

Bell-notes

The quarterly newsletter for The Chertsey District
Issue 35: August 2020



Thomas 'Dennis' Brock 23/11/1918-24/07/2020



GUILDFORD DIOCESAN GUILD OF CHURCH BELL RINGERS

President: THE BISHOP OF GUILDFORD

A Message from the Committee~ 25/07/2020

There are usually two ways of looking at things, at least, just as the glass that is half empty is also half full. So of course we all regret that in the past few months we have not been ringing, neither for services nor for practice, nor have there been peals, nor outings, nor striking competitions – and specifically we have not held the training days (the Spanner Day was due at Horsell at the start of April, and Handling was scheduled at Chertsey and Thames Ditton in June), nor could we enjoy the much-anticipated visit to the Cathedral and the Guild Library in early July.

Basically – bells have been silent and bell-ringers have been grounded. But as the pages of these Bell Notes record, lots has in fact been happening: ringers have been doing zoom meetings, social-quizzes, and bell rooms a-plenty (carry on reading below for more on Ringing Room etc); and beyond bells, all manner of things have been possible in the extra time available – see inside for details!

Gradually now we might be starting to see the way forward. Guidance on ringing within the constraints of Covid19-security has come from the Central Council, and also from Public Health England; real-life, in-the-flesh services are resuming at churches here and there, and bells have been rung again in at least one of our towers (look inside – no spoiler here).

While we will all miss the outings originally planned for the summer, maybe we can look forward to a gradual return to ringing between now and the autumn, which will be all the sweeter for this long period of Covid19-silence. Please take care as activity resumes, check the bells, follow the guidance – and keep safe.

A big thank-you to Hilary for resolutely persevering with Bell Notes over this period.

Best wishes for a safe and healthy summer.

Stop Press.

We have had the heart-breaking news that Dennis Brock died on Friday 24th July, just as this Bell Notes was going to press. Denis was a ringing legend and widely respected as a lovely person. There will be a full and proper commemoration in due course. May he rest in peace.

Our local rogue's gallery!



Will these bandits have had experience of the realities of our quiz, which, following the theme of lockdown, is all to do with prisons. Answers page 20

Short touches from the towers

Horsell

A poem by one of our ringers, Denise Balmer.

Horsell Village Bells

Sunday mornings aren't the same, it really is a dreadful shame

Our bell tower is so very small we must not meet in there at all

Our bells are standing proud and cold, they're wanting to be rung, not tolled.

They're waiting to send out good cheer and say to all there's nowt to fear.

But brighter days will come again, with smiles and tears and sun and rain

Our bells will ring out loud and clear to tell us all good times are here.

For centuries they've rung their say, through famines, floods, at night and day

But never doubt it won't be long before we hear their joyful song.

Our bells will ring out loud and clear to tell us all there's nowt to fear.



Avril Blagbrough

1. Which prison in California is infamous for having the largest death row for male inmates in the United States?

Weybridge

Since lockdown our bells have been silent but with the return of the Sunday Eucharist at St James' on July 5th, we did think that we would be open for business with a spot of Bob Minimus. We checked all the bells, hoovered, dusted and raised a band of four...and then THAT email arrived.

So now we wait for further guidance from Public Health England.

Hopefully we shall be back in business soon.



Hold the front page! Having been silent since Sunday March 15th, there is movement in the tower of St James' once again.

Sadly, our first performance on Friday 24th July, was to ring the nine tailors in memory of Dennis Brock.

He was a regular Thursday night attendee and we shall miss his cheerful self in our midst.

We resumed service ringing on Sunday 26th July after nineteen silent weeks.

We wore masks and observed all guidelines as we raised the 2, 4, 6 & 8 for some Bob Minimus and call changes.

We hope the parish appreciated it. – see page 3

L-R Linda, Cathy, Pete & Jess.

Linda Strange

2 Parkhurst prison is located in which English county?

Chobham

We have been continuing with our Monday night catch up meetings on Zoom.

We have logged into Ringing Room and can now ring plain hunt and treble bob hunt on eight bells.

We have also tried to ring Kent Little Bob Minor and Bastow Little Bob Minor with some success. We are enjoying seeing everybody and having a chat.

With the social distancing rules it doesn't look as though we will be ringing again in the near future.

Chris Hill

3 Charles Dickens was sent to work at a boot-blackening factory when his father was imprisoned in which debtors' prison?

Walton-on-Thames

Our tower has only functioned once since Mother's Day and that was in honour of our dear friend Dennis. We sought permission to toll a bell so, while I counted the strokes, John Burnett put up the number 6 then tolled the bell 101 times. Such a sad thing to do and that hundred and one seemed to last a long time. It was very quieting to think that each stroke commemorated a whole year. He is going to be sorely missed.

Our Vicar has said that we have to complete a full risk assessment before return to ringing and he asked if we had plans yet.

I pointed out that three blind mice is not a very exciting thing for neighbours to hear, even if it is for only fifteen minutes.

But now I have remembered that Phillip Saddleton taught me to ring the front work of Stedman on three bells [though I have never successfully mastered the back work]. We have sometimes rung this bizarre and completely false composition on Sundays - much to Dennis's amusement and maybe we should go back to it?

Hilary Brooks

4 Manchester's high-security men's prison is commonly referred to by what nickname?

Send

I will become the new Send correspondent, starting with the next edition

Rachel Wilkinson



5. London's Old Bailey criminal court stands upon the site of which notorious demolished prison?

Egham

During lockdown we have of course not rung, but we have met twice on ZOOM and individually we have:

- Led a local pharmacy support group
- Audited and re-ordered the house's stationery and writing utensils
- Revisited and sharpened bridge skills, online using laptop
- Visited the Silent Pool Gin Distillery (very sociable, despite social-distancing!)
- Painted (acrylic, watercolour) more than usual
- Completed several big jig-saws
- Had long walks
- Read Hilary Mantel's 'Wolf Hall' trilogy
- Cooked delicious meals

On ringing, St. John's has not yet resumed live church services, and when it does it will be applying 2 metre distancing and face covering where possible, hand sanitizing on entry and exit and signing in for track and trace purposes. We are keeping an eye on the ringing guidance for when we do return. We see that happening in quite tentative steps, given the proximity of our ropes one to another.

David (Stone) recently gained access to the belfry to check the state of bells and fittings and found definite wear through clapper strike; Whites of Appleton will be coming on Aug 6th to do a general inspection. Our summer outing was scheduled for next week – roll on Summer 2021!



Willy Burgess eghamten@gmail.com

6 Where were the Kray twins imprisoned for a few days in 1952 for failing to report for national service before being transferred to Shepton Mallet military prison?

Esher

First, thank to Ann B, Amanda and John Y. for coming up to check the bells (no nasties!) and then to ring the 2, 4, 6 and tenor up to check distances and then to ring rounds.

You will be glad to know that we have been given our Safety Certificate to ring on Sundays for 15 minutes only!! We are expected to maintain safety distancing, enter and leave via the door at the bottom of the tower and to ring the same bell for the entire time!! We have left the 2, 4 and 6 up and the chimes on the clock bells - 3, 5 and tenor so apart from ringing the tenor up we were ready to go on Sunday.

The stairs have got longer and steeper as we puffed our way up to the Ringing Room on Sunday to ring for the first service that Darren, our recently inducted Rector has taken. We stood in each corner of the very draughty Ringing Room to ring rounds and call changes on the 2, 4, 6 and tenor. It was fortunate it was only 15 minutes as the bells appeared to get heavier the longer we rang but I am not sure who was more delighted - us to ring the bells, Darren to hear the bells for the first time, the congregation or the Parish to know that Christ Church was back in business. It was lovely to be so popular!!

I have sought notes from Esher ringers about their lockdown experiences, JCM



It doesn't matter how many Covid walks I have done I am unable to recreate the running up of 56 narrow winding tower steps in a hurry on a Sunday morning. The extra work in the garden has paid dividends and Joe Wicks' early morning workouts have helped some muscles but my back is really missing a good stretch at the end of Bell 5!

The 'ringing room' helps with the loss of meeting up together but it's not quite the same and we certainly can't share chocolates!

Ann Tennant

Reflections on "lockdown "

The weather is fine. We sit in the garden and all we hear is the sound of the birds and an occasional car or plane. Bliss!

The only time constraint of the week is getting to the supermarket between 8.00 and 9.00 am to benefit from the over seventies slot. The first week it took one hour in the queue to reach the entrance. It is eerily quiet as you enter. Customers are very suspicious, as they find out what is available. They queue gets shorter by the week. Ten weeks on from that first visit, you can now walk straight in at that time.

Each day is planned to achieve a goal. Cupboards, shelves and drawers are tidied. The garden has more attention than it has ever had. Still there are more things to keep us busy at home.

Life has slowed and the realisation dawns that maybe we try to pack too much into our lives.

The air is cleaner. Do we really need to travel so much?

A golden wedding celebration has been cancelled, plus two holidays to be shared with each of our children.

Never mind! All is well with our family and friends and that is what counts.

Margaret Dollimore

So, you want to know my experiences of lockdown and zoom in Portugal? Here are a few words!

As an expat bell ringer living in the Algarve, I continually miss. bell ringing and all my fellow bell ringers at Christ Church, Esher. However our church services have taken on a very different way of communicating as I am sure it has in the UK. Zoom at 10.30am every Sunday is now the new norm. It is good to see and speak after the service to friends who have been stuck in England unable to travel and even some who have had the virus and are well again. We are now holding communion services in the church on Thursday mornings with a full capacity of 26. We take our own cleaning sprays and clean before and after the service. We do share the church with our Catholic friends. There is no singing, we all wear masks and the Chaplain brings the wafer to us. Shortage of funds have been a problem but most are now contributing via a donation website. We are continuing on Sundays with the zoom service.



We have had no virus here in the western Algarve, tell your friends!! Only 15 people have sadly died in the whole of the Algarve. Unemployment and poverty is terrible! As a church we continually donate food. No generous furloughing scheme here!

The weather has been wonderful throughout the lockdown and we have sat out every day around our

pool and have read so many books! Now we are seeking the shade more as it is very hot!

We have been wearing masks for the last two months as they are compulsory. No one is allowed to go shopping without one or to travel without wearing one and there are hand sanitisers everywhere. I wash all that I buy with bleach before I put it away. Testing and tracing has been key and it has worked very well when there has been an out-break as is the case in Lisbon at the moment.

It is a funny old world we now find ourselves in but we thank the Lord every day for the lovely place we live in and how the Portuguese have mostly responded with responsibility and obeying all the rules which have been set by the government.

As everyone says, stay safe!

Mary Young

Everyone seems to have a slightly different experience but all fascinating!

Jennifer Meade

7 Alcatraz prison was located 1.25 miles off the coast of which American city?

East Molesey

Along with most other towers I guess we've had weekly virtual practices on our usual practice night Tuesday. Variable success with Ringing Room – mostly frustrated by techie problems rather than ringing prowess. We have managed respectable courses of Bob and Grandsire Doubles and found it useful for learners who can concentrate on counting their places without having to worry about controlling their bell. We've also had fun ringing rounds & call changes on 10 & 12 bells.



We've interspersed ringing with chat and quizzes – thanks to the technical skills of Giles & Andrew who screen share their quizzes – some of which they've prepared for their scout groups. I suspect the scouts are probably better than us with the answers. Our other news is that our vicar Richard Lloyd is leaving us in September after nearly 8 years – he'll be a hard act to follow. As for lockdown in the Marsters household.....the initial excitement of having time for those undone tasks – house cleaning, decorating, gardening, piano tuning etc etc has long since waned. Now into a sort of routine of books, puzzles, walking, cycling enlivened by Waitrose deliveries and pre-booked trips to the dump with garden waste. Sometimes these latter happen on the same day which, together with dustbin collection and postman delivery, makes for hardly containable excitement. Equally mis-delivery of groceries can throw up some interesting results. We recently received a bagful of Kombucha organic health drinks which we hadn't ordered – they won't take them back if you've touched them so the choice is to use them or donate to a foodbank. Still thinking about which poor Korean family was deprived of their health drinks and mystified by getting cheeses and lettuces they hadn't ordered..... !

Services start here on 26th July – just the 9am Holy Communion. We hope to ring but still awaiting definite clarification of whether the “2 household” and 15 mins duration only rules apply. It makes a considerable difference!

Keep well everybody and hope to see you soon

PS Pamela writes “My most treasured memory of lockdown is having Sunday lunch every Sunday with my brother-in-law who lives alone in the country so it was essential to keep in touch. Every Sunday we placed the iPad on the dining room table, and laid the table for a visitor, and my brother in law did the same, and we had a leisurely pleasant lunch together on FaceTime only breaking off at the same time to bring to the table a dessert and coffee!”

PPS *On the first Thursday of lockdown, I decided it was time for a new iPad and found a good priced one on Amazon, so immediately sent off for it.*

The parcel arrived the next day (Friday), but following advice I sanitised the parcel and left it for 72 hours before opening it.

On the Monday I opened the parcel and what did I find? 3 bottles of antibacterial handwash. Perhaps they were more valuable than the iPad – anyway, I had the devil's own job claiming my money back from Amazon, as by then they had gone OUT OF STOCK for the iPad I wanted!

Jo Hoad

Jane Marsters

8. Name the early Victorian prison reformer who was often referred to as the "angel of prisons"?

Chertsey

Like many other towers we maintain social contact via a virtual gathering on practice night with attendance ranging from 7 to 12 people with typically 8 people attending most evenings. We started with Zoom and then moved on to Webex because of 40 minute time constraints and also tried the Jitsi platform which had bandwidth problems so reverted to Webex. Typically, we start with general chat and move on to Ringing Room; we have mastered Rounds & Call Changes and have tried plain hunting on 5 to seven bells with a tenor behind. It has certainly improved participants to count their position and it will be interesting to see how well the skill will transform when we actually start to ring the tower bells. We would welcome other District members to join us on-line on a Wednesday evening.



It still remains to be seen when we actually start ringing again of Sundays but since Chertsey has a well ventilated ground floor ringing chamber and are rope are reasonably spaced apart we could probably safely ring bells 1,3,4 6 7& 8 wearing face masks and restricting one person to a particular bell in any one session provided we can muster sufficient ringers.

Meanwhile some of you might be interested in the ingenious contraptions built by Graham Firman during lockdown to allow a band to ring handbells ! See:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7XbW8z3lqW8>

It shows Katharine & Graham Firman ringing Stedman Triples with Rosie & Richie Robot.

Malcolm S Loveday, Tower Captain, on behalf of the Chertsey Ringers. 12th July 2020.

Guildford Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) Matters

As DAC bells advisor, a post that I have since 1993, I am asked to comment on a variety of bell matters by parishes that are planning to undertake refurbishment or rehanging of bells. Some of these works require a Faculty whilst others are routine maintenance but some of which requires the approval of an Archdeacon. The requests come not only from Guild towers with bells hung for full circle ringing but often come from churches with a single Sanctus bell or relate to towers with only 2 , 3 or 4 hung for swing chiming or towers with a peal of bells hung dead. Recent enquiries concern rehanging projects at Holy Trinity, Guildford, St Mary's church, Dunsfold and St Mary's Church, Frensham. Other projects have included the a) a chime of eight bells at Headley (Box Hill) hung by Taylors in 1966 which includes an interesting bell by Richard Hille of London, cast sometime between 1423 and 1440AD, and b) the six bell chime at Chessington. These enquiries usually require a tower visit followed by the preparation of a report to the DAC & the Parish, a copy of which is also lodged in the Guild Library. Frequently access to the bells is only possible when the parish is undertaking roof repairs and scaffolding is in place, e.g. Chessington. If anyone wants further information please contact me on malcolmloveday46@gmail.com

Malcolm S Loveday, Tower Captain.

9 On which island in Table Bay was Nelson Mandela imprisoned for 18 years?

Oatlands

There was no clamour amongst the Oatlands ringers to attempt virtual ringing so we are just looking forward to a time when we can return to the tower. John has been busy with a tape measure and tells us the coronavirus limitations on social distancing mean we will be able to ring just two of our eight bells, so a vaccine looks like our best hope.



Some of the Oatlands ringers have, however, been assisting the East Molesey band in the online Ringing Room. To say we struggle would be putting it mildly. We miss the rhythmic help of a swinging bell and its dependent rope; we miss the visual clues from ropes accelerating up the tower and down again; we stare intently at the screen wondering why our bell doesn't sound (it's because we haven't clicked). Last week we managed a plain course of Grandsire and felt mightily proud of ourselves.

Meanwhile, our beginners who had made such wonderful progress at rope handling have been sadly neglected. We hope they won't have forgotten absolutely everything when they are finally allowed back in the tower with a friendly instructor sharing their rope.

Out of consideration for Cleves School which is directly opposite the Church we normally do not have visiting bands on weekdays. There was a long-planned visit by the Surrey Association Peripatetics due on Monday 3rd August which is during the school holidays. Sadly, this too will be a casualty of Covid-19.

All the planned weddings dates for this year, except one, have been moved on by twelve months into 2021. The couple who were determined to stay with their intended date at the end of July were cautioned that they could only have one or two bells. Surprisingly, they have said they'll have them anyway.

Andrew Fisher and John Burnett

10 In which prison was John Christie hanged for murdering his wife in 1953? (This prison has had amongst its famous inmates: George Best, Boy George and actor Keith Allen.)

Thames Ditton

It has been interesting reading what people have said. I'm afraid nothing has happened at Thames Ditton. Giles and I have joined forces with the East Molesey group and have enjoyed joining in their weekly activity.

Pamela Rider

11· What name did American POW prisoners give Hoa Lo Prison during the Vietnam War?

Old Woking

Unsurprisingly it's been a quiet time at Old Woking since the last newsletter, however, that has now begun to change. The Church have restarted fortnightly Sunday morning services and the band will ring for 15 minutes before these. The first ringing for over four months at the Tower took place on 19 July - social distancing meant a rather unusual combination of bells was used (1,4,5,6), but at least having multiple members of the same household made things a little easier. The band also faced a scene resembling something out of the film Arachnophobia when entering the ringing chamber, as our eight-legged tenants had taken advantage of the absence of ringers, but bravely battled through. While there's only so much minimus one can ring and creepy-crawlies that can be evicted, the band are pleased to have some form of normality starting to return and there was an enthusiastic response to the request for volunteers - the irony of having to tell ringers not to come at what is normally a challenging time of the year to field a Sunday band has not been lost...

Doug Stoneham

12· Name the enclosed bridge made of white limestone in Venice that connects the New Prison to the interrogation rooms in the Doge's Palace?

Ottershaw

Peter Binns

13 HM Prison Berwyn, opened in 2017 and the largest prison in the UK, is located in which Welsh town?



operational

Hersham

David Mealor

14· Prince Rupert's Tower was a village lock-up located in which English city?

Ockham

Following my last Bell-notes article and with the opening of Churches for silent prayer I started my planned maintenance work in Ockham belfry, having put it off for over two years. With the help of Tricia and Angus the Belfry has turned blue from the fading rusting red of many years!

All in the Belfry is now looking much tidier but I still have the clock striking mechanisms to rub down and paint. And it would be great to continue on down into the ringing chamber to spruce this up!

I am still utilising Ringing Room with sessions with Crondall on Mondays, Farnham Tuesdays, Ewell, Esher & Tail end of Chertsey on Wednesdays and my



own practice here at Virtual Ockham on Thursdays. Locally the Ockham RR sessions have shown great improvements over the course of these months with lots of fun being had by all. I would be happy to help occasionally with RR in other Chertsey District towers if links were provided and times were convenient.

I had to give up with RR Fridays at Walton as there were no locals agreeing to take part. Likewise the notion of a Chertsey 'WhatsApp' group had only one interested party so has not been taken further.

Churchwise services have gone well during lockdown using Zoom but the Rector is not returning to Church services yet until either all parishioners can attend or we have wifi to continue Zoom and service together so those still Social Distancing won't be left out!

John Young

When the lock down started various towers decided to meet up on Zoom for a chat and it soon became apparent that we could also access the virtual Ringing Room [RR] a new piece of s/w designed and built since lockdown. John and I have been visiting several virtual towers in the area, Crondall, Farnham, Esher, Chertsey and Ockham throughout this time, slowly our virtual ringing has improved in all these towers.

The other upside is that training in Method Ringing via Zoom has been a much needed and appreciated, with Kevin Fox from Crondall running Plain Hunt, Bob minor & Bob doubles and also Stedman Courses!

Tricia Hoverd-Hughes

15. Which German prison was demolished in 1987 after the death of its last prisoner, Rudolf Hess?

A letter from the Guild Master~

It has been a bit of a rocky road on the restart to ringing for services.

To start with the Central Council did a splendid job of finding the right people to talk with in the Church of England hierarchy, and agreeing guidance with them. However, this guidance was not necessarily passed downwards in the church hierarchy, and ringers were sometimes aware of the guidelines some days before their clergy. Intercession with the recovery team at Diocesan House quickly had the information going out in their daily briefing to clergy and churchwardens, at which point Public Health England stuck a spoke in the works and wanted their say on the guidance as well, Council President Simon Linford said there was much swearing in Moseley (where he lives) when the CofE asked us not to ring after all that Sunday.

I have to say there were a fair number of unsavoury words said in Woking as well, especially when it seemed as if PHE were not going to deal with the guidance speedily. However, it is sometimes better to ask forgiveness rather than permission, and although PHE claimed that there was a further level of clearance to go through, ringing went ahead, where there were services and where it was possible within the guidelines at a number of churches within the Diocese.

From what I have heard the response from clergy, congregation and listeners was universally positive.

Jackie Roberts, Guild Master



Albert Smith, *The Tale of Blanche Heriot and The Curfew Must Not Ring Tonight*

It was interesting to read the recent article written by Sue Marsden on page 204 of *The Ringing World*

(20th February 2020) entitled *A legendary bell sculpture in Chertsey* which highlights the statue near Chertsey Bridge of Blanche Heriot hanging on to the curfew bell clapper to stop it ringing.

Albert Smith, who wrote the story in 1840 based on a Chertsey legend, lived opposite Chertsey church where his father ran a medical practice and the Blanche Heriot tale is set during the Wars of the Roses. Blanche and her cousin, Neville Audley were brought up together at Redwynde Court, (*fictional*), Sir Mark Heriot' s house in Chertsey. They were all supporters of Henry VI, the well respected and kindly Lancastrian King who was eventually buried at Chertsey Abbey. Neville fought at the battle of Tewkesbury, and as an act of chivalry he saved a Yorkist nobleman, 'Lord Beaufort' from being killed. In gratitude Beaufort gave Neville his crested ring that he had originally received from the King. Neville fled from Tewkesbury and planned to go to France in a boat to Ostend. He travelled via Chertsey to say goodbye to Blanche but Yorkist soldiers caught him and he was due to be executed at sunset when the Curfew bell rang. Neville asked his friend Herrick Evenden, to take the ring to the King, Edward IV in London and seek a Royal pardon. Realising the pardon was not going to arrive before sunset, Blanche climbs the tower and stops the bell ringing by holding on to the clapper thus preventing the execution and they live happily ever after.

Albert had completed his medical studies and was admitted as a member of the Royal College of Surgeons, he joined his father's successful medical practice, however both he and his brother had an interest in the theatrical activities. They were friends of Charles Dickens and Albert was a member of Dickens theatrical company whilst Arthur became Dickens manager for his lecture tours. Albert also travelled extensively, and besides completing his medical studies in Paris, he also climbed the Alps at Chamonix and visited Egypt. He was most famously known for his talks at London theatres on his travels illustrated by dioramas. Indeed, he is still respected by the climbing fraternity as an early travel writer and memorabilia from his lectures are highly collectable and still command extraordinary prices.

Albert Smith (1816-1860) gave talks at the Chertsey Scientific & Literary Institute using a contraption to roll pictures into view to illustrate talks which was operated by his brother Arthur Smith. They also travelled round to local pubs '*up dirty lanes*' to put on these shows, using a portable device for the illustrations.

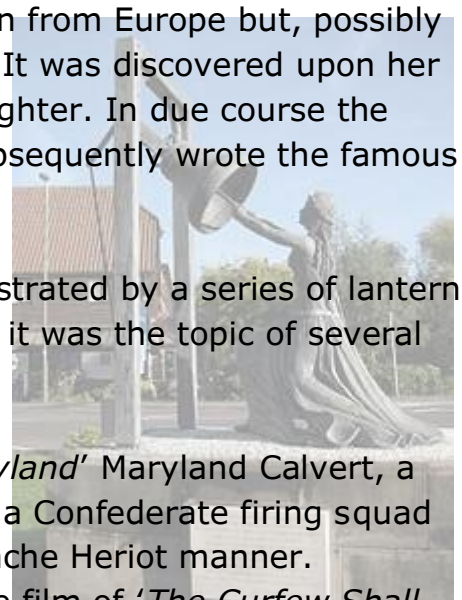
The Tale of Blanche Heriot was first published locally in the Chertsey Almanac and then in a London publication *The Wassail Bowl*. It was then staged as a popular Victorian melodrama at the Surrey Theatre in London in 1842. (see posters below)

The basic plot of a bell being prevented from ringing to stop an execution has appeared in many guises since Smith's tale in poems, stories, and songs e.g *Hang on the Bell, Nellie*. One of Queen Victoria's favourite poems was *The Curfew Must Not Ring Tonight*, which was written by an American, Rose Hartwick-Thorpe which was published in 1867. Interestingly it was based on a story '*Love and Loyalty*' by Lydia Sigourney which was published in America in Peterson's Magazine in 1865 after her death. The story is remarkably similar to Smith's *Tale of Blanche Heriot* but the setting is transformed from the War of the Roses (1470's) to the Civil War (1640's) and Blanche becomes Bessie, whilst Neville Audley becomes Basil Underwood.

Lydia Sigourney was a respected authoress who wrote 67 books and over 1,000 articles. She and her husband visited Europe in 1840 staying in England, Scotland, France & Italy. In her book '*Pleasant Memories of Pleasant Lands*', published in 1842, she notes that '*she was favoured with the acquaintance a number of people including Mr. & Mrs. S. C. Hall*', who lived at a large house, *Firfield*, Addlestone, which was part of the parish of Chertsey, Surrey. The Halls were also authors and part of a literary circle focused in the Chertsey area who met at the newly built Scientific and Literary Institute at 122 Guildford Street, Chertsey. Members of the literati who met there included Charles Dickens, Albert Smith and several other notable people who lived in the area. It is highly probable that Lydia Sigourney heard the Blanche Heriot tale directly from Albert Smith at one of the Institute soirees. It is thought that Lydia wrote '*Love and Loyalty*' on her return from Europe but, possibly out of professional courtesy, she chose not to publish it. It was discovered upon her death and probably submitted for publication by her daughter. In due course the story was read by the schoolgirl, Rosa Hartwick, who subsequently wrote the famous poem.

In Victorian times the poem was given public recitals illustrated by a series of lantern slides [see below and bottom] and with the onset of film it was the topic of several Black & White silent films.

In David Belasco's 1895 Broadway hit '*The Heart of Maryland*' Maryland Calvert, a southern heroine, saves her Yankee lover Kendrick from a Confederate firing squad by stopping the curfew bell ringing in the traditional Blanche Heriot manner. Cecil Milton Hepworth (1874-1923) made a black & white film of '*The Curfew Shall Not Ring Tonight*' at the Hurst Grove studio in Walton on Thames, Surrey, in 1912.



From 1943 -1949, Richard Fleischer (1916-2006) the Oscar winning, actor, writer & director produced a number of films known as '*Flicker Flashbacks*' a series in which footage from earlier silent films—shown at incorrect speed- with soundtracks added were shown as comedy films. *The Curfew* film appears to be based on the 1906 Gaumont film, but only runs for ~5 minutes.

It is remarkable that the ringing of a Curfew Bell, which we still undertake today at Chertsey in the Winter months at 8.00pm, inspired so many literary and artistic people leaving a remarkable legacy. Sadly, I have not found any documentary evidence prior to Albert Smith's writing in 1840, but there is no technical reason to refute Albert Smith's assertion that it was based on a Chertsey legend.

Malcolm S Loveday, Chertsey. April 2020

She reached the topmost ladder 'Out she swang, far out'.

Part of a set of 10 B & W glass lantern slides, 3¼ " square. Circa 1900.





USING 450 SLIDES IN TEN MINUTES.

BLANCHE HERIOT

Allowed by all to be the most powerfully written & interesting Melo-Drama ever Produced. It has rarely been the good fortune of any Management to have presented a Piece with such EMINENT and TRANSCENDENTLY FLATTERING SUCCESS as has attended this BIJOU OF A DRAMA. To attempt to describe its effect upon the Audience would be futile, being of the most ELECTRIFYING NATURE—BOXES, PIT AND GALLERY NIGHTLY RISE, EN MASSE, and hail it with DRAVENING SHOUTS OF APPROBATION! It is needless to say, therefore, that it will be REPEATED EVERY EVENING.

MONDAY, October 10th, 1842, and all the Week,
The Performances will commence with the Last New Legendary Drama of

BLANCHE HERIOT!

OR, THE CHERTSEY CURFEW!

The Scenery entirely New, by Mr. BRUNNING, Mr. Turner & Assistants.
The Machinery by Mr. Luce and Assistants. The Properties and Apparatus by Mr. Ballet and Assistants.
The Costume by Mr. Brown, Mrs. Walker, and Assistants.

THE MUSIC by M. G. STANSBURY
And the Piece produced under the Direction of Mr. R. HONNER.

Neville Audley... (a young Lancastrian Soldier)... Mr. HENRY HUGHES.
Hugh Laneret... (a Trooper in Edward's Army)... Mr. N. T. HICKS.
Master Basil Evenden... (a Physician & Astrologist)... Mr. HESLOP.
Philip Evered... (a Yorkist)... Mr. J. WESTER.
Father Angwin... (Abbot of Chertsey Monastery)... Mr. MORRISON.
Ferryman... (the Ferryman)... Mr. W. SMITH.
Blanche Heriot... (Cousin to Neville Audley)... Mrs. R. HONNER.
Kate Poynt... (her attendant)... Miss E. TERREY.

PERIOD OF ACTION, May A.D. 1471.
WOODED PASTURE adjoining CHERTSEY MONASTERY
Celebration of "Mate Date," in the Olden Time.
MORRIS DANCE BY THE CHARACTERS.
Heriot's Pledge challenged by the Yorkist Soldiers. The Struggle. Triumph of the Red Rose. The Bloodbath on the Track.
Apartment in the Redwynde Court Manor House
THE MAIDEN & THE FOOL.
Song. - "WOMAN'S PREROGATIVE," - Miss E. TERREY.
THE OLD HALL at REDWYNDE.
Audley's Return from the Wars. The Two Lovers. Arrival of the Yorkist Troop. Attempted Capture of Neville. The Game.
HAIR-BREADTH ESCAPE of AUDELEY by the CHAIN OF THE LAMP.
The Sanctuary claimed, & the Conditions assented to.
Act 2.—Laboratory of Master Basil Evenden.
The Alchemist & his Assistant. Unexpected Visit. The Ring & the Garden. Heriot's Escape from the Tower.
KITCHEN AT REDWYNDE.
Strange Guests at the Court. A Gallant Yorkist. The Fool's Jealousy. His Mission and its Reward.
INTERIOR of S. ANNE'S CHAPEL
CHERTSEY MONASTERY, BY SUNSET.
The Vespers—the effect of the Organ in this Scene will be produced by
MR. GREEN'S ROYAL SERAPHINE.
Despair of Blanche and Neville. The Evening Mass. Departure of Blanche. The Abbot's Conclusion, and the Last Scene.
A Wild Track of Land in the Vicinity of the Thames!
The Ferryman and the Yorkist. A Chase scene. The Fool's Success. Heriot finds the Ring.
THE INTERIOR OF THE BELL TOWER
OF OLD CHERTSEY CHURCH.
THE CURFEW DELAYED BY BLANCHE!
Arrival of Hugh Laneret. Blanche saved by the intervention of Neville.
COMBAT BETWEEN LANERET & AUDELEY!
The Baron raised. &c.

Dicks' Standard Play script.

Surrey Theatre, London. Location of first performance of 'The Legend of Blanche Heriot'
Theatre bill dated Monday 10th October 1842



Part of a set of 12 glass lantern slides,
3¼ " square. Circa 1900

Chertsey District contacts -as elected in January 2020

Ringling Master and Chairman: Andy Charnleybeal a.cb@live.co.uk
Secretary: Willy Burgess 01784 439583 egamten@gmail.com
Treasurer: John Young 01252 319739 jgy-young@tiscali.co.uk
Bookstall: under review
Assistant Ringing Master: Peter Binns pjbinns43@gmail.com
Assistant Ringing Master: Peter Whisker peter@whisker.org.uk
Belfry Inspector: Andrew Fisher 01932 829130 andrew@atf.me.uk
Training: Jane Marsters 020 8942 0886 maljan@ic24.net
Newsletter: Hilary Brooks 01932 227088 hilary@greenfinch.plus.com

Quiz answers;

- 1 San Quentin:
- 2 Isle of Wight:
- 3 The Marshalsea:
- 4 Strangeways:
- 5 Newgate Prison:
- 6 Tower of London (they were amongst the last prisoners to be held there)
- 7 San Francisco:
- 8 Elizabeth Fry:
- 9 Robben Island [the name is Dutch for Seal Island]:
- 10 Pentonville:
- 11 Hanoi Hilton:
- 12 The Bridge of Sighs (which passes over the Rio di Palazzo canal):
- 13 Wrexham:
- 14 Liverpool; (famous for being the centre-piece of the crest of Everton F.C):
- 15 Spandau Prison (The British band Spandau Ballet took their name from it).

Dates for the diary - like the Terminator - they will be back!