

## THE LOST BELLS OF LONDON (7)

### OTHER CITY CHURCHES

By W. T. COOK

(Continued from p. 143.)

Besides the City churches already mentioned in this series whose bells have been "lost" in one way or another, there was one other with a ring of eight which was destroyed during the war and has not been replaced as such. This was the eight at All Hallows', Barking-by-the-Tower, where there is now a carillon of 18 bells. This church and its bells were fully described in *The Ringing World* for December 10, 1971, and I do not propose to repeat the information given there.

In that article the writer, Mr. D. L. Cawley, said he did not know of any other peal on the bells apart from the peal of 1818 (8448 Oxford Treble Bob, rung by the Cumberland Youths five years after the bells were recast and augmented to eight). In fact quite a few peals were rung on them; the first was one of Grandsire Triples by the Junior Society of Cumberland Youths on March 23, 1814. This was followed by a 5024 of Oxford Treble Bob, rung by the College Youths on May 22, 1815, conducted by George Gross the younger. A peal of Bob Major was rung there in 1823, and the College Youths rang peals on these bells in 1855 (Stedman Triples), 1859 and 1878 (both Grandsire Triples), and eight more peals between 1891 and 1922, of which the most interesting were peals of Double Norwich and Superlative Surprise in 1898. These were respectively the first of Double Norwich and the first of Surprise in the City. In the College Youths' rule book of 1875, All Hallows', Barking, is mentioned as one of the "Churches in London at which the Members of the Society are engaged."

Writing of the bells in 1942, J. A. Trollope said: "All Hallows' bells had been out of order for many years, and there had been little or no ringing on them since before the last war."

As a result of the developments in the art of ringing that took place in London from the end of the 17th century onwards, the fives and sixes of the City tended to become neglected, and they are very rarely mentioned, if at all. As early as 1733, we find the Rambling Ringers being rather despised for ringing in towers where there were less than eight bells:

"By the Snarling Critics it is sung  
Five fools at Batses' last week rung . . .  
Because there's peals of twelves in town  
Shall five or six bells ne'er be rung?"

I believe the following to be a fairly complete list of vanished rings of five and six bells in the City (in nearly every case due to the church being demolished at some time previous to 1939): All Hallows, Staining (5), All Hallows, London Wall (6), St. Alphage, London Wall (6), SS. Anne and Agnes (5), St. Bartholomew by the Exchange (6), St. Benet Fink (6), St. Christopher-le-Stocks (6), St. Martin-le-Grand (5) and St. Peter-le-Poer, Broad Street (5). To-

day the City contains three rings of six and one of five. The six at St. Vedast, Foster Lane, and the five at St. Bartholomew the Great, Smithfield, are regularly rung, and were described in *The Ringing World* last year.

Of the remaining two sixes, a brief notice will suffice. St. Andrew Undershaft—so called because of the great shaft or Maypole which was set up in front of the south door of the church in Leadenhall Street every May-day until 1517—is one of the few remaining pre-Fire churches in the City. The main body of the present church dates from about 1530, but the tower was rebuilt in 1695. (The upper part was again rebuilt in 1830.) The church already had six bells, and these were hung in the new tower. The second, third and tenor were cast by Robert Mot of Whitechapel in 1597, and the fourth also by Mot in 1600 (presumably a recasting). The fifth was cast by Bryan Eldridge in 1650, and the treble by James Bartlett in 1669. These bells still exist, but are no longer hung for ringing. During the second world war they were removed to the country for safety, and after the war it was found that the tower was no longer safe for the bells to be rung, so they were hung dead for chiming.

For most visitors to the church, one of the main items of interest is the memorial to John Stowe, the Elizabethan writer of the "Survey of London"; but for ringers, St. Andrew's has a special place in history, not for its bells, but because it is the burial place of Fabian Stedman—to whom, however, there is no memorial in the church.

St. Katharine Cree Church, a little further east from St. Andrew's along Leadenhall Street, also escaped the Fire of 1666. It was first built in about the 13th century, alongside the great Priory Church of the Holy Trinity or Christ Church, Aldgate, and it is from "Christ Church" that it derives its name. It was built so that the Canons of the Priory "be not disturbed by the presence of the laity at the services." But in course of time disputes arose between the Prior and the parishioners, one of the complaints being that the parish bells interrupted the Priory services. Eventually the Bishop of London was called in to settle the dispute, and among other things the parishioners of St. Katharine's had to agree that there was to be "no ringing to the office of the Resurrection in the church or chapel until such office in the Conventual Church at the usual time was finished." We do not, of course, know anything about these bells. The Edward VI inventory records the church as having "fyve bells hangyng in the steeple"—probably a ring of four and a saunce bell.

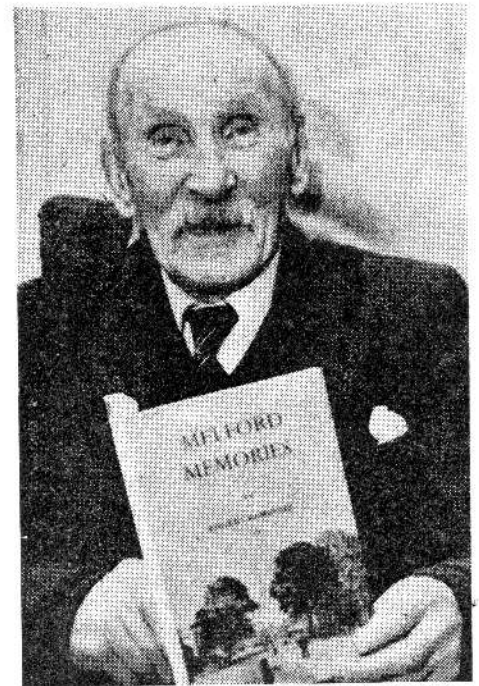
The church was rebuilt in 1628, except for the lower part of the tower, which dates from 1584. It may have been designed by Inigo Jones, and is a most interesting example of the transition from the Gothic to

the Classical style of architecture. In 1733 the Rambling Ringers visited St. Katharine's and rang some Grandsire Doubles on the five bells then existing but "the bells were in sutch bad repair that they had mutch ado to make em answer." In 1754 these bells were replaced by the existing ring of six, cast by Lester and Pack of Whitechapel (tenor 10 cwt.).

The church was extensively restored in 1962, and now serves as the Guild Church for the Industrial Christian Fellowship. However, the bells were not restored, and now hang derelict.

Outside the City there were also many rings of bells which played their part in the history of the Exercise, but now have vanished. Of special interest among these were the rings of eight at St. Olave's, Southwark; Christ Church, Blackfriars Road; and St. Mary Magdalene's, Bermondsey, where the College Youths rang in 1728 a 10,800 of Bob Major; but I have very few details about any of these bells. I will conclude this series with a description of the bells of St. John's, Horsleydown, and St. Mary Matfelon, Whitechapel.

### "MELFORD MEMORIES"



Now 95 years old, Mr. Ernie Ambrose of Friars Street, Sudbury, Suffolk, has been a bellringer for 78 years. Two years ago his wife started taking notes of his impressions of Long Melford, and the Long Melford Historical and Archaeological Society have now published "Melford Memories," giving Ernie's stories of 90 years in Long Melford. On his birthday he was presented with several copies of the book, which was a complete surprise, as he did not know it was being published. There is one complete chapter on bellringing.

In addition to his bellringing Mr. Ambrose has been interested in football and is also an accomplished organist, playing whenever he gets the opportunity.