The Church Bells of Berkshire.

PART IX.

By Frederick Sharpe.

144.

PADWORTH.

St. John the Baptist.

Ring of Six Bells; tenor 333 inches diameter, in B flat; and a Clock Bell.

Bell.	Inscription.	Cwts.	Veig	
Treble.	1890. / MEARS & STAINBANK, WHITE-CHAPEL FOUNDRY, LONDON.			14
Second.	1654 / RECAST 1890. / MEARS & STAINBANK, WHITECHAPEL FOUNDRY, LONDON.	3	3	18
Third.	1660 / RECAST 1890. / MEARS etc. as second.	4	2	3
Fourth.	SANCTA MARIA ORA PRONOBIS O / RECAST 1890. / MEARS etc. as second.	4	. 2	23
Fifth.	MEARS & STAINBANK, WHITECHAPEL FOUNDRY, LONDON. RECAST 1890. JAMES WELLS ALDBOURN WILTS FECIT 1816 [Bell. Fleur-de-lys. Bell. (Four times repeated.)]	5	Ι	18
Tenor.	[Same as treble.]	7	1	4
Clock.	WM EVANS FECIT J763 [Floral wreath.]	2	2	0#

The ring of six was cast from the metal of the former ring of five at the Whitechapel foundry in 1890. At the same time Messrs. Mears and Stainbank installed a new oak frame, and fitted the bells, with the exception of the clock bell, with elm headstocks, plate gudgeons, brass bearings, and traditional type wheels, and clappers. The new bells have "Doncaster" pattern heads.

The clock bell was cast in 1763 by William Evans, of Chepstow, and is illustrated on Plate XVIIIB. It will be noted that its shape is similar to that of the smaller type bells cast at the

¹ For an account of the Chepstow foundry see Wright, Church Bells of Monmouthshire, 117-126, and 128.

Gloucester foundry of the Rudhalls. At the end of the inscription is a floral wreath stop.¹ The bell has canons of the normal XVIIIth century type, and is hung "dead" above the others.

The five bells comprising the former ring were inscribed as

follows:—2

Treble. 1654 Second. 1660

Third. SANCTA MARIA ORA

PRONOB.IS �

Fourth. James Wells Aldbourn Wilts Fecit

1816 [Bell. Fleur-de-lys. Bell.

(Three times repeated)] (sic)

Tenor. # Henri Knight made mee X597

Of these the treble, and second were cast at the Reading foundry³; the third was probably by Appowell, of Buckingham, circa 1560⁴; the fourth by J. Wells; and the tenor, 36 inches diameter, and sounding the strike-note A natural, by Henry

Knight I, of Reading.

The inscriptions on *four* of the old bells have been reproduced in facsimile on their successors. That on the former tenor was also reproduced on its successor in 1890; but, at the opening ceremony, the Revd. F. E. Robinson, Master of The Oxford Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers, expressed dissatisfaction with the tone of this bell, and at his request Messrs. Mears and Stainbank exchanged it for a new tenor,⁵ which lacked the facsimile reproduction of the inscription on Henry Knight's bell of 1597.

The present fourth bell is illustrated on Plate XIX A; and a scale drawing of the *reproduced portion* of its inscription will be found in Fig. 99. All the letters are crowned and reversed.

Visited:

R.G., F.S., 14th April, 1941.

¹ This ornamental stop is illustrated in Fig. 43, Church Bells of Monmouth-shire.

² Compiled from notes by the Rev. T. A. Turner, taken 15th June, 1877. He states that the fourth, and tenor were maiden bells, that the tenor had cabled canons, and that the third, and fourth were cracked.

The products of the Reading foundry at this period, which bear no inscription besides their date, are usually attributed to Francis Knight, who is known to have been founding in 1647. An example of one of these is illustrated under the heading Caversham.

⁴ Cocks, Church Bells of Buckinghamshire, 188.

⁵ Robinson, Among the Bells, 154.

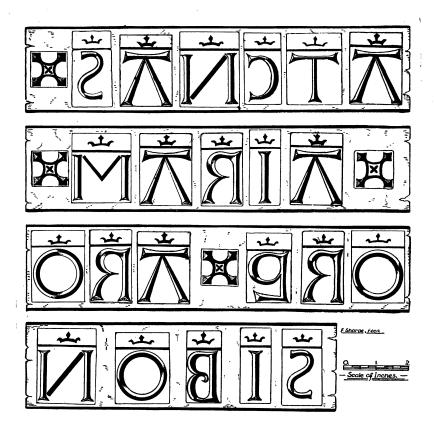


Fig. 99. Portion of the inscription on the fourth bell of the ring of six at Padworth, showing lettering originally used by the Appowells, of Buckingham, circa 1560.

PANGBOURNE.

St. James-the-Less.

Ring	of Six Bells; tenor 39 inches diameter,	in A	flat.	
Bell.	Inscription.		Veigh	
		Cwts.	Qrs.	lbs.
Treble.	WHEN WE RING I SWEETLY SING [Ornament Fig. 29.] A [Bell Fig. 31.] R 1720 [Ornament Fig. 30.]	4	I	o#
Second.	GOD PRESERVE THE CHVRCH AMEN [Border. Fig. 27.] A [Fig. 31.] R 1720 [Fig. 27.]	5	0	o#

Bell.	Inscription.	V Cwts.	Veigh Qrs.	
Third	PEACE & GOOD NEIGHBOVRHOOD [Fig. 27.] A [Fig. 31.] R 1720 [Fig. 27.]	5	3	0#
Fourth.	ABR: RVDHALL OF GLOVCESTER BELLFOVNDER 1720 [Border. Fig. 28.]	6	О	0#
Fifth.	PROSPERITY TO ALL OVR BENEFACTORS $[Fig. 29.]$ A $[Fig. 31.]$ R 1720 $[Fig. 27.]$	7	2	0#
Tenor.	THE REVND BEN: LOVELING RECTR WM: LOADER & RICH: WILDER CHURCH WARDENS 1720 [Fig. 29.] / [Border Fig. 30, all round bell.]	10	0	0#

A complete ring of six, from the famous foundry of Abraham Rudhall I, of Gloucester. All the bells have cabled canons, and have been quarter-turned. They were recently fitted with new elm headstocks, self-aligning ball bearings, plate gudgeons, new wheels and other gear, by Messrs. Mears and Stainbank.

The oak bellframe¹ is placed diagonally in the tower, and is inscribed:—

RICHARD . WILLIAM . LOADER / CHVRCHWARDENS 1720 \diamondsuit IOHN WILLIAMS / AND RICHARD FECIT

There was formerly a sanctus bell, by Messrs. C. & G. Mears, inscribed: RECAST 1847. This bell is now at the school.

In the XVIIIth century Pangbourne possessed a band of ringers capable of ringing "extents" of minor. One of their exploits is recorded under the heading, Hurst.

Lukis, p. 62, records the inscriptions on these bells.

Visited:

M.L.S., F.S., 26th April, 1941.

146.

PEASEMORE.

St. Barnabas.

Ring of Six Bells; tenor 36¼ inches diameter, in A.

Bell. Inscription.* Weight.* Cwts. Qrs. lbs.**

Treble.** MEARS & STAINBANK, FOUNDERS, 3 3 7 LONDON. 1923. / M / IN MEM: / GEORGE HEDGES, / FOREMAN RINGER. / 1890–1922.

¹ There is a frame of similar construction and identical plan at Hampstead Norris, which has been described in detail under the heading of that parish. Other diagonally placed bellframes occur at Basildon, and Radley but these differ slightly from the Pangbourne frame.

Bell.	Inscription.	Weight. Cwts. Ors. lbs.		
Second.	RECAST 1889. / [T.]	4	2	4
Third.	THE REVD. MR. RALPH, SHIRLY RECT: IOHN CALCOT IOHN HATT CH. WARDENS 1737. R:P:	4	3	26
Fourth.	[Same as second.]	5	· I	22
Fifth.	[The same.]	6	2	25
Tenor.	* WM. COWARD GENT. GAVE THIS BELL BUILT THE TOWER 1737 THE BELL WAS RECAST BY JAMES WELLS ALDBOURN WILTS 1809. / JOSEPH WERNHAM & JOHN MITCHELL CHURCH WARDENS. [Twelve fleursde-lys.	8	2	0#

These bells form a very musical ring of six. The treble has a "Doncaster" type head; the third, and tenor have had their canons removed, and the remainder were cast without canons.

The treble was cast at the Whitechapel foundry, and was added to the five older bells in 1923. The third is also from the same foundry, having been cast by Richard Phelps in 1737. The former tenor was also by Phelps, and it seems most likely that the entire ring of five was cast there at that time. Subsequently the tenor was recast by James Wells in 1809, but fortunately preserves a record of its predecessor in lettering which is a near copy of that used by Phelps. William Coward, the donor of this bell, was a great benefactor to the parish, and has been described as a local *Man of Ross*. The second, fourth, and fifth were recast in 1889 by Messrs. J. Taylor and Co., of Loughborough.

The frame was originally constructed for five bells; it comprises oak heads and cills, and cast iron braces. An additional cast-iron frame, which now houses the second bell, was added in 1923. The treble is fitted with a cast-iron headstock, and ball-bearings: the remainder have elm headstocks, and brass bearings. The other bell fittings are of the traditional type.

The Commissioners' Inventories, made 4th August, 1552, state:—Peasmoore three smalle belles and one lyttelle belle in the steple by estimatyon $XV.^c$. If we allow one cwt. for the "lytelle" bell, presumably the sanctus, this would imply a "forebell" (or treble) of $3\frac{3}{4}$ cwt; a "middle" bell (or second) of $4\frac{1}{2}$ cwt; and a "great" bell (or tenor) of $5\frac{3}{4}$ cwt.

Visited :

F.S., 3rd May, 1941.

¹ The inscription on this bell has been incised instead of being cast in relief.

PURLEY.

St. Mary.

Ring of Six Bells; tenor 36½ inches diameter, in A.

Bell.	Inscription.	V	Veigh	t.
	•	Cwts.	Qrs.	lbs.
Treble.	THE GIFT OF JOHN GEORGE LIBENROOD OF THE PARISH OF PURLEY ESQR. JOHN SHERWOOD : CHURCHWARDEN : ★ THOS JANAWAY FECIT : © © ANNO DOMINI J788 © ©	3	2	0#
Second.	PRAYES YE THE LORD X635	4	I	о#
Third.	PRAYES YE THE LORD X629 *	5	О	о#
Fourth.	PRAYES THE LORD X627	5	3	о#
Fifth.	THIS BELL WAS RECAST ANNO DOMINI J787 IOHN SHERWOOD CHURCHWARDEN ∴ THOMAS JANAWAY FECIT ★	6	3	0#
Tenor.	LORD	8	2	о#

The author has not been able to visit this tower, but has compiled the foregoing from notes made by the Rev. T. A. Turner, and Mr. H. B. Walters.

The Rev. T. A. Turner notes:—treble, and second maiden bells; fourth, and tenor square-shouldered; treble a clean casting, and good tone: bad clappers to all ¹

casting, and good tone; bad clappers to all. Mr. Walters notes:—Treble and fifth by Thomas Janaway, of Chelsea; remainder by Ellis Knight I, of Reading. Lord Grandison on the tenor is Oliver St. John, Visct. Grandison and Baron Tregoz (1559–1630). He was one of the St. John's of Lydiard Tregoze, Wiltshire, and his mother was a daughter of Sir Richard Blount of Mapledurham. He was created Visct. Grandison in the Peerage of Ireland in 1623.

Lord Grandison was probably the donor of this bell. Visited:

T.A.T., 18th July, 1877., H.B.W. 1892.

¹ Notes by Rev. T. A. Turner, Society of Antiquaries' Library.

² Berkshire MS. folio 102, Society of Antiquaries' Library.

PUSEY.

All Saints.

Chime of Two Bells.

Bell.	Diam.	Inscription.	Weight.		t.
	Ins.		Cwts.	Qrs.	lbs.
Treble.	$19\frac{1}{2}$	I ♣ C 1597	I	2	o#
Tenor.	$20\frac{1}{2}$	J. TAYLOR & SON LOUGHBORO' 1851	I	3	0#

The smaller bell is by Joseph Carter, and has the figure 5 of date reversed.

Visited:

A.F.S., 1926.

149.

RADLEY.

St. James.

Ring of Six Bells; tenor $32\frac{1}{2}$ inches diameter, in B; and a Sanctus Bell.

Bell.	Inscription.	I	Veigl	ht.
		Cwts.	Qrs.	lbs.
Treble.	MEARS & STAINBANK, FOUNDERS, LONDON, 1897. / A.M.D.G. / ANNO FELICI FIO CAMPANULA VICI MULTAS FELICES PERSONITURA VICES. / A.S. MDCCCXCVII. / V.R. LX.	3	Ι	18
Second.	HARK TO OUR MELODY A [Bell Fig. 31.] 1754	3	3	0#
Third.	WHEN YOU US RING WE'LL SWEETLY SING A [Fig. 31.] R 1754 ::::::::::::::::::::::::::::::::::::	4	О	0#
Fourth.	PEACE & GOOD NEIGHBOURHOOD A [Fig. 31.] R. 1754 ::::: ::::::	4	I	0#
Fifth.	PROSPERITY TO THIS PARISH A [Fig. 31.] R 1754 :::::: :::::::	4	3	0#
Tenor.	ABEL RUDHALL OF GLOUCESTER CAST US 1754 :::::: :::::: ::::::	6	2	o#
Sanctus.	₩ HENRX KNXGHT MADE MEE X6X7	_	3	o#

A ring of five, cast by Abel Rudhall, of Gloucester, in 1754, to which a treble was added by Mears and Stainbank, in 1897, making six.

The second, and third have high crowns; all except the treble and tenor have cabled canons; and the third, and fourth, are maiden bells.

The five largest hang in an XVIIIth century-type oak frame, placed obliquely in the tower, and of similar construction to those at Basildon, Hampstead Norris and Pangbourne. At Radley, however, all the bells swing in one direction: the second, third, and tenor being grouped on one side of the tower, with the fourth, and fifth on the other. The treble hangs in a modern wrought-iron frame above the second.

The sanctus is by Henry Knight I, of Reading. It hangs

inside the east window of the belfry.

The 1552 inventories state: iij belles.

Visited:

F.S., 14th Nov., 1925., M.R.C., 18th July, 1941.

150.

RADLEY.

St. Peter's College.

Five bells.				
Bell.	Inscription.	Weight.		
	-	Cwts.		
Chapel bell.	TAYLORS ★ LOUGHBOROUGH ★ 1931 ★	-	Ι	5
College call bell.	JOHN TAYLOR & CO. ★ FOUNDERS ★ LOUGHBOROUGH ★ 1935 ★	3	0	Ι
Quarter bell I.	C. & G. MEARS FOUNDERS LONDON 1847	9	2	20
Quarter bell II.	[Same as I.]	II	3	21
Peter. (The Hour I	Bell.)			
	C. & G. MEARS LONDINI FECERUNT. 1847. / VENITE EXULTEMUS DOMINO	30	О	2

The two smallest bells are hung for chiming proper. The chapel bell hangs in a turret above the chapel roof; the call bell is housed on the top of the college buildings.

The three largest are hung "dead" in a two-tier frame in the clock tower. They are fitted with clock-hammers, and mechanical chiming hammers only. Miss Cross states that they sound like the treble, second, and tenor of a chime of six.²

Visited:

B. K. Barber, M. R. Cross, 26th Nov., 1943.

¹ Similar construction but not similar plan.

² In Vol. XLIII (1939), 101, I mentioned that the tenor at Bray was the largest in Berkshire, meaning the largest tenor bell. There are four larger individual bells in the county; viz. Peter, of Radley College; a bell at Ascot Priory; the hour bell at Windsor Castle; and the hour bell at Reading University.

READING.

All Saints.

The church was built in 1865, and possesses one small bell, hung for chiming, in an open turret above the chancel arch. The bell is not accessible without scaffolding; but, on the evidence of its shape when seen from the ground, appears to be a XIXth century casting.

Visited:

F.S., 1944.

152.

READING.

Christ Church.

Two Bells.

The larger bell is a canonless casting which is used as an hour bell for the clock, and also fitted with an "Ellacombe" hammer for mechanical chiming. It is 29 inches in diameter, is hung "dead," sounds the strike-note D natural, weighs approximately 5 cwt., and is inscribed:—

CAST BY JOHN WARNER & SONS LONDON 1891.

The smaller bell is hung for chiming proper in an oak frame placed in the clock room, and is fitted with an elm headstock, strap gudgeons, brass bearings, and an iron lever. It is 15 inches in diameter, and bears on its soundbow the inscription:—

J. WARNER & SONS LONDON 1862.

Visited:

F.S., 2nd October, 1943.

153.

READING.

Greyfriars.

The church was reconstructed in 1863 from the remains of the ancient church of the monastery of the Grey Friars, after having been in secular use for several centuries. Over the east gable of the nave is a modern turret containing a ring of three bells which appears to be of XIXth century date. There is no record of the purchase of these bells, and it is impossible to examine them without the erection of scaffolding.

Visited:

F.S., 1944.

A bell hung dead cannot be rung or chimed in the technical sense; but may only be sounded by being struck with hammers. Under these conditions its full and proper tones are not produced.

READING.

The Holy Trinity.

One Bell, hung for chiming, in an open turret, inscribed:—
MEARS. 1845.

Visited:

E.G.F., October, 1943.

155.

READING.

St. Agnes.

One Bell, hung for chiming, in an open western turret. Mr. E. G. Foster states that this bell formerly hung in the mission church of St. Agnes in Silver Street, which was built in 1904, and was removed to this church on its erection. The mission church is no longer used as a place of worship.

Visited:

E.G.F., 1944.

156.

READING.

St. Andrew (Caversham.)

The church was built in 1911, and possesses one small bell, hung for chiming, in a bellcote above the chancel arch.

E.G.F., October, 1943.

157.

READING.

Roman Catholic Church of Our Lady and St. Anne (Caversham.) Four Bells; tenor 30½ inches diameter, in C.

Bell.	Inscription.	Weight. Cwts. Qrs. lbs.		it.
Treble.	OUR LADY OF (?) ST. ANNE 1902. RECAST BY CARRS OF SMETHWICK 1904.		Ω/s. I	
Second.	SANTA MARIA ORA PRO NOBIS. / CAST BY CARRS OF SMETHWICK 1904.	3	3	0#
Third.	[No inscription.]	4	2	о#
Tenor.	H Robertus H Mot H me H fecit 1597 [Crest, Fig. 100.]	5	2	о#

The treble, and second are canonless maiden castings from the Smethwick foundry of Messrs. Charles Carr and Co.

On the headstock of the third is a cast metal plate inscribed :-

S. B. COSLIN / FOUNDER & MANUFACTURER / THE BISHOPSGATE FOUNDRY / & ART METAL WORKS / ARTILLERY LANE, BISHOPSGATE WITHOUT LONDON. E.

Nothing is known of this firm in the annals of campanology, and it seems likely that Coslin was only an agent for some bell founder.

The tenor is by Robert Mot, the first known owner of the famous Whitechapel bell foundry, London, and is the sole example of his work in the county. It has canons of the normal type, and is hung for ringing: the other three bells are hung "dead" and may only be chimed.

Visited:

W. Simmonds, 14th November, 1943.

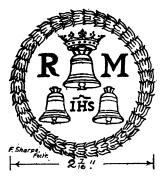


Fig. 100. Founder's mark used by Robert Mot, who owned the Whitechapel foundry from 1570 to 1606.

158.

READING.

St. Barnabas (Emmergreen.)

The church was originally opened for public worship in 1899, and was replaced by a new building in 1925. It contains one small bell, hung for chiming, in an open western bellcote.

Visited:

E.G.F., 1943.

159.

READING.

St. Barnabas (Shinfield.)

One bell; 24\frac{3}{4} inches diameter, strike-note F natural, weighing 3 cwt. 0 qr. 13 lbs., inscribed:—

GILLETT & JOHNSTON, CROYDON, 1935. / IN MEMORIAM. / WALTER FREDERICK SPIKES. / 16. JUNE 1860 - 5. MAY 1935 / PSALM 66. V. 3.

Walter Frederick Spikes was a well-known Reading churchworker, who came to live in this parish on his retirement. He was singing verse three of Psalm sixty-six in the choir here when he died.

Visited:

E.G.F., October, 1943.

READING.

St. Bartholomew.

A Chime of Two Hemispherical Bells.

Bell.	Inscription.	Diam.	Note.
Treble.	sursum corda. 1890.	ins. 23	F#
Tenor.	GRATIAS TIBI DOMINE 1890.	26	E

The bells were cast by Messrs. J. Taylor & Co. of Loughborough, who kindly supplied the foregoing details.

161. READING.

St. Giles.

Ring of Eight Bells; tenor 44½ inches diameter, in E. Bell. Inscription. Weight. Cwts. Qrs. lbs. Treble. STAINBANK, WHITECHAPEL 5 0 17 FOUNDRY, LONDON. 1890. Second. [Same as treble.] 2 24 Third. THOS. MEARS OF LONDON FECIT 6 14 1793 :::::: Fourth. [Same as third.] 6 36 3 Fifth. 8 [The same.] 1 17 Sixth. [The same.] T TO 9 Seventh. [The same.] II 0 22 HON.BLE & REVD. WILLM. BROMLEY Tenor. 15 2T CADOGAN VICAR THOS. DREWEATT & THOS. NEWELL CH. WARDENS WM. WHITUP SIDESMAN :::::: / Thos. Mears of London Fecit 1793

A ring of six from the Whitechapel foundry, 1793, to which two trebles were added in 1890, making eight. These comprise a very fine-toned ring of eight and rank among the best products of Thomas Mears, and Messrs. Mears and Stainbank respectively: each bell having the characteristic qualities of the period in which it was cast.

All the bells have their canons intact, and all have been quarterturned. They are fitted with elm headstocks, strap gudgeons, and traditional-type wheels and fittings, and hang in an oak frame.

¹ The fine tones of these bells are not heard to an advantage in the *immediate* vicinity of the Church, owing to the steep pitch of the stone louvres in the belfry windows, which causes the sound to beat down and reverberate upon the stone pavements and surrounding buildings. This defect could easily be remedied by lining 50% of the insides of the belfry windows with brickwork, or boarding.

The Churchwardens' Accounts (1518-1546) were published by W. L. Nash in 1881. They contain little of interest concerning the bells, but include the following:

1519-1520 Recd for the bells xxiiijs iijd.² 1521-1522 It. paid for ij clapers for ij little bells ijd.³ It. paid to ryngers on assencion day and corps xti day vjd.⁴ 1524-1525 It. in reparacion vppon the belles xiijs viijd. 1533-1534 It. paid for iiij new bell ropes, and for a rope for the Sanctes bell iijs vijd.⁵ 1542-1543. The fourth bell mentioned.⁶ Visited:

R.T.H., F.S., 2nd October, 1943.

162:

READING.

St. James (Roman Catholic Church.)

This church possesses one bell, hung for chiming in an open western turret. When viewed from the ground the bell appears to be of late XIXth century shape.

163.

READING.

St. John the Baptist (Caversham.)

The church was erected in 1888, and possesses one bell weighing circa $\frac{1}{2}$ cwt., cast in that year, and hung for chiming in a western turret.⁷

164.

READING.

St. John the Evangelist.

One Bell, $22\frac{1}{4}$ inches diameter, strike-note G., weighing approximately $2\frac{1}{2}$ cwt.; inscribed:

J. WARNER & SONS LONDON 1875

The bell is hung for ringing, but appears seldom to have been more than chimed.

It hangs in a *deal* frame, complete with wheel, stay, slider, elm headstock, strap gudgeons, and brass bearings.

Visited:

F.S., 2nd October, 1943.

(To be continued.)

Transcribed by Mr. H. B. Walters. Berkshire MS. fol. 105.
 Probably for knells. Similar items occur in the following years.

The sum stated is not sufficient to cover the cost of new clappers and probably relates to baldricks. (See Fig. 76.)

⁴ Similar entries in the following years.

⁵ Evidently there were then a ring of four, and a sanctus.

⁶ Mention of the fourth bell by name implies a ring of five at this date, i.e. treble (or fore-bell), second, third, fourth, and tenor (or great bell.) Had there been only four, the largest would have been called the tenor.

⁷ Compiled from information received from the Revd. Canon G. F. Coleridge, who was Priest-in-Charge at the time.

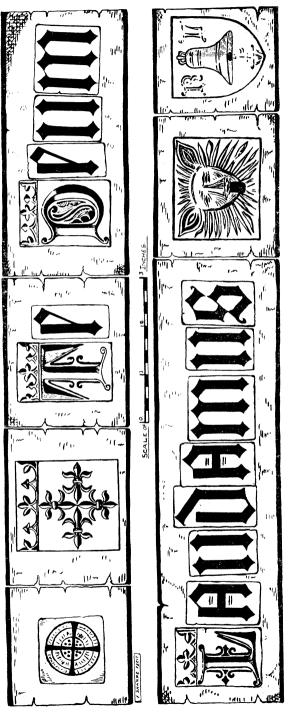


Fig. 101. Inscription on the Third Bell of the Ring of Four, at Stanford Dingley, cast by John Michell, of Wokingham, circa 1490.