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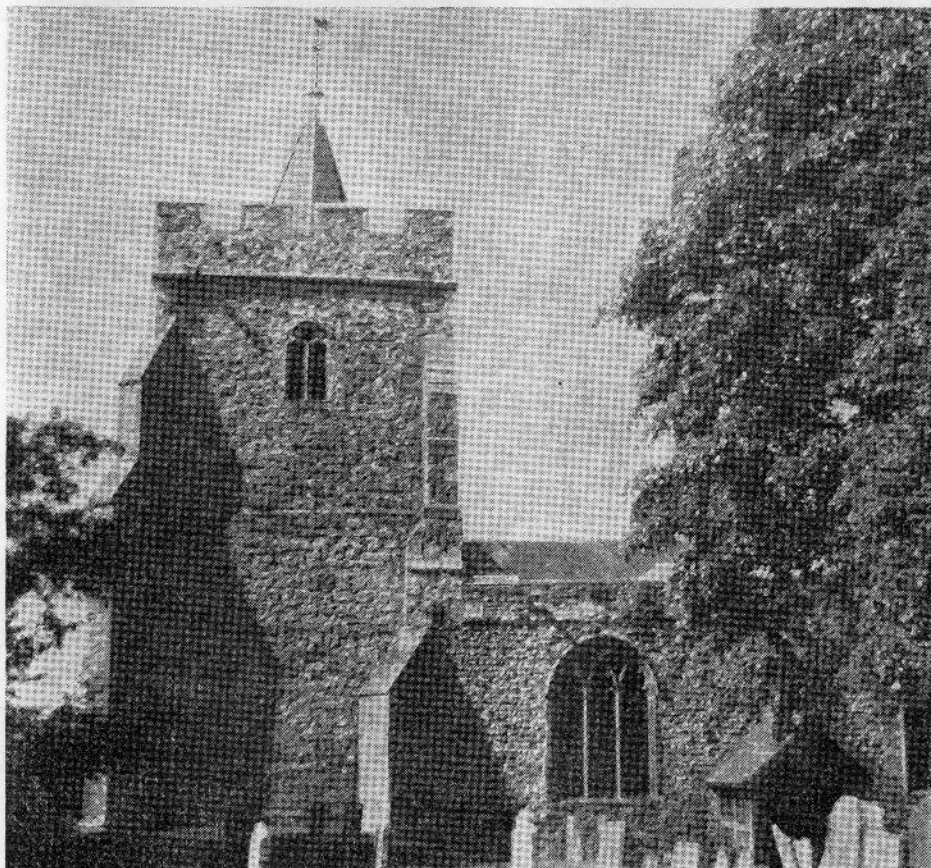
St. Mary and St. Ethelburga, Lyminge, Kent

THE VILLAGE OF LYMINGE is situated at the Folkestone end of the picturesque Elham Valley and boasts a population of over 2,000, a vast expanse of natural countryside and a host of historical features.

Over the past ten years the village has grown rapidly with the introduction of new housing estates which have been well blended amongst the older dwellings. Interesting features around the village point to both the past and the future. The old station and track of the, now redundant, Elham Valley branch line which ran alongside the village can still be seen. The River Nailbourne, which runs the length of the Elham Valley and beyond, has its source in the area and on the nearby, Tolsford Hill is the Post Office radio tower which carries the majority of Continental telephone and television traffic.

Many of the older buildings in the area possess plates indicating that they are "Historic Buildings of Kent" and are thus protected against future development. There are several ancient burial areas in the village, an old Bronze Age burial mound in a nearby wood, a Jutish cemetery and, beside the present churchyard, the excavations of a Roman burial ground. Just below the church are the Tayne and Well fields, the latter containing "Ethelburga's Well" which is built upon an old spring which, tradition has it, was discovered in answer to her prayers when she arrived in the locality many centuries ago. The present church is situated amongst its 7th century predecessor's ruins and is a constant reminder of the development of Christianity in this area over 1,300 years ago.

Queen Ethelburga was born the daughter of King Ethelbert and Queen Bertha of Kent. She was granted royal property in Lyminge by her brother, King Eadbald, when she fled to Kent after the death of her husband, King Edwin of Northumbria, in 633. In this old Roman settlement Queen Ethelburga founded a convent of which she was the first Abbess until her death in 647 when, being regarded as a saint, her remains were placed in a shrine within her church.



In the years following her death the abbey continued to function until about 840, when it was sacked by invading Danes. Shortly after this setback it was used as a monastery and ran for another 125 years when the monks joined with the nuns in Canterbury. Our church is dedicated to St. Ethelburga and to St. Mary, the latter possibly being carried over from the original building.

In the land surrounding the church are remains of the settlement. The old church, which resembles other Saxon churches in the area, is visible in the grass around the present porch, the north wall of the nave and the eastern apse being most obvious. Large stones unearthed beyond the tower

suggest that at one time the building was extended westwards. The lower walls of the present chancel are the remains of old Roman houses. Traces of an older tower can be detected in the wall of the north aisle and a 15th century sundial is built into the wall beside the priest's door. The flying buttress on the south side of the nave was built at the end of the 13th century.

SAXON CONTRIBUTION

Inside the church further indications of its gradual development are clear. The Saxon contribution is the chancel, nave and four round-headed windows about the chancel and south door, all 10th century.

(Continued overleaf)

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LYMINGE, KENT—continued

Roman tiles from the old settlement are used around the church, particularly in the windows. The brilliantly coloured east window is c. 1511 and the glass c. 1859. The base of the font and the arcade between the nave and the north aisle are 15th century, as are the arms of Cardinal Bourchier in the window above the south door and the Bishop's head in a chancel window.

The alabaster reredos was designed by the late Sir Ninian Comper and erected as a memorial to a former resident of Sibton Park. It contains, among others, figures of St. Ethelburga and her chaplain, St. Paulinus, the first Archbishop of York. Two 18th century funeral hatchments of the Honeywood family of Sibton Park are positioned above the 14th century arch of the chancel.

About 1904 a great deal of work was carried out in the church, including the replacement of the old pews with locally grown and worked oak and the replacing of the old ring of six bells by eight in a steel frame.

THE BELLS

- Treble (5-1-20).—Mears & Stainbank founders London. Robert D. Eves M.A. Rector of Lyminge gave me A.D. 1904 "Praise ye the Lord".
- 2nd (6-0-00).—Mears & Stainbank founders London. Katherine, wife of the Rev. Robert D. Eves Rector of Lyminge gave me A.D. 1904 "The Lords name be praised".
- 3rd (6-3-09).—Cast in 1810 and recast in 1904 by Mears & Stainbank. Robert D. Eves M.A. Rector. John Howard M.P.) Church Wardens Alfred Broadley)
- 4th (7-0-00).—John Wilnar made me 1631 W.N.
- 5th (9-0-00).—Messrs Thos Forderd and Jno Swaine Ch. Wardens. Wm Mears of London fecit 1785
- 6th (10-0-00).—Will = March, Robart Wood C. W. Sam = Knight fecit 1727
- 7th (12-0-00).—As on 5th bell.
- Tenor (17-3-00 in E).—Mr Richard Kennett Churchwarden 1759 Lester and Pack of London fecit

The ring was rehung in new fittings and a steel frame by Mears and Stainbank in April 1904.

The history of ringing at Lyminge in the past century can be traced by means of the peal boards erected in the tower, although it appears that only the more noticeable peals have been preserved in this manner.

The earliest 'peal' claimed was the first extent of Plain Bob Minor by a local team in 1884, which was followed in 1888 by the first full peal, seven different extents of Plain Bob Minor; Thurstans one-part calling of Stedman Triples was the first on the new eight. Other notable firsts are the peal of Plain Bob Major in 1907, which was the first composed by a local ringer, and in 1909 Louis Head was the first local ringer to conduct a peal on the eight at Lyminge. Appreciation of Albert Tanton's services is recorded with peals in 1927 and 1937 to commemorate 50 and 60 years as sexton. Mr. Tanton, who took the treble in the 1927 peal, completed his 64th year in this capacity on the 13th February, 1942.

During the war years the bells were, of course, silent but were restarted afterwards. The period from 1960 to '67 appears to have been quite successful with several quarters being scored. Soon after this, however, ringing ceased and was only re-

Obituary

HENRY J. ATWELL

Mr. Henry John Atwell, of Boltonsborough, Som, who died recently, was the senior member of the Glaston Branch of the Bath and Wells D.G. He was a ringer for nearly 50 years and for the past 37 had been tower captain. It is believed that he took part in one peal, but rang innumerable quarter peals. Before the funeral service on July 16 the tenor bell was tolled for 20 minutes, which follows an old custom of the tower, and immediately following the funeral a half-muffled quarter peal of Grandsire Doubles was rung at Boltonsborough.

J. B. WOOLLEY

Taught by his father, John Woolley learned to ring at Long Stanton, near Cambridge, towards the end of the Great War. In 1922 he gained a science scholarship to Cambridge; in 1925 he joined Shell as a geologist, and from that time only returned to England on some half-dozen occasions for a few months each time. When he went abroad he had rung 60 peals, over 40 being on handbells. Ringing conditions then were very different from what they are to-day. The war had caused grievous losses from which the Exercise was slow to recover. Few people owned cars, so for John, as for most others, the bicycle was still the only means of getting about.

Most of his early peal ringing was done with Wilfrid Hooton who, just out of the Army, was starting about the same time. With the Rev. A. H. F. Boughey, the brothers E. G. and H. G. Benson and others, they rang handbell peals in methods

up to Double Norwich. In January, 1925, John called a handbell peal in seven Surprise Minor methods, a performance which was not repeated for nearly 32 years. Though no especial claim was made at the time, this peal, which included London, was actually the first peal of Surprise Minor ever rung in hand.

In the last three months of 1945, after an absence of seven years, he rang 14 peals, 10 of which were on handbells. The handbell peals included the first peal of London Minor, two peals of Surprise Major in one day, and, finally, a peal of Spliced Surprise in four methods—London, Bristol, Cambridge and Superlative. This was rung after a number of attempts during one afternoon and evening, and was the only occasion on which he ever rang Spliced Surprise. He rang only two more peals, ten years later, both on handbells, his last being also the last peal by Ernest C. S. Turner, who had been in his peals of Surprise Major and had called the spliced.

He ceased keeping records in 1923, but the following is believed to be a complete list of his peals (the number conducted given in brackets):—

Tower: Doubles, 2. Minor, P.B. 1, 3 m. 3 (2), 5 m. 1, 7 m. 3. Triples, Grandsire 1. Major, P.B. 6 (1), Double Norwich 2, Kent T.B. 3. Surprise Major, Cambridge 3, Superlative 1. Caters, Grandsire 1. Total 27 (3).

Handbell: Minor, P.B. (5) 3, 7 m. 4 (1), 8 m. 1. Surprise Minor, London 1, 7 m. 1 (1). Triples, Grandsire 1. Major, P.B. 11 (3), 1 each Little Bob, Double Bob, Richmond Bob, Double Oxford and Spliced Plain Major in 3 methods, Cambridge Court 3, Double Norwich 13, Kent T.B. 7, Oxford T.B. 2. Surprise Major, 1 each Superlative, Cambridge and 4-spliced. Royal, P.B. 5. Total 62 (8).

Grand total 89 (11).

As reported, he died on June 23 at his home in South Australia. In 1941 he married Elsie Mackay, who survives him.



LYMINGE RINGERS

Left to right: David Joyce (secretary), Christine Thomson, Tony Sanders, Sarah Garnett, Chris Baker, Frances Joyce, Sue Gibbons and Susan Joyce.

commenced in 1970 when several local teenagers were taught the noble art by ringers from Elham, who were using the bells while their own were being rehung. The Rector mustered together some of the old ringers to join the new recruits and once again Lyminge had its own team.

Since restarting we have had considerable help from the Elham and Cheriton teams, who have assisted and encouraged us beyond rounds and call-changes. We achieved (for us) a milestone when four Cheriton ringers rang a quarter with four of our own ringers for the Induction service of our Rector, the Rev. M. W. Worgan, and shortly after this quarter ten of our ringers joined the Kent County Association. Unfortunately, Satur-

day jobs for our youngsters and pressure of work on our older members have made it difficult to attend meetings, but we have benefited from what visits we have made.

Our band at present consists of five learners, five ringers and any of another half-dozen who help out when possible. The high proportion of learners (average age 14) has meant that we are kept on our toes. We are hoping to be able to add to our knowledge and abilities this August when Lyminge is the host tower for a by-meeting of the K.C.A.

Visitors are always welcome at practice (Wednesday at 7.30) and Sunday ringing or at any other times by prior arrangement.

D. M. JOYCE.