LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

MEADOWSMANSHIP

Dear Sir,—Your correspondent, Raymond Philpott, appears to have taken Mr. Meadows' efforts far more seriously than ever was intended.

Of course there are doubtless, in ringing as in other pursuits, people whom this particular cap fits, but I venture the opinion that this was not the idea Mr. Meadows had in view. All the ringers I have spoken to about these articles, and I get around fairly extensively, are highly amused although a few are not quite certain of what is behind it, any more than people did not quite know what to make of the B.B.C.'s broadcast Lifemanship Lectures.

I can assure your correspondent that 'Meadowsmanship,' as he terms it, is not born of an unfortunate ringing life, and as to whether or not it was sired by the seven deadly sins, perhaps this brings us back to the beginning of my second paragraph.

In his last paragraph Mr. Philpott mentions chess. A well-known chess periodical has from time to time in the past year or two published items somewhat akin to the matter under review, but up to the time of writing no chess enthusiast appears to have been upset by them, although in the absence of any comment whatsoever I am unable to say if anyone was amused.

'Meadowsmanship' is amusing rather than salutary, as it is intended to be. Let us hate other views or ideas if we feel that way disposed but let us not deny their holders the right to express them.—Yours, etc.,

Worcester. BERNARD C. ASHFORD.

A YOUNG ESSEX BAND

Dear Sir,—You will see in last week's issue of 'The Ringing World' the report of the peal rung on the bells of All Saints' Church, Springfield, Essex, the average age of the band being 16¼ years. This is believed to be unique is this division, but we should like to know if any other peal of its kind has been rung. The two girls are members of the All Saints' ringers and the four boys are members of the Danbury Church band, and apart from the one who rang the third bell, all have learnt to ring in the past two years, including the conductor, whose age is 16 years 4 months.—Yours faithfully.

Danbury, Chelmsford. PETER J. CAME.

FREEDOM BELL

Dear Sir,—The German Government has produced a range of postage stamps commemorating the 9¼-ton Freedom Bell installed in the Rathaus Tower, Schöneberg, West Berlin, in 1950, by my firm. It is beautifully engraved and I have pleasure in enclosing a copy.

It would be interesting to know whether an English-founded bell has ever before formed the basis of a stamp design. Perhaps one of your readers may be able to say.

Croydon. FRED C. W. STEVENSON.

Gillett and Johnston, Limited,

ACCIDENT INSURANCE FOR BELLRINGERS

Many teams of bellringers are insured under the special policies issued by the Ecclesiastical Insurance Office Ltd., 11, Norfolk Street, Strand, W.C.2. Particulars will be supplied on application. Those with old policies are recommended to consider increasing the scale of benefits provided.

The Ecclesiastical Insurance Office, Ltd., was founded in 1887 to conserve for the Church of England profits arising from Church Insurances. The Office undertakes all kinds of parochial insurance. 487

THEY WERE ALL OVER EIGHTY

First Octogenarian Peal

A remarkable performance took place at St. John-the-Evangelist Church, Deptford, on Saturday, April 26th, when a band of ringers all over 80 years of age rang a peal of 5,024 Plain Bob Major in three hours and two minutes.

'On October 20th a previous attempt was unsuccessful. There were two changes in the personnel of the band: Mr. John Wheadon, making the journey from Cheshire, replaced Mr. A. E. Reeves on the treble, and Mr. Harry Stalham, of Brighton, took the place of Mr. Frank Blondell on the seventh.

The previous record was a peal of Stedman Triples at St. Olave's, Hart Street, London, on October 21st, 1933, conducted by C. F. Winney. Then the united ages, 612 years, averaged 76¼ years. In this peal the united ages were 651 years with an average of 81.375.

Editorial comment on the St. Olave's peal: 'A hundred and forty years ago, when James Barham rang his 100th peal, the total age of the band was 582. It has taken nearly a century and a half to stretch the average age by four years, but with the growing expectancy of life coupled with the increased efficiency of bell-hanging, it may not be anything like as long before another four years are added to the record. A peal by a band of the average age of 80 would be a wonderful achievement.'

BIOGRAPHY

Treble.—John Wheadon, born Lambeth, London, January 4th, 1872. Learnt to ring at Brenchley, Kent. Now ringing at St. Bartholomew's, Wilmslow, Cheshire. Rung about 360 peals.

Second.—Isaac Emery, born St. Mary Cray, June 25th, 1871. Learnt to ring at St. Mary Cray and now rings at SS. Peter and Paul's, Bromley. Rung 365 peals.

Third.—Frank Bennett, born at Basingstoke, January 27th, 1869. Learnt to ring at St. Michael's, Basingstoke, and now rings at St. Nicholas', Brighton. Rung 1,590 peals.

Fourth.—William H. B. Wilkins, born at Chatham, December 30th, 1870. Learnt to ring at Bobbing, now ringing at St. Ebbe's, Oxford. Rung 290 peals.

Fifth.—Richard W. Stannard, born at Saxmundham, Suffolk, September 5th, 1869. Started to ring at Leiston, Suffolk, in 1825 and rang three peals in 1886. Now ringing at St. Margaret's, Westminster, and Leytonstone. His 140 peals include 10,304 Bob Major on April 21st, 1888. He has rung on every national occasion since Queen Victoria's Jubilee in 1887.

Sixth.—William J. Nudds, born at Banham, Norfolk, May 29th, 1868, and learnt to ring at Banham. His regular towers are Stanmore and St. Margaret's, Westminster. Rung 501 peals.

Seventh.—Henry Stalham, born March 17th, 1872, at Eastbourne. He learnt to ring at St. Paul's, Brighton, and now rings at St. Nicholas', Brighton. Rung 223 peals.

Eighth.—George Henry Daynes, born Lyminge, near Folkestone, July 6th, 1870. Learnt to ring at East and West Malling, Kent, and now rings at St. John s, Deptford. Rung about 300 peals.

GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGED

The Editorial Committee gratefully acknowledge the following contributions to meet the added cost of 'The Ringing World':—

Peals.—Countesthorpe 3s., Chudleigh 4s., Hemingbrough 3s., Dawley Magna 2s. 6d., Hawkhurst 3s., Kempston 4s., Misterton 2s. 6d., Alloa, Clackmannan 4s., Finchley 5s.

Quarter peals.—Bencfield 4s., Wookey 3s., Caston 1s., Ticknall 3s., Helmdon 2s. 6d., Brampton 2s. 6d., Sidmouth 2s. 6d., Ottery St. Mary 4s., St. Albans 2s., Clerkenwell 2s. 6d., Saltwood 3s., Newington 2s., Chipping Norton 2s. 6d.

SUSSEX RINGERS' WEDDING

Mr. Edgar R. Rapley — Miss Enid E. Lonnen

A wedding of interest to ringers far beyond the towers of Sussex took place at Felpham (Sussex) Parish Church on April 26th between Mr. Edgar R. Rapley and Miss Enid E. Lonnen.

The bridegroom learnt to ring at West Grinstead and Shipley 20 years ago and, encouraged by that grand Sussex ringer, Walter Charman, who staged an excellent monthly practice at Horsham, progressed rapidly to the higher methods and soon became one of the leading Sussex peal ringers and conductors. He took part in the record length of Bob Royal at Prittlewell on August 7th, 1950, and in the ill-fated 'raisin' record of Double Norwich Court Bob Major at Debenham on October 21st in the same year.

The bride's ringing interest centred round the activities of the Western Division of the County Association and her loyal support earned her the office of assistant hon. secretary. Her record of attendance—every monthly meeting since November, 1946— must be almost unsurpassed.

The marriage service was conducted by the Archdeacon of Chichester (the Ven. Lancelot Mason), himself a ringer and a vice president of the County Association. Mr. G. W. Cecil (Master) and many officers of the Association, including three Divisional secretaries, were among the large congregation. The service was choral, with Mr. G. R. H. Smith (a ringer from Chichester Theological College) at the organ. The two bridesmaids were the sisters of the bride, one also a ringer at the local tower.

A reception was held in Bognor Regis, where nearly 100 guests assembled. It can quite readily be assumed that the remark made by the best man (Mr. Frank Lufkin, of Prittlewell) concerning the welcome he had received from ringers in Sussex was founded on the hospitality he received from these now vacated homes, and there must be many among the ringing fraternity from far and near who will wish to join at this opportune moment in an expression of gratitude for the never-failing welcome, no matter how inconvenient the time, which always awaited one at Butcher's Row, West Grinstead, and Downview Road, Felpham.

FORTY YEARS AGO

Extract from 'The Ringing World' of May 10th, 1912.

VETERAN RINGER'S DEATH

We have to record the death of Mr. John Coales, who had been a member of the St. Andrew's Society, Rugby, since its formation in 1895 . . . who passed away in his 82nd year.

Mr. Coales had a remarkable career. . . . As a young man [he] assisted his father in his business as a blacksmith. Village life did not appeal to him, however, for at the age of 21 he enlisted in the Metropolitan Police Force, being on duty at the opening of Crystal Palace. When the Crimean War broke out, he enlisted in the Commissariat Department, going over the town of Sevastopol after the famous siege, and being on the field of Balaclava and Inkerman. He was then for a number of years a sorter in the Post Office, travelling between Rugby and Carlisle, retiring on a pension in 1886, when he became curator of the Art Museum at Rugby School. In 1890 he was appointed verger at the Parish Church. . .

He learned to handle a bell when quite a lad but it was not until 1895, when he was 65, that he began to learn change-ringing . . . . He belonged to that grand old school of perfect strikers which the present generation would do well to follow. . . . Opportunities for peal-ringing were very few and he had rung only one 5,000, but it is worthy of note that he learned to ring Bob Major and Stedman after his 75th year.

WORCESTERSHIRE & DISTRICTS ASSOCIATION

THE annual meeting held at Worcester on Easter Monday provided its usual good attendance, upwards of 100 members and friends being present at the service and business meeting. By permission of Bishop Lasbrey the service was held in All Saints' Church at 11 a.m. and was conducted by the chaplain, the Rev. H. Hartley, and the Rev. B. Lane-Smith, assistant priest at All Saints'. Owing to indisposition, the organist, the Rev. J. M. Wale, was prevented from playing, but a last-minute search among the ringers present found a substitute in Geoffrey Baughton, of Clent, who proved to be an accomplished organist.

The general business meeting was held in College Hall with the president, the Dean of Worcester, in the chair and he was supported by Mr. C. Skidmore (Master), the Rev. H. Hartley (chaplain), Mr. J. D. Johnson (general secretary) and Messrs. J. R. Newman, J. Bass and W. Ranford (Freemen of the Association).

The president, in welcoming the Association, personally thanked them for the donation of £5 5s. made to the Cathedral Tower Restoration Fund during the year. Letters of thanks were also received from Evesham and Hagley for grants of £10 each to their respective Bell Restoration Funds

Reporting on behalf of the Central Committee, the secretary said a grant of £10 had been made to the rehanging and augmentation of the bells at Earl's Croome. It had been decided to devote a single page of the report to the names of the 'Freemen,' with a brief record of their years of membership and offices held. Following a loss of £4 10s. in the General Fund for 1951, a charge of sixpence per copy for the annual report would be instituted this year. The reports cost 1s. 9d. each to print—quite the heaviest item of expenditure—and the committee had decided on this course in preference to increasing the subscription from 2s. 6d., and he trusted members would co-operate. The annual dinner had been provisionally arranged at the Guildhall for October 25th, and this date had been confirmed.

HALF-YEARLY MEETING DEFEATED

A resolution from the Northern Branch to institute a half-yearly meeting to be held in the summer in each Branch in turn came in for considerable discussion. It was pointed out that each of the three Branches already held quarterly and often bi-quarterly practice meetings and that other Branches were welcomed to these; that it would clash with bands' summer outings and come close to the annual dinner; and would probably develop into nothing better than an extra Branch meeting. The proposal was heavily defeated, only nine voting in favour.

The librarian (Mr. C. W. Cooper) reported that during the year 15 applications had been received for the loan of 20 books and that since the report was compiled E. Morris's 'Bells of All Nations' had been added to the library. Mr. Cooper was thanked for his services,

All the existing officers were re-elected. Worcester was again chosen for the next annual meeting and arrangements for the annual peal were left to the Master.

An appeal from the Rev. L. J. Birch asking for assistance towards urgent restoration work at Hanbury tower was read and as the constitution of the fund did not allow of a grant from the Belfry Repairs Fund for this work a donation of £5 from the General Fund was made.

The meeting closed with sincere votes of thanks to the president, Dean and Chapter, headmaster of King's School, Bishop Lasbrey and Incumbents whose bells were available for ringing. These were All Saints', Claines, St. John's and Kempsey, the Cathedral bells, unfortunately, not being available owing to work on the fabric of the tower.



THE EIGHTY-YEAR-OLDS, who at St. John's, Deptford, rang a peal of Plain Bob Major on April 26th and thus established a new record in longevity. The band from left to right is—R. W. Stannard (82), H. Stalham (80), F. Bennett (82), W. H. B. Wilkins (81), G. H. Daynes (82), W. J. Nudds (84), I. Emery (80), J. Wheadon (80). Details and biographies of the ringers appeared in our last issue.
[Picture by permission of the 'Kentish Mercury.

MIDDLESEX COUNTY ASSN. & LONDON DIOCESAN GUILD

Bell Restoration Fund Inaugurated

THERE was a large attendance of ringers at the annual meeting of the Middlesex County Association and London Diocesan Guild at St. James', Clerkenwell, on April 26th. The bells at St. Mary's, Holloway, were rung from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. and St. James's, Clerkenwell, during the afternoon before the service, under the supervision of Mr. T. Price, the Association's Ringing Master. The service was conducted by Canon A. Rogers, Vicar of St. Mary's, Twickenham.

The Rev. P. Gough (president) was in the chair for the business meeting and was supported by Messrs. A. W. and W. H. Coles (vice-presidents).

The meeting stood in silence in memory of the following who had died since the previous annual meeting:—C. F. Bailey (Leiston), T. Butler (Ellesmere), W. Claydon (Reigate), M. F. R. Hibbert (Bushey), H. Kilby (Willesden), H. G. Miles (Hammersmith), T. H. Reeves (Birmingham) and W. H. Shuker (Manchester).

The general secretary (Mr. E. C. S. Turner) presented the annual report of the activities during 1951. Altogether 17 District meetings were held, besides two joint meetings with neighbouring Associations and a special Festival meeting on August Bank Holiday. Fifty-seven peals were rung, two less than last year. These included the first peals ever rung of Brinklow, Hereford, Kensington and Wirral Surprise Major. Three other methods not rung previously to peals by the Association were Apsley, Cornwall and Lindum Surprise Major. The list of conductors was headed by R. F. B. Speed (10), C. W. Roberts (9) and E. C. S. Turner (6).

Reference was made to the considerable progress made by two young members of the Hampton band. T. H. Blunt and P. A. Lawrence, and F. T. Blagrove, of Stanwell. The latter had taken part in many quarter peals ringing two bells, some of which he conducted. He and F. C. Price, the younger son of the Ringing Master, took part in one quarter peal on the back six at Feltham with each of them ringing two bells. Tribute was paid to Mr. Reuben Sanders who, at the age of 77, rang the 38-cwt. tenor of Waltham Abbey to a peal of Cambridge Surprise Major.

The Master (Mr. Tony Price) referring to this performance, said that while there were many young ringers all competing to be the youngest to ring one method or another, it was a pleasure to acknowledge the skill of one of their oldest members. Mr. Sanders was a pattern for every ringer; he had never sought the limelight and there were few ringers capable of ringing a heavy bell with more precision and style.

Quarter peals reported numbered 161; the St. John's, Hillingdon, band heading the list with 19.

Restoration work during the year included the installation of the ring of ten in All Hallows', Twickenham. This tower formerly stood in Lombard Street and was moved to Twickenham before the war. The ring of eight at St. Mary's, Hampton, had been retuned and rehung on ball bearings, the ring of six at St. Lawrence's, Brentford, re-hung, and restoration work had also been carried out at St. Matthew's, Upper Clapton.

Officers elected for the ensuing year were:—President, the Rev. C. P. Gough; vice-presidents, A. W. Coles and W. H. Coles; general secretary, E. C. S. Turner; assistant secretary, W. N. Genna; Master, T. Price; treasurer, C. W. Roberts; auditor, M. Hodgson; trustees, T. J. Lock, C. W. Roberts and E. C. S. Turner.

Mr. W. H Oram was thanked for his long and valuable services to the Association and as treasurer during the past 24 years, and was elected an honorary life member.

An amendment of Rule 7 was adopted to allow the Districts to hold their annual meetings before the end of February instead of by the second Saturday of that month.

A donation of £5 5s. was made to the fund for the restoration of the bells of St. Margaret's, Uxbridge. It was also agreed to make a donation to St. Magnus-the-Martyr's, Lower Thames Street, when the work of restoring the bells had been put in hand. To inaugurate a Bell Restoration Fund a collection was taken and this realised £5 14s.

Among the visitors was Mr. G. Joyce, from Hornchurch, who referred to the progress made by the Essex Association and offered to send the general secretary a copy of that Association's annual report. He thought that some of their ideas might be adopted by the Middlesex Association. The general secretary thanked Mr. Joyce for his comments.

Votes of thanks to the incumbents and the tower keepers, the helpers at the tea, the organist, and Canon Rogers for coming at short notice to conduct the service, concluded the meeting.