

A.M.D.G.

S. Mary the Virgin,

Riverhead.

1831.

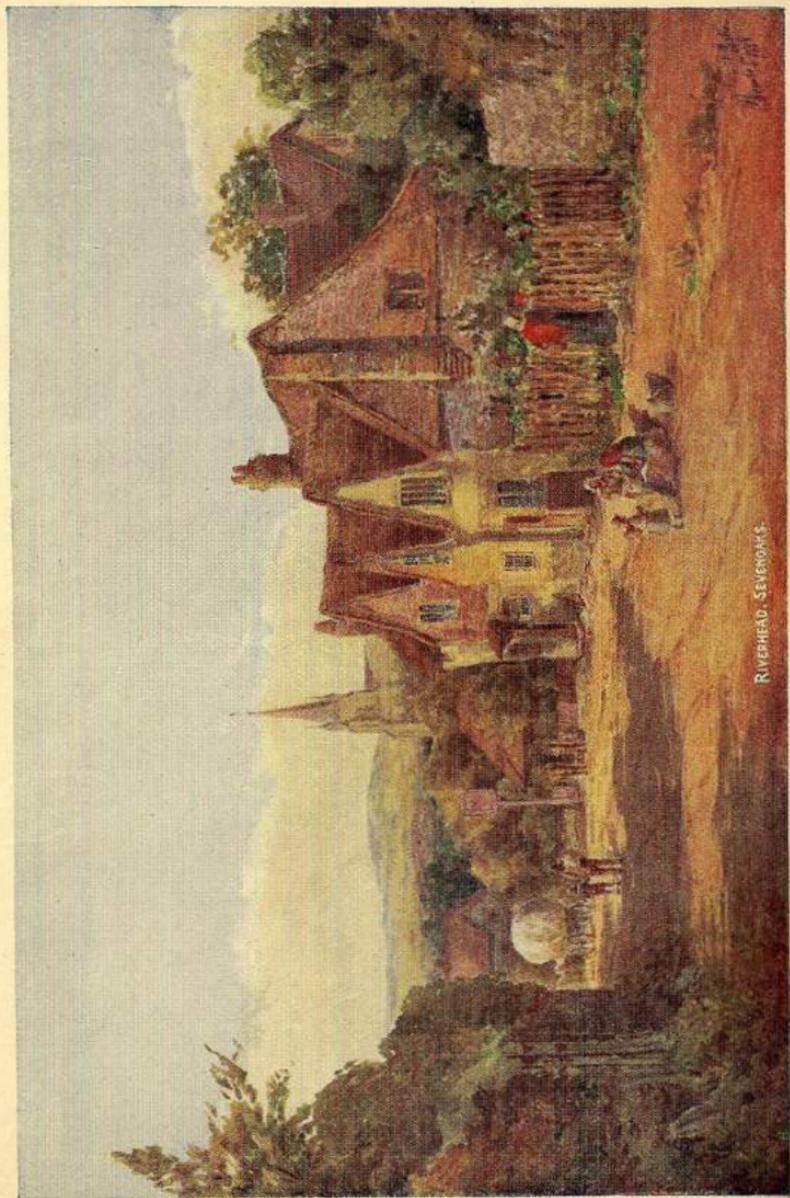
1931.

Lord, I have loved the
habitation of thy house,
and the place where thine
honour dwelleth.

Ps. cxvi, 8.



CANON GEORGE FANCOURT BELL.



RIVERHEAD, SEVERNOLDS.

RIVERHEAD—1888.

After the Water Colour by C. Essenhigh Corke.

S. Mary the Virgin,
Riverhead.

1831.

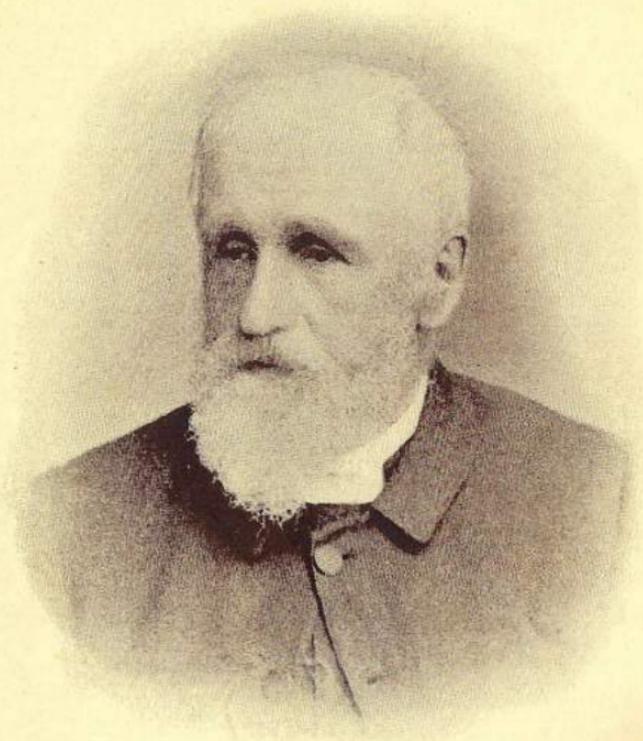
1931.

CURATES IN CHARGE.

- 1831—1849. Thomas Wilgress.
1849—1851. J. C. Shapley.
1851—1863. Cyril Randolph.
1863—1864. James McGibbon Burn-Murdoch.

VICARS.

- 1864—1904. James McGibbon Burn-Murdoch.
1904—1905. Charles Stuart Macdonald Playfair.
1905— George Fancourt Bell.



CANON JAMES MCGIBBON BURN-MURDOCH.

The following notes, by a member of the congregation, in commemoration of the centenary of the consecration of S. Mary, Riverhead, may be of interest to parishioners and friends.

In 1821 William Pitt, Lord Amherst of Montreal and Mr. Multon Lambarde of Beechmont, Sevenoaks, decided to "erect a chapel at or near the hamlet of Riverhead." They gave money and a "parcel of land" for that purpose, plans were made by Decimus Burton, a distinguished architect of his day, the church was built, and consecrated on the 20th August 1831, by the Archbishop of Canterbury (Dr. Howley).

For 33 years this church served as a Chapel-of-Ease to Sevenoaks, but in 1864, owing to the growth of population, Riverhead was made an ecclesiastical parish with the Rector of Sevenoaks as Patron.

The Reverend J. M. Burn-Murdoch, who came to Riverhead in 1863 as the 3rd Curate in Charge, was appointed 1st Vicar. Subsequently an Hon. Canon of Canterbury and Rural Dean of Shoreham, he was also Treasurer of the Holmesdale Cottage Hospital and largely instrumental in founding it. He built the church and was also the 1st Vicar of Dunton Green. During his incumbency, S. Mary's chancel was built in Early English Style, the architect being Sir Arthur Blomfield. The Salviani glass mosaic over the altar, our Lord Enthroned, was his gift in memory of a son, Malcolm James, who died aged 16 months, and the windows of the "Presentation," and "S. George" to the memory of Andrew Swanzy and Samuel Bevington, respectively, were gifts in his time.



1831.

The Reverend George Fancourt Bell came to the parish in February, 1905 and has thus completed 26 years as 3rd Vicar. In 1924 he was appointed Rural Dean of Sevenoaks, and in 1928, an Hon. Canon of Rochester.

During his incumbency much has been done to adorn the church, and the Bishop of Rochester (Dr. Harmer), when paying a visit, said that he "rejoiced that so much care and thought had been expended on the decoration. Nothing jarred, everything blended and was harmonious." Canon Bell has called the adornment of the church "an evidence of enthusiasm for God," and on one occasion said, "Beauty reveals God's character. Our churches should be a silent witness in this respect, nobler and more lovely than the other buildings round it, speaking of the beauty of holiness to all who come for prayer and worship."

Details follow of some of the works carried out in pursuit of this ideal.



THE STATUE OF OUR LADY
by
Romagnesi.

The Sanctuary.

The East window by Kempe to the memory of Canon Burn-Murdoch was dedicated in July, 1905.

To Mr. James Powell, of the Whitefriars Glass Works, was entrusted the carrying out of the scheme of the mosaics in the sanctuary which had been begun by Canon Burn-Murdoch. It depicts the worship of the Heavenly Host around our Lord enthroned, while the Prophets of the Old, and the Evangelists of the New Testament witness to His Godhead.

The Angel panels were given by the Burn-Murdoch family and by subscription, to the memory of Mrs. Burn-Murdoch: the Evangelist panels by Mr. G. F. France, in memory of his father and sister, George France, Priest, and Harriet E. France. The Old Testament Panels constitute memorials to Miss Cressy and to those who fell in the War, and others are in memory of John N. A. Freese and Emily his wife, and Clayton Howard de Vine (killed in action 1917).

The High Altar was designed by Mr. J. N. Comper and the beautiful crucifix in blue enamel is to the memory of Alice Parkes.

The windows in the Sanctuary with the Crucifixion and S. Mary and S. John, record all the events of the Incarnation and the Infancy, viz:—The Annunciation, the Visitation, the Adoration of the Shepherds, the Purification and Presentation, the Visit of the Magi, and the Flight into Egypt. The Epiphany window is to the memory of Adeleve Cressy. Through her we also have the beautiful statue of Our Lady and the Holy Child by Romagnesi, a sculptor in Rome about 1750. It was brought from Italy by Miss Cressy's father in 1820.

The Chapel of the Blessed Sacrament.

The Chapel of the Blessed Sacrament originated as a War Memorial in 1918. Previously it was the Organ Chamber and later a Sacristy.

The Altar was given by the late Mrs. H. C. Burnett, and the aumbry, hangings and kneeling desk by Miss E. K. Lewis, the screen by Mr. Burnett in memory of his wife, the carpet by Mr. and Mrs. Murrell.

The Altar Cross is to the memory of Harriet France and Alice Parkes, and the candlesticks to the memory of Alan Hounsom (killed in action, 1917).

The East window depicts Our Lady Crowned, and S. Nicholas and S. Martin, the patron saints of sailors and soldiers, with S. Joan of Arc and S. Edith of Kensing to symbolize the work of women in the War. This window is in memory of Rosalie France, the gift of her husband and mother.

The North lights to the memory of Emma Milsted portray the Baptism, the Temptation, the Resurrection and the Ascension of Our Lord. The Piscina is after one in Gloucester Cathedral. This chapel and its contents are to the design of Mr. Bucknall and contains an antique lamp dated 1650, which was found in Italy by Miss Geraldine Parkes.

On the North wall there are two Ikons. The Ikon of S. Michael was shot through by the Turks in an engagement on the Vardar River, and saved from further desecration by Philip Haye (Lieut: 7th R. Berks. Regt.) nephew of Canon and Mrs. Fancourt Bell. It records his death on War Service at Tiflis. The Ikon of "The Mother of God, called of Kazan" was given by Mr. and Mrs. Kruytbosch "as a token of love and esteem from Communicants of the Holy Russian Orthodox Church to the Catholic Church of England." It was blessed at Riga in the Russian Orthodox Cathedral.

Mr. J. E. Glass gave the picture of "The Great Sacrifice" and Mrs. C. Bowra the charming little Della Robbia plaque.

The East wall and the North wall of the sanctuary bear the names of those who fell in the War. The Roll of Honour is printed later.

The Nave.

In the Nave there is an engraving of interest "Ecce Homo" after Carlo Dolci, brought from Rome in 1822 by Mr. John Peele Clapham and given by his granddaughter Miss Millicent Wedmore. The Rubens copies came from Mr. Walter's collection at Bearwood, Wokingham.

Over the pulpit hangs a beautiful crucifix, from Anton Lang's School of Wood-carving at Ober-Ammergau, presented by Miss Christine Harrison, and at the West End a replica of Donatello's S. John Baptist given by Mrs. Darkin.

The new windows of white glass which were put into the Nave, display the shields of the Archbishop of Canterbury (Howley) and of the Amherst, Plymouth, Curteis, Streatfeild, Lambarde, Petley, Randolph and Burn-Murdoch families.

In 1928 the walls and ceiling were re-decorated and an anonymous donor generously gave the oak panelling. These improvements were the work of our village craftsmen under the direction of Mr. Bucknall. It is usual to decry the architecture of the period when the church was built, but they have revealed in a remarkable way the intention of the architect and given to the Nave a certain distinction.



Photo by Howard M. King, Sevenoaks.

1931.

The Sacristy.

In 1924 a Sacristy was built from the designs of Mr. Bucknall, by the firm of Mr. John Heath. It contains on its walls an interesting collection of prints and water colours of old Riverhead, "to be a reminder" the Vicar says, "in days to come, of the rural beauties we may lose if the parish is to be completely urbanized."

Among other gifts, too numerous to mention, there is a chalice given by Lord Amherst in 1831, and re-modelled and jewelled in 1909, a 17th century ciborium from Italy presented by Miss Geraldine Parkes and subsequently adorned with jewels given by Miss Wedmore, a processional cross of Byzantine design, the gift of the late Mrs. Hadden Parkes, and two censers given by Mr. J. E. Glass and Mr. Murrell.

For a hundred years the work of the Church to the Glory of God has been carried on in fulfilment of the purpose of pious founders. We thank God for the many evidences, both spiritual and material, of His good Hand upon us and pray for His continued blessing.



Pro Deo. Pro Rege. Pro Patria.

ROBERT NORMAN GORDON—Capt. Border Regiment, 23rd
October, 1914, aged 39.

OWEN PRICE-EDWARDS—Capt. Welsh Fusiliers, 23rd June,
1916, aged 34.

JAMES ARTHUR FORREST DE VINE—Capt. S.S. "Duckworth,"
22nd February, 1916, aged 51.

DONALD JERVIS GORDON—2nd Lieut. Border Regiment,
3rd July, 1916, aged 24.

BERNARD VERNON GORDON—2nd Lieut. R.F.C., 14th
December, 1916, aged 18.

SPENCER LORT MANSEL MANSSEL-CARY—2nd Lieut. Devon
Regiment, 24th February, 1916, aged 22.

BERNARD ALFRED HEATH—L/cpl. R. W. Kent Regiment,
4th April, 1916, aged 23.

ERNEST RUSSELL HARRIS—L/cpl. K.R.R., 27th July, 1916,
aged 20.

HARRY DOUGLAS WOOD—Gunner R.F.A., 26th August,
1914, aged 21.

FRANK BARTON—Private Australian E.F., 23rd August,
1915, aged 43.

HENRY ARTHUR FORWARD—Private R. W. Kent
Regiment, 15th November, 1914, aged 30.

THOMAS HOLLAND—Private S. Staffs. Regiment, 1st
October, 1916, aged 17.

KENNETH JOHN LAWRENCE—Private R. W. Kent
Regiment, 3rd October, 1916, aged 21.

THOMAS JOSEPH OTTEWELL—Private E. Yorks Regiment,
25th September, 1916, aged 28.

- EDGAR SAYWELL—Private King's Liverpool Regiment,
30th July, 1916, aged 22.
- REGINALD JOHN JARVIS—Private Queen's W. Surrey
Regiment, 24th February, 1917, aged 22.
- WILLIAM WALLACE MANKTELOW—Private Essex Regi-
ment, 24th March, 1917, aged 24.
- EVELYN LLEWELLYN HUSTLER JONES—2nd Lieut. R.
Welsh Fusiliers, 26th March, 1917, aged 42.
- ARTHUR CHARLES MICHELL—2nd Lieut. R. W. Kent
Regiment, 12th October, 1917, aged 24.
- GEORGE EDWARD LAWRENCE, M.M.—C.S.M. M.G. CORPS.
5th November, 1918, aged 29.
- WILLIAM DICKMAN—Sergeant R. W. Kent Regiment,
24th April, 1918, aged 34.
- JAMES FRANK STEER—Corporal Canadian E. F., 8th
October, 1916, aged 20.
- NORMAN ALFRED HEATH—Private London Regiment,
27th August, 1918, aged 29.
- HENRY JAMES HEATH—Rfn. London Rifle Brigade, 16th
September, 1916, aged 23.
- JOHN FORWARD—Gunner R.H.A., 4th September, 1917,
aged 24.
- ALAN EDWARD HOUNSOM—Private Northumberland
Fusiliers, 3rd May, 1917, aged 19.
- CHARLES JOHN COWLARD—Private R. W. Kent Regiment,
8th January, 1918 aged 36.
- CHARLES HENRY PAGE—Private R. Sussex Regiment,
22nd March, 1918, aged 21.
- ALBERT EDWARD PEARCE—Private R. W. Kent Regiment,
28th April, 1918, aged 34.
- ALBERT VALENTINE PALMER—Private R. W. Kent Regi-
ment, 22nd September, 1918, aged 38.

Requiescant in Pace.

This is the house of God and He
is here.

Let us give thanks for those who in
past ages built this house, and for
those who preserve for us our
heritage.

The
Caxton & Holmesdale Press,
Sevenoaks.