

# **OUR VILLAGE CHURCH**

**St. Peter's, Ightham**

**by Edward Bowra**

OUR VILLAGE CHURCH

St. Peter's, Ightham

by

Edward Bowra

To

Sir John Winnifrith, K.C.B.,

Patron of our Church,  
whose father was Rector for seventeen years,  
whose mother was Patron before him, and who  
himself was born at the Old Rectory

On the occasion of  
the dedication of St. Catherine's Chapel,  
restored as a memorial to their parents by  
him and their other children on 14th June, 1970.

## C O N T E N T S

	Page
Foreword and Preface	
1. Early Times	1
2. The Norman Church	1
3. The Medieval Church	2
4. The Tudor Period	5
5. The 17th Century	8
6. The Hanoverian Period	12
7. The 19th Century	15
8. The Present Century	19
9. The Churchyard	21
Appendices:	
A. The Church Bells	24
B. Epitaph the second Sir William Selby	25
C. Epitaph Dame Dorothy Selby	26
D. Jane Dirkin brass	27
E. Hatchments	28
F. James window	31
G. Benefactions	32
H. Bombing 1939-45 War	34
Bibliography	36

## FOREWORD

It gives me great pleasure, as Rector, to express appreciation of Brigadier Bowra's record of our lovely old Village church. He has opened up the background of the continuous worship which has taken place therein throughout the centuries, and which still meets the needs of the rising generation. We are indeed grateful to him for this valuable contribution to our ancient heritage.

Arthur Watkins.  
Rector.

## PREFACE

I have written this paper in order to put on record my studies of the history of the Church. I have treated the subject as straight chronological narrative, the whole bearing on what there is to see in the Church and churchyard now. The appendices afford more detail, where it is of interest and worthy of recording.

'The History and Records of <sup>by the late Sir Edward Harrison</sup> Ightham Church' remains the authoritative work on it (published in 1932 and out of print). I have borrowed freely from this, but have enlarged the scope of the subject, introducing a background of local history, together with its personalities, and, to a lesser degree, ecclesiastical history. I have dealt more fully with the churchyard and have brought the whole more up to date.

I am indebted to visits by the noted Kent ecclesiologists the late Mr. F.C. Elliston-Erwood, F.S.A., and the late Mr. V.J. Torr. I owe much to sets of old parish magazines, fortunately preserved, in addition to the well documented resources of the Kent County Archives. I have avoided annotations as to sources, but, where appropriate, have quoted them in the text, and I append a bibliography of references from which I have drawn.

June 1970.

Edward Bowra.

## 1. EARLY TIMES

The earliest record of Ightham Church is in Textus Roffensis, a document now in the Kent County Archives. This was compiled about 1122 and included a list of churches and chapels in the diocese. Ightham is spelt Ehteam, the original spelling. It derives from an unrecorded personal name Ehta, a mutated form of Ohta, which is recorded as the name of a king of Kent. It no doubt came over with Hengist, the Jutish invader, who, after the battle of Aylesford in 455, made himself the first King of Kent. The name subsequently died out. The first settlement at Ightham may be dated to this period. Of the 152 churches listed in Textus Roffensis just 100 are surviving parish churches within the present boundaries of the Diocese. It is considered that the majority of these were founded before the Norman Conquest. The fact that Ightham does not appear in Domesday Book (1086) is no evidence that a church did not exist at that date. So, although no remains of a pre-Conquest building have been found, there may well have been one - probably small and of wooden construction. The site high up and overlooking the Village is typically Saxon.

## 2. THE NORMAN CHURCH

The oldest part of the Church is the masonry of the chancel. The date has been accepted as about 1100, having regard to the date of Textus Roffensis and to the following features, which may be attributed to the Early Norman period:

- (1) The 3 ft. thick Kentish rag work, with the cut and faced tufa quoins on the north-east and south-east corners. Tufa is a porous stone commonly used in Kent in the Early Norman period, being easy to work with primitive tools.
- (2) The two little round-headed lights (now blocked up), high up on the exterior of the east wall. Originally three, these were deeply splayed inwards, thus improving the illumination. Their height was no doubt for security.
- (3) The approximately square chancel, taking into account that there would have been a massive chancel arch, the same thickness as the walls.

The simple rectangular nave was probably the same size as it is now - it seems likely that the present west wall was originally Norman.

## 3. THE MEDIEVAL CHURCH

The present church is a typical medieval parish church and may be dated as a major reconstruction of the Norman building in the early 15th century, with some late 14th century work, such as the lower stages of the tower and the north and south windows of the chancel. ~~The narrowness of the tower and north and south windows of the chancel.~~ The narrowness of the south aisle, matching originally a similar north aisle, suggests, however, that the first alterations were made as early as the 13th century, in the Transitional, or Early English, periods.

The medieval features are:

Exterior:

- (1) The porch. Note the variety of local stone used - ragstone, sandstone, ironstone.
- (2) The south wall, 2 ft. thick above the plinth. Note the matching moulding of the string course, the hood of the window east of the porch, and the porch doorway.
- (3) Several of the Gothic windows are original, partially restored. The remainder, notably in the tower and east end, are reconstructed, no doubt to the original designs.
- (4) The buttressed, square, tower, the battlemented belfry stage being probably the last portion of the rebuilding of the Church.

Interior:

- (1) The arcade on the south side of the nave. The centre (stone) pillar on the north side.
- (2) The west arch (now obscured by the organ).
- (3) The font, octagonal, simple perpendicular style, matching the columns. The base is modern.
- (4) The little piscina, square headed, Perpendicular style, in the south wall, by the altar in the former St. Catherine's chapel (used for washing the sacred vessels).
- (5) The fine open wagon-tilt timber roofs, remarkable for a village church. Note that of the nave,

with moulded principals and embattled cornices, and the arched trusses of the south aisle, with the crudely carved faces. The porch roof is of particularly striking workmanship. This was no doubt due to the importance of the porch at the period. It was used not only for parts of Church services, but also for lay purposes, as a meeting place and for transaction of business. The rite of Holy Matrimony used to take place in the porch - Chaucer wrote of his much wedded Wife of Bath 'Husbands at church door had she five'.

When the Church was rebuilt the massive Norman chancel arch was removed and, a feature unusual in Kent, is the absence of a chancel arch. The usual wooden rood screen was, however, introduced, separating the sanctuary from the people. The screen would have been surmounted by the rood beam carrying the rood loft - a gallery supporting the 'rood' (crucifix) and usually flanked by statues of the Blessed Virgin and St. John. There were three altars - the high altar in the sanctuary, one dedicated to St. Mary in the north aisle, and one to St. Catherine in the south aisle. The Church interior was a blaze of colour from the painted and gilded screen, the images of the saints, the wall paintings (traces of which have been found on either side of the west arch), and during the services by the bright ornaments, vestments and cloths.

The only tomb at the time, the life size effigy in free stone of Sir Thomas Cawne, with the cusped arch and square hood above, would also have been coloured. He died about 1374 and the tomb is contemporary with the famous one of Edward, the Black Prince, in Canterbury Cathedral. Their costumes are the same, the mixture of plate and mail, as worn at the Battle of Crecy. Little is known of Sir Thomas, but he was the first known owner of Ightham Mote and probably built the Great Hall. He came from Staffordshire and married an heiress, Lora de Morant, of Morants Court, Chevening. The carving of the tomb is a notable and well preserved example of medieval craftsmanship. Observe the fine work of the camail (the chain mail protection for the neck) and its attachment to the bascinet (the conical helmet), also the ornamental metal work of the bawdric (the knightly belt) and of the gauntlets. Over the mail shirt the knight is wearing the jupon, of some stout material, on which was embroidered his arms, to distinguish him in combat - lion rampant, tail-forked seme of escallops.

The construction of the window above was provided for in Sir Thomas's will, and originally painted glass added further colour with the arms Cawne impaled Morant.

The cork-shaped decoration of the points of the cusps of the tracery is a peculiar feature, very rare, if not unique. The square head of the window is explained by the lack of height for the usual pointed Gothic arch. The work is dated as Perpendicular (rectilinear) period, somewhat later than the curvilinear forms of the canopy. It is also later than the corresponding window on the south side of the chancel. The rebuilding of the Norman Church may well have started with the chancel, these two windows replacing Norman ones; taking place soon after the death of Sir Thomas Cawne, the whole of the work might be attributable to him. The date coincides with a revival of church buildings throughout the country, due to the gradual recovery of the economy from the devastating effects of the Black Death in 1348-49.

The patron saint of the Church is traditionally St. Peter. In 1336 King Edward II, at the request of the Lord of the Manor, granted a licence for a fair to be held annually for three days, commencing on the vigil of the Dedication Festival, St. Peter's Day. Hasted in his 'History of Kent' (1782) refers to this as 'vulgarly called Coxcombe Fair'.

The earliest known Rector was presented to the benefice by King Henry III, in 1232. Subsequently, right up to the end of the 18th century, the advowson was held by the Lord of the Manor. The beautiful vellum manuscript roll of patrons and rectors was inscribed by Mrs. D. Mahoney, a well known member of the Society of Scribes and Illuminators, and is in memory of Canon C.J. Offer, who was Rector from 1941 to 1964. The date of the creation of the Parish is not known, but it probably originated with the boundaries of the Manor in the 13th century, at the time of the first rectors on the roll. It is remarkable that the present Parish boundaries are virtually the same as those of the ancient Manor.

Of the peal of six bells in the tower the two oldest date to circ. 1430. (See Appendix A.) Bells were tolled for alarm and for curfew, no less than for the call to mass and the battlemented tower on its prominent site was a stronghold, a look-out post, and a beacon.

## 4. THE TUDOR PERIOD

It is not known when the chapel of St. Catherine originated, but as a conjecture it may have been in the time of Sir Robert Read. Although he lived at Chiddingstone, he held the Manor of Ightham, and with it the patronage of the Church, in the early 1500s, in Henry VII's reign (as appears in the Roll of Patrons). He had founded a chantry chapel in Chiddingstone Church dedicated to St. Catherine and may well have done the same at Ightham. This was the early saint, St. Catherine of Alexandria, associated in art with the wheel, popular in West Kent at the time.

The oldest dated brass in the Church, and considered the best, is that of Sir Richard Clement, beneath the carpet by the altar. He bought Ightham Mote in 1521, and it was he who built the beautiful little Tudor chapel there. The brass was originally a double effigy of himself and his wife, Anne, and was inserted at her death in 1528. She was a Catesby, an earlier generation of the family of Robert Catesby, who took a leading part in the Gunpowder Plot. Sir Clement died some ten years later, but the date was not recorded in the blank space left for it in the inscription. The surviving brass, restored, is a half effigy of Sir Clement only. It is remarkable in that some of the original colouring remains, correct for the coat of arms. He is shown in armour, his head resting on the great tilting helm, with the crest wolf passant. Over his armour he is wearing the tabard, the heraldic coat of the Tudor period, the flaps displaying his armorial bearings.

The Reformation imposed many changes in the Church, putting the parishioners to considerable expense, for which they raised funds by selling Church ornaments which had become surplus owing to the comparative simplicity of the Reformed Service. In order to safeguard against this, in the sixth year of the reign of Edward VI (1552), orders were issued by the Privy Council for inventories to be taken of the goods and chattels in all parish churches, the safekeeping of which was to be the responsibility of the churchwardens. The inventory for Ightham Church (preserved in the Public Records Office) gives a good idea of the effects of the Reformation. The stone altars were demolished and their sites paved. The high altar was replaced by a movable wooden communion table. The side chapels were dispensed with. The wall paintings were whitewashed over. Glazing was carried out (possibly in place of painted glass). One of the chalices was sold to raise funds, but an engraved gilt one, with cover, was retained. The Church books for the old service had to be handed in, but two brass crosses were kept, together with altar and other cloths, and a quantity of various

vestments. There is no mention of demolishing the rood screen, but this may well have taken place - the sawn off ends may be seen in the chancel walls. The colouring of the Cawne monument was probably removed at this juncture.

The inventory shows that a new door into the porch was provided from the funds raised, thus dating the present door to 1552. It is of solid oak, well constructed, and originally opened inwards, for defence purposes. The gridiron pattern is of early date, as seen in the portcullises of medieval castles. The large lock, with plate and closing ring, and roughly forged nails, is clearly of local craftsmanship, of Wealden iron.

The year 1559, the second year of Queen Elizabeth I, saw the commencement of the Church registers of baptisms, marriages, and burials. The complete set of these to date exists, the old ones being deposited with the County Archives. Thanks to the painstaking work of the late Sir Thomas Colyer-Fergusson, of Ightham Mote, the registers from 1559 to 1812 have been transcribed, typed and bound, complete in one volume, with index of surnames. The late Sir Edward Harrison carried on the transcription from 1813 to 1955, in two manuscript notebooks, also with index. These books are in the charge of the Rector and are of great value for searchers in genealogy and local history.

Situated in the wall by the Vestry door is an old tombstone, somewhat damaged, on which in relief is represented an arch ornamented with a moulding of Gothic leaves and columns, and there are the remains of a brass plate. This stone is an important one, being that of Jane, the first wife of William Lambarde, well known as the author of the first ever County history 'A Perambulation of Kent', published in 1576. It was during his perambulation that he stayed at St. Clere (then in Ightham Parish), which had been acquired by George Multon, of Hadlow. He lost his heart to Multon's young daughter Jane, and married her in Ightham Church in 1570, the day before her seventeenth birthday. Sadly Jane died just three years later, childless, and was buried in the Church. Lambarde was heartbroken. A translation of the original Latin epitaph reads:

'On Monday, in the year of our Saviour's birth 1573 (Sept.21) at 2 o'clock in the afternoon, Jane Lambarde, my dear and loving wife, after suffering from smallpox for six days, breathed out her spirit at Ightham in Kent, and in that same place I have set up this marble monument to her. Behold I come swiftly. Jane, wife of Will'm Lambard, of Lincoln's Inn, gent., and daughter of George Multon, of Ightham, esquire

and of Agnes Polhill his wife, died on September 21st, 1573, in the 21st year from her birth, and the 4th from her marriage.'

The state of the stone is due to its having been moved at least twice from its original position, and also to the brass having been stolen in the 19th century and fragments only recovered. There are brasses to three generations of Multons in the centre aisle - Jane's parents George (died 1588) and Agnes (died 1591), with an inscription, their son George and his wife Athelreda, and the grandson Robert and his wife Deborah, who were the last of the St. Clere Multons.

Although William Lambarde is now best known as an antiquarian and local historian, he achieved distinction in his day with his books on the law, his foundation of the Queen Elizabeth almshouses at Greenwich (still existing), and his work as Keeper of the National Records. He is commemorated by monuments in Sevenoaks Parish Church, in which parish his descendants lived for three hundred years. Each generation had a son named Multon, in memory of Williams's first young wife and of his great friend, her father.

Mention must be made of the Rev. Henry Firebrass, who is commemorated by the surviving Firebrass Charity. He was Rector from 1574 until he resigned in 1586, subsequently becoming Vicar of Farningham, where he died and was buried in the Church. In his will he bequeathed to the poor of Ightham the sum of 20/-d. per annum, charged on the rent of a field off Oldbury Lane, called 'Bearfield' (now the site of the house 'Heronshaw'). His brass in Farningham Church records the Ightham benefaction, together with a similar one to the poor of that parish. The original will is in the County Archives.

## 5. THE 17TH CENTURY

The history of the Church during this period is bound up largely with the three great houses in the Parish - Ightham Court, Ightham Mote, and St. Clere. Ightham Court and Manor were acquired by the first William James in 1600, and the Mote by the first Sir William Selby two years earlier. The two families remained neighbours for nearly three hundred years. St. Clere Manor was sold by Robert Multon to Sir John Sedley about 1630 and the Sedleys lived there for nearly a hundred years.

It was this William James who erected the box pews, as the Manor pews. This was soon after his grant of arms by King James I in 1611 and he incorporated them as part of the decoration. William's father was a successful London brewer and the three mill-rinds - the iron centre of the millstone for grinding barley for beer - was a device appropriate to the industry, together with the crest, the sheaf of barley, from which beer is made. The oldest piece of Church silver, still in use, is a chalice 8½ in. high, inscribed beneath the foot 'Guillelmus James donavit Ecclesiae de Ightham'. The hallmark is London 1616. The origin of the James family vault beneath the pews is not known - it may have been an existing crypt. It was in use up to 1901, some forty members of the James family being buried in it.

The ornate Selby monuments in coloured alabaster are typical of the period. The epitaphs record that the Selbys came from Branxton, in Northumberland - a village on the Scottish border - and that they were lords of the eastern marches with Scotland. Of the two recumbent knights, the lower is the first Sir William Selby, of Ightham Mote, died 1611. He came there in old age, after a long military career. This started in 1544, as a boy of 13, in Henry VIII's war against the Scots, when he was present at the landing at Newhaven, the capture of Leith, and at the siege of Edinburgh Castle. He saw Border fighting, near his home, was on service in Ireland, and took part in Queen Elizabeth I's intervention in the Protestant cause in the Netherlands (1586-88), when he was Governor of Amersfort, near Utrecht. Notice the old military titles of captain of lances and scoutmaster-general.

The first Sir William never married and he was succeeded at the Mote by his nephew, the second Sir William. Like his uncle before him he was Gentleman Porter of the fortified border town of Berwick. When James VI of Scotland became James I of England he lost no time in proceeding south and was welcomed at Scots Gate by a company of notables, Mr. William Selby delivering up the keys of the garrison and the King showing his favour by onferring on him a knighthood. A translation

of the long and laudatory epitaph is at Appendix B. It was this Sir William who, in 1620, was granted a faculty for two large seats in the south aisle as a Mote pew, in return for having erected a gallery at the west end of the nave. In 1633, however, when he was 83 years old and too infirm to get to the Parish Church, he was granted permission to hold services in the private chapel at the Mote. He died five years later. It is not known when the Selby family vault beneath the pew was taken into use, but when opened in 1881 there were only 10 coffins in it.

Sir William's widow, Dame Dorothy, survived him by three years, dying in 1641. Her monument is an important one, the bust at least being the work of the noted sculptor Edward Marshall (1598-1675) - Master Mason to the Crown and twice Master of the Masons' Company. Works in Kent executed by him (all in 1638) were the monument to Lady Culpeper, at Hollingbourne, the one to Henry Saunders, at St. Mary Magdalen, Canterbury, and his famous double brass, to Sir Edward and Lady Filmer, at East Sutton Church, near Maidstone. Dame Dorothy is realistically portrayed as she was at the time of her death, at the age of 69, and wearing widow's dress. She had no children and had devoted herself to good works - the small figures of mourners represent the poor she cared for. She was fond of music, as shown by the lute, and above all to needlework, as shown by the embroidery frame and in her epitaph.

In Dame Dorothy's curious epitaph (see Appendix C) she is recorded as a Dorcas - needlewoman - who worked the pictures 'Golden Age', 'Acts of Jonah', and 'Gunpowder Plot'. The 'Golden Age' - scenes of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden - is reproduced in coloured plaster relief in the dark niche behind the bust. The 'Acts of Jonah' was evidently her masterpiece as, in her full length portrait which hangs at the Mote, her hand is resting on it. Incidentally, beside her on the table there is a bunch of pinks and a tulip, showing her interest in gardening, the tulip being a recent introduction from Holland and fashionable at the time. A version of her picture of the Armada and the Gunpowder Plot is incised in the lower panel behind the bust, the work being attributed to William Marshall, engraver, younger brother of Edward. The original needlework has survived, in the hands of descendants, and was shown at the 'Old Ightham' exhibition of 1956: the colours have retained a remarkable freshness. The subject was not uncommon at the time, a piece of Anti-Papist propaganda. The Pope, in company with the Devil itself, plans the overthrow of Britain with the invasion of the Armada (1588) and the demolition of the Houses of Parliament by Guy Fawkes (1605), but is prevented by the watchful eye of

Almighty God above. Photographs of the original needlework and of the incised version hang at the west end of the Church. Dame Dorothy has acquired notoriety through the legend that she took part in the discovery of the Gunpowder Plot. This no doubt arose through a misinterpretation of the words in her epitaph 'whose art disclosed that plot', the real meaning of which is no more than that her art displayed the plot in her needlework.

Curiously enough the name Dorothy Selby does not appear in the Burial Register, but this is not considered to be of any significance. It is recorded (National Record Office) that the monument was erected at the charge of Richard Amherst Esq., and Dorothy his wife, executors under her will. The same Richard Amherst signed the funeral certificate of Dame Dorothy's husband, the second Sir William (preserved in the College of Arms). Richard had been married in Ightham Church in 1627 to Dorothy Cradock, whose mother Jane Dirkin (died 1626) is commemorated by a brass in the centre aisle. It is well preserved and notable as an example of Jacobean costume. (See Appendix D). Nothing is known as to who Jane Dirkin was. Little is known about her first husband, John Cradock, except that he came from Luddesdown, and nothing at all about her second husband, John Dirkin. Her daughters by Cradock, however, married well. Dorothy married Richard Amherst, who inherited and rebuilt Bayhall, Pembury (since demolished) and their other daughter, Elizabeth, married Sir John Howell, serjeant-at-law, Recorder of London. The Howells are recorded by an elegant alabaster and black marble tablet in the south wall and are buried in the Mote vault beneath.

Four very fine pieces of silver survive from these families. A paten, diam. 6 in., hallmark London 1616, may have been part of the communion plate recorded as donated to the Church by Jane Dirkin in 1626. An almsdish, diam. over 14 in., hallmark London 1690, is inscribed as the gift of Dorothy Thorneycroft and is engraved with her arms Howell impaled Thorneycroft. She was a daughter of John and Elizabeth Howell, was baptised in the Church in 1634, and married John Thorneycroft of Gray's Inn. A pair of silver flagons, over 10 in. in height, with the same hallmarks as the almsdish, are inscribed as the gift of Lady Elizabeth Howell and are engraved with the Howell/Cradock arms. Unfortunately one has been mutilated in the Victorian period by the addition of a spout.

Sir John Sedley, of St. Clere, rebuilt the north aisle in 1639 for his Manor pews, widening it by 5 ft. The wall should be seen from the outside, with its mellowed bricks, hand made 10 in. by 5½ in. by 2 in., laid in the old fashioned English bond - alternate courses of headers and stretchers. At the same time the family vault

beneath the aisle was constructed, and the arches and half pillars of the adjoining arcade of the nave rebuilt in brick, an imitation of the 15th century stonework.

In 1643, during the Civil War, the Rector of Ightham, the Rev. John Gryme, achieved notoriety by causing a Royalist rebellion. Parliament had issued an ordinance requiring all clergy to take an oath of allegiance to it and to impose this upon their parishioners. Mr. Gryme who had been Rector for 27 years and knew well the feeling of the people, refused to obey. A party of horse was sent down from London to arrest him and, in the scuffle in which the villagers tried to rescue him, one of them was killed. This sparked off a rising throughout the district, which it took Parliamentary troops to quell.

The Rev. James Hickford, who succeeded Mr. Gryme, was described as a 'nonconformist usurper', but, surviving all the vicissitudes of the Established Church, he remained Rector for 49 years, dying in 1693. The austere Puritan influence persisted at least as late as 1827, when a drawing of the chancel of that date shows it as no doubt it was in his time. The bare communion table, covered with a plain cloth, is on a platform, with the recently introduced turned wooden Communion rails on three sides. There are two benches in front for communicants. The east window has plain glass, and beneath it are boards painted with the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments. The present board, hanging to the left of the altar with gold lettering on a black background, may well be the original. The walls are limewashed and the floors paved with stone slabs. There is no chancel screen. The drawing shows the front of the big Rectory pew, on the south side of the nave. Behind this were the pews for the gentry, and on the other side the Court pews. All these pews were enclosed and provided with doors, for protection from draughts. Benches no doubt served for the rest of the congregation, with the gallery as an overflow. There was a large oak pulpit in the nave, by the centre pillar on the south side. This was probably a three decker, where the parson conducted the service and read the lessons from the middle tier, and ascended to the top one for the sermon. The bottom tier was occupied by the lay clerk, who led the responses and gave out the notices. It is not known when the ceiling to the nave was put in but it may have been at this period for the purposes of warmth.

## 6. THE HANOVERIAN PERIOD

The Hanoverian period was one of little change inside the Church itself, although outside, the churchyard assumed a very different appearance. (See 9. The Churchyard). Beyond the scope of this paper, but fortunately well documented in the County Archives, were the many activities of the Rector, with his Parish Vestry, church wardens, and overseers of the poor - responsible for all the local administration within the parish boundaries, including the raising of the poor rates and the care of the poor. The Rector was a landowner and country gentleman, second only to the squire, who, as patron of the living, had appointed him. The Rev. Ralph Leigh, who was Rector for thirty-six years, 1724-60, appears frequently in a diary kept by the squire's young wife, Elizabeth James, for the year 1750. He was very much a friend of the family and was often invited to dinner when there was anything special such as 'a fine turbot' or 'a neck of venison', even though on occasions 'it smelt strong'. Mr. Leigh returned the hospitality by sending up pork and ducks from his glebe farm. When Elizabeth lost her little boy, Mr. Leigh was constantly up at The Court, and he stayed by her in the coach to the 'very large funeral'. It was in his time that the new no. 2 bell was hung, inscribed with his name (Appendix A), and the diary records the pealing of the bells at Christmas.

Elizabeth James died in 1798 and her hatchment hangs in the nave together with four others of the James family of Ightham Court. The earliest is 1718, William James of the fourth generation. That of Elizabeth's husband, another William, is 1781. Of the remaining seven hatchments, two appertain to St. Clere (formerly in the Parish), two to the Mote, and three to Rectors of Ightham. (See Appendix E for details). Hatchments are a feature of the Hanoverian period. With much illiteracy and poor communications, it became the custom when a person of social standing died to notify the event by hanging a shield of his or her arms outside the house. After a time of mourning it was laid up over the family pew.

The two tier twenty-four light chandelier hanging in the nave is a very fine one, almost certainly London made. It is inscribed 'The gift of Michael Upton of the Parish of Ightham, 1759. The donor was here inter'd the 18 of June, 1780, aged 78 years'. Michael Upton's seal and signature appear on a document in connection with the Parish workhouse dated 1753, in which he is described as 'Grocer now Overseer of the said Parish'. As Overseer of the Poor on the Parish Vestry his duties included the management of the workhouse. He was evidently a man of

substance, an example of the rising middle classes - he held freeholds in Meopham and was registered as a voter in the Poll of the Knights of the Shire for Parliament. He was sufficiently important to be shown in the Burial Register as 'Mr.' and to have a funeral sermon. The chandelier takes to pieces easily and, in 1964, was dismantled for cleaning and lacquering under the direction of Mr. Stanley Pratt, of 27 Mount Street, London, W.1., and was then rewired.

In 1791 the advowson of the Church, hitherto included with the title of the Manor, was sold by Richard James of Ightham Court to William Bythesea, of Crooms Hill, Greenwich. It included the parsonage and glebe land, and the deed enjoined 'the said William Bythesea and heirs for ever'.... 'whenever the said Church should become vacant to present some other honest learned and well qualified clerk to succeed in the said Church as Rector'. Mr. Bythesea promptly appointed his son, the Rev. George Bythesea, who is commemorated by his hatchment, hanging to the right of the organ, and by a fine mural in the chancel, with his arms in colours, extolling his virtues and recording his death in 1800 'by a most rapid disease' at the early age of 35. It is not known why Richard James should have taken the unprecedented step of disposing of the advowson, his family having held the patronage for nearly 200 years and installed nine rectors, but it seems that the sum received, £3,400 (not inconsiderable for those days), was to defray debts. Deeds show that after his death in 1807 his widow was compelled to sell lands in order to meet his liabilities. Much of Richard James' time was spent away from home with the Militia, called up for full-time service during the prolonged wars with France, and his estate affairs may well have been neglected.

The Rev. George Bythesea succeeded his father as Patron, and on his death he was succeeded by his infant son George Kent Bythesea. It was under the infant's name that the Rev. Thomas Cobb was appointed Rector; he was also Vicar of Sittingbourne and a Justice of the Peace. In 1806 the Archbishop's Visitation to the Church gave a satisfactory report. The Church and Rectory were in good repair and the Parish Register was properly kept. Services were held twice on Sundays, with morning sermon, and Sacrament four times a year, with about 45 communicants. Children were frequently catechised throughout the year, and the Sunday School had twenty boys. There were no Papists in the Parish, and only one Methodist, and one Anabaptist. In the same year a crisis arose over the Mote pew. The Selbys, having their own chapel at the Mote, seldom used the pew and it had become customary for the old men to sit there, and also for the Vestry to conduct its meetings there. Mr. Cobb records

facetiously in the Vestry minutes 'that another vestry room must be built, the old vestry room having been locked up and parishioners turned out by a person of the name of Thos. Selby Esq., who claims it as his chancel'. The new room was added on the site of the present vestry (since rebuilt). Thomas Selby died in 1820 and his hatchment hangs over his pew. The Rev. Thomas Cobb (died 1818) is commemorated by a wall plaque in the chancel, by his hatchment to the left of the organ, and by a tablet in the floor near the organ.

## 7. THE 19TH CENTURY

In the 19th century the Church, in common with all other old churches, experienced a wave of changes - fortunately, however, the craze for restoration did not spread to interference with the original medieval structure. In the early years of the century the population of the Parish leapt from 709, at the first census of 1801, to 1,017 in the census of 1831. To provide for the larger congregations the Rev. Samuel Wyatt Cobb (Rector 1827-57) moved at a Vestry meeting in 1833 that a new gallery be erected above the existing gallery. At the same time the large Jacobean pulpit in the centre of the nave was replaced by a small one in front of the chancel, thus allowing more seating. Wisely the timber of the old pulpit was retained as panelling on the east wall of the chancel; it will be observed that the decoration closely resembles that of the box pews, dating it to the same period.

In 1849 Mr. Cobb petitioned the Archbishop for non-residence, stating that owing to 'severe and dangerous attacks of gout and other distressing maladies' he had become incapacitated from the performance of his duties, which he requested to delegate to a curate, the Rev. Alexander Douglas. With the licence duly granted, and Mr. Cobb travelling abroad for his health, Mr. Douglas carried on for eight years. It was he who, largely at his own expense, undertook the reseating of the Church in 1854. All the box pews were removed, except the present four, and open seats installed. At the same time the organ - no doubt a barrel organ - was replaced by a harmonium. The barrel organ had been in use at least since 1849, when an organ player was appointed at a yearly salary of £2, payable quarterly. Before the barrel organ, music was provided by a few singers and musicians in the gallery, the churchwardens' accounts in 1822 showing 'paid for repairing bassoon and reeds £1 4s 2d'. It was during the 1854 restorations that Mrs. Selby, of the Mote, presented for the Mote pew a window of 16th century Flemish glass depicting Henry VII and his Queen, Elizabeth of York. A friend had acquired this glass in Worcester and had given it her for the chapel at the Mote, but she preferred the Church to have it. Mr. Cobb died in 1857, having held the benefice for thirty years. He has no memorial.

The origin of the screens of the Mote pew is not known. It is evident from the Mr. Selby affair that they existed in 1806, but a pre-1854 drawing (British Museum) shows that their tracery was different from the present ones. They have been dated as early 16th century, but may be older, and the two parts may be of

different dates. They have clearly been removed from elsewhere and have been altered and much restored. They might well have replaced the original screens, possibly in the restorations of 1854. As a conjecture they might have come up from the Mote.

The same drawing shows the position of the font beside the centre pier of the south arcade. At the time of the 1954 restorations it was moved to near the vestry door. This was close to the foot of the gallery stairs, which it evidently obstructed, as in 1870 it was moved to the west end of the centre aisle. Subsequently, after the demolition of the galleries, it was put back again and remained there until 1969, when it was placed in its present position.

In 1866 the Rev. John Polehampton arrived and at once started a parish magazine. Copies of this survive and give a remarkable picture of life in the village a hundred years ago. His many activities in the management of the village school, in starting a youth club, in coping with poverty by organising clothing and coal clubs, a lying-in fund, and provident societies, are outside the scope of this narrative, but he did much also for the Church itself. He called for subscriptions for an organ to replace the harmonium and, at the same time, started a choir of men and boys, dressing them in surplices. They sat in the upper gallery, but it was not long, however, before choir stalls were provided in the chancel. The tower was repaired at this time, with a new wind vane, described in the parish magazine as 'a very elegant as well as useful addition to the venerable structure'.

In 1868 the James window and brass plate were inserted in the north aisle in memory of Demetrius Grevis-James, of Ightham Court (died 1861), and of his wife Mary (died 1853). Demetrius Grevis took the name of James on succeeding to the Manor of Ightham on the death of his cousin Richard James, who died without issue in 1807 and was the sixth and last generation in direct line from the first William James. The marble mural to him in the nave is the only James monument in the Church. The window depicts scenes in the life of St. James the Greater, discernible throughout by his red robe. (See Appendix F for details). The window was installed some years after the death of Demetrius. According to the Rev. T.F. Charlton, a descendant of the James family, it was instigated by the Rev. James Sandford Bailey, of Ightham Place, who in 1857 had married Lavinia, the sixth daughter of Demetrius Grevis-James, and it was subscribed for by members of the James family. It was probably manufactured by the well known London firm of Clayton & Bell, and the archaistic style is 15th century. The parish magazine of October 1868 records 'a visit by one of the first

Architects in England (or the world) to our ancient Parish Church .... The stained glass window in the north aisle, lately erected to the memory of the late Mr. and Mrs. James, met with his unqualified admiration; the imitation of the antique, particularly, he declared to be as nearly perfect as anything he had ever seen'. The architect so eulogistically described was most probably Mr. Bailey's friend, William Burges, who is recorded (R.I.B.A. Library) as visiting the Baileys at Ightham on occasions 1864-69. (See 9. Churchyard, Bailey Tomb).

Mr. Polehampton did not like the galleries. In 1876 he reports locking them at evening service 'owing to continuous ill behaviour therein' - they were used by the school children and were badly lit. Five years later he got his way in dismantling them thus revealing the finely proportioned 15th century arch leading to the tower. Another of Mr. Polehampton's dislikes were the finials to the nave pews. He comments acidly on them in the parish magazine and later laconically records 'finials in pews lopped off by me' - no doubt in defiance of the views of members of the Vestry! When he resigned, in 1888 he and Mrs. Polehampton donated a bell, inscribed with their initials, to commemorate his incumbancy of twenty-two years, thus completing the peal of six.

The Rev. Douglas Barry succeeded. In his first letter to the parishioners in the parish magazine he refers to the responsibilities of the Rector of a parish 'though comparatively small, are numerous and heavy'. The population at the time was 1150, some 400 less than now (1970), but the Rector was still chairman of the Vestry which managed village affairs, and it was not until the Local Government Act of 1894 that the first Parish Council was elected to take these over. Another of the Rector's letters calls for 'more sympathy for the poor and suffering' and his social work was extensive. He promoted the Ightham Benevolent Society and the Working Men's Club, and started a fund for the employment of a parish nurse. He worked up the Sunday School to a hundred children on the books, and Mrs. Barry started a weekly Mothers' meeting at the Rectory.

In 1888 the boards in the porch showing the benefactions to the Parish were restored by the churchwardens. They have existed at least as far back as 1812, when an entry in the accounts records 'Writing the Benefactions, etc., 31£'. One of the churchwardens was Major-General Luard. (See also page 23, Luard gravestone). As the boards are not being maintained by the Church Council a transcription is at Appendix G for record purposes.

At the end of the century windows in the Church tower were restored and the vestry rebuilt. In 1902 the

clock was installed in the tower. A small tablet, now partially concealed by the organ, records that it was provided by public subscription 'to commemorate the long and illustrious reign of Queen Victoria'. It replaced the clock presented in 1887 in celebration of the Jubilee year of her reign.

## 8. THE PRESENT CENTURY

Mr. Barry was a great benefactor to the Church. In 1900 he donated the eagle lectern and the chancel screen. These were dedicated by Bishop Barry at a special service, and the Vestry minutes record of the screen 'a hearty vote of thanks for the gift' and that 'it was admired and approved by all'. It was evidently intended to replace the original medieval rood screen long since disappeared. The drawing of the chancel in 1827 shows no screen, but in the parish magazine of the 1890s reference is made several times at harvest festivals to the floral decorations to 'the screen in front of the choir'. Nothing is known of this one. Subsequent gifts of his were the brass chandelier in the chancel (1906) and the rood beam, inscribed 'D. Barry Rector 1888-1907 restored me A.D.1912' - the two latter were given after his retirement, when he continued to live in the Parish.

The Rev. Bertram Winnifrith was Rector from 1907 to 1924. For the first few years he kept a diary, at the back of an old 'Tythe Book', an interesting historical document, now in the County Archives. One of his first entries was 'my wife presented me with a fine boy. The event was all the more interesting as it was thirty-five years since there had been a birth in the Rectory'. This 'fine boy' was Sir John Winnifrith, Patron of our Church. In 1911 he records that a crack appeared in the plaster ceiling of the nave; on examination it was found that it concealed fine oak beams, so it was decided to take down the ceiling and restore the original roof. He comments 'now we have one of the finest specimens of fifteenth century roofs in the Country'. In 1912 he describes the installation of the new organ, at the west end of the nave, made by Messrs. F.H. Browne & Co., of Canterbury for £300, raised by public subscription. He writes that 'the old organ was exceedingly ugly and took up valuable space in the already small chancel'. It is of this organ that the story goes that it stood in the way to the pulpit, so when the Rector went up to preach the organist had to stand up and carry on playing the hymn with one hand as best he could! There had been years of delay over the Diocesan faculty for the organ owing to disagreement over the siting, and a proposal to build an organ chamber onto the south side of the chancel. The opening ceremony was carried out by Mr. Luard-Selby, organist to Rochester Cathedral. He came of the Selby family of Ightham Mote, where he was born in 1853, and was a leading church musician of his time. In 'Hymns Ancient and Modern' he composed the tune of Hymn 659 'The Lord is King! Lift up thy voice!' which he named 'Ivy Hatch'. Mr. Winnifrith is commemorated by the altar rails (inscribed), and by a beautiful silver processional cross, presented by his family. The restored St. Catherine's Chapel is now a further commemoration of him.

The memorial tablet to Benjamin Harrison (1837-1921) recalls a great village character who achieved an international reputation in the archaeological world of his day. He contended, and was supported by responsible geological opinion, that flints found by him in the pre-glacial drift on the North Downs near Ash were artefacts, thus vastly antedating the antiquity of man. He called the flints 'eoliths', and one of the first ones found by him, in 1865, is mounted above the tablet. He was much loved in the village and his gravestone (north-west of the Church tower) bears the epitaph (quoted from 'As You Like It'):

He found in life 'Books in the running  
brooks, sermons in stones and good in  
everything'.

In the 1939-45 War, in spite of the large amount of bombing sustained by the village, the Church was fortunate in getting no direct hits and no casualties to churchgoers. (See Appendix G). The damage was limited to windows. The only ones which escaped were the James window and the little one of St. Peter (inserted in 1860) in the south wall of the chancel. All the rest of the glass is post-War. The East window replaced mid-Victorian glass. The parish magazine records its installation in 1949, and that it is stained, and not painted, glass, producing an irridescent effect. The writer (presumably the Rector, Canon Offer) is somewhat apologetic as to the design, but does give it credit as an improvement on its predecessor. A plaque records that it was erected in memory of parishioners who lost their lives in the two World Wars. The names of these men are recorded on brass tablets in the south aisle. The memorial window in the Mote pew to Sir Thomas Colyer-Fergusson (died 1951) replaced the ancient Flemish glass, which has disappeared since the bombing. Close to it is the memorial to Sir Thomas's son, Riversdale, who was killed in 1917, at the age of 21, in the fighting in Flanders in the First World War, and was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross for his gallantry in action. With the death of Sir Thomas the use of the Mote pew lapsed, after a period of 330 years.

## 9. THE CHURCHYARD

Throughout the Middle Ages, from its prominent site overlooking the village, the Church was the hub of its social life. The nave was used as a village hall, the porch was a meeting place, and the churchyard, then free of gravestones, was the village playground. The annual fair no doubt took place there, and probably archery practice, either there or nearby. The old place name Butt Field for a field to the north-east of the Church implies this use, although the real meaning may be no more than a field which abuts another one. The yews are the descendants of those planted in ancient times, evergreen, and thus traditionally associated with everlasting life, but with practical uses for decorating the Church for festivals, as a floor covering for the cold stone floors, as well as for the making of bows and arrows.

The little sundial outside the porch is inscribed 'In publicum designatum. Robert Cutbush facit. 1669.'. It was at about this date that gravestones came into use. Except for the few notables buried in the Church itself, it was customary for graves to be near the porch, on the village side of the Church, and the oldest stones are there. In the preceding five and a half centuries the total number of burials in the plot was very considerable. For the first hundred years recorded in the burial registers, which commence in 1559, there were no less than 800 - the population of the parish being estimated at that time as about 560. Overcrowding was mitigated in that coffins were not then used.

The oldest gravestones recorded - not now discernible - were 1663, 1673, and 1697. The oldest one still legible is Jane Moyce 1703. Owing to the hard local ragstone, the depth of the carving of the lettering, the fact that the stones are chamfered to throw off the rain, several early 18th century stones have survived well. They are of considerable interest as examples of folk art found only in parts of Kent and over the border into Sussex. The crudely incised faces are the efforts of the mason and contrast with his craftsmanship in the Perpendicular style moulding of the thick head-and-shoulder-shaped stones, and in the fine lettering. The faces were intended as images of the departed, but the meaning became lost and they deteriorated into grotesque skulls and bones, the emblems of mortality. There are still surviving of this period several stones, also peculiar to Kent, with ludicrous profile faces, a convention for male and female alike, which seems to have originated from a George I coin. By the middle of the 18th century craftsmanship and public taste had much improved and the designs are of intrinsic

artistic merit, with the delicate carving or the imagery of mortality, the resurrection and eternal life, together with the tradition of beautiful calligraphy. The handsome chest tombs are in the typical classical style of the Georgian period of architecture. The earliest of these is that of the Hodsoll family (circ 1735), by the porch - carved with the Hodsoll arms (the Three Wells) and rather pathetic epitaphs. The practice of iron grills, of which there are several examples, early 19th century, was for protection from 'body snatching' for anatomical research, then prevalent, and from desecration in those rougher times.

An important tomb is the heraldic one situated just north of the chancel, completed prior to 1866. This was designed to surmount a vault below for the Rev. James Sandford Bailey, of Ightham Place, who employed his friend William Burges. William Burges (1827-1881) was a leading architect of the mid-Victorian period of Gothic revival and was responsible for a number of important works, both at home and abroad. (See also page 17, James window). The design represents a catafalque, covered by a pall, in the centre of which are the arms of Bailey. The surrounding arms, besides those of Bailey, are of the families of Sandford (Mr. Bailey's mother), and of Grevis-James, of Ightham Court (his wife's). The many blank shields provided for the Bailey descendants, but actually only five interments took place - Mr. Bailey's parents, his wife (died 1875), his son Demetrius (died 1909), and himself (died 1912, aged 88). Demetrius, who was in the service of the Rajah of Sarawak, is commemorated by a brass in the nave. Mr. Bailey's son Edmund, of Ightham Court, disliked the family vault and acquired a plot near the church tower, where he, his wife, and his two spinster sisters are buried. The tomb has been sadly neglected, the long inscriptions are illegible and the record lost. I am indebted to the Rev. T.F. Charlton, a descendant of the Grevis-James, for this information as to his forebears.

The grave of Adelaide Kemble (died 1879), to the north-west of the Church tower, recalls her performances at Covent Garden Opera House in 1841, notably in the exacting part of 'Norma', when she achieved a reputation as one of the great opera singers of her time. Her dramatic talent was not surprising as she came from the celebrated theatrical family of Kemble - one of whom, the great tragic actress Sarah Siddons, was her aunt. Adelaide married Edward Sartoris, who is buried beside her, and her connection with Ightham was that their daughter May married Henry Evans-Gordon, of 'Prestons'. May lived to 1925 and is buried nearby.

In the same part of the churchyard is the stone commemorating Caroline Luard, who died on 24th August,

1908, and on the reverse the death of her husband, Major-General Luard, three weeks later. Behind this lies a tragic story. From their home at Ightham Knoll Mrs. Luard went out for a walk with the dog one Sunday afternoon and when she did not return for tea the General set out to look for her. He found her in a wood not far off, lying dead with bullet wounds in her head. The Police could find no clues as to the murderer and gossip brought suspicion onto the General himself, accompanied by venomous anonymous letters. The strain was too great for him and he threw himself under a train. Mr. Winnifrith, who wrote a dramatic day-to-day account of the affair in his diary, knew the General well and of all he had done for the Church and in the village for the past twenty years, and was convinced of his innocence.

Apart from the yews in the churchyard, many of them the upright Irish yew, there are several trees worthy of notice. To the north of the path from the lychgate to the porch is a large spreading cedar of Lebanon, possibly 200 years old, and close to it another tall cedar, probably the same age. At the south end of the row of limes to the west of the tower is a redwood - upright, with the characteristic soft reddish bark, possibly 70 years old.

Appendix A

THE CHURCH BELLS

No.	Weight swt., grs., lbs.	Dia. (ins.)	Note	Bellfounder	Inscription	Remarks
1	3 3 16		Treble F sharp	John Warner & Sons, Crescent Foundry, Gripplegate	Name of founders. 'Sist Momen Domini Benedictum. d.d. I.P. and C.P. 1888' ( 'Blessed be the name of the Lord' )	Added to the peal by the Rev. John Polehampton, Rector, and his wife, on his retirement.
2	4 2 0	25½	E	Richard Phelps	'Rev. Ralph Leigh, M.A., Rector. Edward Batt, Churchwarden. R.P. Fet. 1732'	Recast 1926
3	5 0 0	27½	D	John Walgrave of London. Business career estimated 1418-1440	'Amice Christi Johannes' J.W. ( 'O Friend of Christ John' )	Date about 1430
4	6 0 0	29½	C sharp	-do-	'Vox Augustini sonet aure Dei' ( 'Let the voice of Austine sound in the ear of God' )	Date about 1430
5	7 1 0	32½	B	W. & T. Mears, later Lester, Pack, & Chapman of High Street, Whitechapel	Name of founder and 'fecit 1789'.	An earlier bell recast in 1789.
6	8 3 0	34	A Tenor	John Wilner of Horden, Sittingbourne. Business about 1618-1640	'John Wilner made me 1620'.	The only Kent founder.

## Appendix B

TRANSLATION OF THE LATIN INSCRIPTION ON THE MONUMENT  
OF THE SECOND SIR WILLIAM SELBY.

Here rests the body of the right honourable and most accomplished Sir William Selby, Knight, descended from the ancient and noble family of Selby in the county of Northumberland.

He was promoted by the Mayor of Berwick to be Keeper of the Keys, an office of great trust and authority and to a seat in that honourable Corporation, which he held until the Union. In these honours he had been preceded by a long and illustrious line of ancestors, many of whom were lords of the marches of Scotland.

When His Most Serene Majesty James I came to Berwick to take possession of the Kingdom of England, by right of inheritance, Mr. Selby, from the peculiar privilege of his office, delivered to him the keys of the garrison, and had the honour to instal him monarch of that valuable territory.

The King, among the first marks of his favour, conferred upon Mr. Selby the honour of knighthood, and being well acquainted with his courage and abilities, soon afterwards dispatched him to quell some infamous outrages of certain robbers that broke out upon the border. In the execution of this service he incurred the highest obligations from his king and country, for by virtue of his commission he subdued, with amazing success and dispatch, 1,500 notorious and daring robbers, who in numerous bodies had scourged and ravaged the borders of both kingdoms. Some of these were transported, and others were put to death. He at length reduced them all to subjection and established universal tranquility throughout those parts of the kingdom.

Sir William was brave and successful in his undertakings. His disposition was generous and aimable: his wisdom was sound and his integrity unshaken. He was pious and orthodox in religion and replete with benevolence and charity. In short his few failings, (if any failings he had), when mingled with the dazzling splendour of his divine virtues and accomplishments, appear as small as atoms in the air, and obscured by the light that surrounds them.

After enjoying his glorious life to the extreme age of 88 years, he yielded to exhausted nature, and passes to endless bliss !

(Here follows a further eulogy in fourteen lines of verse.)

Sir William Selby, miles, sepult. March 1, 1638.

## Appendix C

## EPITAPH TO DAME DOROTHY SELBY

D. D. D.

To the pretious name and honour of Dame Dorothy Selby,  
the relict of Sir William Selby, Knt., the only daughter  
and heir of Charles Bonham, Esq.

She was a Dorcas,  
Whose curious Needle turn'd th' abused Stage  
Of this leud world into the Golden Age,  
Whose Pen of Steele and silken inck enroll'd  
The Acts of Jonah in Records of Gold.  
Whose arte disclos'd that Plot, which, had it taken,  
Rome had triumph'd and Britain's walls had shaken;  
In heart a Lydia and in tongue a Hanna,  
In Zeale a Ruth, in Wedlock a Susanna;  
Prudently simple, providently wary,  
To th' world a Marth and to Heaven a Mary.  
Who put on ) (Pilgrimage 69  
immortality ) in the yere of her (Redemption  
1641, March 15

Note: D.D.D. = Dono Dedit Dedicavit

The first line and last four would not appear to be original, but to be a plagiarism of the epitaph in Hambledon Church, Bucks., to Sir Cope D'Oyley (died 1636) and his wife Martha (died 1618):

'In works a Dorcas, to ye Church a Hanna,  
And to her spouse Susanna,  
Prudently simple, providently wary,  
To th'e world a Martha, and to Heaven a Mary.'

This was written by Francis Quarles (1592-1644),  
Poet Laureate, brother of Lady D'Oyley.

The epitaph is of sufficient importance to be quoted in full by Mrs Esdaile in her 'English Church Monuments 1510-1840', and also for the last four lines to be included in Benham's 'Book of Quotations', with the comment that similar epitaphs are found elsewhere.

## Biblical references:

Dorcas, Act 9, 39: she was a needlewoman.  
Lydia, Act 16, 14: she was sincerely religious.  
Hannah, 1 Samuel, 1, 12: presumably refers to her praying fervently.  
Ruth, Book of Ruth, 1 16: loyalty and devotion.  
Susannah, History of Susannah (Apocrypha): she was true to her husband.

Martha and Mary: The allusions are well known, Martha was the practical one, active in the care of the needy, Mary Magdalen was the prototype of the penitent and contemplative.

## Appendix D

## BRASS TO JANE DIRKIN

This is a good example of the Jacobean costume of the period. The large ruff was the fashion for married women, together with the corsetlike bodice ending in a point to the front. The low necked décolletage was covered by a 'partlet' - a fill in of transparent gauze. The sleeves are tight fitting to the wrist, with a turnback cuff.

The full skirt, worn over a farthingale, is open in front with a narrow pyramidal gap revealing the elegant underskirt of a different colour and material.

She is wearing the sugar loaf hat, with high crown and moderate brim, trimmed with a twisted band and worn over a white undercap.

The inscription on the brass reads:

'Here lyeth buried Jane Dirkin some tyme wife of John Cradock gent by whome had issue Dorothy the wife of Richard Amherst Esq. Neville Cradock gent & Elizabeth wife of John Howell gent. She departed this life the yeare of Our Lord 1626 & with her heere also buried 3 of her grandchildren by her said daughter Dorothy Amherst viz a sone stillborne Dorothy & Jane'.

Sir John Howell, Kt., Serjeant-at-Law, Recorder of London, married Elizabeth as his second wife. Both their daughters married into the Selby family of Ightham Mote - Elizabeth to William, Jane to Sir Henry as his first wife.

Richard Amherst was of Bayhall, Pembury, Kent. Their daughter Elizabeth married Sir Henry Selby, Serjeant-at-Law Inner Temple, as his second wife, on the death of her cousin Jane. Jane Dirkin thus had three granddaughters married into the Selby family.

## Appendix E

## HATCHMENTS

	B North	A aisle
	C	D
L	Nave	
M		
	F	G
	South	aisle
	K	J H

A. 1837 (Feb.) Colonel Alexander Hume, of St. Clere, who took the name and arms of EVELYN on marrying Frances, heiress of William Evelyn, of St. Clere. The wife's arms are in pretence as she was an heiress.

Azure a griffin passant and a chief or EVELYN and in pretence EVELYN

B. 1837 (March) Frances Evelyn

On a lozenge EVELYN and in pretence EVELYN

The widow bears her husband's arms on a lozenge. Being an heiress she bears her father's on an escutcheon of pretence.

She died without issue. Memorial tablet to both A and B on north wall.

C. 1781 William James, of Ightham Court.

Two Juxta-posed coats each JAMES 1663 (the ancient arms of the HAESTRECHT family in Holland).

Argent two bars castellated counter castellated gules

He married his cousin Elizabeth Haestrecht James who wore the same coat.

E. 1798 Elizabeth James, relict of William James above. JAMES 1663 and in pretence the same. The arms of the husband are borne as an escutcheon of pretence as she herself was an heiress.

F. 1718 William James and his wife Anne Wyndham.

This is the oldest of the hatchments in the Church.

JAMES 1663 impaling azure a chevron three lions' heads WYNDHAM

Anne was the heiress to Sir Thomas Wyndham, of Trent, Co. Somerset, who traced his descent from Thomas Plantaganet, 5th son of King Edward I, by his 2nd wife Margaret, daughter of King Philip III of France.

G. 1807 Richard James and his wife Laetitia Gibbons.

Quarterly of 4: 1 & 4 James 1663  
 2 James 1611  
 3 Barry wavy MORSKYN impaling  
 sable a leopard or between  
 three escallops argent GIBBONS.  
 Crest: swan volant.

This is the same arms as on the marble mural to Richard James.

The arms James 1611 were those originally granted to the James family by James I. (See 5. The 17th Century).

Argent a chevron between three millrinds traverse  
 sable. Crest: a garb argent banded vert

D. 1861 Colonel Demetrius Grevis-James.

Quarterly of 4: 1 & 4 JAMES 1663  
 2 & 3 Argent on a fess azure between  
 three black roundels each  
 charged with a lion's head  
 argent, a griffin passant  
 between two escallops or GREVIS

The memorial brass to Demetrius and Mary Grevis-James beneath the James window has arms JAMES 1663, GREVIS, WYNDHAM, JAMES 1611.

H. 1820 Thomas Selby, of the Mote.

He was the son of John Browne, of Co. Salop, who took the name of Selby on succeeding to the Mote on the death of his cousin William Selby.

Barry of ten or and sable SELBY impaling argent a fess  
 and in chief a lion gules WALFORD. Crest: a moor's  
 head wreathed about the temples or and sable.

- J. Sable a chevron between three fleurs de lis argent.  
Crest: a stag's head issuing from a coronet.

This hatchment has hitherto been unidentified. Thanks, however, to information from Sir John Winnifrith, it is now evident that, although not registered at the College of Arms, the arms are those of Browne, of Co. Salop., who claimed descent from the Brownes of Scotland, who gave rise to Viscount Montague. The last Selby heiress, Dorothy, married John Brown, of Co. Salop., and it was her son John, referred to above, who inherited the Mote and took the name of Selby. He is recorded in the Burial Register as John Selby (died 1797) and it seems likely that the hatchment appertains to him.

- K. 1830 Lieut. Charles Brome, R.N., married Cecilia daughter of the Rev. George Bythesea.

Azure or dexter hand argent BROME impaling BYTHESEA

Memorial in chancel.

- L. 1800 The Rev. George Bythesea, Rector of Ightham, and Patron of the Church, 1791-1800.

Married Anne, daughter of Thomas Read Kemp, of Lewes Castle and Hurstmonceaux, Sussex. See marble mural in chancel, with coats of arms.

Quarterly of 4: 1 & 4 Argent a chevron engrailed  
sable between three crabs  
gules BYTHESEA  
 2 & 3 Azure a bend and on a chief  
or two Cornish choughs VINER  
impaling gules three garbs  
and on a border engrailed  
or eight green roundels KEMP  
OF LEWES

- M. 1817 The Rev. Thomas Cobb, Rector (1801-1817)

Quarterly of 4: 1 & 4 Argent a chevron between  
three cocks gules combs and  
wattles or COBB  
 2 & 3 Argent a chevron sable between  
three bulls' heads gules  
CURTEIS impaling: gules on  
a fess or between three bears'  
heads argent two lions passant  
sable WYATT. Crest: out of  
a crown or a demi-lion rampant  
ermine.

See memorial in chancel and gravestone in floor near organ.

## Appendix F

## JAMES WINDOW

1	4
2	5
3	6

1. Decollavit Joannen in Carcere (He beheaded John in prison).

The caption refers to the beheading of John the Baptist in prison by Herod (Matt. 14.10) and is evidently in error, as it has no connection with St. James. The correct reference would appear to be the execution of James, the brother of John, by the sword - Acts 12.1-2 (no mention of prison). James was the first of the Apostles to be martyred, A.D.44, by the order of King Herod Agrippa I to please the Jewish opponents of Christianity.

2. Fiat voluntas tua (Thy will be done).

Peter, James and John with Christ in the garden of Gethsemane. Matt. 26.39.

3. Venite post me should be read in conjunction with 6 Faciam vos fieri piscatores hominum (Come ye after me and I will make you to become fishers of man). Mark I, 17-20.

James and John being called by Christ.

4. Super hanc petram aedificabo (On this rock will I build)

James and other apostles accompanying Peter, who is being blessed by Christ, as the founder of the Church.

5. Et transfiguratus est ante eos (And he is transfigured before them).

The Transfiguration. Moses and the tablets left. Elijah and the dove right. Christ centre. Peter, James and John prostrated in front. Mat. 17, 1-3.

6. The appearance of Christ to the disciples after the Resurrection. John 21, 1-14.

James, John, Peter and presumably Simon Peter, in the boat. The coals of fire for cooking the fish (verse 9).

## Appendix G

## TRANSCRIPTION OF THE BENEFACTIONS

## PAINTED ON THREE BOARDS IN THE CHURCH PORCH

## Left Board

## B E N E F A C T I O N S

Henry Peyrse in the year 1546 gave to the Poor of Ightham the yearly Sum of six shillings and eightpence and two shillings to the Churchwardens who are to distribute the same every Friday before Midlent Sunday by twopence a piece

as far as it will go the said sum to be paid out of the rent of his Mansion House in Ightham Street, now in the occupation of William MOORLAND.

HENRY FIREBRASS clerk. Rector of Ightham in the Year 1601 gave to the Poor of this Parish the yearly Sum of twenty shillings to be paid out of a Field called Bear Field in this Parish now the property of William TAYLOR

Oct. 12 <sup>th</sup> 1888	CHARLES EDWARD LUARD	) - Churchwardens
	HENRY ANQUETIL	

## Centre Board

## B E N E F A C T I O N S

Elizabeth James of Ightham. by will dated 14<sup>th</sup> of April 1720 directed that the Rent Income and Profit of an undivided Moiety of a messuage and Lands Situated in the Parish of Ightham, should be applied to the teaching of poor Children in the aforesaid Parish to read. The sum of £6 is now paid annually on this account to the Ightham School Board by COLONEL D.W.G. JAMES owner of the said Messuage and Lands numbered 349 on the Ordnance Map.

DAME ELIZABETH SELBY of the Mote. Left by Will dated 13th August 1841 £150 for the benefit of the Poor of Ightham. to be applied as the Rector may think fit. The interest on this sum (which is invested in 2 $\frac{1}{4}$  per cent Consolidated Stock) is now paid by the Charity Commissioners.

Oct. 12 <sup>th</sup> 1888	CHARLES EDWARD LUARD	) - Churchwardens
	HENRY ANQUETIL	

Right Board

B E N E F A C T I O N S

WILLIAM JAMES Esq<sup>r</sup>. in the Year 1627 gave to the Poor of Ightham Twelve Penny Loaves every Sunday for ever. To be paid out of a Field called Wyfield Mead part in this Parish and part in Wrotham. now the property of DEMETRIUS GREVIS JAMES Esq<sup>r</sup>.

GEORGE PETLEY in the Year 1704 gave to the Poor of Ightham Six Four-penny Loaves every Sunday for ever. To be paid out of a Farm called Fen Farm. Part in this Parish and part in Wrotham. now the property of ALEXANDER EVELYN Esq<sup>r</sup>.

Oct. 12<sup>th</sup> 1888

CHARLES EDWARD LUARD )

HENRY ANQUETIL )

) - Churchwardens

(Transcribed by Mr. and Mrs. J.M. Francis in 1961).

## Appendix H

## BOMBING IN THE 1939-45 WAR

The bombing in the neighbourhood of the Church was as follows:-

29th September, 1940

High explosive bombs - 2 north of the Church, just outside the Churchyard.  
1 east of the Church, just across the road.  
1 south-west corner of the Churchyard.

29th January, 1944, 'The Little Blitz'

A 250 kilogram bomb, of a new type (small crater, but greater blast effect) fell at Heronshaw Wood.

2nd August, 1944

A flying bomb fell between the Church and the railway line.

19th October, 1944

A V2 rocket missile blew up in the air over the village.

(Letter dated 10th September, 1964, from Mr. Wilfrid Franks, who was an Air Raid Precautions Warden at the time and quotes from his diary.)

Ightham in the Battle of Britain

Part of a letter dated 27th November 1940 from Mr. C.A.V. Bowra, of The Bower House, to his son serving overseas:-

' All things considered we have not got on so badly with the Battle of Britain raging over our heads for the past three months.

When the attacks over London began we found ourselves right on the line of attack and most of the big air battles have been fought over our heads, and many of them visible from here. The German planes come up the Thames Estuary as far as Gravesend and Dartford, then turn left and follow the line of the North Downs to Croydon and London. This makes them pass within a few miles of us, and even if there is no direct attack on the village (which

there seems to have been on two or three occasions) there is the chance of bombs being jettisoned both coming and going. Bombs have fallen freely on this and all the neighbouring villages. Indeed, I fancy few Kentish villages have escaped a knock of some sort, and as for towns, particularly those on the Thames and Medway, they have all suffered badly.'

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Arch. Cant. Vol. III, 195; Vol. IV. 221; Vol. V.244;  
Vol. VIII, 92; Vol. IX, 273; Vol. XLII, 177.
- Belcher, Kentish Brasses I, 73, No. 140.
- Bennett, Ightham (1907), Chap XI.
- Burgess, English Churchyard Memorials (1963), 119, 172.
- Dampier, The Antiquities of Kent.
- Dunkel, William Lambarde (Rutgers University Press, 1967).
- Esdaille, Country Life, June 18th 1943, 'Gunpowder Plot in Needlework'.
- Esdaille, English Church Monuments 1510-1840 (1946).
- Frampton, A Glance at the Hundred of Wrotham (Maidstone 1881).
- Griffin and Stephenson, Monumental Brasses in Kent (1923), 127.
- Harrison, The History and Records of Ightham Church (Church Army Press 1932).
- Harrison, Harrison of Ightham (1928).
- Hasted, History of Kent (Grangerised edition, Kent County Library).
- Pevsner, West Kent and the Weald (1969).
- Stahlschmidt, The Church Bells of Kent (1887).