

STANTON BY DALE - ST. MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS

Inspected on March 7th 1993

REQUEST FOR INSPECTION from Mr. S. Leleux, Church Administrator.

TOWER - RINGERS' GALLERY

The bells are currently rung from the ground floor, the ceiling of which is 18' from ground level. The eight bells are installed on two separate frames; the upper high-sided H frame carries the original six bell peal dating from 1872 and is located opposite the louvres. The lower low-sided A frame is fabricated and carries the two newer bells installed in 1972. When this lower frame was added the floor below the old six bell frame had to be removed to make space for the lower frame. There is thus now only a single floor between the bells and ground floor ringing room. This floor is 3' 10" below the new lower frame. To give a good rope circle several of the ropes belonging to the upper bells have to be drawn away from a vertical fall in the bell chamber. Additional pulleys at floor level are needed for some of the upper bells to achieve this efficiently. When the tenor is set at backstroke the top of its sally is about 3' below the ringing room ceiling. If an upstairs ringers' gallery were to be installed it would have to be at least 6' 8" from ground level to clear the doorway from the church. The sallies would then pass through the ringing room ceiling. They would also have to pass through the ground pulleys below the bottom frame and even perhaps entering the frame mounted pulleys belonging to the two trebles. These facts dictate that a ringers' gallery is not practical. Even if new larger ground pulleys were introduced to allow the sallies to pass through them the fact that some of the bell ropes are drawn considerably away from the vertical in the bell chamber would still make it unacceptable to have a ringers' gallery. The sallies would not take the change of direction.

The present ringing room ceiling height of 18' is not unusually large. However, if it is desired to have a set of rope guides about 5' or 6' from this ceiling this would be acceptable from the point of view of bell handling. It would probably assist the ringing of the smaller bells more so than the bigger ones. However the local ringers are urged to try to adapt to the existing conditions before actually deciding on rope guides. Please note a specific proposal for installation of rope guides would require DAC approval.

TOWER - GENERAL

There is general untidiness in the bell chamber. It really needs a good clean out. The louvres on the north and west walls are covered with hardboard to keep out the weather; on the south side the hardboard covering is falling down; on the east side it is not present (has it been removed or has it fallen down?). The floor of the bell chamber is covered with old mattresses. Accessibility to both levels of the bell frames should be improved and made more easy. At present it is almost classed as dangerous. With a two tier frame with one floor below the bells, like Stanton's, acoustic problems internally and externally are to be expected. When the two trebles in the lower frame were installed in 1972 it was impossible to hear them clearly outside the tower. Their sound was drowned by the noise from the old six bells in the upper frame. On the otherhand inside the ringing chamber, the noise from the two trebles was excessive. A series of measures were put in place to try to eliminate these problems: viz: thick stone slabs were placed under the trebles to reflect their sound upwards. Mattresses were put on the bell chamber floor to reduce the general level of sound going

downwards. The door to the bell chamber was treated with the same objective. Sound chutes, to bring sound directly down from the upper bells, were installed. The louvres were boarded up and backed with old mattresses to reduce the sound of the upper bells outside. There may have been other measures. Eventually, after much intelligent and painstaking experimentation, a substantial improvement was achieved. During a recent peal attempt it seemed that the standard of internal acoustics had been degraded. This may be due to removing the mattresses from the louvres. Why this has been done without seeking further advice is not clear. There may, of course, be other reasons why the acoustics have been changed. It is recommended that the acoustic treatment of the louvres be restored. External acoustics may also have been degraded.

BELLS

The eight bells are in good condition. Bells no. 7 and 8 have been quarter turned; the others have not. Some of the bells are covered in certain areas by grease and slime as a result of oil seeping from the plain bearings.

Details of the bells are as follows:

bell	diameter	weight	date	founder
1.	23 1/2"	3-0-16	1972	Whitechapel
2.	25"	3-2-16	1972	Whitechapel
3.	26 1/2"	4-1-0	1900	J. Taylor
4.	28 1/2"	4-2-0	1872	J. Taylor
5.	30 1/4"	5-1-0	1872	J. Taylor
6.	31 5/8"	6-0-0	1872	J. Taylor
7.	33 7/8"	7-2-0	1872	J. Taylor
8.	38 1/4"	10-2-0	1872	J. Taylor

The inscriptions are as follows:

Treble: inscription band: blank;
waist: WHITECHAPEL 1972

2. as treble

3. i.b. JOHN TAYLOR & CO. FOUNDERS LOUGHBOROUGH 1900

4. i.b. JOHN TAYLOR AND CO. FOUNDERS LOUGHBOROUGH
waist: ST. MICHAEL 1872

5. i.b. JOHN TAYLOR AND CO. FOUNDERS LOUGHBOROUGH
waist: ST. RAPHAEL. THE GIFT OF HENRY WILLOUGHBY BARONET LORD OF THE
MANOR 1641. RECAST 1872

6. i.b. JOHN TAYLOR AND CO. FOUNDERS LOUGHBOROUGH
waist: ST. GABRIEL. RECAST 1872

7. i.b. JOHN TAYLOR AND CO. FOUNDERS LOUGHBOROUGH
waist: JESUS BE OUR SPEED. RECAST 1872.

Tenor: i.b. JOHN TAYLOR AND CO. FOUNDERS LOUGHBOROUGH
waist: JESUS BE MY SPEED. RECAST 1872.

BELLFRAMES

The upper frame is a high-sided cast iron H frame supported on a steel grillage built into all four walls. The cast iron parts are showing some corrosion. The steel parts of the frame particularly the supporting grillage are badly corroded (steel corrodes more quickly

than cast iron). All steel and iron parts should be wire brushed and painted with Hammerite paint. Parts which are heavily caked with oil and grease should first be cleaned before painting. The lower frame is a low sided fabricated A frame, dating from 1972. It is in reasonable condition.

HEADSTOCKS

These are all cast iron; they need painting.

WHEELS

All are in sound condition.

STAYS

Nos. 1, 2 and 4 have traditional type stays and sliders, the rest have Hastings type stays. All are in acceptable condition.

PULLEYS

These are a mixture of old and new. The pulleys at ground level are new and made of plastic. Those belonging to the six old bells are made of wood, except for the one belonging to no. 3, which is plastic - this bell was turned round when the peal was augmented from six to eight in 1972. All pulleys are showing signs of wear but are in an acceptable condition.

CLAPPERS

All are tight and all are in an acceptable condition. A missing split pin on bell no. 3 needs replacing. These clappers do not need greasing, all have nylon bushes. It has been noticed that certain of the bells are oddstruck. That is, when the bell is rung evenly the time between striking ding and dong is different from that between dong and ding. In order to correct for this defect the ringer has to pull unevenly. The fault can usually be cured by ensuring that the clapper ball is equidistant between the strike points on the bell: see attached diagram.

MAIN BEARINGS

On bells 1, 2, 7 and 8 these are ball bearings. Those on 3, 4, 5 and 6 are plain bearings. The plain bearings consist of a cylindrical gudgeon turning in half brass bearings carried in cast iron hinged closing top housings of a traditional design. This type of bearing needs regular (fortnightly) lubrication. The problem at Stanton is that the H frame design of bell frame at the upper level makes for extreme difficulty in actually getting up to the bearings to do the lubrication that is necessary. It is both a dirty and dangerous operation as one has to climb through and over parts of the bell frame at least 9' from the floor. Because of this difficulty there could be a tendency to neglect this regular maintenance. The bearings themselves are satisfactory on bells 3, 4, 5 and 6 but some wear will have taken place over the years. As a result of this wear the lubricant now runs out of the bearings more quickly. This makes the bells and frame dirty and greasy. Moreover the bearings now need more and more frequent oiling due to this wear. It would be highly desirable to rehang bells 3, 4, 5 and 6 on ball bearings like 1, 2, 7 and 8. Ball bearings do not require regular maintenance and do not release unwanted oil and grease on to other parts of the bell installation.

GENERAL SUMMARY

It is not practical to install a ringers' gallery. It is safe to continue to ring the bells for the indefinite future; however there is a need to catch up on maintenance activity:

URGENT

1. Replace split pin on no. 3 clapper.
2. Oil plain bearings regularly on bells 3, 4, 5 and 6.

DESIRABLE

3. Clear out accumulated rubbish.
4. Wire brush and paint bell frame with Hammerite. DO NOT PAINT THE BELLS.
5. Restore the weather proofing and acoustic features were previously in place against the louvres.
6. Improve the access to the two tier bellframe.

OPTIONAL

7. Install rope guide - faculty required.
8. Rehang bells 3,4,5,and 6, on ball bearings.

G. A. Halls

Adviser on bells and belfries to the DAC.

Advice given in good faith. No liability accepted.