

Chapter 17

Ringling Achievements

This chapter covers areas of ringing achievement, including illuminated peal records which while not strictly prints are of artist interest.



Old Nunke and his Hopeful Nephew - published by Laurie & Whittle, London, 20 March 1798 (20.0cm by 25.0cm). Either side of the table sit a fashionable young man and his uncle. The bespectacled uncle is reading the Courier, a decanter and glass of wine by his elbow. The young man leans imploringly across the table, hand outstretched towards his uncle. The text on the print reads: *Ringling the Changes—or Quizzing my Uncle. Old Gentleman Reading Last Monday a Society of College Youths Rang a Peal of 4000, 500 Changes, in the Space of two Hours and twenty-Minutes, upon a Set of Treble-bob Majors, being the Shortest time ever known, ' what do you think of that Jack'. Nephew---Mere nothing Uncle---I Ring the Changes to the Tune of more than double that Sum in Half the time, on two Generals, and one Simple-Colonel,---will you Lend me a Hundred Pound for two or three days Uncle"*

Ringling Competitions

The idea of bell ringing teams competing to ring either more complex methods or longer peals is well established, as is the challenge between teams on the accuracy of their ringing. This went hand-in-hand with the secular nature of ringing in the early years of change

ringing and still continues today, although ringing for church services is now seen by the majority of ringers as the primary purpose of a local band.

Judges are normally tasks with listening independently to a piece of competition ringing before awarding faults for inaccuracy in the spacing of blows between bells while they are being rung. Today they are often assisted by modern devices, in some cases very sophisticated IT based technology, to help differentiate between the accuracy of ringing.

An early newspaper report from 1699 provides further information on the earliest known ringing competition to have taken place. This was held at Carshalton in Surrey, the test piece being an extent (i.e. 120 changes) of Grandsire Doubles, on presumably the then ring of five bells. This shows that by the end of the 17th century method ringing and the ability to use calls to generate the full extent was already being practiced outside London.

ON the 26. of this Instant December, at Casholton in Surrey, are five Gold Rings to be Ringed for, best of two Trials of Sixscore Changes, called a Grand Sir: As likewise five pair of Silver Buckles to be Ringed for, round Ringing for half an Hours Peal underneath. All Companies of Ringers therefore, that are willing to Ring, are desired to meet at the Greyhound by Nine a Clock in the Morning, and there to put in their Money according to the Articles, Note, If any Company be desirous to try the Bells before the Day prefix'd, they may have their liberty.

Taken from *The Post Boy*, Tuesday 12 December to Thursday 14 December 1699

Landlords were quick to recognise the potential to make a profit from such events given the spectators drawn to hear the ringing and socialise on the day. Many were responsible for organising an event and usually offered a prize as inducement to attract bands to enter the competition. The newspaper suggests a prize of a silver buckle for each member of the winning band, but money inducements were also common. The Greyhound public house is still situated close to the church and continues to trade to this day.

While local ringing organisations continue to hold local competitions for towers affiliated to them, recent years have seen the emergence of national and regional competitions, particularly on higher number of bells. Such competitions usually involve the awarding of certificates as well as a trophy, so have been included in this overview of prints.

The current principal change ringing competition held on higher numbers of bells is the National Twelve-Bell Striking Contest. It has been held annually since 1975 and is open to any tower where 12-bell ringing is practised regularly. The winners of the competition are awarded the *Taylor Trophy* and all team members who ring in the final round receive an attractive certificate. These are produced by the host tower and traditional features the

tower as the background. The 2006 competition was featured in the Marcus Brigstocke BBC television programme *Trophy People*.

Another more recent event is the London based competition for all 12-bell towers within the M25 network. This competition is for the *Whitechapel Trophy* with certificates following the practice adopted for the National competition.





*The National
Twelve Bell Striking Contest*
For the
Taylor Trophy
at
*The Cathedral Church
of St Nicholas, Newcastle upon Tyne*

On Saturday 27th June 1992

*This is to certify that
The Ancient Society of College Youths
was awarded first place*

Test Piece:

279 Changes of Stedman Cinques

Treble	Simon J Linfood	7	Antony R Kench
2	John Hughes-D'Aeth	8	Nigel Thomson
3	Alan D Flood	9	Philip Rogers
4	Stephen A Coaker	10	Peter J Townsend
5	Chris H Rogers	11	Richard H Burton
6	Timothy J Barnes	Tenor	A James Phillips

Conductor Stephen A Coaker



Judges D.E. Horse
P. Randall



**National Twelve-Bell
Striking Contest
For the Taylor Trophy**

Saturday 28 June 2008
at
Lincoln Cathedral

**The team representing
Guildford
was placed EIGHTH**

1. Elizabeth A Burton	7. Jonathan A Agg
2. Nigel C Smith	8. Christopher H Rogers
3. Christopher J Poole	9. David J Tubbs
4. David R Beadman	10. Nicholas M W Haggett
5. Anthea S Edwards	11. Peter J Joyce
6. Philip A B Saddleton	12. Richard H Burton

Conducted by: Richard H Burton

Mark Regan David Brown David Pipe Ian Roulstone

Judges: Mark Regan, David Brown, David Pipe, Ian Roulstone

Hosted by: The Company of Ringers of the Cathedral Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Lincoln

Peal Records

An example of an early invitation card to hear the ringing of a peal by the Society of Royal Cumberland Youths has already been noted in the earlier section on Social Aspects of Ringing (Chapter 14). More common is the practice of recording successful peals either in the form of a broadsheet for wider publicity, or more usually within a society peal book. Although these are not strictly printed, but in many instances illuminated records, they are included for their artistic merit.

(i) Ancient Society of College Youths

As a long standing and eminent society, the Ancient Society of College Youths (ASCY) has many records of prominent peal and ringing competition successes to its credit. It has a unique set of illuminate peal records which reflect the design fashion of the period in which they were written up. Although peal ringing as defined today is thought to have emerged towards the end of the 17th century, the ASCY peal book does not start until 1725. All these early peals can be traced back to newspaper reports of peals at the time. It therefore appears the first volume of the peal records may not have started until much later with the entries being restricted to those peals which could be traced to earlier reports.

The early calligraphy work was undertaken by a member of the Society, John Cadman, with him being paid 3/- (15p) for each peal written up to 1800. He is also thought to have been responsible for designing the title page for the *Clavis Campanalogia* which was described in the previous chapter.

These peal books have an interesting history themselves which suggest we are fortunate still to have them available today. Most of the Society's property was lost when their HQ public house, the Coffee Pot in Warwick Lane, London EC4, suffered an incendiary attack on Sunday 29 December 1940 during the Blitz. Fortunately, the peal books were one of the few items that had been moved to St Paul's Cathedral Crypt for safekeeping and survived the inflicted damage there. Much earlier William Lyford had proposed at a Society meeting that the then peal book with its silver ornaments, together with other historic items of Society property should be sent to the British Museum for safekeeping. His proposition was not adopted and it was subsequently reported to a meeting on 22 October 1832 that the peal book had been stolen. A reward of £10 was offered but nothing further was heard until a Clerkenwell ringer, James Platt, came across pages from the peal book being used to wrap goods in a butcher's shop in Ray Street. He immediately secured what pages remained and sold them back to the Society. In 1836 John Osborn, who was a historian and skilled writer, agreed to write up the missing pages to produce what has become Volume 2 covering peals rung between 1754 and 1867.

The following pages provide examples to illustrate the range of design.

S^t Bridgets

Alias S^t Brides in London .

The Company rung on Tuesday January 19th 1724. a complete peal of 5060 Grandfire Cinques, being the first that was done

M ^r William Woodrove	Treble
M ^r Benjamin Annable	2 ^d
M ^r Edmund Chadwell	3 ^d
M ^r John Ward	4 th
M ^r John Pearson	5 th
M ^r Robert Catlin	6 th
M ^r Richard Castelman	7 th
M ^r William Thompson	8 th
M ^r William Jackson	9 th
M ^r Peter Merrygarts	10 th
M ^r Matthew East	11 th Call'd Bob's
M ^r Thomas Roman	Tenor

N^o 1.

10721503846
10891031372
13163829704
12537416089
13425078199
14135678199
1364880704
1643280704
1246378190
1462378190
15346829704
13426929704
1643578190
1436278190
16248829704
12463829704
17281304968
10720582634
18900147352
10489765423
10204425276
1346290718
1314669804

These are the Bob Changes of the peal and were Composed by M^r William Jackson

The ten biggest Bells were made in the year 1710 and the two trebles in the year 1719 by M^r Abraham Rudhall Sen^r of the City of Gloucester

The two trebles were given to the Parish by the two Societies of ringers College Youths & London Scholars

18731503946
16984021179
17462928704
15527116998
12435670180
12643958704
16432958704
13463270180
1463270180
13240958704
12430958704
1643570480
14265270180
16348829704
13462958704
17342014969
10178392624
13800147253
10438765432
16804429376
12103860749
12345678904



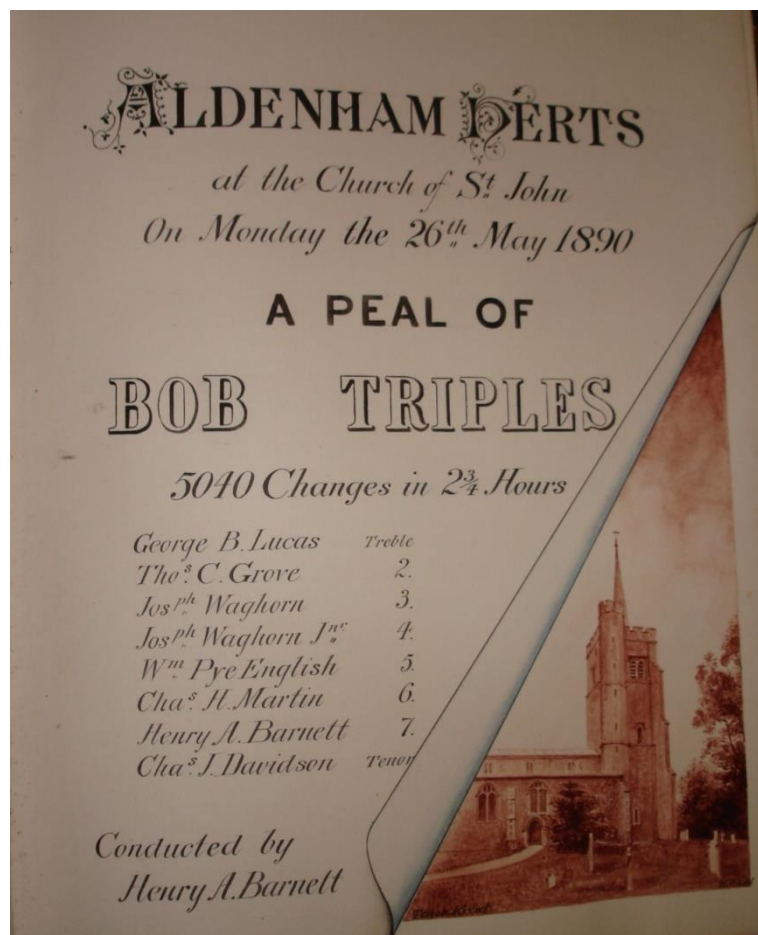


The Royal
 Duckward Chapel
 DEVONPORT
 On Saturday January 11th 1868.
 The Society Accomplished a
 Tour of
 Grandringing
 CONTAINING 5040 CHANGES IN 3 HOURS.
 PERFORMERS,
 JOHN BAXTER... TREBLE
 ELISHA PARLING... 2ND JOSEPH DIXON... 5TH
 WILLIAM BANISTER... 3RD CHARLES SMITH... 6TH
 JOHN E. TROYTE ESQ... 4TH HARRY R TRELAWNY ESQ... 7TH
 JAMES EASTERBROOK... TENOR.
 Conducted by William Banister

(ii) All Hallows Society of Change Ringers

All Hallows, Tottenham is one of the oldest buildings in the London Borough of Haringey. It was originally known as All Saints Church from the 12th century until being re-dedicated as All Hallows in the 15th century. It stands adjacent to Bruce Castle and is reputed to have been given to Tottenham by King David 1 of Scotland to strengthen connection with the Bruce family who were owners of Bruce Castle.

The church tower has eight bells, one of which was donated by Dr Humphrey Jackson in 1801 and is said to have been taken from the French garrison at Quebec and then brought back to the UK by British Troops following the Battle of Quebec on 13 September 1759. An impressive peal book for the local ringing society was donated to the College Youths Library by Henry Hubbard.





(iii) Liverpool Society of College Youths

Over the years there have been a number of regional societies who have called themselves 'College Youths'. One well documented example being the Liverpool College Youths who appear to have existed for most of the 19th century. The Liverpool area has a long association with the Society going back to at least 1788 when James Delafondz, William Farnsworth and Nicholas Nicholson joined. It appears from the *ASCY Name Book* that new members from the area at the time tended to join as groups at infrequent intervals which may explain why the Society of Liverpool College Youths was established.

The Liverpool College Youths were based at St Peter's Liverpool, the parish church which later became the pro Cathedral Church. The ring of 10 bells was transferred to St Helen, St Helens when St Peter's church was demolished between 1919 and 1923. Fortunately, the Radcliffe Collection in the Liverpool Hope University Library holds three manuscripts (MS 61 to 63), the latter being the local society's peal book dated 1811, which helps us examine the connections between the ASCY and the local society. It is interesting that a significant number of new Liverpool based members were elected to the ASCY in both 1800 and 1854, and from comparing the ASCY Name Book with the local society peal book entries it is clear that bands tended to be generally comprised of ASCY members with a few additional ringers. However, a report in both the *Courier and Evening Gazette* (24 November 1800)

and *Porcupine* (27 November 1800) suggests that when the local society was established in 1800 it may either have been founded by ASCY members or called on additional support from existing members outside the area to ring peals.

On Sunday evening, the 9th inst. was rung at St. Peter's Church, Liverpool, by eight young men, who are Members of the Society of College Youths, London, a complete peal of 5040 grandsire triples, which was performed in three hours and seven minutes, in a masterly style of ringing, being the first peal ever was rung in that town.

Whether the local society came into being to allow prospective members to join in activities is not known, but the evidence suggests the Society of Liverpool College Youths was not strictly a branch of the main Society, especially in the latter years of its existence.

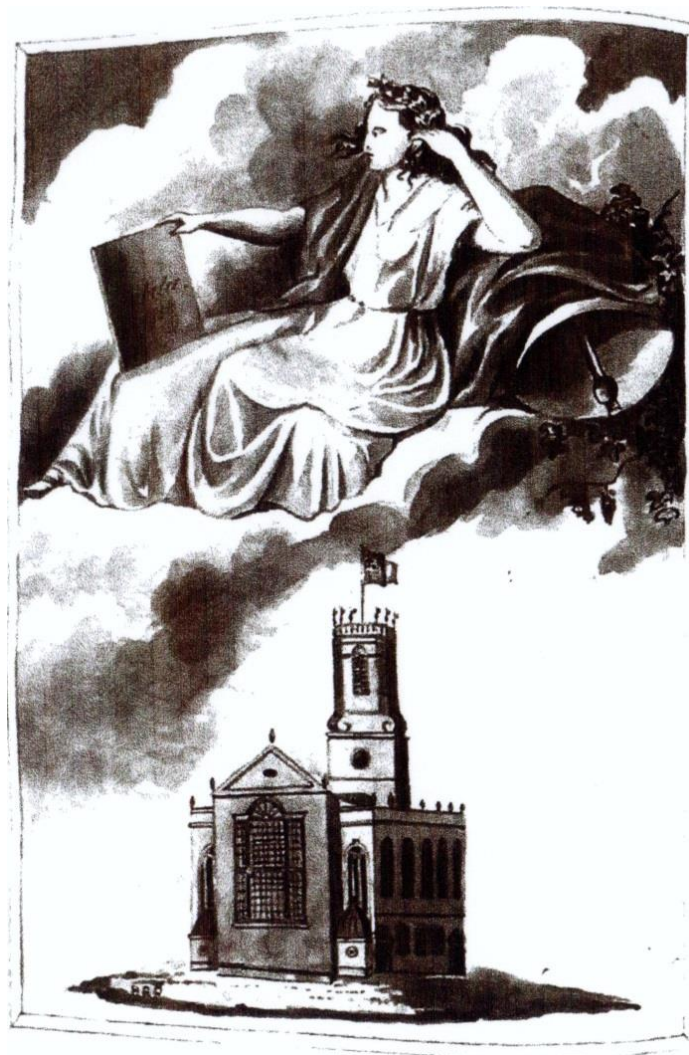
There are though many similarities in the illuminated peal book which show the influence of the ASCY members. For instance, the peal book includes an image copied from the ASCY membership certificate above a line drawing of St Peter, Liverpool. Up to 1863 the peal records were richly illuminated. In total the peal book contains details of 115 peals rung between 9 November 1800 and 25 March 1882, in addition to a set of rules headed '*for the purpose of establishing and forming themselves into a respectable society, began in the year 1800 at St Peter's and re-established at the opening of the bells at St Nicholas 1814*'. These are signed by William Lloyd (President), William Jaeger (Vice President), Henry Rothwell, (Treasurer) and James Briarley (Secretary). Again, only William Jaeger and Henry Rothwell appear to have been ASCY members.

The rules contain the usual references to fines for late or non-attendance on Sundays and practice nights, and for being intoxicated. Perhaps more unusually the rules required each member to '*be particularly attentive in appearing on Sundays clean and decent in their apparel as circumstances may afford*'. The local society obviously realised the importance of a good social side as members were particularly requested to '*meet together after the ringing is over for the satisfaction of enjoying each others company and transacting the necessary business at the house appointed by the society for that purpose*'. Each member was required to pay a subscription of 1/- (5p) each month towards the annual dinner which took place on the 15 May. The rules also promoted hand bell ringing and gave a preference for scientific (change) ringing.

The Society of Liverpool College Youths was active as a society for around 82 years, although possibly not continuously given it was re-established when the new ring of 12 bells was installed at St Nicholas, Pier Head, Liverpool. The installation of the new Dobson ring of bells was widely reported in the press at the time, with invited bands representing the St

Martin's Youths, Birmingham and a band of 'College Youths' from Ashton-under-Lyne opening the bells on 4 June 1814. The *Liverpool Mercury* (10 June 1814) reported the St Martin's Youths won a handsome silver cup of twenty guineas value presented by the Churchwardens of the town for their ringing, the report giving full details of both bands as well as the new and former rings of bells. Other reports in the *Liverpool Mercury* (10 June 1814), *Lancashire Gazette* (11 June 1814) and *Aris's Birmingham Gazette* (13 June 1814) show the opening of the bells was accompanied by significant celebrations - 'At twelve o'clock, a salute of 21 guns was fired from the fort, and the military being drawn up on each side of Castle-street, fired a feu de joie, after which, they gave three British cheers. At one, a salute of 21 guns was by his Majesty's ships in the river'.

While the evidence suggests the Liverpool College Youths was not strictly a true branch of the main Society, the area continues to retain strong links as witnessed by recent elections to membership and the successful Country Meeting held there in 2008. It would be interesting to know if the records that survive from other local 'College Youths' societies exhibit similar features to the Liverpool College Youths.



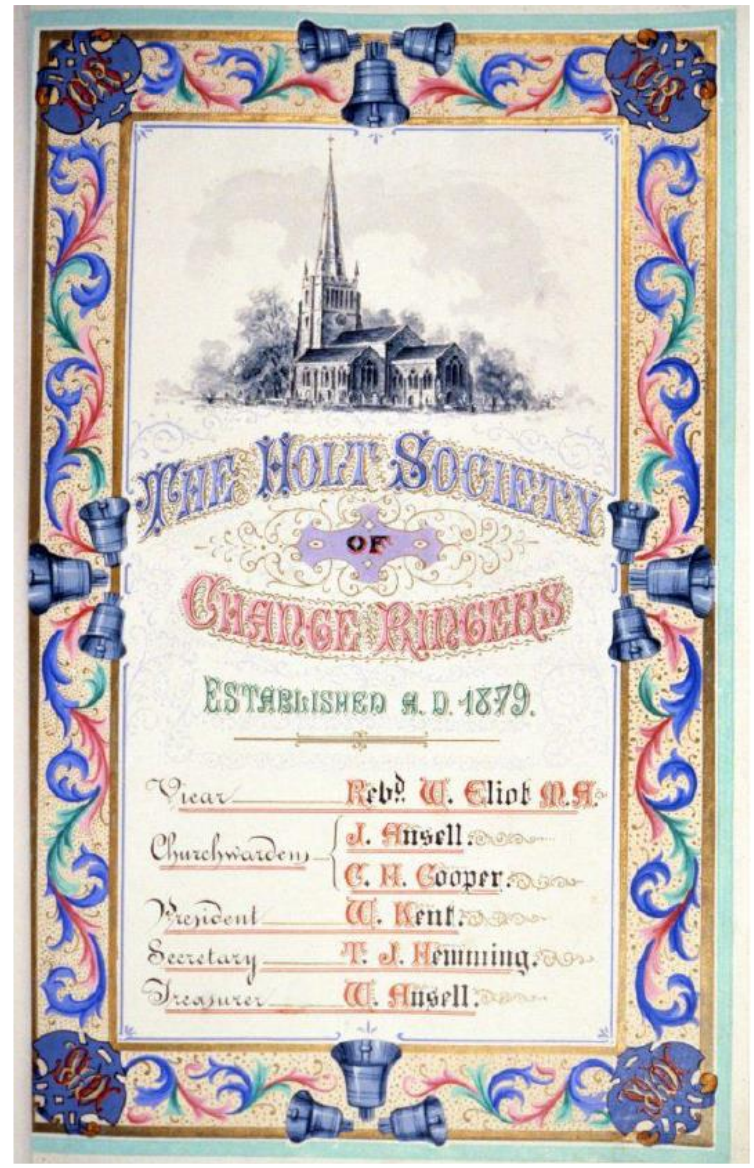
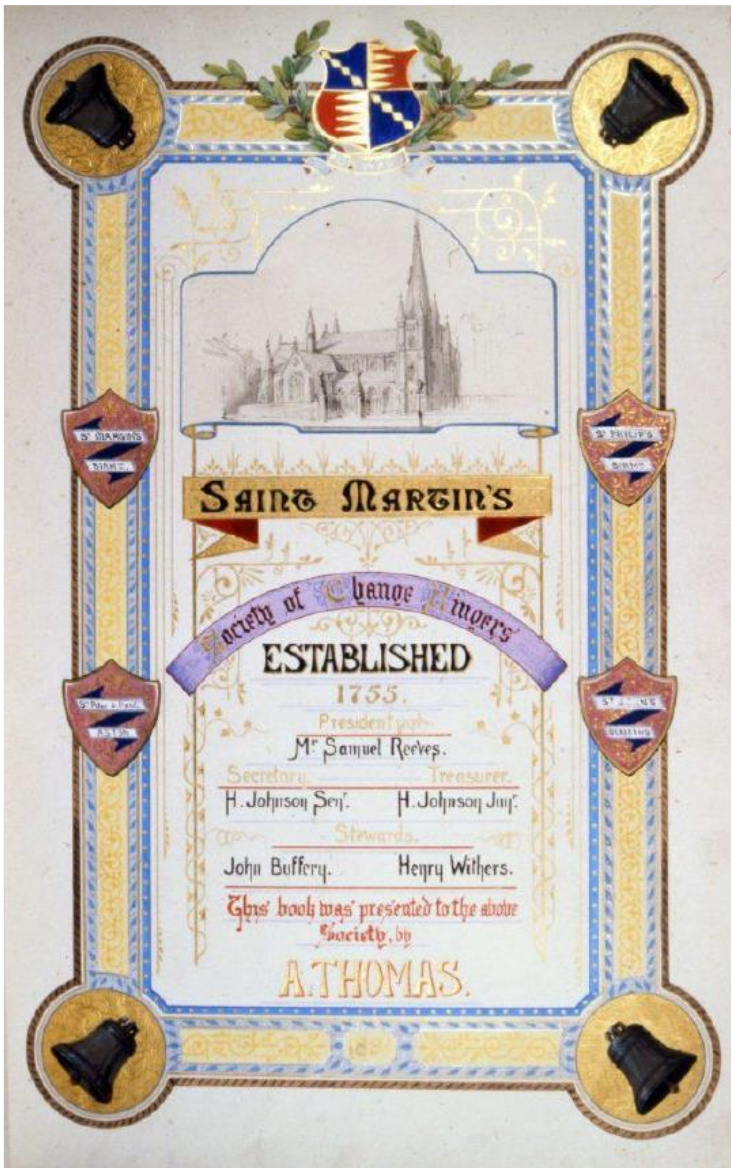


(iv) St Martins Guild of Change Ringers for Birmingham


The St Martins Guild of Change Ringers for Birmingham amalgamated with the Holts Society of Aston on 9th October 1888 (see *Bell News* 26th June 1889, page 541). Shortly afterwards on the 9th February 1889 a meeting held in the White Swan hostelry in Edmund Street, Birmingham agreed an amalgamation of the Birmingham and Districts Association with the Birmingham Amalgamated Society to form the Birmingham and District Amalgamated Society (see *Bell News* 2nd March 1889, page 601).

The creation of the St Martin's Guild for the Diocese of Birmingham was discussed following the creation of the new Diocese (see *Bell News* 29th July 1905, page 246). This resulted in the St Martin's Guild of Church Bell Ringers for the Diocese of Birmingham being founded in January 1906.

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St. Martin's Church
 BIRMINGHAM
 On Monday December 28, 1896
 a peal of
Grandfire **Q**uines
 5214 Changes, Time 3 hrs. 43 mins.
 William A Hancox : 1 John S. Pritchett : 7
 Thomas Miller : 2 Samuel Spittle : 8
 William S. Pritchett : 3 William Greenleaf : 9
 James E. Graves : 4 Frederick Clayton : 10
 Henry Gastable : 5 William Kent : 11
 Samuel Reaves : 6 Reuben Hall : 12
 Composed & Conducted by
 Mr. John S. Pritchett



Church of
St. Martin
 Birmingham
 ON THURSDAY, MAY 24, 1900.
 a peal of
Stedman **Q**uines
 Containing 5113 Changes
 Time 3 hours 41 mins.
 FREDERICK CLAYTON Ⓞ JOHN BARBER Ⓞ
 PHILIP W. DAVIES Ⓞ ALBERT WALKER Ⓞ
 THOMAS MILLER Ⓞ HENRY MIDDLETON Ⓞ
 WILLIAM H. BARBER Ⓞ WILLIAM SHORT Ⓞ
 THOMAS REYNOLDS Ⓞ ARTHUR C. PEGLER Ⓞ
 BERNARD WITCHELL Ⓞ WILLIAM PAINTER Ⓞ
 Composed by G. Lindoff
 Conducted by A. H. Barber
 rung to celebrate
 the 81st. birthday of
 our beloved Queen

Holy Trinity Church



STRATFORD-ON-AYON
WARWICKSHIRE
ON SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 7th 1889
A PEAL OF

SECOOND CRIPLES


5040 Changes = Time 2 hrs 52 mins.

Henry Bastable	William E. Smith
Martin Murphy	Thomas Reynolds
Charles Dickens	Henry Johnson Jun.
Charles Williams	John W. Cartwright

Brooks Variation
Conducted by **HENRY BASTABLE**

THESE BELLS WERE AUGMENTED FROM 6 TO 8 IN THE JUBILEE YEAR, AND THIS IS THE FIRST PEAL UPON THEM.

ON THE IRISH SEA



On Wednesday, Day 29 1901
On board the S/S "Cambria"
on hand bells retained in hand
a peal of
Stedman Caters
Containing 5173 Changes
Time 2 hours 53 minutes

WILLIAM PYE — 1. 2.	GEORGE R. PYE — 5. 6.
WILLIAM H. BARBER 3. 4.	ERNEST PYE — 7. 8.
WILLIAM SHORT — 9. 10.	

Composed by **John Carter**,
Conducted by **W. Short**.

James George } Referees
Isaac G. Shade }

RUNG WHILE CROSSING
THE IRISH SEA FROM DUBLIN
TO HOLYHEAD

