

# Biographical Record

## **Benjamin Alfred SOLLIS (1900 – 1975)**

Represented the East Derbyshire & Nottinghamshire Association on the Central Council from 1960 to 1963 and attended no meetings

Benjamin Alfred Sollis was born in Derby on 21st December 1900. He was the second child of James and Alice Sollis, though by the time he was born his elder brother had died. He had one sister and two more brothers. Ben's father, James, was a railwayman and the family moved to Teversal Station in 1912.

Ben learned to ring in Teversal, Nottinghamshire, in about 1913. His younger brother, Albert, also rang there. Albert had a son, Ernest, who also became a ringer.

Ben did not ring any peals. He was first and foremost a Sunday service ringer. He rang at Teversal for many years and later rang at St. Mary's Sutton in Ashfield where he was Tower Captain from 1948 until his death in 1975.

He was a life-long member of what became the East Derbyshire and West Nottinghamshire Association (formerly East Derbyshire Association and then East Derbyshire & Nottinghamshire Association). He served as Secretary of the Association for ten years from 1953-1963. He was a founder member of the Mansfield District of the Southwell Diocesan Guild when it was formed in 1946. He enjoyed cycling to meetings, but if they were too far away for him to go by bicycle, he used public transport. When he cycled, he tied up the bottoms of his trouser legs with binder twine as he could not see any point in buying cycle clips! He is said to have been a larger than life character, but also very cantankerous and with a terrible temper.

Ben married Vera Clay at St Mary's Sutton in Ashfield in January 1939. They did not have any children.

In his early years Ben worked at Teversal Colliery as a blacksmith, but later in life he earned his living as a market gardener in Haddon Street, Sutton.

Ben died on 20th November 1975 in Sutton in Ashfield and was buried there in St. Mary's churchyard on 26th November, outside the west door of the church. After the interment, the bells were rung open, as requested, by six young people whom Ben had taught to ring, plus the President and Chairman of the two Associations of which he had been a member.

*His obituary appeared in The Ringing World on page 4 in 1976.*