

1970 it cost £206, for 1971 it will cost £220 and for 1972 it is estimated that it will cost approximately £260 entailing a loss of about £70 at the old price. Even though we do not aim to make a profit this loss is more than the P.C.C. could afford.

We trust that subscribers to the magazine will understand our difficulty and continue to give us their support.

C. A. P.

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(X) VILLAGE NOTES

Bridge and the Wars

The recent discovery of anti-tank mines in Bifrons brings to light once again how near the village was to the front line in the second world war; even in the first war the glow of the artillery barrage on June 18th 1916 at the Battle of Somme could be seen from the top of Bridge Hill and there were complaints from several villagers on the state of the roads caused by tanks on the way to France. In earlier times Barham Downs was a favourite place for the assembly of the assembly of the troops before embarkation at Dover: over 30 thousand were reported at the beginning of the Seven Years War and troops were also stationed there before the Battle of Agincourt in 1485. Luckily the village escaped any major disaster (unlike Sturry) from 1939 to 1945 but if the invasion had taken place, Operation Sealion as planned on the Romney Marsh by the German 20th Army Group under General Brausitch and a landing of a parachute regiment on Charing Downs then there would have been an encircling action to capture Canterbury before setting off to Bridge in order to take Dover. On the old Folkestone to Canterbury railway was stationed a platoon of the Polish Army Corps shelling France and although there

was a section of the Home Guard in Bridge, there were also several platoons under the command of Captain Peter Fleming (brother of Ian Flemming who lived at the Old Place, Bekesbourne) who were to take direct charge in the event of an invasion; Renville Farm was a huge food store; the potato field at the back of Bridge Railway Station was laid out as a false aerodrome to deceive the Luftwaffe and two enemy aircraft were shot down at Bekesbourne and the bodies of the two airmen lay for many years in Bridge Church Yard; now they have been re-buried in the German War Cemetery at Cannock Chase. Sir Winston Churchill in his memoirs, p. 270 gives a vivid description of his journey to Dover just after Dunkirk and a piece of his cigar was preserved for many years at the Red Lion; a year later too, Eleanor Roosevelt passed through Bridge to address the Women's Institute at Barham. But for many with all its privations, life went on just the same as for example on the same day that Runstedt's troops passed through Sedan, Bridge Women's Institute 270 miles away was celebrating its 21st birthday; who could have foretold the horror if invasion had come - some did like Mr. John Baker-White, former Tory M.P. for Canterbury, high on the Gestapo list at Street End in the next parish; some fought and all three parishes bear witness to the valour of troops who did not return - the most moving of which is in Bekesbourne Church with the single inscription: "Precious pieces in the Mosaic of Victory".

J. J. Williamson.

Sources: Imperial War Museum.
Lampe - The British Resistance.

WOMENS' INSTITUTE

The December meeting will be held on Tuesday, 21st December, at 7 p.m. in the Village Hall, Bridge. This is our Christmas Meeting and there will be Carols by Candlelight. It is hoped there will be an entertainment by the Drama Group.
Competition - "Six Mince Pies".

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