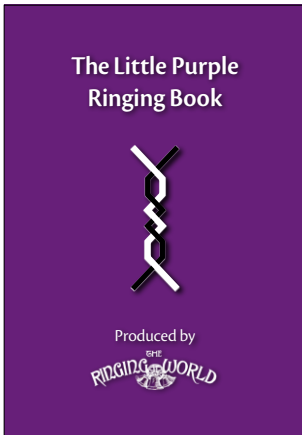




## The Little Purple Ringing Book

Produced by The Ringing World, 2021



A6 (105 x 148mm), 56 pages  
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The title of this new ringing publication is intriguing, and with a little explanation it describes the book's aim as well as its colour. Several years ago, in a series of articles in *The Ringing World*, Simon Linford classified change-ringing into four zones, colour-coded in the same way as the levels of difficulty of ski runs. The book focuses on what it calls the "purple transition", which is the progression from blue to red. What does this mean? The blue zone consists of methods such as Plain Bob, Grandsire and St Clement's, which can be rung by relatively simple rules and a "circle of work". The red zone encompasses more complex methods including most of the

surprise repertoire, which need to be learnt and rung by place bells. Progressing from blue zone to red zone ringing requires developing a new armoury of techniques and a greater understanding of method structure, and it's a stage at which learners can become stuck. The purpose of *The Little Purple Ringing Book* is to smooth that journey.

The best way to describe the book is as a kind of enhanced Ringing World Diary, containing not only methods and compositions across the blue/red boundary, but also the explanations needed to make sense of the diagrams. The text is clear, concise, comprehensive, and at just the right level. As I read the method descriptions and the various hints and tips, nothing came to mind that I felt had been omitted – and yet it seems remarkable that all the necessary information has been packed into such a slim volume. Not a word is wasted. For example, in the section on calling Plain Bob Minor, two and a half pages take the reader all the way from the simplest touches to a standard quarter peal composition, including explanation of all the notation.

The selection of methods includes the expected standards from plain minimus through plain doubles and minor to surprise minor and, towards the end, triples (including Stedman and Erin), plain major, and Plain Bob and Grandsire up to caters and royal. There is a great deal of imagination and care in the selection of additional methods that are not quite on the usual beaten track – but perhaps should be. The book is not prescriptive, but makes suggestions that might not spring to the traditional mind – for example, gently pointing out that Cambridge is not necessarily the easiest surprise minor method to tackle first. It covers the ideas of method structure that are necessary to explore alternative combinations of frontwork and backwork. Plain methods, too, receive a thorough treatment, with some appealing suggestions that I was not familiar with or only dimly

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remembered. Did you know there are plain minor methods that contain the whole of Stedman slow work?

The method diagrams follow a format that's familiar from the Ringing World Diary, with place bells and calling positions clearly highlighted. The book is now available in two editions, the original at A6 size and a new larger A5 format with exactly the same content. I sympathise with those who found the print in the A6 format a little small, but it's true that the A5 version doesn't fit as easily into a pocket – anyway, now there is a choice.

In an age of apps and online resources, it's clear to me that there is still a place for printed ringing books, and *The Little Purple Book* with its carefully curated combination of diagrams and text is a perfect example. I recommend it to anyone who is learning or teaching at the blue/red level.

SIMON GAY

Readers may be interested in a new episode of the 'Fun With Bells' podcast on which Simon and Tina Stoecklin discuss their recent book, *Change-ringing on Handbells: Volume 1: Basic Techniques*. See p.854.

**Plain Minor**

St Clement's College	St Nicholas College	Double Oxford	Single Oxford	Hereward Bob	Stanstead Bob	Cumberland Bob	Double Bob	St Clement's also Plain Bob, Double Bob, Hereward and Stanstead

These methods are **seconds-place methods**, meaning seconds is made over the treble's lead, and everyone else dodges to become a new place bell (see page 8). Most commonly rung minor methods are seconds-place methods.

Perhaps you already know some of the methods on this double spread? If not, try a few of them. **St Clement's**, **Double Oxford** and **Single Oxford** are popular, and perhaps the easiest. But try some of the others too – they are interesting in their own right and provide good practice for learning methods.

Bobs and singles in these methods are called at a backstroke and take effect the following backstroke. At a **bob**, if you would have become 4ths place bell, **run in** to become 2nds place bell; instead of making seconds, **run out** to 3rds place bell; and instead of becoming 3rds place bell, **make the bob** by making fourths to become 4th place bell. The effect in each method can feel very different. In **Double Oxford**, you run out to the 3-4 up places, **omitting the first dodge**, while making thirds at a single merges the 3-4 down and 3-4 up places – **dodge down, thirds-fourths-thirds-fourths-thirds, dodge up**.

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