COPY

TELEPHONE Nº
01-247 2599

W. A. HUGHES
DOUGLAS HUGHES
ALAN HUGHES

Whitechapel Bell Foundry Ltd.
(A.D. 1570)
32 & 34, Whitechapel Road,
London, E1 1DY

(22nd August 1966)

6th July 1976

Dear Sir,

Chalk - Church of St. Mary

Following Mr. William Hughes' visit on the 20th July, we have to apologise for the long delay in rendering this report due to pressure of work.

The bells form a peal of three with the Tenor or largest weighing about 6 cwts. in the key of 'C' (Old Concert pitch). This bell with the Treble was cast in 1634 by John Wilner of Borden; the 2nd is, we believe, a 14th century casting by Thomas de Weston of London who operated for a few years between 1347 and 1349.

The bells appear to be sound but they are only of fair tonal quality and not well in tune. The bells have been turned on the headstocks but the original 'cast-in' staples are still in position, and in the event of any work being carried out, these should be removed and centre holes drilled through the crowns so that new and independent ones can be fitted; the reason for this is that the original 'cast-in' clapper staple being of iron is usually the cause of old bells becoming cracked due to rust and consequent expansion and their removal does help to prevent this happening. The present staples are formed by extensions to the supporting bolts.

The bells were re-hung about fifty years ago by Alfred Bowell of Ipswich, with all new fittings and framework.

The fittings generally are in fair and serviceable condition. The headstocks are of elm and seem quite sound, that on the Tenor has the gudgeons fitted in proper cast iron 'shields' or 'shoes', but the two smaller ones are forgings bolted to the ends of the headstocks. The wheels also are quite good and sound but the metal tongues in the shrouding are now rusting and opening up the timber. The clappers are of good shape and proportion but all ironwork is fairly well corroded with rust. The stay on the 2nd is roughly hewn from a branch and there is no proper 'set'. All frictional parts are now showing signs of wear, these are the main gudgeons and bearings on which the bells swing, the pulleys and the clapper joints. The bell ropes are also well worn. The chime hammers are rather crude and no proper chime bracket is placed in the ringing room below.

..../2.

The bell frame is of oak, quite well designed and constructed, all the timbers appear to be sound and it is supported below the floor by two beams spanning the tower East/West.

In our opinion the three bells should be re-hung with new gudgeons and bearings and we show the cost of doing this; we also show the cost of adding further bells but in this event it would be advisable to have the existing ones brought to the Foundry so as to correct the notes and chief harmonic tones under the tuning machine.

The conditions in the ringing room are not very satisfactory; this room, some sixteen feet high, is very dirty partly due to mortar dust from the walls and partly due to the louvre openings in the walls. We would like to suggest that the louvres be removed and the openings glazed. We would also suggest that a sound deadening ceiling be placed about three feet below the present belfry floor which would make the bells quieter in the ringing room and at the same time provide a 'steady' for the bell ropes.

The ringing room should then be thoroughly cleaned out and some form of lime wash be used on the walls which may prevent the mortar from flaking. The belfry also should be very thoroughly cleaned.

We therefore enclose various estimates showing the cost of our proposals and trust we have made everything quite clear, but if there are any further details you would like, please do not hesitate to ask.

Yours faithfully,

Mears & Stainbank

The Reverend James R. Fry, B.Sc.,
The Vicarage, 2a Vicarage Lane,
Chalk, Gravesend, Kent.

London, E.1

(23rd August 1966)
6th July 1976

ESTIMATE - No.1

Chalk - Church of St. Mary

To:	Dismantle the three bells, remove their fittings and send all the fittings except the wheels to the Foundry.			
	Cut out the 'cast-in' clapper staples from the bells and drill centre holes through the crown of each.			
	Oil all nuts and bolts in the framework and tighten wherever possible; thoroughly clean all ironwork where it is possible to reach and paint two coats of oxide.			
	Provide and fit new steel gudgeons to the head stocks and turn them in accurate alignment.			
	Bore centre holes through the headstocks for fittings the new staple bolts.			
	Provide heavy duty self aligning ball bearings in totally enclosed dust proof housings. (These bearings only need lubricating every 10 - 12 years).			
	Provide new and independent clapper staples with steel spindles and lubricators.			
	Provide a new ash stay for the 2nd bell.			
	Provide new turned hardwood pulleys running on double ball races and steel spindles fitted with lubricators.			
	Provide new bell ropes of best Italian hemp with close woven wool sallys.			
	Anneal and re-face the clappers, weld on new top ends to suit the new staples, with resiliently mounted bushes at the point of swing.			
	Anneal the supporting ironwork and paint three coats of oxide.			
	Return the fittings to the Church and hoist into the tower.			
	Fit the new bearings to the bell frame on iron bed plates.			
	Refit and rehang the three bells leaving them in perfect going order.			
	Including bellhangers time, expenses and cartage etc., but excluding any building work in connection with the sound deadening ceiling and any other work necessary to the ringing chamber.	£12,822		
	.....	£ 389	0	0

Chalk - Church of St. Mary

SUPPLEMENTARY

To: Provide and fit a hand chiming apparatus for the three bells consisting of:-

Three chime hammers placed to strike an upward blow inside the bells so that they may be dropped clear when the bells are swung, also an oak chime bracket to fit to one of the walls in the ringing chamber and connect to the hammers with ropes drawn over pulleys.

and leave all ready for operation.

If done in conjunction with Estimate No.1 £ 91 0 0

Estimate No.2

To: Lower the three bells to the ground and send them to the Foundry.

Carefully adjust the notes and chief harmonic tones under the tuning machine.

Provide one smaller bell to augment the peal to four.

To be 2'2" in diameter, weighing about ¾ cwts.

To be cast of copper and tin only and accurately tuned to agree with the existing bells.

Provide complete ringing fittings for the bell consisting of:-

Headstocks of cast iron with steel gudgeons turned in accurate alignment.
Heavy duty self aligning ball bearings in totally enclosed dust proof housings.
Turned hardwood insulation pads for fittings between the bell and headstock together with supporting bolts with insulation washers, nuts and locknuts.
Oak wheel with angle wheel braces.
Independent clapper staple with steel spindle and lubricator.
Correctly proportioned clapper of wrought iron with resiliently mounted bush at the point of swing.
Ash stay and slider and runner board of oak
Turned hardwood pulley running on double ball races and steel spindle fitted with lubricator.
Turned hardwood ceiling boss and bell rope of best Italian hemp with close woven wool sally.

Chalk - Church of St. Mary

	Return the four bells to the Church and re-hoist into the tower.				
	Fit up and hang the new bell and leave all ready for use.				
	If done in conjunction with Estimate No.1	£	394	0	0
	Estimate No.3				
To:	Provide one smaller bell to augment the peal to five.				
	To be 2'0" in diameter and weigh about 3¼ cwts.				
	To be cast of copper and tin only and accurately tuned to agree with the existing bells.				
	Provide complete ringing fittings for the bell as enumerated in Estimate No.2.				
	Deliver to the Church. Hoist, fit up and hang and leave all ready for use. If done in conjunction with Estimates 1 and 2.	£	267	0	0
	Estimate No.4				
To:	Provide one smaller bell to augment the peal to six.				
	To be 1'11" in diameter and weigh about 2¾ cwts.				
	To be cast of copper and tin only and accurately tuned to agree with the existing bells.				
	Provide complete ringing fittings for the bell as enumerated in Estimate No.2.				
	Deliver to the Church. Hoist, fit up and hang and leave all ready for use.				
	If done in connection with Estimate Nos.1 and 2	£	239	0	0
	SUPPLEMENTARY				
	Independent chime hammers supplied and fitted to the additional bells would be £21.0.0 each.				