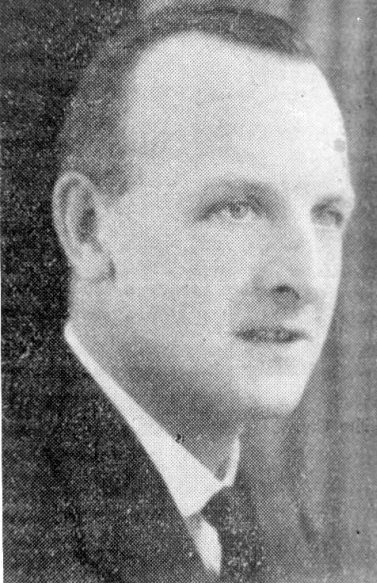


## Prolific Peal Ringers

### 20: HERBERT ERNEST AUDSLEY (1900-1987)



Herbert Audsley, not quite the youngest of a very large family, was born at Crayford, Kent on January 31, 1900, his forebears having lived in the

locality for nearly two hundred years. He was taught to ring along with three of his brothers at Crayford by Edwin Barnett, Snr. just before the beginning of the 1914-1918 War but made little headway till after he returned from Germany and the war in 1919. He then made rapid progress and rang his first peal, one of Grandsire Triples, on January 10, 1920. His first as conductor was later the same year on August 30, also at Crayford but this time the method was Kent Treble Bob Major.

At that period of time there were a number of excellent peal ringers in that part of Kent and in his early days he was closely associated with two of them, John Cheesman and Edwin Barnett, Snr.

In the 1930s *The Ringing World* carried a series of articles on the leading conductors of the day and, in describing Herbert, suggested that he was extremely capable of conducting peals but seldom sought to do so. Of the 709 peals he had rung at that time, John Cheesman and Edwin Barnett, Snr. had conducted over 500 of them!

On June 26, 1948 he married Miss Elsie Nolan, who was also well known as a ringer in Crayford. His best man was Harry Hoverd, a fellow ringer with whom he had rung several hundred peals.

He rang his 1000th peal at Dartford, Kent on April 18, 1955, by conducting one of Stedman Triples. Notable peals were 7,392 Cambridge Surprise Maximus at St Mary-le-Bow in 1925, which was the first long length in the method and

the first peal of Cinques to be rung by the Devon Guild at Exeter in 1927. He was the twentieth person to ring one thousand peals.

Here are a couple of other interesting facts. Although he rang peals all over the country, there were four towers in three adjoining towns in which his peal ringing was concentrated. He rang 222 peals at Crayford; 184 at St John's, Erith; 44 at Christ Church; Erith and 112 at Dartford, so over half his peals were at these four towers! He is believed to be the first ringer to ring more than 100 peals in three different towers.

He rarely became involved in administrative matters but he was elected Master of the Society of Cumberland Youths in 1956. He rang his last peal for this Society on October 1, 1977, one of Cambridge Surprise Major at Crayford, Kent, conducted by Edwin A Barnett.

Indifferent health kept him out of active ringing in his final years but he retained his interest to the end. He died on August 10, 1987 at the age of 87. A large gathering of ringers supported his widow, family and friends at the simple funeral which was a worthy tribute to this very remarkable man who had such a long and distinguished career.

#### References

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87/760,822