

THE RINGING WORLD

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FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 24th, 1943.

[Registered at the G.P.O. for transmission as a newspaper.]

Price 3d.

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These famous bell-founding firms have kindly consented to this adaptation of their advertisements to meet the pressure on our space, due to the compulsory reduction in the number of our pages this week.

IMPROVEMENT.

Recently we printed a letter from a correspondent who signed himself 'A Ringer in the Forces.' He has, he said, been travelling up and down the country, and taking every opportunity of ringing at various centres widely separated; and he gave his general impressions. The picture he painted was a gloomy and depressing one. There is too much indifference to striking, too much practising on a Sunday, too many absentees and latecomers, too little efforts to hold regular week-night practices, too little co-operation between ringers, too much apathy, too much selfishness — in short, everywhere, with few exceptions, ringers are falling lamentably short of the standards they might and should live up to.

We are not surprised that such a sweeping condemnation has called forth protests, and that people have pointed out that in these days it is much easier to say what ought to be done than to do it. It is irritating to a man, who is trying against great odds to keep things going, when he is told that improvement is needed. He knows that as well as any outsider, and he knows too (what the outsider does not know) how many difficulties there are to contend with. Mere fault finding does little, good.

But we suspect that our correspondent used strong language in order to attract attention, so that he might press home more forcibly his appeal to ringers to make greater efforts. If so, all of us will applaud his intention and hope that his appeal will have effect.

There never was, and we hope there never will be, a time when there was no need for improvements in the quality of ringing, in the standards of methods, and in the organisation and regularity of service and practice ringing. If ever the Exercise reaches perfection in these things, or even reaches a level which all would accept as satisfactory, the end would not be far off. It is a condition of life that there must always be striving for something better, or at least for something different. When improvement and change cease, decline and decay set in. There is no halting place.

It is the strength of our art that it offers such unlimited scope and opportunities for development and improvement, and that it makes such strong demands on a man's abilities and devotion as but few can really meet. It may to some seem possible and desirable that every belfry in England should have its skilful band of ringers, and every ring of bells should be well rung Sunday by Sunday; but we greatly doubt if it ever will

(Continued on page 418.)

be possible, human nature being what it is, unless standards are much reduced; and we think it is an excellent thing that there are some bands which are very much better than others—better as method ringers, better as strikers, and better in organisation and enthusiasm. They act as an incentive to the rest.

Failure and shortcomings, disappointments and disillusionment, are common and necessary accompaniments of a ringer's career. They are the tests which show what men are worth. Success is not everything. It is the striving for something better which really matters, and which brings a reward. Those men (and they fortunately are many) who in these difficult times are trying with depleted bands to keep ringing alive must not be disappointed because their efforts are often with little effect. Nor must they be satisfied because things are not so bad as they might have been. No effort after something better is ever wholly wasted, and nothing much can ever be done by people who are content with things as they are.

CENTRAL TOWERS.

To the Editor.

Dear Sir,—I hope your readers will not agree with Mr. Ernest Morris' statement that 'of all our central towers, only two have decided artistic value inside the building.' On the contrary, there are few large churches in this country which do not owe much of their impressive effect to the internal lantern tower.

The effect is greater in some churches than in others. It is most when the tower is in the middle of the choir as at Westminster Abbey, St. Albans and Norwich, all of them Benedictine churches. It is least in churches like Canterbury, where the tower stands at the junction of what are virtually two separate churches.

The size of the windows is of no great importance; in the three instances given above, they are comparatively small and insignificant. At Canterbury the lofty Bell Harry tower is open to the top. This does not add to the effect. It is rather the other way about.

The reason why the lantern was closed by vaulting at Wells and other places was not because it was not valued, but to strengthen the tower.

'I. B. A.'

RINGING IN THE BLACKOUT.

To the Editor.

Dear Sir,—Is it possible for you through the medium of 'The Ringing World' to confirm the position regarding ringing after the black-out? There are no doubt many towers with beginners where regular practice means not only progress but a need to keep their early interest alive, and the cessation of practices during the winter months may take place at many places owing to doubt concerning official regulations.

Can you please tell us if we may or may not ring after dark provided we conform to the lighting restriction orders? 'VAJ.'

[There are now no official restrictions of any kind on ringing church bells, and practices may be held after black-out hours. It is most essential that the black-out should be complete.—The Editor, 'The Ringing World.']

MR. RICHARD E. JONES.

The peal of Cambridge Major rung at Norbury on September 11th was to mark the honour conferred by His Majesty on Mr. Richard E. Jones, who has been made Serving Brother of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem.

This honour follows his long devotion to first aid work, which commenced in June, 1914. During the Great War he served in the R.A.M.C., and after his demobilisation again took up his work with the S.J.A.B. He was made corporal in 1926 and later appointed Ambulance Officer. Last March he was promoted to the rank of Superintendent. Since the outbreak of this war Mr. Jones has been very active in the formation and training of first aid parties as Depot Superintendent of Hazel Grove and Bramhall Civil Defence.

A NOTABLE PEAL BOARD.

Sixty years ago last Wednesday, the College Youths met at St. Giles-in-the-Fields to unveil a peal tablet which had recently been restored by the society. It records the ringing of Holt's Original on October 2nd, 1791, and claims that it was the first time a man had rung and called that very difficult composition. The claim was not a valid one, but the performance was of outstanding merit.

The board is a fine piece of work elaborately carved and written. Like many other old boards, it had become illegible and had been taken down from the wall. It was in great danger of destruction, and the Exercise owes a debt of gratitude to those old College Youths who saved it.

EIGHT BELL PEALS.

NORBURY (HAZEL GROVE), CHESHIRE.
THE CHESTER DIOCESAN GUILD.

On Saturday, September 11, 1943, in Two Hours and Fifty Minutes,

AT THE CHURCH OF ST. THOMAS,

A PEAL OF CAMBRIDGE SURPRISE MAJOR, 5058 CHANGES;

Tenor 14 cwt; 3 qr. 21 lb.

RICHARD E. JONES 1 Treble	TOM WILDE 5
WILLIAM FERNLEY 2	...	JAMES A. MILNER 6
PTE. JAMES FERNLEY, R.C.C. 3	...	ALAN J. BROWN 7
JOHN WORTH 4	...	DAVID VINCENT 8

Composed by C. MIDDLETON.

Conducted by JOHN WORTH.

BECKENHAM, KENT.

THE KENT COUNTY ASSOCIATION.

On Saturday, September 18, 1943, in Two Hours and Fifty-Six Minutes,

AT THE CHURCH OF ST. GEORGE,

A PEAL OF CAMBRIDGE SURPRISE MAJOR, 5024 CHANGES;

Tenor 14½ cwt.

HARRY HOVERD 1 Treble	JAMES BENNETT 5
GEORGE M. KILBY 2	...	GEORGE W. STEERE 6
ERNEST C. S. TURNER 3	...	FREDERICK E. COLLINS 7
J. FRANK SMALLWOOD 4	...	PHILIP A. CORBY Tenor

Composed by T. B. WORSLEY.

Conducted by P. A. CORBY.

50th peal as conductor.

TUNSTALL, KENT.

THE KENT COUNTY ASSOCIATION.

On Saturday, September 18, 1943, in Three Hours and Four Minutes,

AT THE CHURCH OF ST. JOHN-THE-BAPTIST,

A PEAL OF BOB MAJOR, 5058 CHANGES;

Tenor 9½ cwt.

*MARGUERITE A. LLOYD 1 Treble	GEORGE KENWARD 5
WALTER H. DOBBIE 2	...	JOHN E. SPICE 6
†BETTY SPICE 3	...	STANLEY B. DOBBIE 7
†WILLIAM SPICE 4	...	GEORGE H. SPICE Tenor

Composed by J. A. TROLLOPE (C.C.C. No. 119).

Conducted by JOHN E. SPICE.

* First attempt for a tower-bell peal. † 75th peal. ‡ First tower-bell peal. Rung for harvest thanksgiving.

SIX BELL PEAL.

RANWORTH, NORFOLK.

THE NORWICH DIOCESAN ASSOCIATION.

On Wednesday, September 15, 1943, in Two Hours and Forty-Six Minutes,

AT THE CHURCH OF ST. HELEN,

A PEAL OF BOB MINOR, 5040 CHANGES;

Seven different callings.

Tenor 12 cwt. in F.

*GEORGE W. DAVISON 1 Treble	GEORGE H. ALLEN 4
MISS PEARL E. GRAPES 2	...	REV. A. G. G. THURLOW 5
A/C. FRANK L. HARRIS 3	...	DENIS A. BAYLES Tenor

Conducted by D. A. BAYLES.

* First peal of Minor. Rung for the Italian capitulation.

HANDBELL PEAL.

OXFORD.

THE OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD.

On Thursday, September 16, 1943, in Two Hours and Fifteen Minutes,

AT NEW COLLEGE,

A PEAL OF BOB MAJOR, 5152 CHANGES;

Tenor size 15 in C.

JOHN E. SPICE 1-2	...	EDWIN A. BARNETT 5-6
*WILLIAM C. PORTER 3-4	...	MISS MARIE R. CROSS 7-8

Composed by G. LINDOFF (C.C.C. No. 28). Conducted by J. E. SPICE

* First peal on an inside pair.

STOURBRIDGE, WORCS.—On Sunday, August 29th, at St. Thomas' Church, 1,260 Grandisre Triples: *Miss F. L. Wright 1, W. J. Smith 2, C. W. Cooper 3, F. W. Gibbs 4, F. V. Nicholls 5, W. Farley 6, A. Whatmore (conductor) 7, A. D. Fellows 8. * First quarter-peal and first attempt.

A FAMOUS RINGING MATCH.

(Continued from page 409.)

The man who was mainly instrumental in making the arrangements for the Flixton match was John Travis. He was a well known Oldham publican and betting man, and his interest in the matter was the 'book' he hoped to make. Now a bookmaker can only carry on his business when he is reasonably certain that the general public will lose more than it will win—there are expenses to be met as well as profits to be gained. But when there are only two starters and the 'odds' are even, there is no such reasonable certainty, and so Travis had to bethink himself how he might be sure of a profit. This he did.

There was in Oldham a man named Abraham Fitton, who had been an excellent ringer, but who had gone blind. He still maintained his interest in the art, and had trained a naturally acute hearing so that he could follow ringing and take down any changes that were being rung. Him John Travis took to Flixton, and, having found a quiet room where he could listen to the bells, told him to report anything that happened during the peal attempts. Nothing did happen until Jonathan Wild made the miscall in the sixth part of the Ashton men's attempt, and then Fitton at once let Travis know of it. When Travis was assured that the peal was lost, he went among the crowd and offered fairly good terms to any who were backing the Ashton men. The ringing was so excellent, and the apparent chances of Oldham being beaten were so good, that these offers were eagerly accepted. No doubt Travis stiffened his terms as the ringing went on. No doubt he seemed to be less willing to accept bets against Oldham. He played his game skilfully, and before the ringing stopped all the Ashton supporters had put their last penny on their favourites. It is easy to imagine what their feelings were when the verdict was given.

Whether Travis' action was a permissible one according to the ethics of betting we do not presume to judge. He did not interfere with the ringing or attempt to influence it by crooked means. All he did was to take advantage of the superior knowledge he had gained. But to bet on a certainty of that kind does not seem to be quite the proper sort of thing to do. Still that probably was the only way he could have made the ringing at Flixton at all profitable or interesting to himself.

The Ashton-under-Lyne people went home with empty pockets, bitterly disappointed, and sore and angry at the trick played on them. Presently someone suggested that the whole thing was a plot hatched by Travis and Jonathan Wild, the conductor, who had been bribed to lose the match wilfully. The suggestion was at once taken up by the baser sort, and in the general temper was accepted by the Ashton people and even by Wild's fellow ringers. Certainly if he had intended to sell the match he could not have done it better than he did. Though he knew he had miscalled he did not stop. He got the bells back again into the proper changes and finished the peal as if nothing had happened. There was plenty of time for Travis to work his trick, especially as the excellent ringing seemed to make an Ashton victory certain.

As we said before, probably Wild did not know what to do. He knew he had miscalled; the match was lost,

and he would have to bear the brunt of the failure. Perhaps he hoped that, if he went on, someone else would make a mistake and a trip might lead to a muddle which would end the peal in a general breakdown. So other conductors have hoped when they have miscalled, and when not so much depended on their failure as was the case with poor Jonathan Wild.

Wild protested his innocence, but that probably made matters worse. From reproaches and curses the angry crowd proceeded to attempted violence. Many of them had been drinking and were in an excited and quarrelsome condition. They tried to drag Wild out of the cart he was riding in, and he escaped with difficulty.

The party returned to Ashton and told what had happened and how their conductor had treacherously betrayed his party to the enemy. The whole village was moved by anger and resentment. An effigy of Wild was made, paraded round the place with shouts and curses, and finally hung from a pole thrust through the window of the parish church steeple, where it was set on fire and burnt. A silly and childish exhibition, but one with a very ugly side to it. So intense was the feeling that Wild dared not return home, but took refuge at Stockport, and when, after some days, he did venture back no one would have anything to do with him or speak to him, no one would employ him, and even the shopkeepers were afraid to sell him food. He had to return to Stockport, where he lived for twenty-six years.

A statement appeared in the press saying that 'the inhabitants of Ashton-under-Lyne and the change-ringers conjecture that the conducting of the peal of Mr. John Holt's 5,040 changes was wilfully lost at Flixton, and the Ashton College Youths purpose challenging the Oldham Youths to ring them again, the same peal, for one hundred guineas, on their own peal of eight bells at Oldham, off hand, with another conductor.'

In the year 1817, while Jonathan Wild was living at Stockport, the new bells at St. Mary's Church were opened with a prize ringing match. Mr. John P. Fidler recently gave an account of the bells in our columns. Four prizes were offered, of fourteen, eight, six, and four guineas. The test was the same as at Flixton—Holt's ten-part peal of Grandsire Triples. Eight bands competed, and the first prize went to the Mottram Seniors, who rang the peal in 2 hours 46 minutes; the second to Oldham, who took 2 hours 49 minutes and 18 seconds; the third to Manchester; and the fourth to Mottram Juniors. Ashton competed, but they did not win a prize. As the tenor weighed 24 or 25 cwt., the ringing was very fast.

Jonathan Wild taught a band to ring Grandsire on the new bells, and called the first peal by a local company. Shortly before he died he was allowed to return to Ashton and there he was buried.

Several attempts were made to arrange another match between Ashton and Oldham, but they came to nothing. The feeling between the two belfries was one of extreme bitterness, which was shared in large measure by the townsmen of the two places. So much so, that for nearly twenty years an Oldham ringer dared not enter Ashton. If he did and was recognised he was promptly turned out of the village.

(To be continued.)

BELFRY GOSSIP.

Three generations took part in the peal of Bob Major rung at Tunstall on September 18th, Mr. William Spice, who is 83 years old, Mr. George H. Spice, and Miss Betty Spice and Mr. John H. Spice. We congratulate the family.

We are informed that the eight bells at Avelon Giffard, near Plymouth, must be added to the peals lost through enemy action.

On September 20th, 1882, what was believed to be the first peal of Yorkshire Court Bob Major was rung at Cargrave. The method, however, had been rung 150 years earlier by the Eastern Scholars under the name of Eastern Bob.

The first peal of Double Norwich Court Bob Caters was rung at St. Stephen's, Bristol, on September 22nd, 1894. This is probably the best Cater method there is, but it has never received the attention it deserves.

The first peal of Erin Cinques was rung at West Bromwich on September 23rd, 1911.

On September 24th, 1936, the first peal of Pyrford Surprise Major was rung at Egham, and on the same date in 1937, the first peal of Pulford Bob Major was rung at Crayford.

IMPORTANT NOTICE.

All communications for this journal should be addressed to—

The Editor,

"The Ringing World,"
c/o The Woodbridge Press, Ltd.,
Onslow Street,
Guildford, Surrey.

'NEED FOR IMPROVEMENT.'

THOUGHTLESS REMARKS.

To the Editor.

Dear Sir,—I cannot help feeling that the remarks contained in the letter of 'Ringer in the Services' are somewhat thoughtless even if they are not ungrateful.

Few arts could suffer the setback of a three-year ban and get going again with such success as did our Exercise. This success is real and apparent, as witness your columns every week. Does our Service man realise the demands—very heavy demands—which are made upon the waking hours of the average civilian in these times? It requires a great deal of resolution to climb the belfry stairs after a long day's labour to teach some beginners, and often there is night duty of some kind to follow, yet I am sure there are many who do it every week. The recommendations made in the letter you publish are familiar ones, very often they come from people who are keen to do the 'telling,' but not so keen about the 'doing.'

Great efforts have been made on behalf of our Exercise since this war broke out, interest has been maintained in spite of the ban; the special calls made by the authorities for victory bells, etc., were magnificently answered and, above all, we still have our weekly paper. These are creditable results which are deserving of gratitude, and those responsible for such work are well aware that there is always room for improvement.

ARTHUR V. DAVIS.

116, Alma Road, Bournemouth.

CAUSE FOR BEING GRATEFUL.

Dear Sir,—The criticism and advice given by a 'Ringer in the Services' would apply very well in peace time under normal conditions, but under present conditions I venture to suggest that some of the criticism is unjustified and quite a lot of the advice is very hard to put into practice.

Perhaps it is wrong to say anything which looks like excuses, but after all we are in the fifth year of war, and few people have quite the same vitality to spare, or the time that could be devoted to ringing in peace time. There are many faces back in belfries to-day which had been absent for many years before the war, and, judging by my limited knowledge, the bells are ringing in most of the towers where they were being rung before the war began. Surely that fact is something we should be very grateful for and be prepared to give a little allowance for some of our other minor shortcomings.

20, Swaisland Road, Dartford.

J. E. BAILEY

ADVERTISE PRACTICES.

Dear Sir,—On reading the letter of 'Ringer in the Services' in your last week's issue, it has occurred to me that some advantage might accrue if the responsible person in the tower were to make known through your advertising column the times of practice and of Sunday ringing, so that those ringers belonging to towers in the vicinity and also 'ringers in the Services,' and other ringers who may be visiting the district, might have an opportunity of joining in such ringing to the mutual advantage of the particular tower and ringers interested.

CHARLES DEAN.

Croydon.

SOCIETY OF ROYAL CUMBERLAND YOUTHS.

ANNUAL MEETING.

About 70 members and friends of the Society of Cumberland Youths attended the annual general meeting, held in the Vestry Hall, St. Martin-in-the-Fields, on Saturday, September 4th.

The secretary, in his report, referred to the difficulty in manning towers at present, owing to so many people being absent on war services and other duties, and urged everyone to do their utmost to keep up the standard of ringing during war time. Congratulations were tendered to Messrs. C. T. Coles and J. Bennett on ringing their 1,000th peal together.

Members stood in silence for a while in memory of those who had died during the past year.

Mention was made of the articles recently published in 'The Ringing World' on the history of the society, and a vote of thanks was accorded their author for his most interesting account.

All the officers were re-elected with the exception of junior steward, where Mr. Frank Hawthorn took office in place of Mr. Robert Heazel, who resigned.

With regard to the approaching bicentenary of the society, Mr. J. E. Bailey moved that the anniversary date should be that agreed by the historians of the Exercise, Messrs. Morris and Trollope, and any further arrangements be deferred for another year.

Eight new members were elected, which included two young ladies, Miss Vida Simpson and Miss Valerie Crouch, from Mr. George Gilbert's academy at Burnham. Altogether there were seven of these lassies, with their instructor, at the meeting, and it was inspiring to see them all on the ropes in rounds together.

The bells were rung both before and after the meeting.

At the conclusion of the business Mr. G. Radley proposed a vote of thanks to the officers, and the Master, Mr. G. H. Cross, thanked the Church Council for the use of the bells and Vestry Hall.

A SURREY CARILLON.

The death was announced last week of Mr. H. O. Serpell, of Westcroft Park, Chobham, Surrey, who had installed at his home one of the best carillons in this country.

Mr. Serpell learned to love the sound of church bells as a child at Plymouth, and had told himself that one day he would have a peal of his own. The carillon was erected in 1926 and consisted of 18 bells, but in 1933 five more bells were added. Mr. Serpell's head gardener, Percy Rolph, was chosen to be carillonneur, and was instructed at the Croydon Bell Foundry. Later he spent a fortnight at Malines. The carillon has often been broadcast.

For many years Mr. Serpell had taken a prominent part in the public life of Surrey. He was High Sheriff of the county in 1924 and 1925, and was a D.L. and an active magistrate.

YORKSHIRE ASSOCIATION.

MEETING AT ROTHERHAM.

The quarterly meeting of the Southern District of the Yorkshire Association was held at Rotherham on Saturday, September 4th, when members were present from Sheffield (Cathedral and St. Marie's), Rammoor, Eckington, Braithwell, Felkirk, Eastwood, Rawmarsh, Handsworth, Whiston, Sprotborough, Doncaster and the local company. Touches of Minor, Major, Caters and Royal were rung, together with rounds for beginners.

The belfry was visited by the Vicar, Canon J. Waring, and his curate, who welcomed the ringers and showed keen interest in the ringing. Over forty members sat down to tea, provided by the local company, in the Church House, and the business meeting followed, with Canon Waring in the chair.

Condolence was expressed with the relatives of George William Brothwell, of the Whiston company, reported killed in action. An apology for absence was received from Mr. J. W. Moxon, of Sandal, stating he had met with a slight accident.

It was decided to hold the next meeting at Doncaster on the second Saturday in December.

Three new members were elected. John Wardle, Rotherham, Leslie Fields, and Mrs. C. E. Kettell, of Rotherham.

Thanks were given to the Vicar for his warm welcome and to the ladies for providing an excellent tea.

A collection in aid of the Bell Repair Fund amounted to 17s. 6d.

THE LATE JOHN JOHN MARTIN ROUTH

At the last meeting of the Ancient Society of College Youths, Mr. Alfred B. Peck announced that John Martin Routh, who was for so many years a College Youth and had held the office of Master, had left to the society the sum of £10 and his ringing books. A cheque had been handed to the treasurer and the books will arrive in due course.

GRAVESEND, KENT.—On Sunday, August 27th, 1,260 Grandsire Triples: F. A. Mitchell 1, F. M. Mitchell 2, J. Burles 3, H. Argent 4, R. Constant 5, R. A. Constant (conductor) 6, C. J. Beer 7, G. Morrad 8. First quarter-peal as conductor and the first attempt.

CENTRAL TOWERS.

By ERNEST MORRIS.

(Continued from page 413.)

The cruciform planning continued well into the 14th century, and include the beautiful spire crowned church of Ashbourne, and the famous crooked spired church of Chesterfield, Derbyshire. Many cases occur where the central tower has collapsed and been replaced by western towers generally of 15th century date, as at Tintagel, Cornwall; Kirkby Stephen, Westmorland.

In Normandy in the 11th century there was hardly a cruciform church but had its central tower, but they are rare in other parts of France. They occur at Caen in both the great Abbeys: at Rouen in the cathedral, St. Ouen and St. Maclon, at Bayeux, Lisieux, Coutances, Norrey, Bretteville and numerous other churches both great and small, and is generally open from below as a lantern with fine effect. Even in Anglo-Saxon days some churches like Barton-on-Humber and Dunham Magna, Norfolk, had central towers, while one of the first half of the 12th century occurs at Tewkesbury, and of the second half at Iffley and St. Cross, Winchester. The lower part of New Shoreham, Sussex, tower is late 12th century work, and the upper part of the next century. That of Chipstead is 14th century work.

Where the transepts are narrower than the nave and choir, a central tower may be oblong, the best example being that of Bath Abbey. Effective combinations occur of an octagon on a square, e.g., Colyton, Devon; Fotheringhay, Northants; Stafford and others. An exceptional and effective combination is seen at Cartmel, where a square is superimposed on a square diagonally. Many of these central towers have no spiral or other stairways for ascent; others with such stairways only from the church roof level, thus causing the approach to the ringing chambers or belfry stages to be very roundabout or sometimes even difficult. In a great many instances the bells are rung from the ground floor, the ringers being thus exposed on two or four sides, and in the following series I hope to give examples of many varying types of such instances, and some of the more curious means of ascent to ringing chambers in central towers.

I have stated that the ascents to the ringing chamber and belfry stage of some central towers are not only curious and very involved; sometimes they may be even dangerous. Just how dangerous is very aptly described by Charles Dickens in 'Edwin Drood,' and for an account of Rochester Cathedral ascent I am indebted to Mr. Wm. A. Clark, F.R.P.S., F.S.A. (a well known figure among ringers of the Birmingham district). An article by Mr. Clark in the 'Dickensian,' No. 243, Vol. xxxiii., Summer 1937, p. 191 *et seq.*, under the title 'Edwin Drood Again,' contains the following version, which—by his kind permission—I am able to repeat:—

'I would like to call attention to the following important sentence from the mouth of Jasper. He speaks

of "a hazardous and perilous journey over abysses, where a slip would be destruction." My knowledge of English Cathedrals is extensive, as I have explored and photographed them all. It is my belief that Dickens, in this sentence, alluded to the space in all stone-vaulted cathedrals between the vaulting and the external high-pitched and usually leaded roof. These spaces form dark galleries, filled with huge dusty roof-timbers, where one has to walk along a narrow ledge with "abysses" or cavernous depths on either side. It would be an easy matter for one person to follow another, as Jasper might have followed Edwin Drood, and a slight push from behind would seal the fate of the victim, while the body, in the days of Dickens when cathedrals were more or less neglected, might easily remain undiscovered for a long period.'

During 1936 I went to Rochester Cathedral three times in order to make sure of my facts, and the Dean granted me every facility for investigation and also for photography. As the result of these visits, I am more than ever convinced that those significant words uttered by Jasper in his dream referring to a "hazardous and perilous journey over abysses where a slip would be destruction," are the key words of the tragedy, and that Edwin Drood met his fate (not necessarily his death) at the only point in the cathedral which fits this description, viz.: the path over the vaulting of the choir and eastern transept.

'I think we can be certain that before Dickens began to write "Edwin Drood" he carefully surveyed the locale of the tragedy to be, and especially the cathedral. He would know also that any error relating to the various parts of the building would at once be noticed, and this alone would make him very careful.

Let us try to reconstruct the tragedy. Jasper has decided, under the cloak of friendship, to remove his rival. He dreams of his crime before and after it is committed, assisted by opium. The night of the storm provides the opportunity. Jasper suggests to Edwin that they shall visit the tower to see the lighting, or for some other plausible reason.

The noise of the storm—thunder, lightning, wind—would effectively cover up any scream or other sounds incident to the tragedy. Let us follow them—they would enter the cathedral at the point recognised then (and now) as the way to the tower, viz.: the north-west angle of the east transept. Ascending the circular newel staircase, they emerge on the leads with a low parapet on the right, and the remains of Gaudulf's Norman tower below. Through a low doorway opposite access is given to the span over the vaulting with the heavy timbers of the roof overhead.

The vault is cone-shaped and drops steeply away to the side walls, creating a series of pockets. Along the crest there runs a narrow wood pathway with a hand-rail on either side, but it is possible that in Dickens' day

(Continued on next page.)

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CENTRAL TOWERS.

(Continued from previous page.)

there was at least no handrail. There may have been no wooden "duck-board" either. Edwin goes in front with Jasper behind, and upon entering the vaulted space, turns right towards the tower, entered by a low doorway opposite. It would only need a slight push from behind from Jasper to left or right, to send Edwin heading into the "abyss" where his head would strike the wall, causing either death or unconsciousness."

Mr. Clark then goes on to give his reasons for expounding this theory which fits the dream exactly, viz.: that the crime was committed by pushing the victim off the crest of the vaulting. Even to-day a body covered as Jasper did Dood's with lime, would remain unobserved, as the vaulting is covered with a crust of lime and there is practically no light.

A ringing friend thus described the ascent to-day: 'The ringing chamber is reached via a spiral staircase opening out on to the roof; thence along the parapet gutter for a short distance; through a small door into the roof over the nave: through a small opening at the end and across which one of the main beams from which the bell frame is built up, and into the belfry—you literally have to crawl under this beam to enter!'

(To be continued.)

MIDDLESEX COUNTY ASSOCIATION.

MEETING AT RUISLIP.

A meeting of the Middlesex County Association was held at Ruislip and Pinner on Saturday, September 4th, about 40 members and friends being present from Beddington, Dagenham, Ealing (Christ Church, St. Mary's and St. Stephen's), Hillingdon (St. Andrew's and St. John's), Hoanslow, Isleworth, Kingsbury, Leiston, Pinner, Romford, Ruislip, Twickenham, Wembley Park, Weybridge and Willesden. The methods rung, under the supervision of Mr. T. G. Bannister (Deputy Ringing Master of the South and West District), included Grandshire and Stedman, Bob Major, Treble Bob, Double Norwich and Cambridge, as well as rounds for learners.

A short service held in Ruislip Church was conducted by the Vicar, the Rev. E. C. Mortimer, who spoke of his experiences in the West of England in regard to the restoration of bells, and gave an address based on the verses of the hymn, 'Ruislip Bells,' the music of which was composed by the organist, Mr. Owen, and was sung at the service.

A short business meeting was presided over by the vice-president, Mr. J. A. Trollope, who expressed the pleasure of the association at meeting the new Vicar and thanked him for his address and interest. The Vicar assured those present of a welcome at any time they should come to Ruislip.

A letter was read from the Rector of Cranford, the Rev. Maurice Childs, congratulating the association on the first peal rung on his bells, and welcoming the ringers there at any time. The secretary referred to another airgraph letter received from the assistant secretary, Mr. W. G. Wilson.

The following new members were elected: The Rev. J. H. Dominey, curate at St. Mary's, Ealing, and Mr. A. T. Parker, of Bedford Park, on the proposition of Mr. A. Harding, seconded by Mr. T. Collins. Lieut. W. E. Gibbons, R.E.M.E., of Chesterfield, and Mr. E. Armstrong, of Weybridge, as life members; and Mr. B. J. E. White, of Kilburn, to the North and East District, on the proposition of Mr. J. E. L. Cockey, seconded by Mr. G. M. Kilby.

A vote of thanks was proposed by Mr. W. H. Coles to Mr. and Mrs. T. Collins and to Mrs. Casemore for providing tea, and to Mr. Owen, the organist, to which Mr. Collins replied.

HEAVY RINGS OF FIVE.

To the Editor.

Dear Sir,—I should have mentioned four other heavy rings of five in my letter in your issue of August 27th, viz.: Powerstock approx. 20 cwt., Sydling 19 cwt. (both in Dorset), Mudford 19 cwt. and Clossworth (19 cwt. (both in Somerset). Peals have been rung at Sydling and Mudford. According to Canon Raven's 'Church Bells of Dorset', there are apparently heavy 'fives' in Dorset at Piddletrenthide (tenor diameter 48 $\frac{1}{2}$ in.) and Cheselbourne (48in.). Neither of these is now ringable and I have no means of confirming their weights. I have rung on a number of fives in Dorset and Somerset which have tenors of 16-18 cwt., and shall be pleased to send the names to anyone who may be interested.

E. T. PAUL FIELD.

Blandford, Dorset.

NOTICES.

THE CHARGE FOR NOTICES of Meetings inserted under this heading is at the rate of 4d. per line (average 8 words) per insertion, with the minimum charge of 2/-.

For Notices other than of Meetings 6d. per line (minimum 2/6).

NOTICES must be received NOT LATER THAN MONDAY.

'The Ringing World' can be sent direct by post from the Editorial Office for 4s. 3d. per quarter.

ANCIENT SOCIETY OF COLLEGE YOUTHS.—

The next meeting at Bell Foundry, 34, Whitechapel Road, E.1, on Sept. 25th, at 3 p.m. Ringing at St. Botolph's, Bishopsgate, 4.30.—A. B. Peck, 1, Eversfield Road, Reigate.

NORWICH DIOCESAN ASSOCIATION.—Meeting at Ranworth on Saturday, Sept. 25th. Bells 2 p.m. Service 4.30. Tea 5 (additions to food welcomed). Buses leave Norwich 12.5 and 4.30, also 12.30 for Panxworth; return 7.27 p.m.—A. G. G. Thurlow, 52, The Close, Norwich.

DURHAM AND NEWCASTLE DIOCESAN ASSOCIATION.—Annual meeting in the Miners' Hall, Durham, on Saturday, Sept. 25th, 2.30 p.m. Tea at Dunelm Cafe, Old Elvet, 2/6 5.0 p.m.—Roland Park, Hon. Sec.

ST. MARTIN'S GUILD FOR THE DIOCESE OF BIRMINGHAM.—Quarterly meeting at Edgbaston Parish Church on Saturday, Sept. 25th. Bells (8) at 3.30. Service 4.30. Tea and business 5.15.—T. H. Reeves, Hon. Sec., 136, Newton Road, Sparkhill, Birmingham, 11.

LANCASHIRE ASSOCIATION.—The annual meeting on Saturday, Sept. 25th, at Deane, Bolton. Bells at The Saviour and Holy Trinity, Bolton, available. Service at 4 p.m. Tea at 5 p.m. Meeting at 6 p.m.—W. H. Shaker, 36, Colwyn Avenue, Fallowfield, Manchester, 14, T. Wilson, 118, Langham Road, Blackburn, Hon. Secs.

ESSEX ASSOCIATION.—Meeting at Great Bentley, Saturday, Sept. 25th. Bells (8) 2 p.m. Service 4 p.m. Tea and business 4.45.—L. Wright, Hon. Dis. Sec.

SURREY ASSOCIATION.—North-Western District.—Meeting at Kingston-on-Thames on Saturday, Sept. 25th. Bells 3.30 p.m. Service 5.30 p.m. Tea and meeting following.—D. Cooper, Hon. Dis. Sec., 51, Waddon Road, Croydon.

MIDLAND COUNTIES ASSOCIATION.—Nottingham District.—Meeting at Newark on Saturday, Sept. 25th. Bells 3 p.m. Own arrangements for tea. Short service at 5.50 p.m.—T. Groombridge, jun., Hon. Dis. Sec.

SUFFOLK GUILD.—Meeting at Framlingham, Saturday, Sept. 25th, 2.30 p.m.—W. E. Maulden, 14, Market Hill, Framlingham.

GLOUCESTER AND BRISTOL DIOCESAN ASSOCIATION.—Cheltenham Branch.—Meeting at Prestbury on Saturday, Sept. 25th. Bells 3 p.m. Service 4.30. Tea and business meeting 5.—Walter Yeend, Millfield, Tewkesbury Road, Cheltenham.

SUSSEX COUNTY ASSOCIATION.—Southern Division.—Meeting at St. John's, Southover, Lewes, on Saturday, Sept. 25th. Bells (10) 3 p.m. Service 4.30 p.m. Tea, 5 p.m., Church Hall.—E. L. Hairs, Hon. Sec., The Oaks, Theobalds Road, Burgess Hill.

OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD.—E. Berks and S. Bucks Branch.—Meeting at Beaconsfield on Saturday, Sept. 25th. Bells 4 to 7 p.m. Bring tea.—A. D. Barker, Cambridge, Wexham, Slough, Bucks.

DONCASTER AND DISTRICT SOCIETY.—Meeting at Barnby Don on Saturday, Sept. 25th, at 3 p.m.—W. E. Lloyd, Sec., 3, Cranbrook Road, Doncaster.

OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD.—Meeting at Abingdon on Saturday, Sept. 25th. Bells: St. Helen's (10), St. Nicholas' (6) 3 p.m. Service, St. Nicholas', 3.30 p.m.—M. R. Cross, The School House, Radley, Abingdon.

GLOUCESTER AND BRISTOL DIOCESAN ASSOCIATION.—Bristol City Branch.—Opening of new 'Central Training School for Ringers' (electrical installation) at St. John's, City, Saturday, Sept. 25th, 3.30 p.m. Tea and meeting at St. Peter's Parish Rooms, Castle Green, 4.30 p.m. Names for tea to Mr. W. S. Emery, 34, Waverley Road, Bristol 6.

WINCHESTER AND PORTSMOUTH GUILD.—Practice meeting at Christchurch Priory on Saturday, Sept. 25th. Bells (12) from 3 p.m. Tea (1s. 3d.) at 5.30 approximately.—G. Preston, 42, Waterloo Place, Christchurch.

PETERBOROUGH DIOCESAN GUILD.—Northampton Branch.—Meeting at Wootton on Saturday, Sept. 25th. Bells 3.30 p.m. Service 4.15 p.m. Cup of tea provided. Bring food.

SUTTON-ON-TRENT, NOTTS.—Meeting on Saturday, Oct. 2nd. Bells (8) afternoon and evening. Cups of tea provided. Bring own food.

WORCESTERSHIRE ASSOCIATION.—Meeting at Upton-on-Severn on Saturday, Oct. 2nd. Bells (8) 3 p.m. Service 4.15 p.m. Tea and business at 5 o'clock. Names before Sept. 28th.—E. Cubberley, Park Cottages, Kempsey, near Worcester.

SCOTTISH ASSOCIATION.—Meeting at St. James', Paisley, on Saturday, Oct. 2nd, at 2.30 p.m. Notify Mr. Neil Sharpe, 35, Argyle Street, Paisley, by Sept. 29th for tea.—E. A. Stafford, Deputy Sec.

PETERBOROUGH DIOCESAN GUILD.—Wellingborough Branch.—Meeting at Great Doddington, Saturday, Oct. 2nd. Bells (5). Service 4.30. Tea, free to those who advise F. Barber, Fairlawn, Doddington Ridge, Wellingborough, by Sept. 28th.

MIDLAND COUNTIES ASSOCIATION.—Burton District.—Meeting at Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Saturday, Oct. 2nd. Bells 3 p.m. Tea at Ladford's Cafe, 4.45, only for those who notify Mr. E. W. Beadsmoore by Thursday, Sept. 30th.—J. W. Cotton, Overseal.

OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD.—Reading Branch.—Meeting at Shiplake on Saturday, Oct. 2nd, at 3 p.m. Tea at Plowden Arms 4.30 p.m. Service in Church 5.30 p.m. Names by Sept. 29th.—E. G. Foster, Hon. Sec., 401, London Road, Reading.

PETERBOROUGH DIOCESAN GUILD.—Kettering Branch.—Meeting at Grafton Underwood (5 bells), Saturday, Oct. 2nd. Tea only for those who notify me previously.—H. Baxter, 21, Charles Street, Rothwell, Northants.

CHESTER DIOCESAN GUILD.—Stockport and Bowden Branch.—Meeting at Ashton, St. Peter's, Saturday, Oct. 2nd, 3 p.m. Service 4.30. Bring food. Cups of tea provided.—T. Wilde, Hon. Sec.

MIDDLESEX COUNTY ASSOCIATION.—Meeting at Acton, Saturday, Oct. 2nd. Bells 2.30 p.m. Short service 5 p.m. The Rector hopes to provide tea and sandwiches. Ringing (probably) at St. Mary's, Ealing, in the evening. Names to J. E. Lewis Cockey, Hon. Dis. Sec., 1, Listoke, Edgehill Road, W.13.

LANCASHIRE ASSOCIATION.—Liverpool Branch.—Meeting at Garston, Saturday, Oct. 2nd, 2.30 p.m. Service 5. Tea 5.30. Members of Chester Diocesan Guild, please notify for tea not later than Sept. 29th.—G. R. Newton, 57, Amphill Road, Liverpool 17.

HERTFORD COUNTY ASSOCIATION.—Meeting at Sawbridgeworth on Saturday, Oct. 2nd. Bells (8) 3 p.m. Service 6 p.m. and business meeting. No arrangements for tea.—G. Radley, Dis. Sec.

NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE ASSOCIATION.—Meeting at Tunstall, Saturday, Oct. 2nd. Bells (8) 3 p.m. Names for tea to Mr. W. Thompson, 29, Furlong Road, Tunstall, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffs, before Sept. 28th.

SHEFFIELD AND DISTRICT SOCIETY and MIDLAND COUNTIES ASSOCIATION (Chesterfield District).—Meeting at Eckington on Saturday, Oct. 9th. Bells (8) 2.30 p.m. Names for tea must reach P. J. Jervis, 48, High Street, Eckington, by Oct. 7th.—G. G. Graham and S. Scattergood, Hon. Secs.

GUILDFORD DIOCESAN GUILD.—Meeting at Dorking, Saturday, Oct. 9th, 3 p.m. Service at 5. Business meeting in the Church Room at 7.—A. H. Smith, Hon. Sec., Recreation Bungalow, Dorking Road, Great Bookham, Leatherhead, Surrey.

ST. PETER'S, SOUTH CROYDON (10 bells).—Practice, Monday, 7.45 to 9 p.m. Sunday ringing, 10.30 a.m. and 6 p.m.—Chas. Dean.

BATH AND WELLS DIOCESAN ASSOCIATION.—Bath Branch.—A practice will be held at Twerton Parish Church 1st Saturday in each month, 2.30 to 4 p.m.—Sealy Woodburn, Hon. Sec.

BIRTH.

ROBERTS.—On Sept. 17th, at Lelant Nursing Home, to Elizabeth Jessie Corin (nee Angwin), wife of the Rev. Arthur S. Roberts, a daughter.

LEIGHTON BUZZARD.—On Thursday, August 19th, at All Saints' Church, 1,376 Bob Major: J. Conquest 1, J. Nicholls 2, E. R. Butcher 3, W. Botsford 4, W. Jeffs 5, V. Conquest 6, A. E. Belsion 7, J. E. Arnold (conductor) 8. Rung for the wedding of the Rev. W. Edgar, curate of the parish.

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