

THE BELLS OF THE PARISH CHURCHES IN THE HUNDRED OF DESBOROUGH (BUCKS).

BY ALFRED HENEAGE COCKS, M.A.

THE history of the Bells of Buckinghamshire is as yet unwritten, and as a small contribution towards such a work, the following account of the bells in one of its Hundreds is offered.

Accompanied by Mr. Vere Awdry (late Foreman of the Great Marlow Belfry), I last summer visited every belfry in the Hundred of Desborough, and found room for improvement in a large majority of them; the unfortunate belfry being generally not treated as one of "the Courts of the Lord's House." I must call attention to the existence of an excellent Society, not so widely known as it deserves to be—The Oxford Diocesan Guild of Church Bell-ringers, of which the objects are—"To recognize the true position of Ringers as Church Officers; to cultivate the art of Change Ringing; and, to promote Belfry reform where it is needed." Only two belfries in this Hundred at present belong to the Guild—Wooburn and Great Marlow—but as fresh towers are continually joining, it may be hoped that other names from this Hundred may be found added in the next Annual Report.

The Hundred of Desborough, the south-westernmost division of the county of Bucks, contains 17 parishes, and the churches contain 80 bells. This gives an average of about 4·7 bells to each parish: The Rev. W. C. Lukis ("An Account of Church Bells," p. 29), has examined the bells of 88 of the churches in the Archdeaconry of Wilts, with an aggregate of 406 bells, which gives about

4·11 to each; and mentions Framland Hundred, in the county of Leicester, as containing 38 churches, with 127 bells, or only about 3·35 bells to each church. Mr. Stahlschmidt ("Bells of Surrey") records 1030 bells in Surrey, in 388 churches, or only about 2·65 bells to each. These are very slight data upon which to form an average, but so far as they go, they appear to show that the churches of the Hundred of Desborough have fully their share of bells.

The bells may be tabulated as under :—

PARISH.	CENTURIES.						TOTAL
	13th.	15th.	16th.	17th.	18th.	19th.	
Bradenham	2*	...	...	...	1	...	3
Fawley	2†	...	...	...	1	3
Fingest	1	1
Hambleden	1	...	2	2	1	6
Hedsor	1	...	1
Hughenden	2	...	2	...	4	8
Ibstone	2?	...	2
Lane End	6	6
Great Marlow	1‡	5	3	9†
Little Marlow	2	1	3
Medmenham	3	...	...	3
Radnage	2	2	...	4
Saunderton	3	...	...	3
Turville	2	2‡	...	4‡
Wooburn	4	4	8
High Wycombe	6	4	10
West Wycombe	1	2	2	1	6
TOTALS	2	5	1	17	29	26	80

The following founders are represented in the Hundred :—

-
- * These may date from the first decade of the 14th century.
† One of these may date from commencement of the 16th century.
‡ Including Saunce Bell.

FOUNDER.	LOCALITY.	DATE.	No. of Ex- amples in the Hundred.	FULLER PARTI- CULARS UNDER	AUTHORITIES.
Michael de Wymbish	London	Living in 1297. Dead by 1310	2	Bradenham	Stahlschmidt, "Bells of Surrey," pp. 4, 6.
"R. L." Unknown (probably the predecessor of John Michell)	Proby. Wokingham ...	Proby. Edward IV.'s reign (= 1461—1483)	4	Fawley	Tyssen, "Bells of Sussex," p. 9, footnote; Stahlschmidt, "Bells of Surrey," p. 86; North, "Bells of Bedfordshire," "Northamptonshire," &c.; also Ellacombe, "Bells of Devon," "Somersetshire," "Gloucestershire," &c.
(The 2nd Bell at Fawley) Unknown	Unknown	Proby. latter part of 15 th or early 16 th century ...	1	do.	
Joseph Carter	Reading [from 1606 also at Whitechapel]	1579—1610	1	West Wycombe...	Stahlschmidt, "Bells of Surrey," p. 94, &c.; Tyssen, "Bells of Sussex," p. 37.
Henry Knight I.	Reading	1587—1626	2	Hughenden ...	
Ellis Knight (was probably the founder of some if not all the bells having no founder's mark or initials, and dated between 1624 and 1637 ...	do.	1623—1642	6 proby	do. ...	
Ellis and Henry Knight ..	do.	1663—1666	3	do. ...	
Henry Knight II.	do.	1670—1672	1	do. ...	
Samuel Knight	do.	1689—1708	2	do. ...	
	[Removed to London about	1710—Dd. 1739.			Tyssen, "Bells of Sussex," p. 36; Stahlschmidt, "Bells of Surrey," p. 94; Lukis, "Church Bells," p. 13, &c.

FOUNDER.	LOCALITY.	DATE.	No. of Ex- amples in the Hundred.	FULLER PARTI- CULARS UNDER	AUTHORITIES.
Alexander Rigby	Stamford	1684—1708.....	3	Saunderton	North, "Bells of North- amptonshire."
"A K." Unknown	Unknown	1700.....	1	Hedsor	
Unknown	Unknown	Probably early 18 th century	2	Ibstone	
Unknown	Unknown	1729.....	1	Turville (Sanctus)	Stahlschmidt, "Bells of Sur- rey," p. 102, &c.; Mears and Stainbank, "List of Peals cast since 1738;" Tyssen, "Bells of Sussex;" Lukis, "Church Bells," p. 14. Stahlschmidt, "Bells of Sur- rey," p. 120. Lukis, "Church Bells," p. 14; North, "Bells of North- amptonshire." See above Whitechapel Founders. Stahlschmidt, "Bells of Sur- rey," p. 106.
Richard Phelps.....	Essex St., Whitechapel from	1700.....	...	.....
Thomas Lester	267, Whitechapel Road	1701—1734.....	12	Gt. Marlow ...	
Lester and Pack	do.	1738—1752.....	1	do. ...	
Pack and Chapman	do.	1752—1769.....	4	do. ...	
Thomas Swain	do.	1770—1781.....	1	do. ...	
Thomas Swain	Holborn, London	1753—1782.....	3	Little Marlow ...	
John Briant	Hertford	1787—1820.....	2	High Wycombe...	
Thomas Mears, Senr	267, Whitechapel Road	1791—1804.....	5	} Gt. Marlow... {	
Thomas Mears, Junr	do.	1810—1843.....	7		
Mears & Stainbank	do.	1865 to present time	9		
J. Hobbs	Lane End, Marlow ..	1830.....	1	Fingest	} Hughenden {
John Warner	London	1789—1799.....	1	} Hughenden {	
John Warner & Sons	do.	1850 to present time	4		
J. Murphy.....	Dublin	1868 to present time ? ...	1			Wooburn .....
TOTAL			80		

Joseph Carter and the Knights of Reading may be claimed as local founders, as also, probably, "R. L." in the 15th century; but of bells by the founders in Buckinghamshire, mentioned by Mr. T. A. Turner in the IVth vol. of the RECORDS, there are no examples in Desborough Hundred; the only bell cast in the county being the very poor one at Fingest, cast by, or at least bearing the name of, J. Hobbs, of Lane End, and dated 1830. This firm are simply iron-founders, and can hardly be reckoned among the bell-founders of the county.

The inscriptions are given exactly as they are on the bells, including mis-spellings, reversed letters, &c.: even the forms of the letters have been followed as closely as existing founts of type allow. In all bells by R. Phelps where N is printed the wrong way up (= N) the original letter is reversed, the centre stroke running from right to left, instead of the usual left to right; but this could not be shown without having letters cut specially.

BRADENHAM.

1. THOMAS MEARS OF LONDON FECIT 1799
(Plate II., Fig. 1.)

2.  MICHAEL: DE:
VVVMBIS:ME:HEQIT

3. Ditto.

There are only a very few bells* (if any), in England, older than the 2nd and Tenor. Mr. Stahl Schmidt, in "Surrey Bells and London Bell Founders" (1884), gives all that is known about the Wymbish family—three of whom, and perhaps four, were bell founders. Michael was apparently somewhat the earliest of them. On the Rolls of the Hustings Court (City of London), under date

* "The earliest *dated* bell in England, at present known, is at Claughton, Lancashire; it bears date 1297. The bell at Goring, Oxon, . . . although not dated, is however, clearly earlier." (Stahl Schmidt, "Bells of Surrey," p. x.) It was cast by Richard de Wymbish, and bears the name of Bishop Peter de Quivil, who died in 1291, and from the terms of the inscription, the bell was probably cast during his lifetime. It is quite possible, however, that the Bradenham bells may be even older.

1297, is a deed made between him, and his daughter Margaret, together with her husband Adam de Wirlee; and another deed, enrolled in 1310, mentions Michael de Wymbish as the "late." As the name of Richard de Wymbish appears in the Guildhall records in 1303, it is possible that Michael was already dead at that date. Like all early bells, they are very long shaped and resonant. Mr. Stahlschmidt (*op. cit.*) mentions these bells, and figures the lettering and cross. Diameter of Tenor at mouth, $27\frac{1}{8}$ inches.

FAWLEY.

1. CAST BY JOHN WARNER & SONS LONDON
1866

(On the waist :—)



P A T E N T

2. sanc ta mar gri ta ora

Pro no bis

3. (Plate I., Fig. 4.) Sancte Iohannes Ora Pro

Nobis (Plate I., Figs. 1, 2, 3.)

Tenor : Diameter at mouth, $36\frac{3}{4}$ inches. Bells evidently from the same foundry occur at Hambleden (Tenor), and at Hughenden (7 and Tenor).

The crowns on these handsome capital letters are formed of fleurs-de-lys, similar to that on the initial cross Plate I., Fig. 4.

The name and locality of the founder of the very handsome ancient bells of which the Tenor is an example, have hitherto proved an insoluble riddle to campanologists; they exist in astonishing numbers considering



Fig. 1



Fig. 3.



Fig. 4

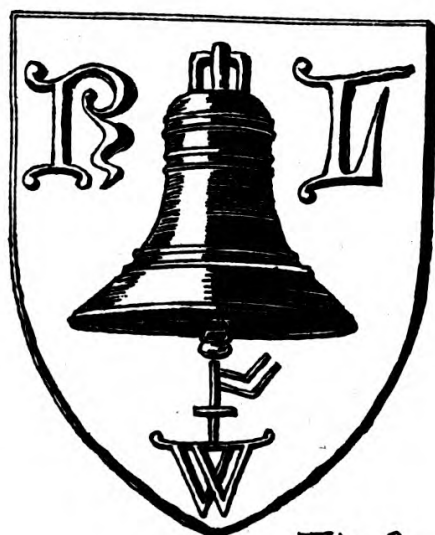


Fig. 2



Fig. 5

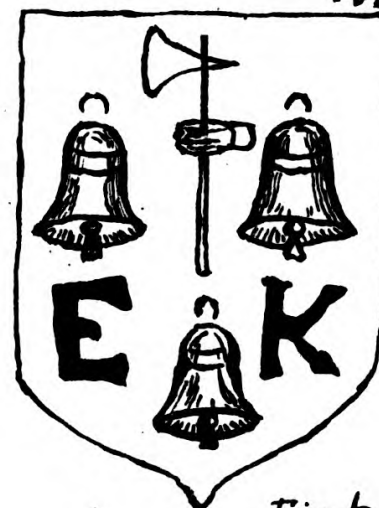


Fig. 6

their age, Mr. Tyssen ("Bells of Sussex") "having found more than fifty of these bells in the counties of Hants, Berks, Bucks, Oxon, Northants, and Surrey;" besides examples in Sussex; and others in Devon, Somerset, and Gloucestershire recorded by Mr. Ellacombe in his histories of the bells of those three counties; one in Norfolk recorded by Mr. Stahlschmidt; and there are doubtless others again in other counties. All these bells may be grouped together, as the same stamps have been used on each for the lettering (at least for the capitals) and for the various founders' marks: but as various other founders' marks (including one, of the arms of the Episcopal See of Winchester) are introduced on some of the bells, it is almost certain that the stamps were handed down from one founder to his successor, and were used through a long period of years by successive founders, who did not all necessarily live at the same town. So far as I have been able to make out (from the works of Mr. Tyssen, Mr. Stahlschmidt, etc.), the earliest existing bell which seems certainly to be connected with this foundry, is the 5th at Chertsey. The whole of the inscription on it is in crowned "Lombardic" or "Gothic" capitals of the same pattern as the capitals on the present bell. As the use of "small" letters, according to Mr. Stahlschmidt's observations (in which opinion the late Mr. T. North, F.S.A., author of histories of the bells of several counties, concurred), came in during the first two decades of the 15th century, the Chertsey bell would probably date from that period at latest; it has the Lion's Head Stamp, "a coin," (not more particularly specified), and a stop consisting of a diamond pattern between two circular patterns. This founder was (I assume) succeeded by one whose initials were "R. L."* (See Plate I., Fig. 2.) The four bells in this Hundred belonging to this group were, I imagine from the identity of the coin on each, cast about the same time, though only two of them have the "R. L." shield.

The reverses of the groats (from which the stamp on the bells was apparently taken) of three or four of the

* The third device on this shield is, according to Mr. Stahlschmidt, not a W, but a "merchant's mark." "Besides, three letters would imply a double Christian name, a thing almost unknown in England in pre-Reformation times."

English Kings of the 14th and 15th centuries, are very similar, especially those of Edward III. and IV., and unfortunately the medallions on the bells are all more or less indistinct, making minute differentiation difficult; but with Mr. Awdry's assistance, I took considerable pains to obtain reproductions of the stamps, which I submitted to the Coin Department in the British Museum; and received the following opinion:—

“BRITISH MUSEUM, *July 23rd*, 1884.

“DEAR SIR,

“Mr. Graeber and I have carefully examined the sealing-wax impressions which you send, and we are pretty sure that the groats upon the bells must be of the time of Edward IV. There are certain indications which were not visible in the drawings and rubbings which you sent.

“Yours faithfully,

“C. F. KEARY.”

This agrees with the conclusion I had myself arrived at as to the reign indicated by the coin, and I feel tolerably satisfied (pending further evidence), that these four bells date from Edward IV.'s time, that is between the years 1461 and 1483.

In the “History of Hughenden” published in the RECORDS, Vol. V., p. 214, Mr. Downs mentions the bells in that Tower, and assigns the two old ones to the reign of Edward III., but gives no authority or reason for so assigning them. Commencing four years after the death of Edward IV., we have a tolerably consecutive list of founders, who seem to fit in nicely as successors to “R. L.,” and are so considered by Mr. Tyssen, viz.:—

John Michell,	Wokingham,	1487—1493.
William Hasywood,	Reading,	1494—1509.
John Hasywood,	do.	1510.
John White,	do.	1515—1527.
John Saunders,	do.	1539—1559.

[From 1556 also in London.*]

And subsequently some of the same lettering was used by Joseph Carter of Reading, 1579—1610, “and this strongly supports the theory that these bells were cast by his predecessors in the same locality.”†

* Stahlschmidt, “Bells of Surrey,” p. 86.

† “Bells of Sussex,” p. 9, footnote. But as Joseph Carter also had the Whitechapel Foundry for a few years, he *might* have acquired these stamps in London, and not at Reading.

Some of this group of bells have the initials I. S. These, according to Mr. Stahlschmidt, do not stand for John Saunders, but for Johanna Sturdy, widow. It is impossible here to transcribe all the remarks of this gentleman on the subject, and I must refer those interested to headquarters ("Bells of Surrey," p. 49 *et seq.*); but "Johane," the widow of a London bell founder named Richard Hille, who died in 1440, continued to carry on the business; in 1459, "Johane" or "Johana" Sturdy, widow, appears as a bell founder (or *foundress*), and is reasonably conjectured by Mr. Stahlschmidt to be the same Johanna, left a widow for the second time. As however a bell at Waterstock in Oxfordshire has these initials under the R. L. shield, it would seem as if the founder I. S. were subsequent to the founder R. L., although Mr. Stahlschmidt (p. 86) says, "I cannot help coming to the conclusion that it (the lion's head stamp) was originally the distinguishing mark of an early fifteenth-century London founder, and that it migrated later—possibly to Winchester—to the possession of a founder whose initials were R. L., and certainly finally to Reading."

FINGEST.

I. (*Incised*) J. HOBBS LANE END 1830.

(On the stock is cut—)

	C W	C W
(On one end—)	T × T	E × S
T M	May 29	
	18	30

A poor bell; diameter at mouth, $31\frac{1}{8}$ inches. This bell is hung with a wheel and stay, but no slider. The frame appears to be older than the bell; and is made for two bells, the second place having evidently been in use at some time; while all round this fine early Norman tower are to be seen the marks in the walls where the frames of a peal of bells were fixed.

Since my visit (in the summer of 1884) the tower has undergone "restoration."

HAMBLEDEN.

1. R : PHELPS MADE ME (Plate II., Figs. 2, 3, 2.)
 GEORGIVS REX A : D : 1724 D : IONES
 R : LANE CH : W :

2. FEARE GOD 1634

3. GEORG DEAMIE GAVE THIS BELL
 1634

4. JOHN WARNER & SONS CRESCENT FOUNDRY
 LONDON 1857.

(On the waist :—)



P A T E N T

5. PACK & CHAPMAN OF LONDON FECIT 1778
 (Plate II., Fig. 1.)

(Underneath, Plate II., Fig. 1, continued all round).

6. (Plate I., Fig. 4.) ^{SP SP} ^{SP SP} ^{SP SP} ^{SP SP} ^{SP SP} ^{SP SP}
 Ora Mente Pia Pro Nobis
^{SP SP} ^{SP SP}
 Virgo Maria (Plate I., Figs. 3, 1.)

Treble. Has been turned; the pair of single canons are broken off.

2 and 3. Ditto, ditto. The inscriptions were graven on the outer mould, or *cope*, not stamped; I suppose these two bells to be the work of Ellis Knight of Reading.

3. Hung with improved gudgeons.

4. Square canons; improved gudgeons.

5. Has been turned; improved gudgeons.

6. Canons broken off; has been turned; diameter at

mouth, $41\frac{1}{2}$ inches. For note on this beautiful old bell—similar to one at Fawley and two at Hughenden—see under Fawley.

There is a tradition that the Rectors of Hambleden and Fingest at some time in “the good old days” played cards together for money. The latter having lost all his available cash, staked the bells of his parish church, and losing, the bells were brought here. Fingest, as we have seen, at the present time only possesses one modern bell, while marks in the tower show that a peal at some former time hung there. The present Rector of Hambleden, the Rev. C. M. Wetherall, believes it to be true that some of the Hambleden bells originally belonged to Fingest, but does not credit the manner in which they are alleged to have been acquired by the former parish. Langley (*Hist. of Desborough*, published 1797) says of Hambleden, “The tower, which stood formerly between the church and the chancel, was taken down in 1703, and in 1721 the present* tower was built at the west end.” He mentions the “ring of bells,” giving the inscription on the old one—which he calls the *fifth*—substituting the word “Sancta” for “Virgo.” If therefore the bells, or any of them, came from Fingest, the year 1721 would probably be the date when the transfer took place. Only three of the present Hambleden bells are older than this date, but the others may be recasts, and not necessarily new bells.

HEDSOR.

I. A K J300

(Incised on the stock is—) 1736

Diameter at mouth, $20\frac{7}{8}$ inches. I have not been able to find any bell-founder with these initials; query, can he have been one of the Knights of Reading?

* Rebuilt, and the bells rehung, 1884.

HUGHENDEN.

I. CAST BY JOHN WARNER & SONS LONDON 1881.
(Underneath)

IN MEMORY OF EARL BEACONSFIELD.

(On the waist)

PRESENTED BY ROBERT WARNER ESQ^{RE}
BELL FOUNDER TO HER MAJESTY
QUEEN VICTORIA



(On the waist, on opposite side)

YEAR BY YEAR THE STEEPLE MUSIC
OER THE TENDED GRAVES SHALL POUR,
WHERE THE DUST OF SAINTS IS GARNERED
TILL THE MASTER COMES ONCE MORE.

2. CAST BY JOHN WARNER & SONS LONDON 1881.
(Underneath)

IN MEMORY OF EARL BEACONSFIELD.

(On the waist)

PRESENTED BY ROBERT WARNER ESQ^{RE}
BELL FOUNDER TO HER MAJESTY
QUEEN VICTORIA



(On the waist, on opposite side)

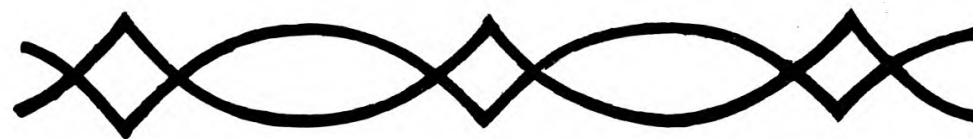
CHRISTIAN MEN SHALL HEAR AT DISTANCE
IN THEIR TOIL, OR IN THEIR REST,
JOYING THAT IN ONE COMMUNION
OF ONE CHURCH, THEY TOO ARE BLEST.

3. Mears et Stainbank, Londini, Fecerunt, 1875.

(On waist) "Laudate Dominum omnes ejus Angeli."

4. Mears et Stainbank, Londini, Fecerunt, 1875.

(On waist) "Dominum campanæ clangore laudate."



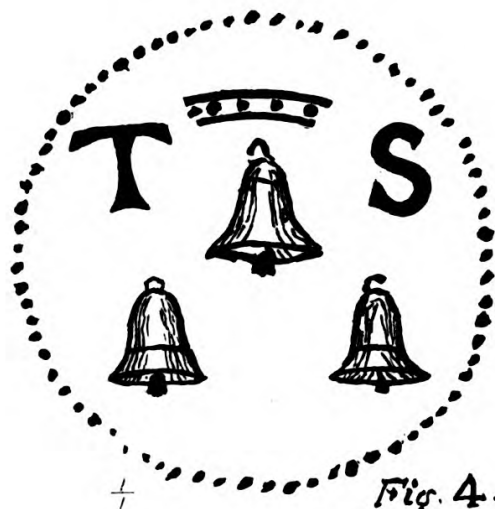
$\frac{1}{2}$

Fig. 1



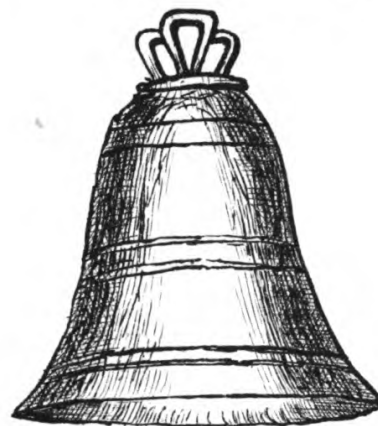
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Fig. 7.



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Fig. 4.



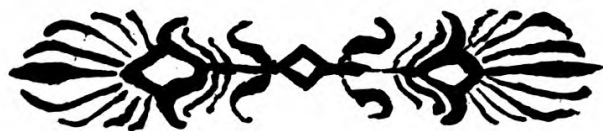
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Fig. 5.



+

Fig. 6



$\frac{1}{2}$

Fig. 8



+

Fig. 2.

+

Fig. 3.



$\frac{1}{2}$

Fig. 9.

5. $\text{AN̄N̄ĒS WRIGHT WILLĪAM RVSEL}$ (*sic*)

C (Plate I., Fig. 5) W

(Underneath) H (Plate I., Fig. 6) K 1663.

6. Ditto.

7. (Plate I., Figs. 4, 3.) Sancta (Plate I., Fig. 3.) Maria (Plate I., Fig. 2.) Ora

Pro [N]obis^* (Plate I., Fig. 1.)

8. (Plate I., Fig. 4.) Criste (*sic*) Baptista Campana

Gaudeat Ista (Plate I., Figs. 1, 3.)

1 and 2. The Crescent Foundry, Cripplegate, London, was established by Mr. John Warner in 1789, and carried on by him until 1799. In 1850 the firm became Messrs. John Warner & Sons, since which date only, they profess to have been casting bells regularly. Mr. Robert Warner is the present head of the firm. The only bell by John Warner in Desborough Hundred is at Wootton.

5 and 6. The initials H. K. are those of Henry Knight of Reading, who was apparently at this time in partnership with Ellis Knight, whose initials are on the shield, Plate I., Fig. 6. This shield of Ellis Knight, between the initials of Henry Knight, also occurs on the Medmenham Tenor, on which also the human figure between the letters C. W. (= Church Wardens) is repeated, but the *reverse* way up, *i.e.*, with the left side downwards, instead of the right, as here.

The succession of the various members of the Knight family of Reading is not very clear; but the confusion probably arises (as with other foundries) from the son joining the business during his father's lifetime, and bells being afterwards cast bearing indiscriminately both names, or either of them alone. The following is the fullest list I have been able to compile; chiefly on the authority of Mr. Tyssen ("Bells of Sussex") :—

* This initial letter is entirely obliterated through corrosion, but was doubtless N.

William Knight, 1567—1586.

[From 1560.—*Stahlschmidt*.]

Henry Knight, I., 1586—1622.

["Henri Knight made mee 1626." West Wycombe.]

Ellis Knight, 1623—1642.

["Ellis and Henry Knight made mee 1624." S. Lawrence, Winchester.—*Lukis*.]

[Ellis Knight's shield, with Henry Knight's initials on either side—1663, and 1666. Hughenden and Medmenham. Also 1670, Basingstoke.—*Lukis*.]

Henry Knight, II., 1651—1672.

["Ellis and Henry Knight made mee 1673." Week, Hants.—*Lukis*.]

Henry Knight, III., 1673—1680.

Samuel Knight, 1689—1708; moved to London about 1710, and died 1739; his will being dated November 15, and proved December 19, in that year.

Mr. Tyssen says, "There was also an assistant, Thomas Knight, who died in 1666; and an Ellis Knight, in partnership with the last Henry Knight, who died between 1685 and 1694."

He also gives the names, presumably about 1565, of the then bell-founders of Reading, William Welles, William Knight, and Vincent Gorowaye. Mr. *Stahlschmidt*, who is inclined to think this list should be placed somewhat earlier, found in the books of the Founders Company of London for 1518 the name of Winsent Galaway, while a certain William Knight was Under Warden in that year, Upper Warden in 1528, and Master of the Guild in 1530-31. The similarity of names is remarkable, and he considers that in the case of the Galaways the names are so peculiar as almost to amount to a certainty that they were one and the same man, and suggests that either this Knight and Galaway, or their sons and namesakes, may have migrated to Reading.

Query, were "A. K. 1700" (Hedsor) and William Knight 1735 (found in Dorset—*Lukis*) of this family?

7 and 8. These are similar to the two previously described at Fawley and Hambleden; *vide* Fawley.

Diameter of Tenor at mouth, $41\frac{1}{8}$ inches; weight, 12 cwt.

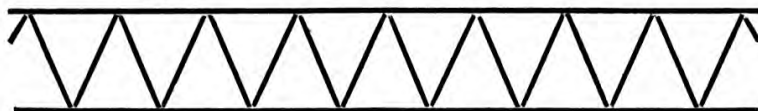
Two Peals of 5040 Changes each have been rung in this steeple, viz., by

THE OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD. A Side from Oxford.
Holt's Ten-Part Peal of Grandsire Triples, *on Dec. 29th, 1883.*

THE OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD. A Side from Oxford.
Thurstan's Peal of Stedman Triples, *on Dec. 8th, 1884.*

IBSTONE.

1. (No inscription or pattern of any kind.)
2. (No inscription; but this pattern goes all round, 3 inches high, and an average of 3 inches or rather less between the apex of each angle—)



These bells perhaps date from last century.

We here met with the most amusing opposition on the part of the old Sexton, which, as it was the only instance in the Hundred, is worth recording. He thought our movements most suspicious, and walked all round the church (with his hat on!) to see if we had pocketed any of the hassocks, and could not understand what we wanted to look at the bells for; and afterwards spread such alarming reports of our goings on, that the congregation (as we heard afterwards) were afraid to go to church on the following Sunday, expecting that the church was about to be blown up with dynamite! This reads, doubtless, like a romance, but is sober fact.

LANE END.

1. Mears & Stainbank, Founders, London.
2. (Below)
3. Presented by
4. H. W. Cripps & Co
5. Parmoor 1878.
- 6.

The inscriptions are exactly alike on all six. They are a very light peal, the diameter of the Tenor being $33\frac{1}{4}$ inches. Beyond improved gudgeons, the hangings do not differ from older ones.

GREAT MARLOW.

1. THOMAS MEARS OF LONDON FOUNDER 1834.

2. T. MEARS OF LONDON FECIT 1827. (Plate II.,
Fig. 1.)

(Underneath, *incised* :)—

WILDSMITH BADGER } CH WARDENS.
THO^S GIBBONS

3.)
4.) } R : PHELPS FECIT 1719
5.)
6.)

7. R : PHELPS MADE ME 1719 (Plate II., Figs. 2, 3.)
THE REV^D : RICH : MILLECHAMPE M : A : VICAR
GEO : BRUERE ESQ : W^M : BLUNDELL CH :
WARDENS

8. THOMAS MEARS OF LONDON FOUNDER 1834.

(Underneath)

REV^D THOMAS TRACY COXWELL VICAR,
THOMAS GIBBONS } CHURCH WARDENS.
SAMUEL BARNES

VOLUNTARY SUBSCRIPTIONS.

Saunce Bell. S K 1694

2. Mr. J. C. Truss informs me that this bell (at that time the *Treble*, the present Treble and Tenor having been added when the church was—in an evil hour—rebuilt in 1834) became cracked, and the churchwardens grudged the money necessary for its recasting; however, on the occasion of a visitation by the Archdeacon, they brought the cracked music of this bell so prominently to his notice, that he directed the churchwardens to have it recast.

3. The bell having developed a crack just below the crown, an iron band was put round it in 1849, hiding the

inscription, which I give on the authority of Mr. J. C. Truss, who was a boy of fifteen or sixteen at the time the band was put on, and helped his father, who was Sexton and Foreman of the Belfry. The hoop was made as hot as possible at the late Mr. Nicholls' forge in High Street; a man then ran with it to the tower, where it was again heated in a fire made on sheet iron in the bell-chamber; then put over the bell (which was unshackled from the stock), and shrunk with water.

Diameter of Tenor at mouth, $45\frac{3}{4}$ inches; weight, about $15\frac{1}{2}$ cwt.

The Saunce Bell is commonly known by the name "Ting-tang," and was cast by Samuel Knight, of Reading; some particulars of its history are given at the end of this paper.

The majority of the churches in this Hundred have one or more bells from the Whitechapel Foundry; but as Marlow possesses the largest number thence, I give here

A LIST OF THE WHITECHAPEL BELL-FOUNDERS.

IN ESSEX STREET, WHITECHAPEL.

Robert Mot, 1570—1605. Died 1608.

Joseph Carter (took this in addition to his Reading business), 1606—1610.

William Carter (his son), 1610—1618.

Thomas Bartlett (foreman to the Carters), 1619—1647.

Anthony Bartlett (his son), 1647—1676.

James Bartlett (his son), 1676. Died January, 1701.

Richard Phelps (in business 1700, commenced at this foundry in) 1701—1734. Died August, 1738.

Phelps & Lester, 1735—1738.

The business was then removed to present site,

267, WHITECHAPEL ROAD.

Thomas Lester (foreman to Phelps), 1738—1752.

Lester & Pack (Thomas Pack had probably been Lester's foreman), 1752—1769.

Lester, Pack, & Chapman (William Chapman, nephew to Lester), 1769. (Lester died that year.)

Pack & Chapman, 1770—1781. (Pack died that year.)

Chapman & Mears (William Mears learnt the business

at the Whitechapel Foundry, and by 1777 was in business on his own account; was taken into partnership by Chapman in) 1782—1784. (Chapman died that year.)

William Mears, 1784—1786.

William & Thomas Mears, 1787—1791.

Thomas Mears, I., 1791—1804.

Thomas Mears & Son, 1805—1809.

Thomas Mears, II., 1810—1843.

["Mess^{rs}. Mears, founders, 1841." Winterslow, Wilts. —*Lukis*.]

Charles and George Mears, 1844—1860.

["C. & R. Mears, founders, London, 1848." Erchfont, Wilts.

"J. & T. Mears, founders, London, 1848." Calne, Wilts.

"T. & G. Mears, Londini, fecerunt, 1849." Woodborough, Wilts.

"A. Th. C. Mears, Londini, fecerunt, 1849." Broad Hinton, Wilts. *Lukis*, "Church Bells."]

["George Mears, 1858." Big Ben, Westminster.]

George Mears & Co., 1861—1865.

Mears & Stainbank (R. Stainbank, the present head of the firm), 1865 to present time.

Four Peals of Grandsire Triples (5040 Changes) have been rung in this steeple, viz., by

THE ANCIENT SOCIETY OF COLLEGE YOUTHS. *On June 5th, 1843.* (Mr. Robert Haworth, who rang the 7th bell, is the only one of this Side now living.)

THE OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD (E. Berks and S. Bucks Branch). A Side from Boyne Hill, Maidenhead. Taylor's Six-Part Peal, *on June 9th, 1883.*

THE S. LAWRENCE, READING, SOCIETY. Holt's Ten-Part Peal, *on Oct. 20th, 1843.*

THE OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD (E. Berks and S. Bucks Branch). A Side from Boyne Hill, Maidenhead, *on Nov. 20th, 1884.*

In the two latter Peals, a Marlow Ringer, Mr. J. C. Truss, took part.

Boards to record the first three of these Peals are hung in the Ringing Chamber.

LITTLE MARLOW.

1. Mears & Stainbank, founders, London, 1873.
2. THO^s [A circular stamp, 1½ inch diameter, perhaps a coin.] SWAIN (Plate II., Fig. 5) MADE (Plate II., Fig. 4, very imperfectly stamped) ME (Plate II., Fig. 6) IN (Plate II., Fig. 5) J757 (Plate II., Fig. 4, very imperfect, and Fig. 6.)
3. THO^s - SWAINE (Plate II., Fig. 4; underneath is TH^{os} Swain Fecit) MADE · MEE (Plate II., Fig. 4, very imperfect) IN J777 (Four coins, very indistinct, 1½ inches diameter, apparently obverse of a coin of George III.; then two impressions of Plate II., Fig. 4; under the first is :—) TH^{os} Swain Fecit (and under the second is :—) T. Swain Fecit

Samuel Knight,* the last of that family of Reading bell-founders, migrated to London in 1710 (probably to Shoe Lane), in the parish of S. Andrew, Holborn. He died in the latter part of 1739 (his will being dated 15th November, and proved on the 19th December in that year). He was succeeded by his executor and residuary legatee, Robert Catlin. He died in 1751, and was succeeded by Thomas Swain, of Longford, in Harmondsworth, Middlesex, eldest son of Thomas Swain, of West Bedfont. The latter was probably the son of Richard Swain, who married Barbara (born 1665), third daughter of William Eldridge, bell-founder, of Chertsey, grandson of Richard, bell-founder, of Wokingham (1592—1623), who is probably the founder alluded to in the Great Marlow churchwardens' accounts for 1593. (*See p. 404.*)

There is a bell by Thomas Swain also at High Wycombe.

* Stahlschmidt, "Bells of Surrey," p. 120, etc.

MEDMENHAM.

1. (Round the crown) HENRY DEYNE

(Ordinary position) W~~E~~LLAM BLVNELL C W S K I O 91.

2. THIS BELL WAS MADE 1624.

3. ~~I~~JOHN KEENE ~~I~~EREMY BR~~E~~DEN C (Plate I., Fig. 5,
reversed, i.e., the figure lying with the left side down) W

(Underneath) H (Plate I., Fig. 6) K ~~I~~666.

1. The only instance in the Hundred of any inscription on the crown of a bell.

The second *i* in William is incised in place, and the *d* in Blundell is incised just underneath its proper place.

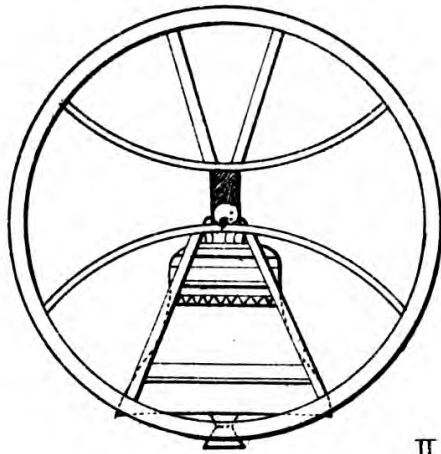
The C W of course stands for churchwardens, and the S K for Samuel Knight, of Reading.

2. The second bell is (from the lettering, etc.) probably also the work of the Reading foundry; and, if so, would be cast by Ellis Knight, from the date.

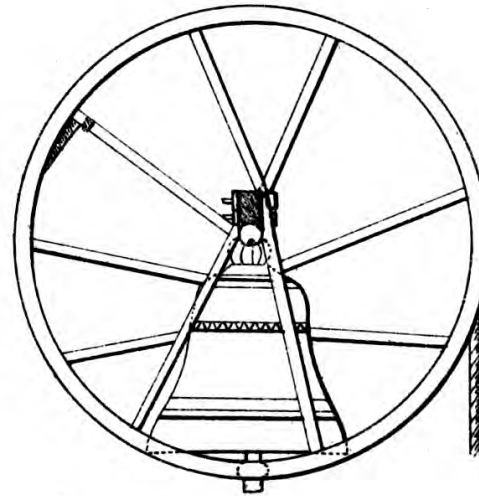
3. The initials on the shield (Plate I., Fig. 6) are those of Ellis Knight, of Reading; the initials H K are those of Henry Knight; they were apparently in partnership at that time. See 5th and 6th bells at Hughenden. This Tenor bell is about 10 cwt.

The clappers are fixed with wooden splints (otherwise known as "Busk-boards," or "Swords,") instead of the ordinary iron copses and wooden "keys." The ball of the clapper of the Treble is peculiarly flat, and the flight is 3 inches long; while the ball of the Tenor clapper is enormous, and the flight is as much as 5 inches in length. The second bell has an iron stay $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches long, and a slider fixed on the frame, level with the centre of the bell, consisting of a sliding iron bolt, with a short horizontal projection, at right angles to the bolt. The lead on the roof of the tower is dated 1706, and the bell hangings may perhaps be as old; there is a place for another bell, beyond the Tenor, fitted, even to the hole in the floor for the rope, as if there had actually been a fourth bell. The three wheels are all the same size.

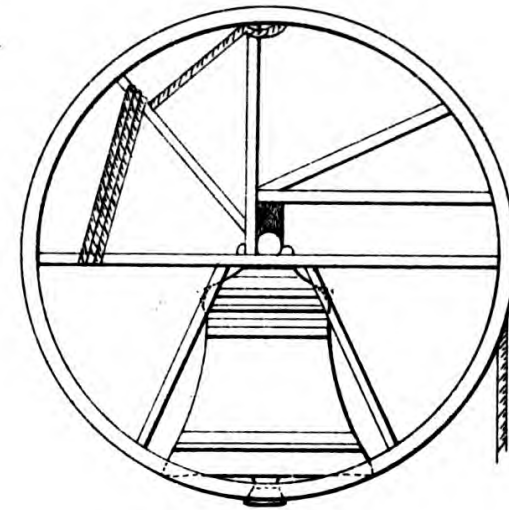
— Peculiar Wheels —



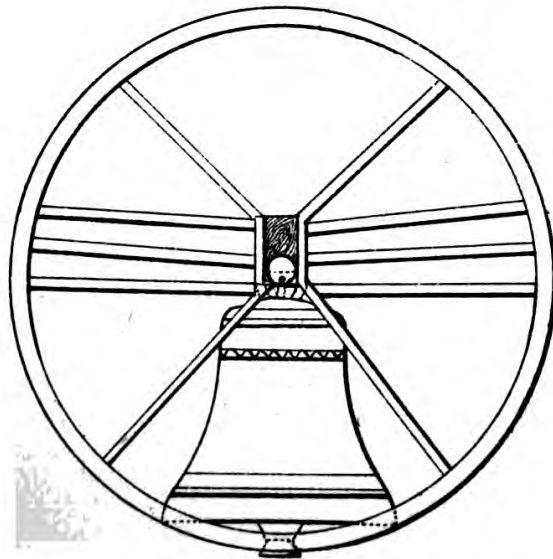
II



III



IV



I

— Turville —

— 3 Bells —

I, II, III, IV — Radnage —

Plate III

RADNAGE.

1. LESTER AND PACK OF LONDON FECIT 1763
(Plate II., Fig. 1, and repeated all round underneath).
2. FEAR GOD F 634
3. R^{D} : PHELPS MADE ME 1729 (Plate II., Fig. 3)
EDWARD BARLOW JASPER HUNT CHURCH-
WARDENS
4. W · S F · B CHURCHWARDENS 1637 ·

1. Messrs. Lester & Pack (predecessors of Messrs. Mears & Stainbank, of Whitechapel) used the singular "Fecit," as the firm continued to do when it was Pack & Chapman; see the 5th bell at Hambleden.

3. Nearly all the N's in bells by Phelps are transposed, as mentioned, p. 379.

The 2nd and 4th bells are, I think, the work of the Knights of Reading.

Tenor: diameter at mouth, $38\frac{5}{8}$ inches.

The four wheels are all of different patterns, and as such are, I think, worth placing on record (see Plate III., Figs. 1, 2, 3, and 4).

SAUNDERTON.

1. ✠ (Plate II., Fig. 9) ALEXANDER : RIGBY : MADE :
ME : 1699 (Plate II., Fig. 9).
2. ✠ : ALEX : RIGBY : MADE : ME : 1699 :
JOHN : DAVIES : M : A : RECTOR
3. ALEX : RIGBY : MADE : ME : 1699 : HENARY :
NEWELL : & : JOSEPH : FRANSIS : C : W

A pretty little maiden peal, and very resonant.

Diameter of Tenor at mouth, $29\frac{1}{8}$ inches.

Large roughly made wheels, the rope passes through them at the top ; no stays or slides.

They hang in a small boarded turret, in which there would be no room for another bell ; apparently a bell turret was not part of the original church (Decorated), as it is supported by oak beams inside the nave walls, springing from the floor.

The clappers are peculiar ; their copses are of wood (instead of iron), and the clappers are fastened to them by long wooden pins or trenails (instead of bolts) ; the balls are very small, and the flights of the two smaller bells very long—that of the Treble being $5\frac{1}{8}$ inches, and of the second $6\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

Alexander Rigby was a founder at Stamford, where he succeeded Tobias Norris. The latter (whose family had held the foundry for four generations, from 1607) died in January, 1698-9. Rigby appears to have been connected with this foundry—perhaps as foreman—for some years before the death of Norris ; for at Great Billing, Northamptonshire, the Treble bell, cast by him, is dated as early as 1684. Alexander Rigby died at Stamford, in Oct., 1708 ; and the foundry closed at his death.*

The following doggerel on the Treble at Badgworth, Gloucestershire, appears to show that Rigby's bells were not always so good as the present examples :—

“ Badgworth ringers they were mad,
Because Rigbe made me bad ;
But Abel Rudhall,† you may see,
Hath made me better than Rigbe. 1742.”‡

TURVILLE.

1. HENRY KNIGHT MADE MEE 1670:
2. **PRAYES THE LORD 1628**

* North, “ Bells of Northamptonshire.”

† Of Gloucester, 1737—1754. Lukis, “ Church Bells.”

‡ Tyssen, “ Bells of Sussex,” p. 36.

3. T. LESTER CHARLES CUTHBERT VIC^R JOHN
JUENS JOHN QUARTERMAIN CH : WARDENS
J744

(Below the date, but naturally referring to T. Lester, is :)—

MADE ME.

Saunce Bell. 1729.

2. Probably cast by Ellis Knight, of Reading; but this is only a conjecture. The letters on this bell average $1\frac{3}{8}$ inches in height, and appear to have been graven on the outer mould or *cope*, not stamped in the usual manner.

3. Diameter at mouth, $35\frac{1}{8}$ inches.

The hangings of all these bells are old (perhaps dating from 1744—the date of the newest of the bells), and very peculiar; the sliders slide from both ends equally, instead of being hinged at one end; the stay of the Treble is fixed precisely in the centre of the stock. The stocks are all very short, the cross frames having to be cut away to a depth of quite 3 inches each side, to allow the mouths of the bells to pass; while the wheels are of the remarkable (and perhaps unique) pattern shown in Plate III., Fig. 5.

WOOBURN.

1. THOMAS MEARS OF LONDON FECIT 1814
(Plate II., Fig. 1).
2. Ditto ditto.
3. R : PHELPS FECIT 1718
4. T. MEARS OF LONDON FECIT 1813 (Plate II.,
Fig. 1).

(Incised underneath)

REV^D T, TYNDALE, MINISTER
HARRY, PEGG, } CH. WARDENS
W^M FORRESTER, }

5. JOHN WARNER FOUNDER OF LONDON 1790.
GEO. HOWARD, GEO. LANE CHURCHWARDENS.

6. J. MURPHY FOUNDER DUBLIN 1868 (Plate II.,
Fig. 8, repeated three times).

(Underneath :—Plate II., Fig. 8, repeated three times) THE GIFT
OF WILLIAM MOONEY ESQ^R DUBLIN

7. R : PHELPS MADE ME 1712 • • MESSEIVRS BEN:
HICKMAN IOS: PETTIPHER RIC: SHRIMPTON: HEN:
HVNT ALDERMEN

8. LESTER & PACK OF LONDON FECIT (Plate II.,
Fig. 1, but consisting only of one long loop, with a short
loop at each end) GEORGE GROVE & RICHARD
HOWARD CH : WARDENS 1762

(Underneath, Plate II., Fig. 1, all round).

2. In Lukis' "Church Bells" (published in 1857) the inscription on the second bell is stated to be—"Johannes Lenglen Episcopus Lincoln. + Ave Maria gratiæ plena Dominus tecum." No other bells at Wooburn are mentioned. This inscription is probably copied from Langley's "Hist. Hund. Desborough" (p. 443), where the name is spelt "Lenglon." On a brass on his gravestone in Eton College Chapel, the name was written "Longlandus," and "Longland;" he was born at Henley, and was Bishop of Lincoln from 1520, or 1521, to his death in 1547. The Bishops of Lincoln (in which diocese the present Archdeaconry of Buckingham was included from about A.D. 1078* to 1845) formerly had their palace in Wooburn; according to Langley, this bell was the gift of Bishop Lenglon, who also "laid out considerable sums on his palace here" (*ibid.*).

* Marshall's "History of the Diocese of Oxford."

7. The *e* and *i* in Messieurs are transposed, and all the N's are reversed.

8. Diameter at mouth, 47 inches. The canons are broken off.

On the floor of the north aisle is a brass of the founder of the steeple. There have been two figures—on the left is the “figure of a man in a gown furred at the wrists, with a purse and rosary” (Langley, p. 455); and to the right may be still seen the form in the stone where another figure—no doubt the wife—formerly existed. Underneath is the following inscription:—

Here lyeth *ſ* John Goodwyn *z* Pernell his wife first founders
of the Steepult of Obourne Duncourt whiche deceised the xlii daye of
ſ Aprill the yere of oure lord god mcccclxxxviii on whose soules ihu
habe mey of youre charite for ooure soules *z* alle cristen sey a pat n *z* aue.

Langley gives a plate of this brass, as well as mentioning it in the letterpress (p. 455), but (especially as his transcript is not absolutely *literatim*) I have thought it best to repeat it here.* He also gives the pedigree of this family, beginning with the father of John Goodwin; John's wife is there called Petronilla; and he adds in a footnote, “By his will, proved June 29, 1488, he bequeaths £5 towards the reparation of Osborne St. Paul's steeple, and 20s. towards the making of a bell,” etc.

HIGH WYCOMBE.

1. THOMAS MEARS OF LONDON FECIT 1802
(Plate II., Fig. 7, repeated 5 times).

2. { THE GIFT OF THE EARL OF WYCOMB } JOHN BRIANT.
{ ELDEST SON OF THE MARQUIS OF LANSDOWN }

HARTFORD. FECIT. 1788. W. BALL . . } ASSISTANTS.
G. HARMAN . . }

* This brass is also figured in THE RECORDS, Vol. IV., plate facing p. 22, but without much attention to accuracy.

3. { THE GIFT OF LORD HENRY PETTY } JOHN BRIANT.
 { SECOND SON OF THE MARQUIS OF LANSDOWN }

HARTFORD. FECIT. 1788. G. HARMAN . } ASSISTANTS.
 W. BALL . }

(The obverse of a coin, 1 inch diameter; Bust dexter,
 "Georgius III. Dei Gratia.")

4. RECAST BY THOMAS MEARS OF LONDON A, D,
 1802 (Plate II., Fig. I).

5. R : PHELPS FEC : 1711 . . EDWARD STEVENS
 CLARK LUKE GURNEY SEXTON

6. RICHARD PHELPS OF WHITE CHAPEL LONDON
 MADE THESE EIGHT BELLS 1711 . .

7. THO^S SMAIN : MADE : ME : J756 (Plate II., Fig. 6) :
 ARON WOOSTER : THO^S WALKER : M^R MEAD :
 CHURCHWARDENES :

8. RECAST BY THOMAS MEARS OF LONDON A, D,
 1802 (Plate II., Fig. I).

9. R : P : FEC : MESEIVRS JOHN LANE THO ;
 STEVENS GEO ; GROVE FERD^O ; SHRIMPTON
 THO ; WELLES ALD^N ; 1711

10. THO^S MEARS OF LONDON FECIT 1802 (Plate II.,
 Fig. 7, five times) MAY ALL WHOM I SHALL
 SUMMON TO THE GRAVE THE BLESSINGS OF A
 WELL SPENT LIFE RECEIVE (Plate II., Fig. 7, five
 times).

(Next line) THE REV^D JAMES PRICE VICAR MESS^{RS}
 RICHARD BARTON SAMUEL BATES JAMES
 KINGSTON & DANIEL TURNER CHURCH
 WARDENS W B

Treble: diameter at mouth, $29\frac{1}{4}$ inches. Has been rehung by Messrs. Mears & Stainbank since this has been in type, viz., in Feb., 1885.

2 and 3. Have flat-topped canons.

John Briant was born at Exning, in Suffolk; he probably commenced work in 1787, and is said to have been an exceptionally painstaking founder; but, owing probably to family troubles, he fell into extreme poverty, and died in an almshouse at S. Albans, 27 Feb., 1829. His business was transferred to the Whitechapel foundry. He had two excellent assistants, Henry Symondson, tuner, and William Skerman, bell-caster (North, "Bells of Northamptonshire"), but I have not found any mention of the two assistants here named. The second bell is hung in a peculiar way, the straps on one side not being opposite to those on the other side, so that the coupling plates, instead of lying at right angles to the long axis of the stock, lie diagonally.

5. One canon is broken off.

6. Is badly cracked across the crown, and down to the waist—the opening admitting the edge of a finger nail; an iron hoop, similar to that on the Great Marlow third, would probably save it for years.

7. The W in "Swain" is the wrong way up = M. The canons are broken off. The stay is at the wheel-end of the stock.

10. Diameter at mouth, 51 inches.

The present 2nd and 3rd bells are evidently the two added to the peal of eight cast by Richard Phelps in 1711; whether this peal was badly cast, or suffered from hard treatment, cannot perhaps be ascertained now; but that one should require to be recast in forty-five years, and *four of the others* in ninety-one years, seems to show that something was wrong. I do not know how long the 6th has been cracked, but it is possible that the clock chimes may be the cause of this mischief.

The only 18th century Ringing Board in this Hundred hangs in the ringing chamber here, in an elaborate gilt frame, and is, I think, worth recording here:—

All Saints, Wycombe, April 8th, 1792.

On the evening of the eighth Instant
was **Rung** in this Steeple,

A COMPLEAT PEAL OF GRANDSIRE CATORS
Consisting of
Fife Thousand one Hundred & eleben
Changes
By a Party of the SOCIETY of
 LONDON COLLEGE YOUTHS
 which they compleated in *three hours*
forty-two minutes, in that masterly
 Style for which they are famous.

Performers

<i>Mr. John Povey</i>	<i>Treble</i>	<i>Mr. James Wooster</i>	6
<i>Mr. John Holdsworth</i>	2	<i>Mr. John Inville</i>	7
<i>Mr. James Lance</i>	3	<i>Mr. Edm^d Sylvester</i>	8
<i>Mr. Will^m Wilson</i>	4	<i>Mr. Dan^t Jenkins</i>	9
<i>Mr. Rich^d Wilson</i>	5	<i>Mr. John Lyford</i>	<i>Tenor</i>


The Peal call'd by Mr. John Povey.

WEST WYCOMBE.

1. LESTER & PACK OF LONDON FECIT, 1756.
2. HENRI KNIGHT MADE MEE 1621 TS



RP 

3. Blecced be the name of the lorde

1581 

(Underneath :)

Joseph carter

4. HENRI KNIGHT MADE MEE 1626
5. LESTER & PACK OF LONDON FECIT  THO^s
 BATTING, & JN^o FRYER, CH-WARDENS 1762 

6. T. MEARS OF LONDON, FECIT, 1828 (Plate II., Fig. I).

(Underneath :)

THO^S. FREEMAN, SAM^L. FLETCHER, CHURCH
WARDENS

2 and 4. The elder Henry Knight, of Reading.

3. This particularly handsome bell is the only one of the 16th century remaining in the Hundred, and is, as usual in old bells, long-shaped, and extremely resonant. Joseph Carter was (Stahlschmidt, "Bells of Surrey," p. 94) casting bells in Reading from 1579 to 1610. According to Mr. Tyssen ("Bells of Sussex"), he started business in London in 1606, seemingly at the Whitechapel foundry, in succession to Robert Mott, his son William taking charge thereof. For a list of the Whitechapel founders, see under Great Marlow, p. 391.

At Hurley, near Great Marlow, but just out of Desborough Hundred, in Berks, is another bell by Joseph Carter,* inscribed (in very pretty lettering) :—

THIS BELL WAS MADE 1602

followed by the initials **I Q** on either side of a shield resembling that figured by Mr. T. A. Turner in his account of the "Bellfounders in Bucks," in the RECORDS, Vol. IV., p. 126, Fig. 5, as on a bell by Bartholomew Atton, 1624; except that Carter's shield has less leaf work on the field, and on either side of the lower crowned bell are the initials **I C**. The shield, as figured by Mr. Turner, was, according to Stahlschmidt ("Bells of Surrey," p. 91), originally the foundry stamp of the Brasyers, of Norwich, and is figured by him (*loc. cit.*) as used by Carter's predecessor at the Whitechapel foundry—Robert Mot, the originator of that foundry.

At West Hothly, Sussex, are two bells cast by Joseph

* Hurley has also a pre Reformation bell, probably 15th century, which has been considered to bear the name of S. Sebastian, but I am unable to decipher some of the letters, and can offer no conjecture as to the meaning of the inscription.

Carter in the same year as the present example; one has precisely the same inscription, except that a capital B is used for the word "Be." His will is dated Feb. 14, 1609, and was proved April 10, 1610 (*op. cit.*, p. 36).

On the 31st March, 1591, William White was instituted vicar of West Wycombe, and apparently one of his first acts was to get a new bell. He was vicar for forty-three years. He succeeded Christopher Price, who (according to Langley) was instituted 1568, on a "pretended title" from Bisham.

EXTRACTS FROM THE OLD CHURCHWARDENS'
ACCOUNTS OF GREAT MARLOW, HAVING
REFERENCE TO THE BELFRY.

Dec. 1593. (Payments).

It. p^d to wydmo^e* for his paynes in goynge to and
from Wokingham † att what tyme the bell was
in castynge xij^d

* There is an ancient manor of this name (now spelt Widmer) in the parish, mentioned in Domesday Book as having existed in Edward the Confessor's time. The name, variously spelt, appears continually in the churchwardens' accounts of this period. In 1650 "Ssilvester Widmere" was constable. "Mr. Richard Widmer, of Hitchenden House," is mentioned in 1690, in one of the old parish registers of Hughenden [Downs, RECORDS OF BUCKS, Vol. V., p. 202]. Widmore, as a surname, is one of the few names in these old churchwardens' accounts which does not occur in Marlow at the present time.

† Mr. Stahlschmidt, "Bells of Surrey," p. 109 *et seq.*, gives much interesting information about the Wokingham bell-foundry, of which the following is a very brief summary:—The first founder at Wokingham we are able to trace is Thomas Eldridge, who was casting bells there about 1565, the business being, in all probability, an offshoot from one of the Reading bell-foundries, of which there is distinct evidence of the existence of at least three in the early part of Elizabeth's reign [*viz.*, William Welles, William Knight, and Vincent Gorowaye]. Robert Eldridge, presumably his son and successor, was also of Wokingham. His bells are dated 1592 to 1623. For the last twelve or thirteen years of his life he had a small branch establishment at Horsham, in Sussex. Bryan, doubtless his son, succeeded him; he had been associated with Richard for the last few years of his life: the earliest bell bearing his name is at Ifield, Sussex, and is dated 1618, and was probably cast at Horsham, as he is noted in the Horsham churchwardens' accounts for that year as paying the rent in lieu of Richard. Bells by him extend to 1638. He probably removed to Chertsey about 1619. He died in 1640. His eldest son, Bryan, the younger of that name, succeeded him. He died in 1661. His brother William succeeded him; he had been previously connected with

It. p ^d Jn. Black for mendynge the belle when the Quene came to Bisham	xviiij ^d
It. p ^d for nayltes * and dryncke the same tyme ...	xij ^d
It. paied Ellys Graye for helpinge Draper cutt the bell stock	ij ^d
It. p ^d Ranffe Draper for mendynge the gudgen of the great bell	ii (torn off)
Itm. paied Ranffe Draper for settinge upp A post in the Church and mendynge the belles ...	xij ^d
It. paied Ellys Graye for splashinge † the bell rope	j ^d
It. p ^d Goodman Sergeaunt for fower bell ropes ...	xij ^s iiij ^d
It. p ^d hym for makynge A rope for the clocke ...	xvj ^d
It. p ^d hym more for A newe baldricke ‡ ...	xx ^d
It. p ^d for A locke for the steple doare ...	xviiij ^d
It. paied Ranffe Draper and Sallenes for woorke § don in mendynge the steple	x ^s
It. p ^d George Pemerton for sawynge of ccccx ^{ty} foote of bordys || for the steple	vij ^s
It. for the tymber logg whereof the bordys were sawed	xij ^s
It. p ^d for one hundred of bordys more occupied att the steple	v ^s
It. p ^d to Gowter Whalley for certeyn whele tymber	ij ^s iiij ^d
It. p ^d to Sawyers for cuttyng the same tymber ...	xx ^d
It. for a bell stocke	xij ^d
Paied to Thomas Waters for nayltes and other Iron-woorke about the Belles	xviiij ^d
It. paied to Ranffe Draper for woorke don about the belles	iiij ^s
It. paied to the Ringers uppon St. Hughes' daye ¶ Ann ^o 1592	iiij ^s iiij ^d

the business, as bells occur in Sussex bearing both brothers' names conjointly, dated 1660 and 1661, as well as one dated 1660, which bears William's name alone. He died at Chertsey in 1716, and with him this foundry came to an end. His third daughter, Barbara, married Richard Swain, who was probably the grandfather of Thomas Swain, bell-founder; *vide* under Little Marlow.

* Nails.

† Splicing.

‡ The Baldrick, or "bauderick, is the leather gear with its appurtenances, attached to the upper part of the clapper, by which it is suspended" (Ellacombe, "Bells of Devon," p. 17, footnote). This arrangement is no longer in use in the Hundred of Desborough, even if it is anywhere in England, but I have seen clappers of church bells suspended in this way somewhere abroad—I think in Russia.

§ The broad Buckinghamshire accent is plainly recorded in such spellings as "fower," "doare," "woorke," &c.

|| Boards.

¶ S. Hugh was born in Burgundy, and earned such a reputation for

It. paid to William Hedge for tooe dayes woorke in helpinge Ranffe Draper	xvj ^d
It. p ^d for xvi ^{tene} powndes of hempe to make a roope for the clocke	ij ^s viij ^d
It. p ^d for amendinge the hangynge of the Bell ropes	xij ^d
It. p ^d John Black & Thomas Webb for hanginge the Belles against the last Coronatōn daye ...	ij ^s
It. for nayltes occupied the same tyme	iiij ^d
It. to the Ryngers uppon St. Hughes' daye last ...	iiij ^s
It p ^d to Henrye Trusse * for A roape	xxj ^d

May 1595. Receipts.

Re. of goodwyfe parsons for a seate she sytteth in at the north syde of y ^e belfry	vj ^d
Re. of players for playinge in the Church lofte † ...	ij ^s

Payments.

Inprimis paid to John Seamer ‡ for a lyne for Bell ropes	vij ^s
It. p ^d for a poolye for the clocke	iiij ^d

sanctity that he was summoned to England in 1181, to take charge of the first Carthusian house at Witham, in Somerset, founded by Henry II., who afterwards made him Bishop of Lincoln in 1186. Buckinghamshire was included in that diocese until the year 1845. He rebuilt Lincoln Cathedral in 1200, and when he died he was buried in it in a silver shrine, his body being borne to the grave by two kings—John of England and William of Scotland—assisted by some of their nobles, three archbishops, fourteen bishops, and more than one hundred abbots. S. Hugh's Day was November 17. ("Calendar of the Anglican Church," Parker, 1851.)

* The Truss family still keeps up its connection with the belfry; there are at this moment four members of the belfry of that name, and some few years ago there were no less than six ringers of that name at the same time.

† I am not sure whether the "Church lofte" was part of the "Steeple"; but it seems very possible, especially as this locality is in distinction to the next entry:—"Rec^d of the players of Wiccombe for playing in the Kitchin of the Church house a year ending midsummer next." The Church house is frequently mentioned previously in the accounts, and was very probably the fine 13th century building, commonly known as "The Tithe Barn," which stood by the river side, just above the present bridge, a little to the west of the church, and which—to the everlasting disgrace of the present generation—was pulled down about the year 1878. It may be well to record here that the splendid timbers of the oak roof (*Quercus sessiliflora*) were used by Mr. John O. Scott for the roof of Lane End Church, which was then being built. Most of the tiles were used for the barn at Town Farm, close to the former turnpike, in Bisham. It has been suggested to me that the "Church lofte" may have been the *Rood Loft*, which would, of course, have no connection with the belfry, and that the "players" may have been, not actors, but minstrels, who gave some sort of musical performance.

‡ There is a manor of this name, now spelt Seymours, in this parish (now the property of T. O. Wethered, E. q.).

April 14. It. p ^a to John Surman for a plate for the Bell stocke	vij ^a
June. It. p ^a for sullat oyle * for the clocke	ij ^a
Octob. 23. It. p ^a for the mendinge of a plate of the clocke	ij ^a
It. p ^a to the Ringers upon St. Hughes' daye	iiij ^a
It. p ^a for the mendinge the Bawdrickes of the belles	vij ^a
It. p ^a for nayles to amende the belles wheeles, and for candles & greace	v ^a
It. p ^a Thom̃s Graye for mendinge the bell wheeles...	vij ^a
It. p ^a to the smythe for makinge a plate and mendinge the other plates of the belles against St. Thom̃s daye	xij ^a
It. p ^a for a Bawdricke for the Saunce Bell to Sergeaunt... ..	ij ^a
It. p ^a to Cocke of Cookeh̃m for mendinge the Clocke wch. he must be pd. well & look to yt this xij monthe	vj ^s
It. p ^a to Bryden for mendinge the plates of the Bells	xij ^a
It. p ^a to Thom̃s Graye for trussinge uppe the belles	vij ^a

1596. Payments.

Itm̃. to the Ringars uppon St. Hewghe's daie	v ^s
Itm̃. grece for the belles & sallett oyle for the clock	iiij ^a
Itm̃. paied Nichas Buckhurst for mendinge the bell ropes, for nayles & for a linke for the Clock	iiij ^a
Itm̃. to the Smyth for mendinge the yron worke of the bell wheelles	xij ^a
Itm̃. to Thomas Grey for one daies work & a half in mendinge the Bell wheelles	xvj ^a
Itm̃. paied Serieant for A newe Badrick and mendinge an old	x ^a

April, 1598. Payments.

Itm̃. for a Bell rope & a baldericke	v ^s
Itm̃. to the Ryngars uppone St. Hue's daye A ^o 1596	iiij ^s
Itm̃. for oyle for the Bells at that tyme	ij ^a
Itm̃. for a rope for the Saunce bell & a baldricke	ij ^s vj ^a
Itm̃. for mendynge the clocke & for oyle	vij ^a
Itm̃. payd to Henrye Trusse for a lyne to make bell ropes	vij ^s
Itm̃. to Tho. Gray for mendinge the Bells & the bare†	ij ^s ij ^a
Itm̃. for oyle for the bells	iiij ^s
Itm̃. to the Ryngars uppone the cronatyone daye	iiij ^s
Itm̃. to Surman for mendinge the bell gudgeon	ij ^a

* Salad oil. Occurs very often in the accounts. † Probably *bier*.

Itm. for mendinge ye bell clappe and for nayles ...	xij ^d
Itm. for mendynge the clock	iiij ^d
April, 1599. Payments.	
Itm. to the Ryngers on St. Hue's daye	v ^s
Itm. for a Baldericke	xx ^d
Itm. to Tho. Graye for mendinge the Bell wheele ...	ix ^d
Itm. for oyle for the Bells	iiij ^d
March, 1600. Payments.	
Itm. payd to Tho. Sargeante for a rope for the greate plummett of the clocke	iiij ^s iv ^d
Itm. payde for a hund. and a halfe of vj pennye nayles for y ^e Bells	viiij ^d
Payde to Robte Hobbs for iiij dayes worke aboute the bells frame	iiij ^s
Payde to Mr. Brinckhurste for 34 foote of tymber for the Bell frame	x ^s iiij ^d
Payde to Tho. Graye for viij dayes worke of his boye aboute y ^e newe frame	iiij ^s

I am very strongly of opinion that all such old documents as churchwardens' accounts (say down to the end of the 18th century) ought to be printed *in extenso*, *verbatim et literatim*, as they afford glimpses of so many curious details of the lives and manner of living of our forefathers, the range of subjects on which they throw some light being extraordinary; and, consisting only of single copies—each in a more or less thumbled and crumbling condition—any accident, such as fire (independently of the slow ravages of time), may so easily put an end to them. However, at present, considerations of space oblige me to limit my extracts subsequent to the close of the 16th century, to a few of the more important entries during the early part of the following century which have reference to the bells; and to conclude with extracts giving the history of the bells still remaining in Marlow steeple which were cast prior to the present century.

The above extracts from the account taken in March, 1600, appear to show that the bells were being rehung; and in the course of that year (as appears in the next year's account), after ringing upon "St. Hewe's daye," there are entries for "iiij laborers to helpe aboute the bells," etc., and "Itm to Tho. Harte for a dayes worke,

and for his forrope lente to lett downe y^e bells," and "Itm. bestowed upon y^e bargmen y^t brought upp the bells, xij^d."

In the next account, taken December, 1603, are entries "for makinge the bellfery flowre," and a "newe flowre in the uppe lofte," and various entries about "the frame" and "yron worke about the bells," including "yron worke at the new hanginge of the bells by Phillypp," and "To the same Phillipp for the newe wheeles & newe hanginge of the bells." The repairs were apparently completed early in the year, as there is a payment in the same year, "Itm. to y^e Ryngers when y^e Kynge was p.claymed, vj^d."

Under the date April, 1605, is given a list of subscriptions to the bells, of which the "sum" only amounted to the modest total of £3 8s. 3d.

The account taken in "Aprill," 1608, shows that some at least of the bells were again recast:—

Inp.mis payd for beare at the takeinge downe of the bells	...	...	...	...	...	...	iiij ^d
It. paid at Reddinge for o ^e Charges when the bells were cast	...	...	...	...	...	...	iiij ^s vj ^d
It. for bringinge of the bells from Reddinge	...	...	...	...	...	...	ij ^s x ^d
It. paid for Castinge of the bells and for mettle	...	...	...	...	...	...	x ^l vj ^s

Also various payments for "stocking" the bells. There is, unfortunately, nothing to show how many, or which, of the bells were then recast.

The account taken "Aprill," 1610, again shows the recasting of some of the bells:—

Inprimis Paied unto the Bellfounder in pt of Payment for castinge of the Bells	...	...	...	...	...	iiij ^{lb} x ^s
Item Paied to the Carter for Carryeinge the Bells from the water syde to be Caste and for bringinge of them home	...	...	...	...	...	ix ^s
Item Payed for makeinge of the bonde from the Bellfounder unto us	...	...	...	...	...	vj ^d
Item Paied for more Mettell Putt in the bells	...	...	...	...	...	xx ^s
Item Paied to Grigory for hanginge of them and for newe Boxinge and Trussinge* the others	...	...	...	...	...	x ^s

* I do not know what these operations consist of; but suggest that possibly the second may mean tightening up the nuts of the straps and other bolts, but against this is an entry of a payment for nails for trussing the bells.

Item Paied for A newe Wheele for the fourth bell...	vj ^s viij ^d
Item Paied for our Charges in goeing to and from Readinge to see the Bells Cast and brought home	ix ^s vj ^d
Item Paied to Christopher Morgen for the Carriage of the Tenno ^r and fourth bell to Readinge to be Cast	iiij ^s
Item Paied for his* Charges goeing to Reddinge to see the Tenno ^r newe Cast	ij ^s
Item Paied to the Bellfounder in full Payment for Castinge the Tenno ^r and fourth bell	xl ^s
Item Paid for xx ^l of mettell at ix ^d the pounce Putt into the Tenno ^r the last Castinge	xv ^s
Item to Grigory for A new wheele for the Tenno ^r †	vj ^s viij ^d
Item Paied to John Atkines for Carryinge the Teño ^r to Reddinge the last tyme	ij ^s vj ^d

Nowhere have I found the number of bells then in the peal mentioned; we have here mention of the fourth and the Tenor, showing that there were at least five besides the Saunce bell; and in 1644, *six* bell ropes were paid for, but this may possibly have included one for the Saunce bell, or a sixth bell may have been added during the interval.

There is no entry of a payment for ringing upon S. Hugh's day after 1601; but after James came to the throne the bells were rung (at least in 1605 and 1606) upon S. James' day, July 25! They were also rung when he came to "Byssome" † in 1604, to "Bustlesham" † in 1605; when he came "through the towne" in 1608, and to "Byssham" † in 1610; when he again came "through the towne" in 1614, and when Charles I. came "thorow y^e Towne" in 1646 or 1647. § Gunpowder plot (Nov. 5) and Oak Apple day (May 28 and 29) were duly celebrated on the bells for many years.

In 1613 appears—"Item paied for mendinge a staple for the staye of the Tenno^r wheele, j^d." Every bellringer

* Viz. : Barnard Hobbs, the sexton.

† In the account taken 1608 (from which extracts were given above), is a payment of the same amount (viz., 6s. 8d.) for a new wheel for the Treble.

‡ Bisham.

§ The item is in the account taken April, 1647, and may refer to that spring or to the previous year.

knows what the stay and the wheel are, but what the stay of the wheel is, or was, is not so clear.

The following is a copy of the "Register of Birth" of the existing Saunce Bell, and of the six inner bells of the octave, of which the Treble (the present *second*) has since been recast, as before stated :—

Disburstments: 1694.

December 17.	To the Bellfounder as \mathcal{L} bill appears	02. 03. 05
	To Rich ^d Gibbons for bringing y ^e S ^{ts} * Bell from Reding...	00. 01. 00
	To John Piggott for carrying the Bell to Reding	00. 00. 06
[1695]		
April 3 ^d	To Nicholas Cox for taking down and hanging the S ^{ts} Bell ...	00. 02. 06

Disbursements (for the year ending at Easter, 1721).

Paid at the Three Tunns when with Mr. Phelps at his first comeing ab^t the Bells 00: 11: 6

"Anno 1720." A subscription list "towards the new-casting the Bells" amounts to £67: 19: 0.

The aforesaid Subscription money disburst as follows (Vizl.):—

1720		£	s.	d.
	Paid for a part of the articles...	...	0:	7: 6
	Paid for screws from London ... ..	...	1:	11: 0
	Paid the three Williams's Bellhangers ... ..	...	9:	1: 6
	Paid Amb. Thompson... ..	...	2:	7: 0
	Paid Rich ^d Lane ... ..	...	1:	14: 6
	Paid Mr. Phelps	0:	10:	6
	Paid Mr. Phelps, Ap. 29, 1720	20:	0:	0
	Paid Mr. Phelps, May 14, 1720	21:	0:	0
	Paid Mr. Phelps, Dec. 22 ^d , 1720	5:	5:	0
	Paid Mr. Phelps, July 7, 1721	5:	5:	0
		52:	0:	6
	Tot.	67:	2:	0
	To Ballance	00:	17:	0
		67:	19:	0

* Sanctus, or Saunce Bell, now commonly called by the unromantic name of Ting-tang.