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LIVES OF GREAT MEN.

The suggestion made by Mr. George Cross in a recent issue that we should publish an account of the life and work of James W. Washbrook has met with the approval of many of our readers. Mr. George R. Newton points out that while the records and doings of the men of one hundred years ago are not entirely uninteresting, they are not so interesting as the experiences of those whom many ringers knew in the flesh.

We fully agree, and we may say that this thing has not for some time past been absent from our thoughts. But there are difficulties in the way, and we should like to take our readers into our confidence respecting them.

When we are writing an account of any person who is dead and who in his lifetime had distinguished himself in any way, there are one or two points which must be kept in mind. First, the truth must be told, and told free from bias either in favour or against the person. Secondly, it must be told so as to be both interesting and instructive to present day ringers. That means that we must try and portray the whole man with his good qualities and his limitations too. It is a mistake to think that we can increase a man's reputation by recounting his good qualities only. The sort of thing which is proper for an obituary notice will not serve when we are dealing with someone of fifty years ago.

But to do justice to a man the writer must have not only a mass of information about the details of what he did, but he must know what he was. It is not enough to say that a man rang so many peals. What is wanted is to know something about his character and the gifts which enabled him to stamp his influence on the men of his own time. Without that no worthy account of the man can be written.

Perhaps the hardest task a writer can undertake is to describe a man, and especially a man of great and diverse gifts. James W. Washbrook was, in the opinion of many people competent to judge, the most outstanding ringer of his generation and perhaps of all time. No one has better earned the right to have his life written as it should be written, and in our opinion he would make a first class subject for a biography, but the task of writing it is a formidable one.

In the account of the Central Council which appeared in our pages an attempt was made to portray some of the early members as they really were, and in one or two instances—Heywood, Bulwer, Davies, Law James—without some degree of success. Washbrook was an obvious figure to add to that gallery and the omission was not due to want of intention, but on account of the difficulties of carrying it out.

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HANDBELL PEAL.

WEST GRINSTEAD, SUSSEX.

THE SUSSEX COUNTY ASSOCIATION.

On Sunday, January 11, 1942, in Two Hours and Six Minutes,
At 92, BUTCHER'S ROW.

A PEAL OF BOB MINOR, 5040 CHANGES;

Seven different callings.

Temor size 13 in F.

GEORGE W. MASSEY ... 1-2 | EDGAR R. RAPLEY ... 3-4

CECIL R. LONGHURST ... 5-6

Conducted by EDGAR R. RAPLEY.

THE COLLEGE YOUTHS.

The Master, Mr. E. Fenn, presided at the meeting of the Ancient Society of College Youths last Saturday, and was supported by the hon. secretary (Mr. A. W. Peck) and the treasurer (Mr. A. A. Hughes). Among those present were Mr. E. A. Young, Mr. G. Price, Mr. R. F. Deal, Mr. J. Shepherd, Mr. C. H. Kippin, Mr. F. Collins, Mr. C. C. Mayne, Mr. E. Hartley, Corpl. K. Arthur, Pte. Len Fox, Pte. C. W. Munday and Guardsman F. A. Munday.

The treasurer reported that a very satisfactory arrangement had been made about the insurance, and the sum of £163 9s. 3d. had been allowed for the property destroyed in the fire raid. This would not be paid until after the war, but interest on the sum would accrue.

The Rector of St. Magnus the Martyr wrote pointing out that the bells of that church had been taken down from the steeple and so would not be available for ringing for peace. He suggested the formation of a handbell band to ring at St. Magnus' and other damaged churches when the time comes. It was decided to arrange a meeting with him to discuss details.

The Master called attention to the loss the society had sustained by the death of Mr. Edward Murrell, of St. Lawrence Jewry, and said that though he had come into ringing fairly late in life and had no particular pretensions to be a twelve-bell ringer, there was no more regular and loyal supporter of the society than he.

Mr. A. A. Hughes added his tribute. He said that Mr. Murrell with Mr. Shorter had been the mainstay of the Jewry band ever since the bells were rehung. Although he had but one leg, Mr. Murrell was very active about the very difficult frame at St. Lawrence's, and had designed and himself installed the very efficient silent apparatus they had read about in 'The Ringing World.' He was an exceptional man in many ways, and, being musical, was a source of strength to the choir. Mr. J. A. Trollope said he had been much struck by the ability shown by Mr. Murrell's letters to 'The Ringing World,' and mentioned that the unsigned article on New Year's Bells was by him. Mr. Deal and Mr. Young both referred to Mr. Murrell's career as a soldier and a sergeant-major in the famous Guards Brigade. It was decided to send a letter of sympathy to Mr. Murrell's son.

The Master congratulated the hon. treasurer on the birth of his first grandchild, and hoped the grandson would follow in his grandfather's footsteps.

Mr. A. A. Hughes drew attention to the suggestion made in 'The Ringing World' that a 'Ringers' Council' should be held in its pages. He stressed the fact that it is impossible for the Central Council to meet. Even the Standing Committee cannot be brought together; and if it were possible there is nothing that could be done at present. He thought, however, that a scheme for discussing different subjects among ringers generally would be a splendid thing, and he recommended it strongly.

Mr. Trollope explained some of the ideas which had occurred to the Editor of 'The Ringing World'; and an interesting discussion followed, in which, among others, Mr. C. C. Mayne, Mr. G. N. Price and Mr. E. A. Young took part. The feeling of the meeting was entirely in favour of the suggestion. It was decided to adjourn the debate and talk more about the matter in a fortnight's time.

The Master said his brother, Roland, sent his best wishes. Pte. Len Fox brought greetings from the junior steward, Mr. G. W. Cecil. Pte. C. W. Munday said he had received a card from Mr. Peter Kearvell, who is in the R.A.F. in Durban, which stated that he had met the Durban ringers and a practice had been arranged.

The dramatic escape of Mr. Derek Sharp in an aeroplane accident was mentioned, and the society decided to write and congratulate him.

Mr. Slack's Two-part peal of Stedman Triples furnished food for a keen and informal debate, which did not end at the formal meeting place.

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DEATH OF MR. C. W. CLARKE.

A LEADING BEDFORDSHIRE RINGER.

We regret to announce the passing of yet another well-known figure from the Exercise; one who did yeoman service for the Bedfordshire Association, of which he was one of the earliest members. Charles William Clarke died at St. Peter's Hospital, Bedford, on January 9th, at the age of 77 years.

In the period just before the present war advancing age somewhat restricted his activities, but ringers of an older generation will recollect the energy and enthusiasm he displayed, mainly in and around Bedfordshire. He was a fine all-round ringer, but he excelled most of all on six bells, having a complete mastery of Minor ringing and conducting in the days before 'splicing' came to the fore. He was something of a marinet in the belfry, but it was all well intentioned and he raised the standard of six-bell ringing in Bedfordshire to a high level.

Mr. Clarke was born at Oundle, Northants, on May 8th, 1864, and rang his first peal before he was 20 years old. His first peal as conductor was the first peal by the Bedfordshire Association. This was seven different 720's of Minor and was rung at Biddenham.

From this point Mr. Clarke gave much attention to Minor ringing and eventually his peals in seven methods alone numbered over 360, of which he conducted more than 250. In addition, he called two peals of London Minor, four peals of Cambridge Minor and 16 peals in less than seven methods. His performances also included peals in 10 and 14 extents, and on one occasion, before such performances were frowned on by the powers that be, a peal of Minor in 14 methods rung in 360's.

On higher numbers Mr. Clarke rang peals which extended from Triples to Cinques; among them one peal of 10,176 Treble Bob Major. As well as 66 peals of Surprise Major and Royal. Altogether he rang no fewer than 720 peals, of which he conducted over 430. The peals were rung in 131 towers for nine associations.

Mr. Clarke had lived in Bedford for the greater part of his life and for many years was associated with the six-bell tower of St. Peter's.

He was buried at his native Oundle on January 12th.



THE LATE MR. C. W. CLARKE.

THE LATE EDWARD MURRELL.

FUNERAL AT WHITCHURCH.

The funeral of the late Edward Murrell, who, as announced in our last issue, died on Sunday, January 11th, took place on the following Thursday afternoon at St. Lawrence's Church, Whitchurch, Canons Park, Middlesex. Mr. A. A. Hughes represented the Ancient Society of College Youths.

Mr. Murrell, who was 53 years old, was born at Thurnby in Leicestershire. He had been a company sergeant-major in the 1st Battalion of the Grenadier Guards and won the Distinguished Service Medal in the retreat from Mons. He was a first rate all round athlete and was skilled in rowing, football and swimming.

He was musical and a leading member of the choir of St. Lawrence Jewry. That brought him into contact with ringing and he adopted it with enthusiasm, though naturally he was hampered by coming to it fairly late in life. He had rung one or two peals.

Mr. Murrell leaves a widow, and a son.

PATRONAL FESTIVAL.

A quarter-peal of Bob Major was rung recently at St. Mary and All Saints', Beaconsfield, in honour of the patronal festival of the church: H. Wingrove (conductor); 1-2, W. Lee 3-4, D. R. Fletcher 5-6, Miss V. Look 7-8.

THE BELLS OF ENGLAND.—"There are sweet bells in France, in Italy, in Belgium; but the English country is their true home. And it will never do for England to listen to the fretful fuss of those who would silence her church bells, whether over her fields or over the noisy towns in which they are the only music."—The Times, March 23rd, 1934.

DEATH OF THE REV. W. C. PEARSON.

RECTOR OF HENLEY, SUFFOLK.

We much regret to announce the death of the Rev. William Carter Pearson, which took place suddenly on Tuesday, January 13th.

Mr. Pearson, who had been Rector of Henley, near Ipswich, for 47 years and was 82 years old, lived alone. He was found by his woman helper on her arrival in the morning at the foot of the rectory stairs in a dying condition. He had a torch in his hand and it is assumed that he collapsed as he was about to go upstairs to black-out.

Mr. Pearson was a man of great determination. Although he had a serious illness last summer, and was incapacitated for a time, he recently walked from Henley to Ipswich and back, in compliance with a wish he had expressed to one of the parishioners that before he died he proposed going the five miles between Henley and Ipswich on foot.

He carried out the full morning service at his church on the Sunday before his death, and preached a sermon, although there was only a small congregation.

Mr. Pearson was laid to rest on Saturday in a spot selected by himself at the foot of the steeple.

The Revs. C. W. Wordsworth (Rector of Coddensham), J. R. Chapman (Rector of Redfield) and L. B. C. Newell (Rector of Claydon) took part in the service, which included the hymns, 'Jesu, lover of my soul' and 'Abide with me,' the 23rd Psalm and the Nunc Dimittis.

The principal mourners were Commander Pearson (brother) and Mr. H. S. Gotelee.

Before the service a course of Grandsire Caters was rung on handbells by Messrs. C. E. Mee, Charles Mee, C. J. Sedgley, E. Rivers and F. Rolfe. There was a large congregation.

Mr. Pearson learned to ring in his early days, and when he went up to Cambridge in 1879 he, with the help of some friends, founded the Clare Association of Ringers, which shortly after became the Cambridge University Guild.

At Henley he restored the bells and completed the octave, and very many peals in numerous and advanced methods were rung with the help of the Ipswich men. Mr. Pearson rang 229 peals for the Norwich Diocesan Association, but he did not approve of the changes which led to the formation of the Suffolk Guild, and thereafter Henley bells and the Rector disappeared from peal records.

Mr. Pearson was for many years a diligent and successful collector of books dealing with bells and ringing, and his collection of early and rare works is unrivalled outside the British Museum. In some respects it is the finest of all, for while all the British Museum copies have been rebound and 'cut,' some of Mr. Pearson's are in the original bindings with uncut edges. He had also the copy of the 'Tintinnalogia,' which for long was supposed to be the only one extant. Mr. E. H. Lewis has now a rather better copy.

Some years ago Mr. Pearson, referring to his books, wrote: 'The "Tintinnalogia" formerly belonging to Mr. Lukis is in my possession. I have a nice clean and perfect copy of Stedman's "Campanalogia," published in 1677. In 1677 J. White published "A Rich Cabinet with a Variety of Inventions," in which is an article on ringing cribbed more or less from the "Tintinnalogia." White also published the same article about 1700, under the title of "Tintinnologia." I have an imperfect copy of this and a good copy of the former.

The "Campanalogia" by J. D. and C. M. went through five editions, 1702, 1705, 1733, 1753 and 1766, the last corrected by J. Monk. I have copies of all these five editions. I have copies of the 1788 "Clavis," one of the so-called second edition, and three of the third. I have two copies of Shipway's book, 1816, one of which is in the original paper boards with rough uncut edges. I have the first and fourth editions of Hubbard's book, 1845 and 1876. I have J. W. Snowdon's copy of B. Thackrah's book. I have two copies of Sottan-tall's book, one of which was formerly J. W. Snowdon's and contains a photo of the author published in 1874. Also "The Bell News" reprints, and the later books by Snowdon, etc.; J. P. Powell's "Stedman Triples" and Thompson's "Grandsire." Also I have all the county volumes that have been published on bell inscriptions, etc.'

Mr. Pearson at one time owned a large and handsomely bound manuscript, folio size. It is entitled, 'The Peal Book of the Union Scholars of Newport, Isle of Wight,' but actually is a collection of miscellaneous records of early performances in different parts of the country. This volume Mr. Pearson presented to the British Museum.

From time to time Mr. Pearson contributed articles on various historical subjects to the pages of 'The Bell News.' They included an account of Theodore Eccleston and a transcript of the book just mentioned. He also published a little book giving a list of the rings of eight, ten and twelve bells in the Eastern Counties with the founders and weights.

ST. PETER'S TUNBRIDGE WELLS.

The band at St. Peter's, Tunbridge Wells, are among the many who are doing what they can to tide over these difficult times and keep the spirit of the Exercise alive. Under the inspiration of their captain, Mr. B. Collison, they hold fortnightly Wednesday practices with lashed clappers. They have now six fully qualified ringers, and two others are in training. Two of the six qualified ringers are women, and so is one of the learners. The other is the Rev. E. F. Yorke, Vicar of St. Peter's.

THE BELLS OF FULHAM.

RUDHALL'S FAMOUS RING.

Among the bells in the metropolitan area none have been better known or more loved than those of All Saints', Fulham. In recent years perhaps restrictions on ringing have made them less familiar to ordinary ringers than once they were, and opinions on bell tones and qualities have much changed; but even now if the question were asked which of all the rings of London should we most regret to lose, many would not hesitate to answer, Fulham. I personally think that there is no belfry throughout the length and breadth of the land where musical requirements in peal ringing are more completely and pleasantly met than here.

When the first church at Fulham was built no one knows. The present fine building is modern and was erected in 1881, but the tower, which it so completely matches, dates from 1440. In the Edwardian inventory of 1549 it is stated that there then were 'V greate belles and a lyttell bell in the steeple, and iij hande belles.' The latter were sacring bells and, being no longer required, were sold. There remained 'in the steeple V greate belles and a saunce Bell.'

During the seventeenth century the churchwardens' accounts contain many entries relating to repairs, which are interesting as showing the cost of such things. In 1638 a set of bell ropes cost 18s. 6d. Two years later a set cost £1 2s. 6d. It rather looks as if in the first instance the churchwardens had gone to the cheapest market and had got rubbish for their pains. In 1649 Bastian, of Hammersmith, was paid 18s. for a new clapper for the great bell, 'the owld one being unserviceable and indangering the bell.' In 1650 Robert Turner, bellhanger, received £12s. 6d. 'for taking down and new hanging fower of the bells (the brasses, googions and baldricks being decaied and worne out) and for new casting the sd. brasses and googians and adding to them five pounds more of mettall, and for new baldricks and roolls and other worke appearing by bill.'

In that same year some soldiers had damaged one of the bells, how it does not appear. Here is the entry: 'To him more (that is to Robert Turner) for taking down and new hanging the second bell over throwne by the Soldiers, and for locks and rayles, 6s. 8d.' The probability is that the soldiers having nothing better to do, amused themselves with bell ringing, and not being skilful ringers, damaged the hanging. Something similar happened about the same time at Peterborough Cathedral, where 'the neighbourhood was continually disturbed by the soldiers jangling and ringing the bells auker (backwards) as though there had been a scare-fire (though there was no other but what themselves had made).' So some of the inhabitants went by night and took away the clappers and hid them in the roof of the church.

The Fulham churchwardens' accounts contain numerous entries of payments for ringing. Usually it was for some royal anniversary such as the King's birthday or Coronation Day, or for some national event, such as Gunpowder Treason Day, the signing of peace (at Utrecht) or some naval or military victory, or it was on one of the many occasions when the King passed by on his way to Hampton Court. Easter Day and Christmas

Day were two of the occasions on which the bells were rung.

Time and again the vestry tried to restrict both the amount of ringing, and the amount paid for it. On May 6th, 1672, it was decided 'for ringing on Gunpowder Treason, tenn shillings and no more. And on the king's coronation tenn shillings, and on the king's birthday the like sum of ten shillings and not to exceed more in the p'teculars aforesaid.'

In 1731 the vestry decided that no more than ten shillings should be paid on any day and that there should be nine ringing days and no more.

In 1636 ten shillings had to be paid to 'the king's footmen' for not ringing; and in 1642, the year in which the civil war broke out, although nine shillings was paid on the king's coronation day, it was ordered that 'it was not to be allowed for tyme to come.' The bells, however, were still rung on the king's birthday.

Fulham was one of the several places where the ringers claimed the right to an annual supper. In some cases there was an endowment; in others an ancient custom. It usually took the form of a leg of pork, but at Fulham it was a shoulder of veal, eaten on Easter Tuesday. The only survival of this once widely-spread custom seems now to be in the Middlesex village of Harlington.

In 1652 Fulham bells had fallen into a bad state of repair. The parish elected as churchwarden a certain Colonel George Langham, but he was anxious not to serve and the matter was settled in this manner—'Coll. George Langham did voluntarily give to the parish of Fulham, on Fulham side, the somme of five pounds, and the inhabitants did consent to execute the said Col. langham from all offices for the repaire of ye bells wch are now in decay.'

Mr. Thomas Crooke was elected in Langham's stead and he forthwith set about the restoration of the peal. This was at the time of the Commonwealth and is one more proof that bells and ringing were not then neglected. The work was entrusted to Bryan Eldridge of Chertsey, and then happened a rather curious thing. Crooke and his co-warden, or successor, John Shorecroft, had entered into a bond with Eldridge 'in ye penall sum of 120 li' for the payment of the contract amount of £60. Crooke was supposed to have paid part and Shorecroft to have discharged the balance, but Eldridge did not return the bond, disputing the payment. He sued Crooke, who had judgment passed against him, and was himself taken in execution. He appealed to the vestry and the minute book contains a detailed account of the matter.

According to him, when he paid Eldridge the latter said that the bond was not then in his custody, but he promised to deliver it up in a short time to be cancelled; but nevertheless 'ye said Eldridge putt ye aforesaid bonds in suits, and although the said Thomas Crooke made a legal defence and proof of ye aforesaid sums paid yet judgement went against him.'

The vestry believed Crooke and reimbursed him the money, but we should like to have Bryan Eldridge's version of the matter. The Eldridges were a family of bell founders who were held in high esteem, and the original sum may not have been paid.

Eldridge cast a peal of six, but by 1728 they had become cracked and out of tune. 'At a Vestry held ye

24th day of July, Anno Domini 1728 pursuant to due and legal notice for that purpose, it was unanimously agreed and order'd that the whole peal of six bells be recast, it appearing that the tenor was broken, the third crack'd, and ye rest untunable, and that a rate should be made and levied at four pence in ye pound to defray the expense of casting and hanging ye said bells and other necessary repairs in and about ye same.'

A leading man in the parish at this time was William Skelton, a skilled ringer and a member of the Society of College Youths. I have already told how his father came to the notice of the Bishop of London by detecting an attempt to poison the bishop, and how the latter educated him and set him up in life. William Skelton was an Oxford graduate and for many years held the office of registrar to the Bishop of London. He now became the prime mover in the scheme to restore the church bells and was the leading man in the committee appointed to deal with the matter.

The vestry found that the proposed rate of fourpence was insufficient, so they raised it to eightpence, and if that were not enough, to tenpence, but it seems this was rescinded. The committee decided to instal eight bells and applied to the Bishop for a faculty to recast the old six and supply two trebles by voluntary subscription; accordingly at the next vestry meeting Skelton, as registrar, presented the parish with the 'Bps Licence for ye new bells, which was read and thanks returned him.'

The response to the appeal for subscriptions does not appear to have been very lively, and in the end Skelton, who had made himself responsible for the money, had to bear the bulk of the cost, and the vestry decided that two bells should bear his name!

The order was given to Abraham Rudhall, of Gloucester, then at the height of his fame. It was the last of the five rings he cast for London churches, the others being St. Dunstan's-in-the-East, 1702, St. George's, Southwark, 1718, St. Bride's, Fleet Street, 1710, and St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, 1726.

From Gloucester the bells were brought overland to the Thames and then by water; and as the barge was passing under the bridge at Oxford it sank. It was a week before the bells could be hoisted out of the river, but at length, in January, 1730, they arrived at Fulham none the worse for their adventure.

The supervision of the tuning was entrusted to John Harrison, who is famous as the inventor of a clock for determining the longitude at sea. For this he received (though after long delay) the sum of £10,000 which Parliament had offered for such an invention. He also made other improvements in clocks and escapements. 'He had a musical ear and made experiments in sound with a curious monochord of his own invention, from which he constructed a new musical scale or mechanical division of the octave according to the proportions which the radius and diameter of a circle have respectively to the circumference.'

(To be continued.)

J. A.
TROLLOPE'S

'COLLEGE YOUTHS' A History of the Society

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BELFRY GOSSIP.

As Dartford is in the defence area, ringers attending the meeting on January 31st should, if they are questioned, explain that they are attending a business meeting of the Kent County Association.

The daily papers have reported that Mr. Derek M. Sharp, a well-known member of the Crayford (Kent) band, who is now a cadet in America, had an alarming and dramatic experience. He was flung out of a plane while flying and saved himself by clinging to the tail elevators. His friends will congratulate him on his marvellous escape.

The many ringing friends of Mr. W. Honeywood, of Mistley, will regret to learn of the death of his wife at the age of 77. Mr. and Mrs. Honeywood celebrated their golden wedding during 1941.

Fifty years ago to-day eight peals were rung. They were: Minor 1, Grandsire Triples 1, Caters 1, Stedman Triples 3, and Kent Treble Bob Major 2.

Ten years ago to-day 26 peals were rung. They were: Stedman Triples 1, Bob Major 2, Oxford Treble Bob Major 1, Spliced Treble Bob Major 1, Double Norwich Court Bob Major 4, Superlative Surprise Major 2, Belgrave 1, Cambridge 4, London 1, Bob Royal 1, Oxford Treble Bob Royal 1, Doubles 2, and Minor 5.

The Norwich Scholars rang 7,126 changes of Stedman Cinques at Mancroft on January 18th, 1844. It was the longest length in the method at the time, and, according to tradition, was a splendidly struck performance.

The first peal definitely known to have been rung by the College Youths was 5,060 Grandsire Cinques at St. Bride's, Fleet Street, on January 19th, 1725. Matthew East called the bobs.

The Norwich Scholars rang the first peal of Double Norwich Court Bob Maximus at St. Peter's, Mancroft, on January 20th, 1817.

The College Youths rang the first peal of Stedman Triples on handbells at the Whittington and Cat, Bothnal Green, on January 21st, 1854.

James Motts, of Ipswich, died on January 21st, 1923, at the age of 63.

BARNESLEY AND DISTRICT SOCIETY.

ANNUAL MEETING.

The annual meeting of the Barnsley and District Society was held at the Royal Hotel, Barnsley, on Saturday, January 10th, and members were present from Cawthorne, Eastwood, Felkirk, Hoylandswaine, Sandal, Sprotborough, Sheffield (St. Marie's) and Wath.

The business meeting was at 3.30 p.m., and the honorary president, Canon W. E. Wilkinson, Rector of St. Mary's, occupied the chair.

The balance sheet was very encouraging, as it showed that after a year of difficulties and no tower bell ringing the society had a balance of £1 7s. 10d. On the motion of Mr. Ford, seconded by Mr. Gill, the auditors, it was adopted unanimously.

The secretary's report stated that since the last annual meeting ten monthly meetings and one committee meeting had been held, the average attendance at the meetings being nine. Considering the small number of handbell ringers in the society's area, this was fairly good. Handbells had been made good use of since the ban on tower bells. Many subscriptions were outstanding, but this was chiefly due to the annual shield contest not being held, for that brought together a lot of members with whom the officials do not otherwise get into touch. No doubt this will be put right when normal times return.

It was very encouraging to the secretary to know that despite all the difficulties the work of the society had been carried on, and he hoped that this would continue until the end of the war, when with normal times the belfries would be full again with the old keenness. The report was adopted.

Two new members were elected. The officials were all re-elected: Mr. E. V. Brookes, Hoylandswaine, president; Mr. H. Chant, Felkirk, treasurer; Mr. D. Smith, Felkirk, secretary; Mr. C. Robinson, Cawthorne, and Mr. J. T. White, Felkirk, auditors.

The Chairman mentioned that something ought to be done about the handbells which are allowed to go to ruin in towers. It might happen that some peals of handbells which are valuable might be taken for salvage and so lost. He thought the society as a body should assume responsibility and try to find out how many towers possessed handbells and in what condition they were. If they were not cared for they should try and arrange to collect them so that any that were good might be saved and any that were bad might be sent to the founders as scrap. The suggestion was accepted and the secretary was instructed to get into touch with all the towers either through the ringers or the incumbents.

It was thought best to change the date of the meetings temporarily and to arrange them as near to the full moon as possible during the winter months. The February meeting will be on the 28th, and it was agreed to accept an invitation to hold it at Wath-on-Dearne.

After the vote of thanks to the chairman for all he had done, the members adjourned to the dining room, and after tea the handbells were made good use of until 8.30 p.m. The methods rung were Grandsire and Stedman Doubles, Plain and Treble Bob Minor, Grandsire and Stedman Triples, Bob Major, Plain and Little Bob Major Spliced, Grandsire Caters and Bob Royal.

THE PROPOSED 'RINGER'S COUNCIL.'

SUGGESTION 'CATCHES ON.'

Views of Representative Ringers.

The suggestion, put forward in last week's issue of 'The Ringing World,' that discussions might be carried on in the form of a meeting through our columns on subjects of general interest in connection with ringing has aroused considerable interest, and below we print some representative views on the subject. The novelty of 'running a meeting' through 'The Ringing World' seems to have caught the fancy of many ringers, and we shall be glad to have the views of other of our readers on the subject.

MEANS OF MAINTAINING ACTIVE INTEREST.

Dear Sir,—Your correspondent's 'novel suggestion' is a very interesting one, and for my part I cordially welcome it as a means of maintaining active interest in our art and of promoting practical preparation for the undoubtedly difficult task awaiting us after the war.

Allow me to make two suggestions. First there is the question of a name for the movement. Clearly it would not constitute a 'Council.' 'Symposium' would sound too highbrow: 'Ringers' Brains Trust' too onirously suggestive of the dialectical subtleties of the Methods Committee and its critics.

I suggest that it be known as the 'Ringers' Conference.'

My other point is that, while all those taking part should be free to express their views with perfect frankness and without reserve, one and all should be required to treat their opponents with the utmost courtesy, and any tendency to undesirable personalities should be rigidly and uncompromisingly excluded.

In conclusion, it seems to me that for purely practical reasons the 'president of the conference' must be none other than the Editor.

F. LI. EDWARDS.

Kington Magna Rectory.

SUPPORT FROM LEEDS.

Dear Sir,—I was greatly interested in the letter appearing in the current issue of 'The Ringing World' over the name of Mr. J. P. Price. As a long standing and regular member of the Central Council, one cannot but recognise all the difficulties facing the Council, both as regards the arranging of meetings, accommodation and travelling facilities, which I am of opinion are likely to get more difficult in the near future.

At the same time one can quite see the essential point (which is more obvious than much correspondence that you are expected to insert) that in the meantime it is of utmost importance to maintain the interest of the Exercise in these trying and difficult times, and I am of opinion that the suggestion of Mr. Price would form a valuable nucleus to arouse interest and enthusiasm. For my part, I would be only too pleased to take part in any discussions that may be introduced, if the proposals come to fruition, and to help in making the scheme a success.

PERCY J. JOHNSON.

Leeds.

AN EXCELLENT SUGGESTION.

Sir,—I read with interest the letter from J. P. Price in 'The Ringing World' of January 16th. It is an excellent suggestion and one that should appeal to many members of the Exercise.

It is generally acknowledged that it is impossible for the Central Council to meet in session during the war, for many reasons which are obvious. At the same time, tribute should be paid to the secretary, Mr. G. W. Fletcher, and others for their efforts, however unsuccessful, in many directions in trying to remove the ban on church bellringing.

Unfortunately, there are ringers who are always ready to criticise generally under a 'non-de-plume' without making any effort themselves to improve or put forward constructive proposals. I feel certain Mr. Price's letter will be read and studied with interest, and I welcome the suggestion that views sent to the Editor of 'The Ringing World'

for publication must each be published in the sender's own name. No doubt, sir, you will be having the views of others, so that it will be possible to get things moving as soon as possible. Personally, I am prepared to support Mr. Price's proposed motion that a small committee be formed immediately to consider and report upon the best and quickest means of rehabilitating ringing when the war is over. I feel sure, too, that your leading article of January 16th encourages the hope that you will assist in this excellent work.

ALBERT WALKER.

Birmingham.

COMPENSATION FOR C.C. ACTIVITIES.

Dear Sir,—I have read with very great interest the letter of Mr. J. P. Price, and welcome most cordially the suggestion contained therein. I feel very certain that there are many subjects that could be profitably discussed in your columns, and now, is the time for it to be given a trial through the means suggested.

In your excellent leader you say, 'Nothing is better for a man's outlook than to hear and study the views and opinions of others.' With that I am certain we are in total agreement. There is no keener member and supporter of the Central Council than myself, and no one regrets more the impracticability of its holding, at present, its meetings.

If Mr. Price's suggestion was put into practice it would compensate in no small way for the temporary cessation of the Central Council's activities.

As you point out, 'There are obvious and serious difficulties to contend with.' We agree with that. You also say 'there are great possibilities in the suggestion.' With that we also agree. I would very much like to see the suggestion put into practice, and I, for one, can promise my wholehearted co-operation.

GEORGE R. NEWTON.

Liverpool.

OPPORTUNITY TO FIND HIDDEN TALENT.

Dear Sir,—I read with great interest your correspondent's suggestion that we hold a Council meeting through the pages of 'The Ringing World.' I think it is one of the brightest ideas we have had put forward for some time, for not only will it help to keep the interest in ringing, it will also give the guilds and associations the chance to study the form of possible future candidates and be a great help in choosing future representatives to the Central Council.

Who knows! There may be a lot of hidden talent among the younger generation, and I think this is a fine opportunity to bring it out.

R. RICHARDSON.

Surfleet, Lines.

A CHANCE FOR THE CRITICS.

To the Editor.

Dear Sir,—The novel proposal suggested in the last issue of 'The Ringing World' appears to be worthy of much serious attention. It has for some time been obvious that there is a great deal of dissatisfaction amongst ringers at the present state of affairs, but very few suggestions have been put forward which seem to be of a practical nature. Most of the critics are merely critics of other people's alleged inactivity, and even those who can see 'obvious advantages' in a certain proposal, like the anonymous person whose letter appeared on December 9th, can only call for 'somebody to do something.'

Now an opportunity occurs which will give everybody a chance to put forward their own ideas for the welfare of ringing, both during the period of the ban and after, and also to say something for or against other people's ideas. I, for one, therefore, welcome the proposal.

There should, however, be no thought of interfering with the rights of the Central Council or of the several associations; and no decision taken should be in any way binding on those bodies. At the same time, the Council and the association will no doubt be very glad to have well expressed opinions of ringers, for guidance in the difficult days ahead.

Further, the proposal that no anonymous contributions to the debate should be admitted will provide an opportunity to ringers to find the many new and capable young men who will be required after the war to take up office in the associations and the Council.

C. T. COLES.

Highams Park.

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STEDMAN TRIPLES.

MR. SLACK'S PEAL.

To the Editor.

Dear Sir,—As Mr. Slack mentions my name, perhaps you will allow me to say that, so far as I know, neither Bulwer nor Heywood ever expressed any public opinion about the possibility of obtaining a peal of Stedman Triples in two exactly similar parts and two singles. What they may have said in private letters and correspondence I have, of course, no means of knowing.

Both of them had studied and understood the early multi-bob peals, but they treated them as stages in the development of the composition of the method which had become obsolete when Thurstans' peal appeared, and neither would seem to have so much as considered whether the B Block plan was capable of development and improvement. For them peals of Stedman Triples meant twin-bob peals. Now a twin-bob peal in two exactly similar parts is so obviously an impossibility that they accepted the fact without comment, and there was for them no problem in the matter. There certainly was not for Heywood, for more than once he publicly stated that the only outstanding problem in Stedman composition was a seven-part peal. That Law James afterwards supplied; but whether it was the sort of peal Heywood was thinking about I am not sure.

The practical objections to peals composed of B Blocks are so obvious that they have been almost entirely neglected. When I wrote my book on Stedman there was not the slightest evidence that composers considered a peal in two equal parts was a particularly desirable thing to be aimed at. It was, I think, Mr. Slack who first mentioned the thing in public, and the statement by the anonymous writer whom he calls 'The Cross-Eyed Yokel' that it was impossible, was obviously an attempt to draw him. Since it resulted in Mr. Slack's peal we may not altogether regret the attempt.

The peal cannot be said to mark any particular stage in the development of Stedman Triples composition, and has little practical value, but that does not mean it has no interest as a composition. Many people will hold that it is not worth ringing, but no one will for a minute seek to belittle the merits of Mr. Slack in composing it, or of Mr. Maurice Hibbert in calling it.

J. ARMIGER TROLLOPE.

Ealing, W.5.

THE MUSIC OF TRIPLES.

To the Editor.

Dear Sir,—Whilst suspecting Dr. Slack made his statement re musical properties of his peal in the vein of ironic sarcasm permeating the context, it always amuses me to hear of people talking of Triples peals as musical or otherwise, as this constantly occurs in ringers' conversation. The only way I know to make any Triples composition apparently musical is to have as many of the most musical changes as possible at backstroke, where they are emphasised by the hand-stroke pause, of which Messrs. Pitman and Parker have produced good examples.

But there are only 5,040 changes of Triples, and all have to be rung good or bad, in any Triples method or composition, so if you have jam in one place you have margarine in others! When you come to Major and upwards you can pick 5,000 changes from any number between forty thousand and forty million, but not in Triples.

Personally, I have never heard any *bad* triple changes in a *well-struck* touch or peal, on bells of average musical quality (probably due to a defective musical education), and even so-called musical changes are nothing if murdered.

I have been struck by the fact that chief opposition, or intolerance, to peals of Triples, Stedman in particular, comes from ringers who have a reputation on Major methods, often a good one. I quite appreciate that all orthodox peals of Major have at least three observation bells, continuously, and another two for longer or shorter periods, according to plan of composition, and can realise their difficulty in sympathising with or understanding peals with none. We all have met, for instance, the experienced ringer of Stedman Cinques, who affects to despise Doubles, because if he unfortunately gets entrapped in the latter he doesn't know how to make a single!

Mr. Keeble's naive suggestion that figures can 'always' be obtained from those who have them is good. Who wants to keep writing out half a peal of Stedman, for people to keep as a museum piece? It was precisely to stop this that figures were sent to 'The Ringing World.' The necessity of this has been emphasised this week by even the composer's admission that he now has no copy of figures. Now, sir, that you have had some destructive criticism on the way the peal was presented, how about a little article, under your own name, telling us how it should be arranged and learnt? Everybody will be interested in the correct way.

Finally will 'A Member' not be too hard on these Bushey people, please, and remember that it was a *district* meeting of the Herts Association attended by members outside the county. Even Bushey people are human, or so they say!

In any case, they had the courage of their convictions and didn't hide behind a nom-de-plume.

MAURICE F. R. HIBBERT.

NORWICH DIOCESAN ASSOCIATION.

MEETING AT ST. GILES'.

A most successful meeting was held at St. Giles', Norwich, on Saturday, January 10th. Various methods were rung during the afternoon on the eight bells, which seem to go as well as ever. The service was conducted by the general secretary, the Rev. A. G. G. Thurlow, and a most interesting address was given by the Vicar of St. Giles', the Rev. D. E. Rae.

A splendid tea was provided in St. Giles' Hall by certain ladies who seem quite undaunted by war difficulties, and this was followed by the business meeting. Mr. W. L. Duffield was in the chair, supported by ringers from Acle, Attleborough, Bergh Apton, Buxton, Diss.



THE CHURCH OF ST. GILES, NORWICH.

Forncett, Great Yarmouth, Long Stratton, Lowestoft, Mulbarton, Norwich, Redenhall, Wymondham and Warsop (Notts). The general secretary read a letter from his predecessor, Mr. Nolan Golden, and another from Mrs. Smalls about her husband, who is a prisoner of war in Germany. It was decided to make the next meeting the annual general meeting, and to hold it at St. Peter's, Mancroft, on the Saturday after Easter, April 11th.

The general secretary's review of the past year's work showed that keenness is well maintained, in spite of the difficulties. The five meetings held had all been well attended. The financial position is satisfactory, the smaller income being offset by smaller expenses than usual. It was decided to issue an annual report in a very much abbreviated form. Members stood in silence as a tribute of respect to the members who had passed away during the past year, including the president, Canon Aubrey Aitken, Vicar of Great Yarmouth.

Votes of thanks were passed to the Vicar for the use of the bells and the Parish Hall, and for preaching the sermon and playing the organ at the service; to the ladies who had provided such a splendid tea; and to the foreman of St. Giles' tower for silencing the bells (had he been a policeman 30 years ago, during the suffragette movement, he would probably have had to try silencing the belles as well). A few courses on handbells brought a very happy afternoon to a close.

INFORMATION ASKED FOR.

To the Editor.

Dear Sir,—The loss to the Exercise by the death of so many of its great and respected composers during recent years makes it all the poorer. Very difficult will it be to fill their places.

Some time ago Mr. J. A. Trollope gave some articles on methods and proof which made interesting reading and study, from which many of us were let into secrets we had not known before.

There are other men who appear to hold secrets, and I wonder if they too could be persuaded to reveal them to the Exercise through the medium of 'The Ringing World,' and not leave it till they have passed to the place from whence no traveller returns. Recently we have heard a bit about Round Blocks, Transpositions, etc. What does it all mean? What is its usefulness and what does it prove? Perhaps with more detailed explanation we might begin to understand and see through the darkness. The science of permutation is very fascinating and gives the life to our ringing which otherwise would become dull and moribund.

Thanks to those who from time to time give lectures in their own particular associations to add interest at the meetings.

Ashton-under-Lyne.

W. W. WOLSTENCROFT.

ESSF ASSOCIATION.

BLIND ORGANIST IS MADE RINGING MEMBER.

At the annual district meeting of the Northern Division at Bocking on Saturday, January 10th, Mr. I. T. Chapman, A.R.C.O., who can already ring Bob Minor, was elected a member. Altogether 14 members attended the meeting from the seven following towers: Boreham, Halstead, Earls Colne, Braintree, Dedham, Dunmow and Bocking. The ringers availed themselves of the handbells, and a fine course of Bob Royal was rung just before the service, which was conducted by the Dean, the Very Rev. E. Rogers. Mr. I. T. Chapman was at the organ and during the singing of the last hymn a collection was taken for the Bell Restoration Fund, and amounted to 8s. 6d.

The ringers then adjourned to the Church Hall, where tea was very kindly provided by Mr. and Mrs. R. Suckling and ably served by Mrs. Suckling.

The business meeting followed, with the District Master (Mr. H. W. Smith) in the chair.

The secretary (Miss H. G. Snowden) presented the annual report, which showed that meetings had been held at Bocking, Halstead and Braintree with an average attendance of 12. Seven handbell peals were rung, 3 of Bob Major, 2 Bob Royal and 1 Minor in four methods, the conductors being C. W. Woolley 5, O. Broyd 1. Attempts had been made throughout the year to keep the Exercise alive with handbell practices, and the practice at Bocking under the conductorship of Mr. L. W. Wiffen had yielded two recruits. The report ended with an appeal by the secretary to members to support the meetings more

Mr. Ridgwell congratulated Miss Snowden on the report. In these very difficult times he considered the report an excellent one.

Mr. L. W. Wiffen then took the chair during the election of the District Master. Mr. Wiffen paid a tribute to the way Mr. Smith had carried out the duties of Master during the past year, and his re-election was agreed to on the motion of Mr. F. Ridgwell, seconded by Mr. H. Hammond.

It was proposed by Mr. R. Suckling, seconded by Mr. F. Claydon, that Miss H. G. Snowden be re-elected secretary for the ensuing year.—Mr. W. Keeble, in a letter he had written, expressed a wish to associate his name with the re-election of the officers.

Both officers accorded their thanks to the members for their re-election.

The two committee members, Mr. F. Ridgwell and Mr. F. Claydon, were re-elected.

The election of new members then took place, and the secretary proposed Mr. I. T. Chapman, A.R.C.O., and Miss C. Chapman as ringing members. Miss Snowden said that Mr. Chapman, in spite of his tremendous handicap, had succeeded in the short space of three months in ringing Bob Minor. The company had witnessed during the afternoon the very creditable performance by both these new and very enthusiastic recruits.—The proposition was seconded by Mr. R. Suckling and carried unanimously.

Earls Colne was chosen as next place of meeting, which the secretary said would be some time in April.

The District Master then proposed a vote of thanks to the Dean for kindly conducting the service and for his address, to Mr. Chapman for playing the organ, and to Mr. and Mrs. Suckling for so kindly providing the tea.

Several methods were rung on handbells, including a course of Treble Bob Royal.

LEAVING BELLS UP.

A DANGEROUS CUSTOM.

To the Editor.

Dear Sir,—A few weeks ago one of your correspondents asked the question whether it is right to leave bells up. He was thinking of damage that might happen to the bells themselves, and he got a reply from Mr. John H. B. Hesse dealing fully with that point.

But I have been wondering why no one has pointed out the danger that might happen to any person who might go into the bell chamber whether on business or curiosity, who did not understand how and why bells are up. Such a person might easily push off a bell that set lightly or even by leaning heavily on it break a defective stay.

I remember some years ago going into a tower where one or two bells were up. There were workmen just beginning to put some wire netting over one of the windows, in front of which was one of these raised bells. They were climbing about it and about to put up their ladders on the frame. I asked them if they thought it safe, and they seemed surprised when I told them that a very little would push the bell off, and if one of them slipped into the pit when it did so it would be very nasty for him.

They had only just begun their work, and, of course, I took the liberty of dropping the bell, but there might have been a nasty accident.

Bells should never be left up if there is any chance that strangers may get among them. But did I not read somewhere in 'The Ringing World' that the bells of one London church were left up during the four years of the last war?

A VILLAGE RINGER

THE HERTFORDSHIRE RESOLUTIONS.

THE COUNCIL'S ACTIVITIES.

To the Editor.

Sir,—Apropos the letter from 'A Member' in your current issue, this effusion, although written by an anonymous writer, needs, I think, a reply.

His remarks, however, in the second and third paragraphs are very amusing and, I am sure, are certain to be of interest, inasmuch that we are assured that at the first meeting of the Council after the war the present members of the various committees will then offer to the Council a report. One thing, however, your correspondent has forgotten, and that is that this year all the members need re-electing.

We all know in this district that the Analysis Committee will be all right in the very capable hands of Mrs. Fletcher, that the Methods Committee meet every Sunday, and we further know that several committees have not met since they were appointed.

The whole thing is this. In June, 1940, the Ringing Exercise received the greatest blow to its activities in the whole of its history, and in the opinion of this district the Standing Committee should have met and discussed the matter in a broad light.

We know and appreciate the great services rendered to the Exercise by the secretary of the Council, but I must assure your readers that Mr. Fletcher is not the Central Council.

As the mover of the resolution at Bushey last November, I would like to inform your readers that we do not expect the Council to meet in session, but we do expect a little more life from the Standing Committee.

I am fully aware that several of our friends will shout out about being on war work, and I can assure these people at once that the great majority of the people who meet at Bushey on the last Saturday of each month are also on war work and also working long hours. For the benefit of 'A Member' these meetings start at 3 p.m. and finish at 11 p.m., and he will be made very welcome if he cares to come along.

Now I come to his last paragraph. This calls for drastic action. Have we in this district ever said or hinted that we could run the Central Council or 'The Ringing World' better than the people who are at the moment in charge of the foregoing two affairs? No, but we assert the right to criticise the actions of both of them at any time, and further that any member of the said Central Council who replies under the guise of a non-de-plume is not fit to be a member of the Central Council.

Regarding the remarks about Dr. Slack's peal, I must inform him at once that we in this district have already rung the peal, but we are wanting to give him the chance to ring and also to call the peal.

There is just one more point. My resolution with regard to the Central Council is only a matter for the Hertford County Association, and while welcoming any critic, I resent a puerile attempt at cheap wit and sarcasm by anyone.

EDWIN JENNINGS.

Bushey.

SOMEBODY MUST ACT.

Dear Sir,—In reply to 'A Member's' letter, I would like to point out that it must be obvious to even him that the future of the Exercise has got to be planned by somebody, and the most able body to do that should be the Central Council. However, a solution to the problem might be found in the suggestion of a Ringers' Council. That remains to be seen.

The remarks passed by 'A Member' in the last part of his letter show, to my mind, very bad taste. Nevertheless, I can assure him that the capabilities of the Bushey people, being far in excess of his, could manage the whole bag of tricks, as he suggests.

Finally, it is my opinion that if 'A Member' is not good enough to sign his name, he is not good enough to be a member at all.

RUSSELL G. SPEARS.

7, Glenwood Grove, N.W.9.

FATAL BELFRY ACCIDENT.

AUSTRALIAN RINGER'S DEATH.

During the ringing at St. Philip's Church, Church Hill, Sydney, Australia, on June 11th, Roy Herbert Henry Livett received injuries from which he died.

Evidence was given in the Coroner's Court that three men assisting Livett to ring the bells saw him suddenly drawn to the belfry ceiling on the bell rope. He struck the ceiling, and then fell 20 feet to the floor. One of his wrists and one of his feet were fractured.

The deceased's father said that the men had gone to St. Philip's Church to practise bellringing. The accident occurred after three rounds on the bells had been rung.

'My son was dazed after the fall,' said Livett. 'Later, he said to me: "When it came to my turn on the fourth round I felt dizzy, and I don't remember anything after that."'

Witness added that his son was taken to Sydney Hospital, where he received treatment and was allowed to go home. On the following day he was advised to go back to the hospital, but he did not do so. He developed pneumonia and pleurisy, and died on July 23rd.

The Acting City Coroner recorded a finding of accidental death.

GRANDSIRE CATERS.

THE HISTORY OF THE METHOD.

BY EDGAR C. SHEPHERD.

(Continued from page 34.)

In 1883 four members of the Birmingham Amalgamated Society rang 10,176 Grandsire Caters in hand. According to Tom Miller's peal book it was 'rung in first class style.' Apparently these lively young men were not regarded too favourably by the St. Martin's Society. Mr. Miller has related how Henry Johnson maintained that John Carter would never compose and ring 10,000 Grandsire Major. Carter took up the challenge, and composed and conducted the peal. It is significant that, of the witnesses, three were members of the St. Martin's Society and five were of the Amalgamated Society.

In December of the same year the Amalgamated Society rang on handbells 6,137 Grandsire Caters, and this remained the longest length of Grandsire Caters until the 8,099 at New Cross in 1912. The figures of the 6,137 may be found in the C.C. Collection, No. 63.

In 1888 the Oxford Diocesan Guild rang 13,247 Grandsire Caters at Appleton, and so beat the record established at Painswick 71 years before. The peal was rung in 8 hrs. 5 mins., and the band stood as follows: E. Holifield treble, C. Hounslow 2, H. Baker 3, W. Bennett 4, Rev. F. E. Robinson 5, F. White 6, J. Avery 7, G. Holifield 8, J. W. Washbrook 9, F. S. White tenor. Composed and conducted by J. W. Washbrook.

The Rev. F. E. Robinson, in his book, 'Among the Bells,' speaks of the perfection of the ringing, no word except 'bob' being spoken for hours at a stretch.

The figures are given on pages 75 and 76 of Mr. Robinson's book, where they are rather carelessly printed. The length is given there as 13,265, and there are other errors. The composition, after the first four courses, is in five parts, each part having one bell behind the 9th. It is in long courses, with calls on 78 or 89 throughout.

In the following year the Appleton performance was superseded at Cheltenham by a mixed band drawn from Birmingham, Sheffield and the local town. The peal board reads: 'On Easter Monday, April 22nd, 1889, Ten Members of the above Association (i.e. the Gloucester and Bristol Association) rang in this Tower a true peal of Grandsire Caters 15,227 changes in 9 hours and 43 minutes. This peal supersedes all previous records in any method on Ten Bells.'

Treble, F. Musty, Cheltenham; 2nd, G. H. Phillpott, Esq., Cheltenham; 3rd, S. Reeves, Birmingham; 4th, H. Roberts, Cheltenham; 5th, F. E. Ward, Esq., Cheltenham; 6th, C. H. Hattersley, Sheffield; 7th, J. Plant, Birmingham; 8th, W. T. Pates, Cheltenham; 9th, T. Reynolds, Birmingham; Tenor, A. W. Humphris, Cheltenham. Composed by Mr. Henry Johnson, of Birmingham, and conducted by W. T. Pates. Mr. J. Belcher, Umpire.

When Mr. William Dyer very kindly sent this information and the figures in April, 1941, the only surviving member of the band was Mr. Humphris, who was then still an active service ringer. The conductor, Mr. W. T. Pates, had never called a bob or single in Grandsire before starting for the peal!

The composition is in four parts. The first part has 789 in the Plain Course position and is a mixture of long and short courses. The second part turns the bells into

the Tittums and thenceforward all courses are called 2, 3, or 1, 2, 3. This part is three times repeated, producing 42563, from which the bells are brought round in the usual way. There are only two Singles (in Parts 2 and 4), and these splice in a large round block of Tittum rows.

On Jan. 8th, 1900, Mr. G. E. Symonds called 5,003 Grandsire Caters on handbells for the College Youths, and in 1902 the 'heaviest' peal in the method was rung at Exeter (tenor 72 cwt.).

On July 7th, 1912, the Kent Association set up a handbell record that has not yet been broken. Five members rang John Nelms' 8,099 Grandsire Caters at New Cross, London, in 4 hours, 17 minutes. The ringers were: Miss Elsie Bennett 1-2, William Shepherd 3-4, Arthur Shepherd 5-6, Frank I. Hairs 7-8, Frank Bennett 9-10. Conducted by William Shepherd. The figures of the peal are given in No. 21, C.C. Collection. The peal was the longest length by all except the brothers Shepherd, who, it will be recollected, were associated with Alfred H. Pulling, Frank Blondell and James Hunt in the 19,738 Stedman Caters on handbells in the August of the same year.

On May 2nd, 1914, ten veteran ringers met at Aston Parish Church, Birmingham, and rang 5,003 Grandsire Caters. They were: John Carter, Birmingham; Reuben Hall, West Bromwich; John Smith, Tipton; John Bradney, Wolverhampton; James George, Rugby; James Jones, Birmingham; Samuel Spittle, Dudley; William R. Small, Tipton; Thomas Horton, West Bromwich; John Sanders, Birmingham.

Their total years were 653 years 10 months.

This survey of the history of the method may fittingly conclude with an account of the record length rung in 1932. 'Oxford Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers. Appleton, Berks. On December 27th, 1932, in 9 hrs. and 20 minutes, at the Church of St. Lawrence. A peal of Grandsire Caters, 16,271 changes, tenor 14 cwt. 2 qrs. 19 lbs. Cuthbert G. White Treble, William Simmonds 2, Frank Taylor 3, Richard A. Post 4, Walter F. Judge 5, R. Thomas Newman 6, F. Donald Boreham 7, George Holifield 8, Richard White 9, Frederick White Tenor. Composed by G. Holifield, sen. Conducted by G. Holifield, jun.

A NATIONAL ASSOCIATION.

WHAT IS THE GOOD OF IT?

To the Editor.

Sir,—Surely Mr. Harris realises that even we older ones were young once, and my experience of over thirty years mixing with boys on the unofficial side has taught me that times may change, but human nature remains the same.

What is behind the idea of a National Association? Let us be candid. Finance. I am willing to admit when we were young no one looked with relish on paying a subscription to an association after the expense of travelling miles. But as we get about we realise that if we are granted permission to attempt a peal that is a privilege. Let no one think they have a right: they have not. Even in our own towers it is a favour from the rector or vicar. This is a free country, there is no compulsion to join, and if anyone considers he cannot support the local association as a slight return for the privilege then let him stay away.

The main thing, in my view, against the suggestion is that our Exercise is not a sport, but a church organisation. The whole trend now is to split up these big dioceses into smaller ones for workable effort. What would our own Guildford diocesan authorities say if it was suggested they should close down and join a national guild? I certainly cannot see the county associations jumping at the idea. Just fancy all the counties in the Midlands breaking up to join one big association. If they did, then they would still have to split up into districts, and what would be the gain?

As Mr. Hughes asked this week, will it improve ringing? No, that is the one view we want to keep in mind with new suggestions.

The Grammar School, Guildford.

A. H. PULLING.

NOTICES

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

NOTICES must be received NOT LATER THAN MONDAY.

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

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

SHROPSHIRE ASSOCIATION. — Annual meeting, St. Chad's, Shrewsbury, Jan. 24th. Handbells, service and business meeting.—W. A. Farmer, Hon. Sec.

MIDLAND COUNTIES ASSOCIATION.—Leicester District.—The annual meeting will be held at Leicester on Jan. 24th. Ringing (silent) from 3 p.m. till 5 p.m. at St. John's. Tea at the Cathedral Church House 5.30 p.m. at about 1s. 9d. each, followed by a meeting. Afterwards there will be a social evening at the Globe Hotel, near the Cathedral.—H. W. Perkins, Hon. Dis. Sec., 53, Landseer Road, Leicester.

MIDLAND COUNTIES ASSOCIATION. — Derby District.—The annual meeting will be held at St. Peter's Parochial Hall, Derby, on Saturday, Jan. 24th. Handbells available 3 p.m. Business meeting for election of officers 4 p.m. Will all towers please send representatives?—Wm. Lancaster, Hon. Sec., 83, Albert Road, Chaddesden, Derby.

LINCOLN DIOCESAN GUILD.—Northern Branch, Gainsborough District. — The annual meeting will be held on Saturday, Jan. 24th, in All Saints' Ringing Chamber, Gainsborough. Service 5.30 p.m. Business meeting 6 p.m. Ringing up to 9 p.m. on handbells and 6 clapperless tower bells.—Geo. L. A. Lunn, Hon. Sec., 248, Lea Road, Gainsborough.

ANCIENT SOCIETY OF COLLEGE YOUTHS.—The next meeting will be held on Saturday, January 31st, 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.

ESSEX ASSOCIATION.—South-Eastern District.—The district annual general meeting will be held at Chelmsford Cathedral on Saturday, Jan. 31st. Eight silent bells available. Business meeting in the belfry at 4.15. Service at 4.30. It is regretted that arrangements for tea cannot be made, but efforts are being made to engage a room for the evening for a social chat and handbell ringing at which all ringers and their friends are welcome.—H. W. Shadrack, Hon. Dis. Sec., 48, Arbour Lane, Chelmsford.

KENT COUNTY ASSOCIATION.—Lewisham District. — The quarterly meeting will be held at Holy Trinity, Dartford, on Saturday, Jan. 31st. Tower open for handbell ringing at 3 p.m. Tea, at the kind invitation of the local ringers, at 4.45 p.m. Business meeting to follow. Members requiring tea must notify Mr. R. A. Jenkins, Cosette, 76, Brent Lane, Dartford, not later than Tuesday, Jan. 27th. Subscriptions are now due and should be paid at this meeting. — A. G. Hill, Hon. Dis. Sec., temporary address: 53, Hengist Road, Erith, Kent.

PETERBOROUGH DIOCESAN GUILD.—Wellingborough District.—The branch annual meeting will be held at Irthlingborough on Saturday, Jan. 31st. Service at 4.30, followed by tea in Co-operative Hall, Queen Street. Please come for 'old times sake,' but let me know early and bring your sugar. Handbells available.—A. Bigley, Hon. Branch Sec., 30, Allen Road, Irthlingborough.

HERTFORD COUNTY ASSOCIATION.—Meeting at the Studios, Falconer Road, Bushey, Saturday, Jan. 31st. Handbells from 3 p.m. Tea and meeting 5 p.m. All welcome. — H. G. Cashmore, 24, Muriel Avenue, Watford.

YORKSHIRE ASSOCIATION.—The annual general meeting of the Association will be held at the Leeds and County Conservative Club, South Parade, Leeds, on Saturday, Jan. 31st, at 3 p.m. prompt. Unfortunately, it has not been found possible to make arrangements for tea, but an announcement regarding this matter will be made at the meeting. A social evening will take place on the same premises at 6.30 p.m., for which the small charge of 1s. per head will be made to cover expenses. All members are cordially invited. Subscriptions are now due and reports will be available at this meeting.—Leslie W. G. Morris, Hon. Gen. Sec., 65, Lilycroft Road, Heaton, Bradford.

ESSEX ASSOCIATION.—South-Western District.—The annual district meeting will be held at Romford on Saturday, Jan. 31st. Service at 4 p.m. Business meeting to follow. Handbells available. All ringers welcome. — J. H. Champion, Hon. Sec., 14, Wellesley Road, Wanstead, E.11.

SALISBURY DIOCESAN GUILD. — Dorchester Branch.—The annual meeting will be held at St. Peter's, Dorchester, on Saturday, Jan. 31st. Handbells in the church from 2.30 p.m. (It is hoped the silent apparatus will also be ready.) Service at 4, followed by tea and business meeting at Major's Cafe—opposite the church. Kindly notify for tea by Tuesday, 27th inst.—C. H. Jennings, Hon. Sec., 59, Portland Road, Wyke Regis, Weymouth.

PETERBOROUGH DIOCESAN GUILD.—Daventry Branch.—The annual meeting will be held at Staverton on Saturday, Jan. 31st. Silent and handbell ringing. Kindly notify me for tea and bring your own sugar.—W. C. Moore, 5, William's Terrace, Daventry, Northants.

EAST GRINSTEAD AND DISTRICT GUILD. — A meeting will be held at Wadhurst on Saturday, Feb. 7th. Handbells and six silent tower bells. Tea for those who notify by Feb. 4th.—C. A. Bassett, Hon. Sec., 3, Pen-drill Place, Wadhurst, Tunbridge Wells.

DEATHS.

CLARKE. — At St. Peter's Hospital, Bedford, on Friday, Jan. 9th, 1942, Charles William Clarke ('Charlie'). Interred at Oundle, Northants, Jan. 12th.

POTHECARY.—On Tuesday, Jan. 13th, 1942, after prolonged suffering, May Elizabeth, wife of C. Potecary, 73, Fernlea Road, Mitcham, Surrey.

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