The church and other bells of Wigtownshire

by F C Eeles and R W M Clouston

INTRODUCTION

As in the case of the similar survey of the bells in the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright the late Dr F C Eeles' note-books have formed the basis of this account of the bells in Wigtownshire (Eeles and Clouston 1967). His visits had all been made before 1915 and a number of parishes had not been reached. Mr Clouston examined all the bells in the summers of 1963 and 1964 and revised Dr Eeles' notes where appropriate.

This article is intended to be a companion to those surveys already published on bells in other Scottish counties which have appeared from time to time in the *Proceedings*. Wherever possible repetition of information is avoided.

DISCUSSION

The oldest existing bell in the county discovered in the survey is the disused one dated 1534 in the church at Kirkmaiden. The inscription records that Nicholas Ramsey, Lord of Dalhousie, caused the bell to be cast, and the inference is that John Morison was the founder though no other bells by him have been found. Unusually there are no moulding wires by the lip and at the top of the soundbow, though in other respects the founder followed traditional practice. More ancient hand-bells once existed at Whithorn and Penninghame. The latter might be the early bell preserved in the National Museum of Antiquities in Edinburgh called St Ringan's bell. Currently this bell is catalogued as Irish, but the wrought iron with bronze covering would support a date in the 5th century contemporary with St Ninian and he could have brought the bell with him from Ireland. There is a record of an inscribed bell of AD 1000 at Penninghame.

Five bells are noted as being cast in the 17th century. The important Dutch bell of 1610 in the museum at Whithorn Priory bears the name of Evert Burgerhuys of Middelburg as founder, and this is his only known work anywhere. In Holland, surprisingly, there is only documentary evidence of him. The middle bell of three in the Wigtown Town House bears the date 1633 and, in spite of the small size, is much ornamented. Comparison with bells of the same date at Belhelvie and Strichen, Aberdeenshire, shows that the founder was almost certainly Henrick ter Horst of Deventer in Holland. The Dutch bell of 1663 at Stoneykirk bears the name of Gerard Koster II of Amsterdam; it was the smallest of a chime of three bells cast for the Glasgow Tolbooth by order of the Town Council. The other two bells have also survived and are at Kirkintilloch Old Church and the People's Palace Museum, Glasgow Green. They have already been described. The uninscribed bells at Kirkinner and Leswalt, the latter being disused, both probably date from the 17th century. Different founders seem to have been involved and they probably both worked in Scotland.

The bells of 18th-century date number seven. The oldest is that of 1708 in the Whithorn Town Steeple bearing the founder's name as Peter van den Ghein V of Malines in Belgium. This is a fine bell from a family which had been sending bells to Scotland from at least as early as 1526 when Peter van den Ghein I supplied St John's church, Perth, with a chime of bells, of which five have survived to the present day.

In 1739 the Edinburgh Foundry, then being run by Ormston and Cunningham as successors to John Meikle and Robert Maxwell, supplied a bell to New Luce church which is now preserved at Loch Inch Castle. The Portpatrick bell of 1748 remains a puzzle. The ornaments are not known to appear elsewhere, and the lettering and figures are typical of the period and lack peculiar features. It is possibly a locally cast bell, but clearly by a founder who was skilled and experienced in this class of work, perhaps from Cumberland or Ireland. The disused Penninghame bell of 1750 now in the Stewartry Museum, Kirkcudbright, is the only one so far discovered in Scotland by Luke Ashton of Wigan. The bell at Dalry in the Stewartry, dated 1754, is also from the Wigan Foundry, but is likely to have been cast by Ralph Ashton II as Luke Ashton died in 1750. The treble in the Wigtown Town House just bears the date 1777. Design considerations link this bell with the Whitechapel Foundry in London, then being managed by Thomas Pack and William Chapman. The blank bells at Mochrum church and the disused bell from Inch church, now at Loch Inch Castle, date from the end of the 18th century, say about 1790, and are probably local products.

19th-century bells are comparatively numerous, and some 40 are noted. The most interesting is the small Norwegian bell of 1804 on the Glasserton Estate cast originally for the ship *Enigheden* or *Unity* of Holmestrand by Borger Riise of Tønsberg. The Whitechapel Foundry in London under Thomas Mears II supplied bells to Newton Stewart, 1833 and 1839, and one formerly in the Town Steeple there may have been by him or a predecessor. The 1861 bell at Inch New Church would be by George Mears, and later ones by Mears and Stainbank are at Loch Inch Castle Stables (1867), Garliestown (1876), Stranraer Episcopal Church (about 1891), Stranraer High Church (1914), and two bells for Whithorn RC Church (1960).

The Gorbals Foundry, Glasgow, under David Burges supplied the bell in Whithorn Parish Church (1846), and his successor John C Wilson and the company bearing his name cast bells for Lochnaw Castle (1864), Inch former Free Church (about 1860), Kirkcowan church (1871), Loch Inch Castle Gatehouse (1878), Wigtown Town House tenor (1881), Glenluce church (1882), New Luce church (1888), Drummore church (1903), Old Place of Mochrum (1905) and Port William (1922). Their list also includes a bell for Whithorn Fauldhouse and another remains at Castle Kennedy.

John Warner and Sons of London supplied a bell for Newton Stewart RC church in 1874, three bells at Ardwell Mains in the period 1882–84, and three for Ardwell church in 1911. The bell of 1896 in Kirkcolm church is also from their foundry. William Blews of Birmingham cast the Stranraer New Town Hall bell in 1873, and the Ewart School, Newton Stewart, has a steel bell by Naylor Vickers & Co of Sheffield cast in the period 1857–74.

There are two chimes of five tubular bells by Harrington, Latham & Co of Coventry, one of about 1925 at Stranraer RC church and the other at Portpatrick. The bell at Lochryan church, Cairn Ryan, of about 1880 bears the initials of the founders B F & Co of Warrington, and the bell in Stranraer Castle bears the name K McDonald and was cast about 1800.

There are a number of blank bells of 19th-century date and others of the same period with inscriptions but with no indication of who the founder was. Most seem to have been locally cast and are not of especial interest.

In this present century John Taylor & Co of Loughborough supplied three bells to Challoch

Episcopal church in 1923, one to Stranraer Old Town Hall in 1935, and one to Sandhead church in 1963.

CATALOGUE

ARDWELL. Parish church (3 bells)

The tower with spire contains a chime of three bells, tenor about 5 cwt in B. Each bell is inscribed:

CAST BY JOHN WARNER & SONS LONDON 1911.

The mouth diameters are 26 in, 28 in and 30 in with the corresponding notes of $D\sharp$, $C\sharp$ and B. The bells have flat crowns and are bolted to rolled steel joists set into the tower walls. The clappers are connected to a plucking type chiming manual.

ARDWELL. Ardwell Mains (3 bells)

The stable clock strikes on three bells. The larger of the ding-dong quarter chime bells, 16 in diameter, was cast by Warners and is dated 1882. The other, $14\frac{1}{4}$ in diameter, is without inscription. The bell has an independent crown staple and appears to be of the same date. The hour bell is well above the others and is difficult to reach. The crown staple is independent and this bell too seems to be of the same age. The clock was made by R R Child of Clerkenwell, London, in 1884 and came with the bells from Southwick House in the Stewartry.

CAIRN RYAN. Lochryan Church (1 bell)

The open western belfry contains a bell, about 18 in diameter, inscribed on the waist:

B. F. & C°
WARRINGTON

Four canons and argent. Iron stock and wheel. Clearly 19th century but the writer knows of no other bells by this firm, and Cheetham in his survey of Lancashire bells mentions none in their home county (1928, 126).

CHALLOCH. All Saints Episcopal Church (3 bells)

The spirelet over the E part of the nave roof contains a chime of three bells. All are inscribed:

JOHN TAYLOR & CO. * FOUNDERS * LOUGHBOROUGH * 1923

The stop is a smaller version of that illustrated elsewhere (Clouston 1948, 149, fig 5). The diameters are 16 in, 18 in and 20 in and the weights 3 qr 15 lb, 1 cwt 0 qr 24 lb, and 1 cwt 2 qr 14 lb. The bells are hung stationary in two tiers, the tenor below, in a metal framework. Wires from the clappers pass down the outside of the church in tubes and are connected to a manual on the ground.

DRUMMORE. St Medan's Church (1 bell)

The tower contains a bell, $19\frac{7}{8}$ in diameter, inscribed:

PRESENTED TO THE UNITED FREE CHURCH KIRKMAIDEN /
BY MAJOR JOHN GARROWAY IN MEMORY OF HIS MOTHER /
(*Soundbow*) JOHN C WILSON & C° L^TD FOUNDERS. GLASGOW. 1903

Hung with iron fittings between two beams. Handbell type argent.

GLASSERTON. Parish Church (1 bell)

The large square modern tower contains no bells. The small bell, about 18 in diameter, hangs in a bird-cage belfry on the top of the W gable. This bell is uninscribed and has neither canons nor moulding wires; probably 19th century.

The belfry has circular pillars at the corners, a cornice with three roll mouldings, small moulded finials at each corner and on the top. A well-proportioned example, but inferior to those of NE Scotland (Eeles and Clouston 1957, pls xix a and c, xx c and d). It bears the date 1580 at the top of the SW pillar on the S side, and is said to have been brought from the old church of Kirkmaiden (RCAMS 1912, 1, no. 1).

GLASSERTON. Glasserton Estate (1 bell) (pl 22a)

When inspected in 1964 this Norwegian bell was hanging in a tree close to the site of Glasserton House, but, as the branches were beginning to envelop the lip, the bell has more recently been taken down. The diameter at the mouth is $13\frac{3}{16}$ in, and the inscription reads:

<div align="center">

STØBT · AF · BORGER · RIISE · VED · TØNSBERG · 1804
(*Waist*)   ENIGHEDEN · FRA
HOLNESTRAND

</div>

Above and below the main inscription is a scallop-type border. The translation is: Cast by Borger Riise at Tønsberg 1804, Enigheden from Holnestrand. It seems clear that the bell was cast for the ship *Enigheden* or *Unity* whose home port was Holmestrand on the west side of the Oslo Fjord. There is a bell at Voe in the Shetland Islands cast by Anders Riise at Tonsberg in 1837 for the ship *Freia*. Both bells are the same size and bear the same border and lettering.

The Glasserton bell has argent and six canons; the cast-in crown staple remains, but was set in the mould a right angle out from its normal position relative to the canons. The latter are bolted to an iron headstock with lever. The bell had clearly not been used for many years as the lip had been trapped for some time between the two branches supporting the headstock.

GLENLUCE. Old Luce Church (1 bell)

The belfry contains a bell, 22 in diameter, inscribed:

<div align="center">

JOHN C. WILSON, & Cº, FOUNDERS, GLASGOW. A.D. 1882.

</div>

Four double canons connected to an iron headstock and wheel. The letters and figures of the date 'A.D. 1882.' are incised.

GLENLUCE. Public Hall (1 bell)

The hour bell for the clock, 17 in diameter, bears no inscription. A clapper is suspended from a cast-in staple but the bell, which is now hung dead, never seems to have been swung. There are no moulding wires just below the shoulder. The clock and the building date from 1878 and the bell seems to be of the same age.

GLENLUCE. Glenluce Abbey

The church, now sadly ruined, was cruciform in plan and probably had a low central tower. Unfortunately little of the piers of the crossing remain, but Symson, writing in 1684, mentions a steeple (RCAMS 1912, 105).

There is an entry in the Ayr Burgh Accounts under the date 1608–9 (Clouston 1949, 208):

<div align="center">

For the carriage of the bells from Glenluce to Ayr, £4 10s 0d.

</div>

This suggests that the monastic bells were removed at that time, but unfortunately they do not now exist in the neighbourhood of Ayr in their original state.

INCH. Parish Church (1 bell)

The lofty open turret contains a bell, about 18 in diameter, bearing just the date 1861 on the inscription band. Certainly English and very probably from the Whitechapel Foundry, London. The bell is secured to an elm headstock mounted in a cast iron A-type frame with an iron wheel. A peg on the top of the headstock engages with a stop in the frame to prevent the bell swinging more than just under a full circle. The ringer stands outside the church.

The former bell, which used to hang in the plain bird-cage belfry over the S gable of the ruined church, fell to the ground and is now preserved at Loch Inch Castle. The diameter is $18\frac{1}{2}$ in and there is no inscription. A roughish casting with slightly moulded crown, broken hand-bell type argent, and simple moulding above the soundbow. There is now a crack from the broken argent down into the crown. Only the shank of the clapper remains, the ball and flight have gone. The bell was most probably cast about 1790.

INCH. Loch Inch Castle (2 bells)

Apart from the above bell and the one formerly at New Luce church, there are two other bells at Loch Inch Castle. One in an open turret over the stables is $18\frac{1}{2}$ in diameter and is inscribed:

<div align="center">

MEARS & STAINBANK, FOUNDERS, LONDON, 1867.

</div>

The fittings and frame are of the same design as for the bell of 1861 in Inch parish church.

The clock bell in the gatehouse tower, 20 in diameter, is inscribed:

JOHN C. WILSON & Cº FOUNDERS GLASGOW. A.D. 1878.

The former free church at Castle Kennedy, dated 1846, has a bell, about 14 in diameter, inscribed:

JOHN C. WILSON, FOUNDER, GLASGOW 18 . . .

The date is obscured by the masonry when viewed with a telescope, but it will be in the period 1854 to 1875.

KIRKCOLM. Ervie-Kirkcolm Church (1 bell)

The reinforced concrete bird-cage belfry contains a bell, about 16 in diameter, inscribed:

J WARNER & SONS LᵀᴰD LONDON 1896 /
(*Waist*) KIRKCOLM PARISH CHURCH / 1896 /
REVᴰ. THOMAS BARTY. D.D. / MINISTER.

The bell for the former church hung in an ash tree against the W part of the N wall of the churchyard. When the hangings became rotten the bell was removed to Corsewall House. The bell over the stables there, about 9 in diameter, bears the following incised inscription on the waist:

KIRKCOLM / OLD / CHURCH BELL / RECAST 1899 /
SIR D. C. R. C. BUCHANAN, K.C.B. / CORSEWALL

Sir David Carrick Buchanan, KCB, gave the clock and bell to Kilmacolm Old Church, Renfrewshire, in 1875 (Clouston 1948, 162).

KIRKCOWAN. Parish Church (1 bell)

Set between beams above the tower roof is a bell, $24\frac{3}{16}$ in diameter, inscribed:

JOHN C. WILSON. FOUNDER GLASGOW. A.D. 1871.

Hung with iron fittings. The former bell fell down and was broken.

KIRKINNER. Parish Church (1 bell)

The tower contains an uninscribed bell, $13\frac{1}{2}$ in diameter, which probably dates from the 17th century. The bell is very cleanly cast and new looking, but has been quite appreciably worn by the clapper. The canons and argent remain but the cast-in crown staple has broken off and a new one has been fitted in the same plane. The clapper ball in section looks like a spade as portrayed on playing cards and has no flight; probably 17th century. The ringer stands immediately under the bell with no floor between, a rather dangerous arrangement if there is any risk of the clapper dropping out.

KIRKMAIDEN. Parish Church (2 bells) (fig 1, pl 21a)

The 1885 arched belfry on top of the west gable contains a bell, $17\frac{1}{2}$ in diameter, inscribed:

(*Waist*)   ERECTED
1885

Hung with an iron stock and iron three-quarter wheel. No canons or moulding wires, only a simple hollow moulding above the soundbow.

The former bell was removed to Logan House in 1885 but more recently has been returned to the church; 14 in diameter at the mouth and inscribed:

× NICOLAIVS × RAMSADOMINVS × DEDALHVISSI × ME × FIERI × FECIT ×

ANO/DNI × MILLESIMO × QVIGENTISIMOXXXIIII × IH̃S × MARIA × IHONE × MORISON ×

A very peculiar bell. The inscription is in small Roman lettering with Lombardic Ds, Ls and Hs; perhaps the Os and Ss might be regarded as the same. All the Ns are reversed. Above the upper line of inscription there are two moulding wires surmounted by a border of stunted fleur-de-lys, then the $\frac{3}{8}$ in high lettering in a band $\frac{3}{4}$ in high, then a $\frac{3}{4}$ in gap, and then a $\frac{5}{8}$ in wide band with the second line of inscription. The rest of the bell is absolutely plain without moulding wires or other ornamentation. One of the double canons has been broken off and a false crown staple has been fitted. The clapper has the top end closed
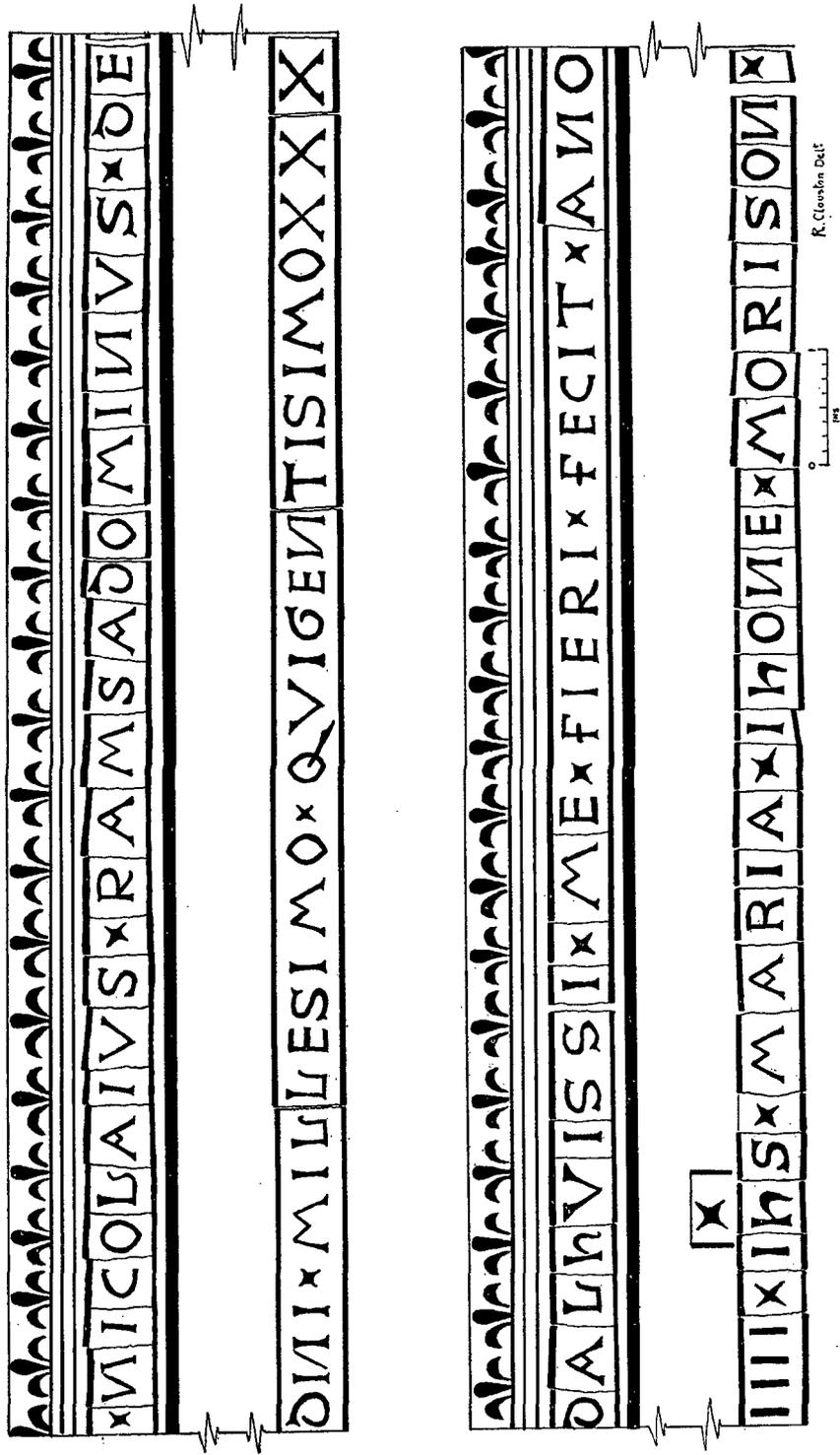
FIG 1 Inscription on the 1534 bell at Kirkmaiden

over the staple and the ball lacks a flight. A kind of four-pointed star is used as a stop between most of the words and it is also placed above the H of IHS.

It is to be presumed that John Morison was the founder in 1534, but no other bells by him are known, nor had the late Dr F C Eeles or the present writer ever seen a similar bell anywhere else. The bell was cast for Nicholas Ramsay, and then passed to Gordon, the Laird of Lochinvar, who presented it as a wedding present to Alexander Gordon of Clanyard, Lochinvar, and the bell was used at Clanyard Castle about the end of the 16th century, being subsequently moved to the parish church (RCAMS 1912, 61, no. 154).

LESWALT. Parish Church (2 bells) (pl 21c)

The present church has an uninscribed modern bell, about 20 in diameter, hung in a plain bird-cage belfry over the W end. The bell for the older church, now in ruins, used to hang in a large sycamore tree at the extreme NW corner of the old churchyard, but the bell is now kept in the new graveyard opposite. The diameter is $14\frac{5}{8}$ in and there is no inscription. Round shoulders with rather straight sides, flat projecting soundbow, no moulding wires and very rough at the lip. There were six canons but they have been replaced by four bolts through the crown; the argent remains, but, unusually, there is no central hole in it. It seems probable that the bell dates from the 17th century.

There is no trace of any belfry upon the ruin of the old church, in each gable of which there is a fireplace with chimney.

LESWALT. Lochnaw Castle (1 bell)

Lochnaw Castle has a small bell, $13\frac{1}{8}$ in diameter, hung in a bird-cage belfry at ground level on the side of the courtyard nearest the lake. The inscription reads:

JOHN C. WILSON / FOUNDER / GLASGOW. / 1864.

MOCHRUM. Parish Church (1 bell)

The bird-cage belfry over the W gable contains an uninscribed bell, $15\frac{3}{4}$ in diameter. A rather rough casting, somewhat flower-pot shaped with hand-bell type argent and no canons. There are some very shallow mouldings on the flat crown and ogee mouldings at the top of the soundbow where it joins the waist. There are none below the shoulder, and the bell was almost certainly cast using a solid pattern rather than a strickle. Poor tone. Probably late 18th century.

The fittings are peculiar; the timber headstock is cylindrical and the argent is held by a bolt through a horseshoe shaped iron band. A half wheel is now connected to the headstock by four spokes but formerly there was a fifth. The rope falls outside the church.

MOCHRUM. Old Place (1 bell)

The courtyard contains a bell, 12 in diameter, inscribed:

OLD PLACE OF MOCHRUM 1905

Cast by John C Wilson & Co Ltd of Glasgow and appears in their list of bells. Eight canons bolted to a deadstock and rung naval fashion.

NEW LUCE. Parish Church (1 bell)

The small bird-cage belfry over the W end contains a bell, 20 in diameter, inscribed:

PRESENTED BY THE RIGHT HON: JOHN HAMILTON DALRYMPLE, / EARL OF STAIR K.T. 1888. / JOHN C. WILSON & C?, FOUNDERS. GLASGOW. A.D. 1888.

Iron fittings and hand-bell type argent.

NEW LUCE. Loch Inch Castle (1 bell) (pl 21b)

The former parish church bell is preserved at Loch Inch Castle, $15\frac{3}{4}$ in diameter, and inscribed:

(*Flower*) GIFTED BY THE PARISHIONERS OF NEWLUCE / (*Flower*) ORMSTON & CUNNINGHAM EDIN^R FECIT J739

The lettering is that used by the earlier Edinburgh founders Meikle and Maxwell, and all the Ns are reversed. The crown is badly damaged with a large hole right through; the canons and argent have been

s

removed and efforts have been made to repair the damage by welding. The peculiar locally made clapper is also preserved, the ball is conical and has no flight.

NEWTON STEWART. Penninghame Church (1 bell)

The tower with spire contains a single bell, 35½ in diameter, hung in a timber frame with contemporary fittings for swing chiming and inscribed:

THOMAS MEARS FOUNDER LONDON
(*Waist*) PRESENTED TO THE PARISH OF PENNINGHAM/
BY BENJAMIN BOYD MDCCCXXXIX

The former bell by Luke Ashton of Wigan, 1750, is described under Penninghame.

NEWTON STEWART. Roman Catholic Church of St Ninian (1 bell)

The open belfry contains one bell, 21⅛ in diameter, inscribed:

J. WARNER & SONS LONDON 1874.

Hung stationary and struck by an external hammer.

NEWTON STEWART. Town Steeple (1 bell)

The present bell, 13 in diameter, is without inscription and appears to date from about 1850. Dr Eeles, about 1900, noted an uninscribed bell from the Whitechapel Foundry, 17½ in diameter, which was then cracked and disused. It seems that the present bell was hung when the new clock was installed about 1923.

NEWTON STEWART. Former Civil Defence Headquarters (1 bell)

This building, erected 1832, was originally Samuel Douglas' Free School. The central tower contains a bell, 18⅛ in diameter, inscribed:

1833

Clearly from the Whitechapel Foundry, London, cast by Thomas Mears II. Hung with contemporary timber fittings including a wheel for swing chiming. Now disused as the clock has been removed and there is no rope.

NEWTON STEWART. Douglas Ewart High School (1 bell)

The former Ewart Institute (1864) has a cast steel bell from the foundry of Naylor Vickers & Co, Sheffield.

PENNINGHAME. Old Parish Church

Very little now remains on the site of the old parish church. The ancient bell is said to have been inscribed (Symson 1684):

Campana Sancti Niniani de Penygham M.

Symson assumed that the final M stood for the date, AD 1000, though no dated bells of this period have survived in Britain.

There is also a record of a hand-bell here called 'Clog Rinny' or bell of St Ninian (Wilson 1851, 660). A handbell was certainly in use in 1506 when there is an entry in the Royal Accounts (*see the Gallovidian Annual* 1920, 41):

March 17th 1506 in Penyghame, to ane man that bure
St Ninian's bell   ix s.

James IV was on a pilgrimage to Whithorn to pray for the Queen's recovery. In 1851 Wilson records that a bell called St Ninian's was then in the possession of Mr Bell of Dungannon in Ireland but he does not mention Penninghame in his description. This bell is now in the National Museum of Antiquities in Edinburgh where it is catalogued as Irish. The material is wrought iron with the remains of a bronze covering so the bell could well have been made in the 5th century when St Ninian was alive and could possibly have had some connection with Penninghame but this has yet to be proved. The height is only 6½ in and in plan the mouth is quadrangular with tapering straight sides rising to a handle on the crown.

From 1750 till 1838 the bell in use was the bell now preserved in the Stewartry Museum, Kirkcudbright. The mouth diameter is 18¾ in and the inscription reads:

(Border) **Kirk Bell of Penningham J750** *(Plaque)* /
∴ Awake · thou · that · Sleepest · and · Christ · Shall · giue · thee · Life

The border also appears on the priest's bell at Rhuddlan, Flintshire, and the plaque bears:

Luke (*a bell*) Ashton
Wigan   Fecit

The 'w' in Awake is really an 'r' and a 'u' run together. The Wigan foundry of the time was one of the very few to use lower-case lettering in their inscriptions. This is the only known bell in Scotland by Luke Ashton, though there is a bell at Dalry in the Stewartry most probably by Ralph Ashton II of Wigan, dated 1754.

In 1838, with the presentation of a new bell to the parish church by Mr Benjamin Boyd of Merton-hall, the 1750 bell was given to the church at Bargrennan. The bell remained in use there until a crack developed and was then given to the Stewartry Museum.

PORTPATRICK. Parish Church (1 bell)

The present church, built in 1842, has a tower containing a single uninscribed bell, 30⅜ in diameter. There are a number of moulding wires just below the shoulder and the design of the bell suggests that it is a Scottish product, but not from the Gorbals Foundry, Glasgow. Hand-bell type argent and clumsy wooden wheel. Date probably about 1842.

PORTPATRICK. Old Church (1 bell)

In the interesting round tower of the old church hangs a bell, 19½ in diameter, inscribed:

PORT (*flower*) PATRICK (*flower*) PARISH (*flower*) J748
(*flower and leaf ornament alternating*)

The bell is right up in the cylindrical central part of the roof, and with no floors now remaining in the tower the present writer has only seen the bell from below. Dr Eeles obtained a rubbing and noted that it was a most peculiar bell with a very clear tone. The inscription is round the lower part of the waist, just above the soundbow, and the bell is covered with moulding wires and ornaments. There are mouldings above the shoulder, heavy mouldings above the soundbow and below the waist, two lines by the lip and four upon the upper part of the waist. A stop like a small rose is used between the words and the inscription band is filled up with it, alternating with a leaf ornament. There is a band of the same on the upper part of the waist, and on the soundbow is a band of variegated leaf ornament with small medallion heads at intervals, all in high relief, but coarse in detail and with a rough surface.

The bell originally seems to have had canons, but is now fixed to an iron stock by what appear to be the remains of the canons. That the bell was cast for Portpatrick cannot be doubted, on account of the inscription, but where or by whom it is impossible at present to say. The lettering and the rose stop are very like those of Robert Catlin of London who was working in the period 1738 to 1751, but the other ornaments are clearly not his, and the bell is most un-English in shape and treatment. The bell has been disused for many years and now has no rope.

PORTPATRICK. Church Hall (5 bells)

The former Free Church, now the church hall, has a set of five tubular bells, largest 7 ft 4½ in long in C, cast by Messrs Harrington, Latham & Co of Coventry. They are now dismantled.

PORT WILLIAM. Church (1 bell)

The metal belfry of this former Free Church contains one bell, about 14 in diameter, inscribed:

JOHN C. WILSON & C$^{\circ}$ L$^{\text{TD}}$ FOUNDERS, GLASGOW, 1922.

SANDHEAD. Church (1 bell)

This modern church, taking the place of a former Free Church, has a detached stone tower some 25 ft high. The upper part has an open belfry containing a bell, weighing exactly 1 cwt, inscribed:

JOHN TAYLOR & CO. ∗ FOUNDERS ∗ LOUGHBOROUGH ∗ 1963

The bell is hung stationary from an iron deadstock, and is struck by a clapper operated electrically from the church.

SORBIE. Church (1 bell)

The parish church at Garliestown contains one bell, $33\frac{15}{16}$ in diameter, weighing 7 cwt 0 qr 18 lb, hung for swing chiming and inscribed:

<p align="center">MEARS & STAINBANK, FOUNDERS, LONDON, 1876.</p>

The fittings include elm headstock and timber wheel as originally supplied. The bearings are fixed to two beams which span the tower walls.

The older church at Sorbie was unroofed in 1877 and the bell in use there till then had no inscription. This bell was sent to London in part payment for the new bell noted above.

SORBIE. West Church (1 bell)

The former Free Church at Sorbie, now Sorbie Church West, has a small bell of about 12 in diameter; apparently uninscribed and dating from about 1845. Hand-bell type argent and no moulding wires just below the shoulder.

There are now no bells in the old churches at Kirkmadrine and Cruggleton. There are three bells on the Galloway House estate, but all seem to be later than 1850, and one bears the name of a ship.

STONEYKIRK. Parish Church (1 bell)

The tower contains a fine Dutch bell, $18\frac{11}{16}$ in diameter, inscribed:

<p align="center">**(a head) GERARD · KOSTER · ME FECIT · AMSTELREDAMI · A° · J663**
(Waist) Arms of the City of Glasgow.</p>

This is the smallest of the three bells cast in the same year by this founder for Scotland; the others are at Kirkintilloch Old Church, Dunbartonshire, $22\frac{1}{4}$ in diameter, and the People's Palace Museum, Glasgow, about 25 in diameter. The inscriptions and decoration of all three are identical and have been illustrated elsewhere (Clouston 1948, pl xxxv, 1, figs 4, 12 and 16). At the moment there are no other known bells in Scotland by this founder, Gerrit Koster II of Amsterdam (Clouston 1948, 176).

Stoneykirk church was rebuilt in 1827 and the bell hangs between beams in the tower. The double canons have been broken off and the remainder with the argent have been used as a shank and fitted to an iron stock to which is attached an iron half-wheel. The crown staple has been broken and the clapper is hung from four bolts through the crown. The bell has been quarter turned and there are clock hammer marks on the outside of the soundbow, though there is no clock here.

A very good bell with clear and good lettering and a rich ornamental border above and below the inscription. The arms of Glasgow on the waist are in a circular medallion containing the full motto FLOREAT GLASGVA PRÆDICATIONE EVANGELII; the main pitches are 1760, 1520, 1060, 888, 745, and 355 cycles per second.

The three bells noted above were ordered for the Glasgow Tolbooth by the Town Council and did duty there till 1792. The tenor bell, now in the People's Palace, Glasgow, then went to the Calton Parish Church, Glasgow, and remained there till 1881. The Stoneykirk bell is also thought to have come from the Calton Church.

STRANRAER. Old Church

The church has no bell; and the town bell is used for church services.

STRANRAER. High Kirk (1 bell)

The conspicuous tower contains a bell 38 in diameter, weighing 9 cwt 0 qr 5 lb, and inscribed:

<p align="center">MEARS & STAINBANK, FOUNDERS, LONDON. (*Trade medallion*) /
TO THE GLORY OF GOD. / ISABELLA VICTORIA WHYTE / PLACED ME
HERE, IN MEMORY OF / HER HUSBAND, JOHN WHYTE. / 1914. /
I THANK MY GOD UPON EVERY REMEMBRANCE OF YOU.</p>

From the Whitechapel Foundry, London; the trade medallion is based on that used by an earlier owner of the foundry, Robert Mot, from about 1575, and includes three bells, a crown and initials AH for Arthur Hughes, the Master Founder in 1914, all enclosed in a wreath. The bell has Doncaster type canons and is tuned to the Old Standard. The equipment includes a timber headstock and wheel, plain bearings, and a lowside cast iron frame set on rolled steel joists. No stay or slider.

STRANRAER. Episcopal Church (1 bell)

The bell for the Episcopal Church of St John the Evangelist, about 16 in diameter, was cast by the Whitechapel Foundry, London. The church is dated 1891, and the bell is probably of this period.

STRANRAER. RC Church of St Joseph (5 bells)

The central tower contains a set of five tubular bells supplied by Messrs Harrington, Latham & Co of Coventry about 1925.

STRANRAER. United Free Church (1 bell)

A single uninscribed bell, about 18 in diameter, which appears to date from about 1850.

STRANRAER. Castle (1 bell)

In the bird-cage belfry on top of the old castle is a bell, $22\frac{1}{4}$ in diameter. On the waist are the arms of Glasgow without the motto but with a scroll above inscribed GLASGOU and another below inscribed K MᶜDONALD. There are no other marks or inscription. There is a crack in the soundbow and the bell is disused. No clapper or crown staple. One double canon has gone and the others are surrounded by lead used to anchor the bell to the iron headstock. Most probably cast about 1800.

STRANRAER. Old Town Hall (1 bell)

The present bell, $24\frac{3}{8}$ in diameter, weighing 2 cwt 3 qrs 19 lb, is inscribed:

JOHN TAYLOR & CO. * FOUNDERS * LOUGHBOROUGH * 1935 *

The bell is hung dead and is sounded only by the clock which was installed in 1936. Dr F C Eeles noted an earlier bell, about 18 in diameter, bearing no inscription. It was similar to the uninscribed bells at Inch and Mochrum, and was formerly used for church services and for the earlier clock.

STRANRAER. New Town Hall (1 bell)

The tower with spirelet contains a bell, $38\frac{1}{8}$ in diameter, inscribed:

WILLIAM BLEWS AND SONS FOUNDERS BIRMINGHAM 1873.

Cast with six canons and hung with wooden fittings in ball bearings in a wooden frame which is a very tight fit in the tower. The bell is used for church services at the Old Church as well as for civic purposes.

WHITHORN. St Ninian's Priory (2 bells)

The tower of the present parish church now contains the bell from the former Free Church, $18\frac{5}{8}$ in diameter, inscribed:

(at front on waist) DAVID BURGES / FOUNDER / GLASGOW / 1846
(at rear on waist) Nᵒ / 185

The bell has eight canons and is hung with cast iron fittings between beams in the tower.

In the Museum is preserved another bell, $11\frac{3}{4}$ in diameter (pl 21d), inscribed:

EVERT · BVRGERHVYS · ME · FECIT · 1610 ·

A unique bell from the Middelburg foundry in Holland, as this is the only known bell to bear the name of Evert Burgerhuys. In his native Holland there is only documentary evidence of him, and a recent list of Dutch bell-founders, published in Holland, omitted his name (Assumburg 1962, 55). The lettering is from the same set as used on the Roseneath, Dunbartonshire, bell cast by Jan Burgerhuys I in 1610 and illustrated elsewhere (Clouston 1948, 179, fig 5, a). The bell is well cast with the exception of the inside of the crown, where normally there would have been an iron cast-in crown staple to support the clapper. In this case the mould seems to have given way and there is a bronze knob where one would expect to find the staple. Two holes have been drilled through the crown to take a false staple. There are no tuning marks and the tone is quite good. There seems to be no precise record of where this bell was hung; in 1911 it was preserved in the Priory crypt (RCAMS 1912, 168, no. 491), and before that had been discovered disused in the Town Hall *(see The Gallovidian Annual* 1920, 42). Dr Eeles noted that the bell formerly hung in the town steeple.

Symson in his description of Galloway (1684) notes that the Priory had an ancient hand-bell; 'There was in this town a famous priory, and a stately church, founded by St Ninian, and dedicated to his uncle,

St Martin of Tours, ... Sure I am that there is a little hand-bell in this church, which in Saxon letters tells it belongs to St Martin's Church'. This inscription could well have been incised on the surface like that on the Bell of Armagh cast about the year 900 (Walters 1912, 7).

WHITHORN. RC Church of SS Martin and Ninian (2 bells)

The open belfry contains two bells cast by Mears & Stainbank of Whitechapel, London, in 1960; the smaller is 15½ in diameter in E and the larger 19 in diameter in C.

WHITHORN, ISLE OF. Church (1 bell)

This was originally a Free Church, and the building is dated 1844. The open turret contains an uninscribed bell of this date. Dr Eeles records a bell about 15 in diameter in the former quoad sacra church here (no inscription), but this was not seen in 1964.

WHITHORN. Town Steeple (1 bell) (pl 22c)

This contains a fine bell, 19$\frac{15}{16}$ in diameter, inscribed:

PETER · VANDER · GHEIN · HEEFT · MY · GHEGOTEN · INT · IAER · /
17 (*shield*) 08

See pl for part of the inscription. The shield contains a bell, the initials RA, and some floral ornament. A very good border of fleur-de-lys appears above and below the inscription, evidently made from stamps of much earlier date than the bell. The lettering is exceedingly clear and good.

The inscription is in Flemish, and may be translated as 'Peter van den Ghein cast me in the year 1708'. The van den Ghein family were noted bell-founders at Mechlin or Malines in Belgium (Clouston 1949, 249; Radford 1950); the first was Willem who died in 1533 and the firm was carried on by the van Aerschodt family at Leuven until recent years. The founder of this particular bell was Peter van den Ghein V, who, with his cousin Matthias, cast a carillon for Nijmegen in 1738. No other bells by him have been discovered in Scotland, but by 1708 trade with Continental founders was virtually nil due to the competition from local and English foundries.

The bell is hung between steel girders in the base of the spire; though hung in bearings, there is neither wheel nor lever, and the bell is only sounded by the clock. The argent and six canons remain and the clapper of normal design is hung from a false crown staple inserted parallel to the original cast-in one. There are no tuning marks, and the pitches are approximately 1840, 1620, 1205, 962 and 457 cycles per second. It is an octave hum bell, the style of tuning used today, but the Fundamental (962 c/s) should be an octave below the Nominal (1840 c/s); being rather sharp the tone is not as good as it could be.

WIGTOWN. Parish Church

The church tower contains no bell and the tenor bell in the Town House is rung for church services.

WIGTOWN. Former Free Church (1 bell)

The former free church, now disused, which bears the date 1845, contains one bell, about 18 in diameter, hung in an open bellcote. No inscription is visible and the bell appears to date from 1845. Cast iron headstock and wheel, hand-bell type argent, and no moulding wires by the shoulder.

WIGTOWN. Town House (3 bells) (pl 22b)

The tower contains three bells, mouth diameters 19$\frac{1}{8}$ in, 21$\frac{3}{8}$ in and 32$\frac{1}{2}$ in, notes B♭, A♭ and C♯. The inscriptions are:

Treble.	1777
Second.	(*a head*) O * GOD * LET * WIGTOVNE * FLOVRISH * BY * THY * WORD * IN * CHRIST * WHO * IS * OVR * ONLIE \ / (*head in a wreath*) HEAD * AND ANNO * 1633 (*border*)
Tenor.	PRESENTED TO THE ROYAL BURGH OF WIGTOWN, / BY THOMAS MURRAY, PROVOST – A.D. 1881. / JOHN C. WILSON. & C⁰., FOUNDERS. GLASGOW.

The treble is almost certainly from the Whitechapel Foundry, London, having been cast by Thomas Pack and William Chapman.

The second bell is an interesting one from Holland, most probably cast by Henrick ter Horst of Deventer. The bells at Belhelvie and Strichen, Aberdeenshire, bear his name and the same date as the Wigtown bell (Eeles and Clouston 1957, 136–7, pl xvii c; 1958, 105). The border above the inscription on all three bells is the same, as is the stop between the words; and the smaller lettering on the Wigtown bell appears on the other two bells. The border of leaves and grape-like fruit on the Wigtown bell also appears in a modified form below the inscriptions on the other two bells. The stop between the words on these three bells is the same as that on the Dutch bell at Kirkoswald, Ayrshire (Clouston 1949, 235), cast by an unknown founder in 1677, but the lettering and borders are different. The Dutch bell at Grange, Banff-shire, cast 1677, also bears this stop.

As can be seen from the illustration, this Dutch bell is very neatly cast; the lettering is rather heavy and some letters are set very close together, but the detail of the head which appears at the beginning of each line is extremely good. The inclined bar between the two lines is to signify to the reader when to start on the lower line. The inscription seems to have a superfluous AND after HEAD, but the founder may have originally intended to have a longer text.

The tenor is from the Gorbals Foundry, Glasgow, and was added in 1881. The two smaller bells are now disused. The treble is hung with timber headstock and wheel and retains argent and six canons. The tone is quite good. The middle bell has a flat portion on the soundbow inwards from the lip, which is inclined to the horizontal plane of the mouth, a feature found on a number of Continental bells. The argent and six canons remain, and the cast-in crown staple was put in the mould a right angle out com-pared with normal, and with the bell hung quarter turned casual inspection suggests that the bell has never been turned. The original clapper remains, connected to the staple with an iron link, and its shaft is conical, terminating in a relatively large bun-shaped ball and no flight. The bell was that used for the clock before the tenor was added. The fittings include a wrought iron headstock and timber wheel.

The tenor has cast iron fittings and is hung for swing chiming. It is also now used as the clock bell. The present clock by Ritchie of Edinburgh, 1864, has a $2\frac{1}{2}$ secs pendulum of 20 ft 5 in. The tenor is rung for church services, Town Council meetings and for the Sheriff's Court.

The Gallovidian Annual (1920, 43) records a minute of the Town Council, under date 3 March 1727, that one Aron Peever was to recast a bell in Wigtown for the Town House for £10. Aaron Peever was a bell-founder whose home was at Kirkoswald, Cumbria, and was active in the period 1724 to 1729 (Whitehead 1884, 226–7). His bells are quite rare in England and none have so far been discovered in Scotland; certainly none of the bells here now are his work.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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a   Kirkmaiden

b   New Luce
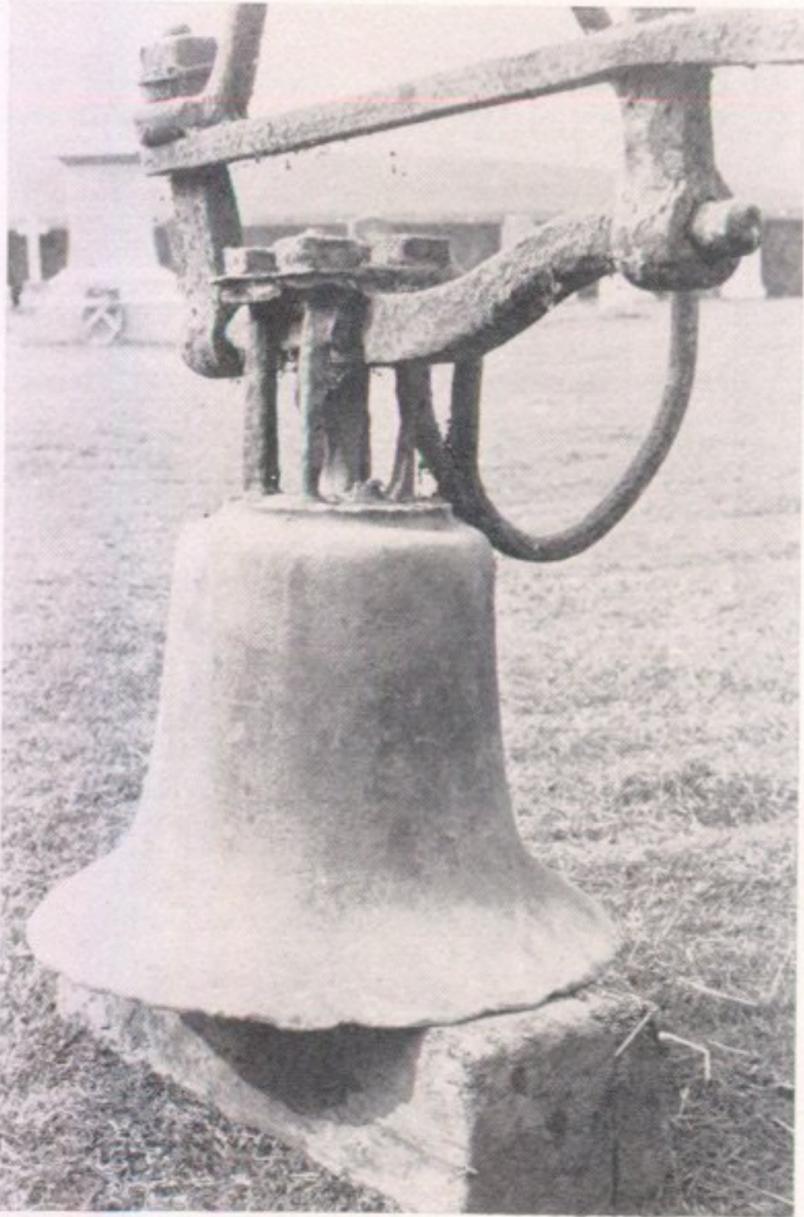
c   Leswalt

d   Whithorn Priory

Wigtownshire bells | EELES and CLOUSTON

PLATE 22 | PSAS 107

a Glasserton
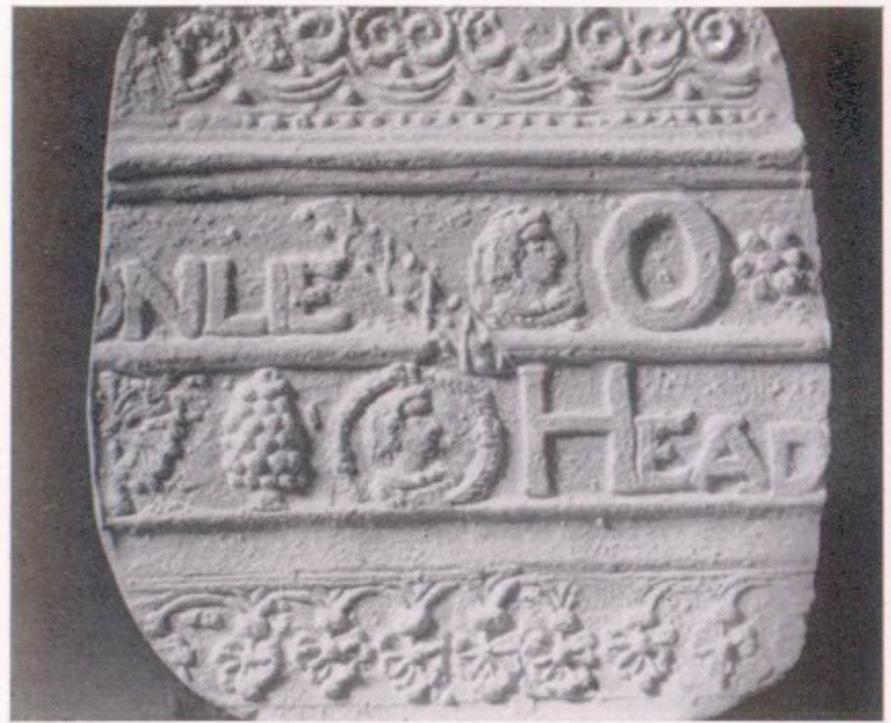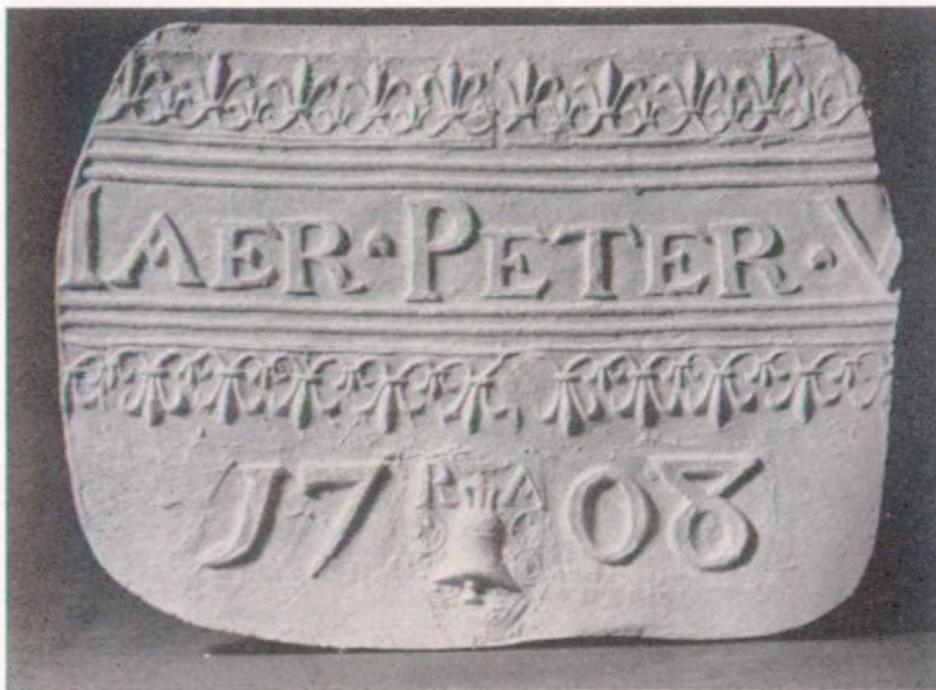
b Wigtown

c Whithorn

d Kersmains

EELES and CLOUSTON | Wigtownshire bells
CLOUSTON | Kersmains bell