

### Table a hazard

May I please draw attention to a hazard rarely considered in the ringing chamber, following a terrifying accident I witnessed while ringing for Sunday service recently?

While sitting out during a touch, I saw a ringer pulled up to the ceiling when it appeared that the stay and slider had failed at backstroke and she had not released the rope; she fell to the floor, a distance of some fifteen feet, but seemed to strike her head on the corner of a large, heavy table in the centre of the rope circle. Although the ringer was unconscious for five minutes, and had sustained severe facial injuries, mercifully no more serious trauma was found subsequently in hospital.

Besides consideration of the obvious points of belfry safety, bell maintenance and access for rescue services, may I also beg ringers consider the safety aspects of a table placed in the middle of the rope circle? I certainly feel that the injuries sustained in this accident might well have been less severe had the table not compounded the fall.

I hope never to witness such a horrific belfry accident again.

Dr. K. G. LEE.

Ealing, London.

### Camberwell Beauties?

One of our junior ringers asked why (all?) our six bells at All Saints, Sherbourne were ringing at about teatime on Saturday (19th May). I assured him that he had been mistaken but he insisted that he had heard them, and nearby Barford's three too. So I asked the Vicar. Apparently a fat man from Oxford, two people from St. Giles, Camberwell, and a lady from Walsall and one other person had called at his Rectory in Barford and requested permission to ring at both his towers for "just ten minutes". Our good-natured Vicar, impressed by their apparent competence and enthusiasm, left his work unfinished and went to let them in. Whilst clearly permission to ring any bells must be obtained from the incumbent in whose care they lie, I would suggest that such a method of organising a ringing tour is totally unacceptable for all sorts of reasons. Naturally they left no contribution.

(MRS.) PAM COPSON.  
Tower Correspondent,  
All Saints, Sherbourne,  
Warwickshire.

P.S. In answer Anthony Smith (RW 18th May, p.424) who said that a computer programme cannot teach ropesight, it can. Dr. I. G. Vincent, of Nottingham (tel 0602-253664) has produced a super one for the BBC Micro, which allows the user to choose method and speed, to ring any number of the moving ropes either instantaneously (like handbells) or with the delayed sound of tower bell ringing. All calls can be inserted as appropriate, the current change is displayed and faults are added up as the ringing proceeds. A combination of this program and Alan Griffin's one (tel Banbury 720359), which displays the changes and blue line for any method, have turned my BBC Micro into a most useful new teaching aid.

### Doubles variation named

At All Saints, Burton on Trent on 16th May 1984 an extent of Doubles variation 53d was rung and named "Church Broughton Doubles".

J. A. CATER.

Hilton, Derby.

## When the Abbey bells ring

The eight bells which have hung in the north-west tower of Westminster Abbey since 1919, were augmented to ten as a result of a legacy from the estate of Dr. Eric Perkins (brother of the late Sacrist, the Reverend Dr. Jocelyn Perkins), and were dedicated in the presence of H.M. The Queen on 9th November 1971.

Two of the old eight are regarded as being historic and a direct link between the two Elizabeths, having been cast in the reign of Queen Elizabeth I, and so they remain in their original frame, high in the tower. They are used for the chiming which precedes Matins and Evensong.

The remaining six were recast and four new bells added to make the present ten, all the work being done at the Whitechapel Bell Foundry.

Before the early celebrations of Holy Communion on weekdays a small bell is rung for five minutes.

On the occasion of the death of a member of the College the eighth bell is tolled every half minute for half an hour; on the death of the Dean or of a member of the Royal Family the tenor bell is tolled every minute for an hour.

After a Funeral\* or Memorial Service\* the bells are rung half-muffled.

### Ringing Days

Ringing on the bells takes place on the follow-

ing days, generally between the hours of 1200 and 1300.

- The Naming of Jesus (January 1)\*
- The Epiphany (January 6)\*
- The Purification (February 2)\*
- Accession Day (February 6)
- Commonwealth Day
- Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary (March 25)
- Easter Day
- St. George's Day (April 23)\*
- Ascension Day
- Election of the Lord Mayor of Westminster
- Whit-Sunday
- Coronation Day (June 2)
- Official Celebration of The Queen's Birthday
- St. Peter's Day (June 29)
- Election Day\* (1300 to 1330)
- The Lord Chancellor and the Judges and the Members of the Bar attend Service on the day of the Reopening of the Law Courts\*
- Translation of St. Edward, King and Confessor (October 13)
- All Saints' Day (November 1)
- Remembrance Sunday
- Foundation Day, Anniversary of the Accession of Queen Elizabeth I (November 17)\*
- Wedding Day of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II (November 20)\*
- Christmas Day (December 25)
- St. Stephen's Day (December 26)
- Holy Innocents' Day (December 28)

\*Indicates eight of the bells are rung. On all other days ten bells are rung.

### Ear, ear!

Apropos Peter Lawrence's letter in *The Ringing World* (May 18, p.424), I wonder if he has tried ringing with the ringers all facing outwards? It certainly makes everyone use their ears!

JOANNA BENTON.

London N1.

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N. Pemble (aged 15) from Dunstable writes in cartoon form asking whether we have heard about a new method. Known as Scargill Surprise Miner its chief characteristic is apparently the "Back to Work".

### Redundant St. George

In recent years St. George's Day has been celebrated in Bristol by ringing quarters at as many churches as possible, including lunch time ringing at St. John the Baptist and the Lord Mayor's Chapel, St. Mark's, but this year there were complications as 23rd April fell in Easter week when "Lesser Festivals and Commemorations" are not to be observed according to our A.S.B.! St. George may be a "Lesser Festival" in synodical eyes but it was decided that even the A.S.B. was not going to get away with that one and through the goodwill of the authorities at both St. John's and St. Mark's, quarters were rung at noon and 1.15 p.m. on 24th April, which would have been St. Mark's Eve in the normal course of events. But "The Book" transferred St. Mark to 30th April and that would have been too late, as sadly, Sunday 29th April saw the last service at St. John's which is now closed and declared redundant while attempts are made to find an alternative use for the building. It therefore happened that the quarter at St. John's was the last ringing at this ancient church on the city wall before it ceased to be a parish church and it was appropriate that it should have been to celebrate a national occasion, even if we were not supposed to observe it this year.

Although St. John's bells have not been rung for service for many years the churchwardens and Mr. Leslie Pearce have always been most helpful in allowing the use of the bells by visiting bands and when the dust of redundancy has settled we hope to conclude arrangements with the Diocesan Authorities for the continued use of the bells on appropriate occasions. But every cloud has a silver lining and on this occasion it must be recorded with pleasure that before the quarter peal began young Miss Eleanor Kippin was given the opportunity to ring at St. John's while it was still one of Bristol's historic parish churches. Watch it Dad, you're being followed!

W.G.H.

**Bristol, Avon** (St. Mark - The Lord Mayor's Chapel) 24 Apr, 1260 Grandsire Doubles: P G Neil 1, J M Stallard 2, A W Adams 3, Rev. D L Cawley 4, P J Harris (C) 5, W G Harris 6. For St. George the day before and St. Mark the day after - Old style! And 1272 London Surprise Minor: Catherine A Cridland 1, Sheila Taylor 2, Clare Pipe-Wolferstan 3, I P Hill 4, C H P Pipe-Wolferstan (C) 5, M P Taylor 6. The last quarter on the bells before closure of this ancient parish church as redundant. £1

### Wilton first

The Taunton Branch of the Bath and Wells Diocesan Association of Changeringers held its Annual Striking Competition on Saturday 12th May, on the recently rehung six bells of Bishop's Hull. Mr. Reg Colman, the Assistant Ringing Master, organised the event and during the evening seven teams from different towers, rang a test piece which was judged by Mr. and Mrs. Brian Wylde from the Bridgwater Branch. The competition was won by Wilton who had only 15 faults. Second was the home team from Bishop's Hull with 19 faults; 3rd, St. James, Taunton; 4th, a scratch team which included three ringers from Churchstanton; 5th, Pitminster; 6th, Wellington; 7th Corfe.

Over 50 people attended and refreshments were prepared by the local Bishop's Hull ringers.