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BELL FRAMES.

The history of church bells and the archæological study which they present have had an increasing interest for ringers, large numbers of whom now realise that this side of campanology can provide a subject of considerable educational value. In the past, ringers concerned themselves very little with the history of the bells they rang, and even to-day there are many who have no interest in bells except as instruments in their hands. They will criticise their tonal qualities, their defects and their merits, but beyond this the bells receive scant consideration. But there is gradually spreading an interest in the antiquarian aspect of bells, an aspect which the labours of writers like North and Walters have opened to a wider circle of the public. By their investigations among the church bells in the towers of many counties, there is now available material for a very fascinating study, and it is a matter for regret that the county bell histories are not more generally available. They have, however, usually been published by subscription or through archæological societies, with the result that only a limited edition has come from the press, and in these days the possessor of anything like a complete collection of the books is a fortunate individual. From these volumes it is possible to trace the art and craft of the bell founder and the development of the bell itself.

Amid all that we can learn about bells, however, there has been, strangely enough, very little written about the frames that carry them. Perhaps antiquarians have thought them of little interest, yet the development of the bell cage and the bell fittings have played no unimportant part in the development of the art of ringing. Or should it be put the other way? Did men adapt their bell cages to suit the expanding desires of the ringers, or did the development of the bell frame to carry the increasing weight of metal which founders put into their bells encourage ringers to further efforts with their flying ropes, and did it make possible that bell control by which alone change ringing can successfully be done? That is a question which we leave ringers to answer for themselves, but the fact remains that very little attention has been paid among ringers to the manner in which the bell frame of to-day took its form. The cage which is found supporting a modern ring of bells fashioned of timbers or metal, but built on engineering lines to take the strains and stresses from the walls of the towers and give that ease of ringing which ringers now expect, is an important structural unit. It has not always been of the design that is installed to-day. It has been gradually evolved from a simple beam, and the changes down the

(Continued on page 62.)

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centuries have been dictated by the slow development of scientific knowledge.

We publish in this issue the first part of a highly interesting illustrated article on this matter. As far as we are aware it is the first time that the subject has been so completely dealt with in a bellringing journal, and it throws an instructive light upon a hitherto neglected feature of our belfries. Ringers are indebted to Mr. G. P. Elphick, hon. secretary of the Southern Guild of Ringers, Lewes, for this article, which has been provided largely from the material discovered from personal inspection of Sussex towers, and obtained only by much patient labour. It is this first-hand investigation which adds so much to the value of work of this kind, for it should be remembered that the results set down in a page or two of 'The Ringing World' have provided a task which has taken months if not years to complete in leisure hours, albeit it has been a congenial occupation.

REFRESHMENTS PROVIDED.

THE STORY OF A SIX-BELL PEAL.

It was all fixed up in a hurry. Somehow peals like that go off well and have a happy ending. The conductor came over on Thursday, in search of four more for a peal of Minor on Saturday. He got his band, including a lady who had never started for a peal.

The venue of the peal was a small village some miles away, and the five 'youngsters' and one not so young arranged to meet at the bus stop in a nearby town at an appointed hour. This was all to the good and saved having to wait for the 'odd one' to turn up at the church. En route to the bus, some of the party bumped into a prominent association official, himself off to attempt a peal.

'Where are you off to?' he enquired.

On being told, he said, 'Oh! you will find they are a lively lot. You will be lucky if you ring a peal at the first attempt. Anyway, I wish you luck.'

A local call change ringer was ready to welcome the band on arrival. After assisting with rope adjustments he departed, asking how long they would be.

'About two hours and three-quarters' came the reply.

The ringing chamber, on the first floor, was very small both in length, breadth and height. In fact, the ropes only just appeared through the holes when the bells were set at backhand. The ringer of the fifth had to operate with his back hard against the door, which opened inwards.

The ringers found the 'official' knew what he was talking about, and the first 720 was not without incident. It finally came to grief by a shift near the end. The menfolk were game for a fresh start, but questioned whether the lady would find it too much of a good thing at the first attempt. She waved all such talk on one side and the peal was recommenced. The 720 'practice' made all the difference and all went well until about half-way.

Suddenly the ringer of the fifth shot forward and it seemed all was lost. Recovering his balance, he planted his 14 stone back against the door, telling the intruder to go away. After one or two vain attempts to open the door, the unwelcome visitor departed, but not for long.

The peal was almost 'in the bag' when the heavyweight on the fifth received a nasty jolt from the door. He managed to hold the fort, however, and ringing continued without mishap until the peal was finished.

Long before the end the conductor and the ringer of the fifth had decided what they would say to the intruder. Their words melted in their mouths when a youth appeared in the doorway carrying a tray complete with tea, sugar, milk and biscuits.

'Father is sorry he is not able to see you, but told me to bring this over after you had been ringing about two hours and three-quarters. I waited a long time and you didn't stop, so I thought I had better come over in case you didn't know the time!' Well, it was no use explaining a lost 720, and after all they had rung the peal.

The refreshments were very welcome and everyone was satisfied, particularly the young lady, who had rung her first peal. As I said at the beginning, it was all fixed up in a hurry and somehow peals like that go off all right.

J. E. B.

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CROWLAND BELLS.

THE FIRST PEAL. To the Editor.

Sir,—It was very interesting to read about Crowland Abbey bells, the first ringing peal. I should like to state that I had the honour of ringing in the first peal rung on the bells 45 years ago. It was my third peal. It was rung by the South Lincolnshire Association on Saturday, November 28th, 1896, in 2 hours 48 minutes, and consisted of 5,040 changes in four methods on tower bells, viz., four six-scores of Canterbury, four six-scores of Bob Doubles, 24 six-scores of St. Dunstan's and 10 six-scores of Grandsire, all called differently. The ringers were P. Cherrington (first peal) treble, W. Ambrose 2, R. Wyche 3, Rev. H. Law James 4, C. R. Lilley tenor. Conducted by the Rev. H. Law James.

It was duly recorded as 'the first peal on this historic ring of bells, there having been a ring of five bells in Crowland Abbey for nearly 1,300 years.'

The five bells are dedicated to five different saints and were rehung by Taylor and Co. in a new frame about 50 years ago. The ringers of 1, 2 and 3 were Crowland men, the 4th then of St. Martin's, Stamford, and the 5th of Peterborough.

All have passed away except the tenor man. Since the peal was rung the bells have been increased to six, and I think a peal of Minor was rung there a few years ago.

If my memory serves me right, they had a band for Grandsire at Crowland at that time, as Mr. Wyche, a solicitor, was living in Stamford, but used to go to Crowland most week-ends.

I well remember our seven miles' drive in a trap. It was a bitterly cold day with the wind blowing from the Fen country.

Ringings in Lincolnshire at that time was at a very low ebb until the Rev. H. Law James came along. I have watched the progress since with great pleasure, for we used to have to cycle 14 miles to get a touch of Triples. I wonder if the young generation of to-day would do it? Surfeet bells had not been rung for years until Mr. James went there. What a difference now!

C. R. LILLEY.

BELLS RECAST.

Mr. Lilley is in error in thinking that the five bells upon which he rang are dedicated to five saints. Only the tenor is a pre-Reformation bell, the others of the five are 17th and 18th century; the treble cast by Thomas Norris in 1654, the 2nd and 3rd by Edward Arnold, of Leicester, in 1788, and the 4th at the same foundry in 1797.

The original bells, however, are said to have been named after saints, as were another ring afterwards. The great bell of the first ring, cast by Turketyl, the sixth Abbot (A.D. 946-975), was named Guthlac. Egelric, his nephew and successor (A.D. 975-984), added six more bells, namely, two large ones named Bartholomew and Betelm, two middle ones named Turketyl and Tatwyn, and two lesser ones named Pega and Bega.

The bells were destroyed in the fire of 1091 which engulfed the church. Later the bells were replaced, but again, in 1171, the church was destroyed by fire. Whether the bells suffered, however, is not known.

Abbot Ralph Merske (1253-1281) erected a campanile at the east end of the church, which was known as the 'outward belfry.' There are records of large bells hanging in this belfry, so that at that time the Abbey possessed two rings of bells.

In 1405 there were 'four sweetly sounding bells,' hanging 'in the tower beyond the choir,' which is generally understood to be the central tower. What became of the bells in the 'outer belfry' at the Dissolution is not now known, but, says North in his 'Church Bells of Lincolnshire,' 'at Moulton there is a tradition that the church bells there came originally from Crowland Abbey, and there is a similar tradition at East Pinchbeck, the bells being said to have been sent there because there was no other tower in the neighbourhood large enough for them.'

In 1465 Abbot John Lytlington, 'in order that nothing might remain undone which is considered to tend to the increase of the praise of God, caused five fine and choice bells to be cast at London and substituted for the three old ones, to send forth their sweet sounds with their harmonious chimes. The cost of these, together with the expense of the carriage thereof to Croyland by land and water, amounting in all to one hundred and sixty pounds, was defrayed entirely by himself.'

Apparently one of the four older bells in the central tower had gone since 1405. Before the new bells were hung they were solemnly consecrated and dedicated to the patron saints whose names had been inscribed on them: Guthlac, Bartholomew, Michael, Mary and Trinity. Two of the five probably remained until after 1783, and were those recast of Edward Arnold in 1788.

ANCIENT SOCIETY OF COLLEGE YOUTHS.

At the meeting on Saturday, February 1st, at the Holborn Viaduct Station Buffet, nine members were present.

Kind letters of sympathy and good wishes were received from Mr. C. T. Coles, general secretary of the Middlesex Association, and from Mr. F. J. Rumens, of Chicago, U.S.A.

Some difficulty had been experienced in finding suitable accommodation for meeting on Saturday afternoons, and Mr. H. Langdon kindly offered a room at 15, Farringdon Avenue. The offer was readily accepted by the members.

Respect was paid to the memory of Alderman J. S. Pritchett, of King's Norton, and Mr. C. Catchpole, of Ipswich. Mr. J. S. Hawkins had deposited the peal of handbells (presented to the society by Lady Heywood and loaned to the St. Andrew's, Holborn, ringers) in a 'safe deposit' strongroom in Holborn for safe keeping. Mr. A. A. Hughes and Mr. E. Murrell had been appointed assessors of the damaged property and were making good progress.

HE HAD HIS FIVE POUNDS' WORTH.

A well-known ringer, who shall be nameless, on Monday realised the ambition of his life. Ever since he was a boy, and that is a long time ago, he has wanted to pull the communication cord in a railway train. That notice 'Penalty for improper use £5,' always deterred him.

Bub on Monday, travelling to 'The Ringing World' Office, he found himself on arrival at the usual station, a prisoner in the compartment. Despite all his struggles and that of four hefty fellow passengers, including part of the British Navy, he was unable to open the door into the corridor, which was on the platform side of the train.

There was nothing for it but to pull the communication cord or be carried on to some other station. So he had his five pounds' worth.

At that moment another passenger, entering the corridor from the platform, put his hand on the door latch and, heigh presto, it opened as easily as the stone to the robbers' cave when Aladdin shouted 'Gertcher' or some other such cryptic word.

The gentleman whose destination was 'The Ringing World' office spent a good deal of time explaining to railway officials. They know his name and address: he is now wondering whether he really has had his five pounds' worth.

CHECKING A PEAL OUTSIDE THE TOWER.

To the Editor.

Dear Sir,—A peal of Major was attempted at St. Michael's Church, Framlingham, Suffolk, several years ago, and the bells duly came into rounds. The late Rev. J. Holme Pilkington, well known as a composer of Bob Major, sat in his Rectory, which adjoins the churchyard, and listened to the ringing, as he usually did, always being interested.

He met the ringers as they came out of the tower and said to the conductor, 'You are not going to publish that peal, are you?' 'Yes, why not?' the conductor replied. He then explained where the peal was false, and it was not published.

G. E. SYMONDS.

Ipswich.

BEDFORD SURPRISE.

To the Editor.

Dear Sir,—I wish to thank Mr. Melville and Mr. Harvey for their remarks on Bedford Surprise. It was an attempt to produce a method where all the bells were in possible progressive coursing order. From previous attempts I thought this the most musical way. My statement that all peals of Treble Bob would go to Bedford did not mean that these were the only peals possible. The proof of Bedford is much simpler than Treble Bob. The false course end 24365 is false only in the 4th and 5th leads, not together; that is the 4th lead is false with the 4th; also 5th lead, with the 5th. Therefore, the bob Before will separate the two leads as the illustrations will show.

	23456		32546	
	35264	B	24365	B

Here are three peals of 5,088 of Bedford Surprise, but they are false to Treble Bob. Probably they have already been used for Bristol.

23456	M	B	W	H	23456	M	B	W	H	23456	M	B	W	H
-------	---	---	---	---	-------	---	---	---	---	-------	---	---	---	---

52364	—	2	32654	2	2	62534	2	1	2
32654	2	1	62534	2	1	65324	—	1	2
62534	2	1	65324	1	2	62453	—	2	1
65324	1	—	46253	—	2	2	2	2	2
24536	1	2	2	2	2	23564	1	1	2

Each twice repeated.

Saffron Walden.

F. DENCH.

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DEVELOPMENT OF THE BELL-CAGE. WOOD FRAMES THROUGH THE CENTURIES.

By G. P. ELPHICK.

During the last few months ringers have had quite a lot to say about methods of bell-hanging—ball versus plain bearings. There is one important factor that seems to have escaped their notice—the stability of the tower and bell-cage. Most of us have rung in towers where the bells do not run well, in spite of the fact that they are on ball bearings. We blame the bell-hanger, an easy thing to do, and leave it at that.

I have a vivid recollection of examining a cage when the bells, which had the reputation of going 'like houses,' were being rung. The cage was behaving like a ship in a storm at sea; rising and falling at least an inch, at the same time moving sideways about two inches and battering the tower walls. It was the bearings that were getting the blame in the ringing chamber; the real cause had to be seen to be believed. This is a bad example of what will happen through neglect, for a cage that has been well looked after is one of the most rigid pieces of timber framing we have.

Now the question arises how has the modern cage been evolved that it is so rigid? Strange to say, this question has never been answered; even the various archæological societies have not paid any attention to it. While our knowledge of mediæval bells is considerable, our knowledge of the cages is practically nil. So far as I know, Sussex is the only county of which a survey of its bell-cages has been made. It is to the frames in the towers in this county to which I shall generally refer.

In trying to place the period in which a cage was constructed, we are confronted with a problem much more complex than that of dating mediæval bells. No dated cages appear to be known before the seventeenth century. For earlier cages we have to rely on the evidence of the age of the tower and the bells it contains.

If the cage timbers are built into the tower walls, we can be fairly sure that they are of the same date. The position and roping of the bells may give a clue, as well might a cage that has been altered to fit the tower. All we can do is to obtain a period in which the particular type with which we are dealing was in vogue, relying on the bells to give us a better approximation of the date.

We must also bear in mind the fact that the mediæval smith and carpenter were the bell-hangers of their day and would use principles of construction with which they were familiar. The carpenter, for example, would use the principles of the roof truss for the trusses of a bell-cage. Another point to consider is that in an obviously reconstructed cage the village carpenter would generally use the previous type as a copy, on which to base his idea of proportion and sizes of timber required. Where cages are moulded, help in placing them can be obtained from mouldings in vogue at various periods on beams, door-frames and the general joinery of the time. It must also be borne in mind that most of the types that I shall mention overlap each other by considerable periods.

Belfries did not become part of church structure until the seventh or eighth century. In the latter period mention is made of them by the monk of S. Gall and Amalarius. There is a record of one being built in 770 A.D. by Pope Stephen III., or by his successor two years later. In 926, Athelstan caused a law to be passed conferring the right to sit at the town-gate on any

thane who possessed a belfry on his estate. There are remaining to-day Saxon towers which obviously were built to contain bells of considerable size. Earl's Barton is a notable example.

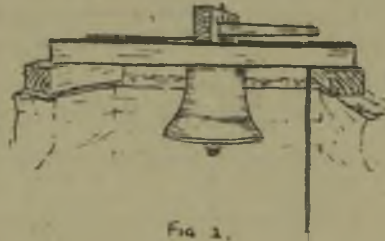


Fig. 1.

been continued above the roof to form a bell-gable. It seems quite reasonable to assume that this was one of the earliest methods of hanging a small bell; it being chimed by a lever. Man, being the creature he is, wanted larger and more bells, and so he had to build a tower to contain them; what was more natural than to hang them between beams, the beams taking the place of stone piers? (Fig. 1).

The earliest example of this method known to me is at Lynchmere. There is a cage for two, which I consider coeval with the thirteenth century bell it contains. The plates, on which the beams rest, are at present built into the walls of the present seventeenth century tower; they are exposed where they pass across the louvre window openings. On closer examination the timber which is buried in the walls proves to have the marks of prolonged exposure to the same degree as the beams which support the bells, proving that it was in that condition before the present tower was built. The central beam is of much larger section than the others, showing that the carpenter realised that it had to carry twice the load that was imposed on each of the

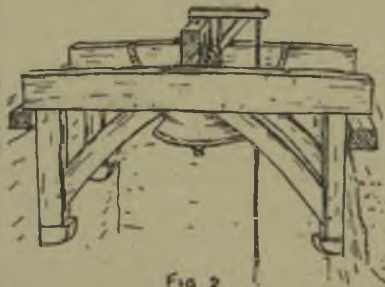


Fig. 2.

end beams. It is also interesting to note that the end beam of the treble pit is laid flat, showing that the carpenter considered it strong enough for the treble but not for the tenor, as the tenor and beam is on edge, although it is of the same section as that used for the treble.

It was soon found that, with the long beams necessary to span large towers, it was essential to stiffen the beams, as it was impossible to obtain sections of sufficient size to be rigid. The method used to stiffen the beams, or 'Heads,' as they will be called, branched into two different types of cages. Either they could be braced to the walls by means of a piece of timber, one end fixed near the centre of the beam and the lower end embedded in the wall of the tower, or by placing a post under the centre of the beam.

The most natural development seems to have been to brace the beam as men braced their roof trusses; and it is as well to notice how much bell-cages and roof trusses have in common. They both have to carry forces acting from the vertical to the horizontal direction.

At East Chiltonington there are the remains of a cage of this type, as old as the mid-twelfth century tower in which it is built. It is a seven inch tree trunk, with one brace remaining in the tower wall. The bell was hung in the centre, apparently not in alignment with the beam, for there is a groove cut on one side to give clearance for the bell to swing frame high.

There is another example of this type (Fig. 2), showing some improvements in the twelfth century tower at Newhaven. The beams show two advances, for not only are they cambered, but the bells were hung close to the walls to lessen the strain on the beams. Another improvement was that the beams were nearer together than the diameter of the bell's mouth. The carpenters had found out that a short stock was more efficient than a long one; so they cut grooves in the sides of the beams to enable the bell to swing clear and at the same time keep the beams as close as possible. There are many examples of this form of cage generally to be found in the timber spires that adorn so many of our ancient towers. A further development in this type was to have wall posts fixed to the lower end of the brace and the beam at the top, to distribute the thrust over the wall to a greater degree.

The other direction led to the bell-cage as we know it to-day. I only know



Fig. 3.

of two examples of this type of

cage (Fig. 3). At Cold Waltham is a fine example in a thirteenth century tower. It is a cage for three, containing two bells probably of fourteenth century date. There are several improvements over the previous types that we have examined. The heads, or beams, are wider in the centre where the bell is hung, and cut down where the lip passes, remaining at this width to the ends. The carpenters had found that once a vertical groove is cut in a beam, the timber between it and the nearest wall was taking no strain; in fact it was a liability of extra weight and the beam was stronger without it. They also had discovered that beams or the joists of a floor need not be so strong if they had a beam supporting them in the centre. In the case of a bell-cage the beam had to be lowered to enable the bell to swing clear, so it was connected to the heads by posts. These were braced to the head to make it more rigid, and the result is a roof-truss upside down. Yet this type of cage grew out of the experience men had gathered from making floors, the braces being the only part borrowed from a roof truss.

(To be continued.)

THE FUNERAL BELL.

To the Editor.

Dear Sir,—With reference to the Rev. F. L. Edwards' letter as to chiming each of the bells in turn the morning before a funeral, I have several times heard it done at Hodnet (Bishop Heber's Church), Salop. If I remember correctly, they start with the treble and finish with the tenor for a man, and start with the tenor and finish with the treble for a woman.

At Stanton-on-Hine-Heath, the 5th is raised, rung a few minutes and lowered again in the morning, the tenor being clocked at intervals prior to the funeral, finishing with three sharp strokes as the cortege arrives at the lych gate. Here, according to legend, the ghost of one Madam Brown, of Sowbatch, was 'read down by twelve parsons at midnight' in the year 1777. Singularly enough, when the church was restored in 1891 a leather bottle was found under the stone flooring beneath the Sowbatch pew. I understand the men threw it in the river.

E. V. RODENHURST.

Prees, Salop.

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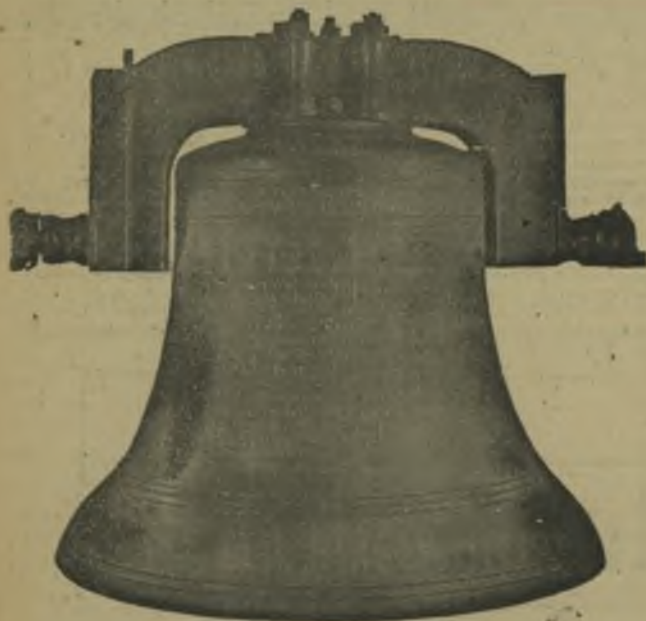
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BELFRY GOSSIP.

Mr. George Popnell, of 3, Pant-y-Cefn Road, Markham, Mon., has, we regret to say, been laid up for the past two months. He was bombed out of Bristol General Hospital, where he went for treatment, and is now waiting for a bed in Newport Hospital. Mr. Popnell has many friends in ringing circles and they will wish him a speedy recovery.

We are glad to be able to report that Mr. P. C. Williams, hon. treasurer of the Bristol United Guilds, has now fully recovered from his recent serious operations and hopes to resume work shortly.

Mr. R. Overy, serving in one of the technical branches of the Army, and whose present address is 275, Hornby Street, Bury, Lancs, would like to get into touch with handbell ringers in the district.

To-day is the one hundred and fifty-eighth anniversary of the opening of the bells at St. Botolph's, Bishopsgate. Three complete peals were rung, one by each of the leading London societies.

It is also the sixteenth anniversary of the only peal of Cambridge Maximus rung at St. Paul's Cathedral.

Fifty years ago to-day a peal of Stedman Cinques was rung at St. Bride's, Fleet Street, by a band of bachelors belonging to the Ancient Society of College Youths. It was composed and conducted by Mr. F. E. Dawe.

John Carter called at St. Martin's, Birmingham, the first peal of Forward Maximus on February 8th, 1889.

The first true peal of Surprise Major in London, one of Superlative, was rung at St. Matthew's, Bethnal Green, on February 9th, 1850, by the St. James' Society.

Four years later on February 10th the same society rang the first double-handed peal of Stedman Cinques.

The first true peal of Cambridge Surprise was rung at Bennington in Hertford by the local company on February 11th, 1873.

Fifty years ago to-day 13 peals were rung. They consisted of Grand-sire Doubles 2, Triples 3, Union Triples 1, Canterbury Pleasure Triples 1, Stedman Triples 1, Caters 1, Cinques 1, Bob Major 1, and Kent Treble Bob Major 2.

REVERSAL.

To the Editor.

Dear Sir,—I was interested by the account of reversing, but cannot agree with the statement that Grandsire does not reverse like Double Norwich. When I reverse Grandsire I make the hunt bell go in front of the treble thus:—

2135476

1234567

1325476

3152746

etc.

They rang Holt's Ten-Part on this plan in Cheshire some time ago with the ordinary Grandsire single.

E. BANKES JAMES.

HANDBELLS IN CHURCH.

To the Editor.

Sir,—On the Sunday afternoon before Christmas a very interesting candle and carol service was held in the ancient Parish Church of St. Mary Magdalen, Woolwich. At the start of the service the church was in darkness, no sound was heard but the ringing of the handbells from the crypt, symbolising the bells of Bethlehem. While these were playing the choir found their way into the church and the service began with the singing by the choir of 'Silent night, Holy night.' The Yule candle was lit during the singing of the last verse representing our Lord Jesus Christ, the Light, entering the world on the first Christmas eve.

The Gospel for Christmas Day was then read and the choir sang the carol, 'Away in a manger.' During this carol the light was passed from lantern to lantern, reminding us of our Lord's commission to 'pass the Light on, to make disciples of all nations.' At the conclusion of the carol the bells were again rung calling us to Bethlehem. While the congregation listened to the bells, the clergy and choir passed to the crypt for the blessing of the crib, at the conclusion of which the choir sang, down in the crypt, 'Sleep, Holy Babe.'

The rest of the service took place in the church itself and consisted of carols and readings from the scriptures. The part played by the handbells was very greatly appreciated by everybody.

In addition to this service, a choir of some 30 to 40 voices from the Parish Church and from the nearby Methodist Church visited 16 public air raid shelters and sang carols there. On several occasions this was preceded by carols played on handbells. Increasingly here in Woolwich we are seeing the possibilities in the use of handbells.

CUTHBERT BARDSLEY, Rector of Woolwich.

DEATH OF THE REV. R. C. THURSFIELD.

A LOSS TO PETERBOROUGH DIOCESAN GUILD.

The tragic death of the Rev. Richard Cecil Thursfield and Mrs. M. A. Thursfield, which we briefly recorded in our last issue, has deprived the Peterborough Diocesan Guild of one of its best known clerical members, and removed a leading figure in the civic life of Northamptonshire. They died as a result of a motor crash in their own parish of Cranford, within a mile or so of their home.

Mr. and Mrs. Thursfield were travelling from Kettering in their car, the Rector driving, when it was involved in a violent head-on collision with a motor bus. Mrs. Thursfield was killed instantly, and Mr. Thursfield was terribly injured. He passed away early on Saturday morning, January 25th, in Kettering General Hospital.

The Rev. R. C. Thursfield, who had been Rector of Cranford St. Andrew and St. John since 1903, was 75 years of age, and was Rural Dean of Weldon Second Deanery, chairman of Kettering Rural District Council and of several committees, member of Kettering Guardians' Committee and the Public Assistance Committee. He was also a member of Corby and District Town Planning Committee as well as Kettering Joint Hospital Board.

He had been a member of the Peterborough Diocesan Guild and its predecessor, the Central Northants Association, for almost the whole of his tenure at Cranford, and since 1923 had been president of the Kettering Branch of the Guild, to the affairs of which he had devoted much attention and enthusiasm, and by the members of which he will be sorely missed. He was seldom absent from a meeting; his genial presence and encouragement were an inspiration, and his help and advice of great value.

Mrs. Thursfield was also associated with public life as well as carrying out a great deal of parochial work. She was a member of the Ladies' Guild, and, with her husband, always gave a welcome to ringers at Cranford.

There is a family of four, with whom the deepest sympathy is felt in their sudden bereavement. Mr. Rupert Thursfield is in Burma. Mr. Christopher Thursfield, of the Berkshire Yeomanry, is in the Near East. Mrs. Thompson (daughter) is now resident in Portsmouth, and Miss Sylvia Thursfield now a Regional Organiser for the W.V.S. Before taking up war duties Miss Thursfield was secretary of the Northants Branch of the Ladies' Guild.

At the inquest on Mr. and Mrs. Thursfield a verdict of 'Accidental death' was returned, and the driver of the bus was exonerated from blame. Evidence was given that there was bad visibility at the time of the accident and that Mr. Thursfield did not appear to see the bus and came across into the middle of the road.

The funeral took place at St. John's Church, Cranford, on Wednesday, January 29th, amid signs of mourning and regret from the humblest villagers to the most prominent figures in the county of Northants. The Bishop of Peterborough conducted the service, while the Assistant Bishop (Dr. Norman Lang), the Rector of Kettering (the Rev. G. Holborow) and the Rev. L. H. Lethbridge, an old friend of the deceased, also took part.

The church was filled to capacity with mourners, and the coffins, which had been lying in the church, were carried to the grave by the Cranford ringers. Many robed clergy were in attendance, and other mourners, representing every phase of county life, included Lord Brooke of Oakley (chairman, Northants County Council), Mr. McIntyre (representing the Rural Councils' Association of England and Wales), Alderman Haynes (Mayor of Kettering), etc. Ringers were represented by the Rev. E. S. Powell (Master), Mr. R. G. Black (general secretary), the Rev. A. T. Seggar (president, Northampton Branch) and Mr. H. Baxter (secretary, Kettering Branch), of the Peterborough Diocesan Guild, and Mrs. F. Boulton (district president) and Mrs. E. S. Powell (Ladies' Guild).

Lord Brooke of Oakley, at Kettering Petty Sessions, paid tribute to the memory of the late Mr. Thursfield, typical of many at the meetings of public authorities in the district. Lord Brooke alluded to the great loss sustained by the death under tragic circumstances of the Rev. R. C. Thursfield, and expressed deep sympathy with the members of the family. They mourned, he said, the loss of a valued colleague. Although the end was sudden, perhaps it had a happy side, as it found Mr. Thursfield alert in body and mind, and it found a devoted husband and wife undivided when they walked through the valley of the shadow of death.



THE REV. R. C. THURSFIELD.

By courtesy of the Northampton Printing and Publishing Co.

Guild, and, with her husband, always gave a welcome to ringers at Cranford.

SALISBURY DIOCESAN GUILD.

ANNUAL MEETING OF DORCHESTER BRANCH.

Though their towers stand silent, members of Dorchester Branch of the Salisbury Diocesan Guild are seeing to it that the tradition of their ancient English art is well maintained in South Dorset. The zeal which animates the branch was in evidence at the annual meeting at Dorchester on Saturday, January 25th, when it was reported that despite all difficulties the membership had kept well up to the average.

Handbell ringing started at 3 o'clock, the Rector having very thoughtfully placed a table in a comfortable and warm part of the church to place the bells on. Some had their first try out, and certainly became very interested.

The service was conducted by the chairman, assisted by the vicar-chairman. About 50 were present, and it was good to hear the singing, showing that many ringers are also members of choirs.

Tea was served at Mrs. Major's Cafe, followed by the annual meeting. It was good in these anxious times to see how the members turned up from the countryside. Forty-three were present, the towers represented being Bradford Peverell, Charminster, Dorchester St. Peter's, Fordington St. George, Maiden Newton, Preston St. Andrew, Puddletown, Stratton, Sydling St. Nicholas, Upwey, West Lulworth, Wool and Wyke Regis, and there were also visitors from Lumborne and Shroton. Apologies for absence were received from the Rev. F. Llewellyn Edwards and others.

The Master of the Diocesan Guild, the Rev. C. Carew Cox, of Lyme Regis, wrote: 'Interest in ringing must necessarily be rather a struggle to sustain while our bells have to submit to the silencing authority, but if members of the branches can meet occasionally, the brotherhood will function and hopes will be kept alive. . . . We can give more attention to handbell practice these days and I hope your branch will do something towards encouraging that. I hope every tower will keep bells, ropes and fittings regularly overhauled. I could say a lot about the "ban," but no purpose would be gained. We just have to be loyal to what many of us believe was a mistaken and little thought-out policy. Anyway we know our people are only waiting for the glorious day when they will hear our beloved bells again sounding forth the notes of victory and the promised peace. God grant that may be this year.'

The hon. secretary (Mr. C. H. Jennings) gave his annual report for 1940. Altogether seven meetings were arranged, but six had to be abandoned owing to the military authorities having taken the halls. One excellent meeting was held at Charminster before the ban, at which 40 were present.

Congratulations were given to the chairman on his preferment to a Canonry in Salisbury Cathedral.

On Armistice Day a wreath had been placed on the branch memorial to the brethren who fell in the last Great War. Regret was expressed at the loss by fire of Cattistock tower with the bells and carillon. It was hoped that when the carillon was replaced it would again contain a good octave for ringing. Membership had been well maintained, although there were many serving in H.M. Forces.

The balance sheet showed receipts for £33 7s. 6d. and expenditure £16 5s. 5d., leaving a balance of £17 2s. 1d. All money was now banked with the Post Office Savings Bank as soon as received, and, in addition, the reserve fund of eight Saving Certificates was now worth £8 12s.

Mr. Jennings said: 'We regret especially the ban on Sunday ringing. Various efforts have been made to get the decision altered without success, but I am given to understand that there is good reason for the enforcement of the complete silence. The past year has been a disastrous one for ringing—it was the first time for more than a thousand years that Christmas and the New Year were not heralded by the bells. I ask you where possible to practise on the handbells. We must meet again this coming summer. We must keep to it and not wait until something turns up. We must keep the flag flying in these discouraging days and be ready when the time comes to ring the bells for victory.'

The importance of keeping a watch on the ropes was emphasised by a member. It would be very unfortunate, he commented, if the ropes broke when they started to ring them for victory!

Discussion followed for the purpose of arranging meetings during 1941, and it was left in the hands of the hon. secretary to make what arrangements he possibly could. He said he hoped to arrange two or three meetings during the summer, where perhaps they would need no hall or room.

The officers of the branch were re-elected as follows: Chairman. Canon Markby; vice-chairman, Canon Slemek; hon. secretary and treasurer, Mr. Jennings; Ringing Master, Mr. C. Smart; Deputy Ringing Master, Mr. P. Tockock.

The hon. secretary read a paper on fire watching in churches. Some in Dorset have already started this scheme. He appealed for a larger support for 'The Ringing World.'

Mr. Jennings was congratulated on his son, a flight-sergeant in the R.A.F. and a ringer before joining the R.A.F., being mentioned for the second time in despatches. The chairman was asked to write a letter of congratulation and thanks to him.

A very happy meeting concluded with votes of thanks to the chairman for taking the service and the use of the church, and to Mr. J. W. Smith for making the excellent local arrangements. The members then adjourned to St. Peter's Church and practised on the handbells.

THE STANDARD METHODS.

SOME QUESTIONS WORTH DISCUSSING.

In a recent letter to 'The Ringing World,' Mr. James F. Harvey, the president of the Leeds and District Society, referred to the new and as yet unpublished book on the Surprise Major methods, and asked whether, when it does appear, 'any guide will be given as to the order in which it is desirable that these should be practised, in order that the number generally known and relatively widely practised may be extended by common consent.' He goes on to suggest that some scheme should be devised 'whereby the same further half-dozen or so new methods are indicated as being of the highest quality and worthy to rank as Standard Methods.'

Several interesting points are raised here, either directly or indirectly, all of them important, and all of them more or less controversial. There is the question of how a ringing text book should be written and what it should contain. There is the question of how to overcome the difficulties, financial and otherwise, of publishing such a text book. There is the question of what constitutes a standard method, and what are the qualities which should be sought for and encouraged. And there is the question whether the Exercise has not already as many good methods as it needs for the present, and whether it would not be well to make the most of what we have before seeking new ones.

These are, as we said, all controversial questions, and not one of them admits of any definite and clear-cut answer. Even the last, which to some will sound like merely stupid opposition to progress, has something to be said for it.

We can well imagine many ringers with conservative ideas arguing like the following, or if they do not actually put their ideas into words, this is pretty much what they think and upon which they would like to act.

The object of ringing (so they hold) is to sound the bells in such a way that they give pleasure to the people who are listening outside, as well as to the ringers in the belfry. That is all that really matters, and the value of a method depends ultimately on it and on nothing else. To give pleasure we must have methods which produce good music, and however good a method is it will not give pleasure unless it is well struck. Two centuries of practical ringing have abundantly shown that those methods are most musical in which the bells have a sustained beat, which means the methods which are simplest in construction. No Surprise method can ever produce the musical effect that Plain Bob or Treble Bob does. Some would even go further and say for the sake of music Triples and Caters should be encouraged, and Major and Royal, if not actually discouraged, given a relatively less important place in the ringers' repertoire.

Furthermore (these advocates go on to say) no band can properly strike any method unless they know it thoroughly and have practised it often. In olden times when the best bands rang only one or two methods (it might be Treble Bob or it might be Stedman and Grand-sire) they devoted their full attention to good striking, now they are so occupied in learning and attempting new and complex methods that they miss the finer points in striking altogether, and are content with a lower standard than they should be. It is a common thing to find beginners taking a rope in Cambridge or Double

Norwich before they have learnt to ring rounds as it should be done.

A concrete case may be cited in this connection. Year in and year out at St. Paul's Cathedral the custom has all along been, twice on Sundays, to ring three courses of Stedman Cinques. By general consent, St. Paul's bells are rung as they should be, and in a manner worthy of the great church and of the great city it adorns. Would the ringing have been of the same high quality if the band had tried to ring courses of half a dozen Surprise Maximus methods? And if it is desirable to introduce variety into twelve-bell ringing, where is there a belfry in which the conditions necessary for doing so seem to be more favourable?

The very low quality of the striking which almost always obtains at ringing meetings is due to the fact that people will attempt to ring methods which are beyond their present capacity, and so they not only ruin other people's pleasure, but themselves miss what should be the ringer's own greatest delight—to take part in a really well-struck touch, be the method what it may.

Let us then get back to the old simple musical methods which we can strike well if we really try, and let us leave the rarer and more difficult methods for the occasional use of special bands.

We can well imagine with what scorn these opinions will be received in some quarters. They are scarcely likely to be popular with young and ambitious ringers, and we should not care to have them taken as our own opinion. But there is more truth in them than appears at first sight.

The simpler methods are the most musical. Good striking is the first essential. Too many beginners do strive after much method ringing to the detriment of their striking. A good touch of Treble Bob is better and far more enjoyable to take part in than a rough course of Superlative or London. But there is a law of nature which ordains that in such a thing as the ringing Exercise there can be no standing still in the old paths. There must be progress or there will be decay. The tales of the marvellous striking of the bands of olden times are largely myths. Not wholly so, for there were bands then, as there are now, who did strike well, but there was also much bad Grandsire rung. The prize ringing of Yorkshire and the West did produce excellent striking, of methods in one case and rounds in the other, but a price had to be paid for it which no one would willingly pay now.

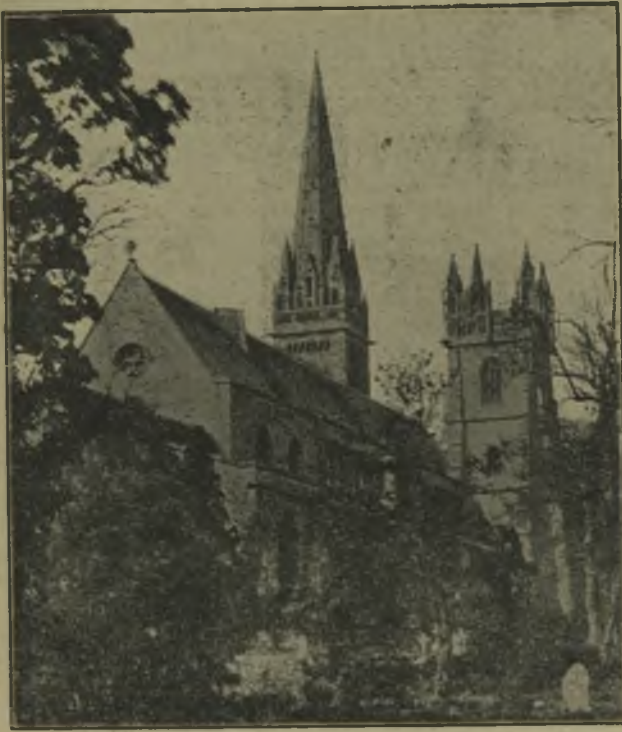
Generally speaking, history teaches us that when the life of the Exercise has been healthiest there have been most new methods rung, and we shall do well to encourage method ringing as much as we can provided we keep a proper sense of proportion and remember that to ring peals in the new Surprise methods is not the only thing nor the most important thing. The old standard methods are still the best, and should not be despised or neglected, but it will be worth our while to see why they are standard methods and whether there are any others which may, as Mr. Harvey suggests, prove worthy to take a place alongside them.

There is, however, one pitfall which we must try to avoid. It is so easy when discussing a matter of this sort to mistake our personal preferences for general laws and to assume that, because a method on paper appears

(Continued on next page.)

LLANDAFF CATHEDRAL.

DAMAGED IN AIR RAID.



Llandaff Cathedral was among the buildings damaged during a raid on Cardiff. The whole of the nave on the south side was unroofed from end to end and all the windows, including the fine west window, were blown out. The interior of the Cathedral suffered severely and the roof of the chapter house was destroyed.

The spire suffered some damage, but, happily, the towers and the ring of ten bells are uninjured. Some valuable stained glass had also been removed to a place of safety.

ST. PETER MANCROFT TENOR.*To the Editor.*

Dear Sir,—In reply to the letter of 'T.' in your current issue, I should like to say the bells were being ceased in peal when the accident happened to the tenor. There is some considerable evidence of the truth of this, in spite of Dr. Parr's statement to the contrary.

CHARLES E. BORRETT.

Sheringham, Norfolk.

THE STANDARD METHODS.*(Continued from previous page.)*

to us to be all that a method should be, it will prove to be equally valuable in actual practice. Many writers and eminent men have told us in the past what should be good methods and what should be bad ones. Many have prophesied the advent of some new method which was to take its place among the standard ones, and almost always the event has confounded the prophet. There is but one safe test, and that is the general experience and tradition of the Exercise throughout the centuries. Not what ringers have written and said, but what they have done and what has resulted from it. Trial and error, the rough and ready test of humanity is here better than all the logically worked out ideas of experts. But we must have eyes to see, and common sense to use them. The proof of the pudding is in the eating.

LANCASHIRE ASSOCIATION.**MEETING OF THE LIVERPOOL BRANCH.**

All things considered, the attendance of members at the meeting of the Liverpool Branch of the Lancashire Association, held last Saturday, at the Church House, was most encouraging. The towers represented were Bootle, Oxton, Bebington, Woolton, St. Luke's, Liverpool, and the Parish Church. Mr. Philip A. Corby, of London, and Mr. R. A. Saulby, of Wrexham, were also present.

Handbells were rung before the meeting, at which the Rev. D. P. Roberts presided until the arrival of the Rector, the Rev. D. Railton.

Tributes of respect were paid to the memories of Messrs. E. Counce and J. Wilkinson, and the hon. secretary was instructed to convey the meeting's sympathies to the relatives of the deceased gentlemen.

It was decided to hold the next meeting on Saturday, March 8th, at the Parish Church, St. Helens, if the necessary permission can be obtained.

The meeting congratulated the band who rang the peal of Stedman Caters on handbells in St. Nicholas' tower last October. It was, as will be remembered, the first of Stedman rung in hand in Liverpool.

The Rector read the reply he had received from the Prime Minister in answer to a request for the removal of the ban on ringing. It was very similar to those received by Mr. Llewellyn Edwards and other persons.

After a most successful and encouraging meeting, the members were entertained to tea by the St. Nicholas' ringers.

OXFORD UNIVERSITY SOCIETY.**MEETINGS DURING TERM.**

A general meeting of the Oxford University Society was held at New College on Wednesday evening, January 22nd. In the absence of the president (the Rev. C. E. Wigg), the vice-president (Mr. H. Miles) took the chair.

Reports were presented by the treasurer and the Master, the latter expressing the pleasure of the society in welcoming Mr. Miles back again after his illness of the previous term.

The Master, Mr. J. E. Spice (New College), announced that an extra set of handbells was available from St. Peter's Hall so that members may have more opportunities of ringing at handbell practices.

A motion that the silent tower-bell practice at New College should be changed from Wednesday in view of other attractions of that night was not carried.

Meetings during term at New College were arranged as follows: Tower bells, Wednesdays, 8 p.m.; handbells, Saturdays, 5 to 7 p.m., and Sundays, 10 to 11 a.m.

It was unanimously agreed that, in spite of the war, the custom of an annual lunch should be revived this term, and a sub-committee was appointed to arrange details.

Looking ahead, the Master foresaw the possibility of not more than five members being in Oxford next Michaelmas, and urged all members to a vigorous recruiting campaign. He also announced that an unsuccessful peal attempt had been made last term. However, the band was undaunted and on the very first evening of term a quarter-peal of Grand sire Doubles was rung. There were ten different callings and the band consisted of W. L. B. Leese 1-2, J. E. Spice (conductor) 3-4, W. F. Gibbons 5-6.

Pressure of work caused the secretary, Mr. W. L. B. Leese (St. John's College) reluctantly to resign his seal of office, and Mr. W. F. Gibbons (Keble College) was elected to the post.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned. The evening was then concluded with a plain course of Grand sire Caters. It was pleasing to note that, of the five ringers, four had had no previous experience of double-handed ringing before October last, the fifth being the Master, who had exercised such excellent patience in teaching them.

BELLRINGER FOR OVER HALF A CENTURY.**DEATH OF MR. H. WALKER, OF LUTON.**

We regret to record the death of Mr. Harry Walker, of Luton, a member of the Beds and Herts Associations, who died rather suddenly on January 15th at the age of 68 years. He had not been in the best of health lately, but was out and about on the day before his death.

One of the oldest bellringers in the county, he was a member of the Luton Parish Church band, and was a service rather than a peal ringer. He had rung only 18 peals, viz., Bob Minor 3, Bob Major 3, Grand sire Triples 5, Stedman Triples 3, and one each of Double Norwich, Oxford Treble Bob Major, Superlative Surprise and Cambridge Surprise Major.

He first became a ringer at the age of 16 at St. Albans. He joined the Luton band in February, 1909, and continued without a break right up to the outbreak of the present war. For many years he was employed by the Vauxhall Motors, Ltd., retiring last year. He leaves three sons and two daughters in bereavement.

Following a choral service at the Parish Church on January 20th, conducted by the senior curate, the Rev. G. B. Garrish, with Mr. Fred Gostelow at the organ, deceased was interred at the Church Cemetery. The following ringers attended: Messrs. A. King, F. Hunt, J. Herbert, D. Newman and A. J. Smith. Mr. U. Norris represented the Vauxhall Motors, Ltd.

A wreath was sent by the Luton band.

REMINISCENCES.

BY A TOUGH VETERAN.

The question has often been asked, 'How soon should a man begin to write his reminiscences?' But before that is answered there is this other question. Why should a man write his reminiscences at all? Surely younger people are not in the least bit interested in what some old fogey did and thought fifty or sixty years ago.

And yet it is a fact that autobiographies and reminiscences are among the most popular forms of literature. If someone who, during a long life, has mixed freely with ringers and ringing, would tell us all about it, we should gladly welcome what he has to say. Only he must be someone with wide and varied experiences, he must be able to write good and attractive English, and he must have kept a diary so that his facts may be correct. We shall not, I fear, ever find such a combination in the Exercise.

I am not going to write my reminiscences. I could not if I tried. But I have often wondered idly, at odd moments, what brought me into touch with bells and bellringers. Most ringers, I suppose, have a definite reason. They knew someone who was a ringer, or they were connected with a church where there were bells. With me there was no such reason. My people were chapel folk of the strictest kind. I did not live near any church with bells. I never came into contact with anybody who knew the remotest thing about ringing. And I did not meet a real ringer until after I had got to know quite a lot about bells and ringing.

And yet, from my earliest infancy, church bells seem in some indefinite and mysterious manner to have had an influence over me.

It is most wonderful how some quite trivial things of long, long, ago remain vivid in the memory and keep recurring from time to time for no particular reason, while other and far more important things are forgotten almost as soon as they happen. Ask me what I did last Thursday and I cannot tell you, but I can remember, as if it were yesterday, things which happened in my childhood, and the curious thing is that some of the most vivid of them are more or less connected with bells.

BELLS AND BOILED SWEETS.

When I was about three or four years old I went with my grandmother on some business of hers to the parish clerk of the country town where she lived. The man's name was Philo, and it struck me even then as a peculiar name so that I remembered it. Since then I have never anywhere come across the name, except that I believe there was an ancient person so called, but recently I noticed, in turning over the leaves of Mr. Morris' book, that a James Philo, evidently my man's great-grandfather, rang a peal of Bob Major in 1756.

One day, when I was about ten years old, I happened to go to a cupboard in my first and very elementary school, and then I picked up a book which I opened and read. It contained an account of a visit to a country church. What it was all about I forgot, but I did remember that the visitor was advised to take the rubbings of the bells, only he must be careful in doing so or 'ten hundredweight of metal will crush you against the frame.' What it all meant I did not know, and I don't quite know now, but I do know that I could at this minute go into that schoolroom, open that cupboard and pick up that same book.

To reach the school I had a long walk backwards and forwards twice a day. It led me through the market place, and I can remember stopping underneath the massive church tower and gazing fascinated at the dark shadow of the great bell that slowly swung backwards and forwards behind the louvres. You can stand to-day where I stood and you will see no moving shadow, but it was not imagination, nor was the smell of the boiled sweets which came up from the cellar underneath Sullivan's shop in Red Lion Street, which (goodness knows why) is always associated with it in my mind. I can smell them now as I write.

A RUDIMENTARY BOOK.

I have said that my people were chapel folk. They were, and of the strictest Puritan type. Sunday was Sunday in those days, and you had no cause to forget it. Twice in the day we went to chapel and once at least to Sunday School. So far as I remember we never found it any hardship, and I have no reason to regret it, but that is neither here nor there. It was the custom then for the chapel people to begin their services half an hour earlier than those at the churches. So I used to hear, in the intervals between the singing, the bells from a nearby steeple. They were a minor three, swing chimed. Perhaps they were those of St. Clement's or of St. George's, Colegate, both of which were close. Very lovely they sounded, and to this day I think that a ring of three, swing chimed, is a beautiful sound.

It was some time after this that I began to take a conscious interest in bells, but how it came about I am totally at a loss to know. I and my friend Jack used to go for walks in the country, and when we came to a church, we would try and climb up the steeple, so as to get a good view of the surrounding district. Perhaps that led to us taking an interest in the bells, but I miss the connection. What did, however, introduce us to change ringing was a book by a man called Benjamin Lomax, who, after a popular account of church bells, gave a very rudimentary description of ringing. It was not a very good book, but it gave me the foundations of all I know about the art. Jack and I used to sit next each other (we were, of course, the two top boys of the school), and I have still Latin and mathematical text books with changes written wherever there was a blank space. For we began to work out changes experimentally before ever we had met a real living ringer.

In those days the curfew was still rung occasionally at one of the churches, and there we learnt to handle a bell. There was little or no ringing in that steeple, so it did not bring us in touch with any ringers, but there was another tower which had five bells, and there we used to go and practise pulling up and ringing the bells singly. About the same time Jack's elder brother came home from school and we roped him in, so that we had a fully competent three-bell band. We used to go to this five-bell tower—Mountergate it was—at any odd time and practise changes on three bells.

We had no connection with the church and knew nothing about the parson or the churchwardens, neither did they know anything about us. How did we manage it? We just knocked at Mrs. Farrow's door and asked for the key. She told me, not once nor twice, that we were a nuisance and what did we want to come bothering people for, and causing an annoyance with all that row, but she always let me have the key. I suppose I must have had a way with me.

At the same time we started to make a set of handbells for ourselves. The first attempt was a weird lot of contraptions with two hammers one on each side of a metal plate. Jack and I started for a 5,000 of Bob Singles on them, but we gave it up as altogether too monotonous and not worth while. Ultimately we manufactured a quite decent set out of door bells, reasonably in tune, and we cast the fittings out of zinc after wood had proved a failure. By means of them we got quite a lot of useful double-handed practice, and in the end we rang seven 720's of Bob Minor on them, the first peal by all and my first as conductor.

INTRODUCTION TO A TOWER.

Before this we had increased our band to five by the addition of Charlie and Alfred. They were both senior to us, and already had rung with the real ringers. It was through Charlie that I was brought in touch with them. He arranged to introduce me to the captain of the band, and on the allotted day I went into the Belfry, a very famous one, but not one where the traditions welcomed young beginners.

I was received kindly. The captain had written out a full course of Bob Major on a large sheet of paper and distinctively marked the treble. He explained to me what hunting was, and asked if I understood. I said I thought I did. Did I think I could ring the treble single-handed on the handbells to a course? I said I would try and I did so, the other bells being rung double-handed. I was warmly congratulated on my performance and then I asked if I might try 1-2. That somewhat surprised them, but they let me try, and I rang it all right.

There was, of course, nothing in it really, because though I had not met any ringers before I did know quite a lot about ringing. Nobody then or since has ever suggested that I am anything more than a very average ringer. He would be wrong if he did, though I have had the luck during my lifetime to come in contact with more than one really good band, and so take part in a few good performances. But to this day I can ring 1-2 to Bob Major; even my two boys will not deny that.

Well, I suppose by that time I had become a ringer. For two or three years we made quite decent progress. Jack called a five-thousand in seven methods for us at Mountergate. Charlie made up our handbell band, and we rang several peals of Triples, Major, Caters and Royal. One of them was the record length at the time, and I will say that I have never rung a better struck peal than that was. There were no trips, for a trip would (since we knew nothing about conducting) have broken us up. Charlie called this peal, for we let the conducting go round.

STEDMAN TRIPLES.

A REVERSAL OF THURSTANS' PEAL.

A correspondent sends us the following figures which were given him by someone in Birmingham (he does not remember who) as a reversal of Thurstans' Four-part by Henry Johnson. These figures differ from those which we published recently as Johnson's reversal.

	2314567	S	H	L	Q	4671325	S	H	L	Q
	4675321	1	4S			7413256	x	x	x	
	3415726	x	x	x		7416523	x	x	x	
A	2516437	x	x	x		2613475	x	x	x	
	7615243	x				2716354	C			
	4513267	A				4617235	x			
	6317254	A				6417325	D			
	6314527	x	x			2715463	x	x	x	
B	2417365	x	x	x		2617534	C			
	7516234	x	x			2316745	C			
	3614257	A				2413657	C			
	5417263	A				2514376	C			
	6713245	A				2517643	D			
	4315276	A				2415736	C			
	5714236	B				6514273	x			
	3416275	A				6513724	x	x		
	4671325	S2 (2 Sixes only)				1234567	x	x	and 12 only	

All course ends are at a six-end when treble goes in quick.

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.

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

NOTICES must be received NOT LATER THAN MONDAY.

PETERBOROUGH DIOCESAN GUILD.—Wellingborough Branch.—The annual meeting will be held (D.V.) at Irthlingborough on Saturday, Feb. 8th. Mr. R. Richardson will, if possible, be present with films. Please bring wives and sweethearts.—A. Bigley, Hon. Branch Sec., 30, Allen Road, Irthlingborough.

BARNESLEY AND DISTRICT SOCIETY.—The next meeting will be held at Silkstone on Saturday, February 8th, at the Ring of Bells. Handbells 3 p.m. Tea 4.30 p.m., followed by business meeting. All are welcome.—D. Smith, Hon. Sec., 28, Chapel Street, Shafton, near Barnsley.

CHESTER DIOCESAN GUILD.—Macclesfield Branch.—The annual meeting will be held on Saturday, February 8th; at Christ Church Institute, Macclesfield. Tea 4.30 p.m., meeting after. Handbells and billiards for all who wait. Owing to the hon. secretary being in H.M. Forces, all names for tea to J. Worth, The Clock, Broken Cross, Macclesfield.

HERTFORD COUNTY ASSOCIATION.—St. Albans District.—Next meeting at St. Peter's, St. Albans, on Saturday, February 8th, at 3 p.m. Arrangements will be made for tea nearby. All the practice you want on handbells and 'silent' tower bells. Start the new year well with a good meeting.—Harold J. Hazell, Dis. Sec., 15, King's Hill Avenue, St. Albans.

GLOUCESTER AND BRISTOL DIOCESAN ASSOCIATION.—Bristol City Branch.—Please note that in future meetings of the branch will be held on the second Saturday in every month at the Haymarket Hotel (opposite St. James-in-the-Horsefair). The next meeting is on February 8th, from 2.45 p.m. Handbells, tea and meeting.—A. M. Tyler, Sec.

LANCASHIRE ASSOCIATION.—Rochdale Branch.—Next meeting will be held at Todmorden on Saturday, February 15th. Handbells available at 47, Cambridge Street, from 3 p.m. Meeting at 6.30 p.m.—Ivan Kay, Hon. Sec.

ANCIENT SOCIETY OF COLLEGE YOUTHS.—The next meeting will be held on Saturday, February 15th. Members will meet at Holborn Viaduct Station Buffet at 2.30 p.m. By kind invitation of Mr. H. Langdon, the business meeting with handbell ringing will take place at 15, Farringdon Avenue, E.C.4, at 3 p.m.—A. B. Peck, Hon. Sec., Branksome, Eversfield Road, Reigate.

PETERBOROUGH DIOCESAN GUILD.—Kettering Branch.—The branch annual meeting will be held at Kettering on Saturday, February 15th. Service 4.15 p.m. Tea and meeting to follow. Please notify me if you require tea.—H. Baxter, 21, Charles Street, Rothwell.

GUILDFORD DIOCESAN GUILD.—Leatherhead District.—The annual district meeting will be held at Leatherhead on Saturday, February 15th. Service 3.30 in Parish Church. Tea at the Duke's Head at 4.30, followed by the usual business meeting. Handbells available for the rest of the evening. Please remember catering difficulties and notify Mr. A. Dean, 24, Church Walk, Leatherhead, as soon as possible, if you require tea.—A. H. Smith, Hon. Sec.

PETERBOROUGH DIOCESAN GUILD.—Daventry Branch.—The annual meeting will be held at the Abbey Buildings, Daventry, on Saturday, February 15th. Chair to be taken at 5.30 p.m. Will members kindly make an effort to attend?—W. C. Moore, 5, Williams Terrace, Daventry, Northants.

HERTFORD COUNTY ASSOCIATION.—Next meeting at Bushey, Guides' Studio, Falconer Road, on Saturday, February 22nd. Meeting time 3.45. Excellent opportunity to practice method ringing on handbells. Comfortable room, social chat. Tea arranged. All interested in the hobby of change ringing are welcome.—C. H. Horton, 53, Aldenham Road, Bushey.

EAST GRINSTEAD AND DISTRICT GUILD.—The annual meeting will be held in the Church Room, Hartfield, on Saturday, February 22nd, at 3 p.m. Business meeting at 3.30. No arrangements for tea. Come along and meet old friends and have a social afternoon together. Handbells available.—C. A. Bassett, Assist. Sec., 3, Pendrill Place, Wadhurst, Tunbridge Wells.

ST. MARTIN'S GUILD FOR THE DIOCESE OF BIRMINGHAM (Established 1755).—The 53rd annual Henry Johnson Commemoration will be held at the Imperial Hotel, Temple Street, Birmingham, on Saturday, March 1st. Owing to prevailing conditions this will be a luncheon to commence at 1.30 p.m. prompt, Vice-President Councillor A. Paddon Smith in the chair. Tickets will be issued to fully paid-up members at 1s. each; to other members and friends at 5s. 6d. each. All applications for tickets must be received by Saturday, February 22nd. Apply T. H. Reeves, Hon. Sec., 136, Newton Road, Sparkhill, Birmingham, 11.

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