

## THE CHAPEL OF ST JAMES AT SOUTH ASH MANOR (PART 3)

Last month we discussed the testimonies of Thomas Ketyll, Thomas Burrowe, Sir Thomas Mapfield and John Dawes at the Rochester consistory court held on 11th April 1564 and this months article deals with the last meeting, which was held a few weeks later.

ff-149v-151r court session held 26th July 1564.

JOHN FREMLING of Kemsing, where he was born a yeoman of about 60 years was examined on a matter exhibited by Richard Tebold of Kemsing, gentleman. He deposed that the kitchen and the old hall of South Ash as it was labelled 40 years previously was within the parish of Kemsing. Further he said that about 47 years ago he was hired by the clerk of Ash to be the "Saynt Nicholas Bisshopp" for the parish of Ash. This clerk came to Fremling's fathers house in Kemsing and took young John to the mansion house of South Ash. There they found one Markley, then farmer sitting there on the high bench of the hall of the said mansion. The clerk said to Markley "I have brought this boye that shalbe bisshop of Asshe". Markley took John Fremling by the hand and sat him down by him on the bench and said, "Remember a nother day that thow sittest nowe in the parishe of Kemsing".

To the second article put to him Fremling said he remembered that "old Hodsoll" an old ancestor of William Hodsoll, with his wife, his man and his maid, did yearly at Easter or before, receive the sacrament at Kemsing parish church. Further about 20 years ago, one Burrowe, the farmer of South Ash did receive the sacrament at Easter at Kemsing parishioner as a parishioner of it.

Fremling stated that he knew William Hodsoll, immediately after the death of his father, did cause two elms growing within his "churche marke" of Kemsing to be lopped and received money for the lops from the son of John (BLANK) of Kemsing. Fremling remembered hearing his father say on one occasion, that there was a farmer dwelling in the mansion house of South Ash having a man and a maid who went to Ash church to be married. The parson of Ash refused to marry them so they were constrained to go to Kemsing parish church.

THOMAS HILLES of Kemsing a yeoman born in that parish, who was aged around 49 years, was examined on the same matter exhibited by Richard Tebold gentleman of Kemsing. He said that the west end of the house at South Ash was in Kemsing parish.

WILLIAM FREMLING yeoman of Kemsing where he was born, aged about 46 years was examined as above and stated that he had heard that his ancestors said half the manor of South Ash was in Kemsing.

JOHN MUNKE an approximately 50 year old yeoman of Kemsing, where he had lived for ten years having been born at Worth in Sussex, stated that he had heard that from the "high dyes or benche in the hall of South Ash unto the end of the kitchen of the same" was in the parish of Kemsing. He had heard that the inhabitants and ancestors of William Hodsoll dwelling in the manor of South Ash did yearly like to receive the sacrament at Easter in Kemsing parish church.

JOHN MILLER a husbandman of Kemsing where he had lived for seven years, having previously lived at Hadlow for three years and before that at Horton (i.e. Kirby) where he was born, aged about 43 years, he had heard that the greater part of the mansion of South Ash was in Kemsing and that the inhabitants of the manor were counted as parishioners of Kemsing".

This article concludes the references to the chapel of St James at South Ash Manor.

When Dr Lee forwarded me his thesis I was intrigued by the fact that in pre-Reformation times a chapel had existed at South Ash. Very kindly, Paul sent me a typescript of the two Rochester consistory courts, which had been held in 1564 some three years after William Hodsoll came into possession of the manor house and once again I sincerely thank Paul for his kindness in allowing the fruits of his research to be shared with you all.

Leslie Morgan

With grateful thanks to Dr Paul Lee.