

Brinkworth

At last the bells have come back from Soundweld and Taylors. They were taken out early December and returned on the 3rd October, so they have been away 10 months.



Neil, Anthony and Kit

As expected they have new headstocks, apart from the

1925 treble, and welding has smoothed the rough crowns, filled clapper impact dents and removed spurious holes. The headstocks have inscriptions cast in them including one commemorating 150 years of the local school.

The Taylors team, consisting of Neil, Anthony and Kit, supervised the



Unloading

bells were already resting on the floor in their pits and the tenor was safely in the foyer. The tenor measured



The 3rd had already been turned 90° and is now 45°.

48" across and so did the doorway, minus its doors, so it was a bit of a squeeze getting it in.

The bells are going back where they came from as that is where the mountings are. They are a tight fit, there is not a lot of room around each bell. The rim of



1,2,4,5,3,6

Winching the 5th from the central hatch over the frame to the right



The tenor has a chip where the clapper once fell out. The lip is unusually thin.



unloading in front of a class of children from the nearby Earl Danby's school and the bells were lined up alongside the church for blessing and marking with the Sign of the Cross using chrism by the Rev. Steve Wilkinson.

the 5th's wheel is almost scraping the wall!

Already a minor problem had been spotted: near where the bearing housings were to be bolted to the frames there were already some other bolts holding something else. So another set of housings with shorter lugs had to be obtained from Loughborough.

In case you are puzzled by the photo, they were put in the order 1,2,4,5,3,6 as that is the way they are going up into the tower.

As they were being winched up you could see most, if not all, had been quarter turned already and, although the clapper marks have been filled in, the bells are now turned 45°. At the end of the first day five of the

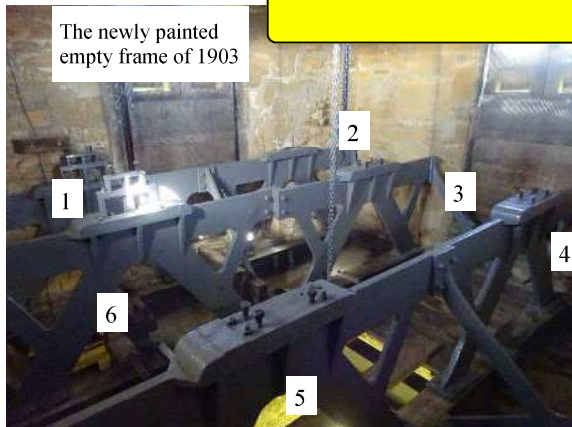


The 3rd, before and after



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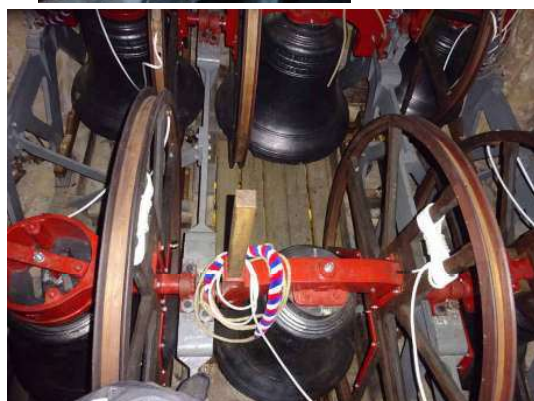
The newly painted empty frame of 1903



The spacing on the 2nd's wheel, and those troublesome bearing blocks



the bells were hanging from their bearings, the wheels were on and the sliders and their tracks were being fitted. A number of minor problems had been resolved which just goes to show these installations are not at all straightforward and rely a lot on the skill of the installers.



The wheel on the 2nd had to be moved over an inch or so with some wood packing between it and the bracket on

the headstock so the rope did not have to pass through a steel beam.

Three of the bells have canon retaining headstocks which are substantial pieces of metal, so counterweights in the form of metal plates have been



The ringing chamber was full of scaffolding

bolted to the wheels of two of them to make them easier to ring. However, the two's weight would not go on as the wheel had been moved over! So the weight

has gone on the other side of the wheel.

Fitting the sliders needs care as they have to be high enough to catch the stay, but low enough to clear the swinging bell and its clapper. One of the slider tracks could not be bolted to the frame at first; because the frame is right up against the wall the nut could not be fitted onto the bolt. The hole had to be tapped and a sawn-down bolt screwed into it.

The stays have to be just right too: not too short or they miss the slider, nor too long as they will hit the frame. Even the clappers cannot be too



Enlarging the holes for the bosses

Brinkworth, Wilts, S Michael & All Angels

Bell	Weight before	Weight now	Note	Cast	Founder	Canons before	Canons now
1	6-2-14	6-2-5	B	1924	Mears & Stainbank		F
2		8-0-9	A	1663†	William III & Richard II Purdue	R	Y
3		8-1-5	G	1663†	William III & Richard II Purdue	R	R
4		8-0-6	F#	1663†	William III & Richard II Purdue	R	Y
5		11-0-11	E	1663†	William III & Richard II Purdue	R	Y
6	18½ cwt	16-3-11	D	1663†	William III & Richard II Purdue	R	R

† - The bell has been identified by the Church Buildings Council (formerly the Council for the Care of Churches) as being of historical significance (formerly referred to as 'listed').

Y - Indicates bell has canons, R - Indicates they have been removed, F - the bell was cast with a flat top.

[From Dove's Guide (<http://dove.cccb.org.uk/home.php>).

Columns in this colour are from 2010. NOTE: the canons have NOT been altered!

The tenor weight, presumably based on the size of the bell, had been overestimated.]

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long: some of the original ones had cut-down flights to clear the wall.

Another week later and the bells were ready. Well, nearly. The clappers were in and ropes had been fitted to the wheels (but coiled up on the headstocks). All the floor pulleys were in except for the tenor one and holes had been drilled in the floor to take the ropes. These have been moved a little to improve the rope circle. Of course the clock will be moved into a corner so the 4th and 5th will be easier to ring anyway. Large wooden joists were being sawn to length and fixed to the walls below the bells to form a deadening chamber. Once the floorboards were laid the tenor pulley block could be fitted; it is under the belfry floor (the others are on top) as it needs to guide the tenor rope away from the wall.

By the way, although the ropes were provided by Taylors they were not made by them. They have a rope making facility but no rope makers.

Another problem was with the rope bosses. There were two sets: plastic ones went in the belfry floor and steel

about three years since a problem was identified with the 5th and just short of a year from when they were taken away for refurbishment.



How do they go?
Beautifully!

There is still a small amount of finishing off being done as I write this.

What did it used to look like before this? Look in issue 108 if you still have it.

RLM



Friday sunrise augured well...

ones in the deadening chamber floor. After drilling the holes they found they were slightly different sizes (metric and imperial perhaps). So some work with a large half-round file was required!

Friday the 27th November was a lovely sunny day, same as when the bells had arrived 24 days earlier. The Taylors team were still working so I helped them by tidying up. Then, at around 11am, some local ringers arrived, plus Malcolm Barnes, who is one of the G&B's belfry advisors, and we raised the six bells in peal for the first time for a long time. They sound good, go well and they are so much quieter that you can now call the changes out without getting a sore throat. It is

Some of the people present. L to R: Malcolm Barnes, Bob Mustow, John Tuck, Anthony Hart, Roger Haydock, Ed Rawlings (one of Brinkworth's ringers), Aubrey Chivers. Also there were Kit Bardsley and Colin, Ed's dad. Photo by Kit using Roger's camera.

