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BEKESBOURNE COMMUNITY CAROLS

A very pleasant evening was spent at the Village Hall on Friday 17th December.

Our grateful thanks to Mr.H.S. Shorey for bearing the cost of the hall also to everyone who contributed to make the evening a success.

We should also like to express our thanks to Miss Marion Hawkins for the gift to our church of new English Bible. Also to Miss Douglas who presented us with a new cloth for the vestry table.

FROM THE PARISH REGISTERS

<u>St. Peter's Bridge</u>	<u>Holy Baptism</u>
28th November 1971	Katherine Ann Stokes
12th December 1971	Christopher James Tamsitt
19th December 1971	Simon John William Irvine

MAY THEY REST IN PEACE

22nd December 1971	Henry George Linkins at Barham Crematorium
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Notes on the History of Bekesbourne

THE MANOR OF BEKESBOURNE

Bekesbourne takes its name from the Bourne or stream which flows through the valley. Originally the place was called Bourne. It is so called in Domesday; and in Assize Roll the Church is spoken of as the Church of St. Peter de Bourne as late as 1313. There were however two adjacent villages also named Bourne,

The Manor of Bekesbourne (cont'd)

and to distinguish them each was named after its proprietor. One became Bishopsbourne, one Patricxbourne, and the village before us became Livingsbourne after Levine a Saxon who held the manor. This name continued as an alternative title as late as the Commonwealth, 1655. Later, when the Beke family came into possession, the place came into its present name of Bekesbourne.

Our story begins then with Levine the Saxon, nearly 900 years ago, in the reign of Edward the Confessor. We can imagine Levine living in his manor house, probably a wooden building, presumably on the site of the present "Old Palace," his people's houses clustering near him in the neighbourhood of Bekesbourne Street, and with a little wooden Church in which to worship.

Then came the evil day for them when William the Conqueror landed, Levine was driven out, and his estate handed over to Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, who was half-brother to the Conqueror. Miserable days for the parish they must have been, with Levine their countryman gone, and Normans living in the manor house and talking a strange language. For these Normans they had henceforth to toil. Odo, though a Bishop, living the life of a warrior and statesman was rewarded by the gift of large estates in Kent. He would not probably have lived in Bekesbourne but would have put some Norman to reside in the place.

Now at this point we have accurate information which shews us what the village was like at this period. In 1080 William the Conqueror made his great Domesday Book, in which is set down all the Estates in England, who held them, and what people lived on them.

We will see what it tells us about this village. To begin with there were 25 Villeins. A villein was a small farmer cultivating about 30 acres. This land he held from the Lord of the Manor on condition that he worked without payment so many days on the Lord's land. He had not only to work but also to provide his own plough with eight oxen. He must do extra days in harvest, take loads as far away as a hundred miles, mend ploughs, do hedging and ditching and go sheep-

shearing. It was a hard life, and one wonders how they found time at all to work their strips of land.

Besides these 25 villeins, Domesday tells of 4 Borderers, who one might call smallholders. They held about five acres, and were in the same kind of position as the villeins, only humbler. they supplied no oxen for the plough, but worked so many days for the Lord, and from them the shepherds and bee keepers were taken.

On this estate too were 6 slaves or serfs who could be bought and sold in the market.

As to the actual village, Domesday speaks of a church, probably a wooden Saxon building. It also speaks of a Mill. Windmills were apparently not introduced into England till the time of the Crusaders. The mills of Domesday are watermills, where all the village corn would be brought to be ground. This reminds us of the fact that the river then must have been far larger than now- indeed small ships came up to Bekesbourne till the year 1400, if not later.

In addition to the mill was another possession, of great value in early days, that is a saltpit, or, as we take it to be, a saltpan, where salt was derived from sea water. It may be suggested that, when Thanet was still an island, the tide ran up to this village.

/To be continued.

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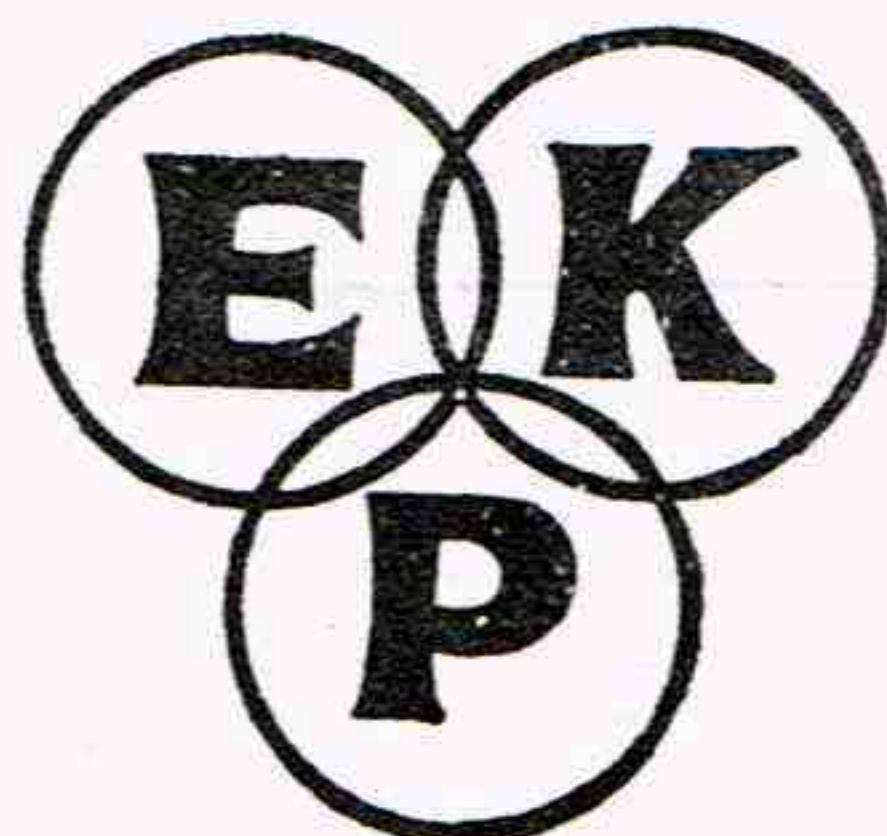
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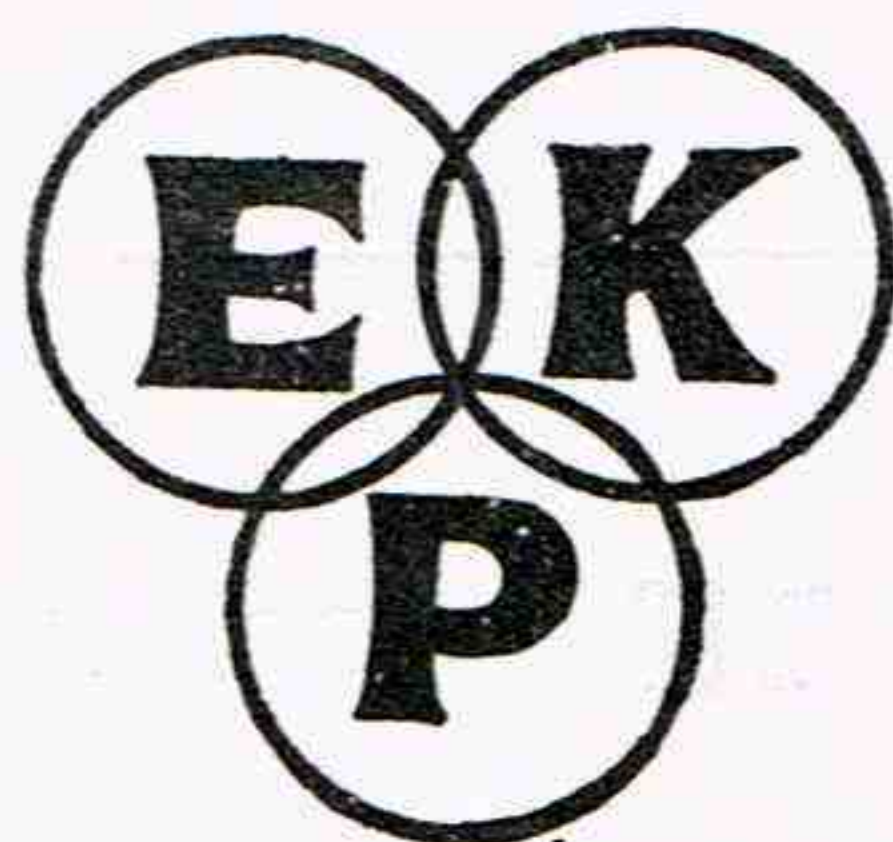
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Part II /Cont'd.

same time to the Shrine of St. Thomas a pax of the purest gold (b).

So the Manor came into the hands of the Church. There was never a Monastery here, but a Manor House with a bailiff in charge. And the Prior would no doubt come over from time to time for audits and other business. He had his private rooms in the house and a little Chapel. Hasted tells us that Prior Goldston (K. Henry VII) rebuilt the Prior's apartment here, and the Chapel adjoining, dedicating it to the Annunciation and the Patron of the Church. He likewise built the hall adjoining the Prior's dormitory and all the buildings there except the lodge and the two barns.

/To be continued..

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- (a) From a pedigree supplied by Mrs. F. A. Sawyer.
 - (b). From a M.S. in the Library of the Dean and Chapter, Canterbury.

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IMPORTANT NOTICE - CHURCH ELECTORAL ROLL, 1972

Under the Church's new form of Synodical Government it becomes necessary this year for our Electoral Roll to have an entire and complete revision, which means that all whose names appear on our present roll have to re-register. May enrolment forms be completed and returned not later than 21st February with which request we hope ALL will comply.

A person shall be entitled to have his or her name on the Electoral Roll if he or she is:

- (a) baptised
- (b) a member of the Church of England or another Church of the Anglican Communion, and is not a member of any other religious body which is not in communion with the Church of England.
- (c) of seventeen years or upwards.
- (d) resident in the parish, or, if not so resident, has habitually attended public worship in the parish during a period of six months prior to enrolment, and
- (e) has signed the form of enrolment.

There was never a time when it was more essential than the present, that those who profess and call themselves Christians should boldly align themselves on the Church's side as its members.

Synodical government means a greater participation by the laity in church affairs. By enrolling you become a voting member of the Church and so help to ensure that all the Councils of the Church, including the parochial church council, the deanery synod, and the diocesan and general synods, are fully representative of its members.

Enrolment forms are available at the west end of the churches, from the Vicar, or the Electoral Officers, Mrs. P. Hulyer, 8 Bridgedown or Mrs. D. Sandal, School House, Bekesbourne.

C.E.P.

JUNIOR CHURCH

Junior Church will meet on Sunday February 13th, 20th and 27th at 11 a.m.

Notes on the History of Bekesbourne

Part II - The Manor of Bekesbourne /Cont'd.

There was also half a fishery, which was valuable in the days when fasts were strictly kept.

Outside the arable land were pastures where cattle and sheep would be turned out onto common land. And in the woods there was pasture for six and a half hogs we read.

There we have a sketch of the parish in the year 1080. The people clustered together round the manor house, round the houses the arable land, beyond that pastures and wood, while the little river provided its mill and saltpan and carried small ships to the sea.

The community would be practically self-contained. All food came from within its borders, it ground its own corn, it made clothing from its own wool, and found its firing in the woods.

Four years later, in 1084, Odo being disgraced, this manor became confiscated to the Crown.

Six years later again, in 1090, we find a new name in the village which has been connected with it ever since, "Hugh Beke (a) of Livingsbourne" appears on the scene.

Three others of the same name followed him. The fourth was the celebrated William de Beke, who, in the reign of Henry III, held this place in grand Sergeanty for the service of finding one ship for the King when he passed the seas, and a present to him three marcs.

In time the Manor passed out of the hands of the Beke family and after various changes was purchased by John Brown early in the fifteenth century. John Brown was plumber to Canterbury Cathedral, and seems to have made money in that position. He paid 200 marcs for the estate, which he held for some years. Finally he gave the Manor to the Monks of Christ Church, Canterbury in order to secure their prayers for the souls of his wife and himself - giving at the

I would like to inform the Residents Association of Kingston, Bekesbourne and Canterbury that we have located the volume control knob and that there should be no cause for complaint. We have received permission to use the Recreation Ground, marked the pitch and played our first home match. Bridge Youth are those in the new blue shirts and white shorts proudly running between the brand new football posts so kindly made and donated to the club by Mr. and Mrs. Buckmaster. The Club Football teams are now known to exist and are making good progress in both full matches and the St. Augustine's '5-a-side' League. Not to be left out the girls have sorted themselves out and have had their first practice for '5-a-side' football. At a recent visit to the Club a member of the Youth Council was pressed into making enquiries of other Clubs for a Girls' Football '5-a-side' League. This has been successful and plans are now being made at a higher level and will also include netball. There is no truth in the rumour that the boys are considering dressmaking !!

Our next 'disco' will be mid-March - make a date.

B. T. Kingsnorth.

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NOTES ON THE HISTORY OF BEKESBOURNE

Bekesbourne as a Cinque Port Member

Part 9

Any, or all, of such punishments would have been used in Bekesbourne if it "pleased" Hastings, and we can well imagine that such penalties were from time to time put in force.

We must turn, however, to a more romantic subject. The highest office connected with the Cinque Ports is that of the "Lord Warden."

Two Bekesbourne Land owners have held this office, which is a crown appointment. In 1559 Queen Elizabeth preferred William Lord Cobham, Lord Chamberlain of Her Majesty's Household, to this office, which he held for 38 years. He was succeeded by his son, Henry Lord Cobham, in 1597, who held office till the first year of King James. In that year he was arraigned for participation in the Raleigh Conspiracy, and spent the rest of his life in prison, where he died in 1618. With him the title expired, his estate, according to Hasted, being forfeited to the Crown.

This Henry brought about an event which must long have been remembered in the Village. When he took the oath on his appointment to the Office of Lord Warden, he had a Court of Shepway, called for that purpose, held at Bekesbourne. The Court of Shepway is the highest of all the Cinque Port Courts and till then had always been held in the open air at Shepway Cross near Lympne.

This breach of tradition caused a good deal of stir in the Confederacy, but for Bekesbourne it must have been a great and memorable day when all the great men of the Ports in their splendid attire assembled at Cobham Court in the parish, a house which had been in the possession of the Cobham family since the beginning of the reign of King Edward III.

A few years ago there came to light a little relic, which may possibly date from this occasion. In the garden of the Old Palace a silver button was turned up by the spade, with the Cinque Port Arms upon it, dropped no doubt by some official or servant.

Other names connected with the Cinque Ports are those of three of the Old Deputy Mayors which have survived. The old Vestry Book in the Church Chest records that Robert Peckham (who lived at the Old Palace) was Deputy Mayor from 1778-1779. He was succeeded by Robert Potter (who lived at Howletts) while Thomas Southee (of Cobham Court) held the office in 1788.

To be contd/...