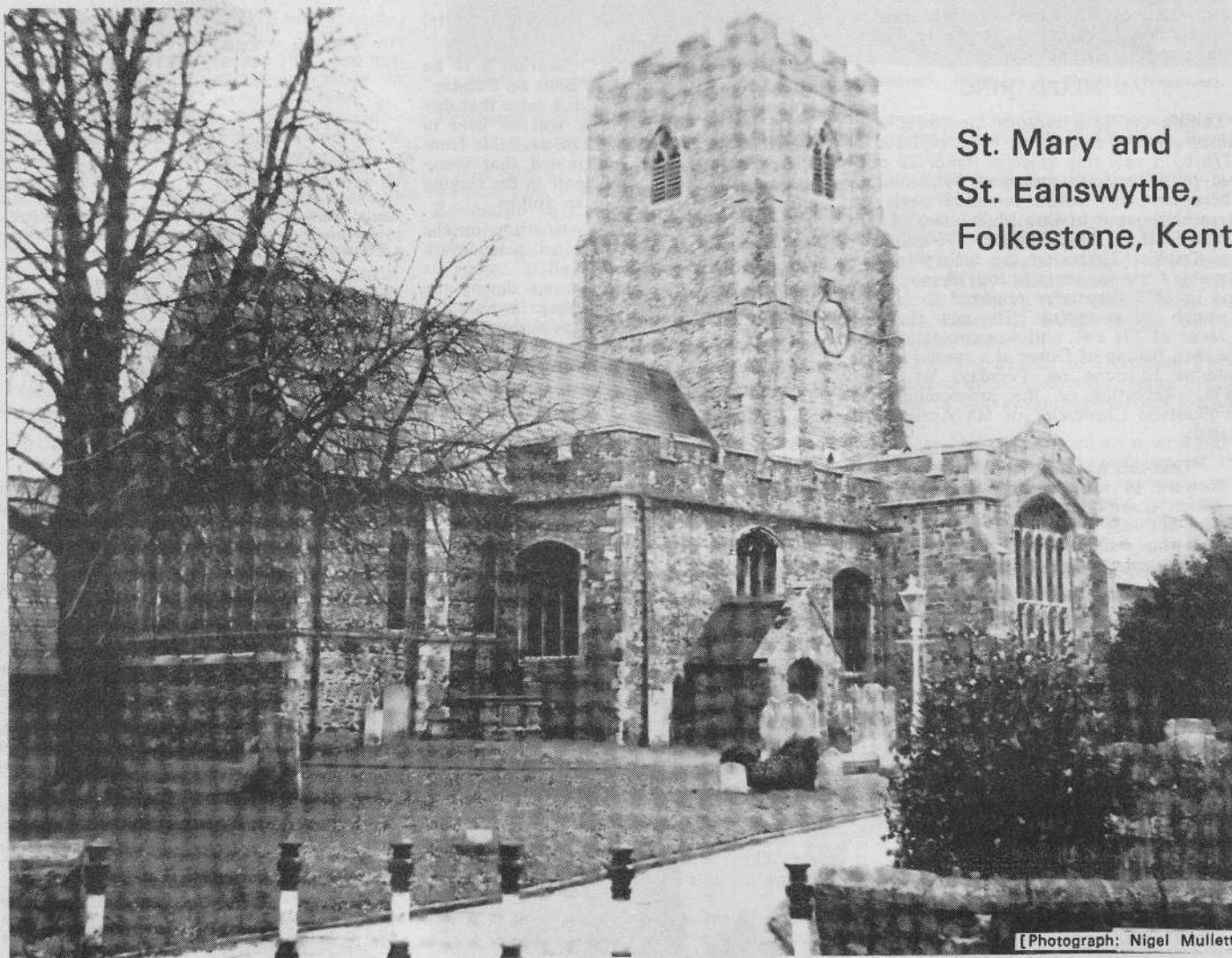


THE RINGING WORLD

18p weekly

OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF
THE CENTRAL COUNCIL
OF CHURCH BELL RINGERS



St. Mary and
St. Eanswythe,
Folkestone, Kent

[Photograph: Nigel Mullett]



Dedication Centenary — Folkestone Parish Church, 1st April, 1979



THE PARISH CHURCH of St. Mary and St. Eanswythe is one of the few churches in England to contain the relics of its patron saint. Eanswythe, a Saxon princess, felt called to the religious life, and her father, King Eadbald, son of Ethelbert, built her a Nunnery on Folkestone's West Cliff in A.D. 630, the first in England. She became the first Abbess of the "Black Nuns", so called because of their dress. She died still young in A.D. 640 and was buried in the Convent chapel.

Both Convent and chapel were razed to the ground by Viking raiders, but Athelstan built a new church wherein the Saint's relics were re-interred in 927. However, in 1052 this church, too, was destroyed by the Earl of Godwyn, after whom the Goodwin Sands were named. Another church was built by Nigel de Muneville in 1095, but by 1138 the cliff on which it was built was slipping into the sea, and the then Lord of the Manor, William d'Averanches, built a new church and priory on the site of the present

church. This also was destroyed, probably during the troubles of King John's reign when the French were besieging Dover Castle. It was rebuilt almost immediately and parts of this church are still extant within the existing building.

The church on the edge of the cliffs was considerably enlarged and beautified in the 15th century but, either at the Reformation or more probably during the Civil Wars, was defaced and the glass broken. Severe

(Continued overleaf)

FOLKESTONE—continued

damage also occurred during the great gale of 1705 when two bays of the nave were blown down, and the church remained thus truncated till the middle of the 19th century. The extensive work of restoration which was then commenced can be seen in the church as it stands today; it was whilst this work was proceeding that the relics of St. Eanswythe were found hidden in the north wall, where they still repose in a leaden casket behind a brass grille.

Among the many treasures the church possesses it would seem appropriate to mention the great Harvey Window at the west end, inserted in 1874 as a memorial to William Harvey, discoverer of the circulation of the blood. Harvey was born in Folkestone on 1st April, 1578, and the window was paid for by the British medical profession as a national tribute to Folkestone's most illustrious son.

A MIXED RING

During the 18th century the tower contained a mixed ring of six bells, replaced in 1778 by a new ring of eight (tenor 22 cwt.) cast by Pack & Chapman of Whitechapel. There are only seven recorded peals on these bells—four of Bob Major, two of Bob Triples and, on 18th February 1860, Grand-sire Triples. Thereafter the bells were unringable for some years as four were cracked and in 1879 they were removed to Loughborough for re-casting. The new ring has a tenor of 25½ cwt. and was consecrated by the then Bishop of Dover at a special service held at 12 noon on Tuesday, 1st April, 1879. Reporting on the proceedings, the "Folkestone Chronicle" of 5th April, 1879, stated:

"That this was an event that was looked forward to with much interest was apparent from the large number of people who not only attended the Parish Church, but who waited in the precincts of the churchyard to listen to the peal of bells."

The first peal on Easter Monday, 10th April, 1882, was 5040 Grandsire Triples, rung in 3 hrs. 5 mins., and is recorded as

NOT WITHOUT INCIDENT

It was in the evening of March 14th that the three Bathwick ringers who had met at St. Mary's to ring handbells discovered within the belfry door a large parcel containing a set of eight new bell-ropes. This set has been on order for two years and more, and so it seemed fitting that some celebration should take place:—

Bath (Bathwick).—14 March, 1260 Plain Bob Doubles: N. M. White 1-2, T. D. Smith 3-4, R. W. Willans (C) 5-6. First on handbells 1-2, 3-4. First quarter "with" the new ropes: they were in the same room!

The quarter was not rung without incident; in the last couple of extents the seventh of the tower bells began to toll for the Lenten Address, and this gave an interesting bourdon effect to the ringing. R. W. W.

containing 194 bobs and 46 singles. There have since been a further 36 peals and it is hoped to score a "Centenary Peal" on 31st March, 1979.

The centenary of the Dedication is to be a feature of the B.B.C.'s "Bells on Sunday" programme on 1st April, and later that day a Service of Thanksgiving will be held in the church. The bells will be available from 4.30 p.m. and it is anticipated that many ringers will wish to participate in the ringing and share in the service to follow.

The tower in its unique situation on the cliffs has for centuries provided a landmark for local fishermen, and pilots using the nearby aerodrome at Hawkinge during the Battle of Britain soon realised its value in this respect. The Grimthorpe-designed bells have been described "as a 'beefy' Taylor ring", but it is felt they have been considerably improved, firstly by re-hanging on ball bearings in 1935, and again in 1974 when they were quarter-turned and fitted with cast-iron headstocks and new clappers. They are still not the easiest to ring but respond well to careful handling. Under new leadership an enthusiastic band is moving into the second century, mindful of their inheritance and resolved in their endeavours to ensure that the bells of Folkestone which have given much pleasure to residents, visitors and ringers alike, shall continue to ring to the honour and glory of God.



[Photograph: Nigel Mullett

The vicar with some of the ringers: (l. to r.) David Wilkinson (treasurer), Roger Bassant, Charles Sinden (captain), Maureen Noton, the Rev. Peter Cole (Vicar), Gillian Noton (a visitor), Bernard Marks (vice-captain), Jack Wellard (tower-keeper) and Mike Godfrey.



Penmark House, Woodbridge Meadows, Guildford, GU1 1BL

The official Journal of the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers

(Founded by J. S. Goldsmith, proprietor and editor until his death in 1942)

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POSTAL SUBSCRIPTION RATES:

	From January 1, 1979		
	3 months	6 months	12 months
1 copy	£3.50	£6.40	£12.00
2 copies	£6.80	£11.70	£21.80
3 "	£9.60	£17.50	£31.40
4 "	£12.20	£22.60	£41.30
Additional copies, £10.00 each per year			
Overseas (Annual only):—			
	Surface Mail £12.20		
	Air Mail £17.00		

Remittances, payable to The Ringing World, should be addressed to The Ringing World, Penmark House, Woodbridge Meadows, Guildford, Surrey, GU1 1BL (Tel. [0483] 69535).

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Obituary

CUTHBERT T. HERNIMAN

All members of the Bridgwater Branch (Bath and Wells D.A.) were saddened by the death of Cuthbert Herniman on 21st February, aged 73. Until January he had served for nine years as Branch chairman, a post ideally suited to him because of his patience and dedication.

He was well known in the area as a farmer and churchgoer, and for his interests in cricket, whist drives, skittles, etc. The tiny church at Fiddington was overflowing on February 28th for the memorial service, and one felt honoured and a certain warmth to be amongst the hundreds of friends and relatives who had gathered in affectionate respect and love for him.

All extend love and sympathy to his wife Chrissie and their two daughters at this sad time. Four quarter peals were rung in memoriam. B. W.

* * * * *
Nether Stowey. 28 February, 1260 Grandsire Doubles: A D Glover 1, G Brown 2, Barbara Wylde 3, B J Wylde 4, E Dibble (C) 5, C Clarke 6. Half-muffled. **Wembdon.** 1260 P.B. Doubles: Dawn Underhill 1, M Allison 2, Ruth Gregory 3, S Allison 4, F W Sweet (C) 5, O Pole 6. Half-muffled. **Weston Zoyland.** 1260 Grandsire Doubles: R Chamberlin 1, A D Glover 2, S Evans 3, W Bartholomew 4, B J Wylde (C) 5, C Pitman 6. Puriton. 4 March, 1260 P.B. Minor: Audrey Short 1, Rosemary Beck 2, Shirley Beck 3, Jean Pigden 4, B Baker 5, E Dibble (C) 6.

Therefore shall evil come upon thee . . .
 Thou shalt not know from whence it riseth . . .
 And mischief shall fall upon thee . . .
 Thou shalt not be able to put it off . . .
 And desolation shall come upon thee suddenly . . .
 Which thou shalt not know . . .

Isaiah 47.11