

The Church Bells of Berkshire.


PART V.

By FREDERICK SHARPE.

89. HAGBOURNE (or EAST HAGBOURNE).

St. Andrew.

Ring of Eight Bells ; tenor 49 inches diameter, in E flat ; and a Sanctus Bell.

<i>Bell.</i>	<i>Inscription.</i>	<i>Weight.</i> <i>Cwts. Qrs. lbs.</i>		
Treble.	R : WELLS : FECIT : I PHILLIPS : DONER : MDCCLXX.	5	2	0#
Second.	MEARS & STAINBANK, FOUNDERS, LONDON. / RECAST MARCH 1910 / W. R. BAKER., VICAR. / R. MILLS, F. ABBOTT, CHURCHWARDENS. / 	6	0	0#
Third.	[<i>Chertsey Arms, Fig. 7.</i>] This [<i>Fig. 7.</i>] Bell [<i>Fig. 7.</i>] Was [<i>Fig. 7.</i>] Made J [<i>Fig. 8.</i>] C 1602	6	2	0#
Fourth.	THOMAS GAMAN THOMAS ANNGER WILLIAM WELMAN C [<i>Fig. 16.</i>] W / H [<i>Fig. 17.</i>] K 1670	8	0	0#
Fifth.	FEARE GOD 1641	9	2	0#
Sixth.	LOVE GOD 1641	11	2	0#
Seventh.	WM : BURROUGH VICAR RICH :: SIMES & INO :: DANDRIDGE CH : WARDENS J75J THOS :: LESTER OF LONDON FECIT [<i>Border, Fig. 14.</i>]	15	0	0#
Tenor.	ROBT .: WELLS. &. SON. ALDBOURN FECIT : . MDCCLXXXI [<i>Scroll-border,</i> <i>with large star.</i>]	21	0	0#
Sanctus.	[<i>Double band of ornament : oak-leaves</i> <i>and acorns, and small fleurs-de-lys.</i>]	1	0	0#

A fine ring of eight : reputed by many campanologists to be the finest toned ring in the Diocese.

Treble, and former second, cast by Robert Wells, of Aldbourn, in 1770.

The latter was inscribed :—1

J. PHILLIPS DONER : R. WELLS FECIT MDCCLXX

¹ Alfred White's Note Book, fol. 47.

The 3rd, which was cast by Joseph Carter, of Reading, in 1602, has an ornamental border round its shoulder and the founder's mark Fig. 10, three times on its crown. A scale drawing of the inscription is given in Fig. 65.¹ The Arms of Chertsey Abbey and the capitals are those formerly used by John Sanders: the smalls are the XVth century Wokingham set, and the founder's crest and date figures are those of Joseph Carter.

The 4th is by Henry Knight II, of Reading and the 5th and 6th by his father, Ellis Knight I. The inscriptions on the latter are in Ellis' well-known type as Fig. 13.

The 7th is from the Whitechapel foundry, 1751. The present 2nd also was cast there in 1910.

The tenor is by Robert and James Wells, of Aldbourn, Wiltshire, 1781. The figure of an angel occurs twice on its waist. The inscriptions on the Aldbourn bells occur in each instance above the sound-bow.

The sanctus probably dates from the 17th century: its founder has not been identified. It hangs in its original cot on the top of the tower.²

The bells have recently been rehung in a new cast-iron side frame, mounted on a double set of rolled steel joists, by Messrs. Mears and Stainbank. The canons have been removed from all the bells, and they are fitted with cast iron headstocks having fixed steel gudgeons, self-aligning ball-bearings, traditional-type wheels, clappers, stays, and sliders; and ground pulleys fitted with ball bearings. The tenor clapper is fitted with a rubber clapper-buffer.

The third and treble bells have been considerably sharpened by hand chipping: the remainder have been flattened.

By means of an ingenious device fitted to the tenor, it is impossible to swing this bell until the clock hammer has been raised, thus eliminating all risk of danger to the bell by the hammer.

The following lines occur in the belfry:—

“THE BELLS OF HAGBOURNE.

It has been authoritatively stated that the Bells of Hagbourne are the second finest peal (*sic*) in England.

When Good Queen Bess was on the Throne these bells of ours were cast³

¹ See *Berks Arch. Journ.*, XLIV (1940), 86. The shield, which is a copy of that formerly used by the Norwich Foundry in the XVth century, was used by Carter and his successor Yare.

² See *Berks, Bucks and Oxon. Arch. Journ.* XVIII (1913), Fig. 56.

³ Although complete evidence is lacking it is reasonable to suppose that the ring was augmented to six by the addition of the present third in 1602, and if so would be one of the earliest rings of six in the country. The ring was increased to eight in 1770.

By unknown (*sic*) founders, working in a day that's long since past.
They graved them with The Maker's Name¹ and many an ancient
rune

And the hand of God was with them when they chipped them² for
the tune.

He knew that through the ages, in the spot where they were hung,
Their voice would be His messenger whenever they were rung,
And if at times the pulpit should appear to lose its power,
For ever pure and true would be the message from the tower.

The villages that lie around, they boast about their peal.
And never for a moment own the jealousy they feel.
But they listen—how they listen—when the distant music swells
And young and old together say “There go the Hagbourne Bells.”

Yes, the Hagbourne bells are ringing, there's a wonder in their
song,

For other things have altered as the ages pass along,
But, who can doubt the future, and who can be afraid,
For the Hagbourne bells are ringing as the day that they were
made.”³

Many peals have been rung on the Hagbourne bells, and are
recorded on tablets in the tower. It is not possible to give all these
in detail, but some of the more noteworthy are appended here-
with:—

On the south wall is a tablet inscribed:—

O.D.G. / May 2nd 1885. / At East Hagbourne Church, Berks. /
Holts' Ten Part Peal of Grandsire Triples / 5040 Changes In 3
Hours and 3 Minutes / F. Napper, Hagbourne, Treble. /
H. Castle, S. Mary Magdalene, Oxford, 2. / J. W. Washbrook,
S. Thomas, Oxford, 3. / J. R. Vincent, Esq., S. John's Coll :
Oxford, 4. / F. A. Castle, S. Mary Magdalene, Oxford, 5. / C. W. H.
Griffith, Esq., C.C.C., Oxford, 6. / A. F. M. Constance, Esq.,
B.N.C., Oxford, 7. / D. Napper, Hagbourne, Tenor. / 23½ cwt.
(*sic*) / Conducted by J. W. Washbrook. / Supposed First Peal
Rung On These Bells. /

The Hagbourne men evidently did not intend this record to
remain long in outside hands. They must have practiced hard

¹ This refers to inscriptions such as those on the present 5th and 6th.

² The ancient method of tuning a bell by hand chipping.

³ A reference to the “Old Standard” method of tuning. A suggestion was
once made that the Hagbourne bells should be tuned on more modern lines,
but this met with great opposition from the parishioners. When the bells
were recently rehung, a stipulation was made that they should not leave
the tower, and that the tuning should not be altered.

during the winter of 1885 to produce a complete band capable of the following peal in 1886, which is recorded on a tablet on the west wall of the tower, inscribed :—

The Hagbourne Society / of Change Ringers / Oxford Diocesan Guild. / On Tuesday March 2nd 1886, / in Three Hours and Fifteen Minutes, / A PEAL OF GRANDSIRE / TRIPLES Being TAYLORS BOB & SINGLE VARIATION, / CONTAINING 5040 CHANGES. / The RINGERS were / J. PETHER, Treble. / E. NAPPER, 2. / F. NAPPER, 3. / D. NAPPER, 4. / J. NAPPER, 5. / W. NAPPER, 6. / C. ALLEN, 7. / A. WOODLEY, Tenor. / Conducted by William Napper. / Revd. W. R. BAKER, VICAR. / S. DIXON, J. SAUNDERS. / Churchwardens.

On the east wall of the tower is a tablet inscribed :—

The Oxford Diocesan Guild. / ON WEDNESDAY, MAY 15TH, 1935 WAS RUNG IN THIS TOWER IN THREE HOURS AND EIGHT MINUTES / A PEAL OF GRANDSIRE TRIPLES / 5040 CHANGES. HOLT'S ORIGINAL. / REV. E. S. POWELL, TREBLE. / REV. R. P. FARROW, 2. / REV. F. LL. EDWARDS, 3. / REV. C. CAREW COX, 4. / REV. E. G. BENSON, 5. / REV. A. G. G. THURLOW, 6. / REV. C. ELLIOTT WIGG, 7. / REV. W. M. K. WARREN, TENOR. / CONDUCTED BY REV. C. CAREW COX. / THIS WAS THE FIRST PEAL OF GRANDSIRE TRIPLES EVER RUNG BY EIGHT PRIESTS OF THE CHURCH. / RUNG FOR THE SILVER JUBILEE OF HIS MAJESTY KING GEORGE V. / REV. H. A. SMITH-MASTERS, Vicar. / F. H. ABBOTT, A. H. WEBB, / CHURCHWARDENS. /

The Hagbourne ringers scored their first Peal of Stedman Triples without outside assistance in 1939. This feat is recorded on a tablet on the east wall of the tower, inscribed :—

O.D.G. / On Saturday, Nov. 2, 1939 / A PEAL OF STEDMAN TRIPLES / Thurston's Four-Part / 5040 CHANGES / was rung in this tower in 2 hrs. 58 mins. / by Hagbourne Members. / R. B. Bond, Treble. / H. K. White, 2. / W. V. Webb, 3. / H. L. Bishop, 4. / B. L. J. Brown, 5. / W. Lambell, 6. / A. H. Webb, 7. / W. A. Goodenough, Tenor. / Conducted by A. H. Webb. / Vicar—Rev. H. A. Smith-Masters, M.A., Hon : C.F. / Churchwardens :— F. H. Abbott, A. H. Webb. /

Visited :

F.S., R.G., 31st March 1940, 24th May, 1941.

90.

HAMPSTEAD MARSHALL.

St. Mary.

Chime of Two Bells ; tenor 30 inches diameter, in C.

Bell.	Inscription.	Weight.		
		Cwts.	Qrs.	lbs.
Treble.	JOHN CROCKER & BENIDITE BARNHAM CH : WARDENS J756 LESTER & PACK OF † / LONDON FECIT	4	1	0#
Tenor.	✠ Henri Knight Mad Mee ANO 1592	5	2	0#

The treble is a maiden bell from the Whitechapel foundry. The tenor, an early example of Henry Knight's work, has a stirrup-topped clapper with iron baldrick copse.

In 1877 the Rev. T. A. Turner noted :—" frame worm-eaten, with fine oak beams below ; but all gear in a shocking state." This frame was subsequently removed and a new oak frame installed. The new frame obviously is the work of some local craftsman who took the former frame as his pattern since it is of the obsolete braced-centre-post type.¹

The bells are fitted with elm headstocks, strap gudgeons, and brass bearings. There are no ground pullies to the frame and the half-wheels are not of the orthodox type but appear to be the top halves of complete wheels. They are keyed to the headstocks.

In the Turner MS is a note stating that there were formerly three bells.

The Commissioners' Inventories, dated 4th August 1552, state :—

"two sakaringe belles, two lytche bells of bell metalle, and thre belles xxxc Weighte."

The weights given here, as at Chieveley (*q.v.*) appear to have been exaggerated.

Visited :

T.A.T., 7th July, 1877.

F.S., R.G., 25th March, 1940.

91. HAMPSTEAD NORRIS.

St. Mary.

Ring of Six Bells ; tenor 40 inches diameter, in G ; and a Sanctus Bell.

<i>Bell.</i>	<i>Inscription.</i>	<i>Weight.</i>		
		<i>Cwts.</i>	<i>Qrs.</i>	<i>lbs.</i>
Treble.	SAMVELL KNIGHT MADE MEE THE LEDER OF THIS RING TO BEE 1703	4	I	0#
Second.	◆ HENRX KNIGHT MADE MEE X6X9	4	3	0#
Third.	HONOR GOD X637	5	2	0#
Fourth.	Samuell Knight made me 1074 ::::	7	0	0#
Fifth.	: FEAR GOD © HONOUR © THEKING © TS © GD © CW : SK 1685 / (T.) / RECAST 1930 / EUSTACE E. PALMER. / PATRON.	8	0	0#
Tenor.	1675	II	0	0#
Sanctus.	J WARNER AND SONS LONDON 1885	I	I	0#

¹ A similar type frame is illustrated in Plate XIV.A.

The treble, fourth, and the predecessor of the present fifth were cast by Samuel Knight, of Reading. The date on the fourth is a founder's error for 1704. The fifth was recast by Messrs. John Taylor & Co. in 1930. The sanctus was recast by Messrs. Warner in 1885: its predecessor was a blank bell of approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ cwt. The remainder were cast at Reading by members of the Knight family: the second is by Henry I; the third by Ellis I; and the tenor by Henry III and Ellis II. The fifth was cast without canons; the others have been quarter turned. The inscriptions on the second, and third are in *sheet-metal* type, and N in HONOR is reversed; the inscription on the sanctus has been placed on its soundbow, and this bell has no top inscription band.

The third is a maiden bell; the treble and fifth have been sharpened, and the rest flattened. The second has a false clapper-staple bolted to its crown.

The oak frame consists of heads, cills, main braces, and two sets of jack braces to each section: it is arranged *diagonally* in the tower and is of the same plan as the frame at Pangbourne which is dated 1720. The treble, tenor, third and fourth bells swing side-by-side north-east to south-west; at right angles to these are the second, in the north-east angle, and the fifth, in the south-west angle. The sanctus, which is used as a clock bell, is housed in a cot on the tower roof. The bells are fitted with elm headstocks, hoop gudgeons, self-aligning ball-bearings, and traditional type wheels, stays, and sliders.

Commissioners' inventories dated 4 Aug. 1552. *a sacrying bell and a lyche bell of bell mettell, iiij belles and a saunce bell in the tower weing by estimacion xxviijc.* This would imply a treble of about 5 cwt.; a second of 6 cwt.; a third of 7 cwt., and a tenor of 9 cwt.: the remaining metal being contained in the sanctus, sacring, and lyche bells.

Visited:

T.A.T., 26th June, 1877.

F.S., T.B.B., 8th March, 1941.

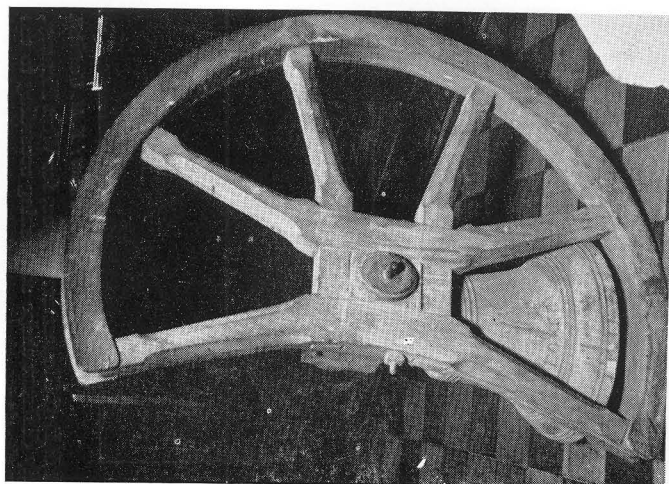
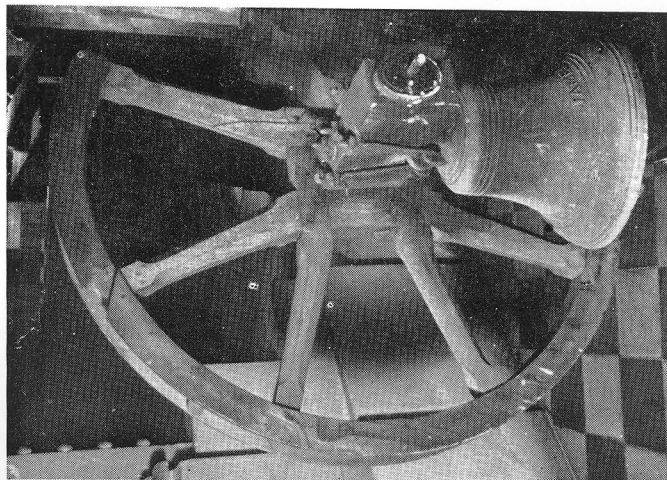
92.

HANNEY, EAST.

St. James the Less.

This modern Church was erected from designs by the late G. E. Street, Esq. (1824-1881), R.A., and is equipped with a single bell, hung for chiming, in the western gable of the nave.

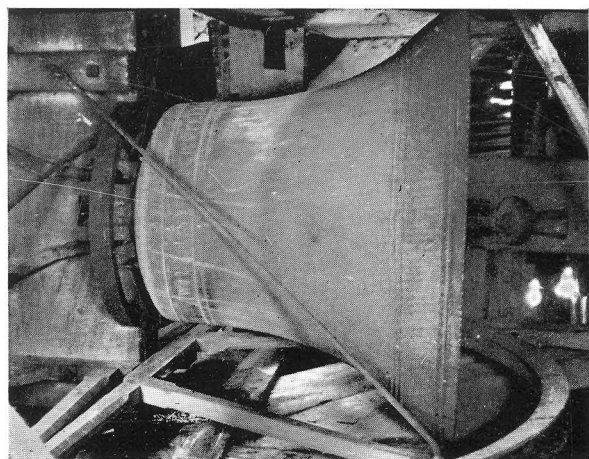
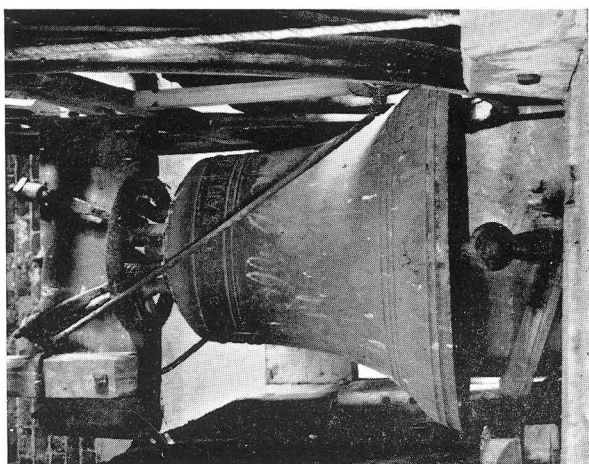
PLATE X.



Photos : F. M. Underhill.
The Sanctus Bell at Faringdon complete with fittings made by James Wells, of Aldbourn circa 1800. Note the method of construction of the three-quarter wheel. This unusual arrangement of the upright spokes also occurs in a complete wheel at West Hanney.

THE CHURCH BELLS OF BERKSHIRE

PLATE XL.



Photos: F. M. Underhill.

The treble and fifth bells of the Ring of Six cast by Abraham Rudhall I, of Gloucester, in 1702, for West Hanney. An excellent example of casting bells of entirely different shape and tuning according to the position they occupied in the ring.

93.

HANNEY, WEST.

St. James the Great.

Ring of Six Bells : tenor 47 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches diameter, in E, and a Sanctus Bell.

Bell.	Inscription.	Weight.		
		Cwts.	Qrs.	lbs.
Treble.	GOD SAUE QUEEN ANN [<i>Border Fig. 30.</i>] A : R [<i>Fig. 31.</i>] [<i>Fig. 31.</i>] 1702 [<i>Border Fig. 30.</i>]	6	0	0#
Second.	C. & G. MEARS OF LONDON THEY MADE ME / THE SECOND OF THIS PEAL TO BE / I WAS PLACE'D HERE BY ALFRED WHITE / WHO IN CHANGE RINGING TOOK GREAT DELIGHT / THE REV'D. JAMES MAC- DOUGALL M.A. VICAR / JOHN POWELL, ALBERT GODFREY, CHURCHWARDENS 1856.	7	1	2
Third.	ABRA : RUDHALL CAST US ALL IN THE YEARE 1702 [<i>Border Fig. 30.</i>]	8	2	0#
Fourth.	PROSPERITY TO ALL OUR BENEFACTORS A [<i>Fig. 31.</i>] R 1702 [<i>10 coins of Queen Ann Period.</i>]	10	0	0#
Fifth.	WILLIAM WICKSTEED UICAR 1702 [<i>Border Fig. 28.</i>]	12	2	0#
Tenor.	W: GEERING. T: WEEDON. B: BROOKES. W: COLLINS. CHURCHWARDENS 1702	17	0	0#
Sanctus.	★ COME AWAY ★ MAKE NO DELAY ★ R: WELLS FECIT	1	1	0#

The second was recast at the Whitechapel Foundry, London, in 1856, at which date the bells were rehung with new fittings in the existing frame by Mr. Alfred White, of Appleton. The sanctus was cast at the Aldbourne Foundry by Robert Wells I, whose bell founding activities cover the period 1760–1780. The remainder are by Abraham Rudhall I, of Gloucester, 1702, by whom the complete ring of six was cast at that date. The former second¹ bore the inscription :—

“PEACE & GOOD NEIGHBOURHOOD AR 1702.”

With the exception of the second, all the bells have been quarter-turned. Cabled canons to treble, and fifth ; ornamented canons to third, and tenor ; canons broken on fourth, false iron canons fitted, and bell also drilled in crown and bolted direct to headstock.

¹ From Mr. Alfred White's Note Book.

The six largest bells are fitted with elm headstocks, hoop-gudgeons,¹ brass bearings, traditional type wheels, stays, and sliders.

The sanctus is similarly hung, but with the exceptions that drive-gudgeons and stock-hoops are fitted to this bell, and it has a wheel of unusual type.² The inscription on the sanctus occurs above the sound bow, and there are three moulding wires below its shoulder.

These bells hang in a seventeenth century oak frame, originally made for five bells only. [See plate XIV.B.] It is of the braced-centre-post, and braced-end-post type, and appears to be the work of a local carpenter. The frame is inscribed³ :—

"THE 4 CHVRCHWARDENS · WHILLYAM · GODFREY · IOHN · FELDE ·
RICHARDE · DASTENE · IOHN · BROOKE .. MARTEW · CHANCLER ·
CARPINTIR · MADE · THIS · FRAME · 1605 ·"

On the evidence of the frame there were only five bells in 1605, of slightly larger dimensions than the present major five. Probably these existed down to 1702, when they were recast by Abraham Rudhall into a ring of six.

The treble and 5th bells are illustrated on Plate XI. They afford excellent examples of Rudhall's habit of casting bells of entirely different shape and tuning according to their relative positions in the ring. The lettering of the inscription on the treble is illustrated in Fig. 77.

Visited :

F.S., M.L.S., 8th July, 1939, F.M.U., F.S., 31st May, 1941.

94.

HARWELL.

St. Matthew.

Ring of Eight Bells ; tenor 47 inches diameter, in E, and a Sanctus Bell.

<i>Bell.</i>	<i>Inscription.</i>	<i>Weight.</i>		
		<i>Cwts.</i>	<i>Qrs.</i>	<i>lbs.</i>
Treble.	★ TAYLORS ★ FOUNDERS ★ LOUGH- BOROUGH ★ 1932 / TO THE GLORY OF GOD / THIS PEAL OF SIX BELLS / WAS COMPLETELY RESTORED / & TWO NEW BELLS WERE ADDED / BY THE BARRON BELL TRUST / IN 1932 // EMMA BARRON, FOUNDER OF THE BARRON BELL TRUST. / F. HOPKINS, / P. M. WALROND, / H. W. ELDRED, / TRUSTEES. / (T)	4	1	24

¹ Hoop gudgeons on the lighter bells are unusual for A. White.

² The main upright spokes are similar in construction to those of the three-quarter wheel at Faringdon (see plate X) but with additional spokes and rim to form a whole wheel.

³ See Plate XIV.C. The letter N is reversed in each instance.

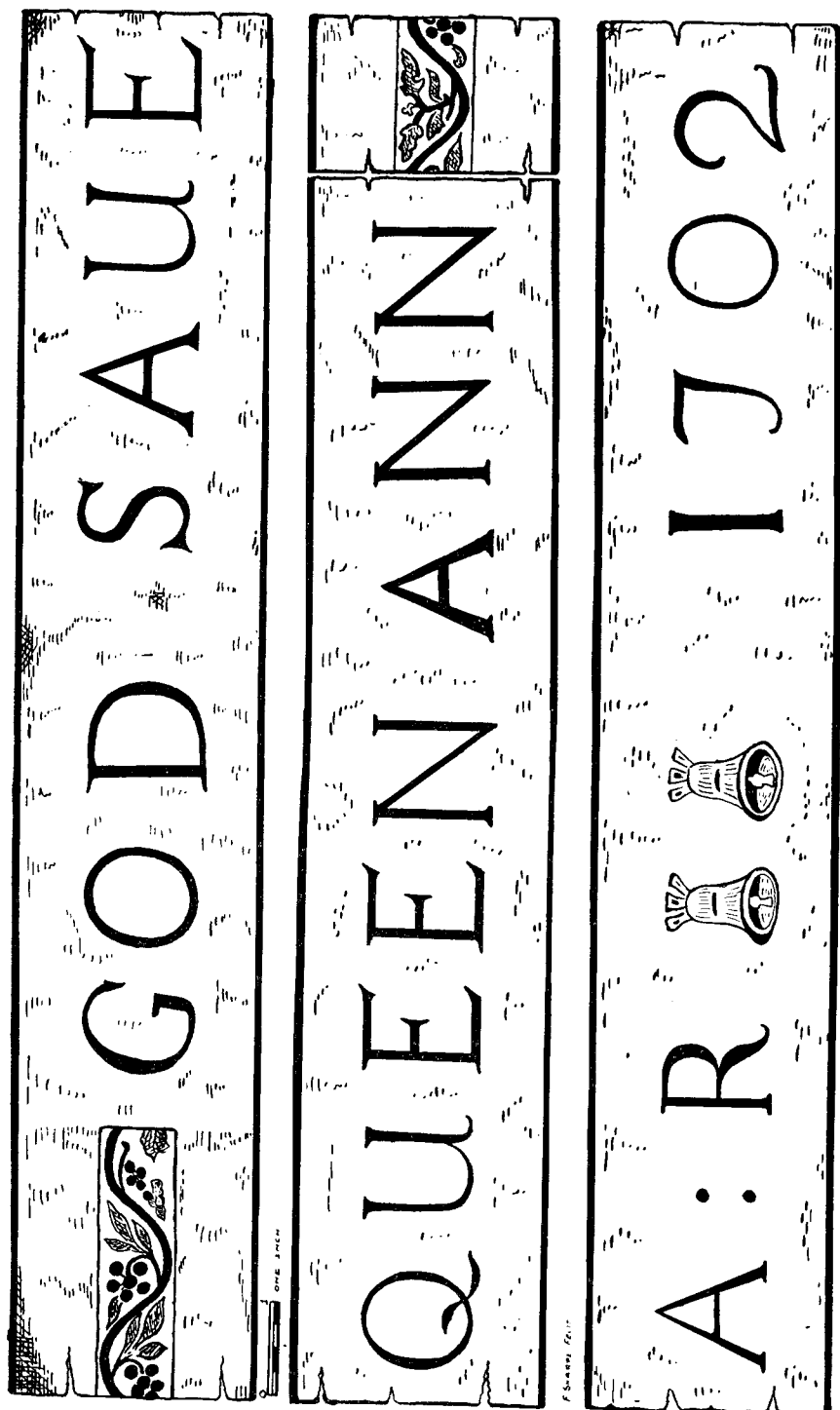


Fig. 77. Inscription on Treble Bell, West Hanney, cast by Abraham Rudhall I, of Gloucester.

Bell.	Inscription.	Weight.		
		Cwts.	Qrs.	lbs.
Second.	★ TAYLORS ★ FOUNDERS ★ LOUGH- BOROUGH ★ 1932 / (T)	4	3	7
Third.	HVMFRIE LODER GAVE THIS BELL 1611 / W [Fig. 8.] Y	5	3	11
Fourth.	Praise ye the lord 1590 © / I [Fig. 6.] C	6	3	2
Fifth.	THIS BELL WAS MADE 1611 / W [Fig. 8.] Y	8	0	14
Sixth.	[The same, with date 1612.]	9	3	11
Seventh.	This bell Was Made in the Yeare of our lord 1597 J [Fig. 8.] C	13	1	27
Tenor. / THIS BELL WAS MADE 1612 / W [Fig. 6.] Y	16	1	26
Sanctus.	R : WELLS ABOURN ...	1	3	0#

The ring was augmented to eight in 1932 when the present treble and second were cast by Messrs. Taylor & Co. An illustration of the treble complete with its fittings is given in Plate II.¹

The six older bells comprise the oldest *existing* ring of six in the world. Previous writers on campanology² considered them to be the first ring of six to be erected but the recent researches of Mr. J. Armiger Trollope show that formerly there were at least two earlier rings, now destroyed, at St. Michael, Cornhill, and St. Sepulchres, London.

The present 3rd, 5th, 6th and tenor were cast by William Yare, of Reading, 1611-1612, whose father-in-law, Joseph Carter, cast the present 4th, and 7th in 1590 and 1597 respectively. Facsimile drawings of the inscriptions on the present 3rd, and 7th, are given in Figs. 78 and 79. The ornamental border and founder's mark on the tenor are illustrated in Figs. 82 and 83.

The sanctus was cast by Robert Wells, of Aldbourne, Wilts, whose bell founding activities cover the period 1760-1780. It is now the only bell in the tower having its canons intact, and has been quarter-turned.

Unfortunately the writer never had the opportunity of examining the former frame, the removal of which, in 1932, destroyed the evidence of how this early ring of six came into being.

From the inscriptions it would seem fairly obvious that prior to 1611 there was a ring of five to which William Yare added a treble³ and recast the 3rd⁴; and, if so, he recast the fourth⁵ and tenor in the following year. But *it is possible* that there existed

¹ *Berks Arch. Journ.*, XLIII (1939), 68.

² See Walters *Church Bells of England*, 81. and Sharpe, *Church Bells of The Rural Deanery of Bicester*, 70.

³ The present third. ⁴ The present fifth. ⁵ The present sixth.

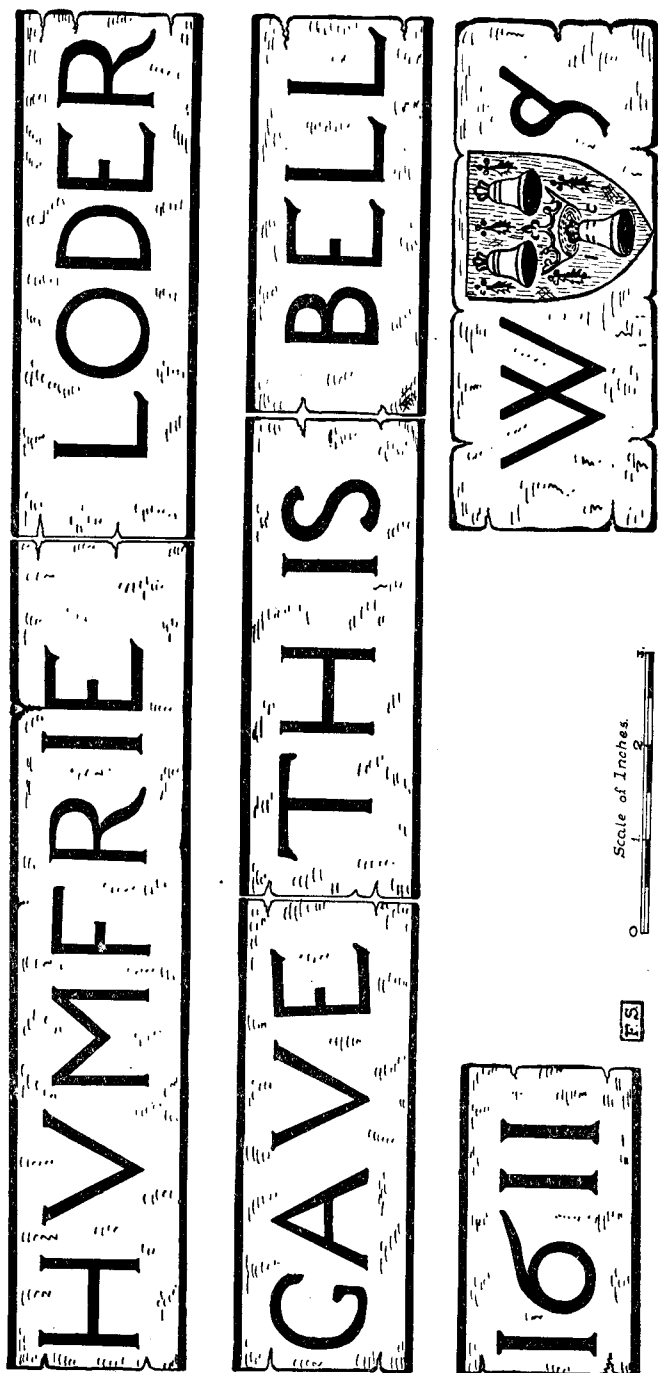


FIG. 78. Inscription on former Treble Bell, (now the third), at Harwell. The bell was cast at Reading, by William Yare. Compare the founder's initials and shield with those in Fig. 83.

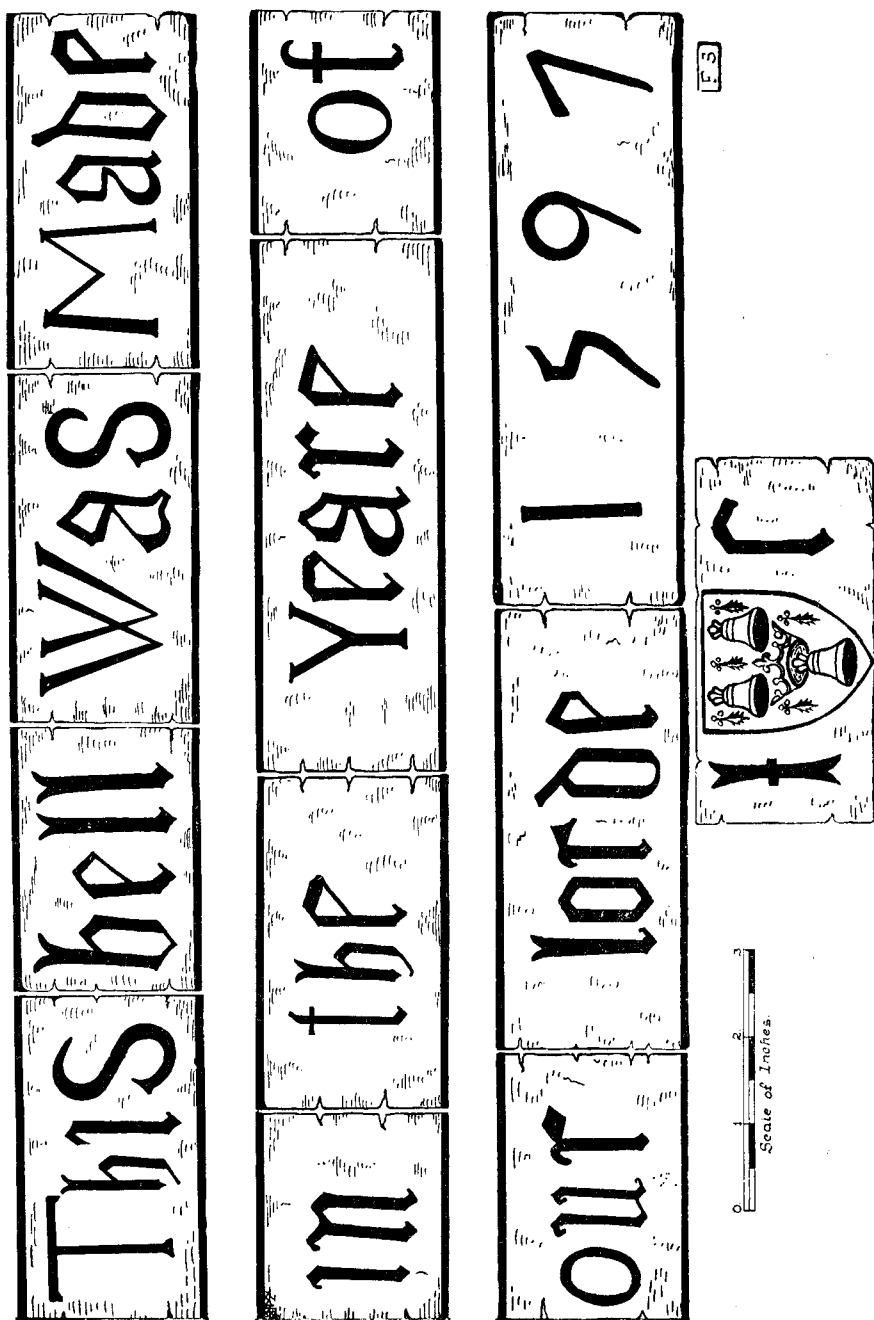


FIG. 79. Inscription on present Seventh Bell, at Harwell, cast by Joseph Carter, of Reading. An example of Carter's *sheet metal type*, with no two letters alike. The letters I C do not appear on the shield in this instance but it may be due to roughness in the casting.

prior to 1611 a ring of four bells in a *minor* key, to which in 1611 a treble was added making a *minor* ring of five, and the tenor added the following year making a *major* ring of six. The plan of the former frame would have proved which pits had been added to the original frame.

The eight bells are now fitted with cast iron headstocks having fixed steel gudgeons, self-aligning ball bearings, "Hastings" type stays, modern type clappers, and traditional type wheels. They hang in a new cast iron side pattern frame mounted on a double set of rolled steel joists. The canons have been removed from the six largest bells. The saunce is also fitted with ball bearings, but has an elm headstock and strap gudgeons. The frame and fittings were installed by Messrs. Taylor & Co. in 1932.

Visited :

F.S., R.G., 31st March, 1940.

95.

HATFORD.

The Holy Trinity.

Ring of Four Bells ; tenor 27 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches diameter, in E flat.

Bell.	Inscription.	Weight.		
		Cwts.	Qrs.	lbs.
Treble.	J. WARNER & SONS LONDON 1873.	2	1	0#
Second.	[Same as treble.]	2	2	0#
Third.	CAST BY JOHN WARNER & SONS LONDON 1873.	3	1	0#
Tenor.	[Same as third.]	4	0	0#

This ring was erected when the new Church was built in 1873. The bells, which have angular-type canons, hang in an oak frame and are fitted with elm headstocks, strap-gudgeons, brass bearings, and traditional-type wheels and other fittings.

In the turret of the old Church hung two bells ;¹ one uninscribed and probably of XIIIth century date, and the other of late XIVth century date. The latter is now at Finchley St. Paul, Middlesex, and was visited by Mr. Underhill and the writer on 17th May 1941. The Church had been damaged by enemy action a few days previously ; the east window had been blown in and the glass in the other windows shattered by blast ; the stone quoins of the walls at the east end had been disintegrated, and a very large number of tiles had been blasted from the roof including the bell turret. Fortunately the bell was safe and sound. It still hangs from its original Berkshire elm headstock, which is fitted with drive-in type gudgeons, each secured by means of a stockhoop,² and is swung by means of an iron lever. Its canons are intact and it has been half-turned. The original clapper staple having been

¹ From Walters' MS.

² Similar to the example at Compton Beauchamp, *q.v.*

broken, a false crown-staple has been fitted ; and, as this is secured by *keys*, suggests a XVIIth century repair. The shank, ball, and flight of the clapper are original, to which has been fitted a XIXth century top.

The bell is illustrated in Plate XII.B., where it will be noted that the inscription occurs in the lower of two inscription bands placed immediately below the shoulder angle. The upper band is occupied by a narrow flat raised band between the moulding wires ; a feature of early XIVth century London bell founding. The diameter of the bell is $22\frac{1}{4}$ inches ; height from lip to crown $20\frac{1}{4}$ inches ; canons 4 inches, and argent $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Its strike-note is G natural. It is inscribed :—

[Cross Fig. 84.] **BEACVS** [Fig. 85.] **VENTER** [Fig. 85.]

QVI [Fig. 85.] **CE** [Fig. 85.] **PORCAVIC**

A facsimile drawing of the lettering will be found in Fig. 80. This inscription is not known to occur elsewhere.

The bell was cast by John Langhorne, brazier, of London, whose business career extended from 1379 to 1406. John Langhorne appears to have been the first owner of the second and more important medieval London bell foundry.¹ His bells fall into two groups. I. Bells with the cross Fig. 84, the wheel-stop Fig. 85, and an inscription in capitals. II. Bells with the cross Fig. 84, the "laver" shield² Fig. 39, and an inscription in Mixed Gothic of which the capitals are the same as in group I. Bells in group I occur at Little Chesterford, Great Holland, and Thorpe-le-Soken, Essex ; Shapwick, Dorset ; Little Hormead, Herts ; and Finchley St. Paul, Middlesex ; (formerly at Hatford, Berks.) There is a bell at Willingale Spain, Essex, on which the cross is repeated in place of the wheel stop.

Connecting groups I and II are bells at Tolleshunt Major, Essex, and Brent Tor, Devon, which have the addition of the "laver" shield to the marks described for group I.

Bells in group II are to be found at Colchester Town Hall, and Steeple, Essex ; the second and recast treble at St. Bartholomew the Less, Smithfield, London ; and at Folkington, Sussex.

John Langhorne apparently died in 1406, his will being dated in January of that year.³ In it he desires to be buried at St. Michael's, Cornhill, and leaves his property to his wife Alice.

The Hatford (or Finchley St. Paul) bell was probably cast at the beginning of his career.

Thanks are due to the Rev. P. Orme, of Finchley St. Paul.

Hatford visited :

R.G., F.S., 9th March, 1940.

¹ See Deedes and Walters, *Church Bells of Essex*, 21-24.

² The arms of Underhill.

³ Sharpe's *Calendar of London Wills*, ii, 363.

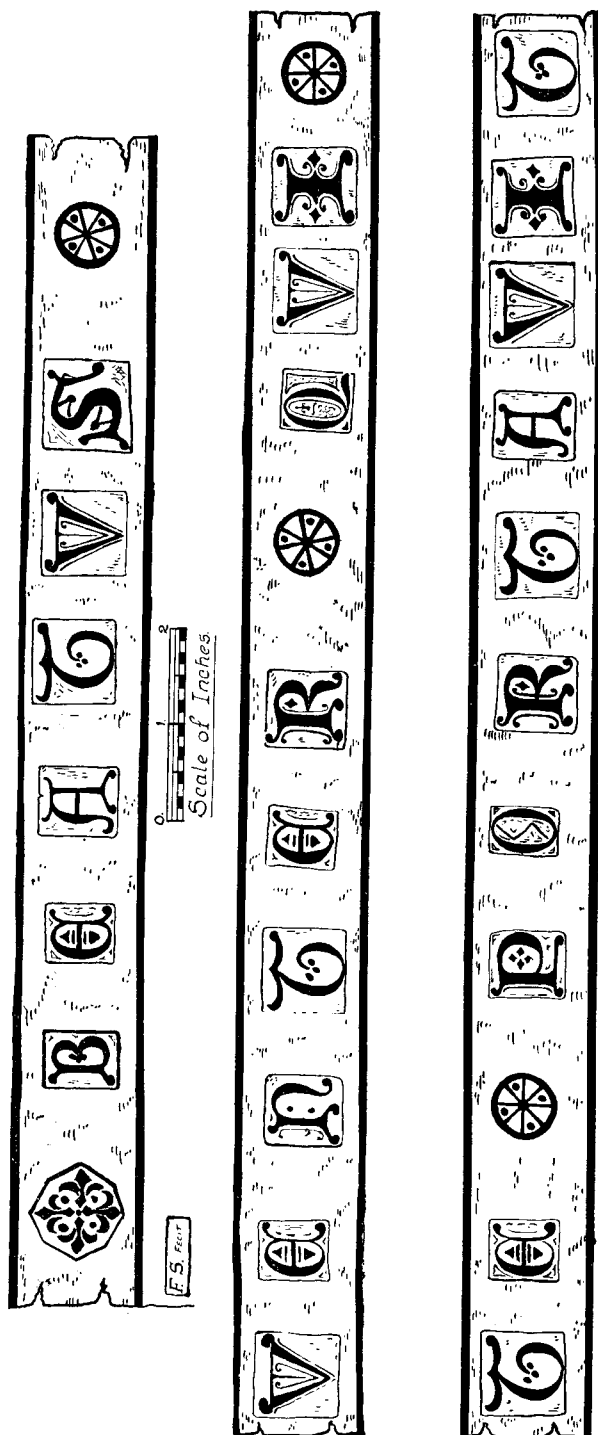


FIG. 80. Inscription on Bell at Finchley St. Paul, Middlesex, which until 1873 hung in the turret of the old Church at Hatford, Berks. The bell was cast *circa* 1380 by John Langhorne, of London.

96.

HENDRED, EAST.

St. Augustine.

Ring of Six Bells ; tenor 50 inches diameter, in E flat.

<i>Bell.</i>	<i>Inscription.</i>	<i>Weight Cwts.</i>
Treble.	ELLIS AND HENRY KNIGHT MADE MEE 1674	6½#
Second.	THOMAS EALLAWAY IOHN CLEMENT CHURCH WARDENS : I : BAGLEY : J746 :	7¾#
Third.	FEARE GOD 1647	9#
Fourth.	<i>s</i> <i>an</i> <i>cta</i> <i>a</i> <i>n</i> <i>n</i> <i>a</i> <i>o</i> <i>r</i> <i>a</i> <i>p</i> <i>r</i> <i>o</i> <i>n</i> <i>o</i> <i>b</i> <i>is [<i>Rebus, Fig. 46</i>]</i>	12#
Fifth.	[<i>Fig. 54.</i>] REV ^D . E. WAPSHARE RECTOR. REV ^D . E. HUSSEY CURATE. / W. ALLIN & C. ROBEY CHURCH- WARDENS. J. TAYLOR OXFORD FECIT 1853. [<i>Fig. 56.</i>]	15#
Tenor.	SAMVELL KNIGHT MEADE MEE GABREL MY NAME TOO BEE 1689 WK [<i>Bust.</i>] IS [<i>Bust.</i>] CW	22#

These bells are not tuned diatonically in a major scale ; the 3rd being A natural instead of A flat. The sequence of notes is therefore that of the 2nd-to-7th of a major ring of ten in B flat. They are fitted with elm headstocks.

The treble was cast by Ellis Knight II. and Henry Knight III, of Reading. The lettering, illustrated in Fig. 67, serves as a criterion for identifying a number of bells cast about this time which bear no founders' names.

The second is by James Bagley, a little-known member of the famous Chacombe family of founders. James Bagley's bells are rare, and his lettering is illustrated on Plate XII.A. Other examples of his work occur at Fifield, and Wolvercote, Oxon.

The third is by Ellis Knight I, and the fourth by John Sanders¹ of which a scale drawing will be found in Fig. 81. There is no record of the predecessor of the present fifth which was cast in 1853 by John Taylor, of Oxford.

The lettering on the tenor is interesting² The large elaborate capitals G, M, N and T were part of a set first used by John Wallis, of Salisbury, on a ring of bells cast for the Clewer Tower at Windsor Castle in 1612. How these came into the possession of Samuel Knight is unknown.

¹ See Drayton.

² See Fig. 68. *Berks. Arch. Journ.*, XLIV (1940), 98.

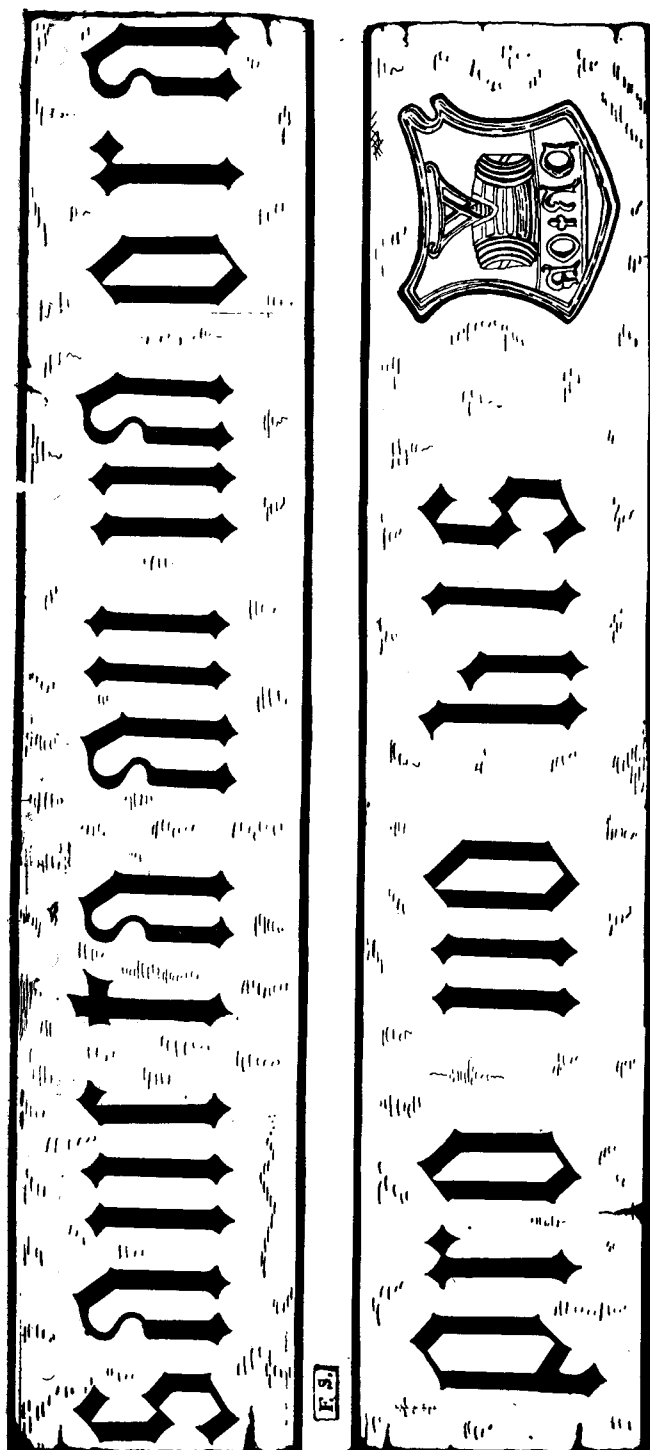


FIG. 81. Inscription on Fourth Bell, at East Hendred, cast by John Sanders, of Reading. In the scale drawing the letters appear nearer together than on the bell on account of space, but each letter is half full-size.

The Commissioners' Inventories made in 1552 state "*fyve bells*," an unusually large number for this date, but it is of course possible that this refers to a ring of four and a sanctus, as no distinction is made. The present bell-frame dated 1631 was originally made for *four* large bells, arranged in medieval style side-by-side, and swinging north-and-south.

An examination of bell frames from medieval times to the first quarter of the XVIIth century, constructed to house either three or four bells, shows us that wherever space would allow these were planned so that all the bells swung side-by-side, and, in the majority of cases, to swing east and west. [The mouth-to-mouth arrangement was a much later innovation.]

A bell pit of maximum length could be obtained by this plan, and three main factors appear to have influenced the medieval craftsmen in its selection.

In the first place, medieval bells were longer in proportion to their respective diameters, owing to the scale of tuning favoured by their founders, than were those of the XVIth and succeeding centuries: secondly, the canons of medieval bells were long, and bells were "tucked-down"¹ by reason of the canons not being let in to the headstocks very far: thirdly, the position in which the drive-in type gudgeons then in use had to be fixed made the rim of the bell further from the centre of oscillation than with the strap type.² This arrangement, while very effective for musical purposes was not very convenient for the ringer, and after the introduction of change ringing early in the XVIIth century, bell hangers began to "tuck up" bells far higher into their headstocks than previously; and also the strap type gudgeon was invented allowing the centre of oscillation to be level with the bottom of the headstock. Then founders gradually shortened bells in proportion to their diameters producing the distinctive tonal qualities so characteristic of post-Reformation bells, and enabling bell pits to be still further shortened. And so it was that when it was desired to add more bells in the XVIIth and succeeding centuries, there was often insufficient space in the tower for this purpose as for instance at Denchworth and East Hendred. Two courses were open to the bell hanger. Either he must install a new frame, or shorten the bell-pits of the existing one. The latter course was seldom adopted because it made the centre posts no longer central, and mainly contributed to the large number of existing early XVIIth century frames. Even these were made with long bell pits, though not as long as their predecessors; and in some instances, as at Hanney and Hendred, local craftsmen copied the former patterns. In all cases the side-by-side arrangement for the *largest bells* was

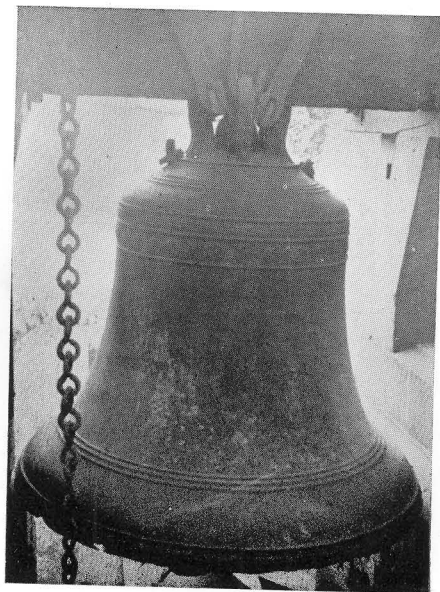
¹ "Trussed-down" in some old accounts.

² For an illustration of a XVth century bell hanging to its original stock, see Plate VI.



A.

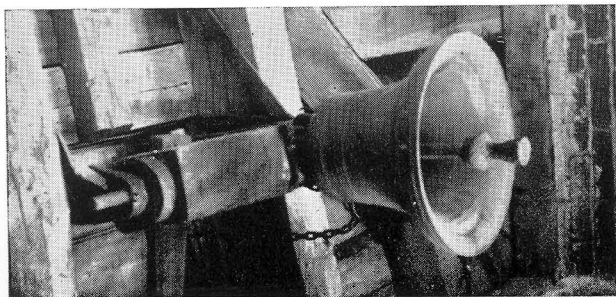
Photo : W. A. Seaby.



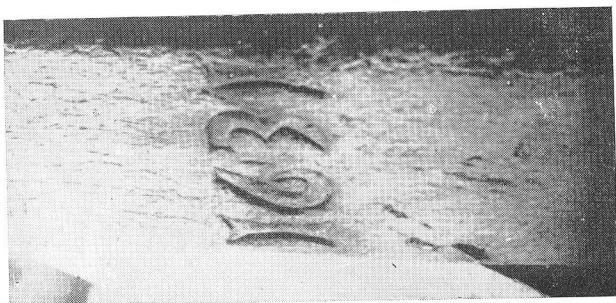
B. *Photo : F. M. Underhill.*

- A. Portion of inscription on the second bell of the Ring of Six at East Hendred. The bell was cast by James Bagley.
- B. Late XIVth century bell by John Langhorne, of London, formerly at Hatford, Berks, now at Finchley St. Paul, Middlesex.

PLATE XIII.



A.
West Hendred. Sanctus Bell.



B.
King-post of bell frame, East
Hendred.



Photos: F. M. Underhill.

C.
Lettering used by William
Knight II, of Reading.

retained ; and, where there was room, as for instance at Cumnor, Blewbury, Boxford, Denchworth, Hanney and Hendred to quote a few examples, the lighter bell (or bells) was added at right angles to the original ones. Where four bells hung side-by-side and it was desired to augment to five the new treble pit was first added, and often by reason of its length occupied most of the available space, as at Cumnor, Denchworth, and Hanney ; but as time went on and bells became tucked up still further, these pits were shortened and another pit added whenever it was desired to add one more bell so that the *two lightest bells* could swing mouth-to-mouth. Cumnor, Hanney and Hendred among others afford good examples of this. The placing of *tenors* mouth-to-mouth is a marked feature of XIXth century bell hanging and definitely throws more strain on the masonry of the tower especially when the two largest bells are roped on opposite sides of their respective wheels.¹

The frame at East Hendred is exceptionally high,—the heads being over six feet from the cills,—and is of the braced-centre-post type with additional braces from the end-posts to the heads.² When the ring was increased to six, possibly in 1674, the additional braces on the south side of the frame were removed and two extra pits constructed at right angles to the four original ones, parallel with the south wall, in which were hung the two lightest bells arranged to swing mouth-to-mouth. This additional framework has *no bottom cills*, and the heads are curiously “X” braced to the bottom cills of the 1631 frame, which run at *right angles to them*. The four largest bells were all roped on the north side, and thus the bell rope circle was anti-clockwise, and less strain thrown on the masonry than by the present arrangement.

The bell fittings were renewed in 1889 by Messrs. John Taylor & Co., of Loughborough, who removed the canons and rehung the bells in the existing frame. Messrs. Taylor altered the frame so that the 4th now occupies the pit which formerly housed the treble, the 3rd was hung to swing mouth-to-mouth to her where formerly the 2nd hung, and similarly the treble and 2nd now occupy the pits in the 1631 frame in place of the 3rd and 4th. This ingenious alteration converted the bell rope “circle” from anti-clockwise to clockwise, and accounts for the lighter bells now hanging in pits designed originally for larger ones. Subsequently the tenor was again rehung and fitted with new self-aligning ball bearings by Mr. Richard White, of Appleton.

In the chamber below the bells is an interesting clock, made by Seymour, of Wantage, in 1525. It has no face, and chimes the

¹ This arrangement is seldom found in XVIIIth century work, but there are exceptions ; Abingdon St. Helen having an example of 1764.

² This feature is also found at Hanney. See Plate XIV.

quarters on the treble and 5th bells, and strikes the hours on the tenor. In the same room is a XVIIth century carillon machine operated by the clock which plays the following tune every three hours.¹

6 : 4 : 6 : 5 : 4 : 3 : 5 : 6. //

6 : 4 : 3 : 2 : 5 : 2 : 3 : 2. //

4 : 3 : 2 : 1 : 2 : 3 : 4 : 5. //

2 : 3 : 4 : 5 : 6 : 4 : 5 : 6. //

Visited :

R.G., F.S., 9th March, 1940.

W.A.S., F.M.U., 23rd March, 1940.

97.

HENDRED, WEST.

The Holy Trinity.

Ring of Six Bells ; tenor 34½ inches diameter, in B flat ; and a Sanctus Bell.

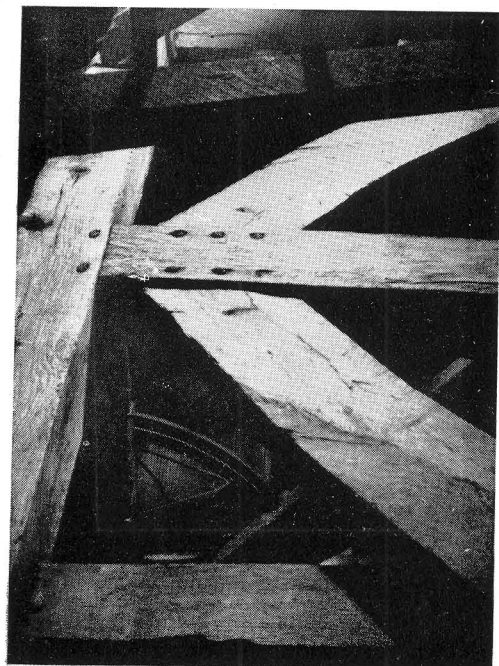
<i>Bell.</i>	<i>Inscription.</i>	<i>Weight.</i>		
		<i>Cwts.</i>	<i>Qrs.</i>	<i>lbs.</i>
Treble.	MEARS & STAINBANK, WHITECHAPEL FOUNDRY, LONDON, 1889.	3	0	16
Second.	MEARS & STAINBANK, FOUNDERS, LONDON. / V.R. JUBILEE, 1887. / C. F. HAYDEN, VICAR.	3	2	2
Third.	LOVE GOD 1630	4	0	20
Fourth.	MEARS & STAINBANK, FOUNDERS, LONDON, 1886. / ROBERT JOHN TAME CHURCHWARDEN. / F. WHITE, BELL-HANGER, APPLETON. / THE NAME OF JESUS OUR LORD BE BLESSED.	4	2	7
Fifth.	PRAYES YE THE LORD 1623 E ♦ K ♦	5	1	0#
Tenor.	FRANCIS : HOPKINS & RICE TERRAL : CHURCHWARDENS : R : WELLS : ALD-BOURNE : FECIT : MDCCLXX :	7	0	0#

The sanctus bears no inscription. It is 12 inches in diameter, giving the strike note E natural, and it weighs approximately ½ cwt. It hangs to its original elm headstock which is fitted with drive-in

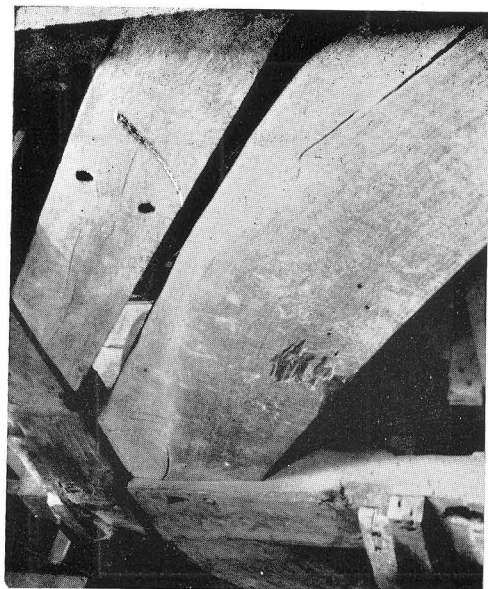
¹ This is given in bell music. For the benefit of the layman 1 is C, 2 is B, 3 is A, 4 is G, 5 is F, and 6 is E flat. See page 76.

I do not propose to give here a technical description of the interesting ancient clock and chime mechanism. These with other Berkshire examples might well form the subject of a separate paper. The chime mechanism is illustrated in Plate XV.

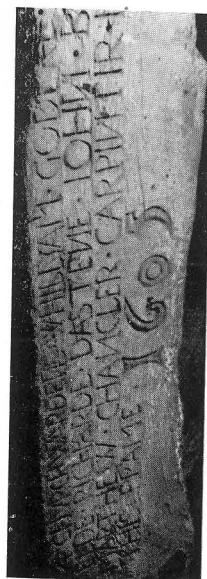
PLATE XIV.



A.



B.

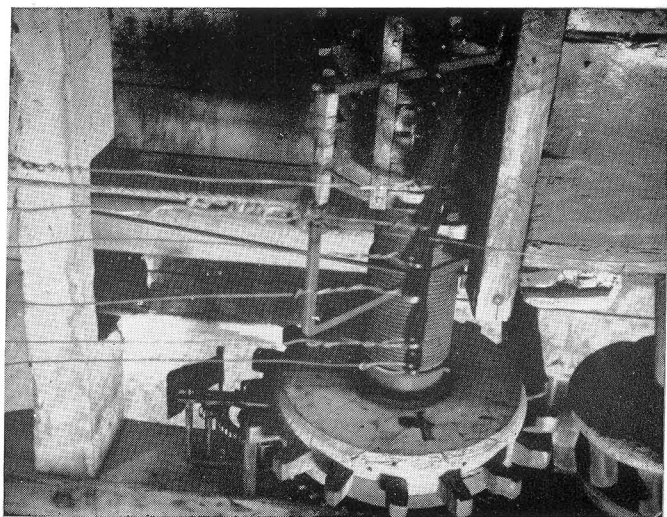


C. *Photos : F. M. Underhill.*

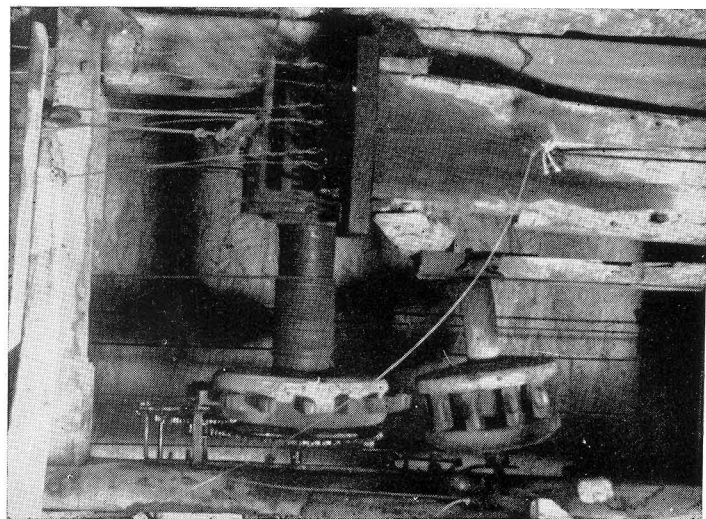
A. Detail of Late XVIIth century frame at Ruscombe. B. Detail of Early XVIIth century frame at West Hanney.
C. Portion of inscription on frame at West Hanney.

THE CHURCH BELLS OF BERRSHIRE

PLATE XV.



Photos: F. M. Underhill.



Details of XVIIth century carillon machine at East Hendred.

type gudgeons, and it is swung by means of a wooden lever. On the evidence of shape and mouldings it is probably an early XVIIth century bell by one of the Knights. See plate XIII.

The third and fifth are maiden bells and of very good tone, as are also the second and fourth which have been flattened. The treble and tenor have been spoiled by being sharpened. One canon of the fifth is missing.

Incised on the waist of the treble is "GLORY TO GOD, ON EARTH PEACE. / XMAS 1889."

The inscription on the tenor occurs above the sound bow, and this bell was cast by Robert Wells I, of Aldbourne. The tenor together with the third and fifth, which are the work of Ellis Knight I, of Reading, have been quarter-turned. The figure 3 on the third has been reversed; see Fig. 86. The remainder, as the inscriptions show, are from the Whitechapel foundry.

The oak frame was renewed at the end of the XIXth century by Mr. Frederick White of Appleton. All the bell fittings are by him, and include elm headstocks, hoop gudgeons, brass bearings, new XIXth century type clappers and ground pullicies, and traditional-type wheels. Mr. Richard White fitted new tie-bolts to the frame, refitted the clappers, and overhauled the bearings a few years ago.

Visited :

F.M.U., W.A.S., 23rd March, 1940.

F.S., 28th June, 1941.

98.

HERMITAGE.

The Holy Trinity.

The Church was built in 1835 and equipped with a single bell hung for chiming, in a western turret. When examined through field-glasses the word DOWNSHIRE and the date 1835 were the only portions of the inscription visible. Subsequently Colonel C. J. West wrote :—¹ "I can find no special mention as to the bell amongst the church records, except that it was given by the Marquis of Downshire, date 1835.

Visited :

F.M.U., 16th May 1940.

99.

HINKSEY, NORTH (or FERRY HINKSEY.)

St. Lawrence.

Ring of Four Bells ; tenor 31 inches diameter, in B.

Bell.	Inscription.	Weight.		
		Cwts.	Qrs.	lbs.
Treble.	1672	3	1	0#
Second.	CHRISTOPHER † HODSON † MADE † MEE 1681 © © © ©	4	0	0#

¹ Letter to Mr. Underhill, dated 6th June, 1940.

<i>Bell.</i>	<i>Inscription.</i>	<i>Weight.</i>		
		<i>Cwts.</i>	<i>Qrs.</i>	<i>lbs.</i>
Third.	R K 1675	4	2	0#
Tenor.	WILLIAM YARE MADE ME 1614 / RECAST 1907. (T)	5	3	2

Treble and 3rd cast by Richard Keene, of Woodstock, Oxon. The 2nd is the only bell in the county by the firm of John and Christopher Hodson, whose foundry was probably in the parish of All Hallows, London Wall, with a branch establishment at St. Mary Cray in Kent.¹ They are noteworthy as the founders of Great Tom of Oxford, whom they recast in 1680, after Richard Keene had thrice failed. The heavy ring of eight at Merton College cast in the same year is also their work.

The inscription on the former tenor, by Yare, which was recast at the Loughborough foundry in 1907, has been reproduced on its successor. This bell has no canons and is fitted with a cast iron headstock. The three older bells have canons and are fitted with elm headstocks. They hang in an oak frame.

An illustration of the treble is given in Plate VII.²

Northynksey chappell ij belles. [1552 Inventories.]

Visited :

H.B.W., June 1893. F.S., 10th July, 1924.

100.

HINKSEY, SOUTH.

St. John.

Ring³ of Three Bells ; tenor 35½ inches diameter.

<i>Bell.</i>	<i>Inscription.</i>	<i>Weight.</i>		
		<i>Cwts.</i>	<i>Qrs.</i>	<i>lbs.</i>
Treble.	Vox Augustini Sonet In Aure Dei [<i>Founder's Mark Fig. 41.</i>] [<i>Cross</i> <i>Fig. 42.</i>]	5	0	0#
Second.	[<i>Cross Fig. 52, upside down.</i>] Sancta Margareta Ora Pro Nobis [<i>Founder's mark, Fig. 44.</i>] [<i>Shield,</i> <i>Fig. 40.</i>]	6	3	0#
Tenor.	D M R P N R A B	8	0	0#

¹ See Walters, *Church Bells of England*, 218.

² *Berks Arch. Journ.*, XLIV (1940), 87.

³ Although this is termed a *Ring* of bells none of them could now be rung in the strictly technical sense owing to the dilapidated condition of the bells, the bell-frame, and fittings. The Rev. T. A. Turner noted the same in 1876. The bells however were originally hung for ringing. The keynote of the tenor must be presumed to have been A natural. The strike-note of the second is approximately B natural.

Facsimile drawings of the inscriptions on the treble and 2nd bells will be found in Figs. 74 and 75.¹ An illustration of the treble in her frame is given in Plate VI.²

The treble, and 2nd bells are products of the major³ London medieval foundry.

The treble was cast by the man (name unknown) who succeeded William Dawe and John Bird *circa* 1420, and whose initials were I.W.⁴ This bell is now badly cracked. It has not been quarter-turned and is secured to its original headstock by means of nailed straps.⁵

The 2nd is a beautifully-shaped bell, cast *circa* 1470 by the successors of J. Danyell, who it will be noted used one of the founder's marks introduced by "I.W." It also bears the well-known and very beautiful initial cross, Fig. 52, introduced by Danyell, and the Royal Arms, Fig. 40. The latter were consistently used by Danyell, and most writers attribute this to his having been commissioned to cast the bells for Kings College, Cambridge. The 2nd is now the only sound bell in the tower. It has been quarter-turned, but is still secured to its headstock by means of nailed straps. The headstock is literally riddled with plug holes showing that the bell has been "trussed" or "bolstered" many times. Owing to the dilapidated state of the bell-frame and fittings this bell has recently been hung "dead," and is now sounded by means of an "Ellacombe" chiming hammer.⁶

¹ *Berks. Arch. Journ.*, XLV (1941), 23 and 25.

² *Ibid.*, XLIV (1940), 87.

³ There were two distinct London medieval foundries: the lesser covering the period 1371-1480, and the more important one 1380-1520. See Walters, *Church Bells of England*, 181-192.

⁴ It was thought by early writers that John Walgrave, who is mentioned with John Bird in William Dawe's will, was the founder of the large group of bells bearing the shield with the letters I.W. [Fig. 41.] This however has been proved by Mr. H. B. Walters to be incorrect. "I.W." introduced the three stamps, Figs. 41, 42, and 44, and a set of medium sized capitals [see Figs. 74 and 75] which were used by no less than *four* of his London successors.

⁵ *c.f.* Boxford, West Challow and Kingston Lisle.

⁶ When the writer first visited the tower in 1932 he found this beautiful medieval bell sounded by the atrocious practice known to campanologists as "clocking." There is no doubt that the same pernicious practice had been responsible for the cracking of the treble and tenor. The evidence, in the form of ropes attached to the clappers, was there. The second bell probably outlived the others because this bell alone had been quarter-turned. The "Ellacombe" hammer was suggested, *not as a permanent means of sounding this bell*, but as a precautionary measure to safeguard the bell until such time as it could be rehung. It is hoped that rehangings will not long be delayed.

The tenor bears an unintelligible inscription of the type favoured by the Appowels, of Buckingham, *circa* 1560, and on this evidence is probably their work. The letters are very badly formed, and some of them are slightly different to those generally attributed to these founders,¹ but the bell obviously belongs to this period when founders were most reluctant to express decided religious opinions, or to disclose their identity.²

The oak frame is constructed to take four bells, and has at some time contained that number. The smallest pit is now vacant. This frame, which probably dates from the XVIIth century, consists of heads, cills, end posts and braces only. Part of it may be seen in Plate VI, where the omission of centre-posts will be noted.

What remains of the bell wheels shows that these were originally of the XVIth century half-wheel type, similar to those at Letcombe Bassett, one of which is illustrated in Plate IX.³

The headstocks are contemporary with the bells, and are fitted with drive-in type gudgeons, and brass bearings. The tenor has a false clapper staple keyed to its crown.

Commissioners' Inventories, 1552. *Southynksy chapell iiij belles.*

Visited :

T.A.T., 30th March, 1876.

H.B.W., June, 1893.

F.S., 17th Sep., 1932, 28th Dec., 1940.

(*To be continued.*)

¹ For illustrations of lettering attributed to the Appowells, see Sharpe, *Church Bells of The Rural Deanery of Bicester*, fig. 14, and also under the heading Padworth, Berks.

² Michael Darbie has been suggested as a possible founder of this bell, but it is not like his other bells in the Oxford district, all of which bear either his name or initials and the date.

³ *Berks. Arch. Journ.*, XLV (1941), 25.



- FIG. 82. Border used by J. Carter, and W. Yare, of Reading.
 FIG. 83. Founder's initials and crest on Tenor Bell at Harwell.
 FIG. 84. Initial Cross, and FIG. 85, Word Stop, used by J. Langhorne of London, XIVth century.
 FIG. 86. Date figures on Third Bell at West Hendred, cast by Ellis Knight I, of Reading.