



C18 Tenor Bell from Bletsoe Church.

Bletsoe originally possessed a ring of four bells cast by various bell founders and dating from the mediaeval period to the mid-C17th. In 1767 the tenor bell was re-cast by Islip Edmunds at St Neots at a cost of £39 13s 0d. In 1787, twenty years later, it was decided to have all the bells recast as a slightly lighter ring of five by Robert Taylor, who had by that time taken over the St Neots bell foundry. Around the same time Taylor had been commissioned to re-cast the tenor of Great Gransden for which he received some £20. However, Bletsoe's old tenor seems to have been of the exact pitch and size required for Gt. Gransden - Taylor had the old relief inscription chiselled away and replaced by a new incised inscription, purporting himself as its maker, before sending it to Gt. Gransden. The picture shows the bell at Whitechapel Bell Foundry on 10 August 2000, undergoing modification prior to re-hanging at Gt. Gransden. Taylor's incised inscription can just be made out between the two bands above the chalk writing. A great deal of research by Chris Pickford, the former County Archivist, uncovered this intriguing story, which was subsequently published in *The Ringing World* of 26 April 1985.

EB6 (Pat Albon)