

Prince Charles in Lincoln 1979

by John R Ketteringham

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The photograph shows Prince Charles with the Cathedral Bell Ringers talking to Mr Walden, Other ringers who can be seen are Les Townsend, David Townsend, Bert Lowman, John Freeman and John Ketteringham.



The second photograph shows the Prince signing the Distinguished Visitors Book in the Cathedral Ringing Chamber with Jack Millhouse (Master of the Cathedral Company) in the background.

During Prince Charles' time at RAF Cranwell I understand on several occasions he made private visits to Lincoln Cathedral. It is not surprising that, when in Lincoln in 1979, he should take the opportunity to inspect the roof timbers of the cathedral. We bell ringers were very privileged to be in the South West tower waiting to ring after the Prince left the cathedral.

We were waiting in the roof space between the two western towers when Prince Charles came towards us led by Dean Oliver Fiennes. He was introduced by the Dean to John Walden the oldest ringer present and after a short chat with us he went on into the ringing chamber. The bells were set at back stroke and he went to grab one of the ropes but was very quickly stopped by Jack Millhouse, the Master of the Cathedral Company of Ringers.

Prince Charles had had a few lessons in handling a bell rope whilst at Cambridge University but nevertheless there could have been rather a nasty accident! After signing the Cathedral Distinguished Visitors Book he turned to us and made an appropriate remark before going out onto the west front to wave to the people gathered below. As the visitors walked down the stairs and out of the west front we started ringing in honour of the Princes visit.