



It is exactly 23 years ago since the Vicar was invited by Balliol College, Oxford, to accept the living of Bere Regis. Incidentally, the College has appointed the Vicar of the Parish since the year 1680. Twenty-three years is a very long time and many changes have taken place. Many kindly souls both at Bere and at

Winterbourne Kingston have entered into their rest and each has contributed something to the progressive life of the Parish. It is tempting to look back and to feel that the present and future generations do not, or may not, equal those who have gone before. We cannot tell. But one thing we must avoid—the words of a familiar hymn which says ‘change and decay in all around I see.’ Change, indeed, we do see, but not ‘decay’. Conditions of life have changed enormously—better wages, better housing and easy transport have all contributed towards this change. This applies to every rural parish but our ancient Parish Churches, with their liturgy, teaching, worship and unbroken history continue with little change to contribute towards the spiritual life and culture of our land. In our own Parish we have two ancient and beautiful churches. Our Parish Church dates back over 1000 years and S. Nicholas for over 700 years. In both places the great events of life and death have been hallowed, and from the towers the bells have rung out on the great events of our national history.

It may be that our ancient churches contribute more—much more—than is sometimes realized, towards the life of England’s green and pleasant land.

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EARLY on Christmas morning it was good to see such a large number at the Parish Church—larger than for many years, and the church was more beautifully decorated than ever. Numbers can mean a great deal but not everything and we can say of S. Nicholas that the attendance was very good and the faithful had done so much to add beauty to that old church.

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THE S. Nicholas Sunday School Party was in every way a success and old and young enjoyed a very happy evening. Among the former we include members of the Mothers’ Union and others who by their loyalty and kindness support the church.

After distributing certificates to the children for good Sunday School attendance the Vicar thanked Mrs. and Miss Sheppard for their unfailing work over the years in connection with the Sunday School which has a larger number on the books than for many years. Mrs. Herring distributed gifts from the Christmas Tree and no-one was forgotten.

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ASH Wednesday, the first day of Lent, falls early this year—February 11th. On that day there will be a celebration of Holy Communion at 9 a.m. and Evening Service at 7 p.m. In previous years we have had our well known 'Thursday Evenings in Lent', but this year we propose to change to the afternoon, at any rate for the first part of Lent, when the weather is often so bad. Starting, therefore, on **Thursday, February 18th, the Lenten Services will be at 3 p.m.**

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BOTH at Bere Regis and at Winterbourne Kingston it has been taken for granted that the footpath through the churchyard is a public right of way and so we published the following extract from the Diocesan Gazette.

RIGHTS OF WAY OVER CHURCHYARDS

Unless there has been a grant out of the Consistory Court by Faculty, no right of way can exist in law over consecrated ground. The Prescription Acts have no application to consecrated land. Nevertheless, some footpaths through churchyards have been recorded by Local Authorities as rights of way under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, 1949. Incumbents are urged to examine provisional maps prepared under the Act by their Local Authorities and take all possible steps to prevent any rights of way over their churchyards being recorded. This should be treated as a matter of urgency.

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Register

Holy Baptism.

December 21st. Michael Tom, son of Tom Evelyn and Sylvia Rosemond Lockyer.

January 11th, 1959. Stephen Christopher James, son of James and Venn Goldsack.

Burial

December 27th. Percy Edwin Ames, aged 67 years.