

QUARTER PEALS ON THE BELLS

A Summary

No database is available of ALL quarters rung at the Cathedral but this summary covers the very active 18 years from **16 Feb 2002** up to **23 Feb 2020** during which **231** quarter peals were rung. It is based on collecting details from Campanophile when it was still an active website and the current RW site 'Bellboard', cross-referencing with the manual record kept in the tower visitors book. It is not necessarily either complete or totally error-free but it is the best we have.

Whilst everyone 'knows' what constitutes a quarter peal there is no strict definition in the way there is for peals. They are long 'touches' with a minimum length of 1250 changes and no obvious maximum other than 4999 changes, nor is there a requirement for every row to be different. However generally they are rung within the same understanding and framework as peals. The longest at Worcester was a date touch in 2004 but only four have been over 1400 changes.

Most of these quarters have been rung prior to a cathedral service and thus form part of the cathedral's liturgical witness and life. Three-quarters of them were on 10 or 12 bells.

CINQUES	85	MAXIMUS	51
Stedman	78	Cambridge	22
Grandsire	5	Bristol	14
Other	2	Other	15

Nearly 59% of the quarters were on twelve bells, which is probably quite unusual for a 12-bell tower and demonstrates a strong and committed local band. Given the bells’ weight and difficulty it is not surprising that most of the Cinques has been Stedman, and the most popular Maximus method was Cambridge.

The bells were cast in **1928** being then one of nearly 50 rings of twelve in the country. They form the eighth heaviest ring¹ measured by tenor weight but the fifth heaviest in terms of the total weight of 10.5 tons. They are challenging to ring well because of tower movement though their magnificent sound is usually considered sufficient compensation for the effort involved.

Along with the ring of twelve there are four semitone bells – combinations of these give **five**² distinct rings – the Twelve (and its subsets the Back Ten and the Back Eight), the Harmonic Minor Ten, the Clare Ten (and its subset the C# Eight), the Middle Eight and the Front Eight.

¹ Liverpool, Exeter, St Paul’s, York, Wells, Redcliffe and Southwark have heavier tenors

² There are also two Natural Minor Tens which have never been used. The Minor Ten scale used is HARMONIC because the seventh note, from the bottom, is sharpened (5#). If the 5th bell was used instead this ten would be in a NATURAL minor scale, which is a major octave plus a semitone and full tone beneath. Worcester has a second Natural Minor Ten being the Front Eight plus the 9# and 10th bells, that is 1, 2#, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9#, 10.

TEN BELL QUARTERS

35

A relatively modest number of the total have been on 10 bells. The Back Ten used to be most often rung when 12 people were not available. The Clare Ten, created by the addition of the new Sharp Second in 2018, are now first choice for that eventuality. The haunting Harmonic Minor Ten are used for special occasions, especially Remembrance, and have usually been rung half-muffled.

THE BACK TEN

15

3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12

CATERS	11	ROYAL	1
Stedman	10	Little Bob	1
Grandsire	4		

THE MINOR TEN

14

2,3,4,5#,6b,7,8,9,10,11

CATERS	14	ROYAL	0
Grandsire	12		
Other	2		

THE CLARE TEN

6

2#,3,4,5#,6,7,8,9#,10,11

CATERS	4	ROYAL	2
Stedman	3	Cambridge	1
Grandsire	1	London	1

EIGHT BELL QUARTERS

57

A significant number of quarter peals have some 'training' purpose and so the subsidiary octaves have been used quite extensively. Even the single quarter on the heavy back eight might be said to fit into this category as it was a practice for a peal on the same bells, successfully rung Oct 2019. In the past the preferred octave for such ringing was of course the Middle Eight with a 1-ton tenor, but for usefulness it has been usurped since 2018 by the lighter Front Eight.

THE BACK EIGHT

1

5,6,7,8,9,0,E,T

TRIPLES	0	MAJOR	1
		23-Spliced S	1

THE C# EIGHT

14

4,5#,6,7,8,9#,0,E

TRIPLES	10	MAJOR	4
Stedman	8	Various	4
Grandsire	2		

THE MIDDLE EIGHT

38

2,3,4,5,6b,7,8,9

TRIPLES	22	MAJOR	16
Stedman	12	Cambridge	8
Grandsire	10	Other	8

THE FRONT EIGHT

4

1,2#,3,4,5,6,7,8

TRIPLES	2	MAJOR	2
Stedman	1	Bristol	1
Grandsire	1	Cambridge	1

ODDS & SODS

3

Unlike the peals, some quarters have been rung on fewer than eight bells. There are 11 combinations in a major key - five sixes and six fives - to choose from and no doubt someone will try to ring them all!

The quarters rung to date are -

Back Six (7-12)	Cambridge Minor	Jul 2012
Middle Six (3-8)	Cambridge Minor	May 2015
Front Five (1-5)	Grandsire Doubles	Jun 2019

The full list is

SIXES	FIVES
7-8-9-10-11-12	8-9-10-11-12
5#-6-7-8-9#-10-11	6-7-8-9#-10-11
4-5-6b-7-8-9	5-6b-7-8-9
3-4-5-6-7-8	4-5-6-7-8
2#-3-4-5#-6-7	3-4-5#-6-7
	1-2-3-4-5

LEADING RINGERS – TOP 20

During the 18 years over 270 people have rung a quarter peal here, with the top twenty all having rung 39 or more –

		1	2#	2	3	4	5#	5	6	6b	7	8	9#	9	0	E	T
Mark Regan	178	73	3	23	4	7	3	3	--	1	3	28	--	7	9	9	5
Bernard Taylor	127	4	2	9	23	10	1	5	12	1	13	20	1	13	9	3	1
Jim Clatworthy	105	2	1	12	25	8	4	9	8	8	9	19	--	--	--	--	--
Chris Kippin	88	4	--	6	7	1	1	1	5	--	2	6	3	6	8	29	9
Paul Smith	84	5	--	9	13	40	2	5	4	4	1	1	--	--	--	--	--
Alex Hajok	83	10	1	4	10	10	2	12	5	3	13	3	1	6	1	1	1
Ashley Fortey	77	--	1	6	4	1	1	2	2	2	2	6	--	10	25	9	6
Dan Jones	75	1	--	1	2	1	--	3	3	3	14	10	--	11	12	9	5
Chris Pickford	72	--	--	--	1	--	--	--	--	--	2	3	1	8	18	25	14
Peter Elliott	68	--	--	--	4	7	2	24	14	6	7	1	--	1	--	--	2
Gideon White	66	--	--	--	2	1	1	3	3	2	12	2	2	18	17	1	2
Alison Regan	60	1	--	1	5	--	--	2	1	--	4	20	--	3	5	15	3
C Homewood	54	1	1	7	1	5	1	3	6	4	4	8	1	5	3	2	2
Mark Wilson	49	--	--	1	4	2	2	4	12	2	9	8	1	3	1	--	--
David Jenkins	47	--	--	2	4	2	--	2	10	--	--	9	2	5	7	3	1
Alistair Smith	46	1	--	10	7	2	--	6	2	1	6	6	--	2	1	2	--
John Nicklin	43	--	--	--	1	--	--	1	--	1	20	2	1	10	--	2	5
Wm Regan	43	4	--	5	2	2	--	1	--	--	4	--	--	7	1	8	9
Steve Barton	41	--	--	3	1	--	--	3	9	1	1	2	1	14	4	2	--
Andy Hartley	39	--	--	--	3	1	--	5	3	1	11	7	--	6	--	1	1

Of note is the fact that 10 of the 20 people listed above also appear in the leading peal ringers list. The leading conductor is Mark Regan with 142, leaving not much scope for the next two, Bernard Taylor (26) and Alison Regan (12).

‘CIRCLING’ THE TOWER

In Jan 2015 **Alex Hajok** was the first to ‘circle’ all 15 bells to quarter peals *in the period covered*, followed by **Bernard Taylor** (Jun 2015). **Chris Phillips** has rung all 15 to quarters but started well before the period of analysis.

The Sharp Second bell was added to the ring in 2018. The first two quarters using it were in Apr 2018 when both the F# Eight and the Clare Ten were rung, enabling **Bernard Taylor** to circle all 16 bells, closely followed by **Alex Hajok** (Aug 2018). **Craig Homewood** is the third person to achieve this (Apr 2019).

The next nearest to completing the circle both have two bells to go – Chris Kippin (2#, 6b) and Ashley Fortey (1, 9#).

For the rings within the 16 bells, surprisingly only **Bernard Taylor** has circled the Twelve to 12-bell quarters, though Alex Hajok (10th), Ashley Fortey (treble), Dan Jones (4th) and Alistair Smith (tenor) are just one away. No-one is anywhere near circling the subsidiary rings, which is hardly surprising as 12-bell quarters make up nearly 60% of the number of quarters rung in the period.

Notes

The full details of all the quarter peals on the bells within the period analysed are stored in PABS's *Pealbook* program on my computer.

At present there is no plan to put them on the Guild website in the same way as the peals. The quarters are usually scribbled in the Tower Visitors Book in the ringing room and then the conductor puts the details on the RW *Bellboard* website (<http://www.bb.ringingworld.co.uk>).

When the analysis was done 3 quarters were in *Pealbook* and not on the *Bellboard* site so they were added to it on 8 May 2020, for

20-Jul-2008 and 2-Aug-2009 and 28-Oct-2014.

The total on *Bellboard* is **1 higher** than that on *Pealbook* because it has the performance of 13-Oct-2002 duplicated.

Not all quarters are published in the hard copy of the weekly 'Ringing World' so the *Bellboard* website has become the de facto record.

The quarter peals database is PABS's Pealbook program. If it were to be put on the WCG website worcesterbells.co.uk it needs to be 'exported' from the program as a .csv file with the Format choices TABLES = Full and INCLUDE = Tabs. It should be sent to richard@enrichdesign.co.uk

Bernard Taylor

May 2020