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**'GOOD COPY.'**

In the present issue we print two more letters from correspondents on the subject of Dr. Slack's peal of Stedman Triples, and before we go any further we had better make one point crystal clear to all our readers. The only criterion which is ever used, or has ever been used, to decide what shall be included in the pages of 'The Ringing World' is whether or not it is 'good copy.' That means whether it is matter which will interest readers. It must be obvious to all, that since readers differ so much, everything cannot be of equal interest. There must be things which to some will seem most valuable, but to others are merely unintelligible. The line has to be drawn somewhere, and it is one of an editor's jobs to find out where to draw it. It is, of course, true that many people think they could manage a paper, and especially a paper like 'The Ringing World,' much better than the man who has had years of experience, but sensible persons will do well to ignore their opinions.

Three reasons are, we are told, given for Dr. Slack's peal of Stedman Triples not being printed. Some 'whispered' that an unnamed and mysterious writer had expressed the view that such a peal could not be obtained; another is that the peal was rung in the wrong place for the figures to be published; and a third is that the composer is 'not sufficiently in the swim' for his work to be acknowledged. So far as we are aware there is not the slightest justification for people holding these opinions, which are the result purely of their own imagination. We do not know whether they will accept the real reason, for it is too simple and straightforward, but we think it will appeal to all sensible persons. It is that when the Editor received the figures of the peal he decided that they were not 'good copy,' and he has not seen any reason since to alter his opinion.

An editor is not bound to give any reasons for his decisions; it is a recognised thing that in matters of this sort his word is final. But for the sake of those who may be under a misunderstanding, we should like to make it clear that this is not just an ordinary case of printing the figures of a peal. In the ordinary way the figures of a peal convey a certain amount of information to a certain number of people. The number may not be a large one, but the persons concerned are worthy of being considered. But what information would be conveyed by the publication of this peal of Stedman as we received it? Merely that it was a composition in two equal parts with many bobs and two singles. All that can be given without a mass of figures which in themselves convey nothing. The

(Continued on page 2.)

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so-called courses are not courses at all, nor are the ap-  
parent course-ends really course-ends. We cannot  
imagine anyone dividing the peal like this if they wanted  
to call it, nor can we imagine anyone writing the peal  
out like this if they want to understand its composition.

It is, of course, true that a man could, if he cared to  
take the trouble, write all the 840 six-ends from these  
figures, but we suggest that there are not many such;  
and if there are any, it would not be a great deal of extra  
trouble to apply for the peal in the quarters where ob-  
viously it may be found.

An explanation of what the peal is, what difficulties its  
composer had to overcome, and how he overcame them,  
would be interesting to quite a number of people pro-  
vided it could be written without too much detail; but we  
do not think that explanation can be gained from the  
figures. For the vast majority of readers, including com-  
posers and conductors, they mean nothing. They are not  
'good copy.'

## HANDBELL PEALS.

RADLEY, BERKSHIRE.

THE OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD.

(OXFORD CITY AND DISTRICT BRANCH.)

On Saturday, December 20, 1941, in One Hour and Fifty-Three Minutes,

AT THE SCHOOL HOUSE,

**A PEAL OF BOB MINOR, 5040 CHANGES;**

Seven different callings.

Tenor size 14 in D.

\*MISS ROSALIND M. WRONG 1-2 | WILLIAM L. B. LEESE ... 3-4

MISS MARIE R. CROSS ... 5-6

Conducted by MISS MARIE R. CROSS.

\* First peal. Miss Wrong, an O.U.S.C.R. ringer, only began to  
ring eight weeks ago.

CROFT, LEICESTERSHIRE.

THE MIDLAND COUNTIES ASSOCIATION.

(HINCKLEY DISTRICT.)

On Saturday, December 20, 1941, in Two Hours,

AT FOSSE WAY,

**A PEAL OF DOUBLES, 5040 CHANGES;**

In five methods, being 720 each of Morning Star, April Day and  
Canterbury, and 1,440 each of Plain Bob and Grandsire.

ALFRED BALLARD ... 1-2 | \*FRANK K. MEASURES ... 3-4

WILLIAM A. WOOD ... 5-6

Conducted by ALFRED BALLARD.

\* First handbell peal in five methods.

ENFIELD, MIDDLESEX.

THE MIDDLESEX COUNTY ASSOCIATION AND LONDON  
DIOCESAN GUILD.

On Sunday, December 21, 1941, in Two Hours and Twenty-Five Minutes,

AT 21, STONARD ROAD,

**A PEAL OF BOB MAJOR, 5040 CHANGES;**

MRS. J. THOMAS ... 1-2 | ISAAC J. ATTWATER ... 5-6

JOHN THOMAS ... 3-4 | WALTER BOWDEN ... 7-8

Arranged and Conducted by ISAAC J. ATTWATER.

First peal in the method 'in hand' as conductor.

BRISTOL.

THE GLOUCESTER AND BRISTOL DIOCESAN ASSOCIATION.

(BRISTOL GUILD OF HANDBELL RINGERS.)

On Saturday, December 27, 1941, in Two Hours and Thirty-Six Minutes,

AT 21, WATHEN ROAD,

**A PEAL OF BOB MAJOR, 5040 CHANGES;**

Tenor size 15 in C.

THOMAS S. HARRIS ... 1-2 | ALBERT M. TYLER ... 5-6

ROYSTON G. BRYANT ... 3-4 | DONALD G. CLIFT ... 7-8

Composed by C. W. ROBERTS. Conducted by DONALD G. CLIFT.

**'CLAVIS CAMPANOLOGIA.'**

(Continued from page 616.)

**COMMENTS ON VARIOUS MATTERS.**

The wide practice and great popularity of Stedman's Principle are due perhaps more to the 'Clavis' than to any other cause. In 1788 the method on five bells had been generally known for a century and had been occasionally rung by skilful bands. In Norwich, peals of Triples had been rung, and the method had been extended to Caters and Cinques and practised, though no peal had been accomplished, and perhaps no peal had been composed. It was the visit of Jones, Reeves and Blake-more, with Christopher Wells and the College Youths, to Norwich in 1785, which first brought the method to the attention of London men. They adopted it enthusiastically, and from the metropolis it spread first to Birmingham, and then in due course throughout the country.

Stedman's Principle was in effect one of the new methods introduced to the Exercise by the 'Clavis.' When the rest of the visitors went home, Thomas Blake-more stayed behind in Norwich for a short time to pick up what information he could about the method and others for the new book. But he did not gather much, and John Reeves set himself to investigate as far as he could the problems of composition in the method.

In this he had a considerable amount of success, considering the time at his disposal. He discovered most of the difficulties in the way and, though he did not surmount them, he did lay foundations on which others could build later on.

In Triples, the longest length he was able to compose was a quarter-peal, and he came to the conclusion that it was 'very near to the extent of changes in the method' on the lines he had laid down as proper for a peal.

For that opinion he had great justification, for he took as a necessary qualification that there should never be two bobs at following sixes. That was for the sake of the music, and it was a thoroughly sound condition if only it had been a possible one. He could see far enough into the matter to realise that 'the only method that seems to carry the least appearance of possibility is by using a multiplicity of bobs, and thereby keeping two bells continually dodging behind'; but that plan he rejected, because it 'must produce music extremely disagreeable and tedious to every judicious ear.'

It was, however, on this plan that the first peals were actually produced. Noonan's peal had 732 calls, Edwards' had 722, Tebbs' had 622, and the improvements made by successive men consisted in reducing the number until the minimum was reached in Thurstans' composition, which has 242.

Working on much the same lines in Caters as in Triples, Reeves produced a 9,720 which, reduced to 5,076, he called for the ancient Society of College Youths at Horsleydown in 1787, the first peal in the method.

Among the many interesting and illuminating remarks in the book are the following: 'The word "Caters," we are told, has been spelled by some Cator, but it being derived from the Latin Quater (*i.e.*, four times) we must, therefore, reject the o as foreign to the matter; indeed, it must be granted that the Latin quatuor (*i.e.*, four) is spelled with an o, but then it is not so applicable to our purpose as the word Quater.'

'It was a maxim formerly,' so we are told, 'not to constitute any number of changes a peal that was under

5,040, merely because it is the extent that seven bells will produce; certainly no practitioner would think of ringing a less number than the whole peal of tripples; but there is no reason why it should be the standard for a greater number of bells, for if 5,600 changes is rung it is only deemed to be by the exercise a five thousand, therefore why not as near five thousand as possible; this certainly is reason sufficient to constitute 5,000 changes a peal, and is as worthy of record as 5,040.'

Although Jones was here probably referring to an opinion widely held among some ringers, it never was a universal opinion. Five times between 1773 and 1784 so few as 5,039 changes were rung; the College Youths rang 5,016 of Double Bob Maximum in 1740, and 5,000 Oxford Treble Bob Royal in 1741; the Cumberlands rang 5,024 Treble Bob Major in 1755 and 5,008 Bob Major in 1756; Titchborne's Invention, rung in 1768, contained 5,012 changes; and in the provinces 5,008 of Bob Major were rung at Shifnal in 1787. A few years later bands rang even peals of Triples with less than 5,040 changes.

Speaking of Court Bob Royal, our authors say, 'Notwithstanding the custom of making eighth's place at the bob was from the first origin of this method, we don't conceive it obligates every company to abide by it, neither should they be tyed to making a particular place at a bob in any other method; by all means let every one follow his taste in this particular, as the art of pricking will still be the same, for whoever has skill as a composer can very easily surmount any alteration of that kind. Therefore in this method we would recommend 4th's place at the bob, as it certainly would make great amendment to the music in a peal or even a touch, for by having the bobs in this manner you fall into treble bob system as far as that of making tripple dodges whilst the great bells are behind, which is so admired by all professors of the exercise.'

This is sound advice. A peal of Double Norwich Major with fourth's place bobs would be a pleasing and interesting novelty.

Grandsire Maximus the authors claimed as 'an addition of our own,' and about it they say, 'We shall just observe that it is far superior to the other plain method on an even number of bells, both for music and variety of changes; as, for instance, in ringing a peal of Plain Bob Maximus you have every course the same thing over again except a little alteration of the small bells; but here you have both music and variety of changes upon the whole number.'

Grandsire Major and Royal had already been rung to peals in London, Reeves himself called the first peal of Grandsire Maximus, and all three had afterwards a considerable amount of popularity in the Birmingham district. There is much sense in what the 'Clavis' says about the method, but the four blows behind at a plain lead, and six at a bob are a blemish which spoils it.

As he nears the end of his book, William Jones writes that 'it may not be improper to take notice of the harmonious effect some positions produce above that of others, and likewise some improvements the art has received, in which we shall introduce a biographical anecdote not impertinent to the subject.'

'When the art was more in its infant state, and half-pull ringing was esteemed a very valuable acquisition (being then but a new discovery), the method of bringing

(Continued on next page.)

## 'CLAVIS CAMPANOLOGIA.'

(Continued from previous page.)

bells into the tittums (by which means the prime and choicest of music is selected) was a matter totally unknown in those days. How long the art might have remained in this rough-cast state (were it not for the gentleman we are about to introduce) is rather hard to say. But certain it is that Mr. Benjamin Anable, when he entered this vast field of rude and uncultured waste, like a skilful planter divided it into all its regular parts and proportions, with that taste, elegance and assymetry as at once evinced the judgment and abilities of the ingenious artist. But, to quit allegory, Mr. Anable soon found the then present state of the art stood in the utmost need of correction, and on exploring it still farther found an ample field for improvement; accordingly he went to work.

'What progress he made in five or six-bell peals, we shall pass over as not very important, but on seven bells there is every reason to believe that he was the first who produced 5,040 ringable changes which was the peal of plain bob tripples, with two singles (*i.e.*, one at the end of each triple).

'This was looked upon as a very great acquisition (and at that time it undoubtedly was) till Mr. Holt's peal without a single appeared. But notwithstanding, Mr. Holt is deserving of all the eulogiums we have paid him, yet it must be confessed that he was in some measure indebted to Mr. Anable for laying those firm foundations on which was afterwards raised such noble structures.

'Our author's next effort was at Grandsire Tripples; here, though unsuccessful, he was very far from being contemptible. For, though he did not obtain the whole peal complete, yet he went much farther than any of his predecessors or even contemporaries, and his peal stood foremost till that of Mr. Holt made its appearance.

'From thence he proceeded to Bob Major, where he also found considerable room for improvement. He saw no necessity for parting the tenors in a peal of either five or six thousand. He made the sixth perform her proper revolution in five courses, and five-six to come home together every fifteen, this was undoubtedly a very great addition to Bob Major, for those who did not admire the music of it before could not help confessing that this new-dress served as a foil which set it off to very great advantage. He next proceeded to Caters and Cinques which he found in such a rude and chaos-like state as may be easier conceived than described; but Mr. Anable threw them into the harmonious tittums where they still continue, and most likely ever will remain.

'The time when these improvements took place we cannot exactly determine; but the gentleman whose name we have taken some pain to celebrate, died in the latter part of the year 1755, between sixty and seventy years of age, so that by comparing these observations with the date of Mr. Holt's works it may be very nearly judged.'

This famous and oft-quoted passage has for many years been treated as historical evidence, but when we examine it critically it is impossible to consider it as more than vague tradition, decked out with rhetoric. Annable had died only thirty-two years before, and there were still living men who had known and rung with him; two at least of them—Joseph Monk and James Darquitt—among the subscribers to the 'Clavis.' He had been dead but five years when John Reeves first joined the Society of Cumberland Youths, and Jones and Reeves and Blake-

wood, all three of them, must have been intimate with men who had known both Annable and Hole.

Yet the authors of the 'Clavis' were quite ignorant of the doings and opinions of the older men. They were separated from them by the gulf which divides the men of one generation from the men of the next, and the composer of to-day who reflects how much he really knows about Henry Dains or Nathan Pitstow, or Charles Hattersley (apart from their printed peals) will realise how much William Jones and John Reeves knew about Benjamin Annable and John Holt.

The 'Clavis' panegyric is valuable historically as showing the great prestige the name of Annable enjoyed in the Exercise, but we can hardly trust any of the details. We know, for instance, that Annable was not, in fact, the first man to compose a true five-thousand of seven-bell changes, and his six-part peal of Bob Triples was not his first composition. He did not seriously take up the composition of Grandsire Triples until he had succeeded in other methods. Grandsire Caters was the first peal we know him to have composed, in the tittums.

Perhaps William Jones did not intend the order in which he described Annable's activities to be taken as a sequence in time; allowance must be made for the rhetorical style. But, if so, are we to take the other statements as literally correct?

It is certainly true that Annable did more than anyone else to popularise the ringing of Bob Major, and his was the first peal known to have been composed in the method, but experience must have taught the men of older days the difference between ringing with the tenors together and the tenors parted. Indeed, Baldwin's peal of Treble Bob Major which was performed before Annable was a ringer has the tenors together. So, too, the musical value of the tittum position must have forced itself on the attention of ringers even if Annable was the first fully to recognise and utilise its quality.

The extracts I have quoted give a very good idea of the opinions and outlook of the authors of the 'Clavis' and show that they took wide and broadminded views of ringing matters. The wording for the most part is Jones' and so are some of the opinions. But now and then there is an abrupt change into an almost colloquial expression; and here we may see the influence of John Reeves. It is William Jones, the conscious literary artist, who gives the somewhat pedantic reasons for spelling Caters with an 'e' and not an 'o'; but it is John Reeves who advocates the alternative bob for Court Bob Royal. We can imagine that Jones has read over what he has written about the method with its eight's place bob. Reeves agrees, and then he adds, 'though it was the custom to make eighth's place at the bob from the start, I don't conceive it obligates every company to abide by it; or that they should be tied to making a particular place in any method. Let everyone follow his taste in the matter; the art of pricking will still be the same; and anyone with skill as a composer can very easily get over any difficulties in the matter.' Jones makes a note of the remarks, and adds them to the text with little or no alteration.

Or again, when Reeves produces his peal of Bob Major with the 120 course-ends, he remarks, 'Though I don't altogether approve of singles when the number can be got without, yet, as this is the full extent without parting 7-8, I think it is a good peal for those who wish to ring a greater length than has yet been done'; and Jones incorporates the sentence in his description of the peal.

**HERTFORD ASSOCIATION RESOLUTIONS.***To the Editor.*

Dear Sir,—It seems that, in adopting the attitude which you have in respect of Dr. Slack's peal of Stedman, you have lost sight of one of the principal functions of the ringing Press—that of presenting to the Exercise the progress of both the practical and theoretical development of the art.

Surely, in deciding for or against publication, the utility value of a composition should not be the criterion!

It is very doubtful if any composition produced nowadays will ever become a 'stock' composition.

Moreover, your attitude in this respect is not consistent. There have, in recent months, been published several compositions of Spliced Surprise which are equally indigestible for the average conductor and are of equally limited interest.

They were published, and rightly so, because they marked a stage in the progress of the composers toward a definite end, and Dr. Slack's composition has actually reached the goal aimed at and for that reason alone should be published.

You attempt to justify your statement that the peal is a freak by drawing attention to the fact that the peal contains a large number of calls, many of which are in the 'long discredited form of six-bob sets.'

That, sir, is an opinion which belongs to a fast receding generation. Six-bob sets are definitely monotonous, but neither discreditable or unorthodox, and the inclusion of any number of them in a 'peal cannot make it a freak.

Mr. Groombridge mentions an opinion which he heard whispered at Bushey.

I have heard another one—that the peal was rung in the wrong place for the figures to be published.

My own opinion, expressed without malice, is that the particular composer was not sufficiently 'in the swim' for his work to be acknowledged.

It may well be that all these opinions are wrong, but when readers are faced with the adamant attitude which you have adopted, it is only natural that they should seek for the reason for that attitude and you have only yourself to blame if they have jumped to erroneous conclusions.

H. G. CASHMORE.

Watford.

Dear Sir,—When I wrote you a week ago on this matter I had no idea of commencing a serial story, but after this week's publication and comments I would like to ask you to spare a few lines (if possible) for further comment.

You state that I advanced no argument for publication of the peal in question. Agreed, as it seemed to me a matter above argument and my letter was a criticism of your arguments against.

Am I right or wrong in regarding 'The Ringing World' as 'the chronicle of the Exercise'? If right, I claim that any new departure should be fully recorded; if wrong, it appears to me that ringers of 2041 A.D. will require a reincarnation of J. A. Trollope to find out just how we amused ourselves in 1941, for it is possible that the MS. of the peal may share the fate of other MSS. of the past.

I would also mention a peal of Cambridge rung at Rochester Row, I believe ages ago. When published I believe the horrible truth appeared in your next issue. Can we now switch for a moment to your reply to Mr. E. Jennings? You say the figures are 'indigestible' to the average conductor. Messrs. Hitler and Goebbels say the same of the B.B.C. broadcast and warn their dupes accordingly, and the Press duly bids us note this narrow act of the dictator.

Similarly, in our art, we claim the right to judge the 'indigestibility' of the fare provided, and should any 'average conductor' be found rolling in agony, serve him right for 'nibbling more than he can masticate.' I personally have avoided 'indigestion' on numerous occasions by simply turning to the next page. It is only bilious attacks that cost me 2½d. for postage. You then ask, 'Has anyone been denied the opportunity of calling the peal through non-publication?' If you are starting a list of names you can head it with mine.

As to freak peals, I heard this term when I used different starting points to obtain 42 different six-scores of Stedman Doubles, and again on calling Washbrook's Cambridge Major, while it only seems a year or two ago that numerous ringers dumped all spliced ringing in this category.

In consideration of space I will cut enlargements and come to the final point—'the deeper issue.' This, I admit, was a nasty one to put up, but I can assure you it was a bona fide comment made to me while the resolution was under discussion, and I submit to you that the most decisive way of disabusing people's minds is by the publication of the figures in question.

T. GROOMBRIDGE, Jun.

HINCKLEY, LEICESTERSHIRE.—At Barian, Cawper Road, on December 16th, a quarter-peal of Stedman Doubles: A. Ballard (conductor) 1-2, L. A. Tremeer, R.A.F. (first quarter-peal of Stedman Doubles on handbells) 3-4, C. Turner (first quarter-peal on handbells) 5-6. Rung as a birthday compliment to Miss M. Turner, daughter of the ringer of 5-6.

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### BELFRY GOSSIP.

We regret to state that the Editor is somewhat seriously indisposed and unable to attend to business. He asks those friends who have written to him and sent him greetings to accept this as the reason why he has not replied.

We have had a very interesting letter from our old friend, Mr. W. Keeble. He tells us that when he made his first attempt to ring the treble to a six-score of Doubles, W. Elliott, one of the band, said to his cousin, D. Elliott, who was calling, 'Call them round at half-way, David. He will never make a ringer!' Prophecies do not always come true. Mr. Keeble sends greetings to all ringing friends.

Miss Mabel Agnes Ornie, of Pyle Street, Newport, Isle of Wight, who left £13,564 (net personalty £10,707), bequeathed £20 to the bell-ringers of St. Thomas', Newport.

The peal of Doubles at Croft was arranged for Mr. W. A. Wood as an appreciation by his friends of what he has done to keep district meetings going in these difficult times. It was his first attempt for a peal on handbells.

On December 24th, seven years ago, the last peal of the Australian four was rung. It was one of Bob Major on the Red Sea, and the band was Mr. and Mrs. Richardson, Mr. E. B. James and Mr. J. S. Goldsmith. Mr. Richardson conducted.

On December 29th, 1894, 10,176 changes of Kent Treble Bob Major were rung at Irthlingborough.

The Yorkshire men rang 6,720 changes of Cumberland Exercise Major at Liversedge on December 31st, 1867.

On the same date in 1892 the then longest length of Double Norwich Court Bob Major, 12,096 changes, was rung at Maidenhead.

One of the many long peals at Appleton was the 15,041 Stedman Caters on December 31st, 1888. It was the climax of a very successful year by Washbrook and Robinson. Canon Coleridge was in the band.

James Barham's one hundredth peal was rung at Leeds on January 1st, 1793. To ring one hundred peals was in those days a feat indeed.

Mr. J. Clough wishes to thank the ringers of Burbage for their gift and hopes for a reunion in the not far distant future.

Fifty years ago to-day only three peals were rung: one was Minor and the others Kent Treble Bob and Double Norwich Major.

Ten years ago to-day the number was 25. They consisted of Grand-sire Triples 3, Stedman Triples 1, Caters 1, Bob Major 1, Kent Treble Bob Major 1, Royal 1, Double Norwich Court Bob Major 2, Loughborough Bob Major 1, Cambridge Surprise Major 3, Superlative 2, London 1, Doubles 3, and Minor 5. The Bob Major and one of the Double Norwich were on handbells.

### LOOKING TO THE FUTURE.

To the Editor.

Sir,—Few if any ringers will have any quarrel with Mr. George W. Fletcher as a genius and hard-working secretary of the Central Council, but since reading the letter from 'A Member' in your last issue, like several more who I have discussed this matter with, I find myself asking this question—Since when has Mr. Fletcher been considered 'the one and only' of the Council, and how long has it been necessary to look upon the ban on ringing as the 'end all' to the Council's activities? Everywhere our church leaders are busy discussing and making plans for post-war reconstruction. What is the Exercise going to do about it? Are we busy making our plans? To hold a watching brief may be all right, but if the Exercise is to have a voice in this post-war reconstruction the motto of all must be—Go to it!

'PLANNING.'

### A POSER.

To the Editor.

Dear Sir,—Will Mr. Leslie W. Bunce tell us how to ring anything from Bob Doubles up to Cambridge Maximus on three bells? We are always willing to learn and should be grateful for his advice.

'TWO COUNTRY YOKELS.'

### THE COLLEGE YOUTHS.

At the meeting of the Ancient Society of College Youths on Saturday last two new members were elected—Mr. Kenneth Arthur, of Newcastle-on-Tyne, who is now serving with the R.A.F., and Mr. F. H. Dalloway, of Stone Cross, Pevensey, Sussex.

Greetings were received from Major J. H. B. Hesse, Mr. Walter Jeend, Mr. E. Morris and Pte. Len Fox. The last named sent news of Sergt. J. Boomsma, of the Stepney band, who had been reported missing at Crete. Joe, as he was always called, is now in the Middle East after taking part in the campaign in Syria. News of another member was brought by Mr. W. H. Pasmore, who said he had heard from his nephew Herbert, a prisoner of war in Germany. He is fit and well and employed on farm work.

The members present were in festive spirit and anecdotes and reminiscences were indulged in. The treasurer was in fine form and retold some of Canon Coleridge's best stories.

Mr. E. Morris sent four more old ringing books to help to build up the society's new library.

Those present, in addition to the Master, Treasurer and secretary, were Messrs. E. Jennings, G. M. Kilby, W. H. Pasmore, R. Stannard, A. B. Wiffen, E. A. Young, H. G. Miles, C. Meyer, H. Hoskins, J. G. A. Prior, J. H. Shepherd and C. Mayne. Incidentally these members are natives of twelve different counties.

**NINETEEN HUNDRED & FORTY ONE.**

**A YEAR OF MIXED MEMORIES.**

When in the distant future the historian of ringing comes to the year that has just passed, what will strike him as most remarkable about it is that it is the first year for more than a thousand years in which from beginning to end no church bell has been rung throughout England, neither to call the people to church, nor to knoll the passing of a soul, nor to mark some public event, nor yet because the people of England like to hear the bells for their own sake. A small thing in itself, the cessation of bellringing is the breaking of a tradition that goes back right through English history beyond the Norman Conquest and the days of King Alfred. It is a sign of the times-and perhaps a portent of the changes that are yet to come. On us of the ringing Exercise the ban presses heavily, for we are completely barred from doing the thing in which we take delight, and the art by which we serve the Church and nation. Our hope is that the prohibition will be lifted ere long, and we are encouraged by the knowledge that



**MR. E. C. S. TURNER.**

there are very many people, some of them not without influence, who are watching for every opportunity to urge its removal. But national considerations must come first.

From a year of complete inactivity in practical ringing we could expect nothing but disappointment and disillusionment, and yet when we do look back in 1941, there is much for encouragement and much to give us good hope for the future. Those many ringers who love the art have not all been content to sit still and do nothing. Activity has been much curtailed, and, compared with pre-war times, meetings have been few. It could not have been otherwise. Apart from the silence of the bells, there have been many restrictions on travelling, in the dark hours of the black-out, even when there is no air raid, it is neither wise nor safe to journey far from home; and most ringers have had their time fully occupied with some job or other done in the country's service.

Yet most of the associations have been able to hold some meetings, and though the attendances have been necessarily small, the reports published in our columns show that the spirit of the Exercise is being kept alive. The flame may be dimmed, but it is still alight.

A notable example is the Society of College Youths. They have had privileges denied to most associations: a central and permanent place of meeting through the kindness of Mr. A. A. Hughes at the famous old Bell Foundry, and they have a tradition behind them which makes it easier to hold the sort of meeting that now is needed. But the very fact that they do meet is a source of inspiration to ringers all over the country, and they are not the only ones. The Birmingham men and others in their own way are doing the same thing.

The number of handbell peals that have been rung is an encouragement. It shows that people are still trying to keep the art alive and one of the best features is the first and comparatively humble performances (sometimes Grandsire Doubles) by beginners.

In all 148 peals were rung. Eighteen were Doubles, 29 Minor, 18 Triples in two methods, 69 Major in twelve methods, 6 Caters in two methods, 7 Royal in two methods and 2 Cinques.

All the Triples were Grandsire except one of Stedman. The Major peals were Plain Bob 46, Reverse Bob 1, Oxford Treble Bob 1, Kent

Treble Bob 7, Spliced Plain and Gainsborough Little Bob 1, Little Bob 2, Double Norwich Court Bob 5, Cambridge Court 1, Richmond Bob 1, Highbury Bob 1, Avalon Court Bob 1, and Lavenham Court Bob 1. The Caters were Grandsire 1, Stedman 5. The Royal were Plain Bob 6, Kent Treble Bob 1. The peals of Cinques were Stedman.

Mr. Christopher Woolley was easily the most prolific of peal ringers with a score of 28. He was followed by Corpl. E. A. Barnett 24, Mr. Ernest S. Turner 21, and Mr. John Thomas 18. Mrs. Thomas rang nearly as many.

For first place in the list of conductors Mr. Thomas and Mr. Woolley tied with 16. The Rev. Malcolm Melville and Mr. Turner each called seven.

Among the outstanding performances were the peal of Stedman Cinques at Leicester, the Stedman Caters at Aldershot, and the non-conducted Holt's Original by four members of the Society of College Youths.

For general proficiency the band that met at Bushey stood foremost. In a comparatively short time they rang peals not only of Plain and



**MR. E. BARNETT.**

Oxford and Kent Treble Bob Major and Stedman Triples, but also of such methods as Double Norwich, Cambridge Court, Reverse Bob, Richmond Bob, Highbury Bob, Avalon Court and Lavenham Court some of them the first peals ever rung in the methods.

Equally meritorious were the many peals of Doubles and Minor rung in different parts of the country by bands who took up handbell ringing for the first time, and among these the peal of Spliced Minor at Preston, conducted by Mr. C. K. Lewis, should be noted. A survey like this can only be a general one. We are sure to have overlooked some deserving of praise, and it is possible there may be a slight error or two in the figures given above.

Peal ringing has not been the only use to which handbells have been put. In many places they have been rung in church before the service, and a notable and impressive event was the half-huffled peal of Stedman Caters in church as part of the funeral service of the late Mr. William Willson.

The last Sunday of the year 1940 had been a disastrous day for London. During the night hundreds of enemy aircraft showered thousands of incendiary bombs on the City, and many famous and beautiful churches were destroyed. Some of them contained bells which had played no small part in the history of the Exercise, and the loss of which fills us with sorrow and regret. They included two 12-bell rings, St. Bride's, Fleet Street, and St. Giles', Cripplegate; the two oldest octaves in the City, St. Lawrence Jewry and St. Stephen's, Coleman Street; the seldom heard six at St. Vedast, Foster Lane; and the eights at St. Mary Matfelon, Whitechapel, and at All Hallows', Barking.

This list of losses was greatly increased during the year that followed. The world famous Bow Bells were destroyed, as well as the heavy eight at St. George's-in-the-East, Rudhall's ring at St. Dunstan's-in-the-East, the tens at St. John's, Horsleydown, and St. Clement Danes', and the octaves at Christ Church, Southwark, St. Mary's, Bow-by-Stratford, St. Olave's, Hart Street, St. Andrew's, Holborn, and St. John's, Vassal Road.

The tale of disaster was longest in London, but some provincial towns have suffered very severely. Plymouth has lost a ring of ten, Charles Church, and of eight, Stonehouse. At Bristol the grand ring

(Continued on next page.)

## NINETEEN HUNDRED & FORTY-ONE.

(Continued from previous page.)

of ten at St. Nicholas' was destroyed, as well as eight at St. Peter's, St. Mary-le-Port and Clifton Parish Church. Southampton has lost the fine Taylor ring at St. Mary's and Swansea a ring of eight. Bromley Church and steeple were shattered by high explosive bombs, and in addition to the bells the historic peal book dating from the eighteenth century has been ruined.

This is not a full list of destroyed bells. Some of them, we fear, will never be replaced, but already there are signs that some will be restored. It is almost certain that there will be another twelve at St. Bride's; the steeple is being restored and the new frame has been designed. A promise broadcast on the wireless has been made that there will once again be bells at St. Lawrence Jewry, and it is unthinkable that London will go for long without Bow Bells. It is, however, unlikely that there will again be a heavy ring of twelve in the steeple.

Another regrettable result of enemy action has been the loss of much valuable books and property belonging to the College Youths. The most valuable articles fortunately had been taken to a place of safety.



MR. J. THOMAS.

The list of the departed members of the Exercise includes the names of several men who were well known to all ringers. Among them the most outstanding was Gabriel Lindoff, who passed away in November. Owing to his long residence in Dublin, Lindoff was not so well known personally as he otherwise would have been, and though he rang over 400 peals they were spread over a period of more than fifty years. He did not, therefore, seem to be a very prolific peal ringer compared with some men, though his list was a very fine one. It was as a composer he was best known, and it is as a composer that his name will live. Here he takes a worthy place in a very select group along with John Reeves, Henry Johnson, Henry Dains, Charles Hattersley and their peers.

In January the Exercise in the Midlands lost its most outstanding member by the death of Mr. John S. Pritchett, who passed away after a life spent in great activity and public usefulness at the advanced age of 86. He was one of the founders of the Oxford University Guild and knew Jonathan Pavier, the oldest of the city ringers, who was born as far back as 1779. Pritchett became a skilful ringer, and with his brothers formed an excellent band at King's Norton. For nearly 40 years he was Master of the St. Martin's Guild. He had a distinguished career outside ringing, and was Recorder of Lincoln and Alderman of the City of Birmingham.

Two men who died after long and useful lives were Henry J. Tucker, who was 85, and ex-Sergt. J. Williams, who was 88. Tucker, who in his younger days was an active peal ringer, had some pretensions to be a composer in the simpler methods.

Ipswich lost a well-known ringer in Mr. Charles A. Catchpole and another equally well-known man from the neighbouring village of Sproughton was Mr. H. J. Mee.

Two men of marked personality who died during the year were James Hunt, of Taunton, and William Willson, of Leicester. Both

were men who held strong and definite opinions on various matters and who were never afraid of expressing them. Both were frequently engaged in controversy, but both were exceedingly likeable men, and those who disagreed with them most never thought of quarrelling with them. James Hunt will be greatly missed at the meetings of the Central Council.

Canon G. H. Kidout, of Johannesburg, died on May 5th. He had learnt his ringing with the Cambridge University Guild and took his love of the art to South Africa. He was interested in the problems of composition and not long since we published an informative article by him on the in-course singles in Grandsire Triples.

A well-known ringer, Edwin F. Pike, came to a tragic end by drinking petrol in mistake for medicinal paraffin.

The theoretic side of change ringing suffered a severe loss by the death of A. G. Driver on September 29th. Mr. Driver was one of those men who, without being themselves ringers, have rendered great service to the Exercise and of whom W. H. Thompson is the outstanding example. Mr. Driver could not even, it seems, handle a single bell, but he turned his attention to composition with excellent results. He specialised in spliced Minor peals and here he had no superior and few, if any, equals. Beyond Minor his range was not very wide, but he also did good work in Spliced Treble Bob and Surprise Major peals.

Among others who have passed away during the year are C. H. Horton, of Watford, a past master of the College Youths; Frederick G. Woodiss, of Banstead; George Popnell; and quite recently Claude Davies, whose death will be much felt in the Liverpool district.

In January Mrs. Laura Snowdon, the widow of William Snowdon, passed to her rest at the age of 91. All ringers have cause to revere her memory, for she carried on the publication of the Jasper Snowdon series of ringing books after the death of her husband.

March 31st was the fiftieth anniversary of the first meeting of the Central Council, which was held at the Inns of Court Hotel, Holborn, on Easter Tuesday, 1891. Of the 63 members present, seven are still alive, and two of them, Canon G. F. Coleridge and Mr. George Williams, have been members ever since. Both, we are glad to say, are still going strong and both have contributed to our columns during the past year.

It was a notable anniversary, but, of course, nothing could be done to celebrate it. An opportunity will, however, come later, for since owing to war conditions the Council did not meet in 1916, 1917, 1940 and 1941, the fiftieth meeting is still some years ahead. We took the opportunity of publishing an account of the foundation and early activities of the Council and of some of the members.

The annual Henry Johnson commemoration at Birmingham took the form of a luncheon, and so did the annual College Youths' feast. Both were very successful.

In these days of paper shortage printing is severely restricted, yet it is pleasant to record that Mr. Frederick Sharpe has been able to issue during the year two more parts of his excellent book on the bells of Berkshire. When it is finished this will take a worthy place among the archaeological books on church bells.

A pleasant and encouraging feature of our own columns has been the letters and articles contributed by many people on a great variety of subjects. Mr. G. P. Elphick wrote learnedly on mediæval bell frames, Mr. B. H. Swinson on the composition of odd-bob peals of Stedman Triples, Mr. G. L. Joyce on Transposition, Mr. W. Taylor on London Surprise, Mr. E. C. Shepherd on Grandsire Caters, and Mr. C. E. Borrett on Norwich ringers. Interesting discussions took place on 'What is a good Surprise method?' to which Mr. J. F. Harvey contributed some good letters; on handbell ringing for beginners, and on silent apparatus, which revealed an unexpected amount of interest, practical as well as theoretical, in the subject. Mr. Herbert Drake protested once more against his old enemy 'backward hunting,' and our other correspondents included such old and valued friends as Mr. C. T. Coles, Mr. E. Barnett, Mr. E. A. Young, Mr. F. Bankes James and many more. The correspondence in 'The Ringing World' has been one bright spot in a sombre year.

## OUR SILENT BELLS.

To the Editor.

Dear Sir,—It was unfortunate we could not ring for Christmas. Perhaps we might have been able to do so if we had made the request earlier, but, like a lot more things, 'we left it too late.'

When the Armistice was signed in 1918 we ringers laid down our tools and rushed up into the belfries. Neglected bearings were quickly oiled and the bells were raised and soon their sound was heard from one end of the country to the other.

But what is going to happen when the Armistice is signed to end this war?

We shall again lay down our tools and rush into the belfries, and when all is ready to commence ringing, the parson and the policeman will enter and say, 'We are sorry, gentlemen, but although the war is over you cannot ring. You see, the ban is not yet lifted.'

I fancy this is something like what will happen unless something is done now.

A happy new year to you and all my friends and hoping this time next year we shall be ringing

H.M. Forces.

'ROBERT TRIPLES.'



## OLD HANDBELLS. THE ALDBOURNE FOUNDRY.

To the Editor.

Dear Sir,—With reference to correspondence in your issues of the 12th and 19th December, 1941, it may be of interest to your readers to learn that musical handbells, in sets as we know them, were cast at the Aldbourne (Wilts) bellfoundry at the end of the 17th century. I possess one (equivalent to size 12 in a modern handbell) cast by William and Robert Cor, whose bellfounding activities cover the period 1694-1724. Subsequent owners of the Aldbourne foundry were Oliver Cor, John Cor, John Stares and Edward Read, and, in 1760, the business was taken over by Robert Wells L., whom I suspect, was the founder of the set of handbells now in the possession of your correspondent, Mr. G. E. Symonds. Bells cast by R. Wells could easily be identified by means of a rubbing of the founder's initials. The Cors used one size alphabet, and the Wells two sizes for inscriptions on their handbells.

Numerous handbells, cast by Robert Wells, exist to-day, and the majority of these bear his name, or initials, on the inside. These are invariably placed in this position so that they should not be defaced during process of tuning and also because of the method employed in forming the moulds. All the musical handbells cast by R. Wells that I have seen have independent clapper-staples, but the earlier products of the foundry have cast in crown-staples. This fact is a good means of identifying early 17th century musical handbells from those of later date.

In his valuable book on 'Church Bells,' the Rev. W. C. Lukis (page 10) gives an extract from 'The Marlborough Journal' of 6th June, 1772, which contains among its advertisements the following—

'At the Bell-foundry at Aldbourne, Wilts, Church Bells are cast in a most elegant and as musical a manner as in any part of the kingdom, the Founder having made the Theory of Sounds as well as the nature of Metal his Chief Study; Also hangs the same, finding all materials in a complete and concise manner; And also Hand-bells prepared and strictly in Tune in any Key. Horse-bells, Clock and Room Bells, the neatest of their several Kinds. Likewise Mill Brasses cast and sold at the lowest Prices. All orders will be punctually observed by Rob. Wells, Founder. He gives Ready Money and Best Prices for Bell Metal.'

Besides musical handbells, Robert Wells cast some very fine handbells of the heavier type. We use one in this village to denote the air raid message, 'Raiders passed,' as we have no siren. The villagers complained that they could not hear the regulation size A.R.P. bell, so I tried Wells' bell. She is a fine bell and quite as heavy as a man can carry on a bicycle. On the first occasion we used her for A.R.P. duties some of the inhabitants thought it was an invasion warning! But they petitioned that she should be always used, and now there are no complaints.

Robert Wells' bellfounding career lasted from 1760 to 1780, when the business was taken over by his sons, Robert II. and James, who remained in partnership until 1799. Robert Wells II. gave the treble, and two other Aldbourne ringers, Joseph Pizzie and William Gwynn, gave the second to augment the ring there to eight in 1787. A peal board in Aldbourne tower records the first peal on these bells: 'May ye 3rd, 1791, was rung, 5,040 Grandfire Tripples, by Jn. North Tripple, Wm. Gwynn 2nd, Edne Witts 3rd, Levi Pizzie 4th, Wm. Lawrence 5th, Broome Witts 6th call'd the Bobbes, Jas. Wells 7th, Jos. Orchard 8th.'

James Wells owned the Aldbourne foundry from 1799 to 1826, when he sold the business to Thomas Mears II., of London. James Bridgman, who had been Wells' assistant, and whose name occurs on a peal board at Aldbourne recording a peal of Grandsire 'Tripples,' rung on January 21st, 1806, worked with Mears at the Whitechapel foundry for about three years, after which he returned to Aldbourne and started business on his own account. To him was apprenticed Henry Bond, who subsequently bought his patterns and plant and established a bellfoundry at Westcot, Gloucestershire, in or about the year 1851. Some ten years later he moved to Burford, Oxfordshire, where the foundry still exists. It is now owned by Mr. Thomas Bond, who, *inter alia*, has a good collection of handbells cast by the Cors and Wells, and also the original patterns used in moulding. So it is possible to-day to have a handbell cast in the traditional Aldbourne style by the direct descendant of the noted Wiltshire founders.

Dorven, Launton, Bicester.

FREDERICK SHARPE.

### A SET BY WILLIAM COR

Dear Sir,—I have recently become the possessor of five very old handbells. They are the front five of a peal of eight, the largest is size 11. There are no crown caps and only four leather handles (all very decayed). The clappers and what little bits of springs were left were all rusted through, so I have taken all of them out.

Inside the bells and cast into them is W. Cor, with a cockerel or pheasant. On enquiry of Mr. E. Morris, he states they are from the foundry of William Cor, of Aldbourne (Wilts), between the years 1696 and about 1720. If so, they are more than 200 years old. They were formerly the property of Mr. Cook, an old Evesham ringer, who came to live at Willington, five miles from Burton. I used to visit him and take copies of 'The Ringing World,' which he was delighted with. I may state that his interest in bells and ringing remained up to the last. After his death his daughter found the bells among his effects and kindly gave them to me. J. H. SWINFIELD.

120 Princess Street, Burton-on-Trent.

## NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE ASSOCIATION

CARRYING ON UNDER DIFFICULTIES.

Resolution Against a National Association.

The annual meeting of the North Staffordshire Association was held at Stoke-on-Trent on Saturday, December 13th. Thirteen sat down to tea in the Church Institute from Stoke-on-Trent, Hanley, Longton, Cheadle and Newcastle-under-Lyme. Apologies for absence were received from the Rev. H. H. Treacher, Messrs. Thomas Hurd and Albert Crawley, of Crewe.

The Ven. Archdeacon P. Hartill (Rector of Stoke-on-Trent) extended a hearty welcome to all present. Although, he said, they were now diminished in numbers, he hoped they would be a larger company in future.

A vote of thanks was proposed by Mr. G. Jones to the Rector of Stoke-on-Trent for the excellent tea he had given them.

The business meeting followed, with the president in the chair, supported by Mr. Andrew Thompson (hon. secretary).

The committee reported that the annual committee meeting was held at Hanley in November. The Rev. H. H. Treacher, who was in the chair, was supported by Mr. Andrew Thompson (hon. secretary) and there were also present Messrs. C. H. Page, G. Jones, W. Carnwell, E. Steele and E. Roberts. The hon. secretary, in his report, stated that during the past year 12 meetings had been held, viz., two at Hanley and one at Stoke-on-Trent, Newcastle, Longton, Brown Edge, Leek, Kingsley, Stone, Cheddleton, Uttoxeter and Tunstall.

Although the attendances had been small, it had always been possible to have a little handbell ringing. The average attendance was 14 and two members had attended all the meetings, viz., Charles H. Page and Andrew Thompson. No committee meetings were held during the year. The fourth annual dinner was held at the George Hotel, Burslem, on Saturday, February 22nd, when a company of 23 was present. Even though the number was small and the function plain, the evening was very much enjoyed. There had been no peals rung during the year, but that was not the first year in which there had been no peals rung by the association. None were rung in the years 1885, 1887, 1889, 1890, 1892, 1900, 1915, 1917 and 1918. In those years there were bells on which peals could have been rung, but during the past 16 months they had not, of course, been able to ring on the tower bells at all. Very little time had been given to double-handed handbell ringing in the district, but he was sure that a practice night could be fixed and sufficient members present to establish this art in the district. With regard to the finance of the association, the secretary was glad to state that there was a credit balance of £41 14s. 1d., which was an increase of 2s. 13d. on last year. The subscriptions of ringing members had fallen by £6 10s. this year and the honorary members' subscriptions by one-half to £1 5s., against £2 10s. last year. The secretary once again appealed to members of the association to give more support to the officers and try to attend the meetings more often.—The report was adopted.

The statement of accounts was accepted and the auditor's report was adopted. The auditor congratulated the secretary on the way in which the books were kept.

The Rev. Hugh Benson was elected chairman and the Rev. S. F. Linsley as clerical secretary. Mr. Andrew Thompson was reappointed hon. secretary. Mr. Kenneth Thacker, although serving with H.M. Forces, was elected as assistant hon. secretary, with Mr. Edward Steele as acting assistant hon. secretary.

Mr. Andrew Thompson was again elected to represent the association on the Central Council. The Rev. Hugh Benson was elected Ringing Master and Mr. George Jones as auditor.

The following meetings for 1942 were proposed: January, Newcastle; February, Longton; March, Brown Edge; April, Draycott; May, Leek; June, Kingsley; July, Stone; August, Cheddleton; September, Uttoxeter; October, Tunstall; November, Hanley; and December, Stoke-on-Trent.

It was proposed by Mr. W. Carnwell, and seconded by Mr. G. Jones, that the annual dinner be held on Saturday, December 19th, 1942, being the nearest Saturday to the inaugural meeting of the association 60 years ago, the society having been founded on Saturday, December 16th, 1882.

A special vote of thanks to the hon. secretary for keeping the association going during the year, and for the manner in which everything had been conducted during this meeting, was proposed by the Rev. H. H. Treacher, supported by Mr. E. Steele, and carried unanimously.

After the minutes of the last annual meeting and the minutes of the committee meeting had been passed as read, a motion was placed before the meeting, moved by the Rev. Hugh Benson (chairman), seconded by Mr. Andrew Thompson (hon. secretary): 'The North Staffordshire Association of Change Ringers recognises the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers as the representative body of all associations, and objects to any National Association being formed.'

On the proposition of Mr. G. Jones, seconded by Mr. G. H. Hoobrook, the following members were elected to form the Annual Dinner Committee, viz.: The Rev. Hugh Benson, Messrs. Edward Steele, Charles H. Page and Andrew Thompson.

BALCOMBE, SUSSEX.—On Christmas morning before service, carols and courses of Bob Minor and Grandsire Triples were rung on handbells: J. Gardner, A. E. Laker, R. Johnson, P. Johnson.

**SALISBURY DIOCESAN GUILD.****MEETING AT KINGTON MAGNA.**

The annual meeting of the North Dorset Branch of the Salisbury Diocesan Guild was held at Kington Magna on Saturday, December 18th.

Members representing five parishes assembled in the Parish Church, where a service was held in the afternoon. The Guild office was intoned by the Rev. W. Uphill, and an address was given by Canon Hellins, D.D. The Rector was at the organ, and a sacred melody was played by four boys on handbells after the Magnificat.

Tea was followed by the business meeting. A financial statement was presented by the secretary. Dr. Hellins was re-elected chairman, the Rev. F. L. Edwards vice-chairman, the Rev. W. Uphill secretary, and Messrs. W. Shute and L. Perrett ringing masters. Thanks were accorded to Dr. Hellins and to the ladies presiding over the tea tables.

**DEATH OF MISS A. H. WOOD**

The death on December 13th is announced of Miss Amy Hattersley Wood, the younger daughter of the late Matthew A. Wood, who was so well known to the London ringers of a past generation. She was born in the house in Church Row, Bethnal Green, which was for so many years associated with the Wood family, and she spent the whole of her life there except for two years. The funeral was at Abney Park Cemetery. She derived her second name from Mr. Thomas Hattersley, of Sheffield, who was a great friend of her father. By her will she desires her trustee to hand to the Master or other executive officer her late father's album, presented to him by the members of the Ancient Society of College Youths, St. Paul's Cathedral.

**GRANDSIRE CATERS.**

(Continued from previous column.)

Worcester Journal" of September 18th, 1828, under the heading of deaths of that week.

'On Friday, in his 85th year, John Bristow, of this city. He was much respected, and well known as a Bell Ringer. We understand that he was the last surviving ringer who was engaged in a memorable peal, rung at All Saints' Church, in this city, November 28th, 1774, which is thus recorded in the Worcester Journal: "Last Monday was rung at All Saints' Church, in this city, by the Society of All Saints' Youths, a complete peal of 7,326 Grandsire Caters, in 4 hours 36-minutes, supposed to be one of the most musical peals every rung of so great a length. A person concerned in this peal dreamed the preceding night that the Tenor Clapper fell out, as the Bells came round, which really happened, to the great surprise of the company, the person having declared it before they went into the Tower." Bristow was the only person who ever rung the tenor bell of All Saints' single-handed to a peal.'

At this time the Leicester Scholars were at the height of their fame. As far back as 1669, Fabian Stedman visited Leicester, and the result of his stay in the town was the growth of a very good band. They had more than a local reputation, for in 1686 Samuel Scattergood took about twenty of them as far as Solihull, Warwickshire, to try the new peal of eight bells at St. Alphege Church. Towards the end of the eighteenth century they were busy with Grandsire Caters, and with Martin as composer and William Bull as conductor, two notable peals were rung.

On August 12th, 1776, they rang 6,012 'in the Tittoms,' of which they said, 'we can safely say that a peal of such Length Never was performed so compleat by the first Attempt Ever Made for the same.'

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**DAVID MAXON, ROPE WORKS, GRANTHAM**

**GRANDSIRE CATERS.****THE HISTORY OF THE METHOD.**

By EDGAR C. SHEPHERD.

(Continued from page 623.)

On February 1st, 1756, Benjamin Annable died, and was buried in St. Bride's Church. This remarkable man had given the Ancient Society of College Youths a great reputation, and Mr. Trollope fittingly writes of him:

"He was by far the greatest of all the College Youths and one of the greatest ringers in the whole history of the Exercise. Few have done so much to develop the art as he did. When he began to ring there had been accomplished as far as we know no more than six true peals. When he died peal ringing was a common thing. The position which the College Youths held in the eighteenth century was due to him more than any other man, and, perhaps, in his earliest days he saved the very existence of the Society.'

A year or two later came the discovery of bringing the bells round at handstroke. This invention by Francis Roberts may perhaps be considered as only second in importance to the establishment of the Tittum Position. Roberts had been leader of the Fulham band, and when he became conductor to the College Youths he called 6,050 Grandsire Cinques at St. Bride's and 5,180 Bob Royal at St. Magnus'.

In 1762 the College Youths performed a notable feat by ringing at Fulham 10,098 Grandsire Caters with ten men only. It was the first 10,000 to be rung single-handed, and it appears to have been the last peal by the 'ancient society' for some years. Mr. H. M. Page, of Fulham, says: 'By reading early copies of the "Bell News" this peal was rang soon after the two Bells were added to make the peal of ten, and I think we are safe in saying the first peal on ten at All Saints', Fulham.'

As usual there is no record of the composition, but the peal board record is as follows:—

'The Society of College Youths did ring in this steeple on Monday, March 29th, 1762 A Compleat Peal of 10098 Grandsire Caters in 6 hrs. 53 mins. The performers were W. Underwood 1, W. Scott 2, R. Moore 3, W. Richardson 4, C. Wells 5, S. Buckingham 6, E. Thomas 7, S. Clark 8, R. Sames 9, S. Mugeridge 10.

William Underwood conducted, and it will be noted that Christopher Wells, who made the discovery that falseness in Treble Bob could occur at the dodging leads of the treble, rang the 5th.

In Chapter VII. of 'The College Youths' Trollope gives a full account of the disagreements that split the society into two, so that for nearly thirty years there were two societies, each calling itself the College Youths. It was the 'junior' society, composed of the younger men, joined by Underwood, that rang 10,188 Grandsire Caters at West Ham, and 5,057 at Cambridge in 1765. This latter peal was rung on the occasion of the annual outing.

During the next thirty years some notable feats were accomplished. In 1773, George Gross called his excellent 7,001 at St. Leonard's, Shoreditch, and on November 28th, 1774, 7,326 changes were rung at All Saints', Worcester. There is no existing record of the band, and the only available information comes from "Berrows

(Continued in next column.)

**NOTICES.**

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

**NOTICES** must be received **NOT LATER THAN MONDAY.**

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

**ESSEX ASSOCIATION.—North-Eastern Division.—**The annual district meeting will be held at St. Peter's, Colchester, on Saturday, January 3rd. Handbells available 2.30 p.m. Service in church at 4 p.m. Tea you must all bring with you, as at previous meetings. Will members please note that subscriptions for 1942 will be due at this meeting. May I appeal to everyone, including our friends over the border in the Northern Division, to come and make this meeting a great success, and show the new Vicar of St. Peter's that the North-Eastern Division is very much alive?—Leslie Wright, Lower Barn Farm, Dedham.

**ST. MARTIN'S GUILD FOR THE DIOCESE OF BIRMINGHAM** (Established 1755).—Annual meeting will be held at the Tamworth Arms, Moor Street, Birmingham, on Saturday, January 3rd, commencing at 6.15 p.m. prompt.—T. H. Reeves, Hon. Sec., 136, Newton Road, Sparkhill, Birmingham, 11.

**ANCIENT SOCIETY OF COLLEGE YOUTHS.—**The next meeting will be held on Saturday, January 3rd, at the Bell Foundry, Whitechapel Road, E.7, at 3 p.m. The payment of 1s. 8d. to enable those members who have not attended the required number of meetings to vote on matters of finance is now due.—A. B. Peck, Hon. Sec., 1, Eversfield Road, Reigate.

**NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE ASSOCIATION.—**A meeting will be held at Newcastle-under-Lyme on Saturday, Jan. 3rd. Six clapperless bells and handbells available from 3 p.m.—Andrew Thompson, 63, Whitehouse Road, Cross Heath, Newcastle, Staffs.

**BATH AND WELLS ASSOCIATION.—**Axbridge Deanery Branch.—A meeting will be held at Yatton on Saturday, Jan. 3rd, 1942. Bells with ringing apparatus available 2.30 p.m. to 9 p.m. Service 3 p.m. Tea and business meeting 4 p.m.—E. J. Avery, Hon. Local Sec., Sandford.

**GLOUCESTER AND BRISTOL DIOCESAN ASSOCIATION.—**Bristol City Branch.—A meeting will be held at the Haymarket Hotel on Saturday, January 3rd, at 3 p.m. Handbells and tea provided. Business includes election of chairman and secretary, etc. A good attendance is requested.—A. M. Tyler, Branch Hon. Sec.

**BARNSELY AND DISTRICT SOCIETY.—**The annual meeting will be held at the Royal Hotel, Barnsley, on Saturday, January 10th. Handbells available 2.30 p.m. Business meeting 3.30 p.m. Tea 4.30 p.m., followed by further handbell practice. Those requiring tea

must notify me by January 9th. A hearty welcome awaits all.—D. Smith, Hon. Sec., 28, Chapel Street, Shafton, near Barnsley.

**ESSEX ASSOCIATION.—Northern Division.—**The annual district meeting will be held at Bocking on Saturday, Jan. 10th, 1942. It is hoped all the members who are able will make a special effort to attend. Six 'silent' bells available, also handbell ringing. Service and business meeting.—Hilda G. Snowden, Hon. Dis. Sec.

**NORWICH DIOCESAN ASSOCIATION.—**A meeting will be held at St. Giles', Norwich, on Saturday, January 10th. Bells (silent) 2.30. Service 3.45. Tea in St. Giles' Parish Hall, Cow Hill, 4.30, followed by business meeting and handbells.—A. G. G. Thurlow, Gen. Sec., 52, The Close, Norwich.

**GREETINGS.**

Wishing all members and friends of the Ancient Society of College Youths a happy and prosperous New Year.—Ernest G. Fenn, Master; Albert A. Hughes, Treasurer; Alfred B. Peck, Sec.

Hearty greetings and best wishes for the New Year to the mad band and all ringing friends, from Paymaster Lieut. C. Glenn, R.N.V.R.

Mr. and Mrs. G. F. Swann send to all ringing friends best wishes for a happier New Year.

New Year Greetings to all ringing friends from Mr. and Mrs. Albert Walker, 86, Scribers Lane, Hall Green, Birmingham, 28.

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**GLOUCESTER AND BRISTOL DIOCESAN ASSOCIATION.****SWINDON BRANCH ANNUAL MEETING.**

The annual meeting of the Swindon Branch of the Gloucester and Bristol Diocesan Association was held on Saturday, December 13th, at Rodbourne Cheney. The attendance was very disappointing, only seven being present. Handbells were in use during the evening, various methods up to Stedman Caters and Grandsire Cinques being rung. The secretary gave his usual report and stated that peals of Minor, Major and Royal had been rung on handbells in the branch during the year, but he regretted that so few ringers gave any attention to this side of change ringing. He also reported that a considerable number of members had not yet paid their subscriptions.

All the officers were re-elected, indeed, with the very small number present, it was impossible to do otherwise, and it is to be regretted that such a large number of ringers show little or no interest in branch affairs.

The fixing of future meetings was left in the hands of the secretary, the opinion being expressed that meetings were rather a waste of time, as the only people who troubled to attend were those who attended the weekly practices at Christ Church, and that one of the practices could be turned into a branch meeting. The meeting ended with the election of one new member as though to show the branch is not quite dead.

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