

**A NARRATIVE**  
OF  
VARIOUS PEALS  
IN  
CHANGE RINGING  
AND  
*Interesting Cricket Matches*

BY JOHN CARR

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*And formerly of Waltham Abbey, Essex*

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## PREFACE.

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TO THE ADMIRERS OF THE NOBLE SCIENCE OF CHANGE  
RINGING.

It is with the greatest pleasure, after thirty years experience in the art of ringing, that I am at enabled to publish to the world, an account of the arduous performances I have had the honor to be engaged in during the period; and I have no doubt that after the perusal of this little work, that if any person having the inclination, and talent and ability, to make any progress in this intricate and most delightful science, the beauties of its music, and the entertainment it affords the mind, they will derive the greatest pleasure in joining the many respectable amateurs in every part of this, the only ringing Island in the world, and I will venture to say, that in so doing, they will derive as much pleasure as has been received by their

Obedient servant,

JOHN CARR.



## NARRATIVE.

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THE Author of this imperfect work was born at Waltham Holy Cross, Essex, where his father was Clerk and Sexton for a period of thirty years, and having frequently to chime the bells for service, it was this circumstance which first introduced him to a knowledge of the art of ringing. His brother William, the present parish clerk, at the early age of eleven years, rang one thousand and eight changes of Grandsire Tripples, with Mr. Shipway and Mr. Hints; some amusing conversation taking place, the London gentlemen were desirous to ring another short touch, but William Carr replied, it was near two o'clock, and he must return to school; his name was inserted by the London ringers as the wonder of the age. Now I being daily with my brother, he was often singing the changes of a five-bell peal, and before going to sleep at night, he pointed out the first lessons in this art, and so in a manner compelled me to learn; thus, at the early age of fifteen, I rang the first long peal of six thousand changes of Bob Major, which

lasted three hours and thirty-eight minutes, the following song being composed on the occasion:—

## I

You that delight in ringing, come listen to my song,  
I'll tell you of a long peal that lately has been rung;  
That lately has been rung at Waltham Abbey Town,  
Six thousand of Bob Major before they brought them round.

## II

This was the first six thousand ever rang upon these bells,  
And perform'd by the St. Lawrence youths, who all in  
Waltham dwell;  
At eight minutes before six they struck off with changes  
near,  
And a half-past nine o'clock, the peal was rung complete.

## III

John Carr he rang the treble, he being youngest man,  
John Kennersley rang second, according to the plan;  
Charles Evennett rang the third, until it was quite dark,  
Will Carr he rang the fourth, and he's the parish clerk.

## IV

Wm. Kennerley rang the fifth, who at the Compasses did  
dwell,  
Chas. Woodbridge rang the sixth, and he struck her might well;  
William Woodbridge rang the seventh, he her balance well  
did feel,  
Edward Ovenden rang the tenor, and did conduct the peal.

## V

He did conduct this peal, on June the fifteenth day,  
Six thousand of Bob Major composed by Shipway;  
And now my song is ended, I trust there's none so shabby,  
To find fault with the St. Lawrence youths who live at  
Waltham Abbey.

Soon after this performance, in the month of September, I rang a peal of 5040 Grandsire Tripples, in two hours and fifty-one minutes of which feat an account is given on frame at Waltham Abbey; this peal was conducted by Mr. Henry Woodbridge.

About this time, 1817, the Waltham ringers began to surprise all around, by ringing tunes on hand-bells, performing at the same time many changes of various methods, and visiting several towns, and among others, the town of Romford, the second Sunday, in August; being the anniversary of the Romford Company, we dined together, and the Waltham Company being composed of several persons experienced in the knowledge of vocal and instrumental music, they sang some very fine pieces of sacred music, and the next day some glees, duets, &c.. About the year 1818, Miss Charlotte Carr, in company with several respectable persons, visited Romford, and on the day of the annual sermons for the Parochial Schools, sang before an assembled congregation —“Let the bright Seraphim;” In the resting parts a trumpet blew on each side of her, which had a beautiful effect, the words were:—

“The loud uplifted Angels’ trumpets blow.”

In the year 1819 the Waltham ringers were able to accompany the instrumental band on the hand-bells, the leader of the band being one of the ringers, he was able to tune the instruments to the bells, by which means a very pleasing effect was

produced, and afforded great pleasure to the inhabitants, as they paraded the town.

Nothing transpired worthy of notice from this time until the year 1822, when the Author of this little work was engaged by a gentleman of Hertford to instruct a company of young men in the art of ringing. He visited Hertford for three years, and one evening after walking from Waltham, had the honour of ringing and conducted a peal of 5040 changes, on occasion of which performance, the following song was composed:—

## I.

Attend brother ringers to what I do say,  
 In St. Andrew's church, and on St. Andrew's day  
 At the fam'd town of Hertford the Ringers did meet,  
 And rang a true peal of Grand Tripples complete;  
 A peal of ten courses and two singles combine,  
 With nine dozen bobs, makes the music divine.

## II.

Those youths they had had but six months to train,  
 And briefly to you I will mention each name;  
 For a progress so great, they a pleasure must feel,  
 In so soon being able to accomplish a peal.

A peal, &c.

## III.

On November 30th these lads they set to,  
 In the year eighteen hundred and twenty and two,  
 When Osborn and Skerman, Bill Farrow and South,  
 Carr, Biggen and Foster, with his brother so stout,

Rang a peal, &c.



## IV.

This peal, I must own, it was conducted well,  
 By John Carr of Waltham, who rang second bell;  
 Changes five thousand and forty they rang them so prime,  
 In two hours and fifty-five minutes of time.

For a peal, &c.

## V.

Here's a health to these youths in a full flowing bowl,  
 Also to John Carr, who's a true British soul;  
 May their deeds be recorded in the annals of time,  
 And long may they live in the steeple to chime.

A peal, &c.

The following year, in the month of September I being the leading person of the Cricket Club, after the practice at Hertford, I walked over to the town of Ware, two miles distance, and made a match for the young eleven of Ware to play us at Waltham Abbey on the next week. This was the most astonishing match I ever played in, for when the Ware players arrived and showed their skill before the match began, I was blamed by many of our friends for having made it, as it was considered we should not have the slightest chance, and on being placed in first, we were put down for 32 runs; at this time the townsmen of Waltham left the ground, considering we had lost the match. The Ware players scored 84 in their first innings. A wager was laid that we would not fetch as many runs in our two, as our opponents had got in their first innings. Two, who were considered our best men, came out without a run, but the game of cricket is

most uncertain; Mr. James Carr and Mr. Davis went in and added 50 to the score. I next joined Davis, my brother being bowled out, and I had the good luck to stand the rest of the eleven out, and and bringing up the score of our second innings to 151, the Ware only obtained 51 in their second innings, and thus ended one of the extraordinary matches I ever saw.

While teaching the youths at Hertford, we often visited the adjacent towns, and on one occasion, having hired a coach and four, we proceeded to St. Alban's, for the purpose of ringing a peal on the fine ten bells of St. Peter's, but some person being ill near the Church, we were obliged to forego that pleasure, the following lines were written on this sad disappointment:—

Disappointments attend all classes of men,  
The psalmist as well as the singer;  
The Bishop, the Doctor, the Dean and the Proctor,  
And sometimes it reaches the Ringer.

Towards the end of my engagement with the Hertford youths, two of them in particular had made such proficiency in ringing that they could compose and conduct any length of Grandsire Tripples, and one morning said to me, Mr. Carr, you came here to teach us, but now you come to be taught; on hearing this I thought it was high time for me to resign my office, and signified to them my intention to decline coming any

more. I accordingly returned home, and communicated to my brother what they had said, and we both determined to practice ringing four bells each, and having a peal of handbells in our possession. I composed 350 of Grandsire Tripples, and after many tedious days and weeks, in private practice, we accomplished the task; we then set about a most difficult performance, namely, of practising 576 changes of Oxford Treble Bob Major, two or three hours every night, and, after a long period, completed the task and rang it in the year 1825, at the Harrow Inn, in the Borough Market, before the Society of Cumberland Youths, Junior College Youths, &c., &c.; we also chimed in this year 1150 changes on the church bells of Waltham Abbey:—viz., 576 Oxford Treble Bob, 350 Grandsire Tripples, 112 Bob Major, and 112 Grandsire Major.

An account of, at this time, this great achievement in the art of ringing, was made know[n] in the public papers, and many came from afar to hear it, as it was considered impracticable. The following summer the Waltham Abbey Society visited Saffron Walden, where they assisted in ringing several pieces in the church tower; and after dining at the Cross Keys, amused about fifty ringers, some of them of first rate science, by ringing a course of cinques, in hand tunes, &c., my brother and myself in conclusion ringing the 576 of Treble Bob.

About the year 1830 Waltham Abbey was much celebrated for good ringers and cricketers, and played

many matches with Enfield, Walthamstow, Romford, &c., & c.

I had the honor to play in a match at Woodford, being chosen to play for the county of Essex with the celebrated Fuller Pilch, against the Mitcham Club, and I have not yet forgotten the play of this celebrated man; I considered myself good at keeping wicket, but when I saw him put a man out, I never thought any more of myself.

In November, 1830, having important business to transact in Norwich, namely, the transfer of some property in the Norwich bank, I being sole executor to my father-in-law; the first day's journey I reached Attleborough, both cold and fatigued, and after being refreshed at an inn, I was about retiring to my bed, when I heard the sound of the church bells; I was soon at the steeple, which I well recollect stood at the east end of the church; being an entire stranger, I moved slowly to the belfry, and on entering it, I beheld five respectable tradesmen. As I have often waited in the same way, I pretty well judged what the case would be, when they accosted me with "Can you ring, Stranger?" I replied in the affirmative. They said, "Will you ring the treble to a piece of Treble Bob, Sir?" Having said I would try, we started off, and I believe there was not a false blow struck, but as they say at Walden, there were some good knocks. They were much pleased. I then wished to go to bed,

as I was very tired, but they said, you must not leave us yet, so we went to an inn at a little distance, and a peal of hand-bells being produced, I rang to the amusement of the company, and we were merry until a late hour.

In the year 1832, I became landlord of the Three Tuns Inn, my landlord being Noah Young, Esq., of Hertford; myself and Mr. Wm. Kennerley, both being innkeepers and members of the Company of Ringers, we were very friendly, and met alternately at each house for practice, and became masters of nearly all methods in the science, and visited Watford, in Hertfordshire, ringing touches of Double Norwich Court, Bob Major, Stedman Tripples, Treble Bob, &c., &c.

In the year 1837, we visited Bennington Park, the seat of Leonard Proctor, Esq., and rang on the church bells, after which we were introduced to ring tunes before the family, which they sang to with much harmony.

In 1840 I was taken ill, and remained so for three years, and my business having been disposed of, as I was without hope of recovery; but in 1843 I was resolved to try whether change of air would not be most beneficial to the restoration of my health. I started to Hertford, and in August rang 704 changes of Grandsire Tripples, in company with Wm. Skerman, Robt. Thorby, R. Forster, &c. On the Monday following, we rang 1008; the next

Saturday Mr. Wm. Carr came over accompanied by Mr. Ovenden, and we rang 800 in all Saint's [*sic*] Tower; we then retired to Mr. Farrow's and rang a course on the hand-bells of Grandsire Cinques, after which my brother and myself rang a course of Treble Bob Major and some tunes, Mr. Lobb assisting us during the evening.

The next morning Mr. Lobb, Mr. Wm. Skerman, my brother and myself, started to Mr. Proctor's, and were received by him with great courtesy; we chimed the church bells for the morning service, performing some sacred tunes on them, to the delight of Miss Proctor and the Squire, who politely returned thanks for the favour; in the afternoon we rang three courses of Stedman Tripples in the tower, when I confess I was astonished at the progress made by the Squire, who rang the third bell; after this we rang some Treble Bob Major. The worthy Squire then took us to his house, in the hall of which hung a fine toned musical peal of handbells forty in number, made by that worthy ringer the late Mr. Henry Symondson; after tea, my brother and Mr. Skerman took leave of us and started for Hertford, myself and my friend Mr. Lobb remaining to spend a few days with the Squire; we enjoyed ourselves very much, playing cricket in the park during the day, and tapping hand-bells in the evening,—three of us playing together at once.

On the following Thursday, the Hertford youths

rang, with the Squire and myself, 1008 Grandsire Tripples at Ware; he kindly thanked me for meeting him, and for the attendance of the company from Hertford. I then took my farewell of him, he sending his compliments to Mr. Wright, of Cambridge, the person who had taught him to ring in that town, where I was then proceeding.

I left Hertford on the following Tuesday, on a visit to Mr. F. Evenett, at Wadesmill; in the evening, he invited three of the hand-bell ringers to his house, they brought a peal of twelve bells with them, which I played during the evening. Mr. Evenett, his good lady, and their sons, behaved to me in the kindest manner. On the Friday before I left, I played in a match of cricket in which I was lucky, scoring 60 runs; after stopping a fortnight, I took coach for Cambridge, my kind friends saying they were sorry I was going and wishing me to prolong my visit. I arrived safe in Cambridge, and, as I knew no one, I enquired for Mr. Wright, to deliver Mr. Proctor's message. On the Monday following, I met the Cambridge Company, at Great St. Mary's Church, where I found a most melodious peal of twelve bells; we rang some Treble Bob, and I found them men of experience. After several touches, we went to the Lamb, the club-house; I rang with them up and down on the hand-bells.

On the following week, a peal of six bells was

to be opened in the church tower of St. Andrew's the Great, this excited a general wish that I should stop, and I was selected with the Cambridge Ringers, when we rang the first 720 on these bells. The Swavesey Ringers who had come a distance of ten miles, then took the ropes and rang another good 720. I was invited to dine by both companies; one of the Cambridge gentlemen played some tunes on the hand-bells, after which I rang four hand-bells in 120 Grandsire Five, at which the company were very much surprised; we finished the day with some good glees, solos, &c. The Swavesey gentlemen kindly asked me to go and see them, which I promised to do.

The following Sunday, being anxious to meet my old friends, as I knew if they could oblige me, I should once again have a trial of my ability in the science.

I commenced my journey with my worthy friend Mr. Jonathan Bennett, (the same person who once called upon my friend Allen to go to Cambridge) and arrived at Walden about the middle of October, 1843; the next morning early, I felt most anxious to see my old friend Richard Miller, and after walking four miles, I arrived at his farm-house; he came when I knocked at the door, but had not the least knowledge of me until I spoke, when he knew me instantly; we were both of us much affected, and did not speak for some time. When I recovered



myself, I was introduced to Mrs. Miller, a most worthy person, she was in truth both mother and sister to me, and indeed, the family altogether made it their chief study to make me comfortable.

I stopped there several weeks, working on the farm, and making myself useful as far as I could; in the evening we met over their wood fire, and spent many happy hours together, sometimes I played a little on the violin, at another on the hand-bells, sometimes we had a song, and on Sunday evening we sung some sacred songs and hymns. The first Tuesday of my visit I went to Walden with Mr. Miller, and rung 1,000 of Treble Bob, and Double Norwich Court Bob Major. I also rang on the Sunday, to the great surprise of the villagers, I chimed some sacred tunes on the church bells, and 120 Grandsire Five with some Bob Minor. During my visit to Ashdon, I ascertained by the public press that the Queen was about to visit Cambridge, having expressed a wish to see her, Mr. Miller kindly offered me his horse and gig, and accompanied by his son and daughter we had a pleasant ride.

On my arrival I met the Cambridge Ringers, who ordered me to get what refreshment I thought proper at their Club House, and behaving to me as a stranger in the most hospitable manner. On the day the Queen was in Cambridge, I assisted in

ringing 1,000 Tripples, firing the bells, and breaking out in the Queen's Change, and the next day after spending so many happy hours as my health would permit, I returned to Ashdon, where I was received with as much kindness as had been hitherto shown me. I had resolved in my own mind to start to Soham, but the whole family insisted on my staying until the 5th of November; on that morning I rang 720 at Ashdon, and in the afternoon I rang at Walden the best pieces of Treble Bob and Norwich Court, I think I ever did ring, and Mr. Miller was much pleased. On the Monday evening following, I accompanied him to Ashdon Tower, where I met old friends Rumball, Francis, and Mr. Wright, of Walden. With them I rang 360 Plain Bob, after which we adjourned to the White Horse Inn, where a good supper was provided; subsequently I commenced the evening's amusement by tapping a course of eight, some tunes, &c. After which Mr. Smart and his son played most delightfully on the bugle and trumpet, we had near thirty in company, and my old friend Rumball being called on for a song, he said that is Mr. Carr's doing, which caused a hearty laugh; altogether we spent a merry and pleasant evening keeping up mirth and harmony till a late hour. The next day I walked over to a village called Camps, where Mr. Miller once rang in a peal of five for new hats.

On the 9th, being the Mayor's day, I went to Walden, and rang 719 Grandsire Tripples round at hand, pleasing all who heard it: the Mayor kindly invited us to his house, where I found a superior instrumental band of Walden gentlemen; after regaling ourselves with some fine old ale and good mixed liqueurs, we returned to the Cross Keys Inn, and spent the evening most harmoniously.

On November 15th, my brothers, William and Charles, came over to Ashdon, when we rang 720 Plain Bob with the Ashdon Ringers, after which we went to the inn, where my brother and myself rang a course of Treble Bob Major, some touches of Grandsire Tripples, tunes, &c., to the great amusement of those who had never before witnessed this arduous task. I parted with my brothers on the following day at Littlebury, they going home and I journeying to Cambridge.

On Monday, November 20th, I was proposed at the Club House to be made a member of the Cambridge Society of Ringers, and on the following day I went to Swavesey, three miles from St. Ives, where I found many respectable friends waiting to receive me. In the tower I rang 360 of Fulbourn Surprise and 360 Double Court on six bells. A respectable company met me at Mr. Dobson's, White Horse Inn, some good glees were sung, and at intervals I played tunes and changes with which they expressed themselves much gratified. I found

them very clever on the church bells. There are also accounts of several surprising peals on frames in the tower, the tenor is in F, weight, thirteen hundred.

On the following day I was most agreeably surprised by the gentlemen of the neighbouring villages sending for the Company of Swavesey ringers to pay them a visit, we got into an omnibus and rung on the hand bells some Plain Bob as we passed along the road. On our arrival at Over, we were received by T. Gifford, Esq., the Churchwarden, in the most respectful manner, this worthy gentlemen accompanied us to the church tower where we rang 360 of Treble Bob, and 860 [*sic*] of Court, after which we retired to the inn, where we drank tea, the Churchwarden presiding. Here was much good feeling displayed towards me by nearly sixty respectable gentlemen, all anxious to spend a few happy hours with the great ringer as they styled me. I exerted myself and amused them by playing on the hand-bells, and they in return proposed my health and expressed their satisfaction that they could meet with one so agreeable to their wishes. The evening passed with much hilarity and good feeling, and the worthy Churchwardens kindly invited me to dine with him next day.

On December 2nd, I visited Soham, my health being much improved by the change of air, &c.

I rang two pieces of Oxford Treble Bob Major, the tenor rang as a cover. In the belfry I read accounts of many a 5,000, one rang in 1795, of Double Norwich Court Bob Major; another of Treble Bob Major, rung by two brothers and their sons named Tebbutt; another of Treble Bob Ten, in honour of the acquittal of Queen Caroline.

I was kindly invited by the Messrs. Springs, to visit them, they being the Churchwardens. I spent several happy hours with these gentlemen talking over my travels, at which they were much amused, they being ringers, and when I related to his son the task which my brother William and myself had performed at Ashdon, (I mean our ringing on the hand-bells some Treble Bob,) he was much surprised and could not imagine how we could hold them. I spent some time with them, and they kindly invited me to visit them at any time. I amused many on the hand-bells in different parts of the town. I also visited Isleham, three miles from Soham, where I also amused the inhabitants by playing on the hand-bells, and received the greatest kindness and attention from both relatives and friends.

On Sunday, December 17th, I started for Cambridge. I saw Fordham Tower as I passed along the road, where I heard them ringing some Grand-sire Six. I came to Burwell to lunch, stopping at a friend of William Collin's, jun., opposite the church. I particularly observed the windows in this

structure, ten in number on each side, next the roof and only about eight inches from each other, which had a very handsome appearance; there is also a fine tower, and on the top something fixed, which very much resembles a parachute; I also learnt there were six bells, but the ringers were very young. I next came to Swaffham, where I saw two churches, as friend Allen used to say, in one churchyard. I next came to Little Swaffham, where as well as at Great Swaffham, there is a peal of six bells. I regretted that I did not stop, as I have since heard there are some good ringers among them. I passed by Quay on the left hand, where there is a peal of five; Fulbourn, where there is a peal of six, and where a Surprise Peal was composed by a Schoolmaster. I passed Fen Ditton and Chesterton, and arrived at Cambridge to dinner, with my cousin, Mr. William Collin, who afterwards left me for St. Ives' market, which is held on Monday.

On Monday, the club night of the Cambridge Society, I was balloted for and unanimously elected, and to my surprise I found a good supper provided for the occasion; after thanking them for all the kindness I had received at their hands, we rang on the hand-bells a short touch of Court Bob, the double method, and the evening was spent very comfortably.

January 3rd, 1844, I went to Trumpington, where

I met some five bell ringers. I was surprised to find a new peal of twelve hand-bells, of the late Mr. William Symondson's; I rang 120 Grandsire, five on the first four of them, also a course of eight, and some tunes. I did not ring on the steeple bells, one of the ringer being ill; they treated me every kindly, and after ringing the hand-bells we sung some songs and enjoyed ourselves merrily together.

On Saturday, January 6th, I went to Walden, but could not meet the company. I accompanied Mr. Miller home to Ashdon, and spent the Sunday with him, and returned to Cambridge the following day, passing through Hadstock churchyard, where I was informed that formerly on the church door hung the skin of a man.

On Monday, January 15th, 1844, being the annual feast of the Cambridge ringers, the members met and dined together at the Lamb Inn, where an excellent dinner was provided by Mrs. Freeman, after which several pieces of hand-bell ringing were performed; and the next day having dined together, we rang some Bob Major on St. Mary's bells, after which the evening was finished with some glees and songs in the most amicable manner possible. There are several accounts of six and five thousand on frames which have been performed in this steeple, viz.:—one of Grandsire Cater's, and of Bob Maximums, Oxford Treble Bob,

Grandsire Tripples, &c. Accompanied by my friend Mr. Skinner, I met Mr. Wright and Mr. Page at Chesterton, about two miles from Cambridge, crossing the river Cam by a ferry bridge; we rang on a most beautiful toned peal of five bells, tenor in F, weight 16 cwt., in a handsome tower, several 120 peals, after which we met Mr. Riddle, and rang on the hand-bells with two of the Chesterton Company. I found Mr. Riddle a most respectable man and well versed in Stedman's method, I rang four bells to 120 which pleased them very much, some tunes and two courses on seven and eight.

Friday, January 26th, I walked over to Fulbourn, having a great desire to see the church and town, which has been such a talented place in the art of ringing. When I reached the church, I enquired for Mr. John Jordan, who was once at Saffron Walden, with Mr. Hart, of Brinkley, where they heard my brother and myself ring 576 Oxford Treble Bob. I opened his cottage door, when he said, "Well, Master, what do you want?" on my replying, "I only came to sit with you awhile by your fire side." He again said, "What do you want here?" I looked hard at him and said, "Do you not know me?" he said "Dear me, I beg pardon for speaking so roughly, is it Mr. Carr?" This old gentleman, although upwards of eighty years of age, rang several 720 at Cambridge, on the occasion of the Queen's visit, October 25th, 1843. I did not ring at Fulbourn



this time, as some of the ringers being engaged in their several occupations, could not meet me. I went to the tower, where a peal of six hang backwards, the belfry being on the ground floor; I looked in the church and a very neat one it is, the roof is very pretty, forming a ceiling with several ornaments in wood, and a clock with two faces. Fulbourn is about four and a half miles from Cambridge, and about two miles on the right of the road leading to Soham; after enjoying myself, I returned to Cambridge, and rang and called some touches of Bob Minor the same evening.

On Saturday, January 27th, I was invited to go to Fulbourn to ring for a wedding, and accordingly I walked over on the Monday following, and met a very pleasant and respectable company, and rang several touches of Bob Minor in the tower, and as good striking as I ever heard. It was remarked that five of the company of the six were named John, namely:—

Mr. John Westwood . . .	treble.
” John Downes . . .	2nd.
” John Mason . . .	3rd.
” John Jordan . . .	4th. Aged 82.
” Joseph Buys . . .	5th.
” John Carr . . .	6th.

We rang 720, conducted by Joseph Buys; this was published on the Saturday following in the Cambridge papers.

We retired to the Six Bells Inn, where we partook of an excellent dinner; in the afternoon we rang on the hand-bells, ten bells placed in the octave position, several good pieces of Plain Bob, after which I rang a short touch of four in hand, tapped some Grandsire, tunes, &c. In the evening we had some good singing, and a neighbouring farmer joined us and sung old Mr. Kennerley's song, "Come Jolly Bacchus, God of Wine," in the same old style I had heard it formerly, which carried my thoughts back to Waltham and my earlier days; he also sung, "The Moon had Climed," &c., which affected me much, as it brought to my mind our late old friend and brother ringer, Mr. William Woodbridge, and he sang also much in the same style. A good bed was provided for me, and breakfast in the morning, after which I took my leave of those whom I shall ever respect for their kind treatment.

The following taken from a newspaper will show the proficiency made in the science of change ringing:—

"On the 18th of January, 1844, the Norwich Scholars rang on the noble peal of twelve bells, St. Peter's, Mancroft, Norwich, the longest length of Cinques on Stedman's principles ever accomplished in England; it exceeded the peal at Spitalfields, London, by 792, and the great peal at Birmingham,

by 526 changes, and was conducted by James Truman, rung by the following:—

- Mr. T. Hurry ... Treble.
- ” R. Burwell ... 2nd.
- ” Elijah Mason ... 3rd.
- ” Charles Middleton 4th.
- ” William Gaul 5th.
- ” J. Greenwood ... 6th.
- ” William Freeman ... 7th.
- ” George Watering ... 8th.
- ” James Truman ... 9th.
- ” Joshua Hurry ... 10th.
- ” Henry Hubbard ... 11th.

G. Smith and R. Palgrave, Tenor, 41 cwt.’

Having received an invitation from the Swavesey Company, I paid them a visit on the 3rd of February, 1844. I rang six methods with that Company, viz., Treble Bob, Court Bob, Fulbourn Surprise, Plain Bob, College Single, and Oxford Bob. I believe this company is master of any method in the science. On Sunday, we rang 720 of Court and ditto of Treble Bob in good striking time, and on Monday I started off for March, but the Somersham Company learning that I was on my way thither, wished me to stop with them an evening which I did. I assisted in ringing two half peals of Bob Minor in the tower, which was all they were able to perform; they are a fair peal of bells, the tenor in F, 16 cwt. We afterwards met in the Rose and Crown Inn, and they

were anxious to hear and see the method of ringing four hand-bells, in the work of changes, which I performed for them. I then tapped some changes of Grandsire Tripples and Major, and sung the Waltham Abbey ringing song, after which they responded and sung a glee much better than I had expected to hear.

TUNE.—“*Here is a Health to all Good Lasses.*”  
 Here’s a health to the Waltham Ringers,  
 Sons of music and good singers.  
 May they in harmony unite,  
 When they have rung their Grandsire peal,  
 They then sit down and take their ale,  
 And talk of ringing with delight;  
 Waltham Ringers – here’s a brimmer,  
 May they in harmony unite.

On the following morning I rode to March, here I met with my worthy friend Mr. William Beeton, who was much surprised to see me. I very soon found my old friend Mr. Swan, a farmer, and also a good ringer of forty years’ experience; he was the greatest amateur in the art I ever met with, except my old friend, Mr. R. Miller, for I found he was able to give every explanation of all the Surprise Peals. There is a fine toned peal of six bells in the tower at March, on which I rang several evenings, and among other peals a beautiful 720 of Oxford Treble Bob, Double Court, &c., we also rang on the hand-bells a 244 Treble Bob. Mr. Swan, whom I had taught to tap twenty-four years before, rang a course of twelve in Plain Bob, fixed in a hoop.

On Friday, I walked to Wisbech, a beautiful seaport town, eleven miles from March, on the borders of the county of Norfolk. I admired the entrance to this town, the houses standing on each side a navigable stream, whence the tide of the sea flows up, near here is the Market Place: I walked over the bridge across the river, and found a very clean town, with many respectable shops; passing through the market place I beheld at a little distance on my right hand, St. Peter's Church, with its twelve gothic spires. I ascertained that it contained a fine toned peal of ten bells, the tenor 22 cwt. in E flat. I heard the chimes play 'God Save the Queen,' very prettily. I enquired at the Wheat Sheaf Inn for the ringers, but could only find four of them, all master tradesmen. I expressed a wish to ring with them, and asked what they rang in the tower, which I found was only Plain Bob. They brought a peal of handbells into the parlour, with box clappers, made by Mears, of Whitechapel. They gave me two, I said, "What are you going to ring?" to which they replied 'Some Plain Six'. We started off, and they drove along very fast calling Bobs and Singles nearly every lead, I thought it was to try me. I considered them a little opinionated, making light of every method in the science; I questioned them as to the method of several peals, to which they returned satisfactory answers; I at last asked them the method of Surprise Peals, but this I found was beyond their

knowledge. Before I retired to bed, I said, "Will you oblige a stranger?" they said, "We will, what is it?" I said "By ringing a touch of Bob Minor and I would ring four bells;" we rang it tolerably well, and one of them was surprised, and said he would give a hundred pounds if he knew what I did in the art of ringing.

On Monday, March 11th, 1844, I met with a Mr. Balls, from London, a commission-agent for Taylor and Co., of Loughborough, bell-founders; he was much pleased at meeting me, for although he had never seen me before, yet my name was familiar to him, and he expressed much satisfaction in conversing with one who had been so much talked of where he had been. On the following evening, we met at St. Mary's and rang a short touch of Grand-sire Tripples, and spent a very pleasant evening with Messrs. Skinner, Wright, and Page, at my house, Dolphin Inn, New Town. He gave me several curious touches and peals, and entertained me with a description of his journeys to Manchester, York, Halifax, Leeds, Stamford, &c., &c.; he returned to London on the following day. On Friday, March 15, 1844, I rang the tenor of Great St. Andrew's to 720 Bob Minor, and called it in twenty-four minutes. The performers were, Mr. York, Treble; Mr. Skinner, 2nd; Mr. Driver, 3rd; Mr. Page, 4th; Mr. Rockett, 5th; and Mr. J. Carr, Tenor.

On Monday I received a letter from Mr. E. Os-

born of Hertford, one of my former pupils, and with whom I rang the 5,040 Grandsire Tripples. As mentioned in the former part of this work, Mr. Osborn was rejoiced to find that I had quite recovered my health.

The following taken from the ringing book of the Cambridge Company, may not prove uninteresting, it shows that more than one hundred years back the Cambridge Ringers took delight in the science, and were able to perform some great feats:—

March 8th, 1749	£	s	d
Paid the woman for Steepleage . . .	0	1	8
Candles this month . . . . .	0	0	8
Club night expenses . . . . .	0	6	0
			<u>0 8 4</u>

August 1807

Ringers expenses to St. Neot's on a visit to Mr. Taylor, Bellfounder . . . . .			<u>18 15 1</u>
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The following peals were ring by the Cambridge Company in Great St. Mary's Tower:—

November	5th,	1725,	5,040 Grand Tripples.
October	22nd,	1734,	ditto.
December	24th,	1770,	5,610 Grandsire Cinques.
January	29th,	1773,	5,220 Bob Royal.
November	10th,	1774,	5,120 Grandsire Caters.
May	15th,	1781,	5,040 Bob Major.
March	14th,	1779,	ditto.
January	21st,	1788,	6,600 Bob Maximus.

February	16th,	1790,	6,000	Treble Bob Royal.
October	31st,	1791,	7,002	Grandsire Caters.
February	14th,	1793,	5,039	Ditto. ditto
June	2nd,	1797,	5,040	Holt's Original Peal.

On March 31st, 1844, I went to Ashdon, and the next day rang 720 Bob Minor with the Ashdon Company.

On Tuesday, in Easter Week, rang at St. Mary's and St. Andrew's for the new churchwardens, one of whom came up St. Mary's tower, and afterwards kindly ordered a supper for us at the Ringers' Club House.

On Tuesday, April 16th, rang on the Trumpington church bells, only five, tenor in G sharp, several peals of 120, called by Mr. Butler, for Miss Foster's wedding.

On Tuesday, 23rd, I visited Little Shelford, and rang on the steeple bells some Five Bell Grandsire, Thomas Finch, Esq., the clergyman's son, ringing the third bell; the belfry is on the first floor, and the tenor 15 cwt. in G. We rang on the handbells at the Prince Regent, some up and down, on twelve bells, the ringers names were R. Everett, J. Button, J. Jennings, John Everett, and Joshua Dave.

In the centre of the church there are three arches, and on the walls of the two outside ones is written "Oh, that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end." On



the other is written "What does the Lord require of you, but to do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God."

On a tomb near the tower in the church-yard is written "What his character was will be known at the great day, reader how will your's be?"

Mr. Finch was much pleased to ring with me some Treble Bob, 12 in; I also corrected them in striking handbells. I stopped all night and breakfasted in the morning, and having received great kindness and attention, departed for Cambridge. I passed through Great Shelford, the church has a tower, at the bottom it forms four squares, at the top eight squares, about twenty feet by eight, and appeared rather a large building.

On Monday evening, April 29th, we rang six courses with the 567 at home, which was the best striking on Grandsire Tripples I have heard at Cambridge, and the company were much encouraged and pleased at their improvement in this part of the science.

On May 5th, I received an invitation from Leonard Proctor, Esq., Bennington Park, to meet him and the Waltham Abbey Company, at Hitchin, on Tuesday, May 7th; and after a journey of twenty-seven miles in company with Mr. Skinner, we met the party at one o'clock.

The following taken from the *Cambridge Chronicle* is a true statement of the performance:—

### CHANGE RINGING

The populous town of Hitchin was much enlivened last

market day by the Waltham Abbey Company of Change Ringers, accompanied by L. Proctor, Esq., of Bennington Park, B.A., of Trinity College, Cambridge, who during his residence in college and since, has been instructed in the rudiments of the art of ringing. Mr. John Carr, of Cambridge, having also been invited to meet the company as their leader, they ascended the tower and rang on the noble peal of eight bells, tenor 27 cwt. in E flat, several musical pieces of Stedman's Tripples, Oxford Treble Bob, &c., &c.' they then retired to the Angel Inn, to dinner, Mr. Proctor presiding; when five of the Waltham Company rang a musical piece of Grandsire Royal; Messrs. Carr sung the duett, 'Daughter of Israel', and Mr. Ovenden, 'My Blushing blue eyed maid', &c.

Messrs. John and William Carr then proceeded to perform the masterpiece of ringing, viz.: two in each hand, performed thirty changes a minute in the method of Oxford Treble Bob and Grandsire Tripples, and some splendid tunes to the great admiration of the company. The Waltham Company dined at Bennington Park the following day on their return home.

On Thursday, June 27th, 1844, the 217th anniversary of the annual ringers' feast was celebrated at Saffron Walden. Mr. Skinner accompanied me from Cambridge, and rung, on the evening of the 26th, a touch of Bob Major with me and the Walden Company, conducted by that eminent ringer, Mr. R. Miller. And on the 27th in the morning, was rung 800 of a piece composed by myself.

In the course of the day, Mr. Proctor rang 1,008 of Oxford Treble Bob, with me and the Walden Company, and as a conclusion, myself, Mr. Skinner

and the Walden Company finished the day with 960 Grandsire Tripples, the piece was of my own composing, and was much admired by the amateurs, who expressed their thanks to us for the pretty touch.

On July 4th, 1844, the Cambridge Company visited Ely, we stopped at the Peacock Inn, the worthy host being one of the ringers, and were pleased to hear the Ely Company ring a good piece of Bob Major of about 500 for a wedding.

After breakfast we ascended the tower of St. Mary's, and found a fair peal, tenor, 18 cwt. in F. We rang about 1,200 Tripples in one piece, with some good striking, the day being spent very cheerfully.

August 20th, 1844, on ascending the tower of Bow Church, Cheapside, I was surprised to meet Mr. Mason, of Norwich, a person who rang in the Superlative Surprise at Norwich, and a gentleman from Oxford; we rang some short touches of Stedman's Caters with the Cumberland Youths, after which we rang on the hand-bells at the Club House.

On October 1st, I was invited to accompany the Walden Ringers to Finchingfield, in Essex. We rang some touches of Grandsire Tripples, 960 Oxford Treble Bob, and I amused them before and after dinner on the hand-bells.

I visited Walden every fortnight, and on the

29th I assisted, for the first time, in ringing a short touch of Superlative Surprise.

I forgot to mention that after I came from London, I rang at Waltham Abbey with my own company several touches of Stedman's Tripples, &c. &c.; and with my brother chimed on the following Sunday some sacred tunes, and a touch of Treble Bob Major; the Churchwarden being present, expressed his surprise at this arduous task.

January, 1845, the Cambridge Company rang 1,008 Grandsire Tripples, which they had never before performed, composed and called by myself.

On Shrove Tuesday, I called a 720 of Bob Minor, performed by the following band:—John Jordan, of Fulbourn, 84 years of age, treble; J. Riddel, 76, farmer, of Chesterton, formerly a Stedman ringer, and the only one I met in this part of the country; T. Wright, 3rd; W. Page, 4th; Wm. Skinner, 5th; J. Carr, 6th.

July 27th, 1845, being invited by the March Company to accompany them to Whittlesea, I went by the mail on Monday, Mr. Swan took us the distance of ten miles, stopping at Coates, and rang on the hand-bells a touch of Bob Major. On entering Whittlesea, the Wisbech Ringers were raising the bells in peal, after which they rang a touch of Bob Major. St. Peter's possesses a fine peal of bells tenor, 20 cwt. in E. In half an hour after, the Stamford Company rang 800 Grandsire Tripples, after

this I rang, and called near a 1000 with this company, ringing the third bell. I next walked down to St. Andrew's Church, a fine peal of six, tenor 22 cwt. in E flat; the Raunds Company, Northamptonshire, were pulling some Court Bob; after they had finished, I said, "Gentlemen, what is that name of that method?" They told me "Court Bob"; I said "I was a stranger and should like a pull". They said "You can be obliged." I rang two courses of Oxford Treble Bob. After which 65 Change Ringers sat down to dinner at the George and Star Inn, there being members from ten companies present. After dinner I sung the Waltham Abbey ringing song, and at the close of the evening rang four hand-bells to a touch of Bob Major, with Mr. Swan and Mr. Hunt of March; and there was a general surprise, as they had never before witnessed this performance. I tapped some Grand-sire Cinque Caters, and two courses of 8, tunes, &c., and concluded the day very pleasantly. I rang on the following evening at March, a fine piece of Treble Bob, with the March Company, who I must say are the finest strikers of six bells I ever heard.

The next day I dined at Ely, at the Peacock Inn, kept by Mr. King, a ringer; here I tapped the handbells, and arrived at Cambridge by rail, on the day it was opened to Norwich.

On August 16th, 1845, I was invited by Mr. Miller to accompany the Saffron Walden Ringers to

Braughing, which I did on the following Wednesday, we rang 1008 Bob Major before breakfast, and 2000 Treble Bob after. On the Thursday I rang a capital 546 Grandsire Tripples with the Hertford Company; at All Saint's, Hertford, I also rang with them two courses of Grandsire Caters on the hand-bells. On the next evening I rang at Ware, with six of the Hertford and Mr. Proctor, upwards of 1800 Grandsire Tripples.

On the Sunday morning following, my brother and myself chimed the church bells of Waltham Abbey, one touch of Grandsire Tripples, and the [*sic*] of Treble Bob Major.

On Monday, Aug. 24th, my brother William came to Cambridge with me. At Bishop's Stortford we rang four each to a touch of Treble Bob Major, and the same at Littlebury, to oblige Mr. Rider, formerly one of the Walden Company; we rang it at the Lamb Inn, before the Cambridge Company, and on the following Wednesday at Swavesey, in this county, we rang Court Bob, Treble Bob, 720 changes of Fulbourn Surprise, &c. &c.

The following is copied from the Cambridge Papers, Dec. 6th, 1845:—

#### HIGH ATTAINMENT IN THE ART OF RINGING

The Saffron Walden Company of Change Ringers, on their two last practice nights, rang on the first 1680 changes of Norwich Court Bob Major; and on the last occasion upwards of 1200 Superlative Surprise Major, as follows:—J. Bennett,

Treble; John Carr, 2nd; M. Ward, 3rd; F. Ruse, 4th; J. Richardson, 5th; S. Francis, 6th; R. Miller, 7th; J. Wright, Tenor. Composed and called by R. Miller. It reflects great credit on the above Company, that at the present time, there is no other company in England able to accomplish this arduous task.

On August 31st, 1846, I went from Soham to Bury St. Edmund's. Passing Fordham and Chippenham, having a peal of five in the tower, and through Barrow, I arrived at Bury, and found two splendid churches in one yard,—St. Mary's and St. James's, the towers standing at the side of each church; St. James's has a peal of ten, tenor 30 cwt. in D; St. Mary's, a peal of eight, tenor 24 cwt. in D sharp.

I found Mr. Crack, a ringer, and afterwards Mr. Cornish, a respectable master of an iron foundry; we rang together on a fine peal of hand-bells, made by Symondson, 120 of Grandsire, I rang four bells.

September 10th, I visited Bury again, and heard some Bob Major on the eight bells of St. Mary's; after which I met part of the company at the ringing-house, the Dog and Partridge Inn; we rang on the hand-bells a course up and down of Grandsire Caters in good style, the gentleman who rang trebles being J. Dalton, Esq., a fine striker; after which four of them rang one each to me in a course of Oxford Treble Bob Major, I ringing four, which surprised them. Four of them rang 350 of Major well.

Mr. Dalton dissected the man Corder, who

was hanged for the murder of Maria Martin; his skeleton is placed in this Hospital at Bury St. Edmund's. Mr. D. is considered a very clever man in his profession.

On the following morning I was called for by Mr. Cornell, of Horringer, to accompany him and another gentleman to a village called Fornham, to ring for a grand wedding; we dined at a public house in the village, and I was almost worshipped for playing tunes, and ringing four hand-bells in Grandsire Tripples. I never recollect spending a more pleasant day.

The following morning, I started to Lavenham, and arrived at the Cock Inn, kept by Mr. Death. Mr. Smith, the Parish Clerk, got a band, and we rang 500 of Bob Major. I was gratified to see such a noble tower, and when I heard the tenor I was amazed, for she came in with such a noble sound, that she vibrated a perfect octave. Mr. Smith called a musical piece, after which we retired to the club house; they did not know me. I played the hand-bells, and they were much amused; but when I said I should like to ring four in a piece of Treble Bob, they looked as if they could not believe it, but we started, we rang half a course, and could not get any further. One of them said, I never saw such a job in my life before; he also said, I am afraid to look at him, to see him ring four bells, which caused a hearty laugh. The company then intimated their



wish that I should stop till after the club night, and ordered the landlord to make me comfortable. They treated me very kindly, and I was as one of the family. I went to church with them on the Sunday, and heard a very impressive sermon from the text, "Be ye also ready." After dinner I was conversing with one of the ringers, a respectable man entered the room, and asked me if I knew Mr. Holditch, a chemist in Lavenham, who was apprenticed at Waltham Abbey. I replied "I did not," but I afterwards thought it must be the lad who was at Mr. Haddock's, and I thought I should know him, for he was intimate with me. I enquired of the man "how he came to ask for me." He replied "he had not been in Lavenham a year, but asking why the bells were ringing, was told there was a person from Waltham Abbey; being much surprised, he asked who it was; on being told, he replied, he knew them all well, and had been most intimate with John Carr." I saw him at church in the afternoon with his wife, a fine young woman, and knew him instantly; and the next morning, as he requested, I called on him, but he knew me before I got in, and called out, "What, John Carr!" we shook hands most cordially, and talked of many old tales and old friends at Waltham; but we neither of us could forget under what singular circumstances we had met again. It was very pleasant to me, and when the ringers and others knew it, they were

glad, as he confirmed what I had stated of myself. He came to the club house in the evening, where was assembled the ringers from Sudbury and other places, to witness my ringing of four handbells. I called in the tower 1152 Oxford Treble Bob, ringing the 2nd bell; after which we tried Norwich Court, and many short touches; we then retired to the club house, and whilst I was ringing four in Treble Bob, my young friend, the chemist, called out "Well done John Carr, Waltham Abbey for ever!"

The Sudbury gentlemen rang a piece of Bob Royal on handbells, and Mr. Obert sung three leads of Treble Bob Major, a very clever man; he also rung two bells behind me, in a course of Treble Bob 8 in; and thus ended one of the most pleasant meetings that I ever knew.

The following may not here be thought misplaced. At Lavenham, in the county of Suffolk, once celebrated for the manufacture of blue cloth and hand spun yarn, stands a noble monument of ancient munificence, ranked among the most beautiful Gothic fabrics in the kingdom, both for durability and grandeur. In the steeple of this church is a bell weighing only 2576 lbs., with such a melodious note as to be universally styled the matchless tenor, and Camden, in his *Britannia*, speaking of Lavenham, says 'the tenor hath such an admirable note, as England has none to compare to it; from pages of history, at the time of casting this

tenor at Lavenham, in 1625, some rich wool-staplers and other gentlemen in the neighbourhood, contributed great quantities of silver and even gold to the usual metal, which may perhaps account for the vast superiority of its tone. Three roods of land were left by some admirers of ringing for the repair of the bell ropes’.

Judge Hall, Sir Simon D. Ewes, one of the most learned antiquaries of his time, and Lord of the Manor at Lavenham, and William Cecil, Lord High Treasurer of England, were celebrated bell ringers, and no doubt travelled miles to assist at the harmless rejoicings of the village festivals.

On Tuesday, September 15th, I took farewell of my Lavenham friends, and passed through Bildeston, the town where Mr. Hobert [*sic*] and Mr. Edwards reside. There is a peal of six in the tower, which stands at a short distance from the town. I passed through Monks Eleigh and came to Stowmarket, but did not ring, the tenor bell being out of repair. I heard the chimes, which played at twelve and four. The next morning I returned towards home, coming through Woolpit to Bury, from thence to Soham, and on to Cambridge.

An account of the funeral peal rung for the late lamented Chancellor, the Duke of Northumberland, as taken from a Cambridge newspaper:-

### CHANGE RINGING

ST MARY’S BELLS RINGING THE DATE OF THE YEAR  
 “Tuesday last being the day appointed for the

interment of the mortal remains of the late lamented Chancellor, the Company of Change Ringers of this town, rang a solemn muffled peal of Grandsire Tripples, comprising 1847 changes, the date of the year, which lasted upwards of an hour and a quarter. This peal was, after considerable difficulty, composed by Mr. John Carr, the leader of the company.

“In consequence of the bells moving alternately from their own place to another at the rate of thirty changes a minute, the treble bell returns to her place every fourteen changes except in the last lead, which by a multiplicity of calls or extremes and singles effects it, so that the date of the year can only be rung once in fourteen years. The band was arranged in the following order:—

Mr. York ... 1st	” Skinner ... 5th
” Page ... 2nd	” Driver ... 6th
” Carr ... 3rd	” Rockett ... 7th
” Wright ... 4th	” Willby ... 8th

Composed and conducted by Mr. John Carr.

It may be correctly stated that this peal was struck as truly as chimes, and changed 1847 times. Many persons were congregated to hear it, and the ringing had a solemn and beautiful effect.”

Thus, reader, I have brought you up to the present year, and if the perusal of this little work should induce any one who it not already versed in this delightful science, to endeavour to learn, I most sincerely wish him or them success, and beg

to assure them that though the task may at first be found difficult, the pleasure will eventually fully compensate for the trouble taken in attaining it.