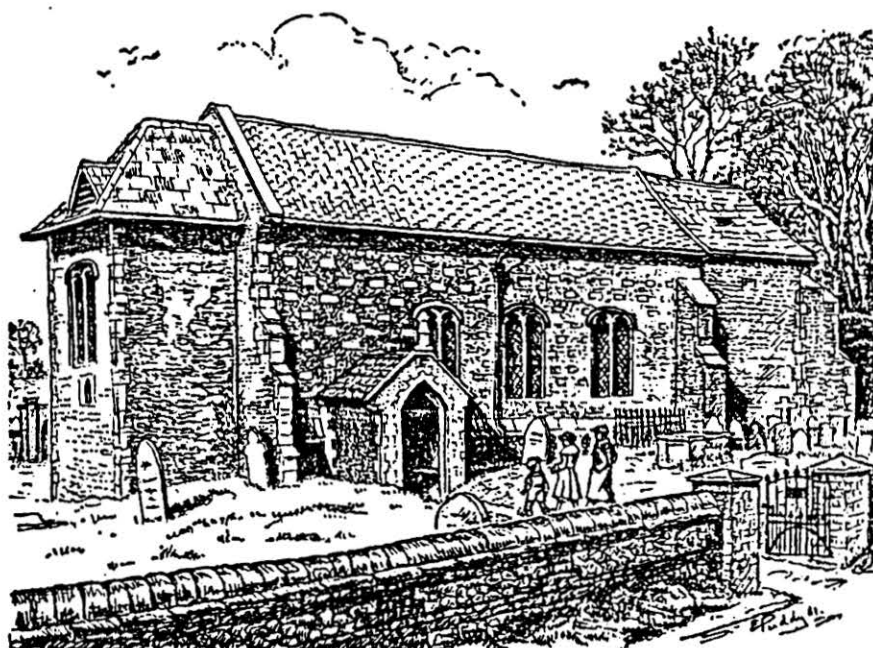


In  
1823

*After Ladbrooke*  
From road which then ran on North side of Church

# NOTES ON HOE CHURCH

by E. Puddy



In  
1960

View from road which now runs on the South side

## Hoe Church (A.D. 975—1960)

(A thumbnail sketch)

Many Norfolk Churches have rectors, while others have vicars. Both Hoe and Dereham are vicarages and share one vicar. Why is this?

As the late Doctor G. G. Coulton points out in his "Mediæval Panorama" the distinction between a rector and a vicar is so little clear, even to the well-informed reader of today, that it is worth a brief explanation.

The "*rector*" is the "spiritual" ruler of his parish. His "*benefice*" is freehold and for life except for the gravest causes. He is the *parson* or person par excellence of his domain, and the cure or care of souls within his parish is incumbent or laid upon him. Here we see the rector as the parson, or the curate, or the incumbent. Different words for the same person.

A vicar is a rector's "substitute." The word "curate" has undergone a change and instead of indicating the rector or vicar who has the care of souls, it became customary in Victorian times to call the rector's or vicar's assistant the "curate," whereas such is really the "assistant curate."

Originally the priest who did the spiritual work of a parish was always the rector, but in early days the lords of manors, or patrons of livings, often felt it to be a pious act to give their "church" to some monastery or cathedral. The monks then became the rectors and took the tithes and endowments, and supplied a substitute, or vicar, to do the work, and this is what happened in the case of Hoe.

975 A.D.

Godwin, the Anglo-Danish thane, or lord, of Hoe, being in a declining state of health, and tired of this world; desired the Abbot of Ely to admit him as a monk to the peaceful and ordered life of Ely monastery. And so it was done. By way of compensation, and for the glory of God, he gave the monastery his village of Hoo. The monks were now owners of the lands or manor and of the church and its endowments. They appropriated the church which Godwin had given them to convert it to their own uses and from that time the monks of Ely became the rectors of Hoe. But Ely was a long journey by boat and by horse from Hoe and they had to supply a "vicar" to live on the spot. At first such vicars were removable at will and had no settled benefice and not until more than 300 years later was it ordered that

vicars should have a benefice that was freehold and they were given a portion of the tithe, usually a third (while the rector kept two-thirds!)

Thus Hoe became a vicarage and Ely the rectory. But Dereham had already been given to Ely five years previously, and since they were adjacent parishes what could be simpler (or cheaper) for the vicar of Dereham to be made vicar of Hoe as well? And so it was done.

### DOMESDAY

More than a century later William the Conqueror ordered an assessment to be made throughout his newly conquered possessions for Income Tax and Land Tax purposes. This is the record we know as Domesday. As it was on a national scale and compressed into two books, each record is terse and abbreviated. The church revenues of Dereham and Hoe are not mentioned but were included in the manors, and Godwin's manor in Hoe was included under Dereham, though there was another manor in Hoe (Dillington) which had belonged to Archbishop Stigand and was recorded separately. When Stigand fell into disgrace the surrounding lords of Gressenhall, Scarning and Dereham intruded into this manor of Dillington.

### THE TAXATION OF POPE NICHOLAS, 1291

This Domesday principle of including the lesser with the greater is followed in Pope Nicholas' taxation which was an assessment on ecclesiastical property. This record has been printed and is well known to students. In the preface bare mention is made of a previous record known as "Norwich Taxation." Apparently the editors did not know that any of it was still in existence.

The taxation of Pope Nicholas remained operative until the time of Henry VIII., and his more searching "*Valor Ecclesiasticus*." Hoe is not mentioned separately but only with Dereham, as follows:—*Deiham cum Capella de Hoo*.

### THE NORWICH TAXATION, 1254

On the other hand if we turn back to the assessment made 37 years previously we find the exciting fact that there were *two* churches in Hoe. This is to be found in the "Norwich Taxation," so called because the then Bishop of Norwich was commissioned to make it. It was a nation-wide valuation but only fragments remain. It is complete however for the diocese of Norwich, which then included Suffolk and part of Cambridgeshire.

Here are the two valuations compared :—

	Norwich Taxation 1254	Taxation of Pope Nicholas 1291
Archdeaconry of Norwich: Deanery of Bristle		
Parish of Hoe	xx marcs or £13/6/8	—
Monks of (Castle) Acre	x sol or 10/-	—
Parson of Gressinhal	x sol or 10/-	—
Archdeaconry of Norfolk: Deanery of Hingham		
Parish of Dereham cum capella de Hoe	Lxxlii marcs or £48/13/4	cx marcs or £73/0/8
Vicar ... ..	xlii .. .. £9/13/4	xlii .. .. £9/6/8
Monks of Lewes ...	xx sol .. .. £1	—

From the Norwich Taxation it is perfectly clear that the Parish Church of Hoe, and the Chapel of Hoe annexed to Dereham were quite separate buildings since they were in different arch-deaconries, and different deaneries, although the issue has been further confused today by the splitting of Hingham deanery into two—Hingham and Mitford—and widening the Mitford net to include Hoe parish so that Hoe church is now, like Dereham, in the Mitford deanery, but Worthing civil parish was added to Hoe civil parish in 1935 to make confusion worse confounded.

Here then we have the true state of affairs in 1254. A parish church in Hoe. A parish church in Dereham, and a chapel in Hoe, annexed to Dereham, and all three belonging to the Bishop of Ely.

Assessed for taxation at £13/6/8 in 1254, why was Hoe church omitted in 1291? How did the Bishop of Ely manage to have Hoe church excused from taxation? We just don't know. Maybe it was burnt or the tower fell in a gale and wrecked the church as happened not infrequently. If we compare the two valuations we see that, whereas the vicar of Dereham's assessment only went up from 13 to 14 marks (a mark being 13/4) the rectorial assessment jumped from 73 to 110 marks; not such a jump however if the value of Hoe Church of 20 marks was included with Dereham and Hoe chapel.

The fact remains that, whatever the cause, Hoe church was exonerated and disappeared from the taxation records, and was confused by later historians with the chapel of Hoe, whereas it was the chapel of Hoe which fell ultimately into ruin while Hoe church continues to exist today.

## CHURCH AND CHAPEL

The term 'Church,' to the modern mind suggests "Church of England"; whereas 'Chapel' suggests "Non-conformist." But, excluding those portions of a Church which were private Chapels or used by a guild, a "Chapel-of-ease" denotes a building belonging to a Mother Church, to which a separate district has not been assigned, and which has not the parochial right to christen or bury. If it has acquired the right to christen and bury, then it becomes a parochial Chapel "and these differ in nothing from Churches, but in the want of rectories and indowments, the Mother Church being to be served before the daughter."

*Chapels-of-ease* were built for the convenience of those parishioners living at a considerable distance from the parish Church, and were only used for the *ease* of such parishioners to hear the Word of God read and preached, and to join in prayers, as is made clear by Degge in his "Parsons' Counsellor."

One of the biggest of such Chapels in Norfolk is St. Nicholas at King's Lynn, which started as a Chapel-of-ease to St. Margaret's the parish Church, and it took the local parishioners some two hundred years of struggle before they acquired the privilege of christening in their Chapel of St. Nicholas.

To-day, those Church-goers who wish, can be put on the Electoral Roll of a neighbouring Church, but in medieval times everyone was bound, not only to attend Mass on Sundays, but to attend it at their own parish Church, and since Dillington was ecclesiastically part of Dereham although some dwellings are more than 2 miles distant—we can see why the Chapel of Hoe in the Dereham parish of Dillington, was built in those far-off days, some 700 years ago, for the *ease* of Dillington folk.

On the other hand, Hoe St. Andrew Church has the right to christen and to bury; it was a rectory (appropriated to the Bishops of Ely); it had rectorial and vicarial indowments; the inhabitants paid their vicarial tithes to the vicar of Hoe; and it was a separate ecclesiastical parish, and so, on all points it was a parish Church, independent of Dereham but sharing a vicar.

In 1533, just before the Reformation, the benefices of Hoe and Dereham were consolidated, and have remained so to this day.

## HOE ST. ANDREW AS A PARISH CHURCH

We have seen how a chapel-at-ease differs from a parish church, and the definition gives us *per contra*, the essential features of the latter.

A Church (1) can christen and bury, (2) is a rectory, though it may also be a vicarage, (3) has its own endowments, (4) and its own parish.

In regard to the first point, *Registers* of christenings, marriages and burials were first ordered to be kept in the 16th century, and the Hoe Registers are as early as most; baptisms and burials dating from 1547, and marriages from 1559. From other sources, such as Wills, we get glimpses of earlier records; for example John Northall of Hoe, in his Will proved in 1490, desired to "be buried in the cemetery at Hoe St. Andrew." Also on a brass, in the centre of Hoe nave, can still be read an inscription "Orate p. a'i'a, etc." that is "Pray for the soul of John Dunham of Hoo, gentleman . . ." dated 1467.

One burial entry of 1648 reads, "Mary Bean, ye wife of Barnard Bean, and Mary his daughter, were buried January 23rd." These two are bracketed and beside the bracket is the word "murdered." This double murder must have caused a considerable stir in the village for the vicar to have been so shaken out of his customary reticence as to add that one cryptic word "murdered."

Weddings. "A register of all such marriages as have chanced within the parish of Hoo ever since the yere of our lorde God 1559." The year 1574 was apparently a vintage year for matches—there being twelve marriages that year, whereas the average was two.

Among recurring names in the registers are Barrett, Claxton, Gooch, still remembered in Gooch's Charity, Lestrange, Pickering, and Secker, who still flourish in the county.

In 1627, Jane, the daughter of Nicholas Peeppes, was christened. This is a splendid phonetic spelling of 'Pepys' an East Anglian family which flourished at Mileham, and was later made famous by Samuel Pepys, the diarist.

Second:—Since both Hoe and Dereham were appropriated to Ely Abbey, which became a Bishopric in 1109, the Bishop of Ely was *Rector* of both. The rectory became a sinecure in the reign of Henry III. and among the rectors collated by the Bishops of Ely, were Hervey de Stanton, Chancellor of the Exchequer to Edward II. and John Barnard who became rector in 1403 and left land in Scarning and Dereham for repair of the almshouses which he founded. These are probably the cottages by Dereham church, known as "Bishop Bonner's cottages," dated 1502. As Bonner did not become rector till 1534, the date should be

1402, and they are really Barnard's and not Bonner's cottages.

In 1557, after the Reformation, the Rev. John Fuller was presented as Rector, not by the Bishop of Ely, as had been his right since the 13th century, but by Queen Mary, the monasteries having meanwhile been dissolved, and the sinecure rectory having been seized by the Crown. Queen Elizabeth actually granted the advowson, and the rectory of Dereham with the Chapel of Hoe, to a *layman* William Dighton, gentleman, for thirty-one years.

The last rector was the Rev. William Charles Wollaston, who died in 1872, and his rectorial tithe then went to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners.

Among the *Vicars* we may mention Edward Kelyng, vicar of "Dereham with the chapel of Hoo," in 1467 and William Leach who was presented to the vicarage of East Dereham in 1716, and is buried in Hoe Church. In 1934 Leslie Edward Baumer, was presented to the vicarage of "East Dereham with Hoe and Dillington," and in 1945 Joseph Noel Boston, M.A., F.S.A., succeeded him.

Thirdly:—What of the endowments of Hoe Church? Endowments usually consisted of land, given by past benefactors to the church, *i.e.* Glebe lands, and the tithes, or tenth part of the produce of the parish. In Domesday Book, the church lands were not mentioned separately, but were included in the Manor. However, the Domesday returns were compiled from more detailed records; in this case the Ely Inquisition, from which we find that the church at Dereham, with which was included Hoe, was endowed with thirty acres. Later gifts down the ages brought the glebe belonging to the vicarage to seventy acres.

The rectors, however, being mostly non-resident, did not farm their own glebe, but some time before 1289 leased out their land to tenants by copy of Court Roll, and thus formed it into a small Rectory manor. The rectorial lands in Hoe and Dereham were combined, and from a rental in the 22nd year of Henry VIII. we know that Alice Ferror, John Coke, and Agnes Taverner, were copyholders of land in Hoe. Coke is a famous Norfolk name, and the Taverners were a prominent local family in the reign of Elizabeth, Richard having published an English translation of the Bible in 1539 under the auspices of Cromwell, for which he was sent to the Tower but was later restored to the King's favour.



At a Visitation of 1827 was produced "a true terrier of all the glebe lands, tenements, tithes . . . and other rights belonging to the rectory, vicarage and *parish church of Hoe* in the county of Norfolk and Diocese of Norwich, and now in the possession of the Rev. John William Trevor *rector* and the Rev. Charles Hyde Wollaston, *vicar*, or their tenants etc."

A terrier (from the French 'terre') is simply a field-drag or record of land, and included one acre of glebe belonging to the *rectory* aforesaid, abutting on a common street leading to Mooregate Green towards the north, and the land of Thomas Grounds towards the south; also twelve acres in Hoe together with an Allotment of land made under the Hoe Inclosure Award, parcel of the *late* common of Hoe, containing one acre two roods, let at the yearly rent of twenty pounds, this rent being appropriated towards the repairs of the Church of Hoe, aforesaid.

With regard to *tithes* these were set out in 1614. "The Customs of the Town of Hoe, set down by the chief inhabitants of the same town, with the consent of John Bretton, *vicar of the said town*, etc.

The inhabitants affirm that all such wood as is burnt upon the several hearths, every several inhabitant is to pay at Easter to the Vicar a half-penny and no more."

Other items included 'plough money, 1d.' 'Faggoted wood, sold out of the town' paid tithes, the vicar was to have a tithe pig; if they brought up any store animal they were to bring up one for the vicar as they did their own, until it was about five or six weeks old. The tithe calf was to be taken up by the vicar at one month old, except calves brought up by the finger.

For hens they had to pay tithes, whether the hens had chickens, or fruit or not, and paid a hen on St. Stephen's day. They paid their mortuary on the passing this life, (this was to cover any tithes negligently forgotten during life). Tithes of hen and goose eggs were paid at Easter, whence we get our custom of giving 'Easter eggs'. The tithes of geese, ducks and turkeys were to be paid at Lammas, except that for any gosling, duckling and turkey under seven in number, the vicar only received a farthing.

Tithes of wool and lambs were to be paid at clipping. Hemp was tithed "when they gather it up ready . . . either in water or dew, the church porch being the usual place for paying the said hemp."

The vicar had tithe hay for all that was mown in the town; the vicar found ropes for the bells by custom; for all such ground as was fed with bullock or fat ware, the vicar was to have sixpence for every one, but not for those that were brought up to fatten, and bought out of the Drovers and such like.

Finally, for every cow, the vicar was to have, throughout the town, at Lammas, three ha'pence.

The vicar signed as consenting to all these customs, as did likewise the church wardens.

Here we have a cameo picture of the vicar's main source of income — the lesser tithes, (the rector taking the greater tithes on corn and cattle.)

The theory of tithes is simple. Originally the parson had every tenth strip in the common fields, but increasing parochial work left him no time to swink and sweat tilling his own strips in the common fields, so the strips were shared by the inhabitants whose holdings were thus increased by a tenth, but they had to pay the parson a tenth of the produce of their land, whether corn, hemp, grass, wood, etc. and the tenth of the increase of their stock, every tenth piglet or chick, etc.

The parson, therefore, had to have his tithe barns and outbuildings and if the parishioners had a good farming year the parson did well. In times of famine the parson starved with his parishioners, and was able to commiserate with them. When he collected his tithes any disgruntled parishioner could unburthen any complaints he had. It was all very personal, and, in general, often caused friction "quarrels, curses and many other crimes being committed", and the Church suffered even more when Nonconformists complained — not without reason — that they were having to pay tithes for the benefit of a favoured section of the community.

In 1836 the payment of tithes in kind was commuted to the payment of a tithe rent-charge, varying with the average seven previous years' corn prices.

By 1925 the rent charge became fixed, and two years later Queen Anne's Bounty took over. Since 1936 these tithe rent-charges are in process of being extinguished over a period of sixty years, though small amounts of under three pounds are now compulsorily redeemable, as tithe-payers have been made aware this year, including those in Hoe.

With the fixing of tithe rent-charges this portion of the Church's income was frozen at a certain figure, but the cost of living has continued rising, and whereas Goldsmith's parson "was passing rich on a hundred pounds a year" the modern parson is now "passing poor on £650 p.a." Now that local finance has become centralised and impersonal the church is at last allowed to buy stocks and shares which are not quite gilt-edged, and so carry a higher rate of interest, thus compensating to some extent for the fixing of its tithe income, though some good folk consider this to be a form of gambling, and hold up their hands in pious horror at the thought.

Lastly, Hoe, although it was removed from the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the Archdeaconry of Norwich, and the Deanery of Brisley, into the Archdeaconry of Norfolk and Deanery of Mitford (as is Dereham) it is a separate ecclesiastical and

civil parish from its big and friendly neighbour, although both benefices are consolidated.

In 1956, Canon Noel Boston told the Hoe P.C.C. that there had been, in recent years, a great revival of activity in Church affairs, since Mr. Sayer and Mr. Gow became Church Wardens, and he agreed that "the time was ripe for Hoe to accept the responsibilities, as well as the privileges, of being a parish on its own, and of paying its quota direct, instead of merging with Dereham."

In 1957 Hoe Church paid its own quota of £15 and thus re-established its right to be acknowledged as a Church, and not to be mis-called a chapel, as it had been in official records for nearly seven hundred years, since 1291.

#### HOE CHURCH IN MEDIEVAL TIMES

Hoe Church is a flint and freestone building, adjoining Hoe Hall. The freestone in the nave walls is set in the flint in rows, at wide intervals; the tower does not rise above the level of the roof, and has no freestone in its walls. There is a North and a South porch and the nave runs into the chancel on the outside, and is only distinguishable by the different levels of the roofs. Inside the church there is no chancel arch, but the chancel roof is lower than that of the nave. The nave is lighted on each side by three windows of two lights under flattened arches, which are medieval. The chancel has no side windows but an East window of three lights, without stained glass but showing Nature's own tracery through the lights — the flowing tracery of trees flecked with green leaves and sunshine.

There are three different dates on the building, 1794 on the nave; 1820 on the chancel, and on the South porch W.G. 1833. At first sight, then, it looks as though it is a fairly modern building, but the brass on a memorial slab in the nave belies this with its date 'John Dunham de Hoo obit MCCCCLXVII A.D.' 1467 A.D. The fact is that the medieval church was pulled down and re-built from the ground in 1794, hence the date on the nave. The church originally had wings, or aisles on each side of the nave, with pillars, and it is freestone from these pillars and arches which was incorporated into the nave walls at the reconstruction.

The chancel was not rebuilt until 1820; the rector being responsible for the chancel, and the parishioners for the nave. This being the reason why one so often finds the chancel and the nave of a church rebuilt in different styles at different periods. The short tower, the tower arch at the west end of the nave and the north porch and the windows, are the only portion of the medieval building left. It is possible, of course, that the upper portion of the tower collapsed and wrecked the nave, but of this we have no record.

Blomefield, writing of Hoe Church in his day, says that at the east end of the north aisle was a chapel,

in the north window of which was the figure of a person lying as dead on an altar tomb with five priests praying by him, and the arms of Morley 'On a field of silver, a sable lion, a crown of gold.' In the east window of this chapel was the representation of a Crucifix, underneath being in Latin 'Pray for the soul of John Clarke and Alice his wife, etc.' who was probably a Chantry clerk. There were marble slabs in memory of Thomas Utber, 1641, and his wife Margaret. Also an altar tomb to Susan l'Estrange, the second wife of Roger l'Estrange, daughter of Francis Lane of Thuxton, died 1687, at the age of 37. On the east wall was a mural monument to Roger, with the arms of l'Estrange, which now adorns the north wall of the nave above the pulpit.

In the medieval chancel was a north window with the arms of Morton, Bishop of Ely.

From bequests made in wills, we know that in 1490 there were three guilds. *The Guild of St. Andrew*, formerly a guild held in honour of St. John; the Guild of the *Holy Trinity*; and the Guild of *Our Lady*. These guilds were the forerunners of the Sick and Needy Clubs, and Burial Clubs combined; and John Northall left two bushels of corn and four of barley to the Guild of St. Andrew, obviously the most important Guild, as he only left half that amount to the other two Guilds. The corn went to making bread and the barley to brewing beer for the needy.

From other wills we get a glimpse of the Church before its medieval splendour was extinguished in 1559. There was a *Chapel of Our Lady* in the church at Hoe, and a chapel and Altar of *St. Thomas*; also a statue of St. Michael; and there were several lights, probably kept up by various Guilds and benefactors. There was a light before the sepulchre, probably a light over the Easter Sepulchre; a light before the Rood, which was the Cross on the beam in the Chancel Arch; a light before *Our Lady*; a light kept up by the Trinity Guild; and a light before St. Christopher.

In 1617 Robert Seckar left ten shillings towards the repair of the church, the church roof being then leaded, and he also founded an almshouse.

#### CHURCH FURNISHINGS, 1368 A.D.

We can get a good idea of the books, vestments and furnishings of Hoe church before the Reformation, from the Inventory of Church goods made in 1368. Nowadays the various monastic Hours of Lauds, Prime, Terce, Sext, Nones, Vespers and Compline have been compressed into the two services of Mattins and Evensong. Saints Days — each with its special service — are largely ignored whereas in medieval times every major Saint's day was a Holy day and every Holy day became a holiday, till masters complained that they could get no work out of their men.

### Books

In 1368, instead of one modern printed Prayer Book containing all the essentials for the various services, the medieval Church had a multiplicity of books, all hand-written at great labour and expense, and Hoe was no exception, for it possessed seventeen different Service Books as follows :—

One *Ordinal*, which was a guide book to all the rest of the Service Books; two *Antiphons* with music for the anthems; a *Legendry* in two volumes, sacred and secular, containing the lessons to be read at Mattins and including readings from the Bible, Homilies, and sermons of Doctors and of the Fathers of the Church; three *Psalters*; a *Manual*, or handbook for the order of administering Sacraments, bound up with the Book of Martyrs; a *Processional* containing music sung in the Processions before Mass; and two *Missals*, or Mass Books; three *Graduals*, the usual number being two, one for each side of the choir, one being bound up with a *Troper*, or book of musical sequences; also a *Troper* on its own.

### VESTMENTS

There were three sets of vestments for the Celebrant, the Gospeller, and the Epistler, also two surplices, six altar cloths; and two hand towels; two Altar frontals; one for the lectern; a Lenten veil; and an Altar hanging.

### ORNAMENTS

The church possessed three chalices of silver, and one of pewter (for Sick Communion); three phials or cruets; a spurula or incense boat or box; a lucerna or lantern, for carrying before the priest when taking Communion to the sick; two thuribles, or incense censers; one portable altar-top; one hand bell; three banners, probably for the Rogation services; a chrismatory, for the three holy oils of Baptism, Exorcism, and for anointing the sick; a pyx, for the Eucharist; a font, with locks, (to prevent the theft of Holy Water for witchcraft); a chest; a bier and a silk cloth; also a chancel lamp. Recent gifts included a vestment newly-given by the rector and another by the vicar; a cope with tunic and dalmatic; a portifory or breviary, a large volume which contained all the Service books thrown into one volume, especially useful when the Offices had to be performed by one person alone. This was given by Sir Stephen Gemere.

Further gifts included a vestment by gift of Nicholas of Hoo, Prior of Norwich. One silver pyx from Sir Thomas Bonde, later Dean of Brisley, who also gave a sudarium, or veil, of green striped silk, worn at High Mass by the acolyte, who carried the paten, standing below the altar; also a pewter vat with a bronze sprinkler.

These sprinklers were for scattering holy water over the congregation on Sundays, or over the altars

or fields in procession, and over objects being blessed, and consisted either of a small brush on a silver stick, or of a stick with a round, perforated head, containing a small sponge.

Lastly there was a complete set of vestments with tunic and cope, of gold cloth shot with red, given by Master Michael de Cawston, who became rector in 1371. To match it, John Mondesson gave a vestment of gold cloth, red shot, with an altar frontal and a corporal cover of the same, for serving at the altar of the blessed Virgin Mary. Lastly there were three banners, one of which bore the arms of Lord de Morley; Sir William Morley, Marshal of Ireland, being Lord of Swanton which extended into Hoe.

### THE REFORMATION AND AFTER

At the time of the Reformation, Henry VIII had wanted to keep to the Catholic religion, but to break the power of the Pope and substitute himself as Head of the Church in England. At his death however matters got out of hand and the Regents of the boy King, Edward VI, turned the Reformation to their own profit. In 1551 Church valuables and vestments were ordered to be sold, and the proceeds used for the poor, but in many parishes, whether from a strong feeling of tradition, or lack of foresight on the way things were shaping, the church-wardens had not obeyed the order, with the result that in 1552 an Inventory of Church goods was ordered to be made, and silver ornaments were confiscated as was the metal of the bells, and the vestments were sold for a song and cut up for secular purposes. This Inventory of church goods showed that Hoe possessed one Chalice and Paten of silver parcel gilt, weighing sixteen ounces, valued at £2 18s. 6d. One other Chalice and Paten, fourteen ounces, value £2 11s. 4d. One silver Shipp, eight and a half ounces £1 11s. 2d. One silver Pyx, thirteen ounces £2 9s. 2d. Three steeple bells, weighing by estimation, twentyfour hundred-weight; "the gret belle, ten cwt., myddell belle 8 cwt., and the lytell belle six cwt.", at fifteen shillings the cwt., value £18. Three hand-bells, value a shilling; two candle-styckes, and one with four sockets, five shillings. Item, one cope of green silk, value twenty pence. Item, one vestment of silk, two shillings; One albe and one vestment of white fustian, and one albe and one vestment of green silk, value a shilling. Item, three bell-clappers, value five shillings. The sum total was thirty-two pounds seven and eight-pence, which at modern prices would probably be in the neighbourhood of six hundred pounds.

At the departure of the Commissioners the church was left with one chalice and paten weighing fourteen ounces; one bell of six hundredweight, that is, the "lytell belle" and clapper; one surplice, two table cloths, a towel and a hearse cloth. The certificate was signed by James Womoke, who incidentally was also rector of Westfield. From that time the Nave

Services of Mattins and Evensong became the chief services, with long sermons, Chancels were neglected, and Communion was only held rarely.

#### CHURCHWARDENS' ACCOUNTS 1765-1845

From these accounts we may deduce that Communion was held three times a year, from such items as 'paid for Sacrament wine for Communion, 3 bottles, nine shillings' and other items 'Bread and wine for the Communion' four times, 12/4d.

WAGES were remarkably stationary. In 1776 a labourer was paid one and six a day, and it remained at the same rate in 1843 'Paid Butters for one-and-a-half day's work in churchyard, 2/3d.'

For fifty years the Parish Clerk's wages remained at £1 11s. 6d. per annum, and then rose in 1831 to £2 12s. 6d., apparently when he took on the job of Sexton as well.

INCOME:— The Church's income was derived from the Church lands. In 1765 the Town land or Poor's land as it was then called was rented by Widow Mann for £7 p.a. Four years later it was ordered that the tenancy be put up for auction to the highest bidder, and Thomas Halcott, Esq., bid £12 10s. 0d. a year. During the Napoleonic wars, land values rose, and in 1815 the common fields were enclosed and re-distributed between the owners under the Inclosure Award. The Churchwardens received thirteen-and-a-half acres of Church land in lieu of the previous twelve acres of Town land. It was enclosed by a fence, and the rent jumped to twenty-seven pounds p.a., for a term of fourteen years, during which it was to be farmed on a four-course of husbandry. The tenant was to advance £60 to the Churchwardens at 5% interest p.a. to defray the expenses of inclosure and for repairing the church, so that this land was a valuable source of income to the church as no collections were made in those days.

CHARITIES:— In 1768 Gooch's Gift, or Charity provided four widows with five shillings each, and three shillings to four 'decayed housekeepers' who were all men; and in 1782 the Churchwardens bargained and sold to Mr. Thomas Gooch of Hoe Hall "the town houses, or almshouses, for £17." In that same year Elizabeth Cobb died, and by her will bequeathed two guineas to be laid out in bread for the poor of the parish.

The Parish Clerk often wrote as he spoke, and his phonetic spelling enlivens the accounts considerably in parts, for instance:— The Accounts of the Church Worthing of the parrish of Hoe, from Easther 1700 to Easter 1800, include, 'Paid for the order to get the money *disburst* to Curk's wife, 2/6; and the total expense for the year is written down as '*Disbust*, £8 2s. 7d.' The local pronunciation comes out in 'reparing the town-land geates,' also in 'Clark's weages, £1 19s. 3d.:' Paid to Deareham Manner for quit rent, 1/10; and Washing the surplus (surplice) 3 times a year, 7/6.

There are the usual entries for the Archdeacon's visitations; visits to Litcham for the General Visitation; entries for cleaning the church, buying brushes and diling (a good old Norfolk word) and many entries for 'lowance of bare' that is, allowance of beer.

Constant expenses were incurred by the renewal and painting of railings and gates round the Townlands and churchyard. The tiling and leading of the roof needed constant attention as did the tower, and birds were a menace then as now, e.g. In 1775 to 'distroying Jack Daws, 6d.' and the next year is an item 'pd. for catching sparrows on the Town land, 1/-;' and 'oats for catching sparrows, 4/-.' In 1844 the churchwardens paid £2 6s. 6d. for killing ninety-three dozen birds, probably on the Town lands also. An unusual item was 'Paid for locust gathering 6/3,' and in the same year, 1788, a further item 'Paid to Mrs. Cobb for locust-gathering £1 4s. 10½d.,' a fairly considerable amount!

The dogg whipper's salary in 1780 was 10/-.

The Napoleonic Wars, and the threatened invasion of England are reflected in the church warden's accounts. The war had to be paid for and the defences manned, and in 1806, an assessment was made for the property tax on the town lands, entered as 'property tax, or incum tax,' and in the same year the Churchwarden was paid three shillings for making "a list of Malitta (militia)." In 1811 occurs an unusual item when a census of the population was undertaken. "A list of population of the parish, 326 persons residing in the Parish of Hoe, 13/-." The census figures since that date show a steady decline; 235 in 1831 — 151 in 1951.

In 1815 they "Paid the Apparators for a letter on subscription of the Battle of Waterloo 4/-," and following this great victory, there was 'A prayer for the peace.'

In 1816 interest in Church affairs revived, for the Churchwardens bought an iron chest for the church for £3 10s. 0d. (which is still going strong); new matting cost them 8/-; repairs to the church came to £2 5s. 8d.; a surplice was mended for 2/-; a new Prayer Book was bought for £2 5s. 0d., and with commendable thrift, the old book was bound for 12/-, as was the Church Bible. The Communion Table was beautified with two yards of green cloth @ 9/- per yard; and a purchase was made of two-and-a-half yards of black cloth for a burial cloth. @ 11/- a yard — not forgetting 'Worsted and thread, for the same, 1/2.'

There is an Arab saying that 'an arch never sleeps'. The weight it supports gradually flattens the arch, and the pillars get splayed outwards, like bow legs. In 1818 a great effort was made to stem the decay in the church fabric, and a surveyor was employed at 2 guineas to advise., and the accounts for that year include iron bars across the church for £1



11s. od.; the blacksmith's bill was 13/6; a journey to Litcham for lime, with man, horse and cart cost 4/-; the stone mason's bill was £2 16s. od., which, with repairs to the tower at 18/-, brought the total to £8 4s. 6d. — (say £80 at present prices). But in vain, for two years later a special Vestry was held, "It having appeared that the arch and wall at the East end of the church have so much given way in different parts that it is wholly necessary to take it down and repair it in such manner as to connect the body and roof of the church with the chancel, and it having appeared also that the Rector was about to take down and rebuild the chancel, the walls of which are in a decayed state, it is agreed that the work necessary upon the church be immediately commenced, and be carried on, at the expense of the parish, at the same time as the work of the chancel." It was also represented that the chancel was much longer from east to west, than was requisite or convenient for the proper performance of the duty therein, and the consent of the Vestry was obtained for an application for a Faculty to empower the Rector to re-build the chancel the same width as before from north to south, but thirteen feet six inches long within-side from east to west, with windows on the north and south sides according to the plan (which is shown in the C.W. book.) The Revd. Charles Hyde Wollaston signed as vicar.

The chancel was rebuilt but the plan of having north and south windows in the chancel was never carried out, for the present chancel has only an east window of four lights.

The method of payment for this work as far as the parish was concerned is interesting, for Hamon Markant, one of the church wardens, advanced the sum of £100 for the purpose of defraying bills incurred by the necessary repairs to the parish church of Hoe, and in order to repay him, he was granted the rents of the Church lands belonging to the parish church of Hoe from the tenants of the same, for a period of five years with interest. It was also agreed that church wardens' expenses be defrayed by a rate of a penny on the pound made for that purpose for a term of five years, on the inhabitants and occupiers of land in Hoe, which brought in £70 17s. 6d., one of the chief inhabitants of that time being Thomas C. Munnings.

An interesting question is why, when repairs to the chancel arch are recorded, there is no account whatever of the rebuilding of the nave in 1794. The only item which appears to have any reference to this reads as follows:— 1794, May 16th, 'Paid the expense at Deareham when the church was Put out, five shillings'. Now this expression 'the church was Put out' can only mean that there was a fire, and the fire engine was called from Dereham, and the five shillings was for the hire of the engine.

In 1823 there was a bill for repairs to the tower of the church, including 'four new sound-windows

and other work, £6 10s. 9d.' This was the year in which Ladbroke made his lithograph of Hoe church, which was drawn from the north side of the church (probably from the road, which then ran between the church and Hoe Hall instead of on the south side of the church as at present). It shows the church much as it is today with one exception — the tower was then nearly twice its present height, and had a pyramid roof, with four Gothic windows in the belfry. At some time during the Victorian period it was lowered to its present height.

#### HOE CHURCH TERRIERS

There are five Terriers in the church chest, the earliest being dated 1791, when the Rev. George Thomas was vicar. He was the last of the vicars to wear a three-cornered hat and cauliflower wig, and he was the High Church rector, mentioned in George Borrow's book 'Lavengro'. This terrier mentions the parson's single acre of glebe, and also the twelve acres belonging to the parish church of Hoe let at £12 10s. od. a year. The customs of the town are copied from a Terrier of 1614, and have already been quoted, but the inhabitants of Hoe now claimed that they were discharged from tithes of honey and wax.

In 1827 the vicar was still to find ropes for the bells by custom. But in the Terrier of 1845 this had been altered to "the vicar is to find rope for the bell — or bells, by custom" so that we may deduce that sometime between 1827 and 1845 the tower was lowered and only one bell left hanging. The Parish Clerk and Sexton was appointed by the vicar, but paid by the churchwardens £2 10s. 6d. p.a. This is the last Terrier in which tithes in kind are mentioned. For at that time tithes were commuted to a payment of tithe rent-charge which was far more convenient.

The Hoe tithes were commuted as follows:—

Rectorial tithes	£236
Vicarial tithes	£118

On the other hand the vicarial tithes of Dereham amounted to £418, but when we consider that there were 223 souls in Hoe, and 4,300 in Dereham, it will be seen that for the care of each soul in Hoe the vicar received nearly ten shillings, and in Dereham only two shillings. Hos was relatively, therefore, worth five times as much as Dereham.

Since some of the land in Hoe belonged to the Manor of Gressenhall and Hymers, the rector of Gressenhall was given a compensation of £6 a year for loss of tithes.

The Terrier of 1894, instead of recording the customs of tithes, now recorded the church furniture. There were few additions to the church furniture between 1894 and 1925; and they are all included on one Terrier, each change being recorded by an endorsement. The first amendment is dated 1897

when the following additions to the church furniture were noted:—

- One chair for the Sanctuary
- Two glass cruets, and
- One credence table,

which shows that the Communion service was gaining in importance once more since the Reformation. The Arch-deacon recommended that "two large Prayer Books being quite worn out, should be destroyed."

There were no further changes until 1915 when altar linen and four stoles were added to the list of church furniture.

Endorsements of 1924 record the conveyance, about the year 1921, by Noel B. Charles Byam Grounds to the Norwich Diocesan Board of Finance of a piece of land of four-and-a-half perches, (now the new churchyard to the west of the church.)

"A room has been erected on this land and will be used as a parish room. The vicar and churchwardens being trustees for the running of this property." In 1922 the rectorial glebe of one acre, and allotment of thirty-five perches of land on the Hoe-Worthing road, was conveyed by the Vicar, the Rev. W. MacNaughton Jones, with the approval of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, and the consent of the Lord Chancellor as Patron, to Edward Charles Keith for £25, and invested, the income being paid to the Vicar.

In the same year, with the authority of the Charity Commissioners the Church lands of twelve acres and their allotment of one acre two roods — part of the late common of Hoe which was enclosed in 1815, — and which had been let for £6 10s. od. a year in 1894, was sold to Mr. E. C. Keith for £240 and the money invested, the interest of £10 16s. od. p.a. being paid to the church wardens.

The Terrier for 1947 records that there was a second chalice belonging to Hoe, four stoles instead of the surplice, the curtain on brass rods round the chancel had been removed as had been three hanging lamps and four wall lamps, which had been replaced by electric light and fittings, and there were three oil stoves to heat the church. The harmonium of 1894 was still going strong.

#### THE PARISH ROOM

The history of the parish room we have obtained from the late Mr. Cyril Norton who was Hoe's oldest inhabitant, and from Mr. Butters, who was born at the turn of the century. It appears that at the beginning of the century money was collected for a fund for restoring the church tower. Having been partly restored it fell down, and the foundations were found to be cracked, and so the parishioners built the Parish Church Room instead. This was opened in about 1912, because Mr. Butters remembers when he was twelve years old going there for the Boys'

Club, and afterwards to Hoe Hall after Sunday School, which was then run by Mrs. Bagnall.

#### MODERN TIMES

The outside of the church has probably altered little since 1833 when the south porch was built by William Grounds. The interior was thoroughly restored in 1905 when the church was closed for nine weeks. The tower arch, and the font, are of 15th century workmanship, the Royal Arms over the filled-in arch are Hanoverian, with the Arms of England impaling Scotland in the 1st Quarter, France in the 2nd Quarter, the harp of Ireland in the third Quarter, and Hanover in the fourth. The nave floor is of red brick tiles in which are several memorial slabs to the Leach family and on the walls are brasses. The windows on either side of the nave are medieval. The chancel is devoid of chancel arch, but is marked off from the nave in another fashion, for the chancel floor, with its two rows of stalls on either side, is two feet above nave level. The chancel has been carpeted, which obviates the clatter of elegant pin-heels on the stone tiles, and ensures the silence which should pervade the Communion service.

In the chancel floor are memorials to the Halcot family. Tubular electric heaters in the pews and electric radiators on the walls replace the coke boiler put in in 1840. Electric light replaces the old oil lamps. The original harmonium has found a resting place in the Church room; the reed organ which replaced it now stands in reserve at the west end of the church, having been itself replaced by a pipe organ, the gift of Mr. Philip Sayer in 1959.

The gilded Cross and candlesticks, which are designed to match the altar rails were given by Mrs. Wormald in memory of Jonathan, John and Major Wormald, at the same time as the altar cloth was given by Mrs. Holiday.

The Church, however, does not consist of a building, but is a body of Christian people. Between the wars church life was in a healthy state. There was a tenor and bass choir, including Mr. Norman Abbott, who now graces the Dereham operatic shows. The Sunday School was run by Mrs. Garnier — now Mrs. Wormald — who also started the Hoe Branch of the Mothers' Union and the Women's Club. Following the difficult times of the last war, church life in the village has revived, and is again flourishing. There are 110 adult parishioners in Hoe of whom 45 — or more than a third — are on the Church electoral roll. The Sunday School has some 18 children attending out of a possible fifty, and three Sunday School teachers. Church expenses two hundred years ago amounted to £6 5s. od. and the income from Town lands to £8 10s. od. But the value of money has since gone down, and prices have gone up. In 1954 the running expenses were £50, (covered by the collections of £54.) The Town

lands having been sold in 1922, the capital only brought in £16 12s. od. interest.

Exceptional expenditure over the last five years included thirty pounds for a wrought iron gate for the churchyard, made by Mr. Bunning, a master craftsman of Gressenhall; £130 and £69 for electric heating; carpets £79; and repairs to tower £59. The parishioners answer is to have a 'get-together' and hold a Fete, which in 1956, although it rained all day, brought in £113, and in 1958 netted £130. Moreover the collections for 1959 amounted to £110, or double that of five years ago, and nearly £1 per head.

Although Hoe is a small and scattered rural parish the attendances at Church services last year numbered 1,290, of which 312 were at Communion. When Canon Boston inaugurated the midnight Communion Service on Christmas morn at Hoe, it so filled a need that the church was packed, not only with Hoe folk, but with many who came specially from Derham, so that after two or three years the Midnight Service was started also at Dereham Church.

There is no choir at Hoe, but one recalls the joyous occasions when Canon Boston brought members of the Dereham choir for the Service of Nine Lessons and Carols and led the orchestra of violins, piccolo and recorders from the priest's stall, until the rafters reverberated to the rumbustious tones of his bass trombone. We are apt to forget that village choirs were often led by orchestras in the 18th century, and the tradition, of course, goes right back to the time of David and of the psalmists.

In the 19th century "Improper warmth of expression" was considered offensive by the Reverend Charles Hyde Wollaston, vicar of Dereham and Hoe. Not so the Psalmist who crowned the whole Psalter with the magnificent Doxology:—

O Praise God in his holiness . . . .  
Praise him in the sound of the trumpet:  
Praise him upon the lute and harp . . . .  
Praise him upon the strings and pipe.  
Praise him upon the well tuned cymbals:  
Praise him upon the loud cymbals.

Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord.