

HAMMERSMITH

One of the leading subscribers was Sir Nicholas Crispe, a wealthy citizen of London and resident of Hammersmith who gave a ring of five bells in 1639. A treble was added in 1657 and the octave completed by 1813. The tenor of 14cwt 3qrs 13lbs was recast in 1747 by Robert Catlin; then the order came from Edward B Pope, Churchwarden, in 1820 for this bell to be recast.

17th and 18th century Churchwardens' Accounts reveal many entries concerning the bells and the ringing. Payments were made to the ringers for the ringing of bells for various anniversaries: Queen Elizabeth's birthday, Restoration day, Gunpowder Treason day - the list goes on. Payment was also received when the King and Queen passed through the town on their way to or from Windsor.

One of the peals rung in this tower was on Sunday April 24th, 1774, when six members of the Hammersmith Society rang 5040 changes of Plain Bob in three hours twenty-five minutes by:- William Lewis, Thomas Harris, William Hallett, Francis Beale, William Parris and called by James Worster.

In 1820 Queen Caroline was living in Hammersmith at the time when her husband King George attempted to obtain a divorce from his Queen. When this was unsuccessful, the bells of St. Paul were rung for four days and bottles of wine consumed in celebration.

The tower was demolished in 1882. The present north-east 157 ft high tower was completed in 1887 and the bells rehung in 1890.

The peal rung on Thursday May 5th, 1904 of 5056 changes of London Surprise Major in three hours three minutes took place when the following members of the Middlesex County Association were all bachelors: Frederick A Holden, Henry Hodgetts, Hubert Eden, Bertram Prewett, George R Pye, John R Sharman, Ernest Pye and William Pye - conductor. The records do not show if this peal was rung by eight men who just wanted to ring a peal here and realised that all the band were single men who were happy about this state, or, if they bemoaned the fact they had not found a perfect marriage partner.

Source: Michael Harris *A short history of Hammersmith parish church* (n.d.); Christopher Hibbert *London's churches* 1988, p 154; Whitechapel Bell Foundry records; Christopher J Pickford; *Ringling world* June 23 1944 p 259; Association records.