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EIGHT DOUBLES METHODS and how they are related

by

David W Struckett

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The eight methods for five bells based on the seventeenth and eighteenth century Old, New, and St. Simon's Doubles, and the later 'Canterbury' places, having similar lead ends and bobs.

These can be learnt as six different pieces of work, put together in different combinations, and are the natural methods for ringers to learn and regard as a 'standard' group, including Bob Doubles. All eight are illustrated in the central pages of this booklet by both the 'first lead' and 'blue line' systems, together with the standard bobs used. It could be copied as a wall chart if required, as with the page of touches.

Describing the method by the first lead

The first treble ‘lead’ or treble’s plain hunting path of a method contains the entire pattern, or work, for that method. Each working bell takes the place of each of the other bells in turn in succeeding ‘leads’ to complete the course. Thus the order of work for each bell can be traced through the lead shown, starting with the 2nd, and then the bell whose position it takes at the end of the first lead, then that of the next lead, etc., until it ends in second’s place again. In this way too, a particular piece of work e.g. a ‘double dodge up’ (by the 2nd in St. Simon’s), can be seen to relate to that of another bell — in this case a double dodge down by the 4th. The similarities or differences between methods can therefore be seen.

Describing a method by the Blue Line

Ever since Jasper Snowdon’s “Standard Methods ‘Diagrams’” of 1881, the most popular aid to learning a method has been the ‘Blue Line’, which traces out the path of a given bell through a course of the method. All the ‘working’ bells (i.e. bells other than the treble) do the same work, in the same order, but they start and finish in a different place. It is usual to trace a bell which has a symmetrical path from start to finish, in order to simplify recognition of work in each half. The dots on the line mark the ‘starts’ or starting positions.

The Methods

The eight methods included here are the plain Doubles methods with a four lead plain course, second’s and fifth’s places made at the lead end change, and no more than two consecutive blows in any place (except at the lead end, where some have 4 blows in fifth’s as in Plain Bob Doubles). There are many more Doubles methods of course, but this is a nice little group whose work relates to that found on higher numbers of bells and therefore worth learning by all.

Each method is given by both the first lead and by the blue line in order that the work in each can be examined. The methods are assembled together in the chart to illustrate their relationship to each other as follows: Methods on the same line have the same work BELOW the treble (e.g. note the plain hunting to the left of the treble’s path in the two methods at the top of the chart). Methods in the same column have the same work ABOVE the treble (e.g. note the Canterbury Places above the treble in methods in the middle column). The examples of Bobs are therefore placed under the columns as it is work above the treble which is actually affected at a bob.

Learning the Work BELOW THE TREBLE

The two methods at the top of the chart contain only plain hunt below the treble’s path, the only difference between them being the order in which the bells hunt to lead (which is due to the places made above).

In the middle line of methods, second's and third's places are made. This gives rise to a place making sequence in 1-2 (like plain hunt on two), and a hunting to and from the back similar to the methods on the bottom line. The second's place at the lead end change is just like that found in Plain Bob, and here joins up the place making on either side. The third's place produces a movement which is basically plain hunting in the back three positions, the bell turning round in third's place instead of at lead. It is useful to remember that the bells passed on the way down to third's are the bells to look for on the way back up again. The third's place is made the right way round - hand-stroke - backstroke, as with all the 'second's places'.

In the lower line of methods there is a 'double dodge' on the front, which is done going 'up' by the second's place bell (over at hand-stroke, under at back) and 'down' by the other bell, (lead at hand, in second's at back). The third's place causes hunting to and from the back as in the middle line of methods (see paragraph above).

Learning the work ABOVE THE TREBLE

Methods in the right hand column contain Plain Bob type work above the treble's path. This means that when the treble leads: second's place is made; there is a dodge by the bells in 3-4; and the bell in fifth's place will be there for a total of four blows. The actual order of doing the dodges may not be the same in each method because the other differences (i.e. work below the treble) will influence this. Noting where you pass the treble on the way up will remind you.

Methods in the middle column contain Canterbury Places in 3-4, which use up the same space as a dodge. Instead of dodging on the back stroke, movement is slowed up by making a place on the **HANDSTROKE** of the lead end, continuing in the original direction on the backstroke, and making a further place on the next handstroke before resuming a hunting path. The bells in second's and fifth's have the same work as in Plain Bob Doubles.

New Bob and Huntspill, on the left of the chart, contain some work which is rather like that found in Stedman, in that third's place is made while hunting in one direction and not turning round. 'Points', 'spikes' or 'half pull' places are also found, but to and from the back. This makes the total line look more complicated than it really is. The secret in mastering these two methods is noting which way round each of the whole pull places are made. The second's place at the lead end change is made 'right' of course (handstroke - backstroke), and so is the middle place of the three fifth's places separated by 'point fourth's', and also the third's places where a bell turns round and goes up again. The third's place on the way to or from the front work however is made 'wrong' (backstroke - handstroke), and so are the two other places at the back, which lie next to the treble's whole pull behind (which, of course, is also backstroke - handstroke). Look for these places on the chart (label the rows H or B perhaps).

The Bobs

The calls required for these methods need only be of one type, as no singles are necessary (unlike Grandsire). Fourth's place bobs are used here as being in common with other 'second's place' methods (e.g. as in Plain Bob on all other numbers of bells, Cambridge Surprise, etc.). However, although there is only one bob 'place' used, the work at a bob can look different according to the work going on near the lead end change. Thus a fourth's place bob in Reverse Canterbury looks different to a fourth's place bob in Plain Bob or St. Simon's because fourth's place is already being made in the previous change (and also in the subsequent change, making four blows in all).

There are therefore three kinds of bob according to the nature of the work above the treble. This is why they are illustrated in line with the appropriate column.

Thus the bob for Huntspill looks the same as that for New Bob.

There is another system of grouping which bobs cause, and that is their effect on the rows produced. This information is only required when arranging and calling touches. The 'lead head' produced by one complete lead of the method is, in this chart, either 3524 or 4253 (the last row shown, in each 'first lead' is either 13524 or 14253). These two rows A or B, being changed by a bob, give rise to two distinct groups of touches, hence the label, and are described later.

In the seventeenth century, third's place was used as a 'bob' instead of fourth's.

Some people now refer to third's place bobs as singles, or alternatively call the method by a different name when such calls are used. See the paragraph on Variations, later.

Learning the bobs

Once a method has been thoroughly learnt and the starting positions remembered, the alteration in work due to a bob must be investigated. This will be seen in the 'bob' diagram at the bottom of the page of methods. Here, in all cases there will be fourth's place made instead of seconds at the lead end change; DURING THIS

CHANGE the affected bells will 'run in', 'run out' and 'make it', just as in Plain Bob. (Note: a CHANGE is the progression from one ROW to the next, so the 'lead end change' is the two rows with the treble leading.)

The backstroke of this change (i.e. the treble's backstroke lead) is a starting position, thus if your bell 'runs in' it is now second's place bell, if it 'runs out' it becomes third's place bell, and if it 'makes the bob' it becomes fourth's place bell. In other words, the position a bell is in at the backstroke of a bob (which is the backstroke of the treble's lead) is the 'start' for the next sequence of work.

However, as mentioned earlier, the places adjacent to the lead end change cause a change of direction in some of the methods, and therefore a slightly different appearance. For example Reverse Canterbury has third's and fourth's places made either side of the treble's lead. This results in, the bob making bell making long fourth's and going back behind, while the third's making bells hunt both from and to

the front. It will help to trace the path of the other bells in the bob diagrams. This is why a chart like this, containing both the blue line and the figures, can be so useful.

Touches

On pages five and six are set out all the true touches using standard bobs. Of course the ‘extent’ or the one hundred and twenty changes on five bells (often referred to as ‘the six-score’) is the most commonly used length, but the other lengths have their uses. Sixty or one hundred can be called where a shorter touch is required (sometimes with more bobs than in a 120), or may be added to ten extents to make a quarter peal (which must be at least 1260 changes). Inspecting the ‘bob courses’ will help to explain the reason for twice as many extents being available for the methods marked ‘B’ than for those marked ‘A’.

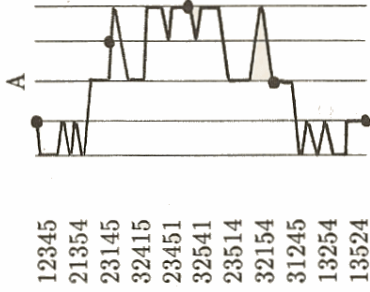
As a guide for those new to reading touches, page five is for Plain Bob Doubles. Start by looking at the first ‘extent’, note the 5th is observation, or is in fifth’s place at each bob, read the notes on page six next. Touches on page six are for St. Simon’s, etc. For further reading, Snowdon’s *Ropesight* contains a good introduction to setting out touches, also Wilson’s *Change Ringing*.

History

Old Doubles (what we now know as Plain Bob but with third’s place bobs) and New Doubles (New Bob, also with third’s place bobs), appeared in the *Tintinnalogia* of 1668, the first text book on change ringing. St. Simon’s is the next oldest, as it is mentioned in the remarkable rhyming manuscript by William Laughton between 1733 and 1735. This is a record of the Rambling Club of Ringers of London at that time. On the occasion mentioning St. Simon’s, they were at St. Bartholomew the Great in the City, where the same five bells are rung today. The use of fourth’s place bobs is clearly described in the *Clavis Campanologia* of 1788 (for Plain Bob and New) but St. Simon’s did not appear in a text book until Shipway’s *Campanologia* of 1813. During the later Victorian Era and early 20th century a puritanical period set in which frowned on four blows in one place (though normally active bias was applied to higher numbers than five bell ringing). Accordingly, the first Central Council Collection of Methods (Doubles, Minor and Triples, 1907) did not include those with four blows, and of this group only New Bob appears. All the methods in the group had been and were being rung during the early part of this century however, and in 1955 the Central Council published a comprehensive Collection of Doubles Methods which included all eight and their reversals (second edition 1961).

More recently there was some confusion when it was suggested renaming Reverse Canterbury and Canterbury the other way round, but fortunately common sense prevailed and the ‘1955’ naming is continued. This naming is the same as for the equivalent six bell methods, where Canterbury is seen as an alteration to Reverse Bob rather than Plain Bob. Since five and six bell ringing share a lot of common ground, and are somewhat independent of ringing on higher numbers, that seems sensible. See also the paragraph on extension, page 8. (cont’d. page 7)

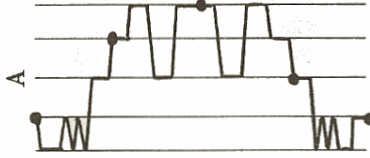
New Bob



12345
21354
23145
32415
23451
32541
23514
32154
31245
13254
13524

~~32134~~
bob
~~31245~~
~~13264~~
~~12354~~
~~21345~~
~~23154~~

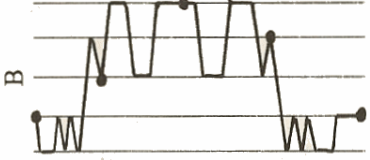
St. Nicholas' Bob



12345
21345
23154
32514
23541
32451
23415
32145
31254
13254
13524

bob
32145
~~31264~~
13254
12354
21354
~~23145~~

St. Simon's Bob



12345
21435
24153
42513
24531
42351
24315
42135
41253
14523
14253

bob
~~42135~~
41253
14523
15423
51243
~~52134~~

Touches — for methods marked A

The Plain Course:	<u>2345</u>	the Bob Course:	<u>2345</u>
(40 changes)	3524	(20 changes)	- 2354
	5432		- <u>2345</u>
	4253		
	<u>2345</u>		

Extents:	<u>2345</u>	<u>2345</u>	<u>2345</u>	<u>2345</u>
(120 changes)	3524	3524	3524	- 2354
	5432	5432	- 3542	3425
	4253	- 5423	5234	4532
	- <u>4235</u>	<u>4352</u>	<u>2453</u>	<u>5243</u>
	2543	3245	4325	- 5234
	5324	2534	- 4352	2453
	3452	- 2543	3245	4325
	- <u>3425</u>	<u>5324</u>	<u>2534</u>	<u>3542</u>
	4532	3452	5423	- 3524
	5243	4235	- 5432	5432
	2354	- 4253	4253	4253
	- <u>2345</u>	<u>2345</u>	<u>2345</u>	<u>2345</u>

Other touches:	<u>2345</u>	<u>2345</u>
(60 changes)	3524	- 2354
	- <u>3542</u>	<u>3425</u>
	5234	- 3452
	- <u>5243</u>	<u>4235</u>
	2354	- 4253
	- <u>2345</u>	<u>2345</u>

(100 changes)	<u>2345</u>	<u>2345</u>	<u>2345</u>	<u>2345</u>	<u>2345</u>
	3524	3524	- 2354	3524	- 2354
	5432	- 3542	3425	- 3542	3425
	- 5423	5234	- 3452	5234	4532
	4352	- 5243	4235	2453	- 4523
	- <u>4325</u>	<u>2354</u>	<u>2543</u>	- <u>2435</u>	<u>5342</u>
	3542	3425	- 2534	4523	- 5324
	5234	- 3452	5423	- 4532	3452
	- 5243	4235	- 5432	5243	4235
	2354	- 4253	4253	2354	- 4253
	- <u>2345</u>	<u>2345</u>	<u>2345</u>	- <u>2345</u>	<u>2345</u>

Touches — for methods marked B

The Plain Course:	<u>2345</u>	the Bob Course:	<u>2345</u>
(40 changes)	4253	(40 changes)	- 5423
	5432		- 3254
	3524		- 4532
	<u>2345</u>		- <u>2345</u>

Extents:	(120 changes)						
<u>2345</u>	<u>2345</u>	<u>2345</u>	<u>2345</u>	<u>2345</u>	<u>2345</u>	<u>2345</u>	<u>2345</u>
4253	4253	4253	- 5423	- 5423	- 5423	- 5423	4253
5432	5432	- 3542	2534	- 3254	- 3254	2534	- 3542
3524	- 2354	4325	3245	- 4532	5342	- 4325	- 2435
- 4235	<u>5243</u>	<u>2453</u>	<u>4352</u>	<u>3425</u>	- <u>2453</u>	- <u>5243</u>	- <u>5324</u>
<u>3452</u>	4532	5234	- 2543	- 5234	- 3524	- 3452	2543
5324	3425	- 4352	4235	- 4352	- 4235	5324	- 3425
2543	- 5234	5423	3452	- 2543	3452	- 4253	- 5234
- <u>3425</u>	<u>3542</u>	<u>2534</u>	<u>5324</u>	<u>4235</u>	- <u>2534</u>	- <u>3542</u>	- <u>4352</u>
2354	4325	3245	- 4253	- 5342	- 4325	- 2435	5423
5243	2453	- 5432	5432	- 2453	- 5243	3254	- 3254
4532	- 3524	3524	3524	- 3524	4532	- 4532	- 4532
- <u>2345</u>	<u>2345</u>	<u>2345</u>	<u>2345</u>	<u>2345</u>	- <u>2345</u>	- <u>2345</u>	- <u>2345</u>

Other touches:

(all 60 changes)

<u>2345</u>	<u>2345</u>	<u>2345</u>	<u>2345</u>	<u>2345</u>	<u>2345</u>	<u>2345</u>	<u>2345</u>
4253	- 5423	4253	4253	- 5423	- 5423	4253	- 5423
- <u>3542</u>	<u>2534</u>	5432	- 3542	2534	- 3254	- 3542	2534
4325	- 4325	- <u>2354</u>	<u>4325</u>	<u>3245</u>	<u>5342</u>	- <u>2435</u>	- <u>4325</u>
- <u>5243</u>	<u>2453</u>	5243	2453	- 5432	- 2453	3254	- 5243
4532	- 3524	4532	- 3524	3524	- 3524	- 4532	4532
- <u>2345</u>	<u>2345</u>	- <u>2345</u>	<u>2345</u>	<u>2345</u>	<u>2345</u>	- <u>2345</u>	- <u>2345</u>

Touches are written out 'by the lead heads', that is to say just the lead head rows are set down, with a dash (-) to indicate if a bob was made to produce the row given on that line. All rows shown are the backstroke of the treble's lead. The treble is not shown as it is always in the same place at the beginning of the row.

The row before starting and the row at the end of the touch (both rounds) are all underlined, together with those lead head rows where the 'observation bell' is in its home position (e.g. in 5th place at bob). This will help you note the construction of the touch, and therefore to remember where to make the calls when conducting.

The latest Central Council publications on five bell ringing are as follows, which contain all types. of methods, names, touches, variations, etc.:

'Plain Doubles Methods and Variations' 1980.

(It's actually called 'doubles collection' on the front cover.)

'Collection of Doubles Methods' 1986.

(Which says third edition, but isn't; it is part two of the other book, above, and contains 'principles' and other systems rather than plain 'methods'.)

What to try next

You may well be asking by now, what can be easily learned next. Of course this depends on what sort of band you ring with, and how many bells are available. Here are some ideas directly related to these methods.

Variations

In Doubles Ringing a 'Variation' is when a different call is used to obtain a touch or extent. For example if Plain Bob Doubles is rung using third's place bobs (i.e. third's place is made instead of fourth's at a bob) it can be known by its original name of 'Old Doubles' (well, earliest name that we know of!). If a complete Grandsire single (including 4 blows in third's) is used as the bob (in Plain Bob) it is known as 'April Day'. The arrangement of calls and the figures produced are of course different to the standard touches shown here, but may be easily worked out. Variations are available for all the eight methods in this booklet. Variations are useful on five bells to add interest to the more restricted range of methods available, but are not used on higher numbers. For details see the Central Council Booklet *Plain Doubles Methods and Variations 1980*.

Reversals

These methods may also be rung in the reversed form, as in Reverse Bob Doubles. With all eight methods described here, the blue lines shown can be used turned upside down and the starting positions moved along the line six changes (or back four changes). The 'second's place' is now a fourth's place. The term Reverse is added to the title, except Reverse Canterbury which of course becomes Canterbury.

The easiest type of bob to apply to obtain touches is simply to call the bob at the half lead, or when the treble is at the back; second's place will be made instead of fourth's place. Calling one bell unaffected three times, as with the methods shown here, will produce the extent. The same 'lead head' figures will be produced. A different sort of bob (and therefore different touches) has to be used if calls are to be made at the lead end change. Unfortunately, when the reversed methods are extended to Triples there are other complications, so the above notes only apply to Doubles.

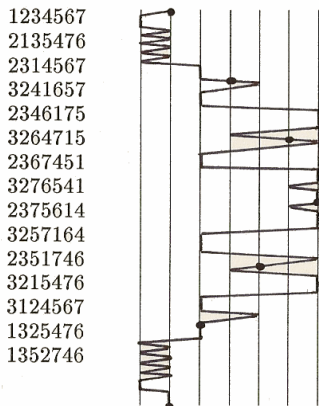
There is no 'Double' version to any of these methods (for example 'Double Bob' does not work on odd numbers, as it does on even).

Extensions

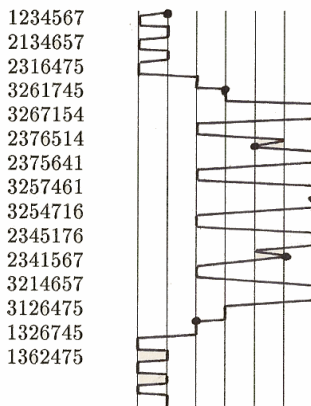
The eight methods in this paper extend to Triples and beyond, by static extension, i.e. places are only repeated in the same position as in the Doubles method, e.g. third's remains third's and is not repeated in fifth's. St. Simon's is a good example of this, which is like St. Clements (and Kent Treble Bob) on even numbers in this respect. In addition, the relationship between the methods remains the same regarding the work either side of the treble. The chart of these eight methods say for seven bells will therefore have an identical layout to the one shown, including bobs.

(However the lead end groups, and consequently touches for the middle column of methods are NOT the same). Although of no use in Doubles methods, singles may be used in addition to bobs (or even instead of bobs) in Triples and above, which can make composition more interesting (Plain Bob Singles with third's and fourth's places) are used. As with Doubles methods, Plain, New and St. Simon's are the oldest and best known of the Triples methods, being first pealed in 1715, 1750 and 1732 respectively. Plain Bob Caters was first pealed in 1751, St. Simon's Caters not until 1968. The extension of Reverse Canterbury to Triples and Caters was first rung to peals during the nineteenth century, but is known as Canterbury Pleasure, and not Reverse. The others were extended and pealed more recently.

New Bob Triples



Winchendon Place Triples



These two methods, together with Plain Bob Triples, contain all the work found in the eight methods described in this booklet for seven bells. For example St. Simon's is the same as Plain Bob Triples above the treble, and the same as New Bob below, just as in the Doubles chart in this booklet. It would be a useful exercise to write out the figures for all the seven bell versions, and trace the blue lines for them.

Squared paper will help.

Splicing

For practice, it is a good idea to ring plain courses of each of the methods learnt one after the other without stopping, the only requirement being that the conductor must announce the next method to be rung just before the end of a course. Quarters and Peals can also be rung in a variety of methods by changing the method at the end of an extent. Real splicing however is when the method is changed during a touch or extent, which may be done several times, and with two or more different methods. The change in method is usually made at a lead end change, where you will know the starts in the new method. This group of methods is an ideal introduction to splicing as there is second's and fifth's at the lead end change in all of them, the similarity of bob has been already explained, and only two methods have to be learnt to start with. There are various systems of splicing, the simplest of which are as follows:

Course splicing: For methods which contain the same rows in their plain courses (albeit in a different order) the simple three bob extent is used, with a whole course of each method between bobs. Plain Bob and Reverse Canterbury Doubles may be spliced in this way, by changing the method after the first bob, and back to the original method after the second bob. The touch will come round after the third bob, as usual. Other pairs, or possibly groups of three can be deduced by inspecting their plain courses.

Lead splicing: This is possible for methods where the path of an observation bell can be arranged into a 'course' using leads of different methods. The simplest version for this particular group of methods is for any pair of methods with the same number of places made at each change, so long as one has a lead head type 'A' and the other is type 'B'. e.g. Plain Bob and St. Simon's, or New Bob and St. Simon's, or Reverse Canterbury and St. Nicholas, or Huntspill and St. Martins. A course in this system (4 leads) is obtained by calling a bob every lead AND changing the method every lead (i.e. alternating between one method and the other). The extent is obtained by OMITTING one of the bobs, and repeating the 'course' twice. Note that there will be an 'observation bell' as in the nine bob touch, with a bob NOT being called when it is making four blows behind.

Complex splicing: Inevitably, once methods are spliced together it is tempting to see how many can be assembled into a true extent. With a suitable variety of methods, up to ten can be put together in this way, as the extent is ten leads long. Working out these extents requires familiarity with all the methods to be used, knowledge of the 'nature of the rows' and a lot of trial and error, as the whole extent probably has to be written out to prove that all 120 rows appear.

This booklet has been produced for the Education Committee of the Oxford Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers, to which is due the author's thanks for its encouragement, and particular thanks to Miss M. Cross for suggestions and proof reading. *Eight Doubles Methods* is dedicated to all young ringers who like asking questions!