

“WILL YOU CALL A TOUCH PLEASE, BOB”

A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO CONDUCTING

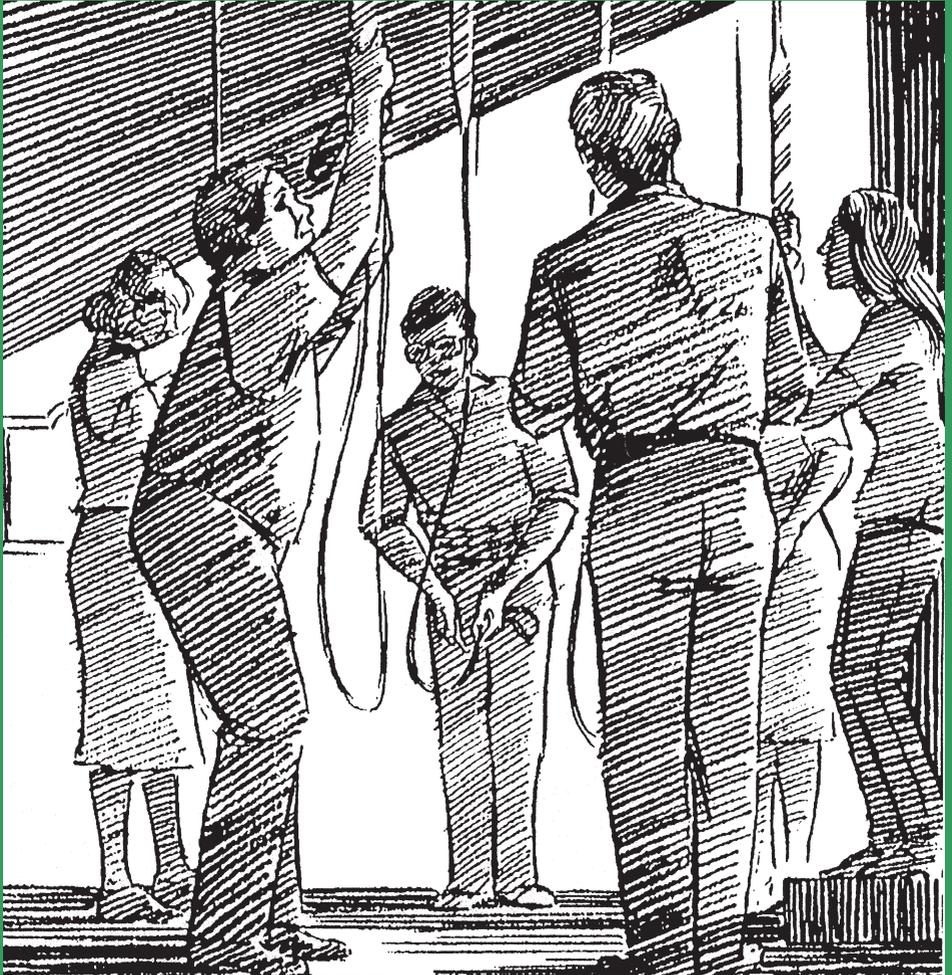


Illustration by Jack Peppiat

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**“Will You Call a Touch,
Please, Bob”**

by

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Author's Note

For convenience, reference is made throughout to the male gender. Of course all comments apply equally to the female and should be interpreted accordingly.

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INTRODUCTION

How often have you stood at a District Practice meeting and marvelled at the ringer who can not only ring everything but call everything as well? Not only that, but when mistakes occur he seems to be able to ring every other bell at the same time! "Beyond me," you might think. "Yet it would be nice to be able to call the odd touch. Wonder how it's done."

There are many towers where there is no one who is capable of calling a touch if the Captain is away. In some cases the Captain himself doesn't seem to want to go further. In these circumstances, the novice conductor is worth his weight in gold, for without him little or no progress can be made. It is to help him that this book has been written.

PART 1

WHAT IS THE CONDUCTOR?

Basically, the conductor is the person in charge. Straight away, this is an advantage, for it is an accepted fact in Ringing that whatever the conductor says must be carried out without question. Mind you, there might be a few questions afterwards but no matter; whilst the ringing is in progress the conductor reigns supreme.

It is he who starts the ringing. It is he who stops it. In between, it is he who calls the bobs. With practice, he might even be able to correct the occasional mistake. But there is the first misconception held by many would-be conductors and which often frightens many away. It is not his job to ring other people's bells. It is their duty to ring properly; their responsibility to learn the method properly, and to avoid mistakes. The only duty the conductor has in this respect is to make sure that he knows the method "inside out", and that he does not go wrong himself. Providing that he does this, no one can blame the conductor for other people's mistakes. Too often the guilty party tries to make the conductor feel inadequate if the touch fires out. Don't be put off. This is the oldest trick in the book - "Belfrymanship". Ignore it. Instead let us see how we can make sure that at least the calling is correct. How do we start?

THE PREPARATION

There is no substitute for Homework. Just as with learning a method, hours spent with pencil and paper at home will make all the difference to the performance in the tower. The first duty of the conductor, whether calling Bob Doubles, or Spliced Surprise Maximus (yes, the same basic rules still apply) is to know the composition. So, how are touches written out? What do the compositions we see in the Ringing World Diary mean? Let us have a look, and then see how we can remember where to put the calls.

WRITING OUT A TOUCH

We could of course write out every row, and to start with, this isn't a bad idea. It does take ages, however, and it won't be too long before one realises that normally a call only affects the rows at which the treble leads. This is true in all methods where the treble does the same work each lead (called "Treble Dominated Methods". It does not apply to "Principles" like Stedman where the treble does exactly the same work as the other bells).

Let us consider Plain Bob Doubles and look at the first lead or so of the Plain Course as shown:

123456	
214356	
241536	
425136	
452316	
543216	
534126	
351426	351426
315246	315246
132546	132546
<u>135246</u>	at a bob this becomes <u>123546</u>
312546	215346
321456	251436
234156	524136
etc.	etc.

The bob takes effect at the backstroke lead of the treble. Indeed, dodging only occurs at the backstroke lead of the treble. We can therefore write out the plain course, and later touches, in a shorthand way by only writing out that row. As we are using shorthand, and as we know that the treble will always be leading, we can forget him, and rounds becomes

23456

Since the tenor (on 6 bells) is always last in doubles, we can forget him too. Hence rounds now becomes

2345

Using this technique, a plain course of Bob Doubles becomes

2345

3524

5432

4253

2345

which is very much shorter than writing out all forty changes. Even so, we must know what these rows mean. Consider 3524 and remember that it is really

13524

Now we can see that the three is in second's place, so it must be making seconds; the five is in thirds place so it must have dodged in 3-4 up; the two is in fourth's place so it must have dodged in 3-4 down; and finally, the four, being in fifth's place, must be doing four blows behind. We say that the three becomes "Seconds place bell" because he will do the work which the two does at the start of the plain course (i.e. 3-4 down), Likewise the two becomes fourths place bell and so on.

Now don't panic! Whilst this helps us work out where the calls come, we don't need to know all this actually to call the touch. Of course, it helps, particularly if we have to put anyone right, but once we have done our "paperwork" at home it is not necessary to remember this to actually call the bobs in the tower. Eventually, you will be able to "see" this whilst you are ringing, so don't worry. It does, however, help us to work out the rows quickly by a process known as transposition. This is shown for information in Appendix 3.

Let us now write out a touch using our shorthand. Consider this standard 120:

2345
- 2354
3425
4532
5243
- 5234
2453
4325
3542
- 3524
5432
4253
2345

The "-" at the side of the first row and each subsequent fourth row is the symbol for a "bob", and the row is called a "bob lead". in methods where "singles" are used, the "-" is replaced by "S". Remember that this does not tell us the precise point at which the call has to be made; we'll come to that later. It merely shows the result of calling a bob.

So what can we deduce from a bob lead? Consider the lead

- 2354

We remember that this is really the backstroke lead

- 12354

hence the two, which is in second's place, must have run in; the three, being in third's place, must have run out, and the five, being in fourth's place, must have made the bob. The four, being in fifth's place, must be doing four blows behind and therefore has not been affected by the bob.

THE OBSERVATION BELL

If we look at this touch a little further, we shall see that in this particular touch the four is always doing four blows behind at a bob. It is the only bell which does the same work every time a bob is called. We therefore give it a special name: we call it "The Observation Bell".

Now we are getting somewhere. We can see that if a bob is called every time the four is doing four blows behind, the touch will come round after 120 changes.

WHEN TO CALL A BOB

Now let us see if we can develop some useful hints to help us in the tower. Let us assume that we are ringing the four. We know that we must call a bob whenever we are going to do four blows behind. We also know that we shall pass the treble in 3-4 just before we do this and we should know that this will be at handstroke. So we can now say that every time we ring over the treble at handstroke in fourth's place going out to the back, we must call a bob. After three such calls the bells will come round when we next dodge 3-4 down. This works. Try it and see. Well, go on. Then come back and read on!

Like all good organisers, we should make some contingency plans to cater for possible disasters in the tower. What if, having looked up the calling from the four, we find that John Smith has already caught hold of the four. He gets very nasty if anyone else wants to ring his bell, so what would we do? There are several possibilities. We could just panic, and admit that "we can only call it from the four". That won't achieve very much other than upset John Smith, and possibly cause a riot when the rest of the band realise that they can't ring a touch after all. We could watch John Smith very closely and call a bob every time he passes the treble in 3-4. With practice this isn't as difficult as it sounds but, for the first few times, we might lose concentration on what we are doing and as the first rule of conducting is not to go wrong oneself, we'd better look for something else. let us re-examine our touch.

If we start the touch by calling a bob at the second lead instead of the first, and apply the same rules, the bells will again come round after 120 changes, but this time the two will be the observation bell, not the four. So it is for all the working bells. Each bell can be called to be the observation bell. So call yourself to be the observation bell and let John Smith get on with it. The problem is solved.

CALLING FROM A NON-OBSERVATION BELL

Armed with this information, anyone can call a touch, quarter peal, or even a peal of Plain Bob Doubles. Mind you, a peal of 42 extents with yourself as observation does get a bit boring, even if it is perfectly acceptable in the eyes of the Central Council! How then can we call John Smith to be observation whilst we are ringing say the two? Once again the answer is found with pencil and paper. Write out the touch, and note what the two will be doing each time the four is four blows behind. Then take each bell as observation in turn and do likewise. In every case the order of work is the same. We merely start in a different place. This order, which will crop up over and over again in conducting not only Bob Doubles, but in many other compositions, should be committed to memory for ever. It is:

Run in; Run out; Make the bob

We can start anywhere and maintain the cyclical order. Thus it could be

Run out; Make the bob; Run in

or Make the bob; Run in; Run out

Do note which bell is observation for each of these alternatives.

Armed with this information, you can now call every extent of Bob Doubles from any bell no matter what happens.

Before leaving the subject of shorthand writing of touches, our system can be developed a stage further. We can write down only the bob leads. Providing we also state how many leads occur between the bobs, almost the same information can be given. Thus our touch above now becomes

120

2345

- 2354 1

- 5234 4

- 3254 4

P 2345 3 P = Plain lead

Here the bob symbol is placed on the left hand side of the rows and the figures on the right indicate the leads between them. Hence the first bob occurs at the first lead, the second bob four leads later, and so on.

Using the same system, a composition 60 changes long, used extensively in quarter peals, would be written:

60

2345

- 2354 1

- 3452 2

- 4253 2

P 2345 1 P = Plain lead

If the bob sign is omitted from the left hand side this indicates that all stated rows are "bob rows".

PART 2

IN THE TOWER

Practice Night arrives. Now to see if it really works. We already have the strongest weapon in any ringer's armoury - Confidence. We know what we will be doing. No need for furtive glances at the text book before we start. We are ready. We look as if we know what's going on. And do you know, this will rub off onto every other member of the band. Each will have confidence in you as the conductor and, because of that, he will feel more sure of himself, and you will feel the difference in the quality of the opening rounds. Already there has been a subtle change from "we" to "you". You can now do it yourself - on your own, and good luck. You will enjoy it. Of course, there is still much to learn, and the points in the following pages are well worth remembering. Everyone adds to these points from his own experiences, but these are fundamental.

MAKING THE CALLS - SOME DOs AND DON'Ts

1. Unless the bells are very loud, there is no need to blast the ringer opposite you through the wall, He hasn't done anything to upset you (yet), so why take it out on him? Just make sure that your calls or instructions are loud enough and clear enough to be heard and understood by everyone. Say "Go, Bob Doubles" in a pleasant call; not a bawl! Oh, and incidentally, when you are more experienced, you will find that it is not necessary to stipulate that you are ringing "Doubles" or "Minor" etc. The Tower Captain should have made it perfectly clear that he wants "Bob **Doubles**" or "Bob **Minor**" before you start. So, "Go, Plain Bob is perfectly adequate. Even worse is the technically correct "Go, Cambridge Surprise Major" - "Go, Cambridge" is enough. And really, "Go, Double Norwich Court Bob Major" is just not on! "Go, Double Norwich" will save you breath and will ensure that everyone starts at the same time. You might think that you will not be calling these things for a long time but you will be surprised just how many conductors still do these things after many years. Of course it doesn't really matter but it does show more polish and generates confidence.

2 Call "Go", at the handstroke pull of the treble before you want the changes to start. Just as he is pulling off, not when his hands are in the air on the way up to the backstroke.

3. In practice, strictly the rules say that the bob should be called a whole pull before the call is to take effect. In Bob Doubles this will be when the treble is in second's place before leading. By calling the bob when we ring over the treble at handstroke, he will only be in third's place, so the bob will be slightly early. So we shall call the bob just as we go into fifth's place after passing the treble in 3-4. Remember that it is always better to call a bob slightly early than slightly late.

4. Make all calls clearly and avoid ambiguity. If putting someone right, it is better, if less friendly, to use the number of the bell, rather than the ringer's christian name. Four "Johns" all trying to lead at the same time does cause some confusion!

5. "That's all" should be called at the point when the bells come round, i.e. just as the treble leads at the beginning of the row 123456. Some conductors use "This is all". It does not matter.

6. So far no mention has been made of the quality of the ringing. This is the most important part of all ringing. It is the most important duty of any conductor to make sure that the ringing is as good as possible. He should make sure that the rounds are perfect before the bells go into changes, for if the band cannot ring perfect rounds there is little hope that good striking will be achieved once changes have commenced. This is not easy. A separate section (Appendix 1) is included on achieving good striking later in the book. Whatever else happens, do not let the bells fire out. Call "Stand" if a trip occurs which cannot be corrected quickly. This is entirely the conductor's responsibility.

7. At the end of a particular touch, "Stand" should be called at the handstroke lead of the Treble a whole pull before the bells are required to cease. Generally, do allow a reasonable number of rounds before calling "Stand", as this finishes off the performance. The one exception is when the Service started three minutes ago!!

PART 3

CALLING POSITIONS

Having mastered calling Bob Doubles, we can now apply the same approach to Plain Bob on higher numbers of bells. The same rules apply to writing out the touches using shorthand. The only difference is the definition of the observation bell. On all numbers of bells above five, the observation bell is usually taken as being the heaviest working bell, i.e. the six in Minor, the seven in Triples, the eight in Major and so on.

The various calling positions are given names which themselves are abbreviated and, since this can cause confusion, we shall develop this in some detail.

Let us start with **Bob Minor**. A call can be made at any lead. Some, because of the music produced, are more popular than others but we can write out each lead as rung by the observation bell (i.e. the six) horizontally across the page thus:

Dodging Position	5-6 Up	3-4 Up	2nds	3-4 Down	5-6 Down
Name	Wrong	Fourths	Before	In	Home
Shorthand	W	4ths	B	I	H

Some brief notes about the names might help at this stage before we go any further.

1. **Home** (Sometimes also called "Right")

When the observation bell is in the position which he normally occupies in rounds, he is said to be "Home". Thus in Bob Minor, the tenor will be in sixth's place, and we will see from the plain course if we write it out, that any bell which is in 6th's place at the backstroke lead of the treble must be dodging in 5-6 down. This is abbreviated to "H".

2. **Wrong** (abbreviated to "W")

Generally (although there can be variations for odd numbers of bells - see Bob Triples later) when the observation bell is in the penultimate place at the lead head (the technical name for the backstroke lead of the treble) it is said to be "Wrong". In this position, the Observation bell will have dodged 5-6 up in Bob Minor.

3. **Fourths** (abbreviated to "4ths" or sometimes "IV")

So named because of what the bell does as a result of the call.

4. **Before** (abbreviated to "B") sometimes also called **Out** (abbreviated to "O")

So named because the observation bell leads **before** the treble. It is usual on the higher numbers of even bells to keep the tenors coursing each other (see Appendix 2). Although a bob Before causes the tenor to run out (hence the alternative name) and the bell coursing him to run in, their relative positions are unchanged, and in subsequent leads they remain coursing each other.

Where more than one bob Before is to be called in consecutive leads, a number sometimes replaces the sign to indicate how many bobs are required. Some composers use "X" to denote a bob Before to indicate that the length of the course is affected by this call.

5. **In** (abbreviated to "I")

Again so named because of what the bell does as a result of the call.

Now put in some calls. Let us assume we are going to call the tenor **Wrong**, **Before** and **Home**. Developing the above, this would be shown as

W	4ths	B	1	H	23456
-		-		-	52436

We do not need to stipulate the positions where calls are not made, so we can shorten this further by writing it as:

W	B	H	23456
-	-	-	52436

On numbers greater than six there is one further name which is used extensively - "**Middle**". This is the name given to the 'bell occupying the last position but two at the lead head. In **Major**, this means the bell dodging in 5-6 down and in this case **Wrong** would be 7-8 up and Home 7-8 down.

There is one other position, less commonly used - the bell dodging in 5-6 up in Major is referred to as "5ths" (or V).

At this stage I must now talk about Bob Triples for this method is the exception which proves the rule and has caused all sorts of problems as a result.

In **Bob Triples** there are two possible interpretations of the calling positions "Wrong" and "Middle". Whilst modern practice uses the same definition of Middle as in Bob Major, ie. 5-6 down, and Wrong as in Bob Minor, i.e. 5-6 up, there are many purists and almost as many compositions which use M as 5-6 up and W as 5-6 down in accordance with the position of the observation bell at the lead head. It is essential that the conductor fully realises which the composer intends and if the composition only includes calls at W H or M H then he should work out the course head (i.e. the row occurring at the backstroke lead of the Treble when the observation bell is Home) using both definitions to ensure that the required row is achieved. If there are calls at Wrong, Middle and Home then it is easier. Again, writing out all the dodging positions for the seventh horizontally we get

5-6 Up 3-4 Up 2nds 3-4 Down 5-6 Down 4 in 7ths

If W = 5-6 up and M = 5-6 down the headings will be written in shorthand as

W B M H 234567

But, if W = 5-6 down and M = 5-6 up we get

M B W H 234567

So, if W comes first in the headings, it must represent 5-6 up, but if M comes first then W must be 5-6 down and M will be 5-6 up. Even with this understanding, it is still wise to check the first course head to ensure that the composer's definitions agree with your own.

Again, the call is indicated when the treble is in second's place before leading. The conductor can either determine where this should be by using a similar analysis as for Bob Doubles explained earlier, or by now, he should be able to watch the treble, and call exactly when the treble is in second's place.

STANDARD TOUCHES

It is very useful to remember standard touches which apply to any method on any number of bells. Whilst regrettably these are few, one such touch should be remembered and learned thoroughly by all conductors. It is simply remembered as

W H W H

For **Bob Minor**, the touch constitutes 120 changes, which we can now write out in one of two ways.

	EITHER		OR
	<u>23456</u>		W H <u>23456</u>
	-23564 (W)*	- -	45236
	36245	- -	23456
	64352		
	45623		
Course Head	- 45236 (H)*		
	- 45362 (W)*		
	56423		
	62534		
	23645		
Course Head	- 23456 (H)*		

**not normally shown*

The course heads shown are places where the conductor can easily check that the bells are correct. Eventually, he will find other ways of doing this, but initially this is the minimum which he should employ. Some composers write the course heads to the left of the calling positions. This does not matter - it means exactly the same.

For **Bob Major** our standard touch is still

W	H	23456
-	-	45236
-	-	23456

but is 224 changes long.

The student should write this touch out lead by lead as we have done before. When this touch has been mastered on six, seven or eight bells, other touches using the same principles can be developed without too much difficulty. Some are given for convenience as Appendix 4.

PART 4

CALLING GRANDSIRE

This method, which is very popular on odd numbers of bells, is slightly different to call from Plain Bob since the dodging takes place at handstroke. This is because there are two bells in the hunt, and it is a useful tip always to remember which bell is in the hunt in addition to the treble. Often he (the bell in the hunt) doesn't!! The same rules apply. A whole pull's notice must be given before the bob (or single) takes effect, so the call is always made at handstroke when the treble is in third's place on the way in to lead.

Let us consider in detail how to call Grandsire Doubles. If we think back to when we started to consider calling Bob Doubles, we remember that we chose an observation bell, and said that we would call a bob every time that bell rang over the treble at handstroke in fourth's place when going to the back. Now, since Grandsire is really Plain Bob with an extra hunt bell (think about it!) perhaps the same rules will apply, even though there is no four blows behind. (The extra bell in the hunt causes the bells in 4-5 to dodge, the bell having been turned from the lead by the treble being forced to make third's instead of second's).

If a bob is called the first lead, then the three strikes over the treble at handstroke on the way to the back, and instead of dodging 4-5 down, double dodges in 4-5 up. The next lead he makes thirds, and will be back where he started. If this is repeated twice, then the bells will run round after 60 changes. if the last call is changed to a single, and the whole touch repeated, then the full 120 changes are obtained.

Using our convention, this touch is written as follows:

120
2345
- 4523
4352
- 5243
5324
S 4253
4325
repeated

Written horizontally, this becomes for memory purposes

B P B P S P B P B P S P

The single can replace any of the bobs, not necessarily the last, so we obtain two more extents:

B P S P B P B P S P B P
and
S P B P B P S P B P B P

in each case the three is the observation bell. If we now start with a plain lead, and call the same touch, then the five becomes the observation bell:

120
2345
2534
- 3425
3542
- 4235
4523
S 3245
repeated

Written horizontally, this is

P B P B P S P B P B P S

Again there are two other extents available with the five observation using this plan:

P B P S P B P B P S P B
and
P S P B P B P S P B P B

Similar touches can be developed if a bob is called when the observation bell is making thirds in between the calls on the back. A plain lead when the observation bell is next making thirds brings up the part end. To avoid falseness, the calls in 4-5 must be singles. Hence we get

120

2345

S 5423

- 2354

S 4523

4352

repeated twice

Again these can be started from any position, giving the following extents:

B S P S B S P S B S P S

S P S B S P S B S P S B

P S B S P S B S P S B S

Finally, there is a simple arrangement which produces a "true" 240‡. It is called Morris' 240 which again can be started from any position. It is rather more difficult to call than a conventional 120, but is given below for completeness.

S S S B S S S P repeated twice

‡ Each change occurs once at handstroke and once at backstroke

GRANDSIRE TRIPLES - WHAT THE COMPOSITION MEANS

There are a number of accepted ways of calling Grandsire Triples, and the book "Grandsire" covers them all. For the novice, our rules still apply, however.

As with Doubles, the calls are made when the treble is in third's place on the way in. It is only the compositions which might cause confusion. It is often useful to learn which bell is called into the hunt, and for how many leads he stays there.

Consider the following very useful touch:

168

234567

- 752634

- 467352

436275

423567

repeated twice

Here the seven is called into the hunt and out the next lead. He is said to be called "In and Out at 1". A more musical version is to call the 6th in and out at 1, for this produces many more 468s.

If there is one plain lead before the observation bell is called out of the hunt, he is said to be called "in and out at 2". If the next lead is also a bobbed lead, the observation bell is said to be called "In and out at 2 with a double".

Grandsire Triples lends itself to producing touches which come round at handstroke. As well as being entertaining, this is particularly useful for half-muffled ringing, and the following touch is given as an example:

167

234567

- 752634 1
- S 437265 2
- 764352 3
- 237564 1
- 642753 2
- 376542 1
- P (325476) 2

We have used this method of writing out touches before, and it is used extensively in Grandsire. The calls are shown on the left hand side, and the number of leads are shown on the right. Hence, there is a bob at the first lead, a single two leads later and so on. Alternatively, we can see that the seven is called In at 1, and Out at 2 with a single, In and Out at one, and then the six is called In and Out at one. The bracketed change at the end doesn't actually occur, since the bells have run round at the handstroke immediately previous.

There is one further standard way of writing down compositions, which should be explained.

A Quarter Peal starts as follows:

4 lead courses except starting course.

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>234567</u>
	a		324576
-	-		4325
	-	-	3524
	-	-	5423
			etc

a = 1S,2,3,4S, 6 (7 lead course)

This is not as fearsome as it might first appear. Let us look at it logically, applying what we know already. Take the first line, '4 lead courses' means just that. The course head shown will occur four leads after the beginning of the course.

Bobs may be called at the first lead of the course (1), the second lead (2), or the third lead (3). Course heads are shown on the right. The first course head is 13245768 and as 7 and 6 will remain in the same positions at the course ends until further notice, they are thereafter omitted just like the treble and tenor. Thus the last course end shown is really

15423768.

The Starting Course is different from all the other courses and is written "a" which is defined at the bottom: The quarter peal starts with a single at the first lead, a bob at the second and third leads, a single at the fourth lead, and a bob at the sixth lead. The course head will occur at the seventh lead. So we go on. But we are now rapidly leaving the realms of the Novice, and my job is done.

There is of course much more which could be written. This book has attempted to introduce the subject only, although the rules used will apply to all occasions if viewed sensibly. For instance, no mention has been made of calling Stedman. This Principle is really quite advanced, but given the above, the conductor could call a touch, armed with the Diary in which the calling positions are shown, and a suitable composition. As usual proper preparation helps at home, and some friendly advice from someone more experienced helps. But it is quite possible.

CONCLUSION:

If as a result of this book some of the mystique which surrounds conducting has been removed, then the object has been achieved. Do try for yourself and you will be encouraged to progress further. With the help of the four appendices attached you should now not only be able to call the touch but also to correct simple mistakes and improve the quality of the noise we make to the glory of God. May you have every success in your endeavours.

APPENDIX 1

TOWARDS GOOD STRIKING

There is quite a strong similarity between a band of Ringers and an orchestra. Both are members of a team whose performance can be ruined by one individual. Both perform for the Public. The ringers, however, have a much larger audience and not all of those want to listen. They have no choice. So even if the ringer doesn't believe that his performance is an offering to God, and should therefore be as perfect as possible, he does owe something to his audience who are having to tolerate his noise.

As with an orchestra, the conductor is responsible for the quality of the performance. He sets the standard and should stop the ringing if it does not reach the required standard. What is this standard? Perfection would be ideal but there are very few bands who are capable of perfection. Much depends on the experience of the ringers taking part and whether they normally ring together. There must be a minimum standard. Under no circumstances should the bells be allowed to fire. But if a band, or even an individual is trying something for the first time, then some mistakes are inevitable. If these get out of hand, then call "stand" and start again. No one will learn anything if the bells are firing.

Providing that every ringer is trying his best, then no more can be expected. But if a ringer can be seen not to be trying, or is clearly not ringing to the standard of which he is capable, then he deserves the full wrath of the conductor, for the ringing will never be good under these circumstances. How then do we know who is striking badly? It is not much good to say something like "Listen to it!" Presumably everyone is trying to do this already. Very occasionally a good band for some reason doesn't settle and a general comment is justified but usually this sort of comment is not very helpful to an individual. Much better to say "Three, closer at backstroke, please". The three knows what is required of him and the rest of the band know that presumably they are right. How is good striking achieved? How does the conductor know who is at fault? The answer to both questions is the same. By RHYTHM. Good striking is impossible without it. It can be

practised by the band clapping one after the other until the spacing is perfect (preferably not whilst ringing at the same time!). Everyone can then hear who is at fault and coordination can be developed between the ears and the hands making the noise. Isn't this what ringing is all about?

The author uses this technique occasionally with his own experienced band. The ringers don't like it much but the quality of the ringing improves dramatically! Bell simulators can also be helpful in developing rhythm if they are available.

The conductor can judge the ringing by counting each bell in perfect rhythm emphasising the second bell. Thus on six he would count

One TWO three four five six, one TWO three four five six.

Of course all the band should be doing this but the conductor will soon be able, with practice, to tell which ringer is slow (or fast) and advise accordingly. Good striking is something which is far more important than the difficulty of the method being attempted. When it is achieved the band can be very proud indeed. Good ringing is very difficult, and cannot be achieved without considerable effort by the whole band. The conductor plays the most important part of all.

APPENDIX 2

CORRECTING MISTAKES

in the first chapter it was stated that it is not the conductor's responsibility to ring other people's bells for them. This is so but, having said that, if no-one is capable of correcting mistakes, particularly when a band is starting from scratch, it must be admitted that progress will be very slow, if at all. So the novice conductor will need to be able at least to check that the ringing is correct and even perhaps be able to correct the odd trip from time to time. So how does he do this? We need some more theory at this stage.

1. Coursing Order

Consider Bob Doubles. In the Plain Course we see that the bells come to lead in the cyclic order 4532. Also the bells go out to the back in the same order. This order is given a special name - it is called the COURSING ORDER. All methods have a coursing order but in some of the more advanced methods it is more difficult to discover than in Plain Bob. For simplicity we will concentrate on Plain Bob but when this has been mastered similar rules can be worked out for Grandsire and more difficult methods.

2. Using the Coursing Order

Consider Bob Doubles. let us ring the second. After leading, the four (known as our After Bell) is the first, followed by five, three and treble. We then repeat four, five, three to bring us into thirds place immediately before dodging 3-4 down. We now drop back over the five (our dodge bell) before passing the treble and leading after the 3, called our "course" bell - we are said to "course the three" . So if when going down from the back we meet both the three and the five trying to go out we can tell the three to stay down because we know that the five follows the four in the Coursing Order and the three follows the five. Because the five is the dodge bell (the bell we dodge back over in 3-4) it follows that the five must be dodging in 3-4 up. So now we can be more positive. We can say "five, dodge 3-4 up with me at backstroke

and go on up". We can even say and course the four", i.e. lead after the four when you get there.

Furthermore, because the three is the last bell we meet before dodging it follows that he will remain below the bells dodging in 3-4 up and will therefore make seconds. The other bell (which is our after bell, the four) must be lying four blows behind. So we now know what every bell is doing at the first lead. Let us apply a similar analysis to the second lead. Again we pick the bells up in the coursing order but this time the treble comes one blow earlier, viz 45134. We are now four blows in fifths. The two bells we follow after the treble are dodging in 3-4, the first 3-4 down and the second 3-4 up. Clearly the bell which the treble is coursing must make seconds, so again we know what every bell is doing. The third lead is similar in analysis to the first - we pass the treble in 2-3 to dodge 3-4 up with the five, the treble is coursing the four who will make 2nds and the three will lie four blows behind.

Perhaps the most difficult is the last lead. Again watch the coursing order immediately after you have dodged up and then check it again immediately after you have made seconds. So much for the plain course. What happens after a bob is called? Clearly three bells are affected (one has run in, one has run out, one has made the bob). If you are affected you will be able to watch the other two "do their thing". If you are unaffected you will see the bells making the bob because instead of ringing over say three, four, three, four you will ring over three, four, four, five. So the four in this instance made the bob and will now go back to lead after the three who ran in and the five who ran out and will now course you. The new coursing order will be the order you meet the bells: five, three, four and this will remain until you call the next bob. This technique has a slight danger if the bells do not make the bob correctly, for a cross can occur which you might not detect. So be careful, and use some other check as well (i.e. check the course head after each part has been completed).

APPENDIX 3

TRANSPOSITION

This is a technique which enables each row to be derived from a previous row using a predetermined pattern. Let us consider the first lead head in Bob Doubles, shown firstly on page 3. We started in rounds

and arrived at

	2	3	4	5
	3	5	2	4

Let us develop the next lead. We see that the second's place bell (the two) has become fourth's place bell in the lead head 3524. So in the next lead head, the three, which is now second's place bell, will become fourth's place bell. We therefore write

2	3	4	5
3	5	2	4
		3	

Now look at the bell which was in third's place at the start (the three). He has become second's place bell in the row 3524. So the third's place bell in the row 3524 (the five) will become second's place bell in the required lead head. We now have

2	3	4	5
3	5	2	4
5		3	

The fourth's place bell will become fifth's place bell; hence

2	3	4	5
3	5	2	4
5		3	2

and finally the fifth's place bell will become third's place bell and we have

2	3	4	5
3	5	2	4
5	4	3	2

Continue to apply the same rules and you will produce the third and fourth lead heads. This technique is called "**transposition**" and can be used for lead heads, course heads and part ends. The technique can be applied to all methods and on all numbers of bells. Clearly, the greater the number of bells the more time will be saved by its use.

Later in your conducting career you will apply a somewhat similar technique to coursing orders. Believe it or not, eventually you will be able to transpose coursing orders in your head whilst ringing, given practice, and keep a continuous cheek on every bell.

But that's another story

APPENDIX 4

SOME USEFUL TOUCHES IN ADDITION TO THOSE INCLUDED IN THE TEXT

PLAIN BOB MINOR

108 or 216

23456

- 23564

- 23645

34256

Repeat twice

For 216 call single at end
and repeat

156 or 240

23456

- 23564

36245

64352

- 64523

Repeat four times

A plain lead after 3rd part
gives 156

120, 240, 360 or 720

23456

64235 4

64352 1

23645 4

23456 1

For 240 call S for last B and repeat.

For 360 omit last bob and repeat
twice.

For 720 omit last bob, repeat 5
times, calling S halfway and end.

540

23456

- 23564 1

- 45236 4

- 45362 1

S 32456 4

S 34256 5

Repeat twice

N.B.. For a Quarter Peal call one 720 and one 540.

PLAIN BOB TRIPLES

112

234567
- 235746 1
- 764532 3
- 765243 1
- 234567 3

112

234567
- 235746 1
- 376425 2
- 745236 2
- 426375 2
P 234567 1

168

234567
- 235746 1
- 645273 4
S 462357 1
- 463725 1
S 765243 2
234567

168

W H 234567
- - 45236
- - 23456
N.B. W is 5 -6 up
H is 4 blows behind

252

234567
- 235746 1
- 764532 3
P 526374 2
Repeat twice

Contains Queens and Titums

PLAIN BOB MAJOR

160

<u>W</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>H</u>	<u>23456</u>
-	3	-	-	23456

160

<u>5ths</u>	<u>IV</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>23456</u>
-	-	-	54326
-	-	-	23456

240

<u>W</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>H</u>	<u>23456</u>
-		-	-	64235
-	1	-	-	23456

240

<u>W</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>H</u>	<u>23456</u>
	1		35264
-		-	23456

272

<u>W</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>H</u>	<u>23456</u>
	1	-		23456
	2			23456

272

<u>W</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>H</u>	<u>23456</u>
-	1			56423
-	2	-		23456

272

<u>W</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>H</u>	<u>23456</u>
-	2		-	23645
-	1			23456

272

<u>W</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>H</u>	<u>23456</u>
	1	-	-	42563
	2	-		23456

288

<u>W</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>H</u>	<u>23456</u>
-	2	-		26543
	2	-		23456

480

<u>W</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>H</u>	<u>23456</u>
-	1		-	
			-	

Repeat

PLAIN BOB MAJOR (cont.)

The touches given so far have been written out with the tenor as observation. Generally, the tenors are coursing for most of the time, and in addition to producing the best music, it is also helpful to an inexperienced band to know that the tenor will normally be followed by the seven. If you are not physically able to call a touch from the tenor, you can call from the seven since it too will be at Home at the course end. A table of equivalent positions is given below.

<u>Tenor</u>	<u>Seven</u>
W (7-8 up)	5ths (5-6 up)
5ths (5-6 up)	4ths (make bob)
4ths (make bob)	5-6 down
B (out)	In
M (5-6 down)	7-8 down
H (7-8 down)	7-8 up

The first 160 given on the previous page is shown below with both the Tenor and the seven as observation.

<u>160</u>					<u>160</u>				
W	B	M	H	23456	5ths	In	down	up	23456
-	3	-	-	23456	-	3	-	-	23456
Tenor observation					Seven observation				

GRANDSIRE TRIPLES

125

234567
- 752634 1
- 237546 3
S 642753 2
- 376542 1
P (325476)

i.e. 7 in and out at 3,
6 in with single and out at 1

139

234567
S 642375 3
- 536742 1
- 425673 2
- 364725 1
P (325476) 3

i.e. 6 in with S
then 5 in, 4 in, 3 in, all with
bobs

167

234567
- 672453 2
- 346572 1
- 723654 2
- 467523 1
S 764523 4
- 357264 1
P (325476) 1

i.e. 6 in & out at 1
7 in & out at 1
7 in with S & out at 1

181

234567
S 762453 2
- 347562 1
- 473562 4
- 364725 3
P (325476) 3

i.e. 7 in with S & out at 1,
4 in & out at 3

195

234567
S 642375 3
- 536742 1
- 735264 5
- 357264 4
P (325476) 1

504

234567
- 752634 1
- 527634 4
- 735246 3
- 357246 4

Repeat twice

OXFORD BOB TRIPLES

Although not referred to in the text, Oxford Bob Triples is a useful, simple method which uses Grandsire Bobs and Singles in touches and in Quarter Peals (n.b. NOT in peals). The method is described in Mr. Butler's excellent "Triples and Major for Beginners".

Some easy touches are given below. The rules for making the calls are the same as Grandsire Triples.

111

234567
- 672534 1
S 436572 1
- 364725 2
P (325476) 4

112

234567
S 762534 1
S 437562 1
- 624537 1
- 246375 2
P 234567 3

126

234567
- 672534 1
- 346572 1
P 325746 1

126

234567
S 432675 2
S 574632 1
P 526374 1

Repeat 3 times

Repeat twice

Contains Queens & Tittums

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Peter T. Hurcombe was taught to ring by Harry Worrall in Gloucester during the early 1950's and conducted his first peal at the age of 15. He is now Captain of the Ringers at Hurstpierpoint, Sussex and is a Life Member and Trustee of the Sussex County Association, having served as its Master from 1978-81 and 1984-86. His involvement in ringing education has spanned twenty years and in that time he has taken part in ringing courses throughout the country. He has represented Sussex on the Central Council since 1976 and was elected to the Education Committee in 1986.

Robert Cater

Chairman (1986-1989)
Central Council Education Committee



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