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CHURCHES AS MILITARY OBJECTIVES

The point raised last week by the Master of the Lincoln Diocesan Guild, and emphasised elsewhere in this issue by the hon. secretary of the Middlesex County Association and London Diocesan Guild, touches a matter of vital importance, not only to ringers but to Church authorities throughout the land. It has been alluded to before, but it needs repeating. The use of church bells by the military makes the buildings a legitimate object of attack by the enemy. It is true that in the indiscriminate bombing carried out by the Nazis, many churches have already suffered, irrespective of whether they are legitimate targets, but, as Mr. Coles rightly points out, it is useless to protest if by our own actions church towers are put to military uses, and that is what the bells are now reserved for. At the moment the damage done to churches has been, as far as one can tell, incidental to the raids; but there might be far more serious losses if the enemy, in sheer spite but under cover of justification, deliberately attacked the precious possessions which, with all their hallowed memories, have come down to us through the centuries in nearly every parish in the kingdom. The destruction of Rheims Cathedral in the last war was deliberately carried out by the Germans, on the allegation that the French used the tower as an observation post, and other church towers suffered the same fate for a similar reason. The enemy would use the same excuse now if they thought they needed it.

If there was likely to be any really useful purpose served by ringing the bells as an invasion warning, if there was any co-ordinated plan for their ringing—after nearly six months the public have not been told what they are to do when they hear the bells—the conversion of church towers into military objectives might be justified, although opinions will differ as to that. But there is no plan; and it is certain that there is no useful purpose which cannot be better and more quickly served by other means. It was not to be expected that the military authorities, when the question was raised in Parliament a fortnight ago, would give way on the question of the ban, if they were still of opinion that air invasion continues to be a possibility, because the use of the bells is their own pet scheme. What we feel, however, is that the case for revocation of the Order under which the ban is imposed has never been properly put before them. The authorities have, we believe, a false impression of the value of church bells as a warning, of the very limited effectiveness of the bells, and of the speed with which they could be brought into use; and they have certainly

(Continued on page 554.)

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neglected any plans for bringing their scheme into general operation. At any rate, if they have them, no one connected with the bells has heard anything about them. Such plans as have been formulated are purely local, and most of them depend so much upon someone being found at the critical moment that they are likely to break down.

There seem to us to be two things which the Church, which has up to now docilely looked on, has the right to demand. One is that if the bells are to be used for the purpose of air invasion warning, the military authorities should announce their plan and object, for the benefit of the public and all who are supposed to be officially concerned. The second point is that the Church, unless prepared to admit that its buildings containing bells are military objects, should protest against their use for the purposes laid down in the Order. This latter point is something which only the ecclesiastical authorities can do, but the practical deficiencies of the warning might well be pointed out by the Central Council when next the opportunity occurs for taking up the subject again. It is not sufficient to ask that the ban be removed, or to cite public feeling as the ground for so doing. The one thing that is likely to carry weight in military quarters is proof that the use of church bells is an utterly unreliable means, even in country districts, of giving the warning that is intended.

Obviously, however, we have got to realise that for the present the ban is to remain. Even if it serves or can serve no useful purpose, nothing must be done for the time being to relax precautions or to convey the idea, as the release of the bells might to some people, that the menace of air invasion is past. The country has to remain keyed up to the possibility of enemy landing, and the Premier's grim warnings are not to be neglected. Later on, when the authorities may be approached again, we hope it will be with more conclusive arguments than have yet been officially put before them. In the meantime, it is unquestionably a matter of considerable importance that, whether the ban is lifted or not, and, despite all the enemy may do, the question of making the churches military targets should be given earnest consideration by those into whose custody this heritage of ours has been committed.

HANDBELL PEAL.

WEST BRIDGFORD, NOTTS.

THE MIDLAND COUNTIES ASSOCIATION.

On Sunday, November 10, 1940, in One Hour and Forty-Five Minutes,

AT 9, PATRICK ROAD,

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Being forty-two six-scores.

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*Miss EVA W. WEBB 2 | †Mrs. IVY NARBOROUGH 5-6

Conducted by RALPH NARBOROUGH.

* First peal. † First peal of Grandsire Doubles. Rung as a birthday compliment to Miss Webb and Mrs. Narborough.

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OXFORD BELLS & BELLRINGING.**THE DEATH OF THOMAS HEARNE.**

The next attempt for the six-thousand was made at New College on March 11th, 1735, but it failed after about two and a half hours' ringing, and then, nine days later, the band started again and this time they succeeded. Hearne did not hear the peal or the previous attempt, for he was ill, and indeed it was only three months before his death; but he was told by good judges that, take it all together, 'twas a glorious performance, though there were two very great blunders and some other bad ringing; yet considering the length of the peal, it was admirable ringing, such as can hardly be mended unless it be by the Londoners, it being next to impossible to go through such a long tedious work without faults.

The band was the same as rang the first peal in 1734, and stood in the same order — Richard Hearn, John Vicars, John George, Guy Terry, Thomas Yates, John Broughton, Richard Smith, William Barnes, Arthur Lloyd and Nicholas Benwell.

They were 'much caressed' when they had finished and were handsomely entertained at New College, but Barnes could not be at the entertainment, being obliged, as soon as the ringing was done, to go to his brother, the waggoner at St. Aldate's, who died that same evening.

Thomas Hearne died on June 10th, 1735, and was buried on the east side of the churchyard of St. Peter's-in-the-East. We owe him a debt of gratitude for preserving these vivid details of the ringing of two centuries ago, and not only we, for as a modern historian, Mr. G. N. Clark, remarks, he is one 'whom any writer on English History should remember with gratitude.'

After Hearne's death we have not much information about the early ringing at Oxford. In 1740 William Freeman gave two trebles to increase the ring at Magdalen to ten. He evidently was a ringer and a member of a family who were greatly interested in bells. They lived at Aspenden in Hertfordshire. The tenor in the steeple there bears the date 1681 and the name of Ralph Freeman. William Freeman completed the octave in 1736 (the present treble, third and fifth bear his name) and on a board in the belfry recording a peal of Triples by the local company on October 24th, 1764, is: Ex Dono Guielmi Freeman, Armigeri. What his connection with Magdalen College was is not clear. We should naturally conclude that he was a student, but his name does not appear among the University alumni.

On Easter Monday, 1742, Vicars and his band started at Magdalen for a ten thousand of Grandsire Caters, but after ringing seven thousand changes in 4 hours and 25 minutes, the conductor is said to have made a mistake and called the bells round.

A statement like that raises our suspicions. It is, of course, in some circumstances quite possible to make a mistake in calling, and yet produce a true peal, but it is by no means an easy thing to do with the old style peals of Grandsire Caters in the tittums with long courses. We do not know what composition Vicars was calling. We do know, however, that once before he missed a bob twice in a peal attempt and still went on with the ringing. But he was drunk then, and may have done what he would not have done when he was sober.

Six of the old band rang in this peal and four were new men. They were: F. Roberts, J. Vicars, P. Man-

ning, Guy Terry, T. Yates, Joseph Gent, R. Smith, W. Carter, A. Lloyd and A. Benwell. The peal, as well as those previously rung, was composed by Vicars.

No more peal ringing appears to have been done by that generation of ringers, but the large amount of paid ringing at the college towers kept the art alive in some measure. No member of the University seems to have joined the band and after the failure of 1742 only two or three peals were rung by local men until the nineteenth century.

All these peals were Grandsire, which practically was the only method rung in the city. Holt's Ten-part was rung at New in 1775 and Caters at Magdalen in 1781. In 1774 two Cambridge men visited Oxford and with eight of the local men rang 5,058 changes of Grandsire Caters at Magdalen.

In 1764 a band of the College Youths visited Oxford, and this time they had better luck than Annable's party, for they scored 5,094 Grandsire Caters at Magdalen. William Underwood was the conductor, and the company included such well known ringers as Thomas Bennett, James Darquitt, George Meakins and Joseph Monk. In 1788 a later generation of College Youths rang another peal at Magdalen, the first of Treble Bob Royal in the city. Thomas Blakemore conducted, and included in the band were Philip Pilgrim, John Povey, William Lyford, Edmund Sylvester and Joseph Holdsworth.

In October, 1807, William Williams, the beadle of the Society of Junior Cumberlands and one of the most active of the Metropolitan ringers, paid a visit to Oxford, and while there called a peal of Grandsire Triples at Magdalen, and this was followed by a revival of change ringing in the city. The local men rang Holt's Ten-part in 1810, and twice again in 1812. On January 5th, 1815, they rang 6,101 changes of Grandsire Caters at Magdalen and on the following March 25th 10,008 changes at New. Edward Nicholls rang the eighth and called both peals which are recorded in the Junior Cumberlands' peal book and, in the case of the ten-thousand, on a tablet in the belfry. For ringing the long peal the band received ten guineas and a good dinner.

These peals were followed in 1820 by 5,003 Grandsire Caters at Christ Church, composed and conducted by W. Parker, and 5,376 Bob Major, composed and conducted by Isaac John Benjamin Lates, who was afterwards so famous as a Birmingham ringer and a composer of Stedman Triples. Lates' peal had 'the whole of the 786's, 867's and 678's in the 40,320; in other terms, the 6th 24 times Wrong and Right.' It must have been constructed with in-course singles as well as with ordinary singles and probably was similar to a peal which Edward Taylor had already composed and called.

Parker called another peal of Caters at Christ Church in 1828, and an unbroken tradition of Grandsire Cater ringing was kept in the city from Vicars' time until the end of the nineteenth century and the great revival which is associated with the name of James W. Washbrook.

One of the mainstays of Oxford ringing during this time was the family of Paviers. Edward Pavier was the father and Thomas, Jonathan, Charles and George his sons. Jonathan, who was born at Hinckley, near Oxford, on May 1st, 1779, was still living and in his 97th year in 1876 when Mr. J. S. Pritchett was an undergraduate at Oxford. He had been blind for some time, which led to his giving up ringing.

BALL BEARINGS AND RINGING SPEED

To the Editor.

Dear Sir,—I beg to say that in his calculations Mr. Lewis has given an initial velocity to his case of a toboggan moving down a sanded slope. This velocity works out to be 28.28 ft. per sec., at 10 ft. down the slope of 30 degrees. This is an acknowledgment of the fact that retardation reduces speed. It assumes that speed is reduced by 2 ft. per sec.

In the case of his smooth surface the toboggan moves down 100 ft. in 3.53 secs. The speed at the base is 56.56 ft. per sec. It will rise to the top of the other slope in 3.53 sec. The total time for 200 ft. is 7.06 secs. (this agrees with Mr. Lewis), and the average speed $\frac{200}{7.06} = 28.3$ ft. per sec.

In the case of the sanded surface, if no initial velocity be given the toboggan, the time down is 3.78 secs. Its speed at the base is 53.8 ft. per sec. But the retardation will not allow it to reach the top of the up slope and it will run up 77.7 ft. in 2.94 secs. Therefore, the average speed is $\frac{177.7}{6.72} = 26.4$ ft. per sec. Had there been an

initial velocity of about 4 ft. per sec., the toboggan might have reached the top of the up slope in the same time, but what would happen if we had given an initial velocity to the toboggan on the frictionless surface? It would have travelled another 28 ft., over the top if you like, or would have come bumping back on the boy in it if there had been a stay.

The movement of a bell, tucked up in an iron headstock, is not quite this. It moves as a *bar* pendulum and the frictional forces at the gudgeons are always normal to the lowest part of the groove. They act on a small horizontal plane, and, according to the laws of friction, are independent of the area, but dependent on the mass of the system under consideration.

I enclose my calculations.

FREDERICK C. SMALE.

Oakfield, Station Road, Okehampton.

AN UNSUCCESSFUL EXPERIMENT.

Dear Sir,—Regarding early use of ball bearings for bells, the following may be of interest.

About the year 1890, Dame Rumour reported that such bearings were being tried out. I was, therefore, not surprised when I received word from my old friend Sam Snelling, of Sittingbourne, who dabbled in bell hanging, to say that he had fitted their tenor with such bearings, and would I take a band from Gillingham to attempt a peal to try them out.

I did as he requested, starting for a peal of Treble Bob and ringing the tenor myself.

For about the first quarter the bell went beautifully; after that she began to get stiff, getting worse as we went along. So, about half-way, seeing no hope of finishing, I called 'Stand.'

Sam came up enquiring what was wrong. Having heard my explanation, he went up to see what was amiss. We soon got an excited shout, 'Don't touch her, she'll be down if you do.'

The reason for the failure in this case, as far as I could gather, was that the old case-hardened gudgeons that were on the bell were used in conjunction with the new bearings, and that the balls had cut through the hardened surface, and were eating their way into the softer material.

Sam had, therefore, to put the old plain beatings back, and a new set of gudgeons.

G. LINDOFF.

Dublin.

WHY BALL BEARINGS WERE USED.

Dear Sir,—It is very interesting to read about ball bearings for bells, but no one has yet stated how they came to be used. I was talking to one of the leading bell founders some years ago about them and he told me the reason was that they had had a lot of complaints of bells going badly after having been rehung. The simple reason was that the bells had not been lubricated and had run dry. So, to remedy the trouble, ball bearings were introduced.

I have rung on both, but I prefer plain bearings especially for a large bell, as you have more control and you have not so much checking against your pull, but you want a competent steeplekeeper who will do his job properly in lubricating. That is where the secret lies. Take, for instance, a peal near here, Heavitree, hung some 35 years ago. It was a new job and the bells there go just as well as when they were first hung. The tenor is 24 cwt. That is only one place I could mention. If my memory serves me rightly, I believe the trebles at Exeter Cathedral are on ball bearings, the others on plain. The consequence is that it wants very experienced men to handle them, as they turn too quickly in comparison with the other ten.

The speed of a bell depends largely on the gartering of the wheel and the tucking up of the bell. I experimented on a sluggish tenor and found that by moving the garter hole a great improvement was effected. I have since done the same with other bells with similar results, from getting more leverage.

C. R. LILLEY.

PHYSICS OF CHURCH BELLRINGING

AN OXFORD UNIVERSITY LECTURE.

On November 12th, a lecture was given by Mr. W. F. Gibbons, of the Oxford University Society, to the Oxford University Physical Society at the Clarendon Laboratory.

The lecturer began by giving a brief description of the different methods of making music on bells, and said that the bell had come to be known as the English national instrument through the custom of ringing with rope and wheel, each bell thus giving its finest note. The bells were rung together in permutations or changes, and weaved their way through them by following strict mathematical laws.

Through this popularity bell-founding has almost reached perfection by evolution from about the ninth century. Scientific investigation, on the other hand, is far behind, but the task, which was begun by Chladni and Rayleigh, has been carried on by such workers as Bicke and Blessing (Germany), Jones and Alderman (U.S.A.), Gianini (Italy), and Canon Simpson (England).

The lecturer then went on to describe the various parts of the bell, the wheel and headstock and the three methods of ringing—clocking, chiming and ringing. This was adequately illustrated by a complete working model church bell (a mounted handbell) made by the lecturer.

The acoustics of the bell have been investigated most thoroughly by Lord Rayleigh and Professor A. T. Jones, of Smith College, U.S.A. They each investigated the two notes of a bell—the clang and the hum notes—separately and their results agree very well.

Between 1875 and 1890, Rayleigh considered the acoustics of the bell from the point of view of symmetry. If there is perfect symmetry about the axis, then no sound travels along it when the bell is struck. In practice no bell is perfectly symmetrical, but we do obtain a minimum volume of sound along the axis.

The nodes of vibration of a bell can be divided into (a) those repeating round the rim of the bell, (b) those producing nodal meridians, and (c) those repeating along the axis of the bell, producing nodal circles. In the first case, the lowest node repeats twice. A 'node' implies no motion normal to the rim, but at this point there is an antinode of a tangential stretching motion of the bell.

For complete symmetry the nodal meridians are not fixed, but arrange themselves so that the striking point is an antinode. For an asymmetrical bell the meridians are fixed with the provision that nodes and antinodes are interchangeable, with a slight change of frequency. This can be used to produce 'beats' when struck at any point other than the node or the antinode of the partial under observation. The lecturer illustrated this very well by means of a tea-cup. When the tea-cup is struck on the rim 45 or 135 degrees round from the handle, there is a node of normal motion at the handle, which, therefore, does not affect the pitch. When struck at 90 or 180 degrees from the handle, there is an antinode at the handle which gives vibrations of a slightly lower frequency. It is possible to detect almost a semi-tone drop in pitch. This theory can be used in fixing the striking point of an asymmetrical bell to give good tone.

Lord Rayleigh worked on many types of bells, and his conclusions were that the strike-note cannot be excited by resonance. It agrees with the fifth partial of the bell in pitch, although it is an octave lower. He advanced the theory that the ear misjudged the note by an octave for some reason not quite clear.

Professor A. T. Jones continued the work round about 1920 on the Dorothea Carlile and Harkness chimes, listening to the partials of the bells by means of a stethoscope arrangement. Later he used a valve oscillation to maintain the oscillations of the bell. His conclusions were similar to those of Lord Rayleigh, but he gave more detail about the relative strengths of the partials. He collected evidence which confirmed the misjudged octave theory, but was unable to explain Grieshacker's special method of resonating the strike-note by touching the extreme lip of the bell with the stem of a tuning fork of the same pitch as the strike-note of the bell.

The lecturer then gave an account of the details of tower construction which give most pleasing acoustical effect both outside and inside the tower. He concluded by describing the mechanics of bellhanging, paying attention to the roping of bells for minimum force on the tower.

BOMBED OUT TWICE.

Mr. Joe Hawkins, hon. secretary of St. Andrew's, Holborn, Society, and past Master of the College Youths, has temporarily settled at St. Clement's Inn Passage, Strand, W.C.2. And this is the reason. Mr. Hawkins lived for many years in West Kensington. Twice he and Mrs. Hawkins were bombed out of their home, and they came to the conclusion it was time to move. They took a house down West Middlesex way, and, as Mr. Hawkins tersely puts it, 'dashed me if that wasn't done in on the Friday night as we were going to move in on the following Monday.' So Mrs. Hawkins was sent to Marlow and Joe sheltered for a time in the tubes. Now they have settled in Clement's Inn Passage and we hope they will there find the rest they so much require. Mr. and Mrs. Hawkins will have the good wishes of all their friends for their safety.

BUSHEY, HERTS.—On Saturday, November 16th, at the Royal Masonic Junior School, on handbells, a quarter-peal of Double Norwich Court Bob Major (1,264 changes): Edwin A. Barnett (conductor) 1-2, Chris. W. Woolley 3-4, Ernest C. S. Turner 5-6, Edwin Jennings 7-8.

MIDLAND COUNTIES ASSOCIATION.**LOUGHBOROUGH DISTRICT MEETING AT COPT OAK.**

A meeting of the Loughborough District of the Midland Counties Association was held at Copt Oak on November 9th, members being present from Hugglescote, Ibstock, Shepshed, The Oaks in Charnwood and the local company. Mr. A. Disney, of Anstey, also paid a visit and was warmly welcomed.

The Vicar kindly placed a room at the Vicarage at the disposal of the ringers, and, despite the bad weather conditions, a good number of members were present.

Handbells were in good use to a variety of methods ranging from Doubles to Caters.

As a parish sale of work and tea was being held in the school, the members wended their way there to do full justice to the ample fare provided by Mrs. Goodman and her band of willing helpers.

A stuffed kangaroo, which had been made in Australia and sent for sale on behalf of the local funds, was purchased by the ringers, who eventually raffled it off (even the single men taking part), the winner being Mr. G. R. Edwards (Ringing Master).

The Vicar conducted a short service and spoke very feelingly on the theme of remembrance, Mr. A. E. Rowley being at the organ.

The business meeting was held at the local headquarters, and Mr. H. O. Over presided. In view of the general quarterly meeting being at Derby on January 11th, it was agreed to hold the district annual meeting at Hugglescote on January 4th if suitable arrangements can be made. This was proposed by Mr. H. Kirby and seconded by Mr. J. E. Tovell and carried unanimously. This will be a departure from the usual custom, the annual meeting having always been held at the Bell Foundry Tower at Loughborough, but the members present thought that in this year, with its many difficulties of travelling, etc., a better meeting might be held at Hugglescote.

Mr. Edwards asked if all the towers were notified when meetings were being held, and the secretary replied that it was the wish of the General Committee, in view of reduced subscriptions owing to the war, that secretaries should reduce their postage expenses and not to send out cards to all the towers.

Mr. Edwards then moved 'That the secretary notify those towers which are likely to be represented at the meetings.' Mr. H. Kirby seconded and the resolution was carried.

Mr. C. W. Hall said how pleasing it was to see such good reports of the meetings in 'The Ringing World.'

Thanks were accorded the Vicar for the use of the Vicarage and for conducting the service, and to the organist.

Further handbell ringing brought another successful meeting to a close all too soon.

THE DEATH KNELL.*To the Editor.*

Dear Sir,—May I thank those gentlemen who have written about the death knell? I am glad to learn that it has survived to a greater extent than most people would have imagined, though there is little doubt that in the majority of places, especially in towns, it is obsolete, and the reason is pretty obvious. Once, as Mr. Hibbert points out, it really was the means of letting people know that a person was dead; now they get the information from other sources, and it is only a survival.

But it is a survival which is worth retaining, and I wish Mr. Edwards success in his effort.

Perhaps, sir, when we have finished with the Oxford Ringers, you may like me to say something about the origin and meaning of the use of bells in connection with deaths and burials.

J. A. TROLLOPE.

FARNHAM DISTRICT LOSSES.**GOOD FRIENDS TO RINGERS.**

The Farnham District of the Guildford Diocesan Guild has lately lost two valued friends, by the death of Mrs. Constance Gertrude Rowsell, wife of the Vicar of Aldershot, and Mrs. Charlotte Maria Elizabeth Dimes, wife of Mr. W. Dimes, leader of the band in the village of Croydon.

Mrs. Rowsell, who was only 46 years of age, was a member of an old Yorkshire family, and was born in Halifax, in the parish where she later became the Vicar's wife. Throughout the last war she was an Army nurse, and later entered the nursing profession and served in hospitals in Leeds and Halifax. The Rev. J. B. Rowsell came to Aldershot three years ago, and during the time spent in the town Mrs. Rowsell entered fully into the activities of the parish. Two young sons of the Vicar and Mrs. Rowsell are among the band at Aldershot Parish Church. St. Michael's ringers sent a wreath and were represented by Mr. W. Denyer at the funeral.

Mrs. Dimes interested herself in the ringing at Croydon and always had a welcome for visiting ringers. Mrs. Dimes was 64 years of age. The Farnham District sent a wreath for the funeral.

WINNEY MEMORIAL FUND.

Amount previously acknowledged, £16 8s. Further donations have been received from James George, Wolverton, 10s.; John N. Oxborrow, Brixton, 5s.; Samuel E. Andrews, Brixton, 2s. 6d.; Roland Fenn, Barking, 2s. 6d.; J. E. Lewis Cockey, 5s.; Fred G. Cole, Gloucester, 2s.; R. T. Newman, 2s. 6d.; J. Hunt, Taunton, 2s. 6d.; to whom the thanks of the committee are tendered.

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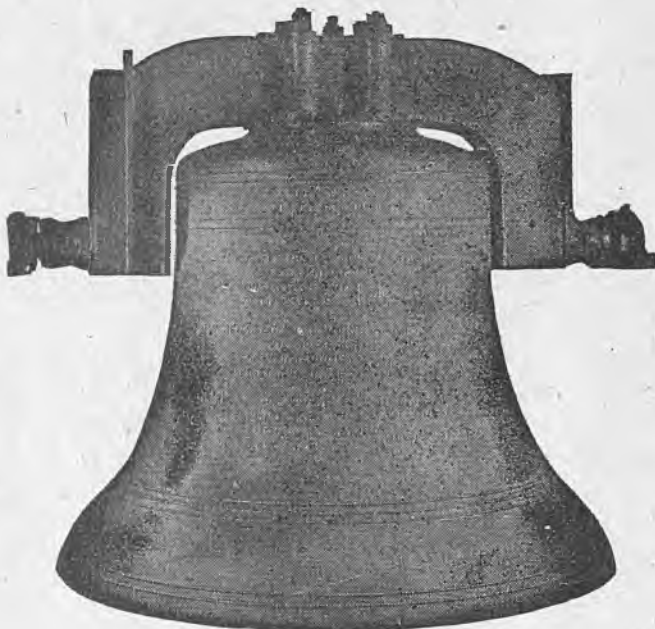
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BELFRY GOSSIP.

Will our readers who are serving in His Majesty's Forces kindly note that we are not allowed to publish the names of their military units or addresses?

Sergt. Donald Eric Bristow, R.A.F., who is officially reported wounded while on active service, is a member of Holy Trinity Cathedral Society, Guildford, where he was a pupil of Mr. A. H. Pulling. Sergt. Bristow is a wireless operator and machine gunner. His injuries, we are glad to learn, are not serious. He has three brothers also in the R.A.F.

The Leeds Society's business meeting at St. Chad's, Headingley, has been fixed for 4.30 p.m. to help those who wish to get home early. A new idea. Will members endeavour to support it?

Congratulations to Mr. John Austin, who was born on November 19th, 1863.

On November 20th, 1890, a peal of Treble Bob Major was rung on the back eight at St. Peter Mancroft. The tenor was rung by Frederick Knights and he was the first man who had ever turned the bell in to a peal of Major, although George Smith, who was recently mentioned in our columns as an outstanding tenor man, had rung it for the full length, but with two bells shifted in the last few changes. Considering the go of the bell, this was a very fine heavy bell feat, but the claim made on the peal tablet that it was the heaviest Major ever rung is an unfounded one. Spitalfields tenor (44 cwt.) was rung several times single-handed to peals, some of them over 6,000 changes.

The first silent peal of Stedman Triples was rung at St. Paul's, Burton-on-Trent, on November 20th, 1886. The band included such well-known men as Charles H. Hattersley and John Carter. The ringers of the fourth and seventh, Messrs. Joseph Griffin and John Jagger, happily are still alive.

Fifty years ago to-day twelve peals were rung. One was Grandsire Doubles, three Grandsire Triples, one Grandsire Caters, one Bob Major, four Kent Treble Bob Major, and one Double Norwich Court Bob Major. One of the Kent Major was rung at Gillingham in Kent as a birthday compliment to Mr. Gabriel Lindoff, who was born on November 19th, 1868.

The City Scholars rang 6,012 changes of Grandsire Caters at Cripplegate on November 23rd, 1732. One of the band, Thomas Nash, moved to Oxford and took part in some of the ringing described in our recent articles.

On the same date in 1775 the first peal (Grandsire Cinques) was rung on the famous twelve at St. Peter Mancroft, Norwich.

A notable peal was rung at All Saints', West Ham, on November 25th, 1737, when Philemon Mainwaring turned the 28 cwt. tenor in to 15,120 changes of Bob Major and called the bobs. The time on the board and in the Eastern Scholars' peal book is given as 8 hours and 40 minutes. There is something wrong there, and it led the authors of the 'Clavis' to throw doubts on the performance. Probably the time should be 9 hours and 40 minutes, unless, of course, that the length claimed was never rung.

DEATH OF A BOLTON RINGER.

We regret to announce the death of Mr. Peter Nuttall, one of Bolton's oldest ringers, who passed away on November 12th at the age of 78.

For 58 years he had been a ringer at St. Peter's Church, Bolton, and although until recently he lived at a considerable distance, he set a good example to all by his very regular attendance both for service ringing and at practice. Nothing gave him greater pleasure than teaching a beginner to handle a bell.

In time the 94 steps up to the ringing chamber got too much for his failing health, and after he had rung in the year 1939, he resigned from the belfry, but he was fortunate in living almost beneath the tower and he was always about when ringing was in progress.

He had rung 47 peals for the Lancashire Association, of which he had been a member since 1891.

He was laid to rest in a village just outside the town, the local ringers being the bearers. Owing to the war restrictions, the custom of ringing the handbells over the grave had to be abandoned, but before the cortege left the house, four members, representing St. Peter's, Holy Trinity, The Saviour's and St. Peter's, Halliwell, rang a course of Grandsire Triples.

A beautiful floral tribute in the shape of a bell was sent by the ringers.

CONGRATULATIONS TO MR. JAMES GEORGE.

Next Wednesday, Mr. James George will be 87, and his friends throughout the Exercise will congratulate him upon reaching this great age with mental faculties unimpaired and also upon his remarkable progress after his illness, which has resulted in the amputation of a leg.

Mr. George's peal ringing activities before the war were known to everybody, and he rang a peal of Stedman Triples on handbells for his birthday in 1939. Since his operation Mr. George has been living at 49, Anson Road, Wolverton, Bucks.

WAR DAMAGED CHURCHES.

SOME FAMOUS BELL TOWERS.

The Ruin of Coventry Cathedral.

A striking feature of the present indiscriminate aerial bombing has been the damage and destruction of churches, most of them in places far away from anything which by the wildest stretch of imagination could be called military objectives, unless the proposed use of bells as an alarm can be said to make them a military objective. Full details are, of course, not available, and in the public interest we cannot publish a good deal of the information that has reached us. But the Ministry of Information has very wisely told the public about the damage done last week in Coventry and the ruin of the Cathedral there, and we are now allowed to mention the names of some of the churches well known to ringers which have suffered.

Prominent among them in London are St. Margaret's, Westminster, St. Martin-in-the-Fields, St. Clement Danes and St. Mary's, Islington, as well as those in the City, of which we gave an account in our issue of September 20th.

When we have the full tale from all over the country, it will, we fear, make sad reading, but there is at least a hope that the towers and bells have not suffered so badly as the rest of the buildings, and amid so much wanton destruction many a famous and noble steeple still stands up proudly.

Only the other day a four or five hours' stroll through some of the familiar streets of Central London showed us that, for all the hammering it has had, the town still wears very much its accustomed air, and carries on its usual business, in daylight at least, much the same as ever.

St. Paul's has been bombed, but the cross of gold still shines over the city and the building outwardly bears no mark of damage. Down Fleet Street, St. Bride's and St. Dunstan's stand unharmed; further west is another eight-bell tower very famous in ringing history, where the first Surprise peal was rung, and where in later years the only peal in eleven Surprise Major methods was achieved. That steeple, too, stands, though the church windows are broken and there is considerable ruin not so very far away.

St. Martin's and St. Margaret's have both been damaged, but the towers and bells so far are safe, and so are those at St. Clement Danes, which has not suffered structurally very much, but where, to judge from what one can see through the broken windows, a sad havoc has been made of the interior.

Unfortunately, another and a worse tale must be told of Islington Parish Church. There the body of the building has been quite destroyed, and though the tower stands, it is a question whether the bells will be able to be rung.

ST. MICHAEL'S FAMOUS BELLS.

Exactly what has happened to Coventry Cathedral has not been made clear except that the body of the church is in ruins. What damage the world-famous tower and spire have sustained will, of course, not be fully known until an expert survey has been made. All men who value the lovely things which have come down to us from the past will hope that it will not be necessary to pull down for the sake of safety this beautiful building.

The Cathedral ranked as one of the outstanding churches of England. It was not, of course, to be compared to the great Cathedrals like York or Canterbury, or even the lesser ones like Chester or Oxford; for St. Michael's was built as a parish church, and so remained until quite recent years. There was a bishopric of Coventry in olden times, but the church which served as the Cathedral was destroyed 400 years ago.

Coventry has been known far and wide as the city of the three spires. St. Michael's, the tallest and the finest, is nearly 300ft. high; Holy Trinity, which apparently has not been damaged seriously, is 237ft. high, and Christ Church, the third spire, is somewhat less.

The old ring of bells at St. Michael's were among the most famous in England. Cast at Whitechapel by Pack and Chapman in 1774 to replace an older octave by Henry Bagley, of Chacombe, they were, in the estimation of old ringers, one of the three best rings of ten in England, the other two being Stepney and Rotherham. Whether modern opinion would confirm this estimate may perhaps be doubted.

The first peal on the ten was rung on Saturday, May 20th, 1780, by the St. Martin's Youths of Birmingham. The method was Bob Royal, and the peal in the tittums was composed and called by Phineas Smith.

In the following years several peals were rung in the steeple both by local men and by the Birmingham company, and the names of the ringers include such well-known ones as James Dovey, Benjamin Pugh, Henry Johnson and the rest. The longest peal on the bells seems to have been 6,140 Tittum Bob Royal, rung in 1807 and composed and conducted by Joseph Keen.

The last peal on the bells was one of Stedman Caters, rung by the Birmingham men on June 9th, 1883. Mt. Tom Miller is the last survivor of the band.

In 1885 fears for the safety of the tower and spire led to the cessation of the ringing of the bells. They were rung for the last time on Sunday, June 28th, 1885. After being rung before morning

and evening services, a final touch was completed as the congregation left the church and the bells were then ceased.

In 1925 a proposal was made to recast the ring and replace them by a carillon or chime of 15 bells. This proposal met with much opposition, which was led by Mr. E. Alexander Young, then the honorary secretary of the Central Council; and when a faculty was applied for in the Consistory Court the application was opposed. Distinguished counsel appeared on both sides. Sir Henry Maddocks, K.C., was for the petitioner, and Alderman J. S. Pritchett, the Recorder of Lincoln, for the opposition.

The hearing resolved itself into a battle between the supporters of the old style of tuning and the modern five-toned or Simpson system. One interesting feature was an offer by Mr. Young, on behalf of the ringers of England, to buy the bells at the price allowed by the founders for old metal with a view to their being stored and later rehung in Coventry, or, failing that, elsewhere.

After hearing the evidence, the Chancellor of the Diocese (Mr. E. W. Hansell) granted the faculty. The bells were replaced by a carillon from Croydon, and so pass out of ringing history.

The neighbouring Church of the Holy Trinity has a ring of eight, which are now hung dead in a wooden bell tower. It was to this church that the 'dekyens' belonged, about whom and their connection with the bells we printed an article last Christmas.

DAMAGED LONDON CHURCHES.

The destruction of Islington Parish Church is not nearly so grievous an architectural loss as that of Coventry Cathedral, for the building, a typical eighteenth century church, belonged to a period when the line of great English architects, which included Wren, Gibbs, Hawksmoor and Vanburgh, had almost come to an end; but the church in the past played a very large part in the religious life of London, being a strong centre of the Evangelical school in the Church. Its belfry also was well known among older metropolitan ringers.

In 1751 the ancient church had become much dilapidated, and it was resolved to pull it down and build a new one. The tower of flint and rubble proved stronger than was at first thought, and for a time it resisted all attempts at destruction. Gunpowder was tried unsuccessfully, for it had to be used sparingly, then the building was shored up with timber, the foundations undermined, and the wooden supports burned with fire.

The foundation stone of the new church was laid on August 21st, 1751, and the building was finished and opened for public worship on May 26th, 1754.

The Edwardian inventories for the old church have not survived, but in the eighteenth century there was a ring of six bells in the tower. Here in 1734, Laughton and the Ramblers rang a funeral peal for William Ibbott—two Grandsires and 720 Plain Bob. It was the earliest muffled ringing of which we have any account, although the custom was then already an established one.

In 1774 the ring of six was recast at the Whitechapel Foundry and made into eight. The Cumberlands rang the opening peal, one of Bob Major on January 7th, 1775, and next day the College Youths rang 5,088 changes of Oxford Treble Bob. In 1802 Shipway called a peal of a new system, Imperial Place Major, which is produced without any dodging. It has not any particular merits and has not been practised since.

ST. CLEMENT DANES.

St. Clement Danes stands just outside the City boundary and was not one of the churches destroyed in the Great Fire of 1666. About that time, however, the building became very dilapidated, and Sir Christopher Wren was employed to design a new church, which was finished in 1680. He left the old fifteenth century tower standing, but recased it with Portland stone, and in 1719 his pupil, James Gibbs, the architect of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, added the spire and gave it the appearance it has to-day.

In 1693 William and Philip Wightman supplied a ring of eight bells with a tenor of 24 cwt. They are the best bells cast by their founders, and the author of the 18th century continuation of 'Stow's Survey of London' was fully justified in calling them 'eight noble bells.'

In 1843 two trebles were added by a man named Oliver. Mr. A. A. Hughes informs us that members of the family of Oliver have been employed at the Whitechapel Foundry for generations, and are still represented on the staff. Oliver probably cast the St. Clement's trebles in his spare time, borrowing the strickles for the purpose.

Although they are one of the oldest octaves in London, the bells played but a small part in the early history of the London Exercise. The first peal of which we have any record was on February 12th, 1733, when Annable called 5,120 changes of Oxford Treble Bob Major with a band of College Youths. Ten years later the Eastern Scholars rang Bob Major, and in 1760 the College Youths rang another peal of Treble Bob.

In 1839 the headquarters of the St. James' Society was moved to St. Clement's and has remained there ever since. During that time many peals have been rung in the tower by various societies, especially in the present century.

Two men, Thomas Tolladay and George Stockham, who played a leading part in the Exercise of the last century, were successively steeplekeepers at the church.

WAR AND CHURCH BUILDINGS.

ARCHBISHOPS' COMMISSION.

The Archbishops of Canterbury and York have appointed a special Commission in connection with the question of the repair, restoration or rebuilding of churches or other church property damaged by enemy action. The commission will consider in particular the provisions of the proposed Government Insurance Bill and, in due course, the question of any general fund for the assistance of dioceses and parishes.

A voluntary levy of at least 5 per cent. on church collections for the benefit of churches suffering through air raids and evacuation was suggested by the Bishop of Blackburn, Dr. P. M. Herbert, at Blackburn Diocesan Conference.

The Bishop said it was certain that dioceses like London could not of their own resources make good their awful losses.

The 5 per cent. levy plan had already been adopted in some of their parishes. The money would not be used immediately, but might be invested in War Bonds for the use of the nation until needed for reconstruction.

CHURCHES AS MILITARY OBJECTIVES.

To the Editor.

Dear Sir,—My good friend Mr. Rupert Richardson raises a very interesting and I think a very important point in connection with the ban on the ringing of church bells for other than military purposes. This *must* make the tower, and with it the whole sacred building, an object of military importance, and it does seem to me that we lay ourselves open to the charge of being hypocrites if we protest, as we do, against the bombing of our churches. The fact that the enemy requires no excuse to bomb just what he thinks fit has no bearing on the matter—it is our position that counts, unless we are content to make it legal for the enemy to bomb our churches as he wishes. The ban should be removed at once, and our churches, with their bells, left solely for the purposes for which they were built.

Another important factor is the question of payment for damage. The Archbishops of Canterbury and York have appointed a special commission to deal with the question of the repair, restoration, or rebuilding of churches damaged by enemy action. The Bishop of Blackburn has suggested a voluntary levy on all church collections for the benefit of churches suffering through air raids. Surely this is all quite unnecessary. The Government has made the churches military objectives and the Government should foot the bill for any damage.

C. T. COLES.

21, Vincent Road, E.4.

DAMAGE IN SOUTHWARK DIOCESE.

In the 'Southwark Diocesan Gazette' it is stated that 20 churches in the diocese, including some of the most beautiful, have been destroyed in air raids, and that 70 more are damaged to a greater or less degree.

Among the places damaged, it may be stated that fire has burned out the church and tower of the church where the College Youths rang the first peal of Stedman Caters on record on May 28th, 1787. These bells have been silent now for many years; perhaps when the restoration of the church takes place, opportunity may be found to give the bells again the honoured place they once held.

BAN ON CHURCH BELLS.

Notwithstanding the decision of the military authorities not to remove the ban, there is a very considerable amount of feeling in the country that the bells of our churches should be rung again, at least for Sunday services.

This is shown by the following letter which was printed last Monday in a prominent position on the leader page of 'The Times':—

Sir,—Now that the dangers of invasion seem to be materially reduced, I venture to suggest to the authorities that there are many people in England who would once again like to hear the sound of our church bells, calling us to remember and to worship God. It should not be impossible to remove the ban, at least for the winter months.—Yours faithfully, W. H. Murray Walton, St. John's Vicarage, Meads, Eastbourne.

CHRISTMAS BELLS WANTED

Writing in 'The Times,' the Rev. H. G. Peile, Rector of North Stoneham, Hants, made a plea that, if circumstances permit, the use of the bells may be allowed on Christmas Day.

Another letter in 'The Times' from the Vicar of St. John the Baptist's Church, Spalding, Lincs, said: 'The employment of church bells as a warning of danger was undoubtedly of great value in days of old; now they would merely confirm what most people by other means had come to know. But even if the authorities still consider church bells to be the best method of warning, let it be laid down that, in the event of invasion, bells in their several steeples must be sounded all together—what campanologists I believe call "firing." If such method of giving warning was everywhere adopted, then our church bells might ring out once more in the normal way, with no possibility of confusion between the bells of alarm and the bells calling us, to remember and to worship God.'

DUNSTABLE'S NEW MAYOR.

ALDERMAN A. E. SHARMAN ELECTED FOR THE COMING YEAR.

Mr. A. E. Sharman, who is so well known to the Exercise as a prominent ringer, and was for many years hon. secretary of the Bedfordshire Association, has been elected to the office of Mayor of the ancient town of Dunstable, and all our readers will wish him success in the responsible duties which will fall to his lot in these difficult and critical times.

He starts his year with the support and respect of his fellow councillors and townsmen. That is evident from the speech of his proposer.

Alderman Sharman's nomination as Mayor was moved by Councillor F. A. Underwood, who referred to the qualities which had endeared him to his colleagues.

History has proved, the councillor continued, that great men arose in difficult times, and he was convinced that in these difficult days Alderman Sharman would prove to be no exception.

'He has that imperturbable type of personality, and all the necessary qualities for leadership,' he declared.

'In fact, he is a man who has already proved his worth and has won the confidence of his colleagues.'

Alderman Sharman was a keen and hard worker, who had gained the admiration of all—even an opponent—through his sincerity and the firm conviction of his views.

In debate he commanded attention, whether one agreed or disagreed, for his arguments merited due consideration. He was fearless—even if a lone advocate of a particular policy, he would advance his views.

In this work he will have the energetic support and co-operation of his wife—a lady possessing both charm and tact—who will win the wholehearted support of the ladies of the borough.

After he had taken the oath of allegiance and signed the declaration of acceptance of office, the Mayor told the Council his first words were those of heartfelt thanks to his colleagues for the honour they had bestowed upon him—the greatest honour that could be bestowed as a citizen of any town.

'What have I done to deserve it all?' asked the Mayor, who confessed that he was overwhelmed.

'It is the proudest moment of my 27 years' residence in this old town—the town of my adoption, to which I came as a complete stranger, and from the first day was received with kindness and friendship.'

RINGERS IN MAYORAL PROCESSION.

On the Sunday after his election the new Mayor attended the Priory Church in state accompanied by the Corporation, and instead of performing their usual duties in the belfry the ringers marched in the procession.

In his sermon the Rector referred to the presence of the bellringers in the procession, saying that so strange were these days that ringers accompanied the Mayor to church instead of making a loud, joyous noise to greet him, as they would have preferred to do.

'If they had done so, most of the procession would have gone in search of parachutists, and the remainder would have gone to the tower to clap the ringers into gaol,' declared the Rector.

'But our hope is,' he told the Mayor, 'that before your year of office is out you will walk beneath the tower that rocks to a peal of victory.'

The town, said the Rector, would loyally support the new Mayor, but he warned him that the town would make heavy demands upon him and the Council.

PEALS IN AUSTRALIA.

Six years ago to-day the Australian tourists rang their last peal in the Commonwealth. Following the Armistice Day peal at St. Paul's Cathedral, Melbourne, they visited Ballarat, where on the Albert bells at the Town Hall they scored the first peal of Stedman Triples outside the British Isles. This was a kind of public entertainment, for dozens of people came to watch the ringing during the three and a quarter hours, and more than one stayed the whole time.

A week afterwards, on November 20th, came a peal of Kent Treble Bob Major at the Roman Catholic Cathedral at Sydney, and out of this ringing, which was exceptionally good, a full half-hour was broadcast to the whole of Australia.

Then, on November 22nd, the final tower-bell peal of the tour was rung at Darling Point, when George Martin conducted another peal of Stedman Triples.

Another peal at the Cathedral was to have been attempted the following evening, but the long days of travelling, sight-seeing and entertainment had taken toll and a peal-fit company could not be made up.

On November 24th the party split up and one section returned to England by the way they came and four of them on the following day made a new record by ringing the first and, up to now, only peal on the Pacific Ocean—a peal of Bob Major on handbells. They were thousands of miles away in the Indian Ocean before they rang another.

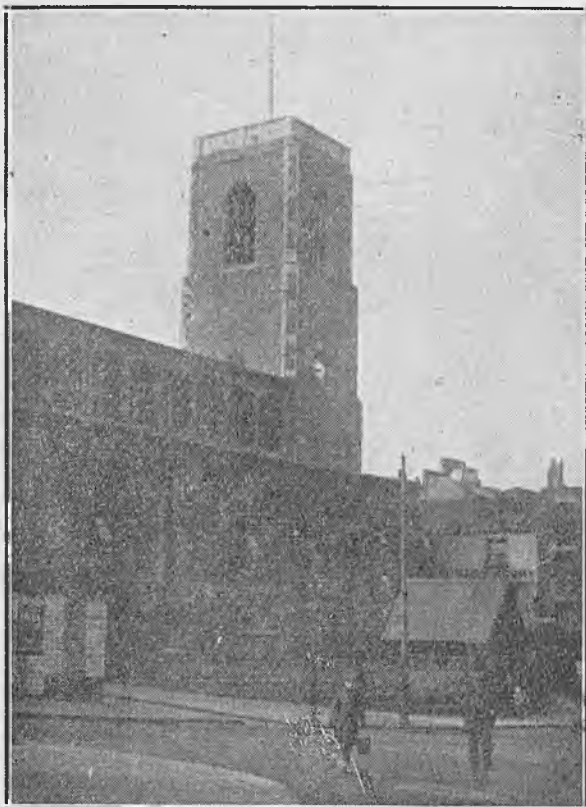
The rest of the company visited New Zealand before coming home via the Panama Canal.

NOTABLE PEALS OF LONDON.

THE FIRST PERFORMANCE AT NORWICH.

The first band to attempt to ring London Surprise was the ancient Society of College Youths. They had already rung a peal of Cambridge, though it turned out to be a false one, but they did not get so far with London, either because, as Shipway suggests, they found it too difficult, or, and perhaps more likely, because they turned their attention to Stedman Caters (of which they rang the first peal), and then broke up.

It was the Norwich Scholars who, on November 17th, 1835, actually succeeded in ringing the first peal in the method. They had already achieved peals of Double Oxford and Superlative; and the London was the best performance by a very fine band. The conductor was



ST. ANDREW'S TOWER, NORWICH.

Samuel Thurston, who, after a time, when he was in opposition to the Mancroft company and their leader, Robert Chestnut, as shown by the extracts from the local papers, recently sent us by Mr. Charles E. Borrett, joined forces with his rivals and eventually became their bob caller and captain.

The Superlative was rung at St. Giles' and the London at St. Andrew's; and the peculiarity of both belfries was that the ropes fell quite out of the proper order. This was especially the case at St. Andrew's, where scarcely any two ropes hung next each other in the right order. It was due to the bell cage, which, starting as a five-bell frame set diagonally in the tower, was added to bit by bit, as the ring became six, then eight and then ten.

The frame is still in the tower, but the bells have not been rung for about forty years. The church is a very fine example of Perpendicular architecture and, except for St. Peter's, Mancroft, has no equal in Norwich. The tower lost a good deal of its appearance when the eight pinnacles which once adorned it were taken down.

SUSSEX BAND'S ACHIEVEMENT RECALLED.

Fifty years ago a peal of London Surprise Major was the zenith of a man's ambition in ringing. There was no greater height to which he could aspire, and at that time there was but a very limited number of ringers who had reached this goal. Few indeed were the peals of London that had been rung by a band who were all regular ringers at the same tower. A 'local' peal of London was therefore an event, and when it was the first peal in the method by all the band it was doubly noteworthy.

Half a century ago, St. Peter's Society, Brighton, were in the limelight. They were one of the few companies that could muster a

(Continued in next column.)

OXFORD UNIVERSITY SOCIETY.

THE PRESENT ACTIVITIES.

The activities of the Oxford University Society have so far this term been most satisfactory. The society was fortunate in obtaining permission to have the clappers removed from the bells at New College, and as a result regular weekly practices have been held there on Wednesday evenings to teach newcomers the art of handling a bell rope, and to give others an opportunity of 'keeping their hands in.'

The number of beginners this term has not been as large as usual, but almost without exception they have been exceedingly keen and have made good progress, especially on the handbells.

It has been found by experience that it is more useful to keep the number of people at the handbell meetings on the small side, as everyone then gets a better opportunity to ring, so for these practices the members are split into two groups, the beginners meeting on Saturday evenings and the more advanced people on Sunday mornings.

The beginners, none of whom had ever rung a handbell a month ago, can now all ring 1-2 or 5-6 in a course of Grandsire Doubles, 5-6 in a three-score of Grandsire Doubles and in a course of Plain Bob Minor. On Sunday mornings, with all double-handed ringing, courses of Grandsire Caters, Stedman Triples and Plain Bob Major are regularly rung, though it must be admitted that sometimes it is with the assistance of one non-university man.

On Saturday, November 9th, the society held a tower bell meeting at New College, at which the members welcomed the Rev. Malcolm Melville, who was paying a week-end visit to Oxford, and seven of the city ringers.

The bells were 'rung up' at 2.45 p.m., and after a good touch of Grandsire, a most enjoyable afternoon's ringing followed. It was realised how comparatively little people relied on sound in the old days for finding their place in change ringing. Grandsire, Stedman and Plain Bob were all rung, and the activities were brought to an end with a fine course of Cambridge Major.

In spite of the inclemency of the weather, the beginners' meeting in the evening was also well attended, and under the energetic tutorship of the Master (Mr. J. E. Spice), some useful work was put in on the handbells. The week-end's ringing was brought to a close on the Sunday morning with some good courses, in which some of the visitors of the previous afternoon again joined.

It is hoped that these Saturday afternoon practices may be continued at intervals, as they are invaluable in keeping tower-bell ringing up to the mark during these unfortunate days.

Miss Dorothy L. Sayers has become an honorary member of the society, and on behalf of all members a cordial welcome was extended to her, whose 'Nine Tailors' has been the stimulus whereby so many people have been attracted to the bell tower.

THE FIRST PEAL OF LONDON IN SUSSEX

(Continued from previous column.)

Surprise band from among their own members. They had begun under George F. Attree, who was Master of the tower, secretary of the Sussex Association and churchwarden of the Parish Church. He was a prominent business man in Brighton, and was able to strengthen his company by employing ringers, while he was also fortunate, then and later, in great accessions of talent by the migration to the town of men like George Williams, Edward C. Merritt and Frank Bennett.

In 1892, having previously rung peals of Double Norwich, Superlative and Cambridge, the band practised London, and on November 22nd, 1892—48 years ago to-day, to be exact—they scored their first peal in the method, which was also the first for the Sussex Association. Afterwards, of course, the society rang many peals in the method, and added other Surprise methods, some of which they were the first to ring. But there was probably none which was of greater merit than their first peal of London.

At this time there had indeed been very few peals in the method at all. Between 1887 and this date the Burton men had rung ten peals, but apart from these there had been only three others, the first at Norwich in 1835, the next at Woolwich in 1849, and the other at Benington in 1870. So that, as far as records carry us, the Brighton peal was only the fourteenth ever rung. It was conducted by G. F. Attree, who made a point of calling the first peal in any new method rung by his band—until it came to Bristol Surprise.

The men who took part in the peal bore names prominent in the Exercise in their day, and the older readers of this paper will recall them with interest, and some, perhaps, with pleasant memories. They were John Jay, sen., treble, John R. Reilly 2, Arthur A. Fuller 3, George A. King 4, Edward C. Merritt 5, George Williams 6, Harry Weston 7, George F. Attree tenor. Only George Williams now remains actively associated with ringing. Half the band at least have 'crossed the hourne.' George Attree died in Canada, where George King still resides.

In the days when this peal was rung, St. Peter's had a light peal of eight, the tenor being only 10½ cwt., with a long draught of rope. The belfry then as now was one of the best appointed in the country, and with the passage of years the walls became panelled with neatly recorded peal performances, which still tell of the achievements of one of the most accomplished bands in the country.

CAMBRIDGE SURPRISE MAJOR. HOW ITS FALSE COURSE ENDS AFFECT COMPOSITION.

Cambridge was the first of the Surprise Major methods to be rung, and for several years before the present war it was the one most popular and most widely practised. But the views expressed by various men as to its merits and demerits have been very diverse and strongly divergent. When the ancient Society of College Youths rang the first peal in the method they were very proud of what they had done, and 'deemed it the greatest performance ever achieved in the Campanistanean Art, as so intricate a method was never practised by any other set of men whatever.'

A few more peals by the most skilled bands followed, and together with Superlative and London the method took its place as one of the three which stood at the very summit of what a ringer's ambition could aim at.

Sixty years ago or so an increased activity in method ringing led the then recognised authorities on composition to examine the different methods which had come down from the past. Superlative they recognised as the 'Queen of Methods,' but when they turned to Cambridge the more they saw of it the less they liked it. To Sir Arthur Heywood and Earle Bulwer it was crude and faulty in construction, a survival from days when men knew no better. C. D. P. Davies went much further in his condemnation, and his denunciation was extravagant and even ludicrous.

These were clever men who had thoroughly earned their reputation, and did not express opinions wantonly or without cause or reason, but we shall, we think, do them no injustice when we say that their real quarrel with the method was not for any faults it had shown in actual practice, but because it obstinately refused to fit itself into the schemes they had drawn up to settle what should be considered a good method and what not.

Heywood had studied very carefully the things which are essential to good music in ringing, and for that reason he rejected as illegitimate any method in which more places are made than are absolutely necessary. Now twice in every lead in Cambridge four places are made in one change.

It is rather difficult to see what difference that makes to the music. Does the most sensitive ear ever notice the making of these four places when Cambridge is being rung? We doubt it.

Davies brushed aside all considerations of music as completely irrelevant. Indeed, to him there was no such thing as music in ringing when the tenor was turned in. The only thing that mattered was that the orderly succession of the nature of the rows, odd and even, should never be broken. He treated this as the fundamental rule, and he held that all those methods, like Kent Treble Bob, London and Bristol Surprise and the rest which have handstroke places, were due to 'what may not unfairly be called a veritable riot of unruliness.' He did not explain why the unbroken succession of the nature of the rows should be a fundamental rule, but then, people do not argue about their axioms; they would not be axioms if they did.

It did not occur to these people that there might be some justification for the place making in Cambridge, or that the peculiar merits of the method—its regularity, its capacity to expand on all numbers indefinitely,

and so forth—were due entirely to the way the places are made. Their excuse is that not much was really known in those days about method construction.

One thing, however, they did know and were not slow to point out. Cambridge has but one true peal with the tenors together, and that was, and is, a serious defect. Here they saw the justification for all the hard things they had said about the method. They disliked it because of the four places made in one change, and they were confirmed in their dislike because they thought that there was the reason why no more than one true peal can be had. Many other people have thought the same, and some, no doubt, still do. But they were, and are, wrong.

The making of the four places in one change in the second section is not the real cause of the extreme liability of the method to internal falseness. It is due to a combination of causes. The first section gives the false course end B24365. The second section gives the two false course ends 26143857 + 62418375 + A32546 and D46253. These are the false 62148735 + course ends of Oxford and Kent Treble 26417853 + Bob, and of London Surprise. They belong to the group ABCDE, and, as we have seen, will allow of thirty true full natural courses. It is the presence *also* of the two, F32465 and G43265, from the fourth section which causes the difficulty. So long as the false course ends of a method are confined to one of the two groups ABCDE and BFG we have thirty true natural courses to work with; but when they come from both groups there is trouble. This might have happened without any making of four places in one change, and on the other hand the four places can be made and no false course ends at all result.

12345678
21436587
12463578
21645387

26143578
62415387
62145837
26418573

24681537
42865173
42681537
24865173

42856713
24587631
25478613
52746831

25478631
13527864
GS—BFG

Here is a method in which the same four places are made in one change as in Cambridge, and the only section which gives no false course ends at all is the second, where these four places are made.

But it may be objected that if you do as Benjamin Thackrah did, and move the places in 1-2 out of the second section to a more convenient position, you get

(Continued on next page.)

NOTICES.

THE CHARGE FOR NOTICES of Meetings inserted under this heading is at the rate of 3d. per line (average 8 words) per insertion, with the minimum charge of 1/6.

NOTICES must be received NOT LATER THAN MONDAY.

'The Ringing World' can be sent direct by post from the Editorial Office for 4s. per quarter.

All communications should be sent to THE EDITORIAL OFFICE OF 'THE RINGING WORLD,' LOWER PYRFORD ROAD, WOKING, SURREY.

BUSHEY, HERTS ASSOCIATION.—Meeting on Saturday, Nov. 23rd, at the Guide Studio, Falconer Road, Bushey, at 2.30. Excellent opportunity for handbell practice (whether learner or professor) in all methods, as well as social chats. Tea can be arranged. All interested in ringing are welcome.—C. H. Horton, 53, Aldenham Road, Bushey. City 4270.

ST. MARY'S CATHEDRAL (GLASGOW) SOCIETY.—A ten-bell practice, with the apparatus, will be held on Saturday, November 23rd, at 3 p.m., tenor 32½ cwt. A cordial invitation is extended to all. Regular weekly practice, Thursdays, at 7.30 p.m.—Ernest A. Stafford, Hon. Sec.

ANCIENT SOCIETY OF COLLEGE YOUTHS.—The next meeting will be held at headquarters, the Coffee Pot, on Saturday, November 23rd, at 3 p.m.—A. B. Peck, Sec., 1, Eversfield Road, Reigate.

MIDLAND COUNTIES ASSOCIATION.—Hinckley District.—Members and friends are invited to meet at Earl Shilton Church on November 23rd at 5 p.m. for a silent tower-bell practice, followed at 6.30 by handbells, etc., at the nearby Plough Inn.—W. A. Wood, Dis. Sec.

LEEDS AND DISTRICT SOCIETY.—The next meeting will be held at St. Chads, Headingley, on Saturday, November 30th. Handbells in the choir vestry from 2 p.m. Business meeting at 4.30 p.m.—H. Lofthouse, Hon. Sec., 8, Wortley Road, Leeds, 12.

ESSEX ASSOCIATION.—North-Eastern Division.—The annual general meeting will be held at All Saints', Colchester, on Saturday, December 7th. Please note the name of church. Handbells will be available at All Saints' Parish Hall, which is in Queen Street, opposite Culver Street, at 2 p.m. till 9 p.m. A service will be held in All

CAMBRIDGE SURPRISE MAJOR.

(Continued from previous page.)

rid of the falseness resulting from that section and make true peals possible. So far, at any rate, the four places are a cause of the falseness of Cambridge. That is true, but we must remember that there are still four places made in one change, and that, if instead of moving the places in 1-2 from the second section, we cut out fifths and eighths as Benjamin Annable did, we have still the same false course ends A and D.

Saints' Church, opposite memorial, at 4 p.m., and tea and business meeting in the hall at 4.45 p.m., with more ringing. Please send names for tea by Wednesday morning, December 7th, as catering is so difficult. There is a good shelter within 100 yards of both church and hall.—L. Wright, Hon. Dis. Sec.

NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE ASSOCIATION.—The annual meeting will be held at Stoke-on-Trent on Saturday, December 7th. Handbell ringing in the tower from 3 p.m. Tea will be provided in the Church Institute at 5.30 p.m. to all who notify Mr. S. Churton, 1, Birks Street, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffs, not later than Wednesday. Please try to attend.—Andrew Thompson, Hon. Sec.

GLOUCESTER AND BRISTOL DIOCESAN ASSOCIATION.—Bristol City Branch.—The annual meeting of the branch will be held at St. Peter's on Saturday, December 14th. Handbells 3 p.m., followed by tea and meeting in Parish Hall. Business includes election of officers, accounts for the year, etc. Please make an effort to be present. A postcard for tea will oblige.—A. M. Tyler, 5, Addison Road, Bristol, 3.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.—The address of Mr. Joseph S. Hawkins, hon. secretary of St. Andrew's, Holborn, Society, is now 8, Clement's Inn Passage, Strand, London, W.C.2.

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BIRTH.

CHADDOCK.—On November 12th, at 9, Bannley Road, Scawsby, Doncaster, to the wife of Norman Chaddock (née Miss Elsie Brothwell), a daughter.

BOW BELLS.

In view of reports of damage caused by raids on Central London, our readers will be glad to learn that Bow bells could still ring again if opportunity offered, but no longer could the ringers resort to a well-known hostelry where once they refreshed themselves and where not a few men have sat to enjoy or criticise the ringing, according to their mood and whoever was ringing.

J. A.
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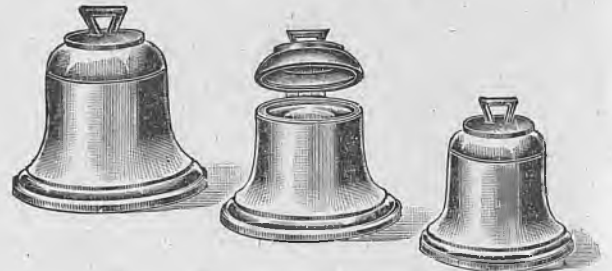
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