

ST GILES CHURCH, KILLAMARSH

INTRODUCTION TO KILLAMARSH

The first mention of Killamarsh as a settlement was in the Domesday Book of 1086 when it was referred to as 'Chinewoldmaresc' meaning a marshy settlement belonging to Chinewold, a king of Mercia. The village's main economy was agriculture and dairy, but it soon became a centre of industry for centuries due to its connection to the river Rother.

Killamarsh grew from a farming community in the Middle Ages (AD 500 to 1500) to a hive of industrial activity in the 19th and 20th centuries. As the Sheffield steel industry grew, so did the demand for coal. Killamarsh became a thriving mining village and transport links matured.



Canal and church yard • Image courtesy of Mary Flint

COAL

Coal has been mined in Killamarsh since at least the 15th century, but the first major mining operation opened at Norwood (1865 to 1943) resulting in the population of Killamarsh almost doubling between 1861 and 1871. Westthorpe (1923 to 1983) and High Moor (1957 to 1992) pits were casualties of the pit closure programme. The coal was transported from Killamarsh nationwide.

CANAL

The Chesterfield canal opened in 1777 was designed by the great canal engineer, James Brindley. The canal opened up a trade route taking Derbyshire lead and coal towards Worksop, Retford and meeting River Trent near Gainsborough. The canal connected Killamarsh with new markets. Its course ran at the bottom of the churchyard. Today, there is little evidence of the canal.

CABLES

The river Rother which skirts the side of Killamarsh provided power for grain mills from the earliest times and was used by ironmongers and smiths from the late 18th century.

Forge Lane was once known as Mill Lane named after the water powered corn mill that was there in the Middle Ages. Grain mills were a huge part of Killamarsh's economy. There was also a medieval Forge which is how Mill Lane became known as Forge Lane in the 1800s. It is believed this Forge made anything from scythes to weapons of war there was also an iron works there in operation from 1795 to when the forge closed in 1887.

Killamarsh Forge made the special wire used in the core of the 2nd Trans-Atlantic telegraph cable laid by the SS Great Eastern in 1866. Today, Ross and Catherall, keep the forge legacy alive as specialist alloys supplier to the aerospace industry.

RAILWAYS

Killamarsh once had three railway stations. Upperthorpe and Killamarsh (closed in 1939), Killamarsh West (closed in 1954) and Killamarsh Central (closed in 1963).

All stations served freight and passengers. Today, the Trans Pennine Trail, the coast to coast multi user route connecting Southport and Hornsea, runs through the location of Killamarsh Central station.

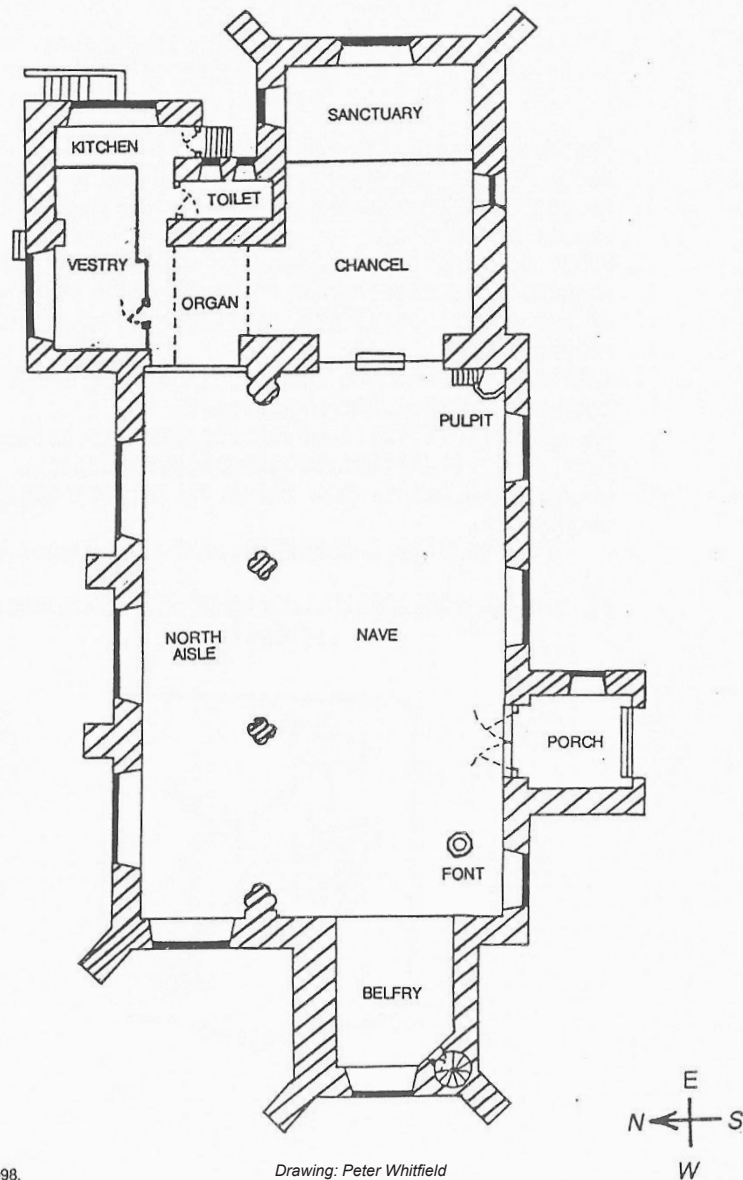
CHURCH

No church was recorded in the Domesday Book but the stone preaching cross that stands in the churchyard is evidence that there were Christian worshippers before 1086.

The church you see today was started in the 12th century and the tower was added in the 15th century and various alterations were made in the 19th century. These included the rebuilding of the chancel in the 1840s, a new high-pitched roof for the nave and the addition of the north aisle and vestry in 1895.

The church was and continues to be at the very heart of community life.

INSIDE THE CHURCH



DRAWN : P.W. 1998.

Drawing: Peter Whitfield

PORCH

Access to the church from the porch is through a round doorway, which serves as an excellent example of Norman architecture. This doorway is adorned with a double row of chevron mouldings; the jambs are crafted with semi-detached pillars of shafts, whose capitals are beautifully carved with well-defined foliage.

In "Notes on the Churches in Derbyshire-1875," Charles Fox notes that "on the west side of the porch, part of the stone bench appears to be constructed, judging by the moulded edge, from a remnant of an old stone coffin lid."

The porch was reconstructed in 1878/79.

The south wall is the oldest part of the present church, dating back to the 12th century. Norman chevron carving can be seen around the archway.



Image: Killamarsh Camera Club

THE NAVE

In 1860, during a visit from Sir Stephen Glynne, he pointed out the unfortunate neglect of the nave. The north wall lacked windows, the oak pews were falling apart, and the flat leaded roof was overshadowed by the chancel's steep roof.

In 1878, efforts commenced to enhance the nave. The roof was replaced with the current high-pitched design, the oak panelling around the nave was taken down, and open bench-style pews took the place of the box pews. As part of this restoration, the musician's gallery was removed, and the tower arch was expanded. In 1962, a panelled wooden screen was installed.

With Reverend Francis Metcalfe's ministry beginning in 1887, plans were made to improve the gloomy north wall. This led to the construction of the beautiful open arches and the current north wall, along with the vestry and organ chamber.

J. Martin Brooks from Wellington Street, The Strand, served as the architect, and the conversion work cost £1,600. On Tuesday, October 8th, 1895, Mrs. C.W. Alderson laid the foundation stone. The silver trowel used for this event is now displayed on the internal north wall, along with a record of the day's events.

The new aisle and vestry extension was officially inaugurated on Ascension Day, May 14th, 1896.

Around this period, the current organ, crafted by Kirkland of London, was installed for £300 and was first played on October 12th, 1896. The organ underwent a complete rebuild in 1989 by Chalmers & Hyde of Dronfield.



Image: Killamarsh Camera Club

CEILING

In 1997, during the administration of Reverend Roy Bradshaw, a full renovation of the chancel was undertaken in collaboration with English Heritage, at a total cost of £25,500.

Defective panels in the horse-hair and plaster ceiling structure were replaced using traditional techniques and then re-plastered. The ceiling panels were painted blue to restore the original colour scheme. Lead stars that were previously affixed to the ceiling panels were removed, and new stars were cast to replace those that were missing. All the new and old stars were painted gold and reinstated in their original positions on the ceiling panels. Each star was sponsored by members and friends of the church.

The main altar was moved forward to allow the priest to stand behind and celebrate Communion while facing the congregation.

The two front rows of the choir stalls were removed to facilitate easier access to the communion rail.

The reredos and walls were repainted, and a new lighting system was installed.

Image: Killamarsh Camera Club



Image: Killamarsh Camera Club

THE FONT

As you enter the church, you will see a wooden table on the left. This is believed to have been a Jacobean altar, used for some time before the present stone altar was installed in the 19th century.

Behind this is the font which has a unique history. It is of Norman origin but was removed at some time in the mid 19th century, when a new font was installed. The old font was found being used by a cobbler for soaking leather. It was re-purchased for the sum of 30 shillings (£1.50) and set up in the churchyard. It remained there until 1944 when it was restored to its rightful place in the church. Indentations in the rim of the font where the cobbler sharpened his knives can be clearly seen.

WHO WAS ST. GILES?

St. Giles is believed to have originated from Athens. In the 8th century, he escaped to France from his fellow countrymen and established a hermitage in a forest close to the mouth of the Rhone, where he survived on herbs and the milk of a hind.

While the king of the area was hunting in the forest, he pursued the hind to the hermit's dwelling. St. Giles protected the hind from the hunters and was struck by an arrow meant for the hind. The King was so moved by Giles' sanctity that he spared the hind and granted St. Giles some land to construct a monastery.

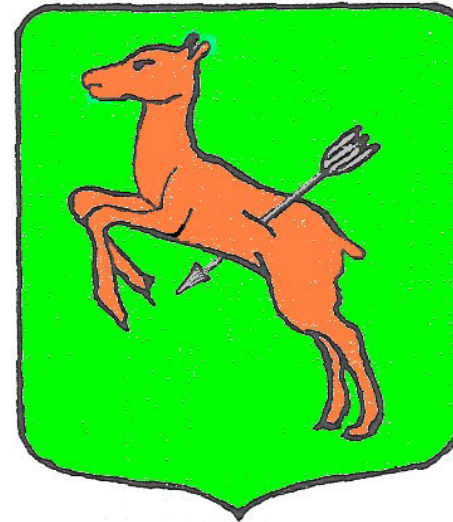


Image: Killamarsh Camera Club

The town of St. Giles, which developed near his burial site, eventually became a renowned pilgrimage destination.

He was one of the most beloved saints of the medieval period, with 160 churches in England alone dedicated to him.

He was called upon by the disabled, the needy, and blacksmiths as their Patron Saint.

His feast day is celebrated on September 1st.

His emblem features a golden doe, pierced by a silver arrow, on a green shield.



RECTORS OF ST GILES

Edward H Smith
Francis J Metcalfe
J Septimus Powell
Norton John Raper

John Milner
Peter D Peterkin
Gilbert Stanley
(Chris) Cheetham
Clive Hilton

John F Statham
Roy J Bradshaw
Revd Canon Helen
Guest

THE VESTRY

When the chancel was rebuilt, two old monumental slabs were uncovered and are now preserved by being built into the west wall of the former vestry. Neither is quite perfect.

The floriated cross at the head is similar in design in each one. Charles Fox in "Notes on the Churches in Derbyshire 1875" states that "One of these slabs has the symbol of the shears inscribed on the sinister side of the cross, and the other one has a broad headed axe laid across it".

The date of their origin is thought to be 12th or 13th century. It was thought that these tombstones were memorials to local gentry.

The left hand stone shows an axe head with vertical shaft, thought to indicate that the deceased was connected with forestry.

The right hand stone shows a set of spring type wool shears, indicating that the deceased was connected with sheep farming.

"The latter memorial is usually attributed to the grave of a village carpenter, but there can be little doubt that these slabs marked the resting place of men of more importance than a mere woodman or carpenter. It is more natural to suppose that it represents a man-at-arms or a knight."



Images: Killamarsh Camera Club

STAINED GLASS

Aside from the 'Our lady and child' (Sancta Maria) window, the church features six stained glass windows, with the two located in the south wall being the latest additions. In the 19th century, these windows, characteristic of the Perpendicular style, showcased diamond-shaped quarries made of old glass in shades of yellow and white, adorned with trefoils, fleur-de-lis and more.

The window in the west wall honours the Walker family, who operated a private school in the village prior to the introduction of compulsory education. Their burial vault is situated just behind the church tower.

One of the windows in the south wall is a tribute to those who perished during the 1914-1918 War, and it was dedicated in July 1921. Memorial plaques made of stainless steel, inscribed with the names of those who lost their lives in the Second World War, are displayed on the side walls of the window opening.

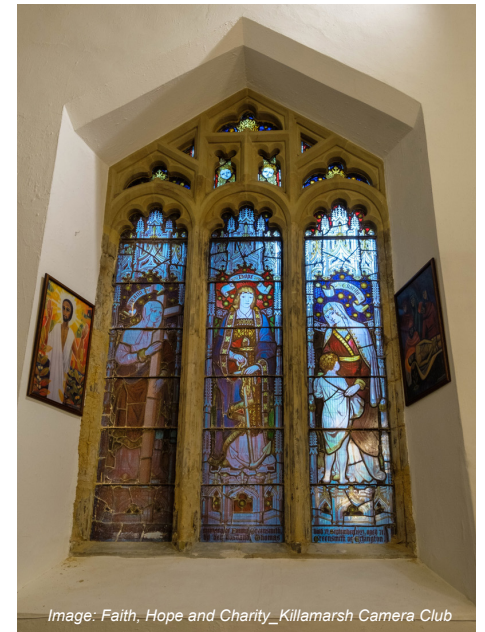


Image: Faith, Hope and Charity_Killamarsh Camera Club

THE SIDE ALTAR

Originally, the side altar was positioned at the back of the north aisle, facing the Walker Memorial Window, which was dedicated on December 14th, 1944. It was first called the "Children's Altar" due to the fundraising efforts of a group of Sunday school children. Mr. E. Thompson, the Churchwarden at that time, was moved by their commitment and arranged for the altar to be constructed at Westthorpe Colliery, where he held the position of Colliery Manager.

Eventually, the altar was transferred to its current location, where it is now frequently used.

The memorial crucifix, which hangs over the pulpit, was carved in Oberammergau, where the local people perform the famous "Passion Play". It was presented to the church in remembrance of a Mission, which was held in 1900.

THE PULPIT

The 19th century pulpit was erected in memory of Reverend Edward Smith.



Image: Killamarsh Camera Club

CHANCEL

When the chancel was rebuilt in the 19th century, its ceiling was painted blue and had gold stars depicting the heavens. In a subsequent redecoration, the ceiling was painted white and the stars were painted in many colours. The chancel was restored with the help of English Heritage in 1997 and returned to its original colour scheme.



Image: Killamarsh Camera Club

MADONNA & CHILD WINDOW

In the south wall of the chancel there is a beautiful stained glass window depicting the Madonna and Child, dating from the 15th century. Our Lord is shown as a child with a man's head, hands and feet to symbolise wisdom and age. It is believed to be one of the finest examples of medieval stained glass in the Diocese of Derby.

NORTH AISLE

The north aisle and vestry are the most recent additions to the church building. There were originally plans for a similar addition to the south aisle of the building to accommodate the large numbers of people attending services, but they were not implemented.



Image: Killamarsh Camera Club



Image: Killamarsh Camera Club

OUTSIDE THE CHURCH

PREACHING CROSS

It is thought that the first cross, a wooden one, was erected on the site of the present church when Christianity was introduced into England and then later a small timber church was built but destroyed during a rebellion. The timber cross was then replaced by a stone one.

STOCKS

Churches are at the centre of village life and in days gone by, this included law and order. Stocks were often found in churchyards for the punishment of minor offenders. Our stocks still stand in our churchyard.



Image: Killamarsh Camera Club

BELFRIES



Image: Killamarsh Camera Club

The parapet features an embattled design and is adorned with four crocketed pinnacles at its corners. At the top, two gargoyles extend outward, with one on the southern side depicting a muzzled bear. Our belfry, the church's bell tower,

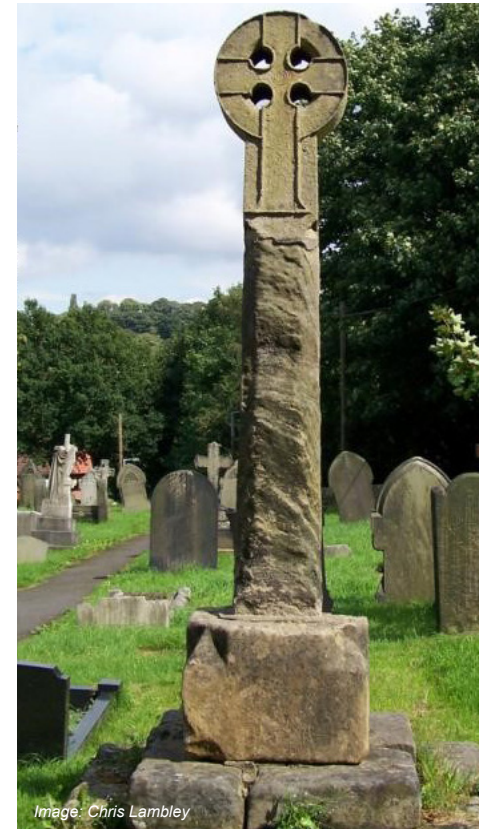


Image: Chris Lambley

houses a peal of six bells. Originally cast in 1843, the bells have most recently been refurbished and re-hung 2023. Bell ringers worldwide will know of Killamarsh's long-standing bell ringing tradition as one of the standard methods of changing, Killamarsh Treble Bob, was composed here.

The clock and chimes were installed in the tower to honour Christopher William Alderson, who served as a Churchwarden for two decades. The clock began ticking on New Year's Day in 1904 and was electrified in 1970. In 2008, the mechanism was enhanced to allow for automatic adjustments for GMT/BST.

THE BELLS AT ST GILES AND THEIR HISTORY

Taylor's Foundry in Loughborough cast the six bells in Killamarsh church in 1843 and then in 1892, Taylor's restored them. By 1892, Taylor's was the largest bell foundry in the world.

The company is part of a line of bell founders dating back to Johannes de Stafford in the 14th century, who was also a mayor of Leicester. The Taylor family became involved in 1784 with Robert Taylor (1759–1830), and a foundry was established in Loughborough in 1839 by his son John Taylor (1797–1858), moving to the current site in 1859. The Taylors also had foundries in Oxford and St Neots between 1786 and 1854.

During much of the later 19th century, the foundry was under the management of John William

Taylor (1827–1906). Taylor's was the first bell founder to adopt "true-harmonic" tuning in the late 19th century.

Taylor's bells are made of metal, alloy of 77% copper and 23% tin. They are cast from ingots or recycled bells, melted in furnaces.

The company have made and continue to make bells for locations worldwide. Of note, in 1881 at Loughborough, Taylor's cast "Great Paul" (the largest British cast bell in Britain) for St Paul's Cathedral in London, weighing 17,002 kilograms (37,483 lb) or more than 17 metric tons. Rock band AC/DC used a 2000-pound cast bronze bell for the song "Hells Bells", which was originally used on the Back in Black Tour in 1980.



Image: casting shed at Taylor's Foundry, Catherine Crouney

RECORDS OF THE BELLS AT ST GILES

(all information and images courtesy of Loughborough Bell Foundry Trust, with thanks to Chris Pickford)

Our bells have an interesting history and their records, held at the Loughborough Bell Foundry Trust, show dates when they were cast as well as further works carried out by Taylor's.

1842 - Taylor's job records of the original six bells, 1842-3 (the original, and a later C19 fair copy) show the diameters and weights of the three old bells, one of which, as we know from Halls and Dawson) was cast by one of the Hedderlys of Nottingham as mentioned on his printed list.

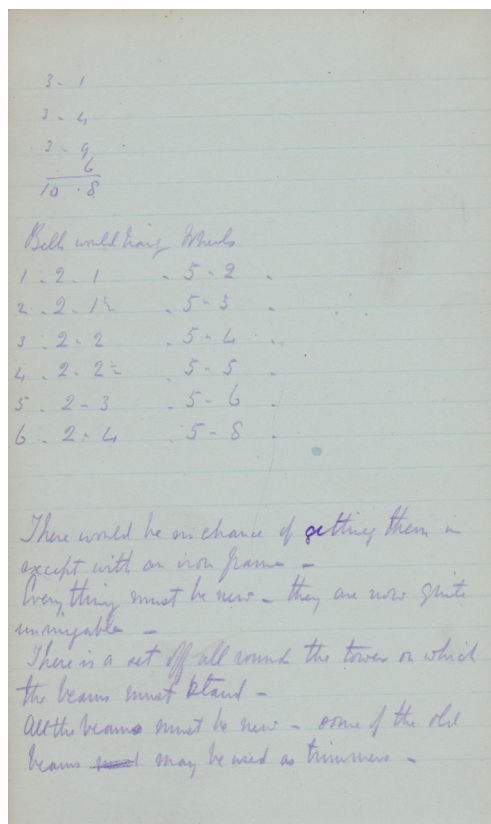
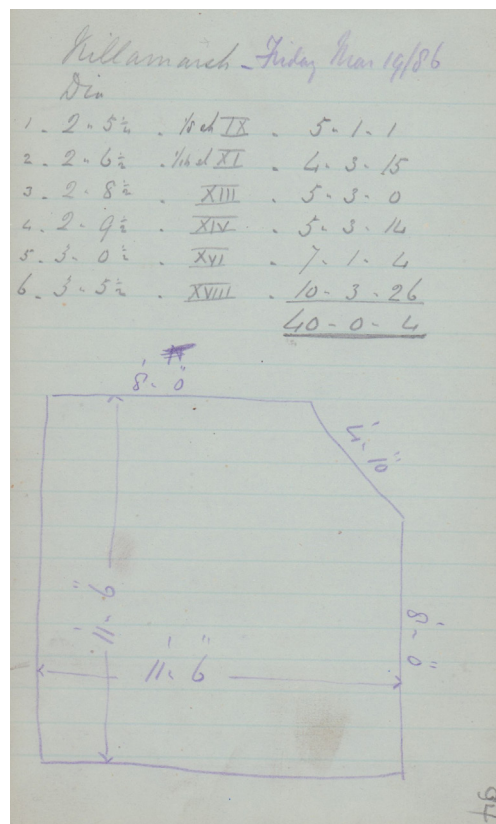
2 as Killamarsh (crooks were set) Derbyshire

2 - 5 - 75	75/5	075	9 - 11 - 16	23 -
2 - 6 1/2	20			215 -
2 - 8 1/2				215 -
2 - 9 1/2				2175
3 - 0 1/2				23
3 - 5	05 - 05 - 95	1 - 115 - 125	17 -	2.525

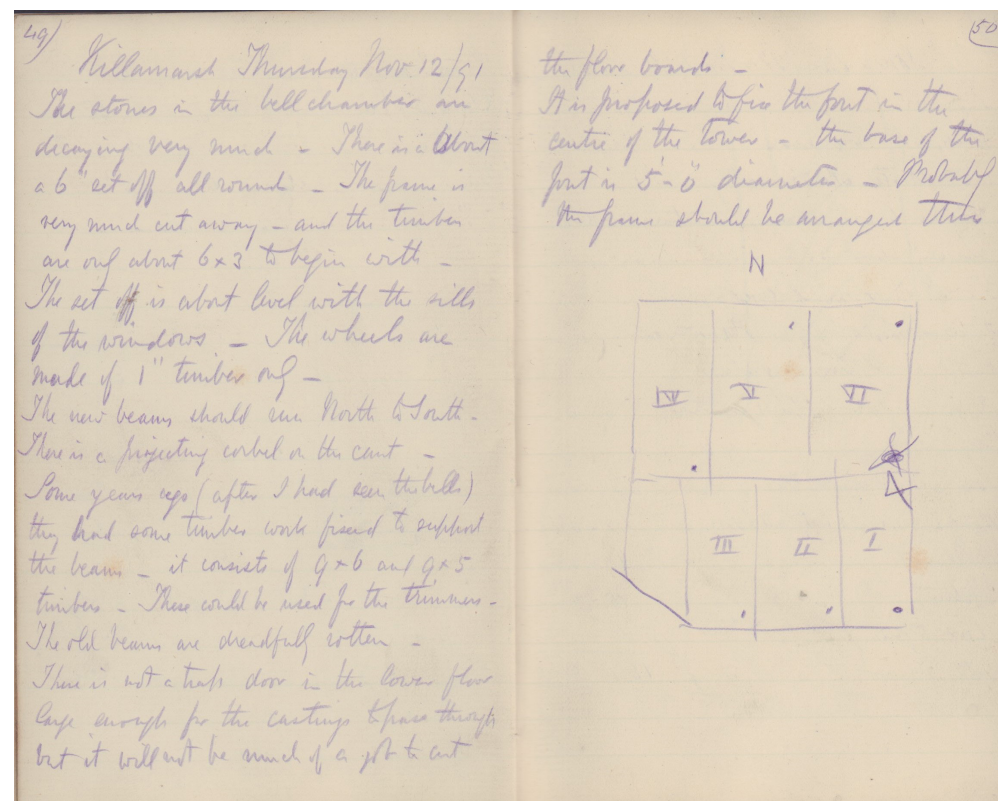
As Bells came out -

2 - 5 1/2	Thick 1 - 235 - 1/2 # IX	At an R
2 - 6 1/2	2.15 - 1/2 # XI	4 - 3.15
2 - 8 1/2	2.15 - XIII	5 - 3 - ~
2 - 9 1/2	2.225 - XIV	5 - 3.14
3 - 0 1/2	2.325 - XVI	7 - 1.4
3 - 5 1/2	2.6 - XVIII	10 - 3.26
		40.0.4

1886 - Inspection notes by John W Taylor junior. You'll note that he says "everything must be new – they are now quite unringable".



1891 - Inspection notes, again by John W Taylor junior, notes that some repairs to the frame had been done since his last visit. There is a plan of the frame – 'sawpit' layout with all six bells swinging in the same direction in two rows of three.



1892 - The job record for the re hanging of the bells, completed on 30 March 1892. The canons were cut off all the bells. This record (job book 80 p.197) gives the sizes of all the new fittings.

197		348	KILLAMARSH - Derbyshire				
Dis	Wt with canon		S.S.	P.H.	T.P.H.		
1. 2-5 1/2	5-1-1	10th IX	1/2 lb D#	1-10 1/2	1-11 1/2		
2. 2-6 1/2	4-3-13	14th XI	1/2 lb C#	1-11	2-0 1/2		
3. 2-8 1/2	5-3-0	XIII	B	1-11 1/2	2-1		
4. 2-9 1/2	5-3-14	XIV	A#	2-0	2-2		
5. 3-0 1/2	7-1-4	XVI	C#	2-1 1/2	2-3 1/2		
6. 3-5 1/2	10-3-26	XVIII	F#	2-3 1/2	2-5		
Canons to be cut off all							
Wheels	Stocks	Bells hang	Circle	Gudgeons	Brasses	Crownstaples	Choppers
1. 4-8	10 x 4	1-10		Flush	h: 8	h: 3 - 4 1/2 long	18 1/4
2. 4-9	11 x 4 1/2	1-10 1/2		"	h: 8	h: 3 - 4 1/2	19
3. 4-10	11 1/2 x 4 1/2	1-11		"	h: 9	h: 4 - 4 1/2	19
4. 4-11	12 x 4 1/4	1-11 1/2		"	h: 9	h: 4 - 4 1/2	20
5. 5-1	13 1/2 x 5	2-0 1/2		"	h: 9	h: 4 - 5 1/2	22
6. 5-6	15 1/2 x 5 1/2	2-1 1/2		"	h: 10	h: 5 - 6	26
Bolts	Stock cut down	Nutlers	Circle				
1. 5/8	1/2	6	4-5				
2. 5/8	1/2	6	4-6 1/2				
3. 5/8	1/2	6 1/2	4-8 1/2				
4. 5/8	1	6 1/2	4-10				
5. 3/4	1	7	5-1				
6. 3/4	1	8	5-6				
Completed 30th March 1892							

1892 - A copy of the invoice from our sales invoice. This shows that Taylor's provided a new cast iron "H" frame and all new fittings. This included new supporting beams below the frame. They also supplied a set of spanners for maintenance and a set of muffles (6) for half-muffled ringing. The total cost was £146.17.6

<p><i>map</i> Recd. A. J. Metcalfe Killamarsh Rectory Rotherham</p>					
Mar 31	To new hanging the ring of six bells with entirely new fittings including ropes, in a new iron H frame, and six turned iron floor brasses. Also can: spicing according to est. of 31 Mar: 1886.	125	"	"	
420	" new beams & brimms supporting the bell frame according to est. of 12 Nov: 1891.	20	"	"	
	" set of spanners according to quot: 4 Apr: 1891.	10	6		
	" set of six mufflers 9/	18	"		
	" part of the old frame	9	"	14 6 17 6	
<p><i>2 1/2% inc month balance in 2 years</i></p>					
<p><i>Errors 6 all folios 328</i></p>					
		230	19	10	x
		231	0	10	

1913 - A further inspection was carried out by John W Taylor junior, although the purpose is not clear. From the wording it's possible that he was looking to see if two more bells could be added to make a ring of eight.

(62)

KILLAMARSH - Derbyshire
Thursday April 10th 1913

See 197/80 - ext. 309/201 - $\frac{592}{126}$

As they are

Di

1.				2-5"
2.	294	510	1112	2-6"
3.				2-8"
4.				2-9"
5.				3-0"
6.	189	367	730	3-5"

Should be

as in 126 book

1.	304.1	608.3	1216.6	5-1-1
2.	273.7	547.5	1095	4-3-15
3.	243.3	486.6	973.3	5-3-0
4.	228.1	456.2	912.5	5-3-14
5.	205.3	410.6	821.25	7-1-6
6.	182.5	365	730	10-3-26
				40-0-6

Canon have since been cut off all so that they now weigh less

(63)

There is no height to hoist as it is only about 2' 6" from the timbers on the top of the H² castings to the roof timbers and the frame could not be lowered. The H castings are rather tall but even if they were reduced there would not be sufficient height gained.

The 2nd and 3rd bells along the West wall ~~to~~ could swing right into the doorway to within say a foot of the South wall.

Cambridge quarter clock by 11 o'clock - The clock works are fixed just about in the centre of the tower just above the first floor.

I think there will be no difficulty in ~~fixing~~ making an opening through this floor near the West wall which will miss the clock case - Then there is just under the bells what the ringers call a temporary floor (about 1/10 below beam of bellframe) - This has been plastered - Ringers stand on ground floor - There are sailing girdles fixed in deals - Not much trouble to alter or to add to these.

(64)

THE COMPONENTS IN BELL MAKING

HEADSTOCKS

Iron fittings are needed to finish the final assembly of the bell and its housing. The headstock is the component where the bell is hung and carries full weight of bell during its rotation through just over a circle.



Image: Headstock at Taylor's Foundry, Catherine Croney

BELL FRAMES

These were traditionally made of local hardwoods but warp and wear overtime. In the late 19th century, Taylor's switched to metal frames made of steel or cast iron. These rust so need to be cleaned and maintained.

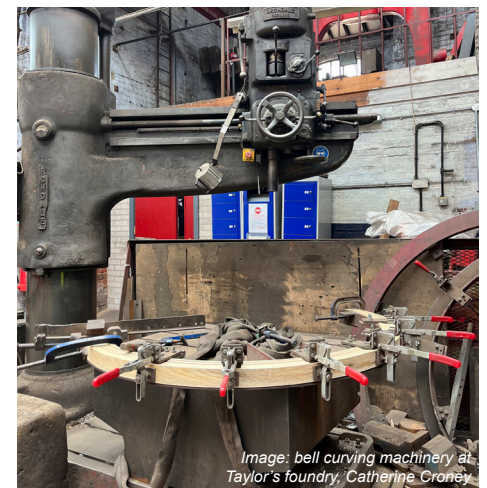


Image: bell curving machinery at Taylor's foundry, Catherine Croney

WOODWORK

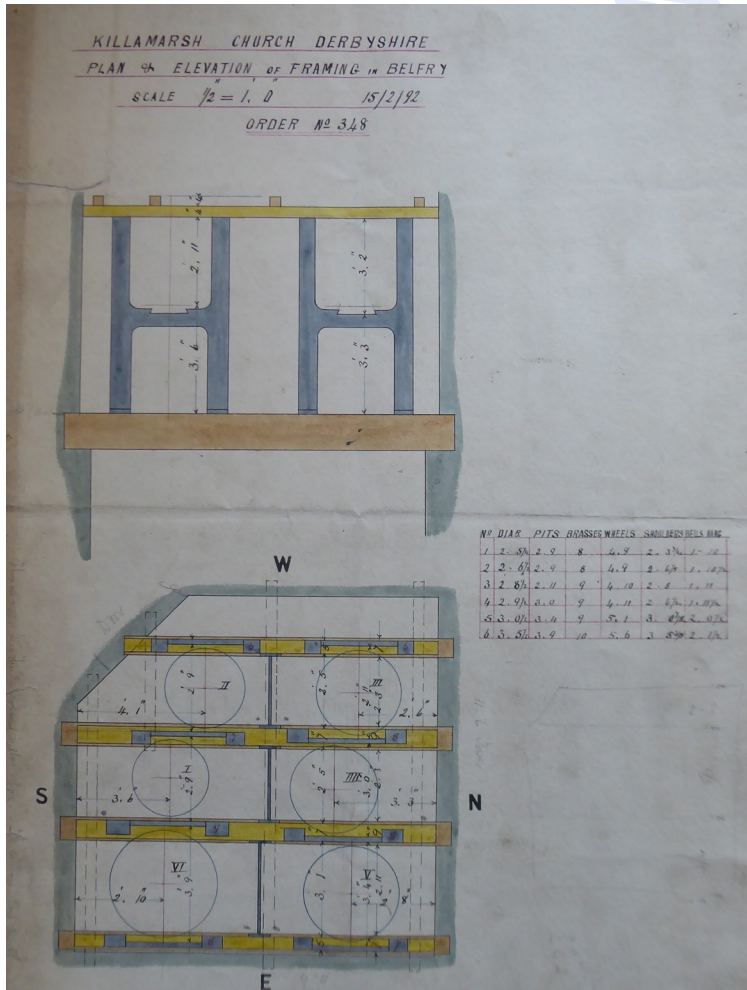
Taylor's have had their own workshop since 1875. British hardwoods oak, ash and elm are used. Bell wheels are crafted using wood softened by steam then curved to make the wheels.

BELL TUNING

A bell produces multiple tones because its shape vibrates differently in places. The main note is identified and fine tuned by carefully shaving metal from inside the bell using a lathe.



Image: bell curving machinery at Taylor's foundry, Catherine Croney



Bell	Weight	Nominal	Note	Diameter	Dated	Founder	Canons	Turning
1	5-1-1	1283.0	Dx	28.88"	1843	John Taylor	R	4
2	4-3-15	1106.0	C#	29.75"	1843	John Taylor	R	4
3	5-3-0	966.0	B	32.00"	1843	John Taylor	R	4
4	5-3-14	929.5	A#	33.00"	1843	John Taylor	R	4
5	7-1-14	814.5	G#	36.00"	1843	John Taylor	R	4
6	10-3-26	726.0	F#	41.00"	1843	John Taylor	R	4

The detail of the six bells at St Giles

HISTORY OF BELL RINGING

The sound of bells ringing is deeply rooted in British culture. Almost everyone in Britain lives within hearing range of bells. They provide the grand soundtrack to our historic moments, call out for our celebrations and toll sadly in empathy with our grief.

They call us to wake, to pray, to work, to arms, to feast and, in times of crisis, to come together. Above all, bells are the sound of freedom and peace as in World War II they hung silently until the day they could ring in the peace.

TIMELINE

680 AD	The practice of hanging bells in British churches gained popularity rapidly, with the Abbeys of Wearmouth and Whitby noted to have bells as early as 680.
750 AD	By 750, bells had become so widespread that the Archbishop of York mandated that all priests ring their bells at designated times.
Late 10th century	St. Dunstan, who served as Bishop of London and Archbishop of Canterbury, installed bells in all the churches.
1600s	After the Reformation, many churches started to reinstall bells, utilizing new technology that allowed bells to be mounted on a complete wheel.
1637	During James II's reign, bell ringing became a popular pastime among the aristocracy, offering both physical activity and mental engagement. In rural areas, local ringing teams competed against each other, often celebrating with a hearty meal at a nearby pub and awarding a 'good hat' or gloves to the best-performing ringer in the group
Mid 17th century	Development of whole wheels continued, culminating in the mid-17th century when organized ringing with changing note patterns began to emerge.
1715	The first true peal, consisting of over 5,000 variations, was reportedly rung at St Peter Mancroft in Norwich.
1837 onwards	The Victorian reform of the Church of England involved a thorough reassessment of practices established since the Reformation. In 1839, the Cambridge Camden Society initiated a nationwide effort to clean and restore churches, focusing on aspects like the tower and bell ringers.
Late 19th century	By the late 19th century, women began participating in bell ringing, with Miss Alice White of Basingstoke becoming the first woman to complete a full peal in 1896.

1900	In 1900, bell ringers were encouraged to elect a Tower Captain to oversee attendance and behaviour, including imposing penalties for poor ringing or misconduct.
1912	The growing interest among women led to the establishment of the Ladies Guild of Change Ringers in 1912.
1918	After World War I, a decline in church attendance and bell ringers occurred due to disillusionment with politicians and organised religion.
1939	All church bells were muted during World War II, only to be rung to signal enemy invasions. After the war, interest in bell ringing was rekindled, highlighted by a Dad's Army episode where a mistaken ringing caused the Home Guard to think an invasion was underway.
1950	There was a notable surge in the number of bell ringers, particularly among the youth, which also led to an improvement in ringing skills.
1997	A £3 million Lottery Grant funded 150 projects for the restoration and enhancement of bells. The "Ring In 2000" initiative aimed to recruit 5,000 new ringers, ensuring that nearly 95% of the UK's church bells were rung on January 1, 2000.

DID YOU KNOW?

Legends surrounding bells suggested they had the power to heal, ward off evil, calm storms, and protect against plagues and enemies. Consequently, bells were rung at the time of death to safeguard the departed soul from the devil.

During the 1700s, a donation was made to the Church of St Sepulchre at the Old Bailey to fund bell ringing on execution days, where the condemned received a service, flowers and a bell peal.

THE KILLAMARSH TREBLE BOB AND ITS COMPOSER

The Killamarsh Treble Bob peal was composed by Charles Severn in the early 1890s. From an interview in 2025 with Charles' great grandson, Michael Severn, there is evidence that the peal was rung in 1892 and lasted just over three hours.

There is not much information about Charles, but he was born in 1866 and died in 1934. It is thought that he was a miner. He married Sarah Heeds in 1887, and they had several children, one of them Harry, born in 1894 was Michael's grandfather. He was an accomplished bell ringer. Harry's son, Harold, born around 1920 was Michael's father. Michael, born about 1946 was a bell ringer in his youth and his son, Paul has carried on the family bell ringing tradition.

RINGERS :
HY. TAYLOR TREBLE
THOS. BETTISON 2
(CONDUCTOR)
JAS. EMSON 3

GEO. BURNHAM 4
HY. TURTON 5
CHAS. SEVERN TENOR

KILLAMARSH TREBLE BOB
COMPOSED BY
CHAS. SEVERN



Image: Headstock at Taylor's Foundry, Catherine Croney

ST. GILES' CHURCH

S. YORKS. & E. DERBYSHIRE ASSOCIATION OF CHANGE RINGERS RANG A PEAL OF 5040 CHANGES ON 6 BELLS IN 7 DIFFERENT TREBLE BOB METHODS, AT ST. GILES' CHURCH, KILLAMARSH, DERBYSHIRE, ON SUNDAY, 14TH AUGUST 1892. TIME - 3 HOURS AND $\frac{1}{2}$ MINUTE.
METHODS - KILLAMARSH TREBLE BOB, CITY DELIGHT, COLLEGE PLEASURE, ARNOLD'S VICTORY, DUKE OF YORK, VIOLET AND KENT TREBLE BOB.

Image: kindly donated by Michael Severn

Given to Harry Sever by Bob and Mayme Ginn on
October 9/1990 on the occasion of his departure to live
in Northern Ireland.

Image: kindly donated by Michael Severn

Killamarsh Treble Bob Minor

Bob	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100	101	102	103	104	105	106	107	108	109	110	111	112	113	114	115	116	117	118	119	120	121	122	123	124	125	126	127	128	129	130	131	132	133	134	135	136	137	138	139	140	141	142	143	144	145	146	147	148	149	150	151	152	153	154	155	156	157	158	159	160	161	162	163	164	165	166	167	168	169	170	171	172	173	174	175	176	177	178	179	180	181	182	183	184	185	186	187	188	189	190	191	192	193	194	195	196	197	198
-----	---	---	---	---	---	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----



BELL NEWS

And Ringers' Record:

A Weekly Journal of the Ringing Exercise; and Compendium of Information for the Clergy and Churchwardens.

No. 541.—VOL. XI.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 20, 1892.

PRICE ONE PENNY.

CHURCH AND PUBLIC CLOCKS.

JOHN SMITH & SONS, Midland
Steam Clock Works, Queen Street,
DERBY.

Manufacturers by Improved Machinery of
all kinds of Church Clocks and Carillons.
Selected by Lord Grimthorpe to make the
New Clock for St. Paul's Cathedral, which
is now in progress at their Works.

GILLETT & JOHNSTON,

(Late Gillett & Sons)
Clock Manufacturers,
Bellfounders and Bell Hangers,
CROYDON.



MAKERS OF THE
CLOCKS AT
Exeter Cathedral, Exeter, Devon
Llandaff Do. Exeter, Devon
Wells Do. Exeter, Devon
Bristol Do. Exeter, Devon
Birmingham Do. Exeter, Devon
Bury Do. Exeter, Devon
Hove Do. Exeter, Devon
Haverhill Town Hall, Haverhill, Mass.
Barnstaple Town Hall, Barnstaple, Devon
Lea Church, London
St. James Palace, London
Shroton Abbey, Shroton, Devon
Sydney Town Hall, N.S.W., Australia
Hampstead Church, Hampstead, London

BENSON'S Church & Turret Clocks.



CHURCH TURRET, STABLE, AND FACTORY CLOCKS.

Of the Best Design and Construction, of Brass or Gun-
metal, with all the Latest Improvements.

Patent from 411, 1870, to 1880.

J. W. BENSON, Clock Maker,
Maker of the great clock of Fountains Abbey, York.

Steam Clock Factory, 61 & 63, LUDGATE HILL, E.C.

Specifications and Estimates Free.

CHURCH HAT PEG

For CHURCHES, CHAPELS, CHAIRS, &c.

NO DUST, AND NO VAST SAVING IN

NO DANGER! IN

SAFE AS A

BANDBOX! HATS!

A glass-plate screw down in four pieces, and a
one-piece rubber-plate prevents the hat slipping.

1s. each; 6s. per dozen. Clock with order.

D. ANDERSON,

20, DRURY LANE, LIVERPOOL.

JAMES SHAW, SON, & CO. CHURCH & CARILLON Bell Founders,

CHURCH BELL HANGERS,
LEEDS ROAD, BRADFORD,
YORKS.

ESTABLISHED 1841.

Bells cast singly or in Rings. Church Bells,
School Bells, and Factory Bells.

OLD BELLS RECAST OR REHUNG.

MUSICAL HAND BELLS

In sets, Diatonic or Chromatic Scales.

Musical Clock Bells and Carillons to any
size or number.



Manufacturers by Steam Power of every
description of

Church, Turret, and Public Clocks.

Price Lists and Estimates Free.

KILLAMARSH, DERBYSHIRE.

THE YORKSHIRE AND THE OLD EAST DERBYSHIRE ASSOCIATIONS.

On Sunday, August 14, 1892, in Three Hours and a Half-Minute,

AT THE CHURCH OF ST. GILES,

**5040 CHANGES ON SIX BELLS, IN SEVEN DIFFERENT
TREBLE BOB METHODS,**

Being a 720 each of the following:

Killamarsh Treble Bob, City Delight, College Pleasure, Arnold's
Victory, Duke of York, Violet, and Kent Treble Bob.

Tenor 11 cwt.

HARRY TAYLOR Treble.	GEORGE BURNHAM .. 4.
THOMAS BETTISON 2.	HARRY TURTON 5.
JAMES EMMEN 3.	CHARLES SEVERN .. Tenor.

Conducted by T. BETTISON.

First 5040 by all except the tenor-man, also first 5040 on the bells for upwards of
thirty years; also first 5040 on the bells by a local company.

HOW WE HAVE RESTORED OUR BELLS

In 1892, Taylor's undertook the restoration of the bells and also updated their fittings. In 2019, Blyth's of Newark quoted to restore the bells in Killamarsh church. Thanks to the National Lottery Heritage Fund, a grant of £76,000 was secured to undertake this work.

On inspection, the six bells exhibited only slight wear on their sound bows where the 'clappers' (a piece of metal hanging inside a bell which makes the bell ring by hitting its sides) make contact, suggesting that they will not need another rotation for at least 75 to 100 years.

The restoration project rebuilt key mechanical components to make the bells easier to ring so that new ringers can be trained. It has trained new bell ringers to continue the tradition of ringing 'Killamarsh Treble Bob' at St Giles, captured oral histories of past and present bell ringers, and hosted community activities to celebrate the church's heritage.

The careful attention to detail during the rehanging ensured the bells would remain in excellent condition for many years to come. The minimal wear observed is a testament to the quality of the installation and the materials used. With the updates made by Taylor's and the subsequent maintenance, these bells are well-equipped to continue ringing beautifully for generations, preserving their historical significance and charm.

To maintain the bells' condition and ensure their longevity, Blyth's suggested a comprehensive overhaul of the installation. This process involved a complete restoration of the clapper and crown staple (used to attach the bell to the Headstock) assemblies.

Other tasks included resoling and shrouding the wheels of the three largest bells, removing wedges from the top grillage, and installing proper wall fixing brackets in the correct locations.

New 'bosses' (used to attach the bell to the headstock) were added to the ceiling of the ringing chamber and the timberwork of the bell frames were treated while the metalwork is painted. The bell chamber was cleaned to eliminate dirt and debris to ensure the bells would be operational for many years.

Recent restoration carried out by Blyth's



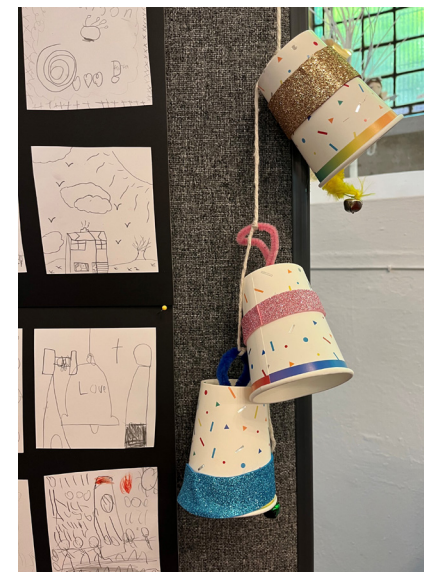
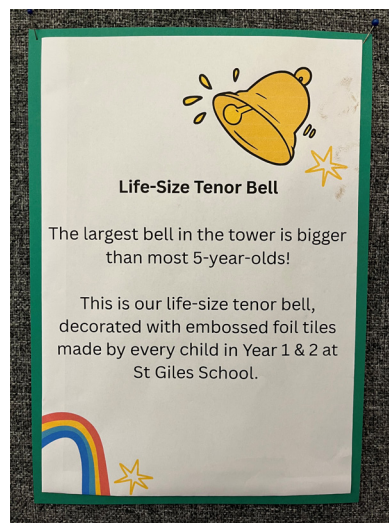
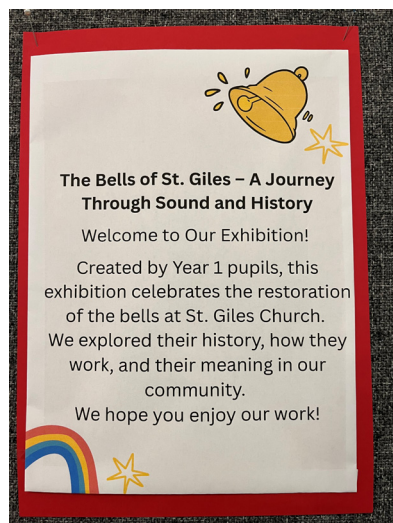
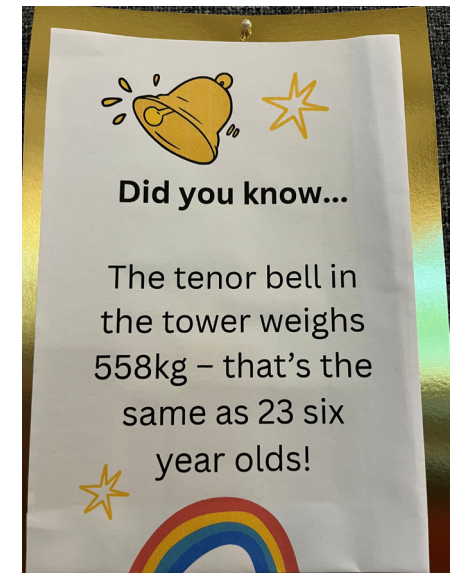
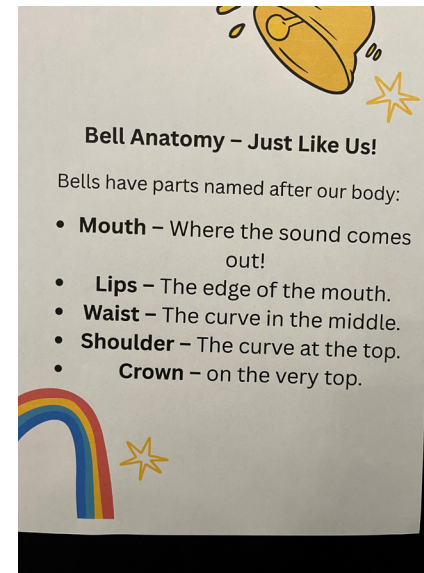
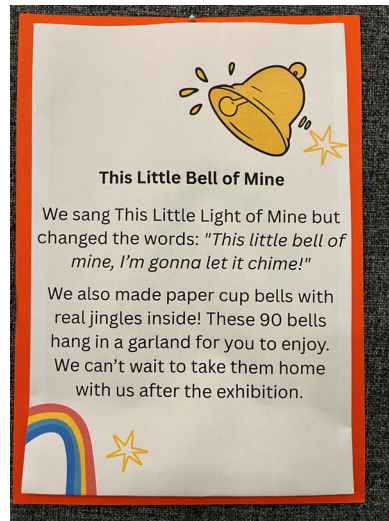
Images: Blyth's



Images: Blyth's

WORKING WITH THE LOCAL SCHOOL

In 2025, pupils at St Giles Primary School were involved in the project and made several visits to the church to learn about the bells as well as the nature in the churchyard. They produced written pieces and artworks about the bells.



As part of the National Lottery Heritage Fund project, a Bioblitz was organised in the church yard. A Bioblitz is a communal effort to record as many species within a designated location and time period as possible. They are an important way to engage the public in connecting with their environment whilst generating useful data for science and conservation.

Public participation using a special app, iNaturalist, makes it easy for everyone to participate in recording observations. This was the method used in the church yard at Killamarsh.



Sunday 4th May

St Giles Church, Kirkcroft Lane, Killamarsh S21 1AB

- Come and explore the wildlife in the Churchyard!
- Expert or beginner, individual or family – everybody is welcome.
- Help us to record as many species of birds, plants, insects etc. as we can.
- You can record by yourself, or join in planned activities at the times below.
- Family-friendly resources will be available.

08:00 – 09:00 Bird Walk

Learn some bird songs and help us to identify the birds using the churchyard.

09:30 – 10:00 Moth Trap Opening

Help us to identify what we caught in the moth trap (subject to overnight weather conditions).

10:00 – 12:00 Plant Survey / Solo Survey Time

If not attending the church service, individuals are welcome to use this time to record species. An ecologist will be using the iNaturalist app to record as many plants as possible!

12:30 - 14:30 BioBlitz Drop-In

The BioBlitz Basecamp will be set up within the Church ready for you to drop in – you can

- pick up a 'mission' – hunt minibeasts, find flowering plants or look out for birds
- borrow a bug pot or a magnifier
- get help identifying species
- learn how to use the iNaturalist recording app
- see what's been found so far

Thanks also to the Friends of St Giles Churchyard

Poster advertising the Bioblitz - Friends of St Giles Churchyard

Miller moth
Yellow-Barred Brindle Moth
Blackbird
Shuttle-shaped Dart moth
Goldcrest
Willow Warbler
Robin

Blackcap
Ribwort plantain
Ragwort
Common Cat's Ear
Shining Crane's-bill
Thyme-leaved speedwel



Images: Richard Godley

www.inaturalist.org/projects/st-giles-killamarsh-bioblitz-2025



'The Parish Church of St Giles, Killamarsh – an historic background': First written by Peter & Heather Whitfield 1998. Published by Reverend Roy Bradshaw in January 1999.

Edited and photographs added by Chris Lambley - Church Warden – May 2009.

'The Parish Church of St Giles, Killamarsh – an introduction and guide': John Hall.

Extracts from newspaper reports and original records from Taylor's Foundry: Chris Pickford, Archivist, Loughborough Bell Foundry Trust.

Killamarsh Camera Club: Andy Cotton, John Kaperys, Glyn Kaye

Report on condition of the bells from Blyth & Co. Ltd. The Church Bell Specialists: 2023.



St Giles Church successfully secured a National Heritage Lottery Fund Grant to bring back the 'Killamarsh treble bob'. This unique style of church bell ringing was originally composed in the 1890s at the church.

In the past, bell-ringing teams from across the globe have been regular visitors to hear the famous peal, ring the bells and see the local team in action.

The grant funded the full restoration of the famous bells, supported the training of the next generation of 'Killamarsh treble bob' ringers and facilitated research into 800 years of church history and its central role within village life.

The project also involved months of research; gathering historical information, photographs and stories.

The booklet has been compiled by St Giles Church. The restoration work of the bells was carried out by Blyth's of Newark. Josh Daniels scripted and made a film about the project. Killamarsh Camera Club (Andy Cotton, John Kaperys, Glyn Kaye) supplied many photographs as part of the project.

A myriad of people have willingly shared information and photographs. It is with great thanks to all those who have contributed.

Further information about the project is available on our website:

www.stgiles-killamarsh.org

The work has been funded by a grant from The National Lottery Heritage Fund, with thanks to Lottery players.

