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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.

THE COUNCIL AND ITS MEMBERS.

Last week we printed a letter in which a correspondent attacked the Central Council and its members on account of their alleged deficiencies as ringers. The elected members are not, said the writer, the best ringers, and some ought not to be allowed to ring on a Sunday in a village church.

Even if these statements were true, they would be unfair and uncalled for; but they are not true. The Council is a small body, of little over one hundred persons, yet it includes probably the majority of the very best ringers in the country, and certainly a far higher proportion of highly skilled ringers than any other body in the Exercise.

No doubt there are some members who have no pretensions to be distinguished in any way as practical ringers; but that is a cause neither for reproach nor regret. Men are not elected simply because they can ring, and the qualities and knowledge needed in the Council chamber are not always the same as are needed in the belfry. The Council is intended to be a small body which can in every way represent the whole Exercise and deal authoritatively with all the many questions and interests which centre round bells and the belfry. Since these questions and interests are so diverse, it follows that all sorts of men are needed to make up a good Council. Practical ringers of the highest skill are needed, and the Council has them. Men who understand composition and the science of change ringing are needed, and they are not lacking. Men who are familiar with the working of the associations are needed, and they are there. Men are needed who can speak with authority on the making and hanging of bells; men who are versed in history and archæology; men who understand the problems caused by the relations between the Exercise and the Church; men of business and men of affairs. All these the Council needs, and all of them, in varying degree, it includes. And in addition there fortunately have always been a number of men whose character and personality have added to the dignity of the body and increased the respect in which it is held by the rank and file of ringers. Nor is their presence the least valuable whose main qualification is that they best represent the humbler sort of ringers because they belong to the same class.

During the fifty years of its existence the Council has steadily gained the confidence and respect of the Exercise as a whole, and it has done so because, taking all things together, it has deserved it. It may claim to be

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a thoroughly representative body, and it is seldom indeed that any man with the necessary qualifications fails to be elected, either by one of the great associations or as an honorary member. We cannot, indeed, call to mind the name of a single man who during these last fifty years had shown himself fully entitled to be a member and was not elected. No doubt there have been several men whose position and influence inside the Council were far less than among outsiders; but that was entirely because their abilities and inclinations were less suited to a debating and legislating body than to activities of the belfries. There is nothing in this unnatural, for men differ widely in gifts. To take an example from the past: Henry Earle Bulwer and James William Washbrook were both outstanding figures in the Exercise and both did splendid work for ringing; but Washbrook was as little qualified to play a leading part in the Council as Bulwer was in the belfry.

The Central Council is a public body, and, as such, is a fair target for comment. The pages of 'The Ringing World' are freely open for criticism, but we think that men who do venture to criticise should first take some trouble to understand the matter, and should avoid the unfair spirit which searches for small faults and is blind to many virtues.

EIGHT BELL PEALS.

LISS, HAMPSHIRE.

THE WINCHESTER AND PORTSMOUTH DIOCESAN GUILD

On Saturday, October 9, 1943, in Three Hours and Nine Minutes,

AT THE CHURCH OF ST. MARY,

A PEAL OF CAMBRIDGE SURPRISE MAJOR, 5056 CHANGES;

Tenor 12 cwt, 1 qr. 16 lb.

EDWARD R. COLES 2	TOWER R. TAYLOR 5
STAFFORD H. GREEN 2	WILLIAM T. BEESON 6
ERNEST J. AYLIFFE 3	FREDERICK W. ROGERS 7
CHARLES E. BASSETT 4	C. ERNEST SMITH Tenor

Composed by C. MIDDLETON. Conducted by FREDERICK W. ROGERS.

WITNEY, OXON.

THE OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD.

On Saturday, October 9, 1943, in Three Hours and Seven Minutes,

AT THE CHURCH OF ST. MARY,

A PEAL OF KENT TREBLE BOB MAJOR, 5088 CHANGES;

Tenor 18 cwt. in F.

*MISS VALHALLA V. HILL ... Treble	R. GORDON CROSS 5
†MISS MARGARET L. TUTT ... 2	REV. C. ELLIOTT WIGG 6
MISS MARIE R. CROSS ... 3	JOHN E. SPICE 7
WILLIAM C. PORTER 4	WALTER F. JUDGE Tenor

Composed by T. LOCKWOOD. Conducted by JOHN E. SPICE.

* First peal of Treble Bob. † First peal on tower bells. First peal of Treble Bob on tower bells as conductor.

SIX BELL PEAL.

LYTCHETT MATRAVERS, DORSET.

THE SALISBURY DIOCESAN GUILD.

On Saturday, September 25, 1943, in Three Hours and Ten Minutes,

AT THE CHURCH OF ST. MARY,

A PEAL OF DOUBLES, 5040 CHANGES;

In five methods, being eight 120's each of St. Dunstan's, London Singles, Antelope, Plain Bob, and ten 120's Grandsire (24 callings).
Tenor 7½ cwt.

*MRS. G. WARREHAM Treble	*W. C. SHUTE 4
MISS P. MARSH 2	H. E. WHITE 5
*L. H. PINE 3	*G. WARREHAM Tenor

Conducted by H. E. WHITE.

* First peal in five methods. First peal in five methods as conductor. Rung half-muffled to the memory of Mr. F. Cole.

DEATH OF MR. EDGAR H. BAILEY.

The death is announced of Mr. Edgar H. Bailey, which took place on September 28th. Mr. Bailey was the senior ringing member of the Bailey brothers of Leiston, Suffolk.

He joined the Norwich Diocesan Association in 1897 and was the first of the brothers to ring a peal, this being Kent Treble Bob Major at St. Margaret's, Leiston, on June 11th 1898. He was quickly followed by his younger brothers, and during the years immediately before and after the last war took part in many peals on tower and in hand, in which the bands were either wholly or mainly made up of brothers of the Bailey family. In 1925 he dropped out of active ringing, but during recent years had been a member of the band at SS. Peter and Paul's, Aldeburgh, Suffolk.

His peals, of which 138 were rung at St. Margaret's, Leiston, are as follows: Minor 8, Grandsire Triples 1, Bob Major 8 (2 in hand), Bob Royal (5 in hand), Bob Maximus (1 in hand), Kent Treble Bob Major 32 (11 in hand), Royal 2 (3 in hand), Maximus 1 (3 in hand), Oxford Treble Bob Major 14, Stedman Triples 7 (7 in hand), Stedman Caters 13 in hand, Stedman Cinques 2 in hand, Double Court Bob Major 33 (3 in hand), Double Oxford Bob Major 1, Superlative 38, Cambridge 27, Bristol 19, London 9, New Cambridge 4, Guildford 4, Suffolk 2, Yorkshire, Lancashire, Edinburgh, Rochester, Norfolk and Dublin Surprise Major 1 each, 216 tower 50 in hand, total 266.

His peals exclusively with his brothers consisted of two of Bob Major, in which the band stood in order of age and he rang the tenor, one each of Stedman Triples, Double Norwich, Superlative and Cambridge on tower bells, and all of the handbell peals were performed by members of the family. He rang the sixth to 11,040 of Double Norwich at Leiston with an entirely local band, and rang in the first peals of Suffolk, Rochester and Edinburgh Surprise Major.

PRIZE RINGING.

To the Editor.

Dear Sir,—The following appears interesting in connection with the article on 'A Famous Ringing Match' which recently appeared in 'The Ringing World':—

John Garratt, a ringer at Sapcote in Leicestershire for the last 60 years, remembers when as a lad he used to visit the belfry with his father, who was a ringer, and hearing one of the ringers by the name of John Bishop telling the story of the Sapcote ringers visiting Long Buckley in Northamptonshire for prize ringing. It would appear that Bishop, who rang the tenor in the match, had great difficulty in controlling his bell, and remarked that it was just as if someone was pushing his bell over, and he attempted to ascend the tower to see, but was prevented from doing so, and the prize was awarded to the Long Buckley ringers.

During the revelry at the local inn which followed the match, Bishop again commented upon the behaviour of the tenor bell he was ringing during the match, to which one of the Long Buckley ringers retorted, 'You don't think we are fools big enough to allow your ringers to come here and take the prize away, do you?' This would appear to infer that tampering with the bells was quite prevalent in these matches.

H. BIRD.

Station Road, Broughton Astley.

HEARING.

To the Editor.

Dear Sir,—I read with interest your article on 'Curious Ringing Scraps' in last week's 'Ringing World,' particularly where you refer to Canon Wigram's inability to hear his own bell.

Until recent years these people had my sympathy, now I believe it is simply because they will not make the effort.

Some ten or so years ago we were fortunate in having several young boys who took to ringing as ducks to water. One was not the accurate striker we would have liked him to be, and I asked him whether he could hear his bell. 'No,' he replied, 'I can't.'

A few weeks later I had occasion to congratulate him on the improvement in his striking and said he must now be able to hear his bell. 'Yes,' he said, 'I've made myself hear it.'

This answer caused me to revise the opinion I held very considerably and since then I have been convinced that, provided the effort is made, the difficulty is easily overcome.

E. BARNETT.

10, Kings Close, Crayford.

THE CENTRAL COUNCIL.

To the Editor.

Dear Sir,—I should like to protest against what Mr. Edwin Jennings says about members of the Central Council and their ringing abilities in your last issue. His remarks are unjustified and unwarranted. The Council contains most of the very best ringers in the country and very many better ones than your correspondent. Here is an eight-bell band written down at random from memory. Mr. Jennings cannot find a better one outside the Council, though he could easily find another, equally good, inside it: C. T. Coles, A. B. Peck, J. T. Dyke, Mrs. G. W. Fletcher, C. H. Kippin, F. W. Rogers, A. Walker and E. C. S. Turner.

A MEMBER.

CURIOUS RINGING SCRAPS.

(Continued from page 440.)

The next item in Sir Arthur Heywood's scrap book is an original copy of the broadsheet issued to record the first peal of Superlative Royal. On it is written: 'Mr. Proctor—Did you ever see this? J. R. Haworth.' The printed record is as follows:—

'On MONDAY, March 27th, 1826, the COMPANY of All-Saints RINGERS, Wakefield, ascended the Tower of the Parish Church, and had the honor of Ringing, in a masterly style a true and complete Peal of Superlative Surprise Royal, consisting of 5,400 Changes, in Three Hours and Twenty-Six Minutes, by TEN MEN only (Tenor weighing 31 cwt.). The great superiority of this Peal over any other is, it being the only true Peal ever rung in the Kingdom in so intricate a method, and will be a standing laurel for the Society, for ages to come. The Peal was composed by Mr. JOSEPH TEBBS, of Leeds, and was by him presented to this Society, and rung by them at the first attempt. The Peal was nobly conducted by Mr. WILLIAM WOODHEAD, and Rung by the following Persons:—

'The Band as Stationed.

- Mr. William Fawcett Treble.
- Joseph Sugden 2nd.
- Mark Blackburn 3rd.
- George Pickering 4th.
- John Hall 5th.
- James Gill 6th.
- Joseph Gill 7th.
- Thomas Netherwood 8th.
- William Woodhead 9th.
- Robert Collett Tenor.

'The Peal.

45236	
62534	
56234	First Part end.
<hr/>	
34562	Second Do.
<hr/>	
62345	Third Do.
<hr/>	
45623	Fourth Do.
<hr/>	
23456	Fifth Do.'

There is also a lead of the method as given by Shipway.

Superlative Surprise Major was published in the 'Clavis' and, so far as we know, was first practised in Yorkshire. Shipway extended the method to ten bells, but, though his extension is an ingenious one, it is not theoretically correct and has nothing to recommend it for practical ringing. After the Wakefield peal it dropped into disuse, but Law James some years ago tried to revive it and called one or two peals.

The next 'scrap' is a printed page from some book giving particulars of the old six bells at Duffield Church, where Heywood was one of the ringers. They were a mixed lot, all of the eighteenth century and of various dates, the smallest being the oldest. The two trebles (1722) and the third (1742) apparently had no founders' names; the fourth (1763) was by Leslie and Pack of Whitechapel; the fifth (1786) by George Hedderly, of

Nottingham; and the tenor (1799) by Thomas Mears, the elder.

The fifth was, for an eighteenth-century bell, highly ornamented. The founder was one of the subscribers to the 'Clavis.' Heywood preserved engravings of the lettering and figures on this bell.

Next is a broadsheet recording the first peal of Stedman Caters of over ten thousand changes. It supplanted the 8,105 rung at Painswick in 1842 (which was afterwards found to be false in the composition), and was itself supplanted by the 11,111 rung by the College Youths at Fulham in 1883. The broadsheet is worded thus:—

'Change Ringing extraordinary. Birmingham. On Tuesday, the 8th of March, 1859, Ten Members of the united Societies of St. Philip's and St. Martin's ascended the Tower of the Parish Church, Aston, and succeeded (at 1st attempt) in ringing a True Peal of Caters on Stedman's Principle, containing 10,047 changes, in six hours and sixteen minutes; the Peal was allowed by competent Persons in the Science to be of first-rate quality, and the greatest number of changes ever yet rung in this intricate method.

The performers were: John Perks Treble, Amos Cresser 2nd, William Haywood 3rd, John Bannister 4th, Charles Shaw 5th, Thomas Macdonald 6th, William Chattell 7th, Robert Wright 8th, Joseph Spencer 9th, Jessie Cutler Tenor.

The Peal was composed by Mr. Henry Johnson and conducted by Mr. John Perks.'

Next is a broadsheet recording two of the marvellous feats of tapping accomplished by Elijah Roberts:—

'Change Ringing, extraordinary. On the 9th of April, 1830, Mr. Elijah Roberts, of the company of St. Martin's Youths, Birmingham, accurately rung, as an opening peal, on a fine-toned new set of Musical Hand Bells, a complete peal of Treble Box Maximus, with the Kent variation, comprising 7,536 changes, in four hours and fifty-one minutes. Conducted by Mr. Joseph Powell, in the presence of Messrs. Henry Cooper, Thomas Cole, Thomas Worrall, James Howell, James Jarvis and Charles Thurstans, who were auditors of this distinguished performance, and Members of the aforesaid Society.

'On the 30th of June, 1833, was rung by Mr. Elijah Roberts, of the St. Martin's Company, Birmingham, on a Musical Set of Hand Bells fixed in a frame, and remained so for the whole of the Performance, a complete peal of that admired system, Stedman's Cinques, comprising 5,016 changes, composed by himself. Conducted by Mr. Henry Cooper, and was accurately rung in a most masterly style in Three Hours Twenty-four Minutes, which can be confirmed by the united testimony of Messrs. Thomas Worrall, Joseph Powell, and James Jarvis, of the above Company; James Allen, of the Cumberland Youths, London; I. J. B. Lates, Oxford; and Daniel Woods, of the Norwich Scholars; and by many other Change Ringers, who met on that interesting occasion.'

(To be continued.)

MACCLESFIELD, CHESHIRE.—At the Church of St. Michael and All Angels on September 29th for the patronal service. 1,259 Grandsire Caters: J. Minshull 1, A. Worth 2, G. Bottomley 3, W. Matthews 4, J. Worth (conductor) 5, V. Norbury 6, H. Dean 7, J. Westwood 8, W. Gayes 9, *F. Cadman 10. *First quarter-peal. Mr. J. Minshull has just started ringing again after 40 years away from the tower.

BELFRY GOSSIP.

To-morrow is Mr. Thomas Groombridge's 76th birthday and we offer him our congratulations. He had been associated with St. Nicholas, Chislehurst, for 40 years, but the belfry was closed at the beginning of the war, and he transferred his activities to the neighbouring tower of The Annunciation, where there was the making of a band. Then came his accident and the ban on ringing; and evacuation, active service and death have completely dispersed the band. Mr. Groombridge is left with one occupation—the forming of a new band, mostly composed of ladies. We wish him success.

In addition to the bells we mentioned, another Devonshire ring has been destroyed by enemy action. It did not hang in a parish church, and was of little value musically, but was interesting as having been cast by William Banister. The first change ringing in Devonshire was done on it.

The ringer of the fourth in the peal of Bob Major at Faringdon, reported in our last issue, was the Rev. Kenneth C. Davis, not the Rev. Kenneth C. Lewis as published.

On Sunday afternoon, October 10th, ringers from Kenninghall, North Lopham, Shelfanger, Winfarthing, New Buckenham, Mulbarton and Banham met and rung touches in various methods at St. Mary's, Banham, on the occasion of the diamond wedding of Mr. and Mrs. Cunningham, of Banham. Mr. Cunningham, who is 81, took part in touches of Treble Bob Minor.

The bells of Emmanuel Church, Plymouth, were rung half-muffled to rounds and call changes on eight and Grandsire Doubles on Monday, October 4th, the second anniversary of the death of Mr. Joseph Woodley, for over 20 years leader of the tower.

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.

MIDDLESEX COUNTY ASSOCIATION.

MEETING AT ACTON.

A meeting of the Middlesex Association, held at Acton on October 2nd, was attended by over 40 members and friends from Acton, Brasted, Dagenham, Ealing (Christ Church, St. Mary's and St. Stephen's), Heston, Hillingdon (St. John's), Isleworth, Kensington, Romford, Ruislip, Stanmore, Twickenham, Wembley Park, Westminster (St. Stephen's), Weybridge and Willesden.

Acton bells were rung at intervals from 2.30 to 7 p.m., and St. Mary's, Ealing, from 7 to 8.30 p.m., the methods including Grandsire and Stedman Triples, Bob Major, Kent Treble Bob and Double Norwich and Cambridge, Superlative and London Surprise Major.

A short business meeting was held in Acton Ringing Chamber at 4.45 p.m., at which the secretary apologised for the absence of Mr. E. C. S. Turner, the Ringing Master, and Mr. F. A. Finch was elected a life ringing member. It was arranged to hold the next meeting at Heston on November 20th. The secretary explained that the Rector of Acton had not found it possible to arrange a tea, as he had hoped, but had handed the secretary a cheque from the Church Council to cover the cost of tea for each individual, and the amount was duly distributed. A vote of thanks was accorded to the Rector and Church Council for their generous action, and to the authorities at St. Mary's, Ealing, for the use of the bells.

A short service was held at 5 p.m., at which the Rector, the Rev. Percival Gough, welcomed the members and thanked them for the ringing.

WORCESTERSHIRE ASSOCIATION.

MEETING AT UPTON-ON-SEVERN.

A meeting of the Western Branch of the Worcestershire Association was held at Upton-on-Severn on October 2nd, at which touches of Grandsire, Stedman, Kent Treble Bob, Cambridge and Double Norwich were rung.

Service in church was conducted by the Rector, the Rev. H. S. Bailey, assisted by Minor Canon A. C. F. Davies, of the Cathedral. Tea and business meeting followed. The Rector took the chair.

It was decided to hold a monthly meeting for probationers—the first at Kempsey on October 30th—and to restart the ringing of quarterly peals—the first to be arranged by the Master of the branch. Mr. H. Willett was elected a member, and G. and M. Willett and M. and B. Jauncey were elected probation members.

ST. MARTIN'S GUILD, BIRMINGHAM.

MEETING AT EDGBASTON.

A meeting of the St. Martin's Guild for the Diocese of Birmingham on September 25th at the Parish Church, Edgbaston, was attended by about 50 members and friends. Service was conducted by the Vicar, Canon Stuart Blofeld, who is a vice-president. In his address he urged his hearers always to ring to the best of their ability and so give no grounds for complaint. He congratulated the Guild on keeping their fellowship and organisation alive. The attendance of the organist and choirboys helped in the enjoyment of the service.

Tea was at the British Restaurant, and the cost was kindly defrayed by the Vicar.

At the business meeting Mr. Albert Walker, vice-president, occupied the chair. Apologies were received from Messrs. A. Paddon Smith and F. E. Haynes. The Chairman referred to the death of Mr. Fred Dickens, which occurred on August 23rd. He had been a member of the Guild for upwards of 40 years. The secretary read a letter from Mr. Dickens' daughter thanking the members who attended the funeral and for the floral tribute.

Mr. C. T. Coles had expressed deep appreciation of the letter of condolence sent on the occasion of the death of his son, Capt. Coles.

The following new members were elected: Mr. Leonard Tuffrey, of Hall Green, Mr. Horace Hough, of South Yardley, and Mr. Charles Williams, of Quinton. As a life member: Mr. Harold Chant, of Felkirk. The tower election of Mr. W. L. B. Leese, of New College, Oxford, as a life member was ratified.

It was decided to hold the Henry Johnson Commemoration on the first Saturday in March, 1944, on similar lines to previous war years, the arrangements to be left in the hands of the secretary.

The next meeting being the annual, it was decided to hold it at headquarters, the Tamworth Arms, Moor Street.

A vote of thanks to the Vicar, to the organist and choristers and to Mr. Sydney Freemantle for making the local arrangements was proposed by Mr. W. C. Dowding.

During the afternoon and evening some good touches were rung, ranging from Grandsire Triples to London Surprise Major.

PETERBOROUGH DIOCESAN GUILD.

MEETING AT GREAT DODDINGTON.

The meeting of the Wellingsborough District of the Peterborough Diocesan Guild, held at Doddington, was attended by over forty members.

The Vicar of Doddington (the Rev. W. R. Flex), in his address, spoke of the recent announcement from Russia of the re-establishment of the Orthodox Church and of the thankfulness with which Christians would welcome the news. He referred to a bell which was once used by the Russian Church in Moscow and later in Sevastopol. During the Crimean War it was carried off as a trophy and now hangs in the Round Tower at Windsor Castle. Mr. Flex thought it would be a fitting gesture on the part of England to return this bell to Russia as a memorial of the revival of Christianity, or the recognition of the Church in Russia.

Three new members were elected, and Irchester was selected for the annual meeting. If facilities are not available there Irthlingborough will be the alternative.

LANCASHIRE ASSOCIATION.

MEETING AT GARSTON.

A meeting of the Lancashire Association was held at Garston on October 2nd. Service was conducted by the Vicar, the Rev. Canon Swift, who gave an address. Tea was in the Church Institute and was followed by the meeting. The Vicar presided and was supported by the Rev. D. P. Roberts and Mr. H. S. Davies, churchwarden.

Members were present from Oxton, Wallasey, Farnworth, Childwall, Woolton, Halewood, Liverpool (St. Luke's and St. Nicholas') and the local company.

Miss M. Stenhouse was elected a performing member and Mr. A. J. Webster, of Wallasey, a non-resident member. The next meeting will be a joint one with the Wirral Branch of the Chester Guild. The Rev. D. P. Roberts thanked the Vicar and churchwardens for supplying the tea, the ladies who served it, and Mr. P. W. Cave, who played the organ.

DURHAM AND NEWCASTLE ASSOCIATION.

MEETING AT SUNDERLAND.

St. Michael's Church, Sunderland, was the venue for a meeting of the Eastern District of the Durham and Newcastle Association on October 2nd, and ringers attended from Chester-le-Street, Houghton-le-Soring, Sunderland (St. Ignatius') and the home tower.

The ringing comprised Minor, Triples and Major methods. The Rector visited the belfry and expressed his delight at hearing his church bells ringing again. He invited the ringers to come again in the near future.

Mr. Denis Bayles thanked the ladies who looked after the tea, and Mr. Patterson (vice-president) moved a vote of thanks to the Rector and churchwardens.

The next meeting was arranged for October 23rd at St. Mary's, Gateshead.

CENTRAL TOWERS.

BY ERNEST MORRIS.

(Continued from page 445.)

The ascent to the central tower of Southwark Cathedral is somewhat unusual. It starts at the corner of the north transept (inside) by a spiral stairway until one arrives at a wall passage under the first floor (roof of nave level), then turn right along a narrow gallery on one side of the tower, then left. When halfway along this side, a door opens to the roof floor of the nave. Turn round and ascend wooden steps to the first floor of the tower, thence a spiral wooden stairway to the next floor, which is the ringing room.

Perhaps one could not do better than quote again from Charles Dickens, of whom Sir A. Quiller-Couch, speaking at a Dickens birthday dinner some years ago, said that he—Dickens—created a world of his own and filled it with men and women. This is, indeed, very true, so true that pilgrimages to places associated with him and his stories are a regular feature of various literary societies and rambling clubs. He himself tells us that 'every barn in the neighbourhood, every stone in the church, and every foot of the churchyard had some association of its own. . . . I have seen Tom Pipes go climbing up the church steeple; I have watched Strap, with knapsack on his back, stopping to rest himself upon the wicket gate, and I know that Commodore Trunnion held that club with Mr. Pickles in the parlour of our little alehouse.' Thus did Dickens see life in all around him—life at its very best and worst.

But perhaps to us bellringers Dickens will appeal more vividly in his graphic description of a visit he made to see the Society of College Youths at their meeting 'in a long, rather low room on the first floor of the King's Head in Winchester Street, in the borough of Southwark,' about Christmas, 1868. This account first appeared in 'All the Year Round' for February 27th, 1869. Rarely do we read a true account of bellringing except when written by a student of the art. Usually to the 'outsider' it appears a fathomless mystery, and many vague and distorted articles have appeared regarding it. It speaks much, therefore, for the observation and accurate rendering of Dickens that his description of this visit is so correct in every detail. His pen-picture is a true and picturesque one.

After telling us about the room, its furniture, peal books, records, etc., he continues: 'A sufficient muster of College Youths has come together, and an adjournment is made to the church (St. Saviour's, Southwark), where they all ascend the spiral stairway to the first landing, then another spell of steep winding staircase, and we emerge breathless in the ringing room. Large and lofty is the ringers' room, lighted by a gas apparatus rather like the hoop that serves for a chandelier in a travelling circus. The walls are adorned by large black and gold frames, looking at first like monumental tablets to the memory of departed ringers, but proving on examination to refer to the performances of the Society. Peals of all kinds appear to have been rung on these bells, but on one occasion it seems that the company achieved "a true peal of Kent Treble Bob Maximus." Bob Major we have heard of, but Bob Maximus! Will they introduce us to Bob Maximus to-night?'

'The ropes of the twelve bells pass through the holes

in the ceiling and reach the floor. Under each is a little raised platform for the ringer to stand on, with a strap for his foot to help him in getting good purchase, and each rope half-way up is covered with some four feet by a fluffy, woolly-looking covering, technically called a "sally," and intended to afford a good hold to the ringer as he checks his bell on the pull-down. The case of the church clock fills up one side of the room, and from it unearthly clickings and wheezings presently come as the clock strives in vain to strike. To strike a vibrating bell suddenly from a fresh quarter is to crack it, so when the bells are rung their connection with the clock has to be temporarily severed.'

How keen he is in giving minute details, and we as ringers can only marvel at the technical grasp that Dickens displays. Gissing says, in his 'Critical Study of Dickens': 'I suppose there is no English writer, perhaps no writer in any literature, who so often gives proof of his wonderful minute observation.'

Dickens then proceeds: 'Coats are taken off, sleeves are turned up, and business is evidently about to begin. But nothing connected, however remotely, with music can be done without a quantity of tuning or other preliminary performances, and change ringing is no exception to this rule. Before the ringing can begin it is necessary to "set" the bells. To set a bell is to get it on the right balance, mouth upwards. Some of the bells are set already, some consent to be set with little trouble, but the "tenor," a small plaything of fifty-two hundred-weight, or thereabouts, is obstinate to-night. Three Youths take him in hand, and presently his deep note booms out sonorously, but he absolutely declines to assume the required position.

'We take the opportunity and go up, preceded by our friend with the lantern, into the belfry, and among the bells.'

Dickens then describes the ascent. 'The tenor's voice becomes louder and louder,' and how, on arriving among the bells, 'We shrink back as from a blow, from the stunning clash of sound with which he greets us.' While there, he watches the conductor adjusting ropes, oiling, etc., 'sublimely indifferent to the clanging monster so close to him,' and muses on various bell legends he has heard. Then they descend once more to find the ringers ready, and they start.

'The tower rocks, the bells clash, tenor booms at appointed intervals. After some little time, one gets used to the noise, which is not so great as might be expected, and begins to pick out the rhythm of the chime. The ringers all have an earnest, fixed expression; attention is written on every face. Occasionally a slight wandering look betokens that a ringer is a little vague as to his place in the change, but he soon seems to pick it up and comes right again.'

Then he goes on to describe the actual ringing, handling of the bell and rope, in his own inimitable way. Equally correct is Dickens' description of actual change ringing. The, he says, further Collegians have arrived, and 'half a dozen boys who gaze at the performances with eager eyes, probably looking forward to the happy days when they, too, will be ringers.' A second touch is rung with the two smallest bells, hitherto idle, 'the treble sounding after the tenor, like a good-sized dinner bell, and a third and last touch is rung with great spirit.'

(To be continued.)

'NEED FOR IMPROVEMENT.'*To the Editor.*

Sir,—After the experience I had last Sunday evening at a certain church, I really must express my agreement with 'Ringer in the Services' that, despite war-time difficulties, some kind of belfry reform is definitely necessary.

The church in question is fortunate enough to possess a full band of ringers, but they do not realise how fortunate they are. I know for a fact that there are many people in the town who would be only too glad to learn to ring in order to keep their glorious ring going on Sundays, but the ringers seem to think it too much trouble to give up at least half an hour to an hour each week to training new material which we shall badly need after the war.

As a result of their lack of enthusiasm for practices, the ringing on Sundays gets steadily worse instead of better, and even the local population are beginning to notice it, judging by some remarks made to me during the evening. Vain attempts are made to ring advanced methods when even an attempt for a course of Grandsire breaks down after only half a dozen changes or so have been rung. As a result the striking is appalling, which, considering the band are all fairly experienced ringers, is, to say the least, a very bad show.

The above should be sufficient to show that, in spite of the troublous times through which we are passing, there is a lot to be done in the way of reform if the Exercise is to carry on until we are all home again after this nasty business is all over. PETER N. BOND.

SERGT. R. C. FOWLER.

The funeral took place at Marlow Cemetery on Saturday, October 2nd, of Sergt. Ronald C. Fowler, who, as reported in our issue of October 8th, was killed in a flying accident in Yorkshire. Sergt. Fowler was the eldest son of Mr. T. J. Fowler, the Ringing Master of the East Berks and South Bucks Branch of the Oxford Diocesan Guild.

The service at Holy Trinity Church, Marlow, and the committal was taken by the Rev. B. H. Hayward-Browne, Vicar of Cookham, where the deceased was a member of the band. The Marlow Company of the Home Guard, under Major B. B. Wilcox, formed a guard of honour. Six sergeants of the R.A.F. acted as the bearer party and the coffin was draped with the Union Jack. At the graveside the Last Post and Reveille were sounded by Bandsman B. Palmer, of the R.A.F.

The chief mourners were Mrs. R. C. Fowler (widow), Mr. and Mrs. T. J. Fowler (parents), and Mr. R. Fowler (brother). Among the ringers present were Mr and Mrs. A. D. Barker, George Martin, Eric Hobbs, W. H. Buckingham, H. Howard, F. O. Nicholls and V. Gibson. The Cookham ringers were represented by Mr. E. W. Tuck. Mr. M. Koster represented Messrs. Odeon Theatres, Ltd.

The many floral tributes included wreaths from the Marlow bell-ringers and the ringers and choir of Holy Trinity Church, Cookham. After the committal a course of Grandsire Triples was rung over the grave by Mrs. A. D. Barker 1-2, A. D. Barker 3-4, George Martin 5-6, W. H. Buckingham 7-8.

Sergt. Fowler was a very keen ringer and had rung about a dozen peals. He leaves a widow, two sons and a daughter.

SCOTTISH ASSOCIATION.**MEETING AT PAISLEY.**

Eighteen ringing members were present at a meeting of the Scottish Association held at St. James' Church, Paisley, on October 2nd.

The following ringing members were elected: Mrs. L. M. H. Caldwell, Messrs. C. E. G. Banham, F. J. Cheal, F. Kitchen, H. Parkinson, N. Randall and P. J. H. Small. Tea was provided by Mrs. L. M. H. Caldwell, after which Grandsire Caters and Triples and Bob Major were rung on handbells. A collection for the Red Cross amounted to 18s. 9d.

ESSEX ASSOCIATION.**MEETING AT GREAT WALTHAM.**

The South-Eastern District of the Essex Association held a meeting at Great Waltham on September 18th, when there was some good ringing in various methods and call changes for beginners.

The Vicar, the Rev. P. H. Crozier, conducted the service and welcomed the ringers, who came from Great Baddow, Broomfield, Chelmsford, Maldon, Springfield, Writtle and Great Waltham.

It was agreed to hold a meeting at Writtle on November 6th or 13th, and to recommend to the next meeting that the annual district meeting be held at Great Baddow in January.

Mr. H. Mansfield thanked the Vicar on behalf of the members.

MISCELLANEOUS PERFORMANCES.

LELANT, CORNWALL.—On Saturday, September 25th, a quarter-peal of Grandsire Doubles (ten callings): E. D. Seymour 1, *D. M. Tregarthen 2, W. H. Seymour 3, Rev. A. S. Roberts 4, V. Williams (conductor) 5, P. R. C. Williams 6. Believed to be the first quarter-peal on the bells. Rung for the birth of a daughter to Mrs. A. S. Roberts. *First quarter-peal inside.

DINDER.—On Sunday, September 26th, a quarter-peal of Grandsire Doubles: F. Harvey 1, P. Hull 2, F. Rickards (conductor) 3, F. Bird 4, Rev. R. C. T. Wallis, C.F. 5, C. Dinham 6. Rung on the anniversary of the Battle of Britain.

CHILDE OKEFORD, DORSET.—On Sunday, September 26th, at St. Nicholas' Church, Childe Okeford, a quarter-peal of Grandsire Doubles: A. Haughton 1-2, A. Hart 3-4, F. Winter 5-6. Conducted by Messrs. Haughton and Winter. On the following day a quarter-peal by A. Haughton 1-2, A. Hart 3-4, and G. Spencer. Conducted by Messrs. Haughton and Spencer. Rung for the harvest festival and the Battle of Britain respectively.

TRULL, SOMERSET.—On Sunday, September 26th, for harvest festival, 1,260 Grandsire Doubles: *A. Pyke 1, *R. Shire 2, A. S. Pyke 3, *G. Perry 4, H. Churchill (conductor) 5, *H. Escott 6. *First quarter-peal.

EDGBASTON, BIRMINGHAM.—On Sunday, September 26th, at St. Bartholomew's, for the harvest thanksgiving and the third anniversary of the Battle of Britain, touches of Grandsire and Stedman Triples, Plain Bob and Kent Treble Bob Major. 504 Stedman Triples: William Dowler 1, J. Atkins 2, G. H. Williams 3, D. T. Matkin (conductor) 4, C. Williams 5, E. Boylin 6, T. Russell 7, S. W. Freemantle 8. W. Mumford, N. G. Goodman and J. Pinfold also rang in the touches.

BURFORD, OXON.—On Sunday, September 26th, for harvest festival, 720 Bob Minor with 6 and tenor covering: G. Holton 1, W. J. Dixon 2, R. Hudson 3, B. S. Nichols 4, Pte. Astbury 5, *L. Jewell 6, F. Soden (conductor) 7, *J. Brown 8. *First 720.

STOKE, COVENTRY.—On Sunday, September 26th (Battle of Britain Sunday), 1,260 Stedman Triples: E. Stone 1, F. Pervin (conductor) 2, A. Roberts 3, *R. Hayne 4, C. Parker 5, D. Ellender 6, C. Freeman 7, *N. Knight 8. *First quarter-peal.

STAPLEGROVE, SOMERSET.—At St. John's Church on Battle of Britain Sunday, a quarter-peal of Grandsire Doubles in 42 minutes: S. G. Coles 1, E. Elson 2, F. Copham 3, J. Roy 4, A. H. Reed (conductor) 5, S. Pyne 6.

MAIDENHEAD, BERKS.—On Sunday, September 26th, at All Saints', Boyn Hill, 1,260 Grandsire Triples: C. Smith 1, W. Judd 2, G. Martin 3, J. Bales 4, T. Goodchild 5, W. Walker 6, J. Eldridge (conductor) 7, H. Baldwin 8. Rung for the harvest festival.

CIRENCESTER, GLOS.—On Sunday, September 26th, at the Parish Church, after morning service, 1,260 Grandsire Triples: A. W. Baldwin 1, F. J. Lewis (conductor) 2, J. C. Eden 3, A. Law 4, H. C. Bond 5, W. A. Godwin 6, W. H. Hayward 7, F. F. Bloxham 8. Rung half-wuffed to the memory of Earl Bathurst, of Cirencester Park.

BATH.—At St. Michael's Church, on Sunday, October 3rd, for harvest festival, 1,260 Grandsire Triples: A. Baverstock 1, W. J. Prescott 2, Mrs. A. Evans 3, E. King 4, G. Hawkins (conductor) 5, F. Andrews 6, J. Hallett 7, S. Woodburn 8.

CUCKFIELD, SUSSEX.—At Holy Trinity on Sunday, October 3rd, for harvest festival, 1,260 Grandsire Triples: T. Mitchell 1, G. Woods 2, E. Quickenden 3, C. L. Mitchell 4, G. Lewry 5, G. W. Cecil (conductor) 6, G. Apps 7, A. Mitchell 8.

WEST WYCOMBE, BUCKS.—On Sunday, September 19th for the harvest festival, 1,260 Bob Major: Miss M. Wingrove 1, G. Martin 2, Miss D. Fletcher 3, P. Newton 4, W. Lee 5, H. Jones 6, J. Harrison 7, H. Wingrove (conductor) 8.

BEACONSFIELD.—On Friday, Sept. 10th, 720 Cambridge Surprise Minor: Miss D. Fletcher 1, Miss K. Fletcher 2, J. Harrison 3, R. Buckland 4, W. Lee 5, H. Wingrove (conductor) 6, W. H. Fletcher tenor.—On Sunday, Sept. 26th, for morning service, 1,260 Grandsire Triples: Miss M. Wingrove 1, H. Wingrove 2, Miss D. Fletcher 3, Rev. R. Routh 4, R. Buckland 5, W. Edwards 6, J. Harrison (conductor) 7, A. Routh (first quarter-peal) 8.

ICKLETON, CAMBS.—On Sunday, October 3rd, for the harvest festival, 504 Oxford Bob Triples: W. Smoothy 1, P. Webb (conductor) 2, L. Lilley 3, A. Fleet 4, L. Flitton 5, G. Lilley 6, W. Flitton 7, A. G. Lilley 8.

WINDSOR.—On October 3rd, at the Parish Church, for evensong, 1,260 Grandsire Triples: G. Barkus 1, T. Smith 2, F. H. Hicks 3, W. W. Phipps 4, A. Ratton 5, A. J. Glas 6, C. A. Levett (conductor) 7, J. Simmonds 8.

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KENT COUNTY ASSOCIATION.—Tonbridge District.—Annual meeting at Tonbridge, Saturday, October 16th, 2.30 p.m. Service 3.45. Tea at Carlton Cafe 4.30.—T. Saunders, Hon. Sec.

MIDDLESEX COUNTY ASSOCIATION and LADIES' GUILD.—Joint meeting at Edmonton on Saturday, October 16th, 3 p.m. Service 4.30 p.m. Tea at Charity Schools, Church Street, 5.15. Bring own sugar. Ringing possible during black-out.—T. J. Lock and I. Housden, Hon. Secs.

MIDLAND COUNTIES ASSOCIATION.—Leicester District.—Meeting at Sibley (6 bells) on Saturday, October 16th, 3 p.m. Tea and meeting 5 p.m. at the Fountain Inn.—H. W. Perkins, Hon. Dis. Sec., 53, Lancaster Road, Leicester.

HERTFORD COUNTY ASSOCIATION.—St. Albans District.—Meeting on Saturday, October 16th. Sandridge bells (6) 2.45-4 p.m., and Wheathampstead (6) 4 p.m. until blackout, followed by meeting. Refreshments available at Wheathampstead. Frequent buses (Nos. 304 and 391) from St. Albans.—R. Darvill, Hon. Dis. Sec.

GUILDFORD DIOCESAN GUILD.—Meeting at Egham on Saturday, October 16th, 3 p.m. Service 4.30 p.m. Tea 5 p.m.—F. E. Hawthorne, Hon. Sec.

SUSSEX COUNTY ASSOCIATION.—Practice at Crawley, Saturday, October 16th, 3 p.m.—O. Sippetts, 10, Three Bridges Road, Crawley, Sussex.

LANCASHIRE ASSOCIATION.—Fylde Branch.—Meeting at Lytham on Saturday, October 16th. Bells (8) 3 p.m.—J. H. Foster, Branch Sec.

GLASGOW, ST. MARY'S CATHEDRAL SOCIETY.—Practice first and third Saturdays of each month at 3 p.m., commencing on Oct. 16th.—E. A. Stafford, Hon. Sec.

BATH AND WELLS DIOCESAN ASSOCIATION.—Axbridge Deanery.—Meeting at Mark on Saturday, Oct. 23rd. Bells (6) 6.30 p.m.—E. J. Avery, Hon. Local Sec., Sandford, Bristol.

PETERBOROUGH DIOCESAN GUILD.—Daventry and Guilsborough Branches.—Meeting at Whitton (6), Saturday, Oct. 23rd. Notify for tea, also meeting at Weedon (6), Saturday, Nov. 13th.—W. C. Moore, 5, William's Terrace, Daventry, Northants.

WORCESTERSHIRE AND DISTRICTS ASSOCIATION.—Northern Branch.—Meeting, Wollaston (6), Saturday, Oct. 23rd, 3 p.m. Tea 5.30 p.m. Bring own sugar.—Bernard C. Ashford, Sec., Bowling Green Road, Stourbridge.

KENT COUNTY ASSOCIATION.—Lewisham District.—Annual meeting at the Church of the Annunciation, Chislehurst, Saturday, Oct. 23rd, 2.30 p.m. Names for tea, which will be arranged if possible, to me by Oct. 19th.—A. G. Hill, Hon. Dis. Sec., 53, Hengist Road, Erith.

ANCIENT SOCIETY OF COLLEGE YOUTHS.—Next meeting Bell Foundry, Whitechapel, E.1, Saturday, October 23rd, at 3 p.m. Ringing, St. Botolph's, Bishopsgate, 4.30. Sunday ringing, St. Dunstan's, Stepney, October 17th, 9.30 a.m. 306th anniversary luncheon at Slater's Restaurant, Basinghall Street, at 1.30 p.m., Nov. 6th. Tickets 6s. 6d.—A. B. Peck, 1, Eversfield Road, Reigate.

GLOUCESTER AND BRISTOL ASSOCIATION.—Gloucester Branch.—Annual meeting at Barnwood, Saturday, Oct 23rd. Bells (8) 2 p.m. Service 4.30. Tea at 5.15. Card for tea by Oct. 20th.—W. H. Harris, Branch Sec., 4, G.W.R. Terrace, Lydney Dock, Lydney, Glos.

MIDLAND COUNTIES ASSOCIATION.—Derby District.—Meeting Derby Cathedral, October 23rd. Bells (10) 2.30 p.m. Service 4 p.m. Names for tea to Mr. James Pagett, 19, Lynton Street, Derby, by October 20th. Bring sugar.—Wm. Lancaster, Hon. Sec.

NORWICH DIOCESAN ASSOCIATION.—Meeting at Norwich on Saturday, October 23rd. Ringing at St. Miles', 2 p.m.; Mancroft, 4 p.m. Service at Mancroft 4.45. Tea in Mancroft Parish Hall, 5.15; bring food.—A. G. G. Thurlow, Gen. Sec., 52, The Close, Norwich.

LANCASHIRE ASSOCIATION.—Blackburn Branch.—Meeting at Church Kirk, Saturday, Oct. 23rd. Bells 3 p.m. Meeting 6 p.m. Cups of tea provided; bring own food.—F. Hindle, 58, Anvil Street, Blackburn.

DURHAM AND NEWCASTLE DIOCESAN ASSOCIATION.—Eastern District.—Meeting at St. Mary's, Gateshead, Saturday, Oct. 23rd. Bells (8) 2.30 p.m. Bring own refreshments.—F. Ainsley, 30, Aysgarth Avenue, Sunderland.

SUFFOLK GUILD.—Meeting at Ufford on Saturday, Oct. 23rd. Bells (8) 2.30 p.m. Tea 4.30 p.m. Names to Chas. E. Fisher, Ufford, near Woodbridge, before Oct. 20th.

OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD.—E. Berks and S. Bucks Branch.—Meeting at Bray on Saturday, Oct. 23rd, 3 to 7 p.m. Tea for those who notify me by Oct. 16th.—A. D. Barker, Cambridge, Wexham, Slough.

LANCASHIRE ASSOCIATION.—Rochdale Branch.—Meeting at St. Mary, Balderstone, on Saturday, Oct. 30th. Bells at 3 p.m. Business meeting 6.30 p.m. Make own tea arrangements.—I. Kay, Hon. Sec.

KENT COUNTY ASSOCIATION.—Linton.—Combined practice; Saturday, Nov. 6th, 3 o'clock. Cup of tea provided.—C. H. Sone, Dis. Sec.

ST. PETER'S, CROYDON.—Sunday ringing, 10.30 a.m., 3.30 p.m. Practice, Mondays, 7.45 p.m.—Chas. Dean.

DEATH.

SPERRING.—On Sept. 28th, at Kent House, 19, Devonshire Place, Chester, Annie, the beloved wife of Robert Sperring, aged 63 years. After a long illness patiently borne.

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