



OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD OF CHURCH BELL RINGERS

Educational Leaflet

No. 12

SURPRISE MINOR: CAMBRIDGE TO LONDON

Part 1

CAMBRIDGE SURPRISE MINOR

1992

Version 1

1. Preparation

Before attempting to ring Cambridge Surprise Minor you should ensure that you have had plenty of practice in learning different methods and that your bell control is of a sufficiently high standard to enable you to move the bell as required.

You should also be thoroughly familiar with the difference between an up and a down dodge so that there is no confusion in your mind as to which way you are going.

Nowadays there seems to be a great deal of emphasis on 'progress' which means that many people will move from Plain Bob to Kent Treble Bob and thence to Cambridge, forgetting that there are any number of Plain Minor methods which are interesting and profitable to ring.

For example, St Clements gives practice in place making and accurate dodging on the front and Double Oxford has the feature of 'half Cambridge places' in 3-4.

(Purists will argue that these are more Yorkshire places than 'half Cambridge' since there is no dodging with the treble, but whatever you care to call them practising these places will go some way to helping you through your first course of Cambridge.)

As this method is probably more complicated than any you have learnt previously there are many more variants in the way to describe each part of it.

Please do not be put off by the variety of descriptions of each part, try to pick out the one which will help **you**.

One point that should be emphasised is that ringing by the treble is all very well provided the treble ringer can be relied on.

If you have a dodgy (sorry) treble ringer, then this can cause all manner of problems.

At the outset it is far better to learn your blue line and stick to it like glue with no reference to any other bell.

When you are more experienced you can ring by 'where the treble ought to be', but this only comes with practice.

2. A look at the method

Draw out a diagram making sure you put in the place bell starts. (That is, insert into the diagram the point at which each bell starts.)

Although it is drawn out here there is no substitute for doing it yourself.

Now take a good look.

You will see that there are three distinct pieces of work, the front work, the back work round the treble and the 3-4 places.

If you look distantly at the diagram you will see that the skeleton shows seconds place bell only going to the back three times in the whole course.

The first time it goes straight there, the second time it makes places on the way up and the third time has another straight run through.

Similarly it only returns from the back three times, twice as a straight hunt, and once stopping to make places.

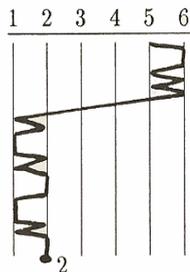
The place bells come in the order 2,6,3,4,5, and each bell has just finished a dodge (except the second).

You may by now be able to learn a method by only writing it out as far as the halfway point and then reversing it.

If you do this it is important that you should still learn where all the place bells start.



Fifths place bell. The single dodge up at the lead end which makes you fifths place bell is followed by a lie behind and a double dodge down. Please do not fall into the trap of beginning the description of fifths place bell as 'one and two'. The single dodge belongs to the previous lead. Fifths place bell starts with a lie and double dodge down. Now you can hunt down to the front where you will meet the bell which is just finishing its front-work, as it needs to dodge up to finish it, so you need to dodge down to start your last piece of work.



Reverse frontwork rules are dodge, lead, dodge, seconds, lead, dodge, seconds. The first dodge as I have said is a down dodge with the bell finishing seconds place front-work. A full lead is next, after which you must accommodate the fourths place bell which is trying to do a dodge and lead. You dodge up with it and make seconds over its lead. (Draw the path of this bell into the diagram.) Then lead again, dodge (with the treble) and make seconds. Please remember that although this is the end of the plain course (if you are ringing the second) it is possible that the conductor will not call 'That's all' so be ready to start again.

4. The Bobs

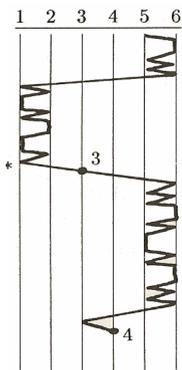
These are Plain Bob bobs and should not present too much difficulty if you have taken the time to learn where all the place bells start and have practised ringing the method on the second, third and fourth.

The bells in 5-6 are not affected.

(* indicates the calling position)

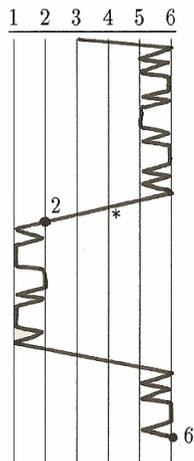
The bell about to make seconds place over the treble runs out, but please remember, if the bob is called a little early you must still do the dodge with the treble first.

This bell becomes thirds place bell, so goes straight up to the back for the double dodge at the start of the long back-work. Thirds place bell does not start with a dodge so there is no dodge in 3-4 on the way up.

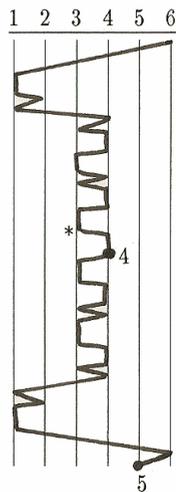


The bell which has just finished the backwork and is about to do the 3-4 down dodge prior to the 3-4 places runs straight in to dodge down with the treble and the start of seconds place front work.

Again the 3-4 dodge is omitted.



The bell which is making places up has already done 3-4 up, fourths, thirds, 3-4 up with the treble, fourths, and thirds. The bob causes this bell to make fourths again here, and to start the places down. A few practices at ringing the fourth to a plain course should help here, the start is thirds, fourths, dodge with the treble etc. So after making the bob in fourths you make thirds, fourths, and dodge 3-4 down with the treble. (Remember, although you were making places up originally the bob has caused you to jump a lead forward and you are now doing the down places having missed out all the backwork.) Now finish off the places with another thirds, fourths and 3-4 down and go down to the dodge and lead at the front.



As in Plain Bob the bells dodging in 5-6 are unaffected by the bobs and singles.

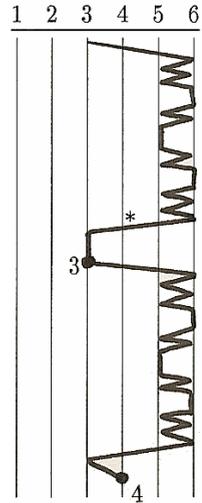
5. Singles

These are made in the same way as Plain Bob singles, so the bell making seconds place is unaffected and the bell which makes the bob at the single does exactly as described above.

The bell making the single has most fun. This is thirds place bell which has just finished the long backwork and is going down to dodge in 3-4 at the start of the places.

As I have already said that one bell is unaffected and making seconds and one is making the bob in fourths, you can see that this bell has very little room to manoeuvre.

It makes thirds and, since it has now become thirds place bell again, goes straight up to the back to start the long backwork again.



6. Place Notation

The place notation for Cambridge Surprise Minor is as follows:

$$\times 36 \times 14 \times 12 \times 36 \times 14 \times 56 \quad \text{le } 12$$

Try writing out a one lead grid from the place notation and this will help you to see what all the bells are doing in relation to one another, on paper at least.

	1 2 3 4 5 6
×	2 1 4 3 6 5
36	1 2 4 6 3 5
×	2 1 6 4 5 3
14	2 6 1 4 3 5
×	6 2 4 1 5 3
12	6 2 1 4 3 5
×	2 6 4 1 5 3
36	6 2 4 5 1 3
×	2 6 5 4 3 1
14	2 5 6 4 1 3
×	5 2 4 6 3 1
56	2 5 6 4 3 1
×	5 2 4 6 1 3
14	5 4 2 6 3 1
×	4 5 6 2 1 3
36	5 4 6 1 2 3
×	4 5 1 6 3 2
12	4 5 6 1 2 3
×	5 4 1 6 3 2
14	5 1 4 6 2 3
×	1 5 6 4 3 2
36	5 1 6 3 4 2
×	1 5 3 6 2 4
le 12	1 5 6 3 4 2