

## A SMALL VILLAGE TRIUMPHS OVER INFLATION

ABOUT FIVE MILES east of Maidstone, nestling below the Downs and close by the old Pilgrims' Way lies the village of Hollingbourne. This gem of a village is divided into two distinct parts. One, called Upper Street, consists of the Church, an almost perfect Tudor Manor House and other fine old houses. The other part lies about half-a-mile to the south and is known as Lower Street or Eyhorne Street; on early maps it was sometimes marked as 'Iron Street'.

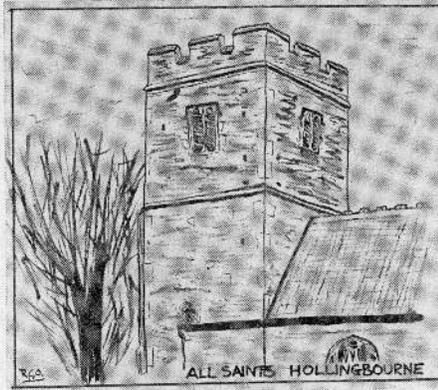
The earliest mention of Hollingbourne is in a will dated about 1000. In this will Athelstan, son of King Ethelred, bequeathed the Manor of Hollingbourne to the Monks of Christ Church, Canterbury. In the Domesday Book the village is recorded as having two Manors—Hollingbourne and Elnorthington.

The Church dates mainly from the 15th century, the previous building having been destroyed in the earthquake which rocked the south-east of England in 1382. Among the Church's many fine treasures are a Jacobean pulpit, a crocketed wooden font cover made in the early 16th century, and many monuments to the Culpeper family who lived at Greenway Court in the parish. The most valuable possession is an altar cloth embroidered by the four daughters of Sir Thomas Culpeper, a Royalist who was in exile for 12 years, the cloth being worked during this period. It is still used for great festivals.

Little is known of the early bells, but by 1723 they required recasting; the work was entrusted to Samuel Knight. The Knights had been a bellfounding family in Reading since 1518; Samuel took over the business in 1681, and seeing its decline moved to Holborn in 1710. In a very few years he built up an excellent trade, casting many rings for Kent churches including the eight at Canterbury in 1726. It would appear that the Hollingbourne ring had to wait until the following year to be hung; the frame, which was built on the foundation of the previous one, has the date 1774 carved on it. A local tradition states that Knight cast eight bells for the church but the neighbouring village of Leeds "stole the two trebbles" to augment their own ring to ten; as Leeds has had a ring of ten since 1751 this tradition can be refuted. In 1897 the bells were rehung as part of the celebrations of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee. This rehanging cannot have been all that satisfactory for in 1920 Alfred Bowell of Ipswich rehanging the bells with new fittings and strengthened the framework.

### SIGNS OF DECAY

By the late sixties the bell-frame was showing signs of decay and movement was causing concern—several bad cracks had appeared in the west wall of the tower. Hollingbourne, like many other villages, has a small population and a big responsibility. Under its last incumbent, the Rev. A. Hugh Lance, over £15,000 was spent on restoring the main fabric of the church. Unfortunately Mr. Lance died suddenly in 1972, leaving the work on the tower still to be



done. In 1974 the P.C.C. decided to go ahead and raise the £6,000 required to complete the restoration of their church.

Miraculously, and in spite of heavy inflation, the work has been done within the original estimate of costs; this has been due in no small way to the help given by members of the Kent County Association. During January of this year a team of about five members dismantled and lowered the bells and completely removed the old frame. The work was carried out in evenings and at weekends, operations often carrying on into the small hours of the morning! A total of 174 hours was spent by the members at Hollingbourne, and many a fine tale could be related about the work! The bells were transported to Whitechapel by a local farmer. Whilst the bells were away the cracks in the tower were stitched and the foundation for the new frame built about five feet lower than its predecessor. The bells were returned, having been tuned, and were hung in a splendid new Iroko frame with partly-new fittings. The bells have been transformed from a very indifferent-sounding and hard-going ring into one which is in every respect a credit to the Bell Foundry.

The culmination of ten years' hard work came on Sunday, October 5th, when at a Harvest Festival service the Archbishop of

Canterbury, Most Rev. and Rt. Hon. F. Donald Coggan, "Solemnly set apart and re-dedicated these bells to the Glory of God". The Archbishop took as the text for his sermon words from the first chapter of St. Luke's Gospel: "Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord". He spoke of the great occasion this rededication was in the life of a parish, and then went on to question the use of a church today. Its use, he said, is three-fold: (1) It should be used for Worship, (2) Holiness, and (3) Outreach. The initials of these three uses being W.H.O. which could also stand for 'World Health Organisation', which is what the Church should be.

After the service an opening touch of P.B. Minor was rung by some of the members who had assisted in the restoration:—

Bert Luck	Treble
Dawn Petts	2
David Joyce	3
Terry Barton	4
Alan Berry	5
Richard Offen	Tenor

This was followed by a splendid buffet luncheon, kindly given by the P.C.C. for those who had assisted with the work, and at this we were delighted to be able to chat informally to our new Archbishop, who showed great interest in the work of the K.C.A.C.R.

### DETAILS OF THE BELLS

Treble.—31". C sharp. SAMVELL s KNIGHT \*  
MADE s ME THE LEDARE s OF s THIS s  
RING TO BE J723. (5-3-11)  
Second.—33 $\frac{3}{4}$ ". B. TS TT AB S KNIGHT  
FECIT J723. (6-2-25)  
Third.—35 $\frac{7}{8}$ ". A. J723. (7-2-0)  
Fourth.—37 $\frac{3}{4}$ ". G sharp. RICHARD SPICE  
JOHN TAPLEY a SENER RICHARD RVSSSELL  
IVNER J723. (8-3-2)  
Fifth.—40 $\frac{1}{2}$ ". F sharp. RICHARD RVSSSELL CH  
WARDEN SAMVELL KNIGHT FECIT J723.  
(9-3-0)  
Tenor.—44 $\frac{3}{4}$ ". E. EDWARD WATERMAN VICAR  
RICHARD CHALONER SAM KNIGHT FECIT  
J723. (13-1-24)

s on treble indicates a small coin.

\* on treble indicates a large coin.

a on fourth is a small mark which may be a hyphen.

N on all bells indicates a reversed N.

### Salisbury D.G.

#### NEW PRESS SECRETARY

The Marlborough Branch held its A.G.M. on November 15th in Marlborough. After tea in the Church Hall, a warm welcome was extended to the Guild Master, Rev. Roger Keeley, and the Guild Secretary, Mr. E. J. Hitchins. All officers were re-elected with the exception of Mrs. R. D. Bonner who replaces Miss Anne Cummins as Press Secretary. Four new members were elected and welcomed into the Branch. After some discussion, arrangements for the fixtures of monthly meetings for the forthcoming year were deferred until further enquiries could be made.

Everyone was saddened to hear that Canon J. Walsh (Rector of Marlborough) would be leaving in the New Year. The Branch expressed thanks and gratitude for his help and co-operation over the past nine years and hoped that his successor would be equally "ringable"! Canon Walsh was also thanked by the Master, who re-

### ST. CECILIA'S MAJOR

Those ringers who are music-lovers will know that St. Cecilia is the Patron Saint of Music. It is customary at Highclere Church (Hants) to hold the Choir and Bell-ringing Festival as near to this date as possible.

It was planned to name a new method after this saint, but due to a late start for a peal on the Sunday afternoon there was only time to ring a quarter in the method.

1344 St. Cecilia's Imperial Bob Major: Helen Robb 1, D. Goss 2, N. Lawrence 3, H. Lawrence 4, A. Twyman 5, R. Knight 6, G. Dodd (cond.) 7, R. Coxhead 8.

ST. CECILIA IMPERIAL MAJOR  
5678.18—18—18—18 i.e. 2nds. 13624857  
First quarter in the method.

called memories of when they were both at Marlborough, at which time the bells of St. Mary's Church were augmented to eight. All finally returned to the tower to complete the occasion with some fine ringing.

R. D. B.