

A Year of Achievement. In wishing our readers a happy new year, we may be forgiven a reference to the year just ended. From many angles 1952 was a year to be thankful about. Askerswell roused itself, and raised a gross sum of about £1 per head of the population (1931 census) to get its church out of debt, and to furnish the churchwarden with a working balance. Loders got well ahead in what is proving to be a minor restoration of the church. The old lead patched beyond endurance was replaced by one of Welsh slate and bitumen, decayed timbers were renewed, and sound ones treated with preservative. The plaster ceiling was made safe for many years (we hope) and the interior of the church redecorated. A handsome screen of leaded lights was put in the tower arch, and that now makes it possible for the temperature of the church to be raised to fifty degrees, within a few hours, when it is freezing outside. This minor restoration was paid for out of the accumulated proceeds of church fetes, and by a lucky sale of scrap lead at a time when it was fetching a phenomenal price. The kitty is now empty, but as the work is not finished, Loders still faces a substantial bit of money raising before its priceless old church is fully restored. Nearly all the windows need re-leading, much of the stonework needs repointing, and then there is the organ. As played by Mr. Tiltman, you would think the organ was in perfect condition. But ask the tuner. Each time that gentleman gets to work on it, he reports that it is grievously ill. All the pipes are half choked with dust, several do not function at all, the bellows have come unstuck, and how the venerable machine manages to hold together is a mystery. The makers of bygone days knew their job, or their handiwork would not have lasted so long and be still worth mending.

No Mention has been made of Dottery, because happy is the church that has no history. Mr. Cecil Marsh keeps the exchequer solvent, and Mr. Cleal keeps the rain on the right side of the roof - though an occasional leak leads him a dance sometimes.

Both Loders and Askerswell enter the new year the poorer for the loss by death or removal of many staunch supporters. It is hoped that some of our well wishers on the fringe of active church life will stop in and fill the gaps. Our new confirmees have made a promising start and are regular at their communions. The world being what it is, the odds against their keeping it up are heavy. We can only hope, and pray. We should all do well to make our own the prayer prayed by Sir Francis Drake on the day he sailed into Cadiz in 1587, "O Lord God, when thou movest thy servants to attempt any great matter, grant them to know that it is not the beginning, but the continuing of the thing, until it be thoroughly finished, that yieldeth the true glory". Dogged perseverance is a virtue badly needed in these days of butterfly flitting from one brief interest to another.

Christmas Parties. School teachers and parents saw to it that the term ended with seasonal jollification. At Loders a large Christmas tree given by Sir Edward Le Breton and fixed by Messrs. David Crabb and Horace Read, occupied the centre of the school room. Children, parents and school managers sat down to an uproarious Punch and Judy show, then adjourned to the inner schoolroom for a tea which delighted the eye and defeated the heartiest appetite. They returned to the tree, and while the arrival of Santa Claus was awaited a presentation of a book token and a bouquet was made to the assistant teacher, Miss Wickham, who was leaving the school. Santa Claus arrived somewhat late. He had had trouble with his reindeer, but his sack of presents was intact, and these he distributed with a word of wisdom for each child. At Askerswell school Miss Wilkinson and her companions, known locally as "The Ladies", amused the children with a programme of games, and conditioned them for a welcome issue of ice-cream. There followed a prodigious tea, prompting the remark "It is wonderful where the food comes from", and finally an exchange of presents. A few nights earlier, Askerswell school had seen another delightful party. The elder girl taking part in Miss Robinson's concert felt that she and Miss Edwards, who had made the costumes, and Miss Wilkinson, who had made the music, deserved an evening out for their labours, so they roped in their friends, laid out an attractive supper on tables for four, and followed it up with a programme of games, each of which carried a delectable prize. The guests enjoyed themselves, and were full of admiration for the way in which the young hostesses carried the party through.

The School Concert given by Miss Robinson and past and present pupils made a profit of £11.13.6. for Askerswell Church-funds, and provided a packed house with three hours' enjoyment. The young performers acquitted themselves well on the small stage, and the dresses, which must have taken Miss Edwards months to make, charmed everybody by their variety, colour and finish. As always, the unrehearsed items in the show were as good as any.

Following a Bible precedent. The book of the Acts relates how the Apostles had two excellent candidates for the place vacated by Judas, and settled the matter by casting lots, the lot falling on Matthias. Loders ringers, at their annual meeting, found themselves in a similar situation. Harry Legg and Harry Crabb polled equal votes for the captaincy, so they settled it by casting lots, the lot falling on Harry Crabb. So the officers now are Captain, Harry Crabb; vice-captain, Harry Legg; Secretary, George Hyde; tower wardens Harry Crabb and Harry Legg.

We congratulate Mrs. Heather Pavey, one of the faithful distributors of these Notes, on the birth of a son. He came unexpectedly on Christmas Eve, and they spent Christmas in hospital.

Useful Gifts. Loders Church seems never to have possessed churchwardens' wands of office. When these were needed for high occasions, the practice was to borrow from another church. Borrowing will now be unnecessary, thanks to Mrs. Lenthall who has presented a pair in memory of her late husband. By a strange irony, we have gained the wands and lost the churchwardens. When new ones have been appointed, the wands will be fixed to their pews. The Mothers' Union have presented a blue curtain for the chancel door in Loders Church. It is for winter use, to reduce draughts, and Messrs. Wippell have made it a good match with the altar hangings. Many thanks to the M.U.

Loders' Choir's carol singing on behalf of the C. of E. children's society gained £8. 11s., a very satisfactory result for bad weather. The refreshment offered at various houses in Uploders was greatly appreciated by the waits. On the second night, when driving sleet would have extinguished any ordinary choir, the measure of carols sung was understandably short, and the time for the vicarage fire correspondingly longer. Mr. Edrich's feeling recitation of "The Highwayman", by firelight has become an institution.

Comings of Age. Miss Rosemary Adams, of Askerswell, and Miss Jessie Crabb, of Loders, have reached their twenty-first birthdays, and celebrated them by large parties.

The Mission Sale, which Loders Sunday School holds near Christmas made the record sum of £21.10. It delighted the children when Mrs. Rudd's present of eggs and cream was won by the infant daughter of their former teacher, Mrs. Clark.

Young Farmers' Double Success. Askerswell and District Y.F.C. came back from the County Rally at Dorchester with two coveted trophies - the Gardening Loving Cup for the best harvest supper, and the cup for the best stage entertainment. This gives them points towards a new seventy-guinea cup for efficiency presented by a cattle cake firm. Mr. Clifford Pitcher must be feeling mighty proud of his club, and Miss Sarah Barnes is probably consoling herself that it was no disgrace for Beaminster to be beaten by a club like Askerswell.

Christmas at Church. The midnight service at Loders drew more worshippers than ever. At the three churches there were 170 Christmas communicants - Loders 106, Askerswell 36 and Dottery 28. Loders was full again for Christmas morning service, when the children sang carols near a Christmas tree beautifully decorated by Mrs. Harry Legg, and received from the Enroling Member sweets given by the Mothers' Union. The carol service of the six lessons at Askerswell was very well attended, despite the weather.

Services for January

<u>Loders.</u>	4th.	H.C. 8, and 11.45,	Matins 11, Children 2.
	11th,	H.C. 8,	Matins 11, Children 2.
	18th.	H.C. 8, & 11.45,	Matins 11, Children 2.
	25th.	H.C. 8,	Matins 11, Children 2.
<u>Dottery</u>	4th.	H.C. 9.30.	11th. Evensong 3. 18th. Evensong 6.
	25th.	Evensong 3.	
<u>Askerswell</u>	4th.	Evensong 6.30.	11th. H.C. 9.30, Evensong 6.30.
	18th.	H.C. 9.30,	Evensong 7. 25th. H.C. 9.30, Evensong 6.30.

Ash Wednesday ushers in the season of Lent on February 18th. Lent was once forty days of unrelieved gloom. Our forefathers used to take a last frolic on Shrove Tuesday in the spirit of a condemned man feasting on the eve of execution. We have gone to the other extreme. If anybody were to object to the date of a dance or a dinner that it was in Lent, the rest of the meeting would turn round and look at the objector with the dropped jaws of blank amazement. As always, the right course is between the extremes. Nothing could have lasted for as many centuries as Lent without good reason. And the reason is, to be found in the name. Lent is simply the old word for Spring. It is the spring of the human spirit, striving like the snowdrops and the prim-roses to come alive to God. It is a time both of pain and of joy - of pain when it makes us realise that we have been living the life of the flesh and not of the spirit; of joy when it brings us closer to God, "in whose presence is the fulness of joy and at whose right hand is pleasure for evermore". For a variety of reasons our three churches cannot make the choice of services wider by offering weekday services in Lent. But the normal Sunday services offer plenty of scope, and may we suggest that attendance at church every Sunday would be a good Lenten resolution? On Ash Wednesday there will be service at Lodgers at 10 a.m., at Askerswell 11 a.m. and at Dottery 7 p.m.

Coronation plans for Lodgers and Askerswell have not got very far at present, but they are under discussion. The initiative rightly lies with the civil authority, as represented by the parish council of Lodgers and the parish meeting of Askerswell, and it can rely on the hearty co-operation of the church. People in Dottery are expressing a hope that they may be allowed to celebrate with Lodgers, as at the previous Coronation.

Lodgers Children know from long experience that when the Christmas parties are over and gone all is not lost; for the biggest party, that given by Sir Edward and Lady Le Breton at Lodgers Court, is still to come. This party, in early January, was on traditional lines. About sixty children met first in the billiard room for a display of magic by a Bristol conjuror, and then moved to the still greater delights of a tea in the dining room. Freedom from parental oversight, and the connivance of host and hostess, enabled them to get to grips right away with the meringues, iced buns and doughnuts without the preliminary skirmish with bread and butter, and such was the abundance of the former that no room remained for the latter; bread and butter was like gold in the reign of Solomon - nothing thought of. A young voice stilled the din of cracker pulling to thank Sir Edward and his lady for their hospitality. It spoke feelingly of the cost, and included in the thanks the use the youth of the village were allowed to make of the billard room in winter and the tennic court in summer. Clutching apples, oranges and half-crowns, the children made for the gate, where a coach was waiting to take the distant ones home.

A chance for everybody to see the plays which won for our Young Farmers the silver cup will be afforded when they are repeated in the Hut, Lodgers, on February 16th. Proceeds will be for club funds.

Lodgers Congregation were pleased, but not greatly surprised to learn that their late Warden, Mr. Eli Lenthall, had left the Vicar and church-wardens £100 for the use of Lodgers Church. It was like him to continue in death the support of an institution very dear to him in life. As repairs to the church have now almost emptied the exchequer, it is likely that the money will be invested against a rainy day. The legacy would then replace a nest egg which saved the church from falling into debt during the war. Mr. Lenthall's kindly thought is a reminder that in the good days a portion for the work of God figured in most wills, automatically.

Brownie Revels. The Guides and Brownies of Askerswell have fresh and very pleasant memories of the Christmas parties that Miss Edwards gave them at her home. She shewed her genius in keeping a crowd actively amused within the confines of a cottage - even to a ritual dance round a toadstool. There was ingenuity also in her giving of presents, which had to be traced along beams of a giant spider's web to the remote corners of the house. Askerswell children are too genteel to admit

that they appreciated the delicacies provided for tea, but they did.

A distinguished visitor. On a Sunday in January the morning congregation at Loders included the Dean of Winchester, Dr. Selwyn, classical scholar and eminent theologian. Like that other scholar, Dr. Johnson, he has an affection for English inns, and during his holiday in Bridport he put up at The Bull. When the Vicar heard that the Dean was coming to service at Loders, the absurdity of his preaching to so great a divine hit him with force, and he placed himself with the congregation at the Dean's feet. But the big guns of the Church are not so easily fired (as witness, in another sense, the Dean of Canterbury). The Dean declined the pulpit on the unassailable ground that this was his first holiday since September (1952). On the day following it was made evident that the great can be very simple and homely when they choose. The Dean came to askerswell church to baptise the infant son of Wing.Com. and Mrs. Newall, who are old friends of his. He had the small sisters of the neophyte standing on either side of the font holding lighted candles, and he called their elder brother from the pew to blow them out. As a father of four, the Dean is not unused to children.

Invalids. It is pleasing to report that Mr. Sidney Marsh of Loders, has recovered from his severe attack of pleurisy. His garden, from which he seemed never to be absent, looks odd without him. Mrs. Tom Pitcher, of The Farmers' Arms, is up again after a long spell in bed. Her pluck is the admiration of all who know her. Another great sufferer whose cheerfulness is an inspiration is Miss Scott, of Uploders.

An Example. A Pymore lady who worships regularly at Dottery was ill, and could not attend church for two Sundays. But she sent her collection by a neighbour each Sunday, with the very true remark that "bills have to be paid all the same, whether we are there or not". Were her example to be generally followed, the financial part of running a church would not be the continual headache that it is. Worshipers who are wary of trusting large amounts to their neighbours might discharge their duty by the simple expedient of doubling their collection after a Sunday's absence.

On the third Sunday in the month at Askerswell there will be a children's service at 10.a.m. which should do something to counter the complaint that the times of service are not convenient for children. What has happened to the Askerswell evening congregation? Since the time was altered to 6.30 the congregation has been evaporating. 6.30 was always regarded as THE time for evening service.

A Good Work. The Allington Mothers' Union has been running occasional "Quiet Days" at which the ladies are forbidden to talk, and are encouraged to listen and think. In fairness to husbands who might press their wives to join the M.U. on the strength of this alone, it must be admitted that when Loders M.U. were invited to participate in one of these Quiet Days, the Enroling Member got no volunteers.

Mr. Lloyd Jones' lectures on English Domestic Architecture will begin at Askerswell School on Monday, 2nd. February., and continue for ten weeks. If you would like a nice smile from Miss Robinson, you can get ten by attending all the lectures.

Typically English. For two years in succession Loders Discussion Club have listened to Mr. "Bunny" Lenthall, the noted Dorset sheepbreeder, argue with passionate conviction that "sheep are essential to the modern farm". They have voted unanimously that he is right, and last month it was in the face of forceful arguments by Mr. Gilks to the contrary. Yet, as far as we know, nobody in these two years has acted on Mr. Lenthall's advice. They vote that sheep are essential, and still do not keep them. Substitute church for sheep, and man for farm, and the voting - and the consequent inaction - would be the same.

Services for February.

Loders. 1st. H.C. 8 & 11.45, Matins 11, Children 2. 8th. H.C. 8, Matins 11, Children 2. 15th. H.C.8 & 11.45, Matins 11, Children 2. Ash Wednesday, H.C. & Communion 10. 22nd. H.C.8, Matins 11, Children 2.

Dottery 1st. H.C. 9.30. 8th. Evensong 3. 15th. Evensong 6. 22nd. Evensong 3. Ash Wednesday Communion 7.

Askerswell. 1st. Evensong 6.30. 8th. H.C. 9.30. Evensong 6.30. 15th. Children 10, Evensong 7, 22nd. H.C.9.30. Evensong 6.30. Ash Wednesday, Litany 11.