon all subjects of Antiquarian or Architectural interest relating to the three counties. Correspondents are requested to write as plainly as possible, on one side of the paper only, with REPLIES, QUERIES and NOTES on SEPARATE SHEETS, and the name of the writer appended to each communication.

THE Editors express the earnest hope that a larger number of Correspondents will avail themselves of these pages, and thus help those responsible for the publication of this Journal to extend its usefulness. There are several Queries—inserted in the Journals for 1912—still remaining unanswered. It is hoped that some readers may solve them.

Notes.

HURLEY.—Amongst the notes made in Rodbourne Cheney, Wilts, parish registers by the Rev. Nicholas Adee, vicar 1676-1713, is the following :—

“ My most loving friend Mr. Francis Stevens of this parish died suddenly Jan. 21, and was buried at Hurley in Barkshire Jan. 23, 1682.”

—W.H.H.

FARNBOROUGH.—Stephen Weston, Bishop of Exeter, was born at Farnborough near Wantage, in 1665. Vicar of Mapledurham, Prebend of Ely, and Archdeacon of Cornwall, died 1742. He is said by tradition amongst his descendants to have been nearly related to Richard Weston, first Earl of Portland.

—W.H.H.

TWO OLD DOCUMENTS.—An anonymous donor has, through the Mayor, presented to the local Museum two old documents of no little interest. May I, as Chairman of the Library and Museum Committee, thank in the most public manner this anonymous donor, and also commend his example to others. There are doubtless many old papers lying about which are of little value to their present possessors, but which would be of great interest in a public collection, where they would be available for research purposes. Of the two documents in question, the one I propose to deal with to-day, leaving the other for a subsequent article, is

A BELL-FOUNDER'S BOND.

This deed dates from 1677, in the reign of Charles II., and guarantees the satisfactory casting of a treble bell for Bray Church. It is written on paper which bears as a water-mark a large crown with a lambrikin, under which are a helmet and shield, the latter being divided into three compartments by perpendicular lines, the centre compartment bearing three S. Andrew's crosses, and the whole shield supported by a lion and a unicorn. The document is endorsed in the same handwriting as appears inside, “ The Bell-founder's bond for warranting the Tribble of Bray 1677.”

As was usual in such documents, the bond is in Latin, and the conditions are in English. The writing is excellent and not difficult to read, though the Latin abounds with the customary contractions. The document is appended in full, with the reservation that, as the ordinary printing office does not keep in stock all the old technical marks of contractions, matters are here compromised by making the apostrophe do universal duty :—

“Nov'int univ'si p' p'ntes nos Ellis Knight de Reading in Com' Berks Bell-founder et Henricu' Knight de Reading p'dict' Bellfounder teneri et firmiter obligari Henrico Oakley et Whillmo Lambden Gardianis Ecclesie p'och' de Bray in Com' p'dict' in Quatuordecim Libris bene et legalis monet' Anglie solvend eisdem Gardianis aut eorum cert' Attorn' successoribus vel Assignatis suis Ad quiquidem soluc'o'em bene et fidel'er faciend' Obligamus nos et utr'mq' no'm p' se p' toto et in solid' hered' execut' et Admin' n'ros firmiter p' p'ntes sigillis n'ris sigellat' dat' Vicessimo die Julii Anno Regni Dom' n'ri Caroli Secundi Dei gra' Anglie Scotie ffrancie and Hib'rne Regis fidei Defensor' etc. Vicesimo nono Annoq' D'ni 1677.”

[Translation :—Know all men by these presents that we, Ellis Knight, of Reading, in the County of Berks, bellfounder, and Henry Knight, of Reading aforesaid, bellfounder, are held and firmly bound to Henry Oakley and William Lamden, Churchwardens of the parish of Bray, in the County aforesaid, in fourteen pounds of good and lawful English money, to be paid to the same Churchwardens or their certified Attorney, their successors or assigns. To the which payment to be made well and faithfully we bind ourselves and each of us jointly and severally our heirs, executors and administrators firmly by these presents sealed with our seals. Dated the 23rd day of July, in the 29th year of the reign of our Lord Charles II. by the grace of God King of England, Scotland, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, etc., and in the year of Our Lord, 1677.]

“The Condition of this Obligation is such That whereas the above bounden Ellis Knight and Henry Knight have the day of the Date hereof newe cast and made one Bell being for a Treble to the five Bells now hanging in the Tower of the said Parish of Bray abovesaid Nowe if the said Bell shall be tuneable and doe agree in tune and sound with the said five Bells as it ought to doe, and shall soe continue whole unbroken sound and tuneable for the space of one whole yeare and a day next after the date hereof Or if the said Bell shall happen to be broken or not to be sound or tuneable as aforesaid att any time or times within ye said yeare and a day and notice thereof given to the said Ellis Knight and Henry Knight or either of them their or either of their Executo' or Administrato' and the same being deliv'ed into the yard or back-side of the said Ellis Knight in Reading abovesaid att the only costs and charges of the above named Churchwardens or their successo' Then if the said Ellis Knight and Henry Knight their Executo' or assignes or some or one of them shall and doe within two months next after the delivery of the said Bell as aforesaid from time to time as often as occasion shall require within the aforesaid space of one yeare and a day att their owne proper costs and charges newe cast or amend and make sound and tuneable the said Bell as aforesaid soe as it may agree in tune and sound with the said five Bells as it ought to doe And if upon the newe casting the said Bell as aforesaid by virtue hereof the same shall be of lesse weight than before Then if the said Ellis Knight and Henry Knight or either of them their or either of their Executo' Administrato' or assignes shall pay or cause to be paid unto the said Churchwardens or their successo' after the rate of Tenn Pence a pound for every pound weight then wanting And if the same Bell shall be more in weight then before the casting thereof Then the said Churchwardens or their successo' are to

pay unto the said Ellis Knight and Henry Knight or one of them their or one of their Executo' or assignes after the rate of Thirteen Pence a pound for every pound weight over and above the weight of the same Bell before such new casting thereof Then this obligation to be void and of none effect Or else to be and remaine in full fore and virtue.

Sealed and delivered in the presence of

Thomas Pave

Samvel Wilmer, sen.

ELLIS KNIGHT (LS).

HENRY KNIGHT (LS)."

A perusal of the above suggests several interesting points respecting both Bray Church Bells and their founders.

At the present time the peal consists of six bells, No. 1, the treble, being the bell above referred to. Its note is B, and experts have pronounced it to be a really good bell. It bears the inscription "Fear God; Honour the King; 1678." The second bell, whose note is A, has on it a label with the inscription: "Henry Knight made this bell Anno 1612." Round the bell, and underneath the label, are the following initials: T.W., R.G., H.P., E.L., but for what names they stand I have not as yet obtained any information. This bell is the oldest in the peal. The third is one year its junior, bearing an inscription which says: "Henry Knight made this bell Anno 1613." Its note is G. The fourth bell, F, is thus inscribed: "The Rev. Edward Townshend—Vicar; George Sanders, William Baker, Churchwardens, 1812. *Perpetuus annis memor esto Mariae Johannis cujus subcura fueras. Mala pella futura. T. Mears fecit.*" The fifth bell professes to sound the note E, but is rather flat. It bears the inscription: "Thos. Ward, Wm. Lee, Churchwardens, 1771." The sixth or tenor bell has nothing on it but the date "1656." It sounds a sharp D and has been highly eulogised by experts, some of whom have spoken of it as the finest in this part of the country. Nos. 5 and 6, dating as they do from 1812 and 1771 respectively, are probably re-casts, as the above Bond speaks of five bells already existing in 1678. I have been given to understand that they are the least successful of the peal, and perhaps it is as well that so far I have not been able to glean anything of their history.

It will be noted that Nos. 1, 2 and 3 bells and probably No. 6, the splendid tenor, came from the celebrated Reading foundry, which was run by the Knight family with distinguished success for a prolonged period. Prior to the Knights' connection with it this business was at first carried on at Wokingham, and though no trace of the old foundry is visible there now, a lane bearing the name of "Bell Lane" probably perpetuates the memory of the fact. Reading subsequently became a noted centre for bell-founding, and amongst the municipal records is a book dating from about 1565, entitled "The Booke of the Names and Ordnances of the Cutlers and Bell-founders Companye." Three names of Reading firms are there given, William Welles, William Knighte and Vincent Garrowaye. This Wm. Knight died in 1586. His earliest bell-founding exploit on record is the casting a bell in 1567 for St. Lawrence, Reading. He is believed to have been the son of a distinguished father of the same name who was Under Warden of the Bell-founders' Company of London in 1518, Upper Warden in 1528, and Master in 1530. The line was continued by Henry, d. 1622, Ellis, d. 1642, Henry, d. 1672, and Henry who gave the bond above mentioned, who was in partnership with a second Ellis Knight, and died in 1680. The last to hold the business in Reading was Samuel Knight, who removed to London about 1710, for as roads and methods of transit improved, it became more and more the custom to concentrate in the Metropolis those trades the

products of which were not in every-day demand. Before Samuel left Reading he cast another bell for Bray Church, which was in 1841 sold to the members of the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion for their Chapel in Maidenhead, now used by the Wesleyans. Here it abides in the turret, strikes the hours by the clock, and bears the inscription, "Samvell Knight made mee 1703."—J. W. WALKER.

Replies.

BRICKS.—There is no standard size for bricks until after the year 1800. It was not until 1839, when the tax on bricks was repealed, that the size of bricks was practically fixed by Act of Parliament and has remained since unaltered. In former times bricks varied in size in different districts, but measurements of bricks in old buildings seem to show they were smaller generally at that time than the present standard which is 8½ in. long, 4¼ in. wide, 2½ in. thick.—W. H. HALLAM, Lockinge.

Queries.

WANTED information about the Abbot's of Reading summer residences. A house here called "Quernies" is supposed to have belonged to Reading Abbey. Twenty-two years ago, when we came here, it was a very interesting looking old building in the form of an L. A wood near is even now called Abbot's Wood, also a field close by is always spoken of as Abbots-field. Three years ago the old house was a great deal altered and made into a gentleman's residence, it had been used as a farm-house for generations, as we knew an old lady, a farmer's daughter at Tylehurst, who was born at Quernies.—Rev. M. PENTYCROSS, The Chaplain's House, Goring Heath.

Reviews.

"HAMPSHIRE RECORDS, OLD AND NEW." An illustrated Quarterly Journal. No. I., Jan., 1914. Printed for H. E. RAYNBIRD by C. E. Symonds, Basingstoke.

We are always glad to welcome new publications dealing with antiquarian subjects and kindred studies. Mr. Hugh E. Raynbird is to be congratulated on the first number of "Hampshire Records, Old and New." It is both well printed and illustrated, and contains some interesting articles, the first of which is a description of the geology of Hampshire, accompanied by an excellent map in colours to show the various formations of soil. As this county borders on Berkshire for some miles, Berkshire people will find much to interest them in this description.

Other articles deal with Hampshire rivers, woods, trees, and cricket at Hackwood Park. There is also an interesting biography of the late Right Hon. Arthur Jeffreys, formerly M.P. for the Basingstoke Division of the County, and also of the late Mr. George Moss, who till his recent death was in charge of the excavations which Lord Bolton is carrying on at Basing House. This house, till its destruction by Cromwell, was the residence of the Marquis of Winchester. The gallant Marquis, who so bravely defended his ancestral home against the Roundheads, after its fall lived at Englefield House, and died there 6th March. 1674, aged 76.

Amongst the illustrations is one of the cork trees in Swallowfield Park, but in the description an error has been made. Swallowfield is not Mrs. Russell's residence, but that of Sir Charles Russell. We hope our new contemporary will have a long life before it.—J. HAUTENVILLE COPE.