

ST. MARGARET'S CHURCH STOODLEIGH DEVON

Results of a Desk-Based Assessment
&
Bell Frame Recording



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Report No.: 101013
Date: 13.10.10
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St. Margaret's Church, Stoodleigh, Devon

Results of a Desk-Based Assessment & Bell Frame Recording

For

Jennifer Rowlandson

On behalf of

Stoodleigh Parish Church Council

By



SWARCH project reference: SSM10
National Grid Reference: SS922188
OASIS reference: southwes1-84607
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October 2010

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Summary

The bell frame at St. Margaret's Church, Stoodleigh, Devon, was recorded prior to its removal and replacement. Although the frame only dates from the later 19th century, an assessment undertaken by Graham Pledger (English Heritage) had identified that it contained certain transitional elements worthy of record. A desktop assessment was undertaken to place the frame in its wider historical context, and identified the importance of the patronal Daniel family. In particular, Thomas Carew Daniel seems to have impoverished his family paying for the extensive renovations at Stoodleigh Church and Court.



Figure 1: Thomas Carew Daniel, 1848-1923 (Mates 1907).

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Acknowledgements

Thanks for assistance are due to:

Miss Jennifer Rowlandson
Graham Pledger of English Heritage
Chris Pickford

1.0 Introduction

Location: St. Margaret's Church
Parish: Stoodleigh
District: Mid Devon
County: Devon
NGR: SS922188
OS Map copying Licence No: 100044808
Oasis ID: southwes1-84607

1.1 Project Background

South West Archaeology Ltd. (SWARCH) were commissioned by Miss Jennifer Rowlandson on behalf of Stoodleigh Parish Church Council (the Client) to make a drawn and written record of the bell frame at St. Margaret's Church, Stoodleigh, Devon, in advance of its removal and replacement. This work was undertaken in accordance with a provisional brief issued by Graham Pledger (Civil and Structural Engineering Team, English Heritage) and the work was carried out on the 24th August 2010. Details of the individual bells were kindly provided by Miss Rowlandson.



Figure 2: Location map.

1.2 Methodology

The documentary research was undertaken by B. Morris at the Devon Record Office and West Country Studies Library, according to guidelines laid down by the IfA for the compilation of desktop assessments (IfA 2008). This assessment was undertaken to place the bell frame in its historical context, but as it reflects the personal research interest of the author, it will not be chargeable. The recording of the bell frame and belfry took place on the 24th August 2010 and this work was carried out by B. Morris and S. Walls. This work was undertaken in accordance with the written guidance produced by Graham Pledger, and with reference to English Heritage guidelines on the recording of standing buildings (English Heritage 2006).

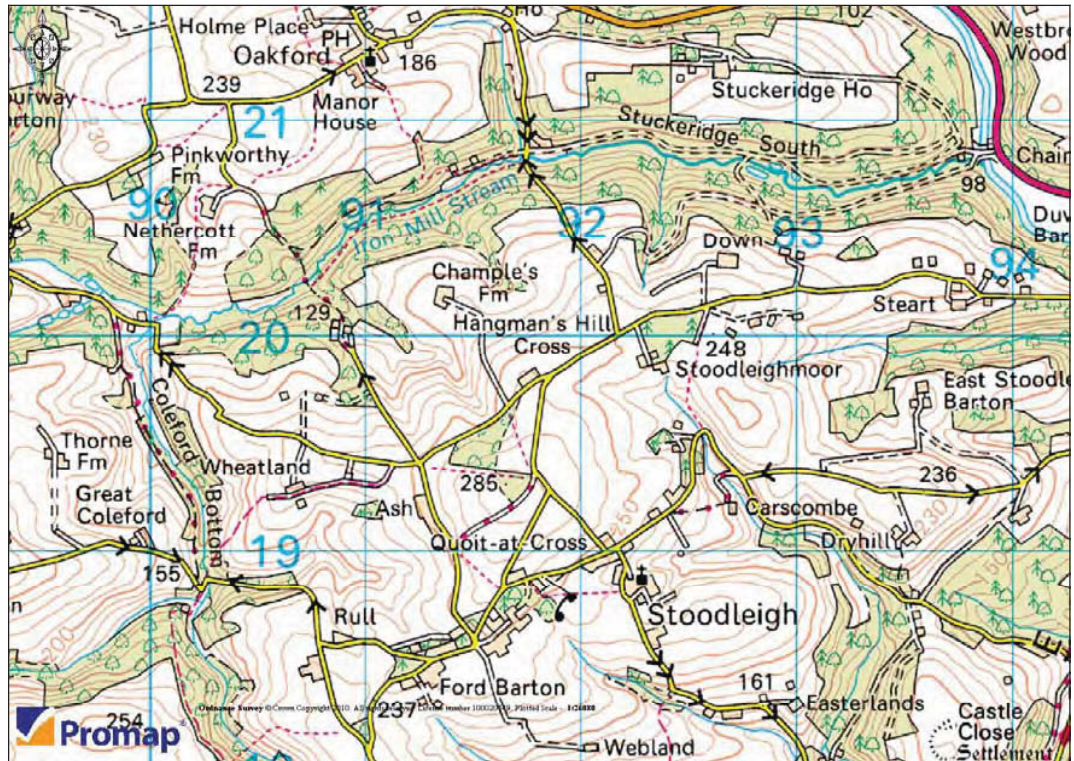


Figure 3: Location map, showing Stoodleigh, Oakford and Stuckridge House.

2.0 Historical Background

2.1 Stoodleigh

Stoodleigh is a small, fairly secluded settlement, with outlying farms, located 6 miles north-west of Tiverton and five miles south-west of Bampton (see Figure 2 and Figure 3). The settlement is first recorded in the Domesday Book as two distinct manors with ten ploughs each, latterly recorded as East and West Stoodleigh. These manors had been held by the substantial Anglo-Saxons thanes Alwin and Aelmer, before being granted to the Bishop of Coutances and Ralph of Pomeroy after 1066. The ecclesiastical parish of Stoodleigh also contained the smaller Domesday manors of Waspley (West Warbrightsleigh), West Whitnole and Rifton. Stoodleigh sat within in the Hundred of Witheridge, but Reichel argued these manors, together with neighbouring vills, anciently belonged to the Hundred of Bampton (Reichel 1898).

By the late 12th century, both East and West Stoodleigh were held by Roger de Champeaux, descending in that family until the mid 13th century, when a ½ Knight's Fee and the advowson of the church of *Westoodlegh* was granted to Roger Fitz Payne. *Estoodlegh* descended from de Champeaux through the Marchant family before being sold to John Fitz Payne in the mid 14th century.

The reunited manor then descended via the Anstill and Kelly families to Sir John Carew, remaining in the Carew family until the latter part of the 18th century. Another Sir John Carew (early 17th century) is listed as the patron of the church, and in 1668 Elizabeth Carew left £400 for the Poor of the parishes of Stoodleigh and Crowcombe (Somerset). The estates finally passed by marriage to James Bernard Esq. in the latter part of the 18th century, and were sold in c.1779 to Matthew Brickdale Esq. M.P. Brickdale's son sold the estate in 1819 to John Nicholas Fazakerley Esq. M.P., "who resides at Stoodleigh in the summer season". Fazakerley is recorded as the patron of the church in 1822 (Lysons 1822; Pole 1791).

By 1836 Stoodleigh Court (née Court Cot), West Stoodleigh Barton and much else besides belonged to one Thomas Daniel. In 1878, Thomas Daniel Esq. was "lord of the manor and principal owner of the soil" and resided at "Stoodleigh Court, a neat mansion in a small park, commanding extensive prospects" (White 1878).

As the Barton in the village of Stoodleigh is recorded in the Tithe survey as *West Stoodleigh*, it seems probable that this, rather than Stoodleigh Court, is the location of the Domesday manor (and see below).

According to the Devon Historic Landscape Characterisation, the historic core of the settlement at Stoodleigh is embedded in a landscape of fields based on or adapting earlier medieval enclosures, with the former parkland of Stoodleigh Court to the west.

2.2 The Church of St. Margaret at Stoodleigh

The Church of St. Margaret at Stoodleigh formerly sat in the Archdeaconry of Barnstaple, in the Deanery of South Molton, later transferred to the Archdeaconry of Exeter and the Rural Deanery of Tiverton (west). In the *Taxatio* of Pope Nicholas in 1291, Stoodleigh Church was valued at £5. The tithes were commuted in 1841 for £407 per annum. The first recorded incumbent, Geoffrey de Santone, was installed in 1264 (Cresswell 1920, 180). The incumbent for much of the 19th century was the Reverend Thomas Bockett, 1826-1880.

The Church of St. Margaret sits within a rectangular churchyard immediately adjacent to the house and farm of Stoodleigh Barton. The fabric of the extant building dates to the 15th century, extensively altered and augmented in the late 19th century. The font is held to be 12th century in date, along with two small fragments of carved masonry in the tower. At the time of the survey, ten fragments of curated carved masonry were noted in the porch beneath the fixed benches, including a number of carved Norman voussoirs from a segmental arch. It does seem probable there was a Norman or late Saxon church here, likely to have been associated with the Barton.

The two western bays of the nave, the west wall and southern three bays of the south aisle, and the tower are held to be 15th century in date. A close examination of the build of these various elements would suggest they are not contemporary, and represent three separate phases of build. The eastern bay of the nave, the chancel, the east bay of the southern aisle and the porch were built or extensively altered in 1879-80. The position of the Rood stair indicates the eastern bay of the nave was originally the location of the chancel, and the nave was extended by a bay in 1879-80.

The reconstruction work was largely paid for by Thomas Carew Daniel of the nearby Stoodleigh Court (see below). The bells (see below) are all dated 1867 and the 'sponsor and donor' is named as Thomas Daniel Esq., indicating earlier, less extensive work was carried out a decade or so earlier (Pevsner & Cherry 1989, 767-8; EH listing; Rowlandson 2009).

Alterations were not, however, limited to the church. The Tithe map for Stoodleigh shows two houses, with gardens, occupying the western half of the modern churchyard. A plaque in the church (see below) suggests these dwellings were torn down, and the western approach to the church created, by Thomas Carew Daniel (see Figure 4).

A more detailed account of the church fabric and fittings can be found in Appendix 2.

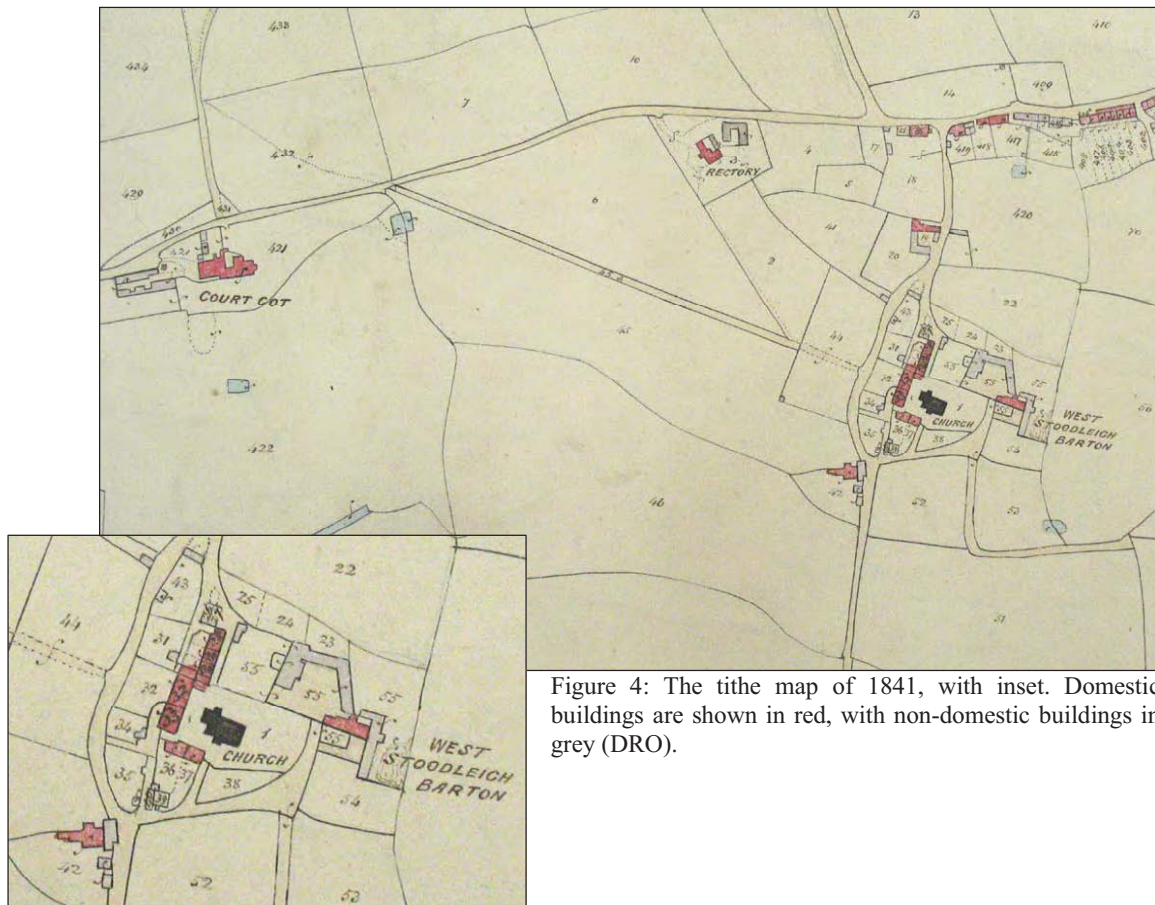


Figure 4: The tithe map of 1841, with inset. Domestic buildings are shown in red, with non-domestic buildings in grey (DRO).

2.3 Henry Woodyer 1816-96

The architect responsible for the extensive alterations that occurred in 1879-80 was one *Henry Woodyer*, a ‘gentleman architect’. He was educated at Eton and Merton College, Oxford, and became an enthusiastic follower of the high church Oxford Movement. For a number of years he was also a member of the Ecclesiological Society, and the bulk of his early work was for fellow Tractarians. Despite this apparent piety, he was seen as somewhat eccentric, even Bohemian. He preferred to spend the summer on his yacht – the *Queen Mab* – in the Mediterranean, smoked fragrant cigars and carried his drawings around in a rolled-up umbrella. As a gentleman architect he disliked the stigma of professionalism and the onus of publicity. He was neither a member of the Royal Academy or the Royal Institute of British Architects. As a result, his work mainly came through the contacts he developed at Eton and among the Oxford Movement (Quiney 1995).

2.4 Stoodleigh Court

Stoodleigh Court is reputed to be the site of one of the two Domesday manors of *Stodlei*. A substantial house *is* shown on the site in the 1841 Tithe map (Figure 4), but under the name of *Court Cot*. This is not a very prepossessing title for a manorial seat, and the private road from the Court to the church cuts across the grain of the surrounding field boundaries, indicating it is a later insertion. In addition, until 1882 the Court lay immediately adjacent to a public road (DRO: QS/113A/185/1). Given the proximity of West Stoodleigh Barton to the church, the houses blocking access to the church from the west, and the term *cot* (literally *cottage*), it is difficult to escape the conclusion that the seat of the manorial lord was moved to Stoodleigh Court at a relatively late date. The relationship between the Court and the Church does, however, remain important, as it was the proximity and patronage of the Daniel family that led to these major works being undertaken.

The Court itself was entirely rebuilt in 1883-4 by the architect Ernest George in partnership with Harold Peto on behalf of Thomas Carew Daniel, and the public road diverted to the north in 1882. George had previously worked in Devon at Rousden (for Sir Henry Peek M.P.), and later became a notable architectural practitioner. The original architect had been Lewis Paxton Crace, but his design had apparently been rejected as Mrs. Daniel did not like it (Grainger 1985, 126-130). Despite the extensive work undertaken at Stoodleigh Court, the Daniel family only stayed in the property until 1885. It was then acquired by Edwin Harris Dunning, a former dealer in diamonds and gold in South Africa. The Dunnings eventually sold the estate and moved to Essex, and Hugh Burdett Money-Coutts took up residence in 1908. The estate was sold again in 1918 and 1920 and finally broken up in 1925 following a bankruptcy. The Court then became home to the Ravenswood School 1928-1992 (Pevsner & Cherry 1989, 767-8; www.stoodleighcourt.co.uk).

2.5 The Thomas Daniels of Stoodleigh Court

While not entirely clear, it seems that between 1822 and 1885 there were three successive men of the name Thomas Daniel ‘in residence’ at Stoodleigh Court. The first Thomas Daniel bought the property before 1836, as he is listed as the owner in the purchase of the Stuckridge Estate in the adjacent Oakford parish. He also held property in Barbados and Demarara (Grainger 1985, 126-130). He does not appear to have been a permanent resident, as the only occupants of ‘Stoodleigh House’ in the 1841 census are two servants. His son, Thomas Daniel Daniel (b.1823 Westbury, Gloucestershire), is a resident of Stuckridge House from c.1847, and he, his wife Dorothea (b.1828, a Carew of Tiverton and Bickleigh), his young son Thomas Carew Daniel (b.1848) (see Figure 1) and younger daughter Louisa (b.1850) are listed there in the 1851 census. In addition, Thomas Daniel Daniel had a second son, Francis Daniel (b.1854), and a second daughter, Mary Frances Daniel (d.1940).

We may surmise that the Stuckridge estate was purchased for Thomas Daniel Daniel by his father. The fact that Thomas Daniel Daniel was born in Westbury, Gloucestershire, and that Thomas Carew Daniel is listed as resident with his brother in Cirencester in the 1881 census strongly suggests they are in origin a Gloucestershire family. Thomas Daniel outlived his son by ten years, so it is probably the eldest Daniel who is variously recorded as supporting the local school (built 1847), casting three bells for the church (1847), providing a new organ (by 1866) and re/casting the bells again (1867) (see Billings 1857; White 1878; and below).

Following the death of Thomas Daniel in 1872, the lands were held in trust for his widow Dorothea (d.1881), before passing to Thomas Carew Daniel, and it was he that instigated the major reconstruction of the church building. A plaque in the south aisle of the church states "...in addition to many other benefactions restored this church and remodelled the churchyard in 1879", which would suggest he was responsible for removing the two cottages to the west of the church and extending the churchyard to the public road. It appears (see below) that Thomas Carew Daniel was educated at Eton, which may have given him the necessary contacts to obtain the services of the architect Henry Woodyer.

In one account, Thomas died a bachelor in 1925 (Bentley 1982, 56), and certainly in the 1891 census only he and his (spinster?) sister Louisa are the gentry residents of Stoodleigh Court. He was apparently known to the inhabitants of Oakford as 'Squire Daniel' (Bentley 1982, 56), and is buried with Louisa (d.1923) and his brother John (d.1902) at St. Peters Church in Oakford. Yet in *Mates County Series (Devonshire)* (1907) he is described as:

Daniel. – THOMAS CAREW DANIEL, D.L., J.P., Stuckridge, Bampton, North Devon. Eldest son of the late Thomas Daniel. Born, March 10th, 1848. Educated at Eton. Is a Deputy-Lieutenant and Justice of the Peace for County Devon; High Sheriff, 1883. Late Lieutenant 2nd Life Guards. Like shooting, fishing, and other country pursuits. Married, 1875, Alice Mildred, daughter of the late Hon. and Rev. John Gifford, Rector of Siddington, County Gloucester; she died in 1897. Club – Army and Navy.

It seems somewhat difficult to reconcile this disparity, but additional documentary research would undoubtedly clarify the matter.

Unlike Thomas Carew Daniel and his siblings, most of the other Daniels were buried in a family plot in Stoodleigh Churchyard. This listed monument (see Appendix 1) commemorates Thomas Daniel (b.1798, d.1872) and his wife Augusta Lousia Daniel (b.1798, d.1871), Thomas Daniel Daniel (b.1823, d.1862) and his wife Dorothea Holway Daniel (b.1827, d.1881), and John Augustus Daniel (b.1825, d.1848). In addition, the arms of the Daniel family may be found in the central two windows of the south aisle. The stained glass of the east window of the chancel is dedicated to Thomas and Augusta Daniel, by their children. The east window of the south aisle is dedicated to Thomas Daniel Daniel, by his widow, and the south window in the east bay of the south aisle is dedicated to Thomas Daniel Daniel and Dorothea, by their children (also see Cresswell 1905-19, 178).

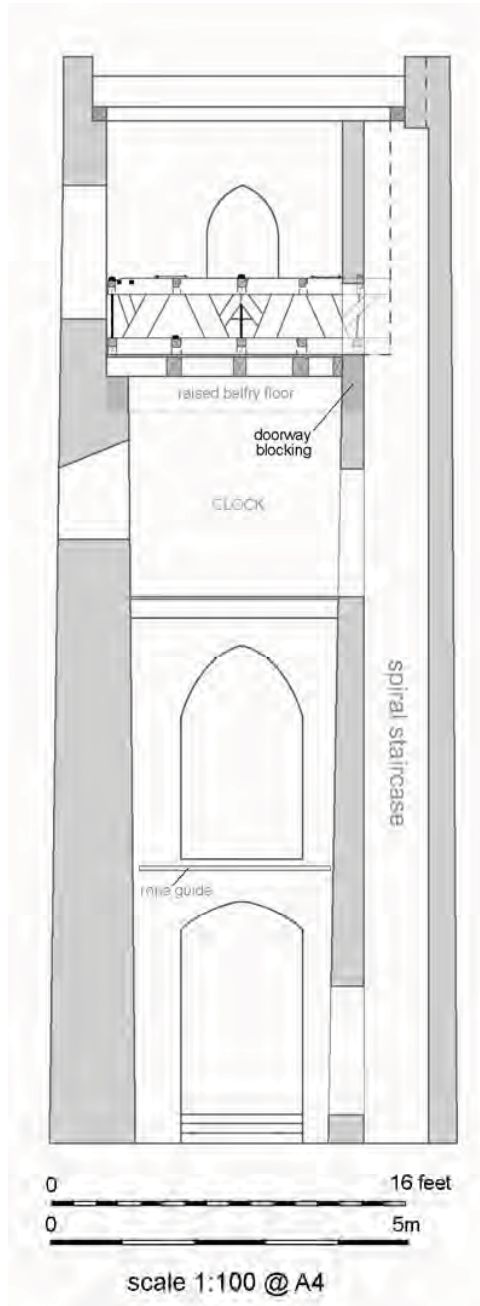
Most of the work undertaken at Stoodleigh was at the behest of Thomas Carew Daniel, and took place after the death of his grandfather and immediately preceding the death of his mother. We may surmise that Thomas Carew Daniel (aged 14 when his father died, aged 33 on inheritance) may have been somewhat lacking in fiscal rectitude. Having extensively rebuilt the church, extended the churchyard and entirely rebuilt his gentry residence, all within the space of a few years, by 1885 he had sold Stoodleigh Court and lands and was resident elsewhere, and buried in somewhat reduced circumstances in Oakford churchyard. As a J.P. and High Sheriff, we may suppose that such works were necessary for Thomas Carew Daniel to be considered contemporary and fashionable, and the results of his patronage reflect both his own aspirations as well as regional and national trends.

3.0 The Building Survey

3.1 The Tower

The western tower, *c.*14m (46 feet) in height, dates to the 15th century, with a plinth, diagonal buttresses and a polygonal stair turret on the north-eastern side (Figure 5).

The ground and ringing floor of the tower is *c.*0.4m lower than the exterior ground level, and the chamber is *c.*7.65m in height. The bell ropes fall to the floor via a medial slight wooden frame with circular rope guides. There is a medieval four-centred doorway in the west wall, with a large three-light 19th century Perpendicular window forced through above.



The polygonal stair turret rises from the ground floor to roof level. Access to each floor is via a narrow doorway *c.*0.5m wide with red sandstone quoins and pointed arch of two quoins. The pitched roof of the tower is accessed via a small recent wooden hatch, and it seems likely the stair turret has been reduced in height. Access to the second floor is more difficult as the floor of this chamber has been raised by *c.*0.4m, presumably when the current peal was installed *c.*1867.

Also rising from ground floor to roof level is a narrow brick chimney abutting the north wall. This appears to be built of regular but handmade bricks, poorly tied (if at all – the entire structure is pulling away from the wall of the first floor) into the masonry of the tower.

On the first floor there is a single narrow south-facing two-light window. The bell ropes fall through this chamber to wooden rope guides in the floor. In the centre of the room a frame holds the church clock at a height of *c.*1.2m from the floor, with the axle passing through the west wall to the exterior clock face. This frame sits within a case of recent pine tongue-and-groove boards *c.*1×1.1m (and see below). An angled shute with access hatch in the west face rises from floor to ceiling in the south-east corner, and the south-west corner is boarded off for safety reasons, all in recent pine tongue-and-groove boards. There are two additional short pine beams tied into the ceiling above to mount iron hooks/pulleys carrying the wire ropes for the clock weights.

The belfry is on the second floor. The bell frame (see below) sits in this chamber, with a narrow access passage against the east wall. Four two-light 19th century traceried windows have been forced through each wall, with louvers but no glass. North, south and west windows have quoins of volcanic trap with a pointed arch of double machine-made bricks above. The east window has quoins and arch of volcanic trap. In the east and west walls there are four corresponding beam slots, presumably for an earlier arrangement of the roof or bell frame.

Figure 5: West-facing cross-section through the tower.

The roof is pitched, of wooden boards with lead over. A single beam $c.0.35 \times 0.2$ m thick crosses north to south, surmounted by a substantial ridge beam $c.0.25 \times 0.20$ m thick crossing east to west. Both beams are reused, as are some of the rafters. The larger beam has been hacked on one side to carry plaster, with a line of small mortise holes down another side. The ridge beam has a chamfer with stop ends, with a regular series of rectangular indentations on the one side; it may be a wall plate from a domestic building.

It is possible the second storey has been added later, but the vegetation (Virginia Creeper), together with the extensive disturbance caused when the 19th century windows were forced through, makes it difficult to be conclusive.

3.2 The Clock

The clock housed on the first floor bears the name plate:

Gillett & Johnston Manufacturer Croydon 1896

And:

This clock was presented by Mrs. E.H. Dunning January 1897 and was bought with the proceeds of what is known as the "Rietfontein Nugget"

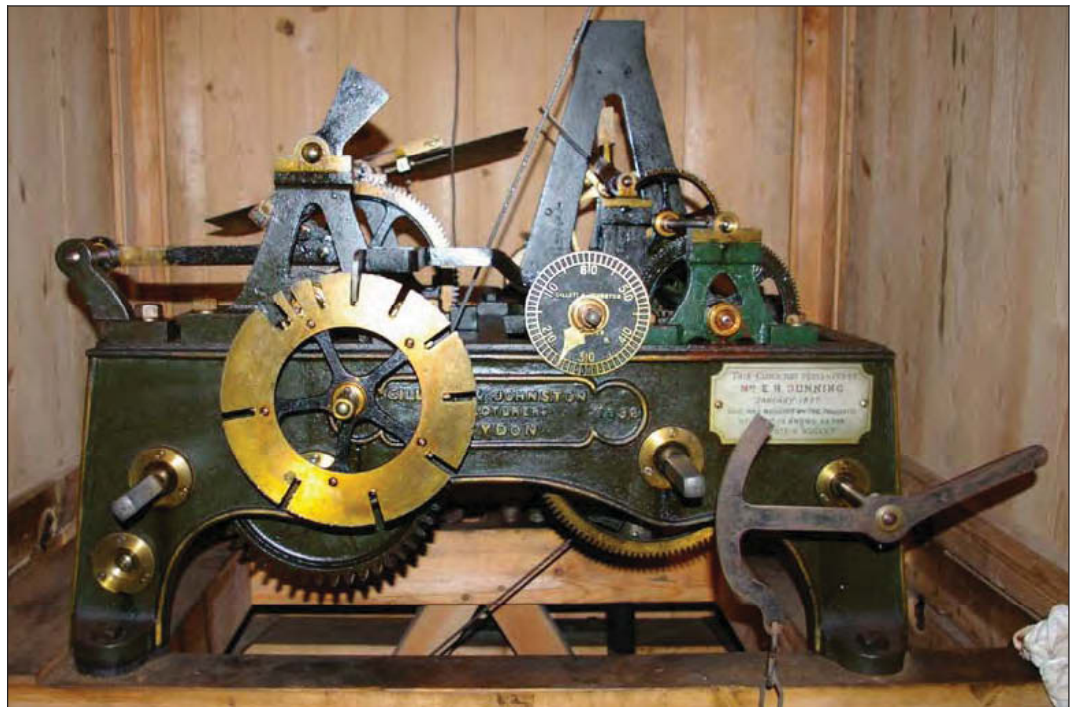


Figure 6: The clock mechanism.

3.3 The Bells

The tower currently has a peal of six bells, all of which were cast or recast in *c.*1867 and rehung by John Warner of London (see below).

	Bell	diameter	weight	note	date	Founder
1	Tenor	35 ¾”	8 cwt	A	1867	John Warner, London
2	Fifth	32 ¾”	6 cwt	B	1867	John Warner, London
3	Fourth	30 ¼”	5 ¼ cwt	C#	1867	John Warner, London
4	Third	29 ¼”	4 ¾ cwt	D	1867	John Warner, London
5	Second	27 ½”	4 ½ cwt	E	1867	John Warner, London
6	Treble	26 ⅛”	4 cwt	F#	1867	John Warner, London


Above information derived from the survey by Andrew Nicolson of Nicolson Engineering, Bridport. Note that this differs in some slight detail to the account in Scott (2007).

Each bell bears the same inscription, with some slight variation:

1. THOMAS DANIEL ESQ. DONOR & PATRON
JOHN GREENSLADE CHURCHWARDEN 1867
CAST BY JOHN WARNER & SONS, LONDON 1867
2. THOMAS DANIEL ESQ. DONOR PATRON
JOHN GREENSLADE CHURCHWARDEN 1867
CAST BY JOHN WARNER & SONS LONDON 1867
3. THOMAS DANIEL ESQ. DONOR & PATRON
JOHN GREENSLADE CHURCHWARDEN 1867
CAST BY JOHN WARNER & SONS LONDON 1867
4. THOMAS DANIEL ESQ. DONOR & PATRON
JOHN GREENSLADE CHURCHWARDEN 1867
CAST BY JOHN WARNER & SONS, LONDON 1867
5. THOMAS DANIEL ESQ. DONOR & PATRON
JOHN GREENSLADE CHURCHWARDEN 1867
CAST BY JOHN WARNER & SONS, LONDON 1867
6. THOMAS DANIEL ESQ. DONOR & PATRON
JOHN GREENSLADE CHURCHWARDEN 1867
CAST BY JOHN WARNER & SONS, LONDON 1867

In addition, on the waist the word PATENT accompanied by the Royal crest. This refers to the fact that Warner developed and patented (1853) the cast-iron cope model, obviating the need for clay model. He was appointed bell-founder to Queen Victoria, hence the royal crest. Stoodleigh does play some greater part in Warner’s fortunes, as prior to this his foundry had mainly produced single bells (Scott 2007).

Prior to 1867, we know from Ellecombe (1872, visited Stoodleigh 1864) that there were five bells:

1. 35½” G : P :  [87] ANNO : DOMINIE : 1615 :
2. 33” MR * THOMAS * TALLEY * CHVRCH * WARDENS * 1736
THOMAS * WROTH * FECIT
3. 29½” JOHN BENNETT CHURCH:WARDEN 1847
THOMAS DANIEL ESQR PATRON
CAST BY W PANNELL & SON 1847
4. 29” JOHN BENNETT CHURCH:WARDEN 1847
THOMAS DANIEL ESQR PATRON

5. 28½” JOHN BENNETT CHURCH:WARDEN 1847
THOMAS DANIEL ESQR PATRON

William Pannell was a bellfounder based originally in Cullompton. He took over the Bilbie bell foundry there in c.1815 but “seldom maintained the Bilbie quality”. Most of Pannell’s work consisted of single and recast bells, a high proportion of which have subsequently been recast. A rare survivor can be found at Ugborough, which is “notoriously out of tune” (see Scott 2007, 97); this may account for why these three bells were recast within twenty years.

Thomas Wroth was a bell founder from Wellington, Somerset, the second of that name and that line. Most of the Wroth bells were “quite clean castings but tonally they were extremely unreliable” (Scott 2007, 110).

G.P was one George Purdue, one of a family of bell founders from Closworth near Yeovil, Dorset. The most notable member of this clan was Thomas Purdue, who was responsible for a number of the 17th century bells in Exeter Cathedral.

Prior to this, in 1553 the Church commissioners reported “Parish of Stodleigh iii belles in the towre their” (Ellecombe 1872), which would indicate the bell frame has been modified or changed at least twice prior to 2010.

3.4 The Bell Frame

3.4.1 Primary Level

The bell frame sits on four horizontal beams orientated north to south. The ends of the two central beams sit on a ledge/offset in the walls of the tower. The east and west beams rest entirely on the ledge/offset. Only the western face of the eastern beam is visible, and the western beam is entirely hidden and/or replaced by recent/modern timber. All of the original beams are oak, and c.0.25×0.2m thick. One of the beams has been shaped to slip past the brick chimney abutting the north wall. On the eastern side, four transverse oak beams of similar dimension run east to west, secured by unpegged mortise and tenon joints. The bases of the draw bolts running through the bell frame above are visible, and can be observed to have twisted in their sockets; two of them have been reset.



Figure 7: The floor of the belfry, viewed from below and the north-east.

3.4.2 The Bell Frame

In the belfry there is a frame for six bells (Pickford type 6.1), constructed when the Warner ring of six was installed *c.*1867. Built in oak, the Stoodleigh frame is slightly unusual in that it is not pegged, but retains halved bare-faced dovetail joints (Pickford A.2 Method 10) in addition to draw bolts. This is indicative of a transitional frame in which reliance on metal fixtures is still not complete. All trusses are jointed to the sill and head beams (Pickford A.1 position 3). The sills are straight with a rectangular section laid on edge (Pickford type 3), and the long heads are straight (Pickford type 1).

The trusses are long-headed in a closed frame with no king or end posts. For bell pits 1-4, the trusses have simple straight braces from sill to head (Pickford type 6.A). For bell pits 5-6, the braces are augmented by straight jack braces from braces to head (most similar to Pickford type 6.D). The east end of bell pits 1-4 is built with two pairs of intersecting cross-braces rising from sill to head (Pickford type 6.I). The Tenor does not pivot directly over its truss – it is offset slightly to the north.

Bell pits 1-4 swing north to south, bell pits 5-6 swing east to west.

While Stoodleigh has a relatively light ring, the frame is over-ambitious for the tower. The polygonal stair turret projects into the chamber and consequently the frame in the north-east corner is cut back and bolted together with countersunk iron plates. The tenor bells swing mouth-to-mouth with no room to close the frame at the ends, and the frame is again held together with countersunk bolted metal plates. The belfry floor was also raised, and this provided a little additional room on the north side.

The cable from the clock rises in bell pit 3 and is connected to a section of iron shafting attached to the central north-south truss. On the hour, the clock striker hits the Tenor.



Figure 8: Detail of the truss on the north side of bellpit 3.

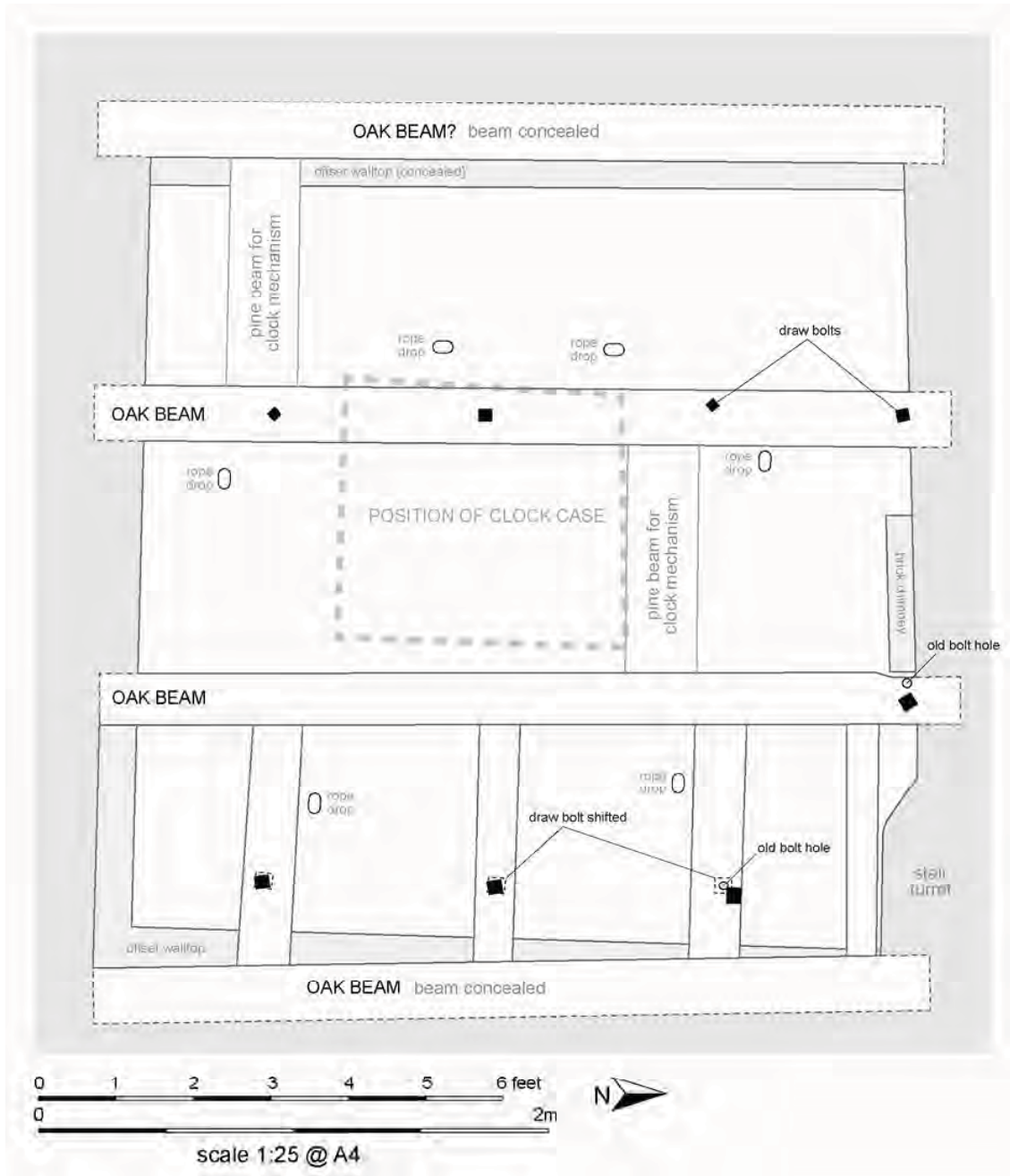


Figure 9: Plan of belfry floor beams.

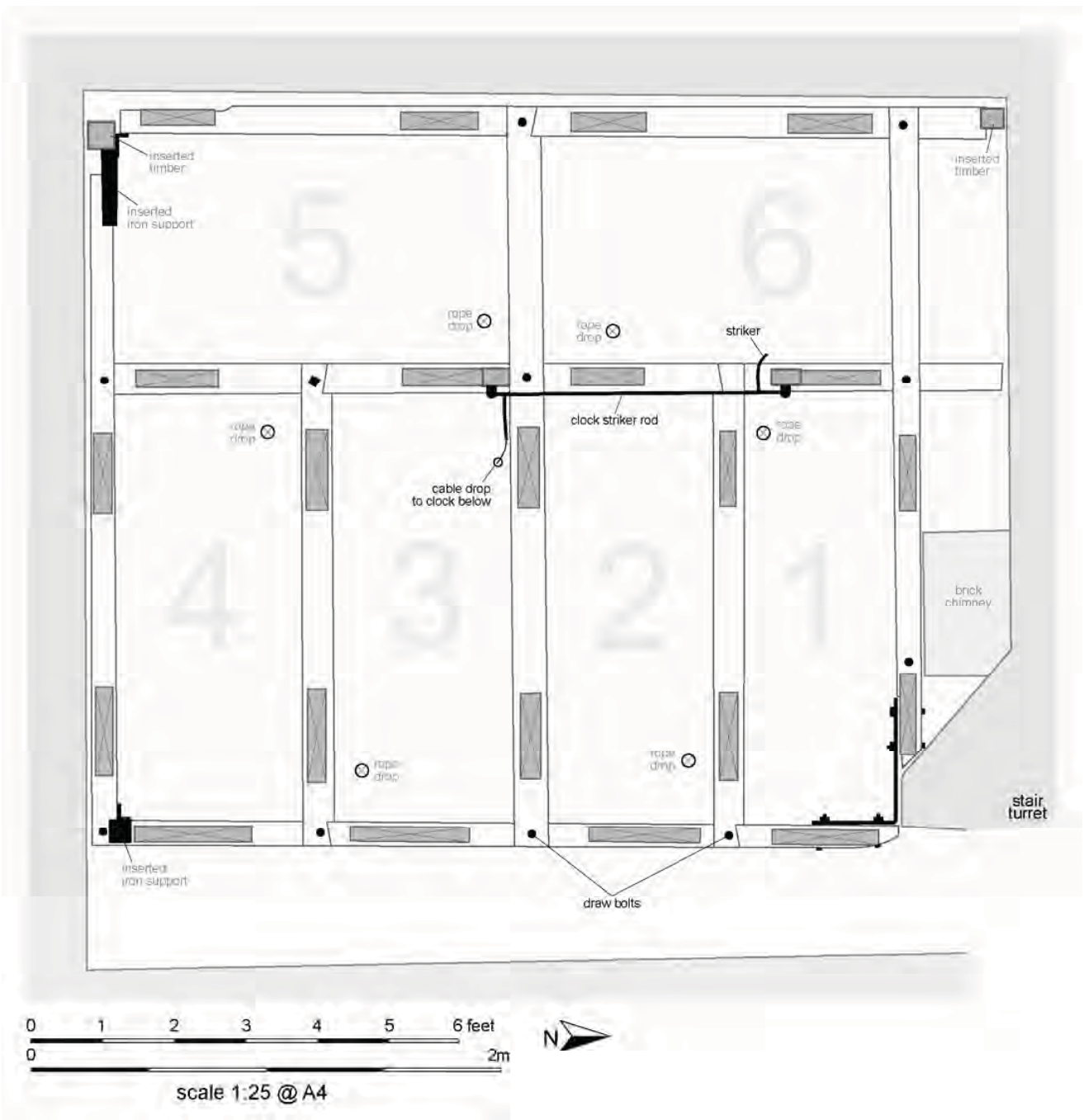


Figure 10: Plan of sill level of bell frame.

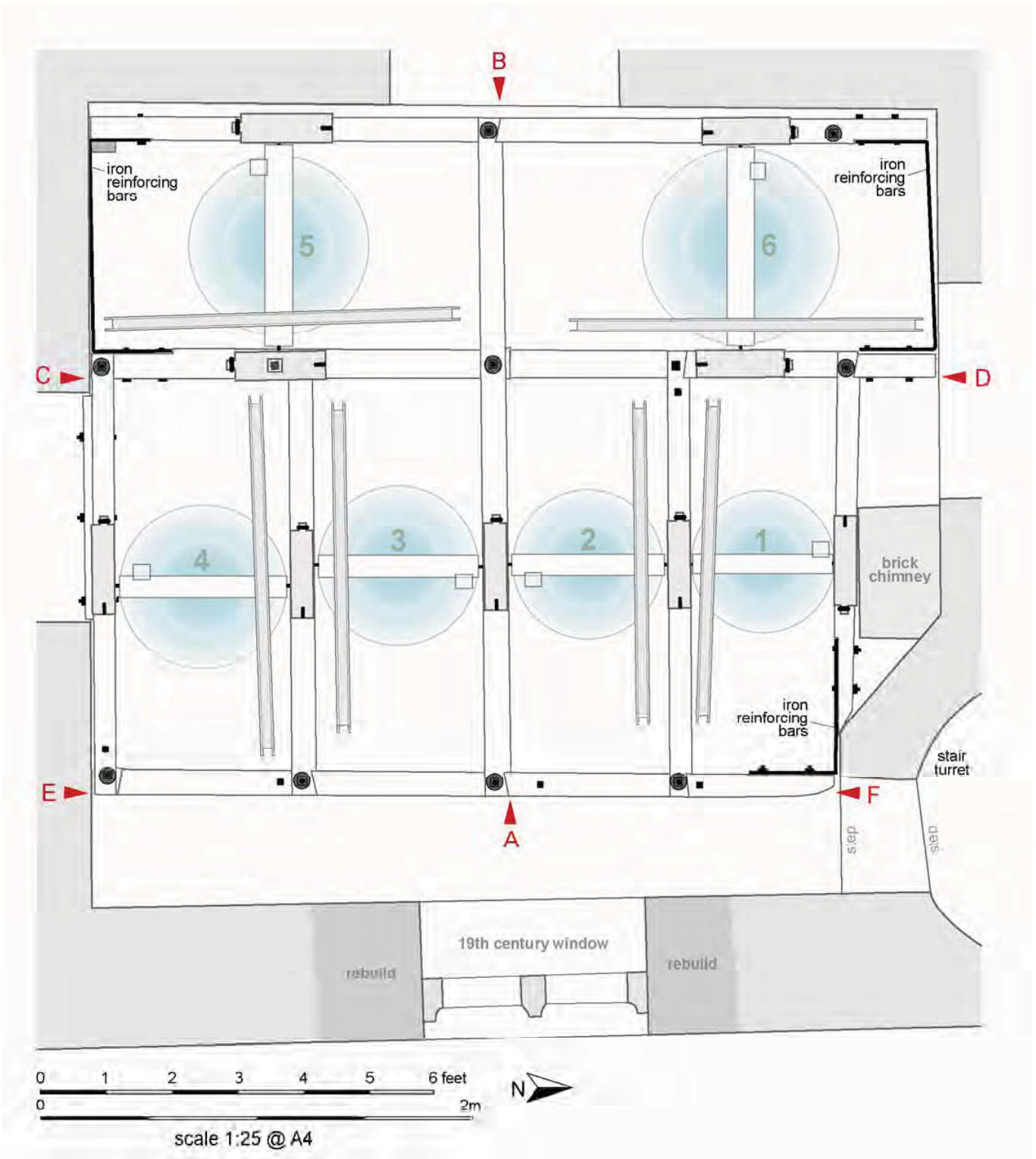


Figure 11: Plan of head beam level of bell frame.

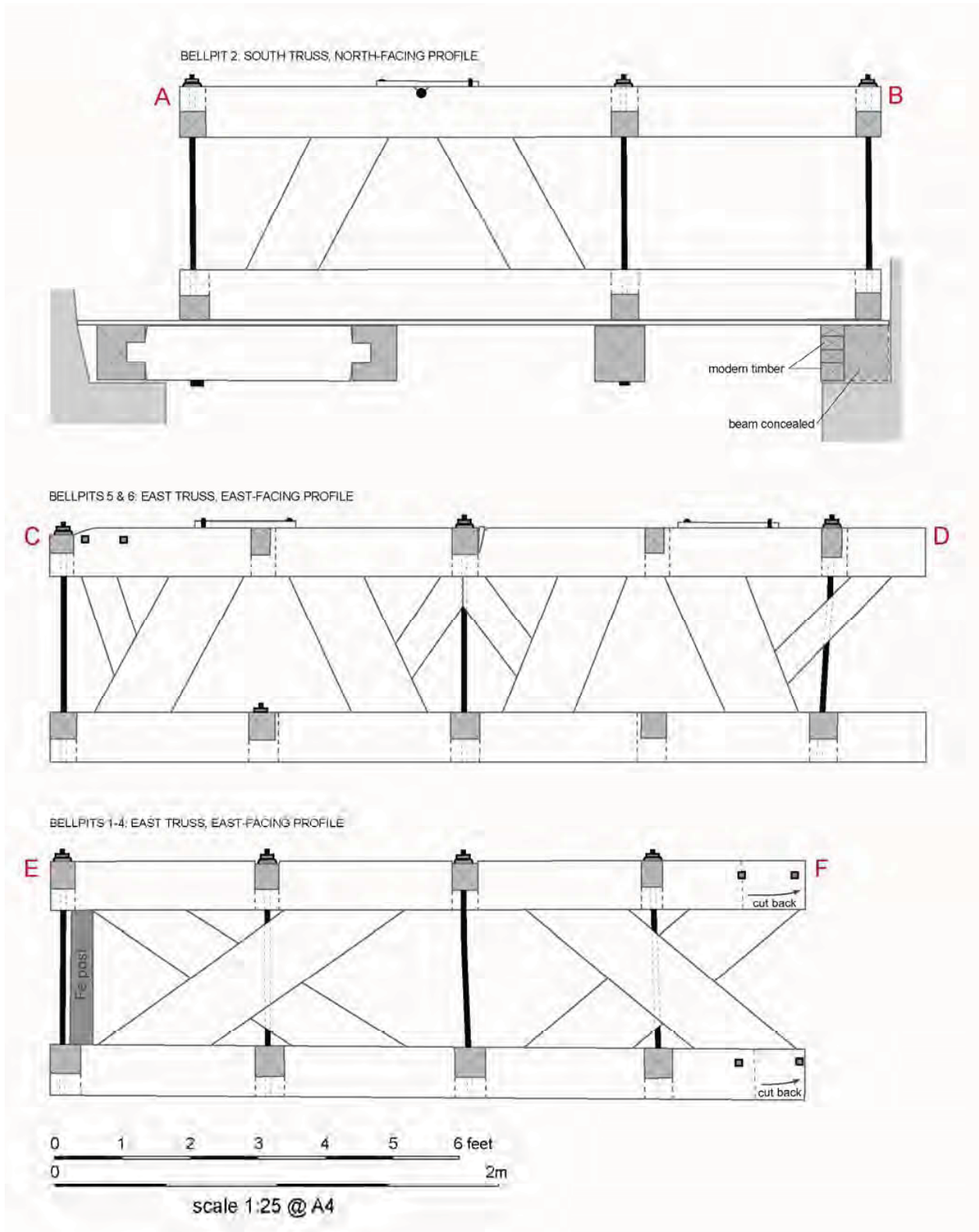


Figure 12: The recorded truss profiles.

3.4.3 The Fittings

The bells have elm headstocks and plain bearings. The largest two bells were made with Doncaster canons, the remaining bells have conventional canons. The canons of the Treble have been broken off the crown. All the bells were made with cast-in crown staples, which remain in place and in use.



Figure 13: The bell frame, viewed from the north-east (scale 0.5m).



Figure 14: The bell frame, viewed from the south-east (scale 0.5m).

3.4.4 Condition of the Bells and Frame

In the south-east corner a steel corner post has been inserted to support a cracked framehead. Not all the iron draw bolts are still straight. The cross-braced eastern truss looks like it has racked to the south, and some of these draw bolts have been reset. This truss also features additional bolts in the head beam, inserted to prevent it cracking. The trusses in bell pits 1-4 have been strengthened by the addition of lateral timbers below the level of the bell. The frame in the south-west corner has rotted and been repaired with additional timber, and the frame and floorboards along the west wall has clearly suffered from water damage. At the time of the survey, the Fifth was supported on wooden blocks and the principal spokes of the wheel crudely tied together with plywood.

4.0 Conclusions

The bell frame at Stoodleigh Church is late 19th century in date and coeval with the installation of a new ring of six bells installed in *c.*1867. The oak frame is fairly simple, with unpegged joints supplemented by iron draw bolts. This frame has become unsafe due to the damage caused by water ingress impacting on its weak design.

In keeping with the general *Thomas Carew Daniel* theme of over-ambition, the bell frame at Stoodleigh Church is undoubtedly too large for its tower. The circumstances that have led to its replacement arise directly from the necessary shortcuts taken squeeze six bells into this belfry.

Finally, the relationship between the church building and the Daniel family forms an interesting local reflection of regional and national trends in architectural fashion and gentle aspirations. The renovations at Court and Church proved a step too far for Thomas Carew Daniel, and the family left the parish almost as soon as their great works were completed.

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Devon Record Office:

Stoodleigh tithe map and apportionment

Concerning the diversion of the public road around Stoodleigh Court: QS/113A/185/1

Appendix 1

Provisional Brief issued by Graham Pledger

Civil and Structural Engineering Team, English Heritage

To: Jenny Chesher, SW Region
From: Graham Pledger, Civil Engineer
Copies: Bryn Morris – SW Archaeology
Jennifer Rowlandson
Francis Kelly

Room 2/20, NMRC, Swindon

Date: 23 Aug 2010

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Tel and Fax 01353 654376

Mobile Tel 07764 629763

Topic: **Recording at St Margaret, Stoodleigh.**

- 1) As you aware, Bryn Morris has been asked by the parish to tender for the bellframe recording.
- 2) In my report to you dated 1st June 2010, I wrote:-

“An archaeological record be made of the bellframe and belfry floor. As a minimum, this should include plans at head, sill and foundation beam level along with an E-W and a N-S section through the tower at this level.”

- 3) In recent emails I said that EH were working with CBC on a joint bellframe guidance note which would cover recording. The current June 2010 draft at that time contained three levels of recording. The lowest level, Level 1, stated:-

“A frame of Little or Local Significance will add nothing to the value of a site and may even detract from it. A basic record based on a measured sketch plan at head and cill, and E-W and N-S sections and the positions of wheels and rope drops, should be sufficient, together with photographs showing a general view and any special features. Curiosities and special features should be indicated on the sketches.”

- 4) When I last spoke to Bryn, I said that the drafting committee were meeting again on Wednesday 18th August and I would then be in a better position to clarify the brief. This is now set out below.

- 5) All bellframes will be given an importance rating from local, (the lowest level), to Regional and on to National, (the highest level). There will be three levels of recording from Level 1 (the lowest), to Level 3, (the highest). The appropriate level in any particular case will normally be determined by the significance of the bell frame, as established through an appraisal, but the detailed requirements of the record will usually reflect the location and extent of proposed alteration or loss, so for example any element of a frame that will be lost, moved or changed may need to be recorded in greater detail.

- 6) I had originally assumed that Stoodleigh might be classified as of Local Interest and have a level 1 recording. However, because of the proposal for total removal and since the bells and frame are of the same date and the period 1872 -9 was a time of major restoration, I believe that the frame becomes of Regional importance with Level 2 Recording now required.

- 7) A Level 2 record is descriptive and analytical in nature, providing a reasoned and illustrated account of the origins, characteristics and development of the bell frame.

For the written record, this would mean a brief note identifying the church, the date and circumstances of the record and the identity of the individual(s) compiling it. In addition to the above, a report combining a description of the bell frame, an analysis of its development and an interpretation of any features of interest is required. This will be based largely on the physical evidence of the frame and its setting, but should include a brief account of the history of the installation, including the tower or belfry, construction type, date and documentary evidence from parish and other records, so far as these can be ascertained from published sources.

8) For the drawn record, this would mean drawings of the plan at head, cill and foundation beam level along with E-W and N-S sections, including the positions of wheels and rope drops. Curiosities and special features should be indicated on the sketches. The drawings will be based on measured survey and drawn up to a suitable scale (probably 1:20 or 1:25) by hand, or in CAD in a manner suitable for plotting at such scales.

For the photographic record, this would mean sufficient photographs to establish the general appearance and character of the bell frame and its setting and to identify significant details. Where possible, general views, including plan views from above the bell frame and from beneath the bell frame floor, should be taken. All photographs should be titled or captioned so as to identify their subject and viewpoint. Particularly when photographing details it is helpful to include in the shot a ranging rod or ruler, or a familiar object of known size such as a coin, to identify the scale of the subject.

9) The drafting committee thought that at Levels 2 and 3 the report should be prepared by someone with a good understanding of bell frames, bells and belfries. On report format they recommended:-

- Printed copies on acid-free paper to be A4, with folded A3 drawings inserted as necessary
- Photographs and drawings should include some means of identifying scale – either a scale bar or an item with known dimensions e.g. a coin
- References should be supplied for all cited sources
- The involvement of consultees (DAC, CBC, SPAB or EH) should be mentioned and any assistance received in making the record should be acknowledged.
- Six paper copies of the report should be provided, one of which should be kept by the PCC. Other copies should be sent to the DAC, the Historic Environment Record (normally held by the County or Unitary Authority historic environment or archaeological service), the Diocesan Record Office, the Library of the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers and the Church Buildings Council
- Electronic copies may be submitted if preferred, although a paper copy should be provided for the parish.

10) On archive, they recommended that it is good practice to deposit any resulting archive (original sketches, drawings, photographs, etc) in the relevant Diocesan Record Office.

11) I do hope this clarifies the situation and explains the background to what at first sight might have seemed like conflicting advice. I am copying this to Francis as well. He is on the drafting committee and should be able to confirm my correct interpretation of the latest draft.

Graham Pledger
Bells and Bellframes Adviser

Appendix 2

English Heritage listing text

9/171 Church of St Margaret GV II*

Parish church: Font probably C12; west tower, western bays of nave and aisle C15, church extended by one bay to the east, chancel rebuilt and whole church thoroughly restored 1872-9 by Henry Woodyer at a total cost of £2,300. Medieval masonry rubble. C19 masonry snecked stone; red tiled roof.

Plan and Development: Woodyer extended the nave and aisle by one bay and entirely rebuilt the chancel and aisle south wall, incorporating the medieval south doorway and some earlier masonry. Flamboyant window tracery is Woodyer's design. Plan of west tower, nave, chancel, 4-bay south aisles south chancel chapel, south porch. Chancel roof carried down as catslide over north-east vestry.

Exterior: C15 battlemented tower with a plinth, diagonal buttresses and a 3-sided north-east stair turret. Medieval four-centred west doorway, 3-light C19 Perpendicular west window; bay 2-light C19 traceried openings on all 4 faces. The nave has buttresses and 2- and 3-light Perpendicular windows except a C19 Decorated pulpit window to the east of the rectangular stair turret. The south chancel chapel is defined by a string course, buttresses and C19 Decorated windows. Woodyer's chancel is buttressed with a string course and a 3-light flamboyant east window, the hoodmould carried down on corbels below the sill. Gabled south porch with a 2-centred outer doorway and C19 roof and a C19 outer order added to the late medieval moulded inner doorway; probably C17 panelled door.

Interior: Chancel and most fittings by Woodyer; notable late medieval nave roof. Rendered walls, the edge of the render decorated to draw attention to the medieval openings. Tall medieval chamfered tower arch with pyramid stops and abutment to the north and south faces; richly moulded chancel arch by Woodyer with moulded responds and carved capitals. 4-bay arcade, the easternmost bay a Woodyer copy of the late medieval slender piers with corner shafts carrying moulded Tudor arches on foliage-carved capitals. Depressed medieval segmental arch presumably resited between chancel and south chancel chapel with C19 parclose. Hagioscope pierces the same wall. Fine late medieval open wagon roof to the nave, presumably extended by Woodyer, with moulded ribs and an unusual variety of carved bosses; wall plates carved with rustic green men. Unceiled wagon to aisle with moulded ribs; boarded wagon to chancel with moulded ribs and small bosses.

Fittings: Very complete Woodyer fittings to chancel: stone and local marble reredos with symbols of the evangelists painted in gold; 1879 tiling; poppyhead choir stalls, the book rests on iron standards; communion rail with iron standards; low timber chancel screen with traceried panels. The nave has an unusual possibly C12 font; a round bowl on a cylindrical stem decorated with 2 carved profile heads and mouldings on the base; C19 font cover in the Romanesque style. 1879 brattished stone pulpit with bold tracery panels; 1879 plain square-headed bench ends.

Important set of ten Hardman windows with memorial dates between 1862 and 1910: a series which adds to the coherence of the interior. C19 brass fittings in chancel possibly also by Hardman. Painted Royal Arms dated 1742 in frame on nave wall.

Listing NGR: SS9225818830

9/173 Daniel monument about 14 metres - north-east of chancel of the Church of St Margaret GV II

Tomb slab and railings. Late C19. Granite slab on plinth with various memorial dates, earliest 1848, latest 1881. The slab is enclosed by a stone plinth supporting twisted iron standards with fleur de lis finials, chain slung between standards.

Listing NGR: SS9228418845

Appendix 3

List of jpegs on CDRom to the rear of this report

EXTERNAL SHOTS

1. The church and West Stoodleigh Barton, from the north-west.
2. The tower of St. Margaret's Church, viewed down the path from the west.
3. As above.
4. As above.
5. Looking back up the path from the church tower, viewed from the east.
6. The church porch and south aisle, viewed from the south-east.
7. The south aisle, viewed from the south.
8. As above.
9. As above.
10. The east end of the south aisle, viewed from the east.
11. The east end of the chancel, viewed from the east.
12. As above.
13. The vestry and north wall of the chancel, viewed from the north-west.
14. The north wall of the nave, showing the buttress for the Rood stair, viewed from the north-west.
15. As above, viewed from the north.
16. Detail of the dated [1879] guttering hopper.
17. The tower and north wall of the nave, viewed from the north-east.
18. The tower, viewed from the north.
19. As above.
20. The tower, detail of the inserted 19th windows.
21. The tower, viewed from the south.
22. The south wall of the tower and the west wall of the south aisle, viewed from the south-west.

GROUND FLOOR/RINGING FLOOR

23. Floor of ringing floor, showing steps and west door, viewed from the east.
24. As above, showing the chimney [right] and boxed-in clock weights [left].
25. The light wooden frame with rope guides, viewed from the east.

THE FIRST FLOOR/CLOCK CHAMBER

26. View of east floor of belfry, viewed from below.
27. As above, viewed from the north.
28. As above, showing the chimney and archway to stair turret.
29. As above, showing central boarded clock case.
30. View of top of west wall of chamber, with change of build evident.
31. Doorway to stair turret, showing blocked base of doorway above, viewed from the south.
32. View of iron hooks and pulleys above the clock weights, viewed from the east.
33. Detail of rope guides in the floor.
34. Detail of the clock mechanism.

THE SECOND FLOOR/BELFRY (scale 0.5m)

35. General view across chamber, viewed from the north-west.
36. General view across chamber, viewed from the south-east.
37. As above.
38. Detail of bell pits 1-4, viewed from the south.
39. Detail of bell pits 4 & 5, viewed from the east.
40. General view across chamber, from the north-east.
41. Vertical shot of fixtures of the Treble, viewed from the west.
42. Vertical shot of fixtures of the Second, viewed from the west.
43. Vertical shot of fixtures of the Third, viewed from the west.
44. Vertical shot of fixtures of the Fourth, viewed from the west.
45. Vertical shot of fixtures of the Fifth, viewed from the north.
46. Vertical shot of fixtures of the Tenor, viewed from the south.
47. Bell pit 2 and Second, viewed from the south.
48. Detail of bell pit 2 and Second, viewed from the west.

49. The Tenor, viewed from the south.
50. Detail of frame and striking mechanism for the clock, viewed from above and to the south-east.
51. Detail of the frame, intersection of bell pit 2 and 6, viewed from the north.
52. Detail of truss, bell pit 3, viewed from the south.
53. Repairs in the south-east corner, bell pit 4, viewed from the north-west.
54. Repairs in the south-west corner, bell pit 5, viewed from the north.
55. View of the east truss of the bell frame, viewed from the north.
56. West wall of the chamber, viewed from the east.
57. East wall of the chamber, viewed from the west.
58. The roof structure, showing the mortise joints in the main beam, viewed from the north-west.
59. As above, showing the unusual tooling on the ridge beam, viewed from the south-west.

MISCELLANEOUS FEATURES

60. The gravemarker for the Daniel family in Stoodleigh churchyard, viewed from the east.
61. The Listed family grave plot of the Daniel family in Stoodleigh churchyard, viewed from the north-west.
62. The plaque on the south wall of the south aisle (east bay), commemorating Thomas Carew Daniel's reconstruction of the church.
63. Some of the fragments of architectural masonry in the church porch.
64. The grave of Thomas Carew Daniel, his sister Louisa and brother Francis, in Oakford churchyard, viewed from the south-east.



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