Sutton, St. James

Prior to 1889 there were three bells at St. James which had been cast in 1795 by James Harrison of Barrow upon Humber, these bore the name of the Rev. George Thompson, Minister, who held the living of Wawne and Marfleet. He had been appointed to take charge of the parish of Sutton. In 1889 these three bells were recast by John Taylor of Loughborough and augmented to a peal of five with a tenor weighing 9.3.4 of note G#. Further work was carried out in 1890, the third bell was recast and retuned from note C to B, and a new tenor then added to give a peal of six bells in the key of F#.

The bells were given by Miss Dorothy Isabel Liddell of Sutton House in memory of her brother George William Liddell who died on 17th November 1888. In 1951 the bells were rehung on new ball bearings and gudgeons by John Taylor & Co. A major restoration took place in autumn 1992, the bells have been rehung on new bearings and gudgeons and the clappers have been restored. This work was carried out by Fred Pembleton and David Stipetic.

Bell Weight Note

Diameter Date

Treble 3.2.25 D# 2' 2" 1889

2nd 4.3.21 C# 2' 4½" 1889

3rd 6.2.2 B 2' 8" 1890

4th 6.3.20 A# 2' 9½" 1889

5th 9.3.4 G# 3' 1½" 1889

Tenor 13.2.9 F# 3' 6½" 1890

David V Stipetic

Ringing at Sutton-on-Hull

During the latter 1940's the band at Sutton was a couple short for change ringing. Arthur Turner rang the Treble (often propped against the adjacent ladder), Ron Ducker the 2nd, Tommy Goodin the 3rd (he was never known to ring any other bell), Henry (Harry) Rodmell the 4th, Clem Robinson, or his brother Jack, the 5th and Cyril Ducker the Tenor. Rounds and call changes were the order of the day, but as all who have rung at Sutton know there was no excuse for not hearing any bad blows! (The bells were very loud in the ringing chamber).

A further two members of the band, Arthur E "Clocky" West and Gerald Sharp rang Plain Bob Minor with 3 tiny handbells in each hand, these bells were found still tied together several years later. "Clocky" acquired his nickname through his large collection of clocks which apparently virtually filled his house. Perhaps this was the reason for stories of handbell ringing taking place in a chicken but - there presumably they would not be con-fused by the striking of the quarters or the hours.

"Clocky" was apparently not short of money and disliked seeing horses whipped. Should this take place near his home he would buy the whip from the driver. This became known so many horse drivers would deliberately be using their whips when passing "Clocky's". Sometime after "Clocky's" death, Harry and Len Rodmell were sort-ing out his bells and opened a box which was thought to contain more bells only to find it full of whips!

The two Rodmell brothers were the mainstays of ringing at Sutton during the first half of the century. In the 1960's when a greater variety of methods were being practised at Sutton Harry was still keen to try his hand at learning - or was it re-learning -such methods as London Surprise Minor. He was of course at this time nicely into his eighties. When not taking part he and Tommy Goodin would sit on the handbell box and listen critically to the ringing, often commenting on the striking or speed. Harry rang at Sutton for well over sixty years. He died on 19th December 1968 aged 89, to be followed shortly by Len on 8th January 1969. Handbells were rung at the graveside of both these stalwarts.

Tommy Goodin's limit was Cambridge Surprise. Being quite deaf if he went wrong one would shout the instructions loud and long but Tommy would simply smile and nod his head. "Go Round" and start again was the only answer.

During the 1950's and 1960's Sutton was perhaps THE thriving change ringing tower in the area, and the Beverley and District Society has many members whose initial introduction to the Art and Science of Change Ringing has been gained at Sutton.

Ronald Ducker