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DOUGLAS HUGHES, O. B. E.
ALAN HUGHES

Ref: AH/vm

25th March, 1997

The Rev. Canon R. Fry, M.A.,
The Vicarage,
2a Vicarage Lane,
Chalk,
Gravesend,
Kent
DA12 4TF

Dear Canon Fry,

Re: Chalk, Kent - St. Mary's Church

Following the recent visit of our Head Tuner, Mr. Nigel Taylor, I now report his findings.

The Church bells comprise a ring of three in the very approximate key of C as follows:

Bell	Diameter	Strike Note	Approx. Weight	Date	Founder
Tenor	2'- 8"	*536½ c.p.s.	¢ 6-0-0	1634	John Wilner, Borden
2nd	2'- 5⅛"	589¼ (14¼^{b})	4-3-0	14C	Thomas De Weston, London
Treble	2'- 3¾"	640½ (30^{b})	4-1-0	1634	John Wilner

* C International Pitch = 523 c.p.s.

The 2nd bell is listed for preservation by the Council for the Care of Churches.

As you will see, the bells are not at all in tune with the 2nd and treble becoming progressively flatter with respect to the tenor. In other words, the interval between the tenor and 2nd is a little short of a whole tone and the interval between the 2nd and treble is also a little short of a whole tone.

In the current Code of Practice for the Conservation of Bells and Bell Frames, issued by the Council for the Care of Churches and published a little over three years ago, there is a presumption against the tuning of bells which are listed. A copy of this Code is enclosed for your information.

If we are to leave the 2nd bell uncut, and tune the tenor and treble to suit, we will be involved in flattening the tenor and sharpening the treble. The flattening of the tenor bell is relatively straight forward and will involve cutting away metal from the inside of the bell in the usual manner. The sharpening of the treble will involve machining metal away from the lip of the bell. This will reduce the height and diameter of the bell, as well as it's weight, and will have the effect of raising the strike note. Fortunately, Mr. Taylor reckons that there is sufficient metal between the lip and soundbow for this task to be undertaken in a satisfactory manner.

Under the circumstances, I would recommend that the bells be tuned in this manner, which will have the effect of reducing our estimates involving the tuning of all three bells by £ 248.00 plus V.A.T.

Our proposals for augmenting the ring to six remain substantially unaltered.

I hope that this clarifies the situation, and allows the scheme to go forward within the terms of the Code of Practice. If you have any queries, do not hesitate to come back to me.

With the Code of Practice, I enclose our account in connection with Mr. Taylor's visit.

Yours sincerely,
p.p. THE WHITECHAPEL BELL FOUNDRY LTD.,

Alan Hughes

enc.