

Miles Graye of Colchester and of Saffron W'olden.—The following note forms a fresh contribution to our knowledge of Miles Graye ii., one of the three famous Colchester bell-founders of that name. The genealogy of this family is very involved, and although Prebendary Deedes and Mr. H. B. Walters collected a mass of material, they were unable to compile a pedigree for their great work *The Church Bells of Essex*, published in 1909. Additional light, however, has since been thrown on the question by Mr. G. Rickword (*Trans. E.A.S., N.S.*, vol. xii., p. 256; vol. xiii., p. 142), who discovered, among other facts, that Miles ii. married Jane Banishe, of Stratford, in 1622. The removal of any uncertainty as to the christian name of Miles ii.'s wife marked a distinct advance, and cleared the ground for further research into the personal history, as well as the genealogy, of the Grayes.

In 1921 I contributed to the *Essex Review* (vol. xxx., pp. 32 and 185) extracts from the churchwardens' accounts relating to the Saffron Walden bells. These show that the great bell was recast in 1624; the name of the founder, however, is not mentioned, but it must have been cast locally as the cost of "carrying of the bell to

casting and back again" was only 2s. 6d. In 1629 the same bell was recast by "Gray the bellfounder"; in 1634 it was again recast by "Miles Graye," the charge "for drawing the Bell downe to Grayes and up againe to the Church" being 8s. In 1641 further payments were made to Miles Graye for bell casting, including 5s. "payd to John Raynolds to carie the bell and recarie the same to the Church." That a Miles Graye was working at intervals in Walden during the fourth decade of the seventeenth century was obvious; but as it was not an uncommon practice to set up a temporary foundry, I did not imagine, when first publishing these extracts, that his sojourn in that town was of long duration. Subsequently, however, when going through the Saffron Walden parish registers, I came across the baptismal entries of several children of "Miles Gray and of Jane his wife," viz. Jacob, 26 November, 1630; Jane, 17 January, 1632; Jane, 19 June, 1633; Marie, 5 August, 1638; and Robert, 19 February, 1639. The burials of two daughters are also recorded—Jane, 19 February, 1631, and Mary, 12 August, 1643. These entries prove that Miles Graye ii. and his family resided at Walden for a considerable part, if not for the whole, of the period between the years 1630 and 1643. Indeed, Messrs. Deedes and Walters had already suggested that Miles Graye the elder was employing his son between the years 1632-1642 as his agent in the counties of Herts., Bedford and Cambridge. Their supposition is thus confirmed, and moreover, we now know that during this time the younger Graye made Saffron Walden his headquarters—a convenient centre in every way for the district with which he had to deal.

Another interesting piece of documentary evidence came to my notice quite recently. The warden's accounts of Ickleford church, Herts., for the year 1637, refer to work done on the bells by Graye and others. This document is printed *in extenso* in *The Home Counties' Magazine* (vol. iv. (1902), pp. 98-100), from which the following extracts were taken:—

First payd to——Gray of Saffron Walden, bellfounder, for running and casting fower of the Bells belonging to the Church of Ickleford aforesayd,
13*li*.

Item payd to James Jackson for carriage of some of the sayd bells by cart to Saffron Walden and for recarriage of them, 20s.

Item for carriage of the other of the sayd bells theither and for recarriage of them by this accomptant's owne carte and horses, 20s.

Item to — Gray for mending a bell clapper, 3s.

Item to a messenger to go to Saffron Walden. 2s 6d.

So far as I am aware Miles Graye's name has not been detected in the records belonging to Walden Corporation ; but my knowledge of these documents is limited, and it is possible that careful search might reveal additional facts relating to his connection with the town.

I am indebted to Mr. Hubert Collar, curator of the Saffron Walden Museum, for kindly amplifying my extracts from the parish registers.

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