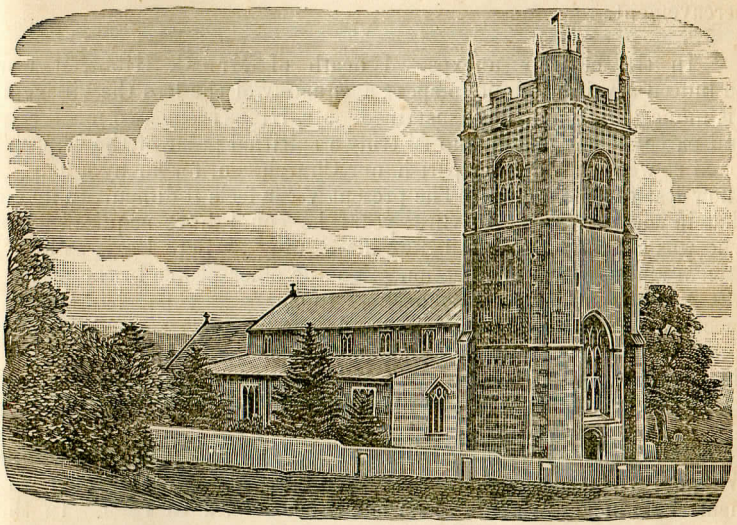
Bere Regis

AND

Winterborne Kingston



Parish Magazine.

JULY, 1903.

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SERVICES.

BERE REGIS.

Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.
Holy Communion, July 5, mid-day.
,, ,, ,, 19, 8 a.m.
July 25, St. James's Day ,, 11 a.m.

MR. J. JOHNSON AND MR. G. HIBBS.

During the last month two well-known figures have disappeared from the village. It was, indeed, on May 28th that Mr. J. J. Johnson died after a short illness, but the funeral took place in June, on Tuesday, June 2nd. He had been for some time in failing health, and a long continuance of his life could not have been expected. We desire to express our sympathy with Mrs. Johnson and the family in their bereavement.

In the entirely unexpected death of Mr. G. Hibbs, it would be indeed a vain attempt to speak adequately of the loss the village and his numerous friends have sustained. Mr. Hibbs seemed so much a part and parcel of the parish, and so truly a spiritual pillar of the Church he loved so well, that neither parish nor Church can, for many a long day, know itself without him. The present Vicar feels it difficult to imagine that in the short space of three years he could have acquired for one who was a stranger to him before his coming to Bere Regis so high an esteem and so warm an affection. To the older people in the parish he was a wise and trusted counsellor, to the young people a father, to successive Vicars a valued adviser and dear friend. We think that the following Obituary notices from Canon Warre and Mr. Farrer, owing to their long experience of Mr. Hibbs's worth, will very truly voice the feelings of those who are lamenting this blow.

Canon Warre writes:—My recollections of our dear friend whom last Wednesday afternoon we laid to rest by the side of the brother whose memory he never ceased to cherish, reaches back to 1865. In those days the parish church of Bere was in a deplorable condition; the walls were green with moss and fern, high unpainted deal pews covered the interior. . . . The roofs were decayed, laying bare the lead work, from which not infrequently the water dripped on the heads of the congregation . . . . . The west end of the Church was filled with a large gallery, which was occupied by the choir. . . . Mr. Hibbs presided over the music of the barrel organ, which blocked the archway and the view of the west window. It was not long before our united efforts were directed to acquiring a more worthy instrument. This was the first of the many works in which I had the happiness of being associated with our dear friend. I can well remember his happiness when, through the aid of an unexpected friend, his ancient charge was replaced by the instrument now in use. And it is interesting to think that one of his last efforts, of which, alas, he was not destined to see the result, was to collect the funds for an instrument worthier of the restored Church.

During the years that followed, full of labour and anxiety in parochial work, the support given by Mr. Hibbs was unfailing. It was not only time, sympathy, and, to the extent of his means, money that he gave. His knowledge of men, his tact in dealing with uncertain circumstances, his cautious, quiet judgement were invaluable to others whose temper was often despondent.

He was a man of strong feelings and large ideas, the true Christian gentleman, courteous, but without flattery; cautious to a degree but firm and independent in his resolutions, warped by no private or selfish aims or prejudices, frugal to an extreme in his own habits, yet generous towards others, a man of business, yet one to be trusted, who was never known to take undue advantage of another.

The influence he unconsciously exercised on all classes of people, rich and poor alike, with whom he came in contact, had its source in his religious character. His unobtrusive faith found its outcome in the unselfishness of that charity which vaunteth not itself, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil.

But it is as a Churchman that he will be long remembered in the parish where he lived. He loved the Church; he never missed a service willingly. Every event in its fortunes was of the deepest interest to him. His character was moulded and penetrated by Church principles. The fabric of the Parish Church was his constant delight. He spent long hours inside and around its walls. He loved to show to strangers who visited the place every feature in it, to which some special recollection, some anecdote or tradition, was in his mind attached.

Mr. Hibbs was no inconsiderable naturalist. In the spring-time especially, the birds and animals and flowers in Bere wood were an unfailing source of pleasure. He had in him also an artistic taste, too late developed, but which helped him to pass many hours of his solitary life, and would certainly have become as years advanced an increasing source of interest.

But now God has seen fit, no doubt in His purpose of mercy, to cut short a life, the memory of which will never cease, the life of one who in his generation and in the circle in which God placed him, shone as a bright example of manly virtue, the pattern to all around of a true Churchman, of a firm and constant friend, in act and aim 'sans peur et sans reproche.'

It will be with genuine sorrow that many friends will have heard of the death of *Mr. George Hibbs*, of Bere Regis. His whole life was spent in the village, which was his birthplace. For full forty years he was the right hand, the dear friend, and trusted counsellor of successive vicars of the parish. His love for his grand old parish church, and his devoted loyalty to the Church of England, may be said to have been the keynotes of his life. When the church was restored in 1872-3, he watched with loving care the progress of the work from day to day, and his life-long pride and joy in the restored church are known to all

his friends. He was one to whom the services of the Church were a real "strengthening and refreshing." He was scarcely ever absent from any service. From the days of the barrel organ onwards he always did his utmost to secure that all things should be "worthy of the Church." "Oak, not deal," was his principle throughout. This principle was acted on in the flooring of the Church, in the chairs, and, in accordance with his urgent desire, the case of a new organ shortly to be erected is to be "oak, not deal." Mr. Hibbs was a most regular attendant at the synod at Salisbury. He had been a member of it since its second session. He had been vicar's churchwarden since 1887, having previously represented the parish in the same office.

This is not the place in which to speak of his work in the sphere of politics, or to enlarge on the countless instances in which he acted as friend and adviser to those, both young and old, who claimed his help. Much might be said, too, of his interest in antiquities of all sorts, of his love for the birds, of his study of their habits, or of his affection for Dorset scenes and Dorset people.

It is rather as a Churchman of Churchmen—may I rather say as a Christian of Christians?—that he must here be spoken of:—

> "He sought not praise, and praise did overlook
> His unobtrusive merit; but his life,
> Sweet to himself, was exercised in good
> That shall survive his name and memory."

(From the *Guardian.*) W. F.

Mr. Hibbs was buried in the Churchyard on Wednesday, June 17. There was brilliant sunshine in the middle of a generally wet week, and in our deep sorrow never could the great words have been more truly realized—"Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

ADDRESS TO COMMUNICANTS.

On Wednesday, June 24, S. John the Baptist's Day, the communicants were invited to meet at tea at the Vicarage, and at 8 p.m. a large number attended service in the Church, at which an address was given on the privileges and responsibilities of Church life by the Archdeacon of Dorset. The Vicar was much gratified by the good attendance at a time when every available hand was required in the hay-field.

BERE REGIS SCHOOLS.

Government Inspector's Report.

Boys' School.

The elementary subjects are diligently and carefully taught in the Boy's School, and taken all round reach a good level. Reading has decidedly improved in distinctness and intelligence in the Upper Division, and writing and figuring are neat. The oral work is decidedly better than last year in the Upper Division. The Boys answer brightly, especially in Geography, and show more intelllgence. Singing and notes reach a fairly good level of merit. The discipline is good.

Girls' School.

The work of instruction was generally going on well under Miss Hemery in April. Hand writing was neat, and Arithmetic and figuring were on the whole neat and accurate. Reading was intelligent, and the Recitation in the Upper Division deserved special praise. The general discipline was decidedly smart and good, though the habit of whispering would be better abolished. The model drill has made a very good beginning. The class work is well carried out, though a rather better descriptive knowledge in Geography may be aimed at next year. Needlework is taught with care.

Infants' Class.

The Infants' room is diligently taught, and much of the work is good. The remarks made in last year's report may however be again repeated, as they again exactly apply. If the Teachers in this room could be persuaded to make the necessary effort to introduce the newer methods suggested year by year, a still better report might easily be given. Handwriting deserves special praise.

Bere Heath School.

The general discipline is satisfactory, but some of the children are occasionally troublesome. A better system of drills and physical exercises would secure prompt obedience. With the exception of some weakness in the spelling of the third standard, the elementary subjects are of average merit. Geography is making good progress, and the object lessons are creditably known. History is not yet a strong point, and singing may be improved. There is an improvement in the order and attainments of the infants.

MISSIONARY MEETING.

We hope to have a Missionary Meeting early in August; but Mrs. Sotheby is sorry that the Needlework Competition cannot be held this summer.

KINGSTON.

CHURCH SERVICES.

Sundays, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.

Children's Service, 2-30 p.m.

HOLY COMMUNION:

July 5th, at midday.

July 19th, at 8 a.m.

SUNDAY SCHOOL AND CHOIR.

We hope to arrange for a combined outing of the Choir and Sunday School to Swanage after the hay is gathered in. It is proposed that the parents should also come, if they are willing to contribute a small sum towards the cost of the outing.

DAY SCHOOL REPORTS.

Mr. Berry and his Assistant Teachers are once more to be congratulated on the excellent reports obtained both from the Government Inspector, and the Diocesan Examiner in Religious Knowledge.

Mixed School.

The Children obey promptly and cheerfully, and are attentive and industrious. The elementary work is good throughout. Writing in particular is neat and the Composition is above the average. The oral lessons are made interesting and full descriptive answers are a good point. The nature studies are carefully arranged and well suited for the locality.

Infant Class.

The Infant Class is carefully taught and all the work is good. The requirements in Drawing have been overlooked.

DIOCESAN EXAMINERS' REPORT.

Much pains and interest are taken in the work of this School and the results reflect great credit on the Teachers as well as the children.

BAPTISM.—June 21st, Reginald Charles, son of Tom and Nellie Burt.

BURIAL—May 6th Edwin Plumley, aged 42 years.