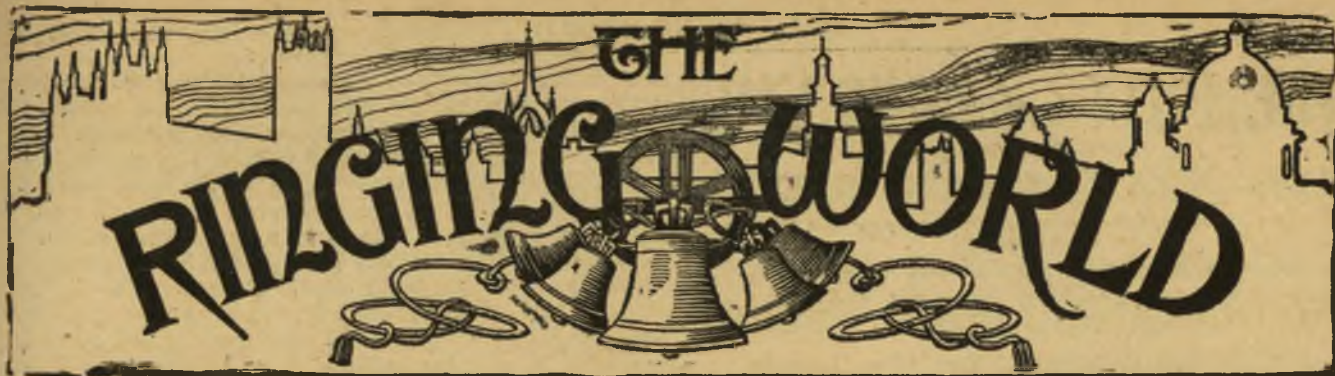




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FRIDAY, JUNE 20th, 1941.

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A YEAR OF THE BAN.

It is just a year since the ban on the ringing of church bells was imposed by the Ministry of Home Security, in order that the use of the bells might be kept exclusively to give warning of air invasion. At the time the regulation was made the attempted invasion of our shores, either from the sea or air or both, seemed to be imminent; the enemy, however, has not yet found it convenient to try conclusions in what would probably prove his final death struggle, but the possibility still hangs over this land, and until the threat disappears the bells for all ordinary purposes must remain silent.

Many others, besides ringers, disliked the ban; they missed the cheering sounds of the bells on Sundays particularly, and they found that the order not only robbed them of a familiar background of generations of parochial life, but seemed unnecessary in the extent of its restrictiveness. No representations, however, even from the highest quarters, have succeeded in getting the ban eased by one iota and it can only be concluded that the Government still believe that the sounding of the church bells will be the most effective call to arms in the case of air borne invasion. No one who knows anything about bells and the ringing of them has this illusion, but it seems fairly obvious that, as long as there is even the remotest possibility of enemy troops landing from the air, so long will the ban remain.

The most remarkable thing about it is still the fact that if and when they hear church bells sounded, the public have no notion what they are to do. We have been told in a recent leaflet recently distributed to every household that when church bells are rung 'it is a warning to the local garrison that troops have been seen landing from the air in the neighbourhood of the church in question,' and that the ringing of church bells in one place will not be taken up in neighbouring churches. After the recent experiences in Crete the futility of this proceeding, which, be it remembered, may be carried out only 'in accordance with directions given by a commissioned officer of His Majesty's forces or the chief officer of police for the area,' must be blatantly apparent to all but those obsessed with the idea that in these days church bells chimed can be heard far and wide over the countryside, even assuming that the chiming can be done in time to be of the least use to 'the local garrison.'

But why labour the point? As ringers we know how ineffective this alarm will be, both through the delay that must in most cases inevitably happen in sounding it and from the limitation of the area in which it will be audible. All the arguments, which we have from

(Continued on page 290.)

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borough, Melbourne (Australia), Rochester, Dublin, St. Patrick's,
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time to time put forward to show how little worth while
is this complete ban on bells for the purpose visualised
by the makers of the order, remain unchallenged.

What of ringing under the ban? It has received, as
was obvious from the outset must be the case, a tragic
setback. Associations, most of them, have made heroic
efforts to keep their organisation intact, but most of
them have suffered badly. It is not only the demands
of the Services that have depleted their ranks—in the
majority of cases these ringers have been kept upon the
roll—but they have lost heavily by the slipping away of
men who, having no bells to ring, have had their in-
terest sapped both in ringing and in the associations.
Splendid work has been put in by many officials in their
endeavours to keep the members together by organising
periodical meetings. These gatherings have not, of
course, attracted as many ringers as in pre-ban days,
but, where they have been held, they have been, we
think, fully justified; and if they are continued they will
help in the recovery after the war. The longer the ban
lasts the more difficult it will be, but those who are
looking to the future realise that unless some kind of
touch is kept with the towers and the ringers who re-
main, reorganisation later is going to be a long and
formidable business.

Apart from the task which lies before association
officials, however, there is a personal responsibility rest-
ing on all the members. They should feel it a matter of
duty and honour to continue their support of the asso-
ciation to which they are attached. Lack of means in
these days, when there is work for everyone, cannot be
advanced as a reason for backsliding, as it was in the
days of depression. More probably, the large number
of unpaid subscriptions which every association is now
deploring is due to want of thought, and we would urge
all those who wish our art well and who have taken an
interest in ringing in the past to rally in these most
difficult days to the support of their associations, first
by maintaining their subscriptions and secondly by at-
tending, even at some inconvenience, the meetings which
are arranged. At present, it would seem that it is more
than ever the 'stalwarts' who are carrying the load.
To-day we are all trying to share one another's burdens,
let all ringers show their loyalty to their art by helping
to lighten the burden of those who are striving so
valiantly to carry on the ringing associations, so that
the ban will, at least, not be allowed to break down en-
tirely the machinery of the Exercise.

HANDBELL PEALS.

ENFIELD, MIDDLESEX.

THE MIDDLESEX COUNTY ASSOCIATION AND LONDON
DIOCESAN GUILD.

On Monday, June 9, 1941, in Two Hours and Thirty-Five Minutes,
At 24, SUFFOLK ROAD,

A PEAL OF BOB MAJOR, 5056 CHANGES;

MRS. J. THOMAS	1-2	ISAAC J. ATTWATER	5-6
JOHN THOMAS	3-4	HAROLD HOWSON	7-8

Composed by F. BENNETT.

Conducted by JOHN THOMAS.

CHELTENHAM, GLOUCESTERSHIRE.

THE GLOUCESTER AND BRISTOL DIOCESAN ASSOCIATION.

On Wednesday, June 11, 1941, in One Hour and Fifty-One Minutes,
IN THE PARISH ROOM,

A PEAL OF GRANDSIRE DOUBLES, 5160 CHANGES;

Being 43 extents.

Tenor size 11 in G.

LEONARD T. SHEASBY	1-2	GEORGE R. H. SMITH	3-4
CHARLES ROUSE	5-6		

Conducted by GEORGE R. H. SMITH.

First peal on handbells by all. First peal as conductor.

THE CENTRAL COUNCIL.

(Continued from page 281.)

THE LEGITIMATE METHODS COMMITTEE.

On the Methods Committee much could be written which would be both instructive and entertaining. For many years it was one of the most prominent features of the Council's meetings, it was the focus of strong and keenly contested controversies, it was responsible for the largest number of the Council's publications, and it bore a leading part in the causes which led to the great development and advance in method ringing during recent years. Much of its influence in the latter was indirect, but it was none the less real. Almost all its early activities were occupied with discussions and disputes stubbornly fought out in the Council, in the columns of the ringing papers, by private correspondence, and by personal contact.

Of all dead and dry dust and ashes, none are so dead and dry as the ashes of burnt out controversies. Who now cares anything for the hot and violent things that were said and written fifty or sixty years ago about Home Rule for Ireland? Who reads, or even tries to read any of the hundreds of books on controversial theology whose titles take up so much space in the catalogue of a great library? Yet the issues once were alive and the fires burnt fiercely, nor was the heat altogether dissipated and lost. So it has been in the Exercise. The clever young men of to-day, when they come across any of the old controversies in the pages of 'The Bell News,' or the reports of the early Council meetings, wonder what all the pother was about. To them the answers to the questions in dispute seem so obvious and hardly worth troubling about. Yet it was by means of those discussions and controversies that the life of the Exercise was maintained.

The great mass of ringers, of course, were not interested. They had other matters to think about, and cared for none of those things. They had two words for the few who did care; sometimes they called them 'faddists,' and sometimes they called them 'experts.' Neither was a good name. The few were not faddists to any great extent, and they certainly were not experts. They were a handful of enthusiastic men who were trying to find out something about the truths which lie behind the science of ringing, and who were groping more or less blindly in the dark. Some followed will-o'-the-wisps; some thought their own penny rushlights were the sun; and some lost their ways in the dark. But something was gained and has been added to the common heritage of the Exercise.

The appointment of the committee was one of the results of the attempt by the early leaders of the Council to tidy up things, and to reduce to law and order the chaotic condition in which (as they supposed) the science and art of change ringing had grown up. The urge among many ringers to be known as composers had led them to produce and publish methods of all sorts. It was a pleasant and an easy way of gaining fame; for once the art of pricking changes had been learnt, it was a simple thing to 'compose' methods, and as harmless a diversion as solving cross-word puzzles. When it was done no one was a penny the better or a penny the worse; for in those days the chances of a new method being rung were very remote indeed. If these people had torn up their papers or kept the figures to themselves, nothing could or would

have been said; but they often managed to get them published in 'The Bell News' and thereby claimed to take a place among the men who have really done something for the science of change ringing. That sort of thing offended Heywood and those who thought as he did. He considered it degraded the art and lowered its standards. Something must be done to stop the output of this mass of rubbish and a sharp line must be drawn between what were called 'legitimate' methods and what were called 'illegitimate.' A few years later, in 1903, when he returned to the same theme, the Council passed, at his direction, a resolution declaring that 'in the opinion of the Council the publication of palpably false compositions and worthless methods reflects discredit on their composers.'

To that opinion everybody might have been expected to give an assent; but it did not go very far, since no one would be likely to publish methods if he considered them worthless. How was he to know? And by what standard were other people to judge?

It was to answer these questions that the Legitimate Methods Committee had been appointed. They were expected to lay down a few clear and precise rules which everybody could understand and apply, and so put a stop to the publication of rubbish.

The question was first brought before the Council by Earle Bulwer at the Norwich meeting in 1899. It is, I think, most likely that when he and Heywood discussed the agenda and the subjects to be debated they decided that this was a suitable one to bring forward, and so Bulwer introduced it without more consideration than was necessary to make a good opening statement. Both he and Heywood had pretty clear general ideas of what should be allowed; both knew a good deal about the methods then rung; and neither thought there would be any difficulty in finding the few necessary rules. They did not realise, however, that only the tiniest fraction of possible methods had been examined, and they had not the least suspicion that there might be some really fundamental scientific laws which govern the production of methods.

So when he made his speech and gave what he thought might be the rules for method composition, Bulwer did not put them forward as more than a basis for discussion. His conditions may be read in an article in 'The Ringing World' of January 28th last. They are of interest only as showing the general opinions of leading men at the time.

The subject did not evoke much interest in the Council, and few members took part in the discussion; but Henry Law James introduced what he considered was a really scientific definition of a method, and one round which the required rules could be drawn up. He asked for a committee to deal with the matter. It was duly appointed and consisted of James himself, Henry Dains, John Carter, Arthur Craven, and myself. Bulwer and Heywood were invited to join, but neither was willing to form part of a committee which quite evidently would be dominated largely by Law James. Bulwer, however, reserved his right as secretary of the Council to intervene if he thought fit, and he actually did so.

On paper the committee was a strong one, but its strength was largely illusory. From the beginning, in fact, it hardly existed at all as a committee. One or two members took no part in its work, and the others were quickly resolved into a number of jarring and

(Continued on next page.)

THE CENTRAL COUNCIL.

(Continued from previous page.)

warring individuals. There never was any co-operation, and it was well there was not; for more good came out of the disputes than would have come out of agreement. It is well to pool your knowledge and experience when your knowledge is real knowledge; but when it is not, it is better to disagree.

John Carter and Arthur Craven took no part in the committee's work and discussion, and retired after some years.

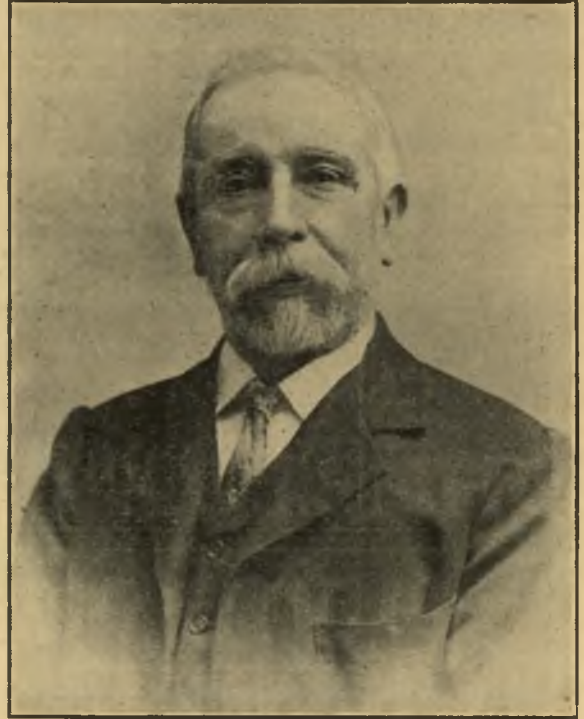
Arthur Craven was a good composer of the second class. He produced many admirable peals, but none of any outstanding merit or value. To-day he is best known as the composer of Surprise Major methods. He devoted much time to working them out, with a great deal of success; but inevitably the best, such as Yorkshire, Pudsey, Rutland, Belgrave, Ealing, and the like, are just those that any competent man is bound to come across, and they have, in fact, been 'composed' by several persons. Craven's gifts and qualifications were not such as to make him of much use for the work of the Methods Committee.

John Carter was a far abler composer than Craven. He made a name which will be remembered as long as change ringing is practised, and it is scarcely necessary to mention the services he rendered to the art. But the brilliant intellectual gifts which enabled him to produce the odd-bob peal of Stedman Triples, and the 'circuits' of Stedman Caters, were not such as would make him useful on a committee. He was like the majority of modern scientists and inventors, an experimental worker, and he was almost inarticulate. He could never explain to others the mental processes by which he achieved his results, and the reason was that he did not know himself. In the technical sense of the word he was not a thinker, and so, though his work was excellent, his opinions were often crude and useless. He did splendid work for the Exercise, but as a member of the Central Council he was a failure.

I have already spoken of Henry Dains and his work on the Peals Collection Committee, but it was in connection with the Methods Committee that I was brought into the closest relationship with him. In dealing with the work these men did for the Council, it is necessary, if I am to write true history, to point out their limitations and shortcomings, and that must create to some extent the impression that I am trying to disparage them. That is not so. I am trying to put on record a true account of the Central Council and its early members. Like human life in general, their work was a fabric woven with wool and web of many colours, dark and light, strength and weakness, knowledge and ignorance, wisdom and foolishness, truth and error were all blended, as they always are in human affairs. There were square pegs in round holes, men who thought they knew and did not know that they did not know, and many more who were sincerely trying with some success and much failure to do something to improve the things belonging to ringing and ringers.

I knew Dains intimately and valued his friendship. I recognised his skill as a ringer and his industry and success as a composer. He was a thoroughly likeable man and a pleasant companion. In abilities and character he was much above the average of his class. His

limitations were due partly to his education, and partly to a natural tendency of his mind. He was born in a remote village in Norfolk and received the very elementary schooling of the village school. He was, of course, not illiterate or anything like it, but he had not the advantages of education that later generations have had. In a general sense that mattered not at all, for he was successful in his trade, and held responsible posi-



THE LATE MR. HENRY DAINS.

tions as clerk of the works on buildings. It did show itself, however, when he came to discuss things with people like Law James. Though he definitely belonged to the older school of London ringers and shared to the full their traditions and prejudices, he was genuinely anxious to range himself on the side of the men who were looking forward. Almost alone among the leading London men he really welcomed the formation of the Council and threw himself wholeheartedly into its work. He was a man of ideas, but by some defect in his mental equipment they almost always remained in a fluid state, and he had really little that was concrete to offer. In his writing and his speeches there were generally the same indefiniteness which made him largely ineffectual. Unlike John Carter, he was a man with whom one could discuss and argue questions, though his limitations were generally obvious. With Carter it was usually impossible to discuss matters. He thought that a thing (say Bob Major Lead Ends) was necessary or it was not; but he could give no good reasons for his opinion. That does not necessarily mean that his opinion was not sound nor based on good reasons.

Henry Dains was for several years an active member of the Methods Committee and took much interest in its proceedings, but his actual contribution to its work was not great.

NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE ASSOCIATION.**FIGHTING FOR EXISTENCE.**

A meeting of the North Staffordshire Association was held at Kingsley on Saturday, June 7th. Several members and friends were present from Derby, Leek, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent, Kingsley, Burton-on-Trent, Burslem and Newcastle-under-Lyme. Tea was very kindly prepared for the visitors by the ringers of Kingsley in their homes.

Several touches on handbells were brought round on a very fine peal of handbells, which were a delight to handle.

Such meetings as that at Kingsley will long be remembered by those who attended. If meetings like this can be held during the war, it will help to pave the way to preserving the association.

The hon. secretary (Mr. Andrew Thompson) says, in regard to the continuance of the association during this war, that he would like to appeal to the members, who gave the association so much of their time during much happier days, to try to give a small amount of it now to helping the organisation. He is afraid that, even at the present time, the association is fighting for its existence in the ringing Exercise.

The membership by the end of 1940 was 127, including hon. members, life members and the members serving in H.M. Forces, and only about 8 per cent. of the members are attending the meetings each month. If it were not for a faithful few the association would have to disband, and after the war it would mean many years of hard work to bring the association to the standard of pre-war days.

The next meeting will be held at Stone on Saturday, July 5th, and it will be very encouraging to the officers to have a good attendance.

GLOUCESTER AND BRISTOL DIOCESAN ASSOCIATION.**MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING.**

About 24 members attended a meeting of the Management Committee of the Gloucester and Bristol Diocesan Association, held at the Spreadagle Hotel, Gloucester, on Saturday, June 7th. Mr. S. Romans was elected to the chair, as the Master (the Rev. N. E. Hope) was unable to attend owing to the illness of his wife, who had undergone a serious operation the evening before.

It was decided not to hold an annual meeting this year.

It was resolved to purchase 35 units of War Saving Certificates and to invest a further £21 17s. 1d. from the Belfry Repair Fund in the Post Office Savings Bank.

It was reported that the membership of the association had fallen to 334, and that there had been a loss on the year of £11 13s. Branch receipts had been halved and the expenditure reduced by nearly 50 per cent. The committee are anxious to maintain the present membership, low though it may appear to be, so that a useful start

(Continued in next column.)

OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD.**NORTH BUCKS BRANCH ANNUAL MEETING.**

The annual meeting of the North Bucks Branch of the Oxford Diocesan Guild was held at Bletchley on Saturday, June 7th, when some 20 members, together with friends from the Bedfordshire Association, attended. The service was conducted by the Rector (the Rev. J. L. Milne), and the address was given by the chairman of the branch (the Rev. J. P. Taylor, of Hanslope).

Unfortunately, tea could not be arranged and the business meeting followed the service. The chairman presided, supported by the Rev. C. E. Wigg (Deputy Master of the Guild).

The balance sheet and the hon. secretary's report were adopted, and officers of the branch were re-elected.

Newport Pagnell, Stony Stratford and Hanslope were chosen for quarterly meetings and Bletchley again for the annual meeting.

The Deputy Master complimented the branch on the successful way it was being carried on under difficult circumstances, and said he was pleased to see a good attendance at the meeting.

Votes of thanks were accorded to the Rev. J. L. Milne for the welcome extended to the branch and to the chairman for his very inspiring address. The organist was also included in the vote.

Methods and selections on handbells concluded the meeting, a very successful one but for one exception. Something was missing; the general secretary, Mr. R. T. Hibbert, owing to lack of travelling facilities, had to forgo his annual visit to North Bucks.

THURSTANS' REVERSED.

To the Editor.

Dear Sir,—I would just like to state that there is no reflection on Mr. Emery for the statement re the peal at Chislehurst. The result of the correspondence has beyond a doubt proved that the composition called was not the One-Part. With best thanks for your indulgence.

H. H.

(Continued from previous column.)

can be made when the ban is lifted. They strongly urge that, after such a long spell of inactivity, great care should be given to peals of bells before any ringing is resumed, and that some of the bad going bells should receive expert attention.

After the meeting some excellent touches on handbells were rung, including spliced methods, and welcome visitors were Messrs. Wilfred Williams, Caleb Fenn and W. Shorter.

Thanks are due to Mr. John Austin for arranging the meeting and to the handbell ringers on the train to Bristol for their well-struck Grandsire Triples. (Only a ticket collector could spoil such ringing, and he did.)

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BELFRY GOSSIP.

A Sunday meeting is to be held by the Western Division of the Sussex Association at Pulborough on the 29th inst. This is a somewhat new departure and the result will be of considerable interest to others outside the immediate district.

The handbell peal of Bob Major, conducted by Mr. Jack Thomas, on June 9th, was rung as a farewell to one of his pupils. Harold Howson, who is joining the Navy, was in the early Grandsire stage when church bell ringing was suspended, and he took up handbell ringing only five months ago. He has since rung five peals, one of Bob Minor, one of Minor in four methods and one in seven methods, and two peals of Bob Major. He has also rung touches in four plain and eight Treble Bob methods, including Cambridge Surprise. We hope Mr. Howson will return safely to make his further mark in the Exercise when peace is restored.

If any of our readers should know of any ringer living in or near Johannesburg, South Africa, Mr. C. Chambers, of 16, Merlin Street, Kensington, Johannesburg, will be glad to have his address.

Fifty years ago next Monday a fire broke out in the Loughborough Foundry and destroyed a large part of the works and the bell tower with its eight bells.

On June 16th, 1816, 5,080 changes of Oxford Treble Bob Royal were rung at St. Leonard's, Shoreditch.

Jasper Snowdon was born at Ilkley in Yorkshire on June 18th, 1844.

One hundred and eighty-five years ago to-day a peal of Garthings Trebles was rung on the bells of St. Peter-at-Archies, Lincoln, the church which not long ago was pulled down to widen the street. Garthings Trebles was the original peal of Grandsire Triples composed by John Garthorn, of Norwich.

On June 23rd, 1882, the first peal by the Derby and District Association (Grandsire Triples) was rung at St. Alkmund's, Derby. Later on the association became the Midland Counties Association.

The only peal ever rung on a greater number of bells than twelve was one of 5,055 Stedman Sextuples or Thirteen-in on handbells at Birmingham on June 24th, 1922. Mr. Albert Walker conducted.

Sam Thomas, of Sheffield, died on June 24th, 1924, at the age of 53.

Fifty years ago to-day five peals were rung. They consisted of Grandsire Triples 2, Kent Treble Bob Major 1, and Oxford Treble Bob Major 2.

DEATH OF A PUDSEY RINGER.

FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE LEEDS AND DISTRICT SOCIETY.

The death has occurred, with tragic suddenness, of Mr. James William Baxendale, of Pudsey, Yorks. Although Mr. Baxendale had not enjoyed the best of health for the past few years, his death was altogether unexpected; in fact, he was in the company of some of his brother ringers on the evening prior to his passing away, and then seemed to be quite his usual self.

Mr. Baxendale will long be remembered for his geniality, his outspoken comments and his love of an argument; no company was ever dull if he was there, and he will be sadly missed when ringing starts again.

He was an excellent ringer, a good striker and a good method man. He was one of the original Surprise band at Pudsey. His total of 26 peals is by no means indicative of his abilities, a big proportion were of Surprise Major, and include the first of Cambridge, Superlative, Bristol and Pudsey Surprise on the bells of St. Lawrence's, Pudsey, the latter two being the first in the county of Yorkshire.

Mr. Baxendale was always deeply interested in the affairs of the Leeds and District Society and for some years held office as president. His unorthodox but effective way of controlling a meeting was an inspiration; he believed in getting on with things.

The funeral service was held in the Parish Church, Pudsey, and was attended by many of deceased's ringing friends. At the close of the service four members of the Leeds and District Society, Messrs. J. Thackray, P. J. Johnson, W. Barton and J. Ambler, rang a course of Grandsire Triples in the nave of the church. The interment took place afterwards at Wortley, Leeds.

'RINGING' ON SILENT BELLS.

To the Editor.

Dear Sir,—I have recently had my first experience of change ringing on 'silent' bells, i.e., without any type of apparatus. Not only did I find it difficult, but also I am certain that it permits intolerably bad striking to go unchecked.

In my opinion, all towers should be fitted with some efficient but simple and easily constructed apparatus, and so long as it is reliable and constant in itself, it matters little if it only approximates to the sounds of an open clapper. Most of the time gained when 'coming in' is saved at the beginning of the stroke, and the end of the preceding one and the amount the bell rises after the strike (whether of the clapper or the apparatus) only concerns the next stroke.

If the apparatus will operate at a distance below the balance (as certain types will) there is no need to 'drive' the bells, which, as was pointed out some time since in an editorial, makes hard work for the tenors. Such an apparatus would, if anything, improve striking, as even greater care would be called for in timing, and would not only provide practice and instruction for new recruits, but also help to keep the band together—a very important result.

Accrington.

R. LEIGH.

CITY OF LONDON CHURCHES.

FIRE EFFECT ON TOWERS.

Safeguarding of Bells.

To the Editor.

Dear Sir,—A note in your last issue draws attention to the fact that the tower of St. Mary-le-Bow is out of upright, with the alarming suggestion that this may necessitate its demolition.

We need not worry unduly about this. The tower was first found to be 'out of plumb' during construction of the Central London Railway nearly forty years ago, and the movement of the tower ceased with the completion of the tunnelling. History says that Wren made use in his foundations of a 'Roman causeway' which he found on the site; presumably this was affected by the removal of soil and water from below. I do not think the lean of the tower (very marked when seen from the west end of Cheapside) has become greater in the intervening years.

I do not doubt the stability of the tower, but feel some apprehension regarding the effect of fire on Bow and some other London towers, particularly St. Andrew's, Holborn, and St. Clement's. Portland stone does not stand fire very well, and in these towers are remains of much more ancient structures, so it is possible that they have been weakened by the ordeal. However, the ringers will not have much to say as to whether these towers will eventually be suitable for ringing peals equivalent to those we have lost—that is chiefly a matter for the architects to decide.

Regarding Bow bells, I have failed to get authoritative information, but fear the worst, as one or two pieces of a large bell could be seen at the base of the tower after the disaster.

No steps appear to have been taken to safeguard Bow bells, and I am concerned for the safety of another important twelve, viz., Southwark Cathedral, where the bells have been taken down and deposited on the floor in the north and south transepts. There is now nothing between the bells and the stone vaulting over (covered by a massive timber roof). In the event of a 'direct hit,' therefore, the bells will be precious little safer than when they were in the tower. They should be well packed with sandbags, etc., which need not be a costly business. At St. Clement's the bells were lowered to the bottom of the tower, but no further precautions taken, the result being that when the trouble came practically all were broken by the mass of burning debris from above.

I believe the people who dealt with the bells gave advice in both the above cases; it was not, of course, their business to do anything more, but perhaps some of the church authorities resemble the architects mentioned by Mr. Trollope—rather resentful of advice, particularly when it is proffered by the 'small fry' of the ringing Exercise. Perhaps those of us who are able to speak with some authority could make a deeper impression.

I read lately a letter signed 'Tourist' which at least one of your readers seems inclined to take seriously. I don't think any of us need get 'het up' about this gentleman's opinions, his absurd comparisons and the general tone of his letter proclaim that he has but a superficial knowledge of his subject. I expect he has been so busy 'piling up' towers that he has not given himself time to make more than a casual inspection of any church, in London or elsewhere.

Admittedly there are many ugly churches in London, but this is not peculiar to the Metropolis, and even in the dreariest period of church building some fine churches and towers were built. The London standard has never been lower, but has always been a bit above that of the provinces or of Scotland.

Good churches have appeared in London at all times, even in the 1750 (or St. George's, Southwark) period, and if 'Tourist,' under proper guidance, could study some of the best, he might be able to forgive or forget the ugly ones.

The work of Wren and his immediate followers must not be 'lumped in' with anything that followed. It forms a class of its own. It should be remembered that Wren had to rebuild about fifty churches on their ancient confined sites—usually so closely surrounded with other buildings that little of the exterior could be seen. He, therefore, spent the money at his disposal inside the churches, and externally where the architectural detail could be seen, usually in the steeples. At St. Lawrence Jewry practically all the detail is concentrated in the east end, fortunately still intact. I have always doubted whether the timber and lead steeple of this church was actually the work of Wren. Some people agree with me that the tower has greater dignity without it!

The glory of the City churches (apart from towers, organs and bells) is in the highly expert craftsmanship shown chiefly in carved woodwork, elaborate plaster ceilings, etc. Much of the best, alas! is gone, but some no doubt will survive, and it is to be hoped that in those churches which are eventually restored the best features of the originals will be reproduced. There are craftsmen to-day who can carve wood and model plaster as well as the old ones could—but it takes time—and money! Perhaps some influential bodies with the necessary finances at their disposal will interest themselves in the great work of restoration; this is, I understand, very likely to happen in the case of one important City church.

RICHARD F. DEAL.

9, Crosby Road, Forest Gate, E.7.

THE FUTURE OF THE TOWERS.

PREVIOUS PROPOSALS RECALLED.

Several schemes for the future of the City of London churches, says the 'Daily Telegraph,' await the judgment of the special commission appointed by the Bishop of London, Dr. G. F. Fisher, with Lord Merriman as chairman.

One is to leave towers which are not substantially damaged and clear the rest of the sites if restoration is impracticable.

The position is complicated by the necessity for a new plan for the City. This may involve the total disappearance of some historic churches whether they have been bombed or not.

Proposals to take down certain churches and rebuild them in the suburbs, the correspondent gathers, are not likely to be popular. Similar schemes in the past have been strenuously resisted by those anxious that the City should keep as much as possible of its ancient character.

It will be remembered that some years ago a scheme put forward by a committee, appointed by the late Bishop of London, to dispose of the sites of a number of churches, met with great opposition, even from the City Corporation itself.

The Central Council, too, at their meeting in 1920 passed a resolution on the subject, but on the advice of some of the clergy present, limited their representations to the question of towers and bells. They agreed, on the motion of the late Canon Elsee, after amendments to include references to the churches themselves had been defeated, to urge the desirability of preserving all towers in the City in which there are notable rings of bells.

The list of threatened churches at that time included St. Michael's, Cornhill (12 bells); St. Magnus', London Bridge (10); All Hallows', Lombard Street (10), since demolished; St. Dunstan's-in-the-East; St. Dunstan's-in-the-West; St. Botolph's, Aldgate; St. Stephen's, Coleman Street (all containing 8 bells); and St. Vedast's, Foster Lane (6). Eleven other churches were also included. Some of these, of course, have now been destroyed by enemy action.

If the proposal is adopted to leave towers which are not substantially damaged, even though the rest of the site is cleared if restoration is impracticable, ringers will be keen to know what will happen to the bells where these are still intact or are capable of being replated.

City bells have suffered very badly with the churches, and the future in store for some of the notable rings will be watched, not only with interest, but also with anxiety.

DEATH OF REV. W. PENNINGTON-BICKFORD

RECTOR OF ST. CLEMENT DANES.

London ringers will greatly regret to learn of the death on Thursday of last week, at the age of 66, of the Rev. W. Pennington-Bickford, who had been Rector of St. Clement Danes', Strand, for 31 years. The final destruction of his church by enemy action, says 'The Times,' was a tremendous blow, which may well have proved fatal to him, though only a few days before he died he was planning its restoration after the war.

The son of Rear-Admiral James E. Bickford, he was born at Plymouth and educated at Ashburton Grammar School. In a sketch of his career 'The Times' says he began his long connection with St. Clement Danes' in 1895 as a layman, assisting the Rev. J. J. H. S. Pennington, the then Rector, as a voluntary organist. After four years at Clare College, Cambridge, he was ordained to the curacy of St. Clement Danes' in 1905, and was also churchwarden. In 1907 he married the Rector's daughter, Miss Louie Pennington, and added Pennington to his surname by deed poll.

In 1910, when the living fell vacant, he was appointed Rector. To both the Rector and his wife—and it is difficult to separate one from the other—the church was their absorbing interest. They made it also a centre of church and classical music, when the Rector formed an orchestra which gave frequent concerts.

The ancient church, which is of Danish and Saxon origin, was regarded as the parish church of Danes in London.

Oranges and lemons have long been associated in nursery rhyme with St. Clement's, and an annual oranges and lemons service was instituted by the Rector. Members of the Danish community subscribed yearly towards the cost of the fruit, which was handed to little St. Clement Danes' children by little Danish children. The church was also Australia's church in London, and the first Anzac Day commemoration service was held there on April 25th, 1920. Dr. Johnson worshipped in St. Clement Danes', and the Rector instituted a service on the anniversary of his death (December 13th) in 1973, which has since been held annually under the auspices of the Johnson Club. He founded the Johnson Society of London in 1929.

The Rector was chaplain to the London County Association, which, established in 1824 as the St. James' Society at St. James', Clerkenwell, moved its headquarters to St. Clement Danes' in 1839. He frequently attended the annual meetings of the association.

He restored the 'Bells of St. Clement's,' which are known all over the world through the nursery rhyme, and they were opened by Queen Alexandra in 1919. For this occasion Mrs. Bickford wrote a special hymn, which the Rector set to music.

It was at this church in 1919 that the first peal by the Ancient Free and Accepted Masons of England was rung. Mr. Bickford took a great interest in the performance and arranged an impressive service on the occasion of the dedication of the peal board.

ESSEX ASSOCIATION.

SATISFACTORY FINANCIAL POSITION.

The Late Mr. George Dent's Bequest.

The sixty-second annual meeting of the Essex Association was held at Chelmsford on Saturday, May 31st, when upwards of 45 members attended. Service was held in the Cathedral at 4 p.m., and in the course of his address the Provost (the Very Rev. W. E. R. Morrow) said: 'There will be a lot of work for the bellmakers after the war. When the time comes the bells will be rung with greater fervour than ever before. A great many people miss the message of the bells. Your bells are democratic. They are rung for the King as well as the lowliest in the land. So, ring on, brothers, in spirit, if you cannot ring the material bells. When victory comes you will ring in those years of peace which we hope will follow.'

The Master, Dr. P. T. Spencer Phillips, J.P., presided at the meeting which followed in the Chapter House, and in his report said: 'Owing to the conditions under which we now live, this, the 62nd annual report, is not very encouraging, since the use of tower bells for the practice of our art has been prohibited. However, we still have handbells, and their use is very instructive and should be made more use of than is at present the custom.'

THE YEAR'S STATISTICS.

Members for the year, he stated, showed a decrease of six, there being 65 hon. members, 725 ringing members, and 281 non-resident members, and there are 102 towers in union. District meetings had been held at Earls Colne, Witham, Bocking, Broomfield, Great Baddow, Tendring, Kirby-le-Soken, Ardleigh, All Saints', Colchester, and Epping. The average attendance at all these meetings was 27, but at Epping an excellent attendance of 70 was attained and 20 new members were elected.

The following peals were rung during 1940: Bob Royal 1, Superlative Surprise Major 1, New Cambridge Surprise Major 1, Cambridge Surprise Major 1, Double Norwich Major 1, Kent Treble Bob Major 1, Bob Major 1, Minor in 7 methods 1; on handbells, Bob Royal 1, Bob Major 2, Grandsire Doubles 4; the conductors being F. Lufkin 4, C. W. Woolley 4, P. Green 1, J. A. Bullock 2, J. Bullock 1, U. W. Wildney 1, L. W. Wiffen 1, with one peal of Grandsire Doubles non-conducted. One member rang his first peal and four their first in the method.

The Master regretted to record the death of the following members: George Dent, of Harlow, many years Master of the North-Western District; R. Hutson, of Maldon; G. B. Lucas, of Walthamstow; S. Bingham and G. F. Smith, of Rayleigh; W. Coppin, of Halstead; G. T. Bartram, J.P., of Braintree, an hon. life member; Alfred Howell, of Ipswich, a non-resident member well known for his work in rebanging various peals throughout the county; G. Perry, of Loughton; and J. Corney, of Woodford, who was killed in action in Africa while serving with the R.A.F. shortly after receiving the D.F.M.

The accounts continued to be satisfactory; there had been no grant during the year from the Bell Restoration Fund, which now had a balance of £89 2s. 8d.

Through the generosity of Mr. W. J. Nevard, a board had been erected and consecrated at Great Baddow Church to commemorate a peal of Double Norwich rung half-muffled in memory of the late Mr. C. H. Howard.

The Master concluded by thanking the district masters and secretaries and the general secretary for all their work and the committee for their help.

On the general account there was a balance of £235 13s. 8d., 25 6s. 8d. less than in the previous year. The receipts had been £45 13s. 4d., of which £36 15s. 9d. was from the districts and £8 17s. 7d. from interest. The expenses, which included £7 7s. 1d. transferred to the Bell Restoration Fund, amounted to £51.

The report and accounts were adopted, and the following officers were elected: Master, Dr. P. T. Spencer Phillips, J.P.; secretary and treasurer, Mr. L. J. Clark; peal secretary, Mr. L. W. Wiffen; trustees, Messrs. G. Green, E. J. Runter and H. W. Shadrack; auditors, Messrs. R. C. Heazel and E. J. Butler; Central Council representatives, Messrs. J. Cornford, E. J. Butler and G. R. Pye and Miss H. G. Snowden.

Messrs. W. Spokes (Danbury), R. Sharpington (Galleywood) and J. French (Earls Colne) were elected life members of the association.

INTEREST ON £600 FOR HARLOW RINGERS.

The Hon. Secretary referred to the will of the late Mr. George Dent, of Harlow Common, under which the sum of £600 had been left in trust to pay the income to the ringers of St. Mary Magdalene's Church, Potter Street, Harlow, according to their attendance and punctuality so long as they carried on the art of scientific change ringing at that church, but for no other kind of ringing or chiming whatever. Should the practice of scientific change ringing cease to be carried on at the said church, the income of the fund is to be paid to the Essex Association of Change Ringers.

Mr. Clark said that the £600 had already been paid over to the Chelmsford Diocesan Board of Finance and that the income from the fund would be from £18 to £20 a year. He expressed the hope that the Harlow Common ringers would continue for many years to practise the art, but the association should keep the matter in mind so that if at some future time change ringing should be discontinued at Harlow Common they could see that the income was dealt with in accordance with the late Mr. Dent's wishes.

(Continued in next column.)

DEATH OF EX-SERGT. J. WILLIAMS.

A WELL-KNOWN GLOUCESTERSHIRE RINGER.

We regret to announce the death of ex-Sergt. Joseph Williams, which took place at his residence, Oak Wood, Newent, Gloucestershire, on Tuesday, June 10th, at the age of 88. He leaves a son and three daughters to mourn their loss, his wife having predeceased him about two years ago after a married life of some 67 years.

Ex-Sergt. Joseph Williams was born at Coln St. Alwyn's, Gloucestershire, in the year 1852. At the age of 18 he joined the Gloucestershire Constabulary, and after serving in different parts of the county went to Newent as sergeant in charge of the Newent Petty Sessional Division in 1891, retaining this position until he retired in 1903, after serving 32 years in the force. On his retirement he was presented by the chairman of the Bench with a testimonial and a purse of £50, which had been subscribed by the townspeople of Newent. Up to the last he was affectionately known to many friends as 'The Sergeant.'



THE LATE MR. J. WILLIAMS.

Mr. Williams after leaving the police was appointed school attendance officer for the Newent district and held this post for 19 years, retiring at the age of 70.

Although Mr. Williams did not take up ringing until he was 60 years of age, he made rapid progress and soon mastered the standard methods. He rang 125 peals in all, consisting of Triples, Major, Caters and Cinques. His last peal was Bob Major at St. Lawrence's Church, Barnwood, on June 3rd, 1939, the average age of the ringers being 74½ years and Mr. Williams being in his 87th year, a remarkable achievement of which he was very proud. It was no fault of his that he did not ring further peals.

Mr. Williams also took a great interest in tune ringing and was never happier than when with his old friend John Austin manipulating four bells in hand to a tune or sitting back to back and tapping off a course of Grandsire Triples. He was a regular attendant at all district meetings, and his cheery countenance, his erect figure and his happy disposition will be sadly missed by his many friends and colleagues.

Deep sympathy will be extended to his son and three daughters, one of whom (Mrs. Tyndall) was bereaved by the loss of her husband only a few days before the death of her father.

The funeral service was held at St. Mary's Church, Newent, on Friday, and was conducted by the Vicar (the Rev. C. J. K. Burnell). The coffin was met at the entrance to the church by the Vicar and surpliced choir, of which Mr. Williams had been a member for nearly 50 years, a processional hymn being sung as the cortege proceeded to the chancel, where handbells were rung for a few moments. During the service the anthem, 'O rest in the Lord,' was sung, the solo being beautifully rendered by Mr. D. O'Shea, a member of the choir. At the conclusion of the service handbells were rung in the porch as the coffin and mourners passed through, and at the graveside a course of Grandsire Triples was rung by J. W. Jones 1-2, S. E. Romans 3-4, J. Austin 5-6, W. H. Harris 7-8.

In addition to the family mourners and friends, there were present representing the Gloucester and Bristol Diocesan Association the Rev. N. Hope, Master; Ross and Hereford, Mr. J. Clark and Mr. W. Poston; Llandaff and Monmouth Diocesan Association, Mr. J. W. Jones; South Forest Branch, Lydney, of the Gloucester and Bristol Diocesan Association, Mr. J. Davis; Ancient Society of Crypt Youths, Messrs. J. Austin, H. Austin, W. H. Harris and S. E. Romans. Among the many floral tributes was a wreath from the Ancient Society of Crypt Youths, Gloucester.

(Continued from previous column.)

Votes of thanks were passed to the Master and general secretary for their work during the year, to the Provost for allowing the use of the Cathedral and Chapter House, and to Mr. F. R. Frye for his services at the organ.

Following the meeting, 43 members had tea at Cannon's Restaurant. Handbells and eight silent tower bells were made good use of during the afternoon and evening.

BURBAGE, LEICESTERSHIRE.—On Sunday, June 8th, at 58, Lychgate Lane, 504 Grandsire Triples: Pte. A. J. Adams, R.A.O.C. (conductor) 1-2, A. Ballard 3-4, F. K. Measures 5-6, W. J. Clough 7-8. Rung as a farewell to Pte. Adams after an attempt for a quarter-peal had been lost near the end. Practices are held on Wednesday evenings at 8 o'clock and on Sunday mornings at 11 a.m. at Stedman, 128, Sketchley Road, Burbage.

PEAL COMPOSITIONS.

DIFFICULTIES OF INCLUSION IN ASSOCIATION REPORTS.

To the Editor.

Dear Sir,—As a general secretary with many years' experience, may I be allowed to add to, and perhaps criticise, the very interesting points brought out in Mr. Barton's letter?

Solely from the point of view of keeping a complete record, the insistence of the Yorkshire Association on publication in the annual reports of all compositions is to be commended. There are occasions when it is very unsatisfactory not to know what composition has been rung in a particular peal. As Mr. Barton states, no composer can be entirely trusted not to make a mistake, and when, as sometimes happens, a false composition is discovered, it is difficult, and perhaps impossible, for associations to be sure whether or not this particular peal has been rung and included in its records.

A few years ago, when the Middlesex Association's rules were revised, a rule was adopted which provides that the composition of any peal rung must be forwarded to the secretary, unless it is apparent from the report of the peal in the ringing Press what the composition actually is. Several associations have a somewhat similar rule, and many endeavour to publish the compositions. But there are difficulties, and it is the realisation of these which doubtless is the reason why the officials of many associations, especially when rules do not cover the point, make no effort to collect the figures of peals rung.

Amongst these difficulties is the question of expense. Annual reports cost a great deal of money, and many associations cannot possibly afford the pages that would be necessary to publish the compositions of even a selection of the peals rung. Thus at once the record is incomplete. Another difficulty is the slackness of conductors, and I think I can speak with experience of this matter. A peal may be rung in the early part of the year covered by the annual report, and unless the official responsible for collecting compositions is continually on the alert, it is quite possible that it is not until several months later that he finds the composition has not been sent to him. On enquiry, the conductor has *forgotten* what composition he called, or has mislaid the figures. That is only one instance of many in connection with the difficulty of collecting compositions.

Another difficulty, although not a very important one, is the question of originality. It requires an expert to decide whether a particular composition is the work of 'B,' or previously of 'A,' and during my several years' experience I have received many rather critical letters on this point.

The greatest difficulty of all, however, is the question of proof. Mr. Barton, at the end of his interesting letter, asks the following question, 'How many associations could claim an unblemished peal list if all their records were checked?' I think the answer is that very few associations have been fortunate enough to avoid ringing false peals. But I would like to put *this* question, 'How many false compositions have been rung a second or a third time, or even on several occasions, through being published in an association report?' I suggest that the answer to this question is an unknown quantity.

It should be remembered that an association report has a wide circulation, and many get into the hands of conductors who are quite likely to use the figures of peals published therein. I wonder how many times the compositions referred to by Mr. Barton have been rung through being published in his association's reports, and rung not only for the Yorkshire Association. Even if the falseness is immediately discovered and pointed out through the ringing Press or through a subsequent report, the figures in many copies of the original still remain uncorrected, and may easily be rung again and again.

The question is not only one of 'keeping a record.' It is also one of seeing that the records are true, before publication. This is a job for an expert, who is not always available. It has, however, during the last few years been tackled by the association of which I am secretary. I am quite aware of the difficulty, but it does appear to me that before an association publishes a composition it should be checked.

Before leaving this matter there is one more thought that comes to my mind. Some years ago I heard a well-known ringer-composer say that it was a great pity that the falseness of the Southwark Cathedral long peal of Stedman Cinques was discovered, and, having heard most of that performance, I felt inclined to agree. There is an old saying, 'Where ignorance is bliss, etc.,' and perhaps this is the answer to Mr. Barton's final question, to which I have already referred. On the other hand, perhaps it is not, so I still feel that associations should face up to this matter, and, whilst making every endeavour to keep their records complete, at the same time see that they are true.

C. T. COLES.

Hon. Sec., Middlesex County Association.

DEATH OF CANON G. H. RIDOUT.

HIS WORK FOR RINGING IN SOUTH AFRICA.

Many of our readers, and particularly members of Cambridge University Guild, will regret to hear of the death in Johannesburg on May 5th of Canon G. H. Ridout, at the age of 69 years, after a comparatively short illness, which began with influenza and eventually developed into pneumonia.

Change ringing in South Africa has never flourished. Isolated efforts have been made occasionally in the few places where there are rings of bells to give it a foothold, with only fleeting success, but Canon Ridout, in a city without any peal of bells, continued his efforts to cultivate change ringing on handbells over a long period of years in face of many disappointments and almost insurmountable difficulties.

From time to time he has succeeded in getting a band together and some progress was made, only to see hopes dashed by the departure of some member of the limited little company which he formed. He did, however, succeed in ringing three peals of Bob Minor on handbells at various times in South Africa.

A few years ago he enlisted the interest of two or three mission sisters and a promising advance was made for a time, but was not sustained. More lately the arrival in Johannesburg of Mr. C. Chambers led to a revival of handbell ringing. He came in contact with Canon G. H. and Miss Ridout, and Bob Minor was successfully practised, although Mr. Chambers had previously had little experience of handbells. Since then Canon Ridout, Miss Ridout, Mr. Chambers and his wife have been practising Graudsire Triples, and the death of the leader of the party is a severe blow, which threatens to put an end to the operations, although it is sincerely to be hoped that every effort will be made to carry on.

Canon Ridout was at Selwyn College, Cambridge, in the early nineties of last century and joined Cambridge University Guild, of which he was treasurer in 1893, the year in which the late Rev. C. W. O. Jenkyn was secretary. Canon Ridout had been in South Africa for about thirty years, but he visited England in 1929 and was able to join the members of the Guild in their celebration of its jubilee and to meet many of his old friends of undergraduate days. He had been a regular reader of 'The Ringing World' from the start of this paper, and although he was separated by thousands of miles from the old country, his interest in ringing was as great as if he had lived in England all his life.

DEATH OF A WATH RINGER.

FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE BARNESLEY SOCIETY.

The death occurred on May 23rd of Mr. Charles Walsh at the age of 63 years. He was interred in Darfield Churchyard on May 27th.

Mr. Walsh was a native of Darfield and was one of the local ringers for a great number of years. Later, however, he joined the Wath company, with which he did the majority of his method and peal ringing in many Minor methods. He was a member of the Yorkshire Association, which he joined in 1907. He was also a member of the local societies within the Southern District of the Yorkshire Association, but he was chiefly associated with the Barnsley and District Society, being one of the first ringers to join when it was founded in 1909.

He was elected vice-president in 1914 and became president in 1920. He rang in all 21 peals and conducted one. He was always at the heavy end, and this was a man's job at Wath on the old six.

Deceased had not been seen in ringing circles for a long time, as he had suffered from an illness nine years ago, since when he had been an inmate of an institution.

At the funeral ringers were present from Rotherham Parish, Wath and Darfield. The only regret was that owing to working hours it was not possible to arrange for handbells to be rung in church.

FIRES AND BELL FRAMES.

To the Editor.

Dear Sir,—In reply to A.F.S. asking about iron bell frames in times of fire, may I say that at Bromham, Bedfordshire, the old heavy six were put into an iron frame in 1903. On September 11th, 1906, after practice, a fire was discovered, and before it was put out the tower was gutted. Only the frame and bells remained. The frame was passed as fit and is still in use. The bells were recast, as water had cracked them. We had them in use again in April, 1907.

P. INSKIP.

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THE STANDARD METHODS.

TEN AND TWELVE BELL METHODS.

In our last article we said that, generally speaking, Surprise methods are very unsuitable for Royal and Maximus ringing. It is a statement which is pretty certain to be strongly contradicted and especially among those ten and twelve bell ringers whose experience justly entitles them to have an opinion on the matter. They will point to the fact that almost all the development and improvement of ringing on the higher numbers have been in Surprise methods, and they will instance Cambridge and Yorkshire as two which have fully made good their position, and which are likely to advance rather than to recede in popularity.

All that we fully acknowledge. We do not deny the popularity of those methods nor their usefulness; but it may be worth while to consider ten and twelve bell ringing as a whole, and see if the best is really being made of it. In the first place, there is no doubt that the reason why some methods are rung is because of the glamour which belongs to the word Surprise, especially when it is coupled with the name of some method with a great reputation on eight bells. Peals of Superlative and London Surprise Royal have been rung, and in neither case would the method have been looked at if it had borne any other name. Cambridge and Yorkshire Royal have merits of their own not generally shared by the Surprise class.

A method should be judged by how far it provides interesting work for the ringer and at the same time good music for the listener. The test of music is, as we have pointed out, not quite the same for the outside public as it is for the man who is ringing, and this is notably so in the case of Royal and Maximus. Most of the men who ring Cambridge Royal and Maximus are quite satisfied with the music, but we do not think the same satisfaction is felt by the outside listener who is taking notice of the sound of the bells and is not interested in the method.

To obtain the best outside effects from Royal and Maximus, it is essential that a steady beat of the bells should be maintained. In Major a great and pleasing variety of rhythm can be used, but on ten bells, and still less on twelve bells, the ear does not easily adapt itself to complex rhythms. Sir John Stainer, the famous organist and composer, who took a great deal of interest in the ringing at St. Paul's Cathedral, would not allow Treble Twelve to be rung there on Sundays. His ear called for the covering tenor to steady the beat. The music of Cambridge Maximus probably would have disgusted him.

The only way in which a steady beat can be maintained in ten and twelve bell ringing is to keep the natural coursing order practically unbroken. Yorkshire very nearly succeeds in doing it, and that makes it musically much the best of the Surprise methods for the higher numbers. Cambridge keeps the natural coursing order above the treble; but as the bells, hunting down, come to the treble's path, they pass it, one running through and the next making places. This alternate quick and slow makes an entirely different coursing order below the treble, which, though a regular one, does not produce a good musical rhythm. It is similar to what

(Continued in next column.)

THE WORCESTERSHIRE ASSOCIATION.

EXTRACTS FROM THE ANNUAL REPORT.

In the fifty-sixth report of the Worcestershire and Districts Association, presented to the annual meeting on Whit Monday, deep regret was expressed at the death of the Rev. G. W. Webb, clerical secretary since 1937. His work for the success of the annual dinners was recalled, but above all he would be best remembered by his Christian example, an infinite capacity for human understanding and a cheerfulness which endeared him to all with whom he came in contact.

The report went on to say that, with all the branch officers re-elected, the committee remains the same as last year, with the exception that the office of clerical secretary had become vacant by death.

As was anticipated, the association income for the year had been considerably reduced, but comparisons had little real value in these days. The balance sheet revealed a loss of 101 in paid-up membership for 1940. 'This,' says the report, 'is not all accounted for by members joining the Forces. Even in normal times far too many members wait for a personal approach by the secretaries before paying the small subscription due to the association. To-day this personal contact is almost impossible—the secretaries themselves are busy men apart from their voluntary work for ringing—and we feel it should not be too much to ask these apathetic members to do their bit towards keeping the association going. That the General Fund shows a credit balance for the year of £3 11s. 7d. is due largely to the number of 1939 subscriptions received early in the year and one numerically strong band having paid for 1941. The Belfry Repairs Fund has increased in value to £59 6s. 6d., and the total worth of the funds to £115 10s. Financially, the association is, of course, in a strong position, but the normal annual expenditure does not allow of any falling off in subscriptions. Our policy should be one of maintaining our balance and conserving our reserves against that period of reconstruction and reorganisation which will follow the cessation of hostilities.

'With the imposition of a complete ban on the ringing of church bells for their normal purposes, all associations and guilds are faced with a position without parallel in the history of bells and bellringing. No one regrets the necessity for this ban more than the ringers themselves, and efforts have been made to induce the authorities to find an alternative warning method of attempted enemy invasion. Much has been written of the use of bells for this purpose, but until our leaders see fit to lift the ban, surely we as loyal subjects should do nothing to hamper them in the war effort. In the meantime, the lack of tower bell ringing removes much of the attraction of meetings, and any activities have to be carried on in a very much modified form. We feel, however, that the branch meetings should be arranged as usual, as far as restrictions and the circumstances existing from time to time will permit—even with the reduced attendances which are insurmountable. The Northern Branch have instituted bi-quarterly meetings, which have had good results, and while their success depends largely on facilities and enthusiasm for handbell ringing, we commend the idea to the other branches. A greater use of handbells and occasional small gatherings of adjoining or isolated towers would do much to keep interest and enthusiasm alive.'

The report, which was signed by Mr. J. D. Johnson, the lay secretary, concluded with congratulations to the Master, Mr. S. T. Holt, upon his recent marriage.

THE STANDARD METHODS

(Continued from previous column.)

happens in Stedman Caters and Cinques, only there the covering tenor redeems the musical situation.

So far as the outside listener is concerned, Kent Treble Bob, and (to a lesser degree) Plain Bob, supply what is needed for ten and twelve bells when the tenor is turned in, but both of them fail to supply the amount of interest in actual ringing which modern skilled hands look for. Are there methods which will give this interest, and at the same time produce the outside musical effect?

Half a century ago Sir Arthur Heywood set himself to answer the question and, as a result, produced his Duffield. He said he was 'bold enough to believe that as in Stedman is found the perfection of odd-bell ringing, so in this new method will be found the most musical and adaptable even-bell system possible of attainment.' So far as the music of ten and twelve bell ringing is concerned his claim was a sound one, yet the method has proved a complete failure. Why? The reason for eight bells no doubt is that it is too monotonous, but Duffield Royal and Maximus have scarcely had a fair chance. They lie outside the line of normal progress.

NOTICES.

ANCIENT SOCIETY OF COLLEGE YOUTHS.—The next meeting will be held on Saturday, June 21st, at the Bell Foundry, 32-34, Whitechapel Road, E.C.4, at 3 p.m., by kind invitation of the treasurer, Mr. A. A. Hughes. Handbell ringing and a good adjournment spot afterwards.—A. B. Peck, Hon. Sec., Branksome, Eversfield Road, Reigate, Surrey.

SURREY ASSOCIATION.—A meeting will be held at Reigate on Saturday, June 21st. Members and friends attending are requested to meet at the **Village, Merstham**, at 3 p.m. From there it is proposed to walk to Reigate via Gatton Park. Service at Reigate Church at 5 p.m. Following the service, Mr. M. A. Northover has very kindly offered to provide tea and his house and garden will be at the disposal of the association for the purpose of the meeting.—E. G. Talbot, Hon. Sec., 53, Birchwood Avenue, Wallington.

WORCESTERSHIRE AND DISTRICTS ASSOCIATION (Northern Branch) AND DUDLEY AND DISTRICT GUILD.—Joint meeting at Hagley (D.V.), Saturday, June 21st. Tower bells (8) available for 'silent' practice from 3 p.m. Service 4.15 p.m., followed by tea. Business meeting, handbells and social evening. Reports should be obtained and subscriptions paid at this meeting. — B. C. Ashford, 9, Bowling Green Road, Stourbridge.

YORKSHIRE ASSOCIATION.—Western Division. —The summer meeting will be held at Almondbury on Saturday, June 21st. An attractive ramble has been arranged for 3 o'clock, starting from Conservative Club (against church). Tea in Parish Room (1s. 8d.) at 5 o'clock. Business meeting after tea. Annual reports now available. All welcome. — Frank Rayment, Dis. Sec., Bramley.

YORKSHIRE ASSOCIATION. — The annual joint meeting of Southern District, Barnsley and District and Doncaster and District Societies will be held at Wath-on-Dearne on Saturday, June 21st. Handbells available, Church House, 2.30 p.m. Tea 1s. 6d. each, Warburton's Café, 5 p.m., followed by business meeting, Church House, 6 p.m. Hoping for a good attendance.—S. F. Palmer, D. Smith and E. Cooper, Joint Hon. Secretaries.

NORWICH DIOCESAN ASSOCIATION.—A meeting will be held at Bergh Apton on Saturday, June 21st. Six silent tower bells available from 2.15 p.m. Service 4.15. Tea, 4.45 at the Rectory, followed by business meeting. Names for tea as soon as possible to the Rev. A. St. J. Heard, The Rectory, Bergh Apton, Norwich.—A. G. G. Thurlow, Gen. Sec., 52, The Close, Norwich.

EAST GRINSTEAD AND DISTRICT GUILD. — A meeting will be held at Hartfield on Saturday, June 21st. Come along and help support the Guild. Have you thought of that 1941 sub?—C. A. Bassett, Hon. Sec., 3, Pendrill Place, Wadhurst, Tunbridge Wells.

KENT COUNTY ASSOCIATION.—The 61st annual general meeting will be held at Gravesend (D.V.) on Saturday, June 28th. Committee meeting at St. George's Church at 3 p.m. Association service at 4, conducted by the Rector (Canon H. T. Southgate). Tea and business meeting at 5 at the Town Hall, by kind permission of His Worship the Mayor, who will preside. Tea (free) will be provided only for those members who notify me before Tuesday, June 24th, to allow arrangements to be

made with the Food Control Committee. Travelling allowance up to 2s. 6d. will be allowed to practising members notifying and attending.—Fred M. Mitchell, Gen. Hon. Sec., 114, Sun Lane, Gravesend.

SHROPSHIRE ASSOCIATION. — A meeting at Shrewsbury will be held on June 28th. Assemble at St. Chad's at 3 p.m. Please note change of address.—W. A. Farmer, 70, Oakfield Road, Shrewsbury.

GUILDFORD DIOCESAN GUILD.—Chertsey District.—A meeting will (D.V.) be held at Horsell on Saturday, June 28th. Handbells from 3.30 p.m. Service 4.30 p.m., tea at 5 p.m. Owing to catering difficulties, will members let me know by Tuesday, 24th, and, if possible, bring sandwiches to be pooled? The Vicar and his wife will supply tea and other niceties. Everybody welcome, but a p.c., please, will be of great assistance in making the arrangements.—F. E. Hawthorne, Hon. Dis. Sec., 39, Queen's Road, Thames Ditton, Surrey.

HERTFORD COUNTY ASSOCIATION.—Bushey. —Meeting, Saturday, June 28th, at the Studios, Falconer Road, 3.30 p.m. Tea can be arranged. Handbells available.—H. G. Cashmore, 24, Muriel Avenue, Watford.

LEEDS AND DISTRICT SOCIETY.—The next meeting will be held at Batley on Saturday, June 28th. Handbells in the tower 3 p.m. Business meeting 4.30 p.m. — H. Lophouse, Hon. Sec., 8, Wortley Road, Leeds 12.

MIDLAND COUNTIES ASSOCIATION.—Hinckley District.—Next meeting at Thurlaston on Saturday, June 28th. Meet at tower at 4 p.m. It is hoped to have silencers on the bells. Bring your own "eats." Handbells, etc., from 6 p.m. onwards.—W. A. Wood, Dis. Sec.

SUSSEX ASSOCIATION.—Western Division. — A meeting will be held at Pulborough on Sunday, June 29th; tower bells (front six; silent) and handbells from 3.30. The Rector (Rev. E. Frost) has kindly offered to provide tea and buns for those sending names by previous Wednesday to E. Treagus, Acting Hon. Div. Sec., Queen's Lane, Arundel. (Evensong 6.30.)

LANCASHIRE ASSOCIATION.—Rochdale Branch. —The next meeting will be at Moorside on Saturday, July 5th. Tower bells and handbells available. All ringers and friends welcome. Business meeting at 6.30 p.m.—Ivan Kay, 30, Grafton Street, Moorside, Oldham.

ST. MARTIN'S GUILD FOR THE DIOCESE OF BIRMINGHAM. (Established 1755.) — Quarterly meeting will be held on Saturday, July 5th, at headquarters, The Tamworth Arms, Moor Street, City, at 6.30 p.m., to be followed by handbell practice.—T. H. Reeves, Hon. Sec.

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