

Lavenham,  
1 Canons Close  
Radlett  
Herts  
WD7 7ER.

21 March 1982

Great Bradley Church Bells.

The writer reinspected the three bells here on 16 May 1981 and made up a list of items requiring attention, copy enclosed. He revisited on 13 March 1982 on the conclusion of the builders' work and would comment on the items as follows:-

- 1) No change
- 2) The hammer on the second bell has been moved, but instead of striking  $3/4$  inch too low it now strikes 1 inch too high! clearly calipers were not used to fix the point of maximum thickness of the soundbow.
- 3) No change
- 4) The first floor chamber windows have been netted but not glazed, rain still drives in and on to the core of the walls.
- 5) Satisfactory now
- 6) Satisfactory now
- 7) The securing ironwork has been painted with Galvalfroid or equivalent, but there have been no coats of exterior grade paint.
- 8) No sign of treatment against woodworm.
- 9) Mr R.S.Ryder was able to confirm that the beam ends were examined and were found to be satisfactory.

As the bells form an important trio ranging in date from circa 1290 to 1576, the writer returned on 20 March and personally undertook the following work:-

- A) The treble's Ellacombe chiming hammer was moved and the batten resecured with two coach screws instead of nails. It now strikes on the thickest part of the soundbow where the latter is unworn.

- B) The above work was repeated for the second bell's Ellacombe hammer.
- C) The battens to take the weight of the hammer heads at rest on the two smaller bells were repositioned and secured.
- D) Rentokil woodworm fluid was brushed on all three elm deadstocks which take the weight of the bells, and on the battens supporting the three Ellacombe hammers.
- E) Two pronged cleats were fitted for each bell rope on the chiming manual to facilitate easy adjustment of the ropes.

*Ranald W M Clouston*

Ranald W.M.Clouston

B.Sc.Eng. F.S.A.

Great Bradley Church Bells.

Items Requiring Attention at 16 May 1981

- 1) The hammer on the treble ( on the south side of the tower) strikes the bell 2 inches too high. resecure the timber batten which holds the hammer pivot so that the head strikes the bell on the chord of maximum thickness, use calipers, and on an unworn zone.
- 2) The hammer on the second bell (in the middle of the tower) strikes 3/4 inch too near the lip. As in 1) above resecure the south end of the batten holding the hammer pivot so that the head strikes on the chord of maximum thickness.
- 3) The chiming manual lowest horizontal member must be fitted either with ratchet tensioning devices for each rope as at Great and Little Thurlow churches, or a two pronged cleat for securing the end of each rope. When correctly set the hand grip should be pulled out about 6 ins before the bell is struck and no more.
- 4) The first floor chamber to have the window openings glazed to exclude rain and birds.
- 5) The first floor to be cleaned down, combustible matter removed from the proximity of the incoming electric main cables, the woodwork repaired and treated against further woodworm attack.
- 6) Birds to be excluded from the bell chamber. Use either thick plastic netting or expanded metal made from stainless steel.
- 7) The securing ironwork above the bells to be wire brushed, painted with Galvalfriad zinc based paint, followed by exterior grade top coats.
- 8) Treat the timber battens holding the Ellacombe hammers and the hammer heads with Wykamol Plus or equivalent to prevent further woodworm attack.
- 9) Assess the condition of the ends of the two main E-W beams below the frame where they are buried into the walls. If badly decayed two N-S rolled steel joists by the east and west walls may be needed immediately underneath them.


*R.W.M. Clouston.*  
R.W.M. Clouston.

INSPECTION OF BELLS


Sheet No. I of 2

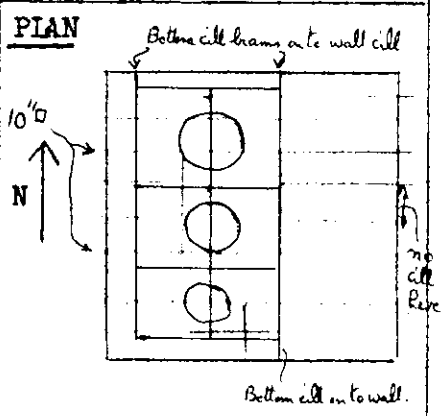
Date 7 May 1960	Church	Dedication
County Suffolk	GREAT BRADLEY	St Mary
Report No. 191		

Diocese of St. Edmundsbury and Ipswich

TOWER	Plan Square western 	Material Flint & stone
	Number Of Buttresses Six	Level at top of Buttresses bell frame
	Permanent Access to Bells and Roof? Yes, spiral staircase.	
	Roof Material and State Lead, quite fair, some repairs to cracks.	
	Battlements Safe? Yes	
	Lightning Conductor? No	Any Cracks? Yes, W wall
	Louvres Fitted? Yes	Opening Wire Netted? Yes
	Signs of Dampness? Yes, some	Any Intermediate Chamber? Yes
	Dimensions inside at Frame Level 13' 8" N-S x 13' 0" E-W	Is it Fireproofed? --
	Opening to Nave Ceiling? No	
	Clock? None	Maker --
		Date --
Any Lumber? No	Any Twigs etc? Some	
Bells Rung From ground	Any Boiler Fuel in Tower? No	
Strong Direction of Tower E - W	Internal Chimney? No	
Flag Pole? No, weather vane on top of staircase turret.		
Tie Bars? No		
Intermediate chamber 11' 3" N-S by 11' 8" E-W.		

BELLS	Number of Bells Three	Ring of 3 Way Rung with hammers
	Ellacombe Hammers? Yes	Clock Hammers? None
	State of Ropes. Quite good, to chiming manual.	
	Peal Boards. None	Three bells here in 1553.
	The bells were quarter turned, fitted with new headstocks and securing ironwork and hung stationary by Bowell of Ipswich in 1935. He fitted Ellacombe hammers and connected them to a new chiming manual at the same time. The hammers strike the bells at points of maximum thickness. There is no trapway in the first floor ceiling for the bells to pass through.	

FRAME	Material. Oak	
	Type.	
	Age. mediaeval?	
	Signs of Decay? Some	
	Traces of Beetle? Yes	Type? Death watch
	Type of Bearings. None	
	Level of <del>chime</del> <sup>cill</sup> . 1' 8" Above <del>floor</del> Windowsill.	
	How Supported? see below	
	Clamped with Metal? in odd places	
	Wheels. None	
Stays. None		
Sliders. None		
Ground Pulleys. Good where fitted, 1935		
Floor. Fragmentary		
Frame Beams. In fair state, adequate for bells of this weight not swung. The frame is set on 2 E-W beams set into tower walls at their ends, the W ends rest on wall cill. The E ends are not easy to inspect but as two of the beams are 10" square they should be stout enough even with a little decay in the E wall. To check these ends the floor boards here should be lifted.		



POINTS REQUIRING ATTENTION:-

- 1) The treble hammer support beam on the south side is loose and requires screwing to the frame side member adjacent.
- 2) Dampness is evident by the windows in the intermediate chamber, these openings should be glazed to exclude rain. This would also exclude the birds.

Tenor Bell. This bears the name of Richard de Wymbis, he cast a bell for Garing, Oxon, before 1291, appears in a document in the City of London Guildhall dated 1303, appears on the City Hustings Rolls

COMMENTS

**Tenor Bell.** This bears the name of Richard de Wymbis, he cast a bell for Goring, Oxon, before 1291, appears in a document in the City of London Guildhall dated 1303, appears on the City Hustings Rolls for 1307-1313 and 1315, and entered into an agreement with the Prior of Holy Trinity Church, London in 1312 to cast a bell to weigh 2820 pounds. Only five of his bells now remain, this one seems to be the largest, the others are at Goring, Oxon; Burham, Kent; Slapton and Cafesby, Northants.

THIS SUPERCEDES REPORT DATED

VISITED BY:- RWT/Chanta  
BSGy, FSA Sec.

Sheet No. 2

**TREBLE BELL** Diameter 30 11/16 ins | Approx Weight 5 cwt. 2 Qrs. - 1 lb  
 Note C sharp - 0.46 semitones. 1080, 770, 645, 550, 264. Cycles/Sec.  
 Tone Quite Fair | Cracked? No | Any Cracks Visible? No  
 Unworn Soundbow Thickness 2 3/16 ins | Worn Soundbow 2 3/16 ins  
 Clapper Correct Length? None Fitted | Clapper Roll -- ins  
 Original Crown Staple? Stump remains | Any Tuning Marks? None  
 Argent Retained? Yes | Number of Canons Six  
 Bell Loose in Headstock? No | Type of Straps 2pr screwed, 1935  
 Headstock Condition Good, 1935 | Turned 1/4  
 State of Gudgeon Pins & Type None, bell hung stationary.  
 Founder Unknown | Date Pre-Reformation, not before 1300.  
 Inscription No inscription.

**SECOND BELL** Diameter 33 ins | Approx Weight 6 cwt. 3 Qrs. - 1 lb  
 Note B + 0.29 1005, 714, 601, 482, 252 Cycles/Sec.  
 Tone Fair | Cracked? No | Any Cracks Visible? No  
 Unworn Soundbow Thickness 2 3/8 ins | Worn Soundbow 2 3/8 ins  
 Clapper Correct Length? None fitted | Clapper Roll -- ins  
 Original Crown Staple? Cast-in | Any Tuning Marks? None  
 Argent Retained? Yes | Number of Canons Six  
 Bell Loose in Headstock? No | Type of Straps 2pr screwed, 1935  
 Headstock Condition Good, 1935 | Turned 1/4  
 State of Gudgeon Pins & Type None fitted  
 Founder S. Tonni & William Land, Bury | Date 1576  
 Inscription ✠ DE ✠ BYRI ✠ ZANTI ✠ EDMONDI ✠ STEFANVS ✠ TONNI ✠ ME ✠ FECIT ✠ WL ✠ 1576

**TENOR BELL** Diameter 35 3/16 ins | Approx Weight 7 cwt. 2 Qrs. - 1 lb  
 Note A - 0.10 875, 680, 535, 449, 233. Cycles/Sec.  
 Tone Quite good | Cracked? No | Any Cracks Visible? No  
 Unworn Soundbow Thickness 2 5/16 ins | Worn Soundbow 2 1/4 ins  
 Clapper Correct Length? None fitted | Clapper Roll -- ins  
 Original Crown Staple? Stump remains | Any Tuning Marks? None  
 Argent Retained? Yes | Number of Canons Six, cable moulded.  
 Bell Loose in Headstock? No | Type of Straps 2pr screwed, 1935  
 Headstock Condition Quite good, some worm attack. | Turned 1/4  
 State of Gudgeon Pins & Type None fitted  
 Founder Richard de Wymbis, London | Date 1290 - 1315  
 Inscription ✠ RICHARD: DE WYMBIS: ME: FECIT

(See Surrey Bells & London Bell Foundry Plate III)

**BELL** Diameter ins | Approx Weight cwt. Qrs. lb  
 Note Cycles/Sec.  
 Tone | Cracked? | Any Cracks Visible?  
 Unworn Soundbow Thickness ins | Worn Soundbow ins  
 Clapper Correct Length? | Clapper Roll ins  
 Original Crown Staple? | Any Tuning Marks?  
 Argent Retained? | Number of Canons  
 Bell Loose in Headstock? | Type of Straps  
 Headstock Condition | Turned  
 State of Gudgeon Pins & Type  
 Founder | Date  
 Inscription