

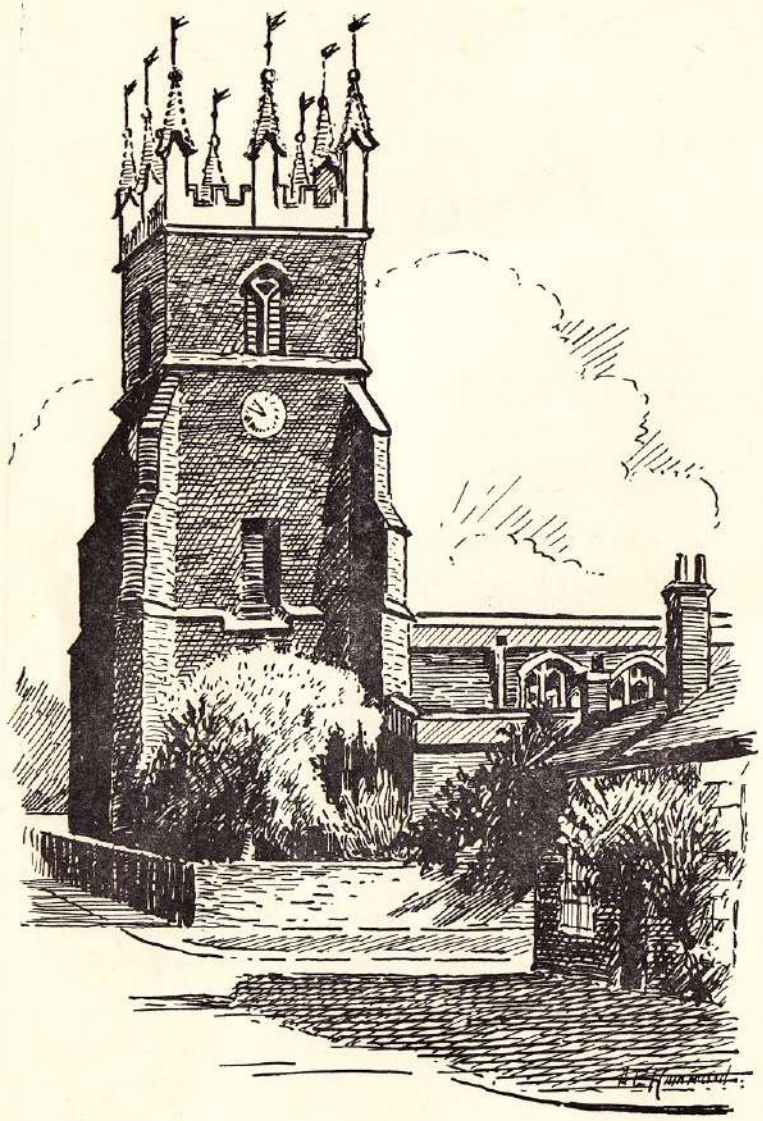
*Deddington Parish Church,
Oxfordshire.*

NOTES
on the
TOWER & BELLS.

With some *VERSES* by the late
Master John Bunyan,
first published in 1686, and now
reprinted for the edification of all
who ring or hear the
Church Bells.

DEDDINGTON: Printed by *M.F.* at the *Vicarage,*
on the south side of the *Church,* for the *Ringers,* 1952.

[Price 6d.]



The Tower

According to the Parish Register the Tower fell in the year 1634, when the earliest book was bought.

A brief was promptly applied for and obtained, as the following documents show:

(a) *Calendar of State Papers Domestic, 1634-5*, p. 612.

1635 97. Notes apparently derived from docquets of
March instruments which had passed the sign manual
. and letters patent for a similar collection
towards repairing the tower of the church of
Deddington, co-Oxford, which fell March
last

(b) A similar note appears in the *Calendar* for 1635-6,
p. 232, under 16 February. Bewes reprinted the docquet
referred to from *S.P.Dom. Car.I.* vol.ccciv.

A graunt by *Letteres Patents* for a Colleccon to be
made of people's charity in all Churches & Chapples
within seuerall Counties & Citties Townes & liber-
ties within this Kingdome for repaying of the To-
wer & Parish Church of Dedington in the County
of Oxon which tower fell downe & in the fall there-
of brake down a great parte of the bodie of the
said Church the reedifying whereof is estimated at
£8250. His Majesties pleasure signified by the Lord
Archbishop of Canterbury & the Lord Keeper Sub-
scribed by Mr. Sollicitor general, Procured at prius.
J. O. (Bewes, *Church Briefs*, 1896. p. 136)

Next is the reference in the records of the Archdeacon's Court, when in 1692 the Churchwardens, Edward Bates and John Elkington presented Job Nutt for not paying a levy for the restoration of the tower.

From the Churchwardens we learn that the repair work was started almost at once, but remained incomplete, so that the tower was left open to the weather. In 1683 two levies were made upon parishioners, to which Mr J. Nutt contributed £33, though he called it a *free gift*. Another levy was made, to which Mr Nutt apparently refused to contribute. He contended the levies were unnecessary as the tower was in adequate repair; the one made in 1685 was illegal as the major part of the parishioners had not agreed thereto, it having been made by *ten men* only and in an *Alehouse*; when announced in church he consented not to it; the churchwardens had agreed with Thomas Wood, stone-cutter of Oxford, for between £500 and £600 for *building of y^e Tower of y^e Church of Dadington aforesd higher & no otherwise & for Ornament only*. He admitted that old parishioners had said the original tower *was very high*, but he complained that he had not been allowed to see the accounts, which had been *kept cladenly from* him.

It is interesting to learn the name of the builder who was responsible for finishing the tower, as he also built the old Ashmolean in Oxford.

The latest repairs were to the pinnacles in 1938, when a lightning-conductor was installed and the vanes renewed.

The Bells

The first reference to the bells is in 1643, when Charles I ordered them to be sent to his magazine at New College, as *the fall of the steeple . . . made them unserviceable to you, till the same be rebuilt and they are refounded*. With the order he promised to *restore the same in materials or monies to your church, when you have occasion to use the same*. Evidently the body of the church was restored before the tower.

Six years later, in 1649, James Keene of Woodstock cast the existing sanctus bell

In 1709 the tower was apparently ready for the bells to be replaced, for the War Office was petitioned to fulfil the promise made in 1643.

It is known that the Bagley family of Chacombe cast two bells for Deddington before 1732, and this fits in with the statement of Dr Rawlinson (*Rawl.B.400 f. fo 56*) that in the incumbency of Mr Richard Short (1700-1747) there were two bells. Rawlinson's visit was certainly after 1711, as on *fo 57* he refers to William Vaughan, Vicar of North Aston, as having been instituted in that year.

The Browne Willis manuscript in the Bodleian gives the number of bells early in the eighteenth century as four.

In 1788 there were at least five, as the churchwardens in that year presented the 3rd and 4th bells as broken. There followed, in 1791, a new ring of six, which were quarter-turned and rehung in a new oak frame with eight pits by Mr Richard White of Appleton in 1928. In 1946 a new treble and 2nd were given as a thankoffering by Mr A. J. Morris. The work was done by Mr White, who rehung the sanctus in 1951, the ringers bearing the cost.

<i>Treble</i>	M & S. LONDON. 1946. / A. J. M. / D. D. D. / A. M. G. D. / JILL. / 1945. / VICTORY. / MAURICE FROST, VICAR. / GEORGE MONTAGUE HODGES. / E. C. PEARSON.] CHURCHWARDENS. (5 cwt. 2 qrs. 9 lb.)
<i>Second</i>	As <i>Treble</i> , except no date 1946, and with JOHN in place of JILL. (5 cwt. 3 qrs. 6 lb.)
<i>Third</i>	THOS. MEARS LATE LESTER PACK & CHAPMAN OF LONDON FECIT 1791 (7 cwt. 0 qrs. 8 lb.)
<i>Fourth</i>	As <i>Third</i> . (7 cwt. 1 qr. 25 lb.)
<i>Fifth</i>	ditto (9 cwt. 0 qr. 16 lb.)
<i>Sixth</i>	ditto (10 cwt. 1 qr. 27 lb.)
<i>Seventh</i>	ditto (12 cwt. 3 qrs. 7 lb.)
<i>Tenor</i>	ditto (17 cwt. 0 qr. 10 lb.)
<i>Sanctus</i>	ANTONY BASELY RICHARD LARGE C W 1649 (1 cwt. 2 qrs. 0 lb.)

The Tenor is 45 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches in diameter, in F; the Sanctus 18 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter.

[The following verses are from John Bunyan's *A Book for Boys and Girls: or, Country Rhimes for Children*. By J. B. Licensed and Entred according to Order, London, Printed for N. P. and Sold by the Booksellers in London 1686. Only two copies of this edition have survived, but in a shorter form as *Divine Emblems* it was republished often during the xviii century. These verses are in the first edition only.]

Upon a Ring of Bells.

Bells have wide mouthes and tongues, but are too weak,
Have they not help to sing, or talk, or speak.
But if you move them they will mak't appear,
By speaking they'l make all the Town to hear.

When Ringers handle them with with Art and skill,
They then the ears of their Observers fill,
With such brave Notes, they ting and tang so well
As to out strip all with their ding, dong, Bell.

Comparison.

These Bells are like the Powers of my Soul;
Their Clappers to the Passions of my mind;
The Ropes by which my Bells are made to tole,
Are Promises (I by experience find).

My body is the Steeple, where they hang,
My Graces they which do ring ev'ry Bell:
Nor is there any thing gives such a tang,
When by these Ropes these Ringers ring them well.

Let not my Bells these Ringers want, nor Ropes;
Yea let them have room for to swing and sway:
To toss themselves deny them not their Scopes.
Lord! in my Steeple give them room to play.

If they do tole, ring out, or chime all in,
They drown the tempting tinckling Voice of Vice:
Lord! when my Bells have gone, my Soul has bin
As 'twere a tumbling in this Paradiſe!

Or if these Ringers do the Changes ring,
Upon my Bells, they do such Musick make,
My Soul then (Lord) cannot but bounce and sing,
So greatly her they with their Musick take.

But Boys (my Lusts) into my Belfry go,
And pull these Ropes, but do no Musick make;
They rather turn my Bells by what they do,
Or by disorder make my Steeple shake.

Then, Lord, I pray thee keep my Belfry Key,
Let none but Graces meddle with these Ropes:
And when these naughty Boys come, say them Nay,
From such Ringers of Musick there's no hopes.

O Lord! If thy poor Child might have his will,
And might his meaning freely to thee tell;
He never of this Musick has his fill,
There's nothing to him like thy ding, dong, Bell.

The Spire

Since the previous pages were printed Mr F. Sharpe (whose monumental work on the Bells of Oxfordshire is now in course of publication by the *Oxfordshire Record Society*, and to whom I am indebted for permission to use some of his material) has sent me another reference to the Tower. It is a letter in the Bodleian Library to T. Secker, Archbishop of Canterbury, 30 Jan. 1737/8, from Browne Willis (MS.Oxf.dioc.papers c.651, fol.1).

‘When I was a youngster I loved Pell Ringing & have been in all y^e market town churches in number 13. What is very remarkable of them, every one of them have six bells except Dedington, where are only 4. There were but 2 in my time & the other two are an Addition; there was a very tall spire at Dedington the most noted of all Oxfordshire & seen the farthest. This fell down in 1634 as I have remarked the Bells were alienated I think cast into canon by K. Charles the martyrs Friends: the tower was begun to be rebuilt but never finisht till after 1680, when it was adorned with large pinnacles.’