

THE RINGING WORLD

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THE CENTRAL COUNCIL
OF CHURCH BELL RINGERS

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ST. GEORGE'S, GRAVESEND

By G. W. J. COLLINS

THE FIRST recorded name for Gravesend is in the Domesday Book (1086) as Grave-sham and in the Domesday Monachorum (c. 1100) as Grauesand, passing through variations until 1232, when it was recorded as Gravesend. The second part is Old English "ende" or end, boundary. The first part is probably Old English "graf" or grove, rather than "groef" or grave, trench.

This church was once a chapel to the Parish Church of St. Mary, Gravesend, until 1510, which remained until 1581, when it fell into decay through desertion, and finally disappeared.

The church was originally consecrated to St. George on April 3, 1510, by Bishop Fisher, but was not to be used to the detriment of the Parish Church, therefore making it unlawful to bury the dead or to baptise.

This church and graveyard were destroyed by fire in 1727, and the church was rebuilt in 1731, £3,000 being given by an Act of Parliament and £1,000 by George III towards the rebuilding.

The church has always been in the Diocese and Archdeaconry of Rochester and was in the Deanery until 1846, when it became part of the Deanery of Gravesend.

Of the registers, those for burials date from 1547, for baptisms from 1651, and marriages from 1653.

THE PLATE

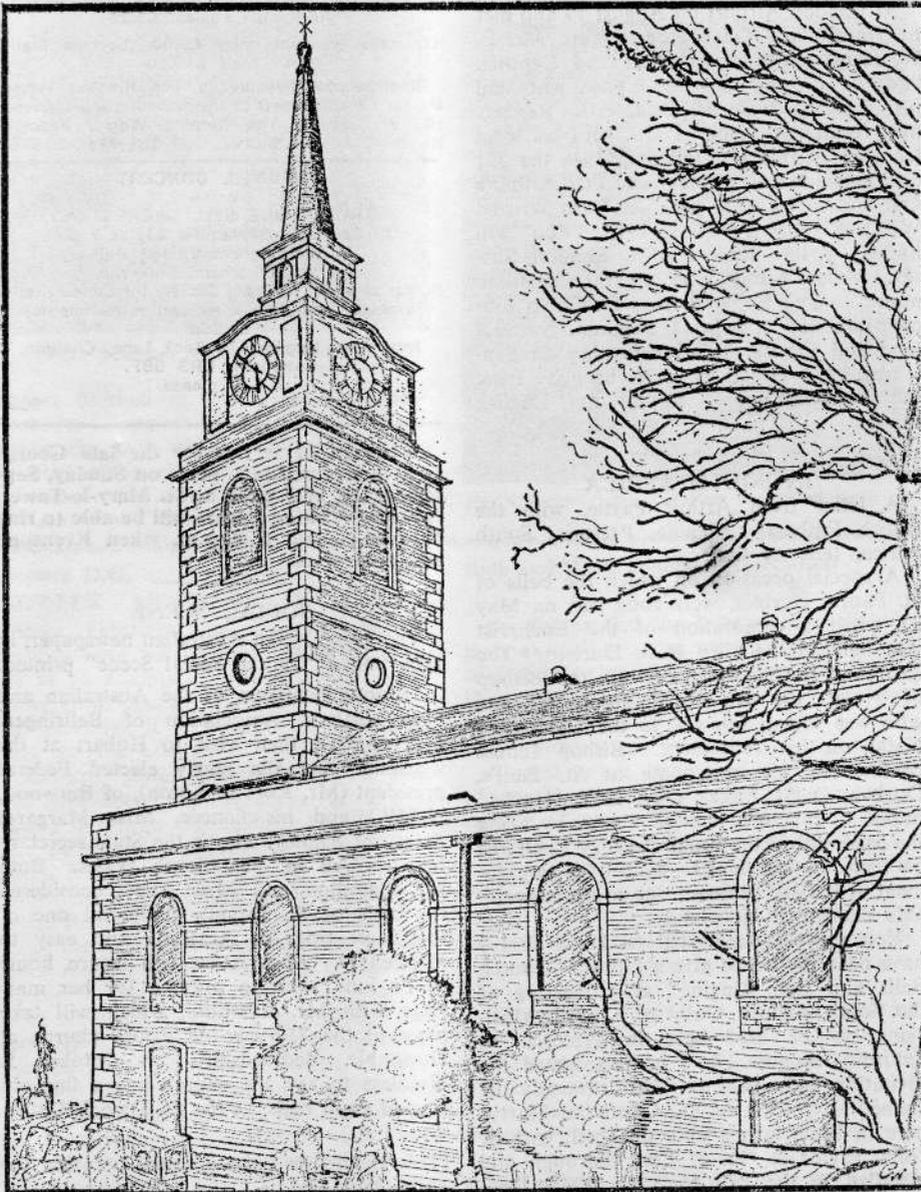
The plate consists of two chalices, two patens and flagons, all of modern silver, and also a brass alms dish.

The patronage of the church was in the hands of the Wyatts, then to the Brookes of Cobham until James I, when it passed to the Crown until 1886, when it passed to the Bishops of Rochester, the present patrons.

On April 1, 1974, under the Boundaries Re-Organisation, Gravesend was linked with the surrounding area to become known as Gravesham, the old 1086 name.

The eight bells were originally given in 1736 but have had some recasting since, and were listed thus:—

(continued overleaf)



ST. GEORGE'S, GRAVESEND, KENT

GRAVESEND, KENT—continued

- I 28in. lo WADE ESQ MAYOR Gm.
RACKSTRAW G THOMPSON
CH WARDENS (founder's mark)
1771 O O O Th SWAIN
FECIT
- II 29½in. Several Gentleman Strangers
Gave This Bell 1736
Recast at the Charge of The
Parish 1793. JOHN TUCKER
A. M. RECTOR GEO THOMPSON
and JAMES KIRK CH WARDENS
Thos Mears of London Fecit
- III 33in. GEO ARNOLD Esq Mayor Thos
Killick John Hales Ch Wardens
T. Mears of London Fecit
- IV 34in. THE INHABITANTS OF GRAVESEND
GAVE THIS BELL.
THOS: HARRIS RECT: Wm
HARRISON HEN: WOOTON
CHURCH WARDENS 1736
- V 37in. JNO: JOYNES Wat; NYNN Wm;
LANCE ANTH: IRELAND Wm;
MYERS JNO: FOX JNO: BOLGER
JNO: HUGHES JA; ROE GEO:
CLARKE TRUSTEES FOR THE
SUBSCRIPTION MONY GAVE
THIS BELL 1736 JOHN APPE-
BEE AND RICHARD PHELPS
MADE THESE EIGHT BELLS
- VI 38½in. IAMES WADE MAYOR ESqr
GAYNHAM RACKSTRAW
GEORGE THOMPSON CH WAR-
DENS (founder's mark) 1771
O O O
- VII 42½in. THE IURATES GAVE THIS BELL
WILLIAM HAFFENDEN ESQ:
DEPUTY MAIOR JOHN IOYNES
ESQ: JUSTICE 1736
- VIII 47in. The Corporation gave 50 towards
these bells William Man Esq:
Maior 1736. This bell was
recast at the charge of the
Parish 1793
John Tucker A.M. Rector. Geo
Thompson and James Kirk Ch.
Wardens.
Thos. Mears of London Fecit.

In Vol. XI of "Archæologia Cantiana" (p. xlviij), it is mentioned that in 1522, at Bishop Fisher's visitation, the churchwardens of Gravesend omitted to ring the bells in his honour, for which terrible ecclesiastical offence they were cited and fined.

According to Cruden's "History of Gravesend" the third bell, prior to recasting in 1813 bore the same inscription as the present treble. The original ring of eight cast in 1736 was by R. Phelps, with whom appears to have been associated one J. Applebee who was, I suspect, the bell carpenter or hanger. The tenor was inscribed to the effect that "J. Applebee, R. Phelps, made these eight bells". (Extracts from Stahlschmidt "Church Bells of Kent").

Bibliography.

- Feilding, C. H.—The Records of Rochester. Dartford, Snowdon Brothers, West Kent Printing Works. 1910.
- Stahlschmidt, J. C. L.—The Church Bells of Kent. Elliot Stock, 62, Paternoster Row, London, E.C.1. 1887.
- Wallenberg, J. K.—The Place-Names of Kent. Uppsalla. 1934.

MRS. ELSIE PERRINS

The sympathy of his many friends and of the Exercise as a whole is extended to Mr. Frank W. Perrins of 68 Warwick Avenue, Coventry, in the loss he has sustained by the death of his wife, Elsie. Mrs. Perrins, who was in her 83rd year, died in Gulson Hospital on Saturday, following a stroke a few days previously. The funeral took place on Wednesday.

Bedfordshire Association

BACK FROM ZAMBIA

The August meeting of Biggleswade District brought a much better attendance than was anticipated in view of the holiday season. The afternoon was occupied with ringing at Roxton until tea, which was taken by 36 ringers in Potton's new Sunday School building and prepared by the Potton ladies, who were duly thanked.

During the business meeting which followed 10 new members were elected, two of whom were re-elected, having recently returned from Zambia.

Ringing continued in the evening on the Potton bells in which visitors from other districts were welcomed and took part until 8.30 p.m.—C. W. F.

THE IZARDS ARE HERE

At London Airport on August 19 and met by Harold and Olive Rogers were Mr. E. W. (Pop) Izard, and Arthur and Cynthia, "Pop's" son and daughter-in-law, who had just flown in from Victoria, B.C. Readers may recall that "Pop" Izard, with his local team of engineers installed in 1936 the 29½ cwt. glorious ring of eight and that Arthur's first and so far only peal was with Wilfred Williams' touring party in 1973. "Pop" will holiday at the "Izard seat" in Slindon, Sussex, whilst Arthur and Cynthia plan to motor around England from Devon to Lincolnshire and then visit Belgium, Switzerland and France, before returning on September 15. Greetings were brought from the Victoria ringers to all the English ringers.

IN SOUTH AFRICA

A letter from Arthur Payne, with the British Embassy, Arcadia, Pretoria, South Africa, tells us that:

A special occasion on which the bells of St. Paul's, Durban, were rung was on May 27 when a celebration of the Eucharist was held in the City Hall, Durban. The celebrant on this occasion was the Bishop of Natal, the Rt. Rev. Vernon Inman, who was saying farewell to the Diocese of Natal on his retirement. Bishop Inman commenced his episcopate at St. Paul's, Durban, on St. Luke's Day, 1951. He had hoped to conclude it at St. Paul's by being the celebrant at the usual weekday Eucharist on June 15, but had to cancel the engagement at the last moment due to an unavoidable change in his plans.

You may be interested to know that I have been invited to give a talk on "Church Bells and Bell Ringing" at a meeting of the South African Guild of Church Musicians, to be held here in Pretoria on Saturday, August 17. I have accepted the invitation with pleasure. Unfortunately the Cathedral Church of St. Alban the Martyr here in Pretoria has only one bell; cast by John Taylor & Co. of Loughborough and installed in the bell tower in 1958, three years after the Cathedral's consecration by Archbishop Geoffrey Clayton of Cape Town.

With all good wishes and greeting to fellow ringers in Britain from ringing friends here in South Africa.

ARTHUR PAYNE.



Penmark House, Woodbridge Meadows, Guildford, GU1 1BL

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(Founded by J. S. Goldsmith, proprietor and editor until his death in 1942.)

Editor: C. W. DENYER.

The Ringing World Committee: W. G. Wilson (chairman), 42 Willow Grove, Ruislip Manor, Middlesex; R. S. Anderson, D. A. Bayles, R. F. B. Speed and Mrs. P. J. Stanforth.

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HANDBELL CONCERT

by the

THURLSTONE BELL ORCHESTRA

On Saturday, September 21, at 7 p.m.

in Woldingham Village Hall,
near Caterham, Surrey.

Proceeds to the National Society for Cancer Relief

Tickets (including wine and refreshments)

£1.25p

from Mrs. Hughes, 74 Rook Lane, Chaldon,

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S.A.E. please.

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A memorial service for the late George E. Symonds will take place on Sunday, September 29, at 3 p.m., at St. Mary-le-Tower, Ipswich. Visiting ringers will be able to ring between 4 and 6.30 p.m. when Evensong will take place.

SOCIAL SCENE

The Mercury, an Australian newspaper, in June under "On the Social Scene" printed:

"Among members of the Australian and New Zealand Association of Bellringers who enjoyed their visit to Hobart at the weekend were the newly elected Federal president (Mr. Ross Bampton), of Burwood, N.S.W.) and his fiancée, Miss Margaret Aslett, of Sydney, who is the State secretary for ANZAB in New South Wales. Both Mr. Bampton and Miss Aslett considered the bells of St. David's Cathedral one of the finest rings in Australia and easy to manoeuvre. Miss Aslett will return home to England soon to prepare for her marriage with Mr. Bampton, which will take place at the 750-year-old Priory church at Dunstable, Bedfordshire, on October 5. Needless to say the church has a fine old ring of eight bells, as has St. David's Cathedral."

[This should be quite a social occasion for bellringers.—Ed.]

There was a decidedly campanological flavour at 42 Willow Grove, Ruislip, on Sunday last, when Mr. and Mrs. Wilfrid G. Wilson entertained relatives and friends, the occasion being to celebrate their silver wedding.