

Essay for the Friends No. 18

PUBLICATIONS OF THE CCCBR PRIOR TO WW I

The Formation of the Central Council

The formation of the Central Council in 1890 was a result of the vision and drive of Arthur Heywood (later Sir Arthur). There had been an earlier proposal to form a National Association of Ringers, and a committee formed to investigate this published a draft scheme in *Bell News* in October 1884. The discussion rumbled on in a desultory way until the end of the next year, but it was clear that there was little support, and the matter was dropped.

Heywood introduced his proposals in a more roundabout way, using a dinner in Birmingham on 28 February 1889, organised by Heywood to celebrate the 80th birthday of Henry Johnson, as a platform to launch his ideas. Among those invited were the chief ringing officers of the County of Diocesan Associations, or, if they could not attend, a delegate in their place. Heywood took the chair at the dinner, and when he came to respond to the final toast of the evening, that of 'The Health of the Chairman', he took the opportunity to put five resolutions to the company. The first of these stated:

'That this meeting, whilst failing to see the advantages of a National Ringers' Association, is of opinion that great benefit would accrue to the Exercise if a committee, consisting of one or more selected members from each association, could meet from time to time to consider and decide such ringing matters as are a cause of perplexity.'

This was agreed to - no doubt helped by the relaxed atmosphere after a good dinner—as were four supplementary resolutions. Heywood placed

a letter in *Bell News* on 20 April 1889, asking ringing associations so discuss the matter and let him know the result of voting, and it was in this letter that the term 'Central Council' was first used. The positive response led to the formation of a Provisional Committee which met on 8 April 1890 when draft scheme was circulated, discussed, and amended. Among the objectives of the proposed Council were that it would 'Encourage and assist the development of the Art, in its scientific, practical and historical branches.'

The amended rules were adopted at the first meeting of the Central Council, held on Easter Tuesday 1891, and determined how the new body operated, and continues to operate to this day.

Acts and Decisions

In a sense, the Central Council published material before it came into existence, as the draft constitution and rules for guidance were printed and presented to the meeting of the Provisional Committee, which were later adopted by the infant body. Another of the objects was that it should 'Arbitrate—so far as may be deemed advisable—in such matters of dispute or perplexity as shall be submitted to its judgements.' With this in mind, the Central Council made decisions on contentious matters which it hoped would be binding on its various constituent bodies. These were regularly published in pamphlet form, the first being the Acts and Decisions of the years 1891-93, the first Council, for the three-year term was part of the constitution. Those for the next triennium (1894-1896) followed. Whether any more were published before a summary of acts and decisions for 1891-1893 were published in 1895 I am unable to say. Nor can I say if any more were published before those for the sixth council (1906-08), which were succeeded by those for the seventh and eighth councils, taking these acts and decisions up to 1914, our

watershed. Meanwhile, the rules of the Council were published in again in 1909.

Belfry Repairs

One of the first decisions of the new body was to set up a committee to prepare a pamphlet on the 'Preservation and Repair of Bells, Frames and Fittings and other kindred matters', as it became called, which was to be promoted through the co-operation of the various societies. This committee presented its report to the Central Council at the meeting held in London on 31 March 1892, where it was adopted and the meeting decided that 10,000 of these were to be printed. However, when the Decisions and Acts of the first triennium were printed (undated but likely to be soon after the end of the triennium in 1893) it was found necessary to add the following rider to the relevant decision:

'N.B.—This Pamphlet containing the above being out of print cannot now be embodied with this statement'

It may well be that this was subsequently reprinted, but, if so, there are no copies in the Central Council Library dated later than 1892, and a second, revised, edition was not published until 1930. The delay was probably caused by the publication in 1914 of Heywood's book *Bell Towers and Bell Hanging*, which covered in rather more detail some of the matters discussed in the Central Council booklet. While Heywood was the actual publisher, the title page stated that it was 'Published with the sanction of the Central Council of Ringers.' In view of the fact that Heywood was the somewhat autocratic president of the Central Council, this sanction was really rather unlikely to have been withheld! The second edition of the Central Council booklet was followed by a number of others, before the modern hardback book was produced, but all of these, which are listed in

the Library Catalogue (2004), are too late for discussion in this essay.

The Catalogue of Peals

On the change ringing front, the Central Council formed a committee to consider a scheme for the formation of a catalogue of peals, and the report was printed in 1893. As a result to committee was reappointed and revamped its report, published in 1894, which included recommendations about the nature of calls, and included a number of peals, starting with a selection of peals of Grandsire Triples, and leading up to nine peals of Treble Bob Maximus. It is perhaps difficult to see how the latter were helpful to less experienced bands, but the composer, N.J. Pitstow, was one of the committee and no doubt saw it as a good opportunity to get some compositions in print, so that the collection included a total of 95 by him! An appendix to this report was published the following year.

Section I of the full catalogue was issued in 1903, and this concentrated on odd-bell treble dominated methods, with the bulk of the material being compositions for Grandsire Triples, Caters and Cinques (96 pages out of 144), and the remainder to Union Triples, Oxford and Double Court Triples, and Court Bob Triples. Section II followed in 1904, the pagination running on from Section I (145 - 268). This section was the first part of peals of what was called Group II, even-bell methods with a plain hunting treble, and inevitably it concentrated on Plain Bob, with a variety of peals from Major up to Maximus, but at the end there were 16 pages of compositions of Double Oxford Court Bob Major. The second instalment of peals for methods in Group II was issued as Part III in .1908, again continuing the pagination (269-380), and this dealt solely with peals of Double Court Bob Major. Trollope later damningly wrote of this section that 'the peals were badly collected, badly selected, badly proved,

arranged badly and badly printed.’ Because of shortcomings in this and the earlier sections, corrigenda leaflets had to be printed, which rather cause doubt about the truth of other compositions in the collections, and not surprisingly sales were low. At the time a natural follow-on would have been a book of compositions of treble bob, to supersede the Snowden work, and such a book was prepared for publication by Trollope, but such was the lack of support for these collections that it was never published, and no more collections were produced until 1950.

The Glossary

At the time that the Central Council was set up, Heywood considered that the technical terms then in use were not clearly defined. Accordingly, a committee was set up in 1895 and a printed preliminary report was issued the following year which proposed a few alterations in terminology, some of which have since been adopted by ringers, others have not. The amended report was accepted in 1896. Work on a Glossary, the main object of the committee’s work, took some while, and although it was ready for publication in 1899, it was not printed until 1901. Although it was intended that 6,000 should be printed, it is thought that 3,000 was actually produced, and many of the Guilds and Associations ordered stock to sell to their members. This encouraged the Central Council, which, in 1903, decided to reprint the Glossary, with a print run of 2,000. This appeared in 1904 but the reprint was a bad move, as most of the guilds and associations still had a large amount of stock on their hands, and it proved difficult to shift, so much so, that in 1937 the remaining stock (932 copies) was offered free to guilds and associations provided they paid for postage or carriage. It is fair to say that the appendix to the Glossary, in which there was an attempt to classify methods, attracted a lot of criticism, and when the remaining stock was disposed of, the appendix was stamped ‘cancelled’.

Legitimate Methods

One contentious issue that the Central Council has always found difficult was the acceptability of methods, and strong views were—and still are—expressed. At the 1899 Central Council meeting, a committee was appointed to look at the whole question of what was a legitimate method. The leading member of the committee was the Rev. H. Law James, a person of very forthright and dogmatic views. Eventually, in 1907, what was called a collection of legitimate methods was published in 1907, almost entirely the work of James, who had not even sent proof copies to the other members of the committee. The collection covered Doubles, Minor and Triples, and its publication caused a wider variety of Minor methods to be rung. It was not until 1931 that a second edition was published, which covered Doubles and Minor only.

The Model Code

One other publication that came out in 1902 was *A Model Code of Rules suitable for a Company of Ringers*. A committee to look at this matter was set up in 1901, and by 1902 a draft set of rules was published in *Bell News*. Accepted as they stood by the Central Council, they were published later in the year, and did not cause the controversy that other publications of the Central Council did. Evidently successful, the second edition did not come out until 1929.

Appointment of the First Librarian

In consequence of the increasing number of publications, in 1913 the Rev. C.W.O. Jenkyn was appointed to deal with sales of these, which previously these had only been available from the Council's publishers, who were taking too large a commission. Thus the librarian did not have a library to look after, and the Central Council Library was not set up until 1920. After Sir

Arthur Heywood died in 1916 he left his ringing books to the Cambridge University Guild to augment the library, and in 1920 the Guild generously passed on the surplus to the Central Council, which formed the nucleus of the present library. Jenkyn volunteered to house the library in his own home, where it remained until his death in 1933.

Holdings of the Central Council Library.

The CC Library holds copies of all publications mentioned in the text. Should any Friend know of any other items that are not listed, then I would be very pleased to hear of them.

Acknowledgments

The history of the Central Council is well covered in *The Central Council of Church Bell Ringers 1891-1991. A Centenary History.* (1993), the work of Bill Cook, my predecessor as Librarian, and I acknowledge my debt to this publication.

Title	Publisher	Place	Date	Edition	No of pages	Comment
Draft Scheme for the Constitution and Procedure of the CCCBR	CCCBR		1890		4	Presented at the Inaugural Meeting in 1890
Statement of Decisions and Acts of the CCCBR 1891-3	CCCBR		1895		4	
Statement of Decisions and Acts of the CCCBR 1894-6	CCCBR		1895		4	
Statement of Decisions and Acts of the CCCBR 1891-1903	CCCBR	London	1904	First	29	
Statement of Decisions and Acts of the CCCBR 1891-1903	CCCBR	London	1904		29	
Acts and Decisions of the Sixth Council, 1906, 1907,1908	CCCBR	London	n.d.		4	
Rules of the Council, 1909	CCCBR	London	n.d.		4	
Acts and Decisions of the 7th Council in Session 1909, 1910, 1911	CCCBR		n.d.		4	
Acts and Decisions of the 8th Council in Session 1912, 1913, 1914	CCCBR		n.d.		4	
Report of the Committee appointed in 1891 on The Preservation and Repair of Bells, Frames and Fittings.	CCCBR	London	1892		31	
Report of the Committee appointed to consider a scheme for the formation of a Catalogue of Peals	<i>Bell News Office</i>	Walthamstow	1893		10 + 1	
Report of the Committee appointed to consider a scheme for the formation of a Catalogue of Peals	<i>Bell News Office</i>	Walthamstow	1894		35	
Appendix to Report of Committee on Catalogue of Peals			1895		98	Pages 39 - 136
Collection of Peals Section I (Triples, Grandsire Caters and Cinques)	Bemrose and Sons	London	1903		144	
Collection of Peals Section II (Plain Bob and Double Oxford Bob)	Bemrose etc.	London	1904		124	Pages 145 - 268
Collection of Peals Section III (Double Norwich)	Bemrose etc.	London	1908		112	Pages 269 - 380
Corrigenda Leaflets for Collection of Peals Sections I (1903), II (1904) and 111 (1908)	CCCBR		1925		7 sheets A4	Photocopies
Preliminary Report of the Committee on Technical Terms.	CCCBR	London, Bell News Office.	(1895)		8	
A Glossary of Technical Terms Employed in connection with Church Bells.. .and Change-Ringing	CCCBR		1901		83	
A Glossary of Technical Terms Employed in connection with Church Bells...and Change-Ringing	CCCBR		1901	1904 reprint	82	
Collection of Legitimate Methods Sections I (Doubles, Minor, Triples)	CCCBR	London	1907	(First)	45	
A Model Code of Rules suitable for a Company of Ringers.	CCCBR	London	1902	(First)	8	

Statement of Decisions and Acts of
CENTRAL COUNCIL OF
CHURCH BELL RINGERS.

1891-3.

1. The preparation by a Committee and the adoption of a body of advice, suggestions, and instructions on (1) the preservation of bells, frames, and fittings; (2) the best means of moderating the sound of noisy bells both outside the tower, and in the ringing chamber; (3) the furnishing and ventilation (without draught) of ringing chambers; (4) the relations and responsibilities towards each other of Church Authorities and Church bellringers; with (5) a schedule of approximate prices of bells and their fittings.

Also the promulgation of the above, with the sanction and authority of the Council, through the co-operation of the various Societies, to the extent of 10,000 copies.

N.B.—The Pamphlet containing the above being out of print cannot now be embodied with this statement.

2. The appointment of a Committee to negotiate with Church Congress authorities in order to secure recognition of the office and work of Church Bellringers at Congress Meetings.
3. The definition of what constitutes a legitimate peal on any number of bells from five to twelve inclusive, as follows:—

On five bells, without the addition of a covering bell, not less than 5040 changes rung without interval in true six-scores, and in not less than three methods.

On six bells, not less than 5040 changes, rung without interval in true 720s, of which no two in the same method shall be called alike.

**The first Decisions and Acts of the Central Council
(continued on next page)**

On seven bells, with or without the addition of a covering bell, 5040 true changes, rung without interval in any one method. Nevertheless, a performance on seven bells without the addition of a covering bell is to be discountenanced.

On eight, ten, and twelve bells not less than 5000 true changes, rung without interval in any one method.

On nine and eleven bells, in each case with the addition of a covering bell, not less than 5000 true changes, rung without interval in any one method.

5. Preparation made for the publication of a catalogue of books relating to bells and ringing.
6. The settlement by a Committee and the adoption of definite principles fixing the calls which are proper to be used in each method of change-ringing ; and the collection, classification, and issue, from time to time, by the same Committee, of compositions of 5000 changes and upwards in all methods for seven or more bells.
7. The desirability affirmed of recording, with the performance of a peal, the composition also of the peal performed ; or of giving a reference to the previous publication thereof.
8. The desirability affirmed of recording the performance of peals under the name of one Society only.
9. A Committee appointed to negotiate with Railway Companies, with a view to obtaining reduced fares for Ringers attending Society meetings, or other ringing celebrations.

On behalf of the Standing Committee,

A. P. HEYWOOD, *President.*

H. EARLE BULWER, *Hon. Secretary.*

Report of the Committee

APPOINTED BY THE

CENTRAL COUNCIL

OF

CHURCH BELL RINGERS,

AT THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD

IN LONDON, MARCH 31ST, 1891,

To draw up a body of advice, suggestions, and instructions,

ON

THE PRESERVATION & REPAIR OF
BELLS, FRAMES, & FITTINGS,

AND OTHER KINDRED MATTERS,

*Presented to, and adopted by the Council at the Meeting held in
Birmingham, on the 19th of April, 1892, and*

Issued with the sanction and authority of the Council.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR THE CENTRAL COUNCIL OF CHURCH BELL RINGERS, AT THE
OFFICE OF "THE BELL NEWS," WALTHAMSTOW.

MDCCXCII.

TO THE
CENTRAL COUNCIL
OF
Church Bell Ringers.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE

*Appointed to consider a Scheme for the formation of a
Catalogue of Peals.*

Members of the Committee :

REV. CHARLES D. P. DAVIES, *Sussex County Association.*
MR. C. H. HATTERSLEY, *Yorkshire Association.*
MR. J. W. WASHBROOK, *Oxford Diocesan Guild.*

LONDON :

PRINTED AT "THE BELL NEWS AND RINGERS' RECORD" OFFICE,
WALTHAMSTOW.

1893.

CENTRAL COUNCIL OF

THE CHURCH BELL RINGING COUNCIL
OF CHURCH BELL RINGERS.

Collection of
Legitimate Methods,

*Edited and issued according to the instructions and under
the authority of the Council by a Committee consisting of*

- MR. JOHN CARTER, Member of the St. Martin's Guild, Birmingham.
MR. HENRY DAINS, Member of the Society of Royal Cumberland
Youths.
THE REV. E. BANKES JAMES, Member of the Gloucester and Bristol
Diocesan Association.
THE REV. H. LAW JAMES, Master of the Lincoln Diocesan Guild.
MR. J. A. TROLLOPE, Member of the Norwich Diocesan Association.
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SECTION I.

All Legitimate Methods of Doubles.

*All Legitimate Minor Methods, except such as
have 5th place without the treble in 6ths.*

All Legitimate Methods of Triples.

PRICE (Post-free)

NINEPENCE.

LONDON:

PRINTED, PUBLISHED, AND SOLD FOR THE COUNCIL BY
BEMROSE & SONS LIMITED, 4, SNOW HILL, E.C.

1907.

Printed by W. & J. G. & Co.

A

MODEL CODE OF RULES

SUITABLE FOR A

COMPANY OF RINGERS.

ISSUED BY THE

CENTRAL COUNCIL OF CHURCH BELL RINGERS,

1902.

PRICE 3d., POST FREE.

Printed for the Central Council and Published by
BEMROSE & SONS, LIMITED,
4, SNOW HILL, LONDON; DERBY, AND WATFORD.