

Parish Notes (July, 1954)
Loders, Dottery and Askerswell.

The Last Lap? Loders Church Council have gladly accepted the kind offer of Sir Edward and Lady Le Breton to hold the fete at Loders Court on Saturday July 31st. It is hoped that the proceeds of this fete may bring within sight the end of a long sustained effort to restore the fabric of Loders Church to good order. In 1947, when the present Vicar took office, this task looked formidable, but now, thanks to keeping at the job steadily, and thanks to the advantage that was taken of a passing phase in the price of scrap lead, the task is nearing completion. The fete to be held on the 31st. will be the eighth in annual succession since 1947. These have raised the best part of £1,000. Since 1947 some £2,500 have been spent on repairs to the church and the school. In the parish chest is a copy of the appeal for funds issued in 1899 by the then Vicar the Rev. David Thomas, for the restoration of the church. The sum he asked for, and presumably got, was £1,200. It is a sad commentary on the present purchasing power of the pound that a few comparatively minor repairs have cost us £2,500, whereas the major operation of restoring the whole church in the year 1900, cost £1,200. But we do not begrudge the £2,500. Not every parish has a church of such beauty and antiquity. Saxons, Normans, Plantagenets, Tudors, Carolingians, Georgians, Victorians and Edwardians have all done their bit to it, and our contribution will be proof that the Atomic Age was not entirely occupied with engines of destruction. The final task in Loders Church is to restore the organ, and that is the object of the fete on the 31st. One would not infer from Mr. Tiltman's masterly handling of the organ on Sundays that there was anything wrong with it, but he could soon produce the evidence of choked pipes and weazing bellows. The age of this organ is one of its assets. It belongs to the time when there were craftsmen who could make organs, and is well worth looking after. It was made for Exeter Cathedral, and served as a supplementary organ there for many years.

"The Lord loveth a cheerful giver". This is the text for Loders to have uppermost in mind this month. When certain good ladies and gentlemen come round collecting for the fete, and enlisting helpers, remember that they are not asking for themselves, and that the ancient church of Loders is no more theirs than your. Each parishioner has legal rights in the church, and each is under a moral obligation to supply its needs. So do your best to make the collectors visit pleasant, and be thankful that there are still people left who will do a big job of work for nothing. Mrs. Randall and Mrs. Lenthall are organisers of stalls, Mrs. Harry Legg of teas, Brigadier Hammond of sideshows, and Miss Muriel Randall of the evening social in the Hut.

Flattering Askerswell. Loders has betrayed the admiration it has for Askerswell's skill at running fetes by imitating some of its methods. First, there is to be no admission fee; second, there is to be a week of skittling for a pig in the plot behind the Loders Arms prior to the fete; and third, a darts competition, with a bottle of whisky as prize, is already in progress at the Crown. The pig has been presented by Mr. A.J. Wells. This will be the third pig he has presented to good causes in Loders in recent years. He thereby earns the title of champion pig donor, but he can scarcely boast that he won it in a fierce competition. In the matter of insurance against rain, Loders prefers not to imitate Askerswell. The latter did not heed their Secretary, or study the terms of the policy, and found that after paying a premium of £1.15s., they could not have claimed had the rain come down in bucketsful. The company had undertaken to pay the difference between the gross takings and £20 provided the rainfall equalled 1.10 inches. But it would be a poor fete that would not take £20 on a wet day. The experience of both Askerswell and Loders has been that there is nothing like a wet day for opening the bowels of compassion.

The Profit on Askerswell fete reached the magnificent total of £217.15.5. Gross takings were £232.1.11. One of the balloons in Capt. Mason's competition got as far as Manche, in the Cherbourg peninsula. It bore the name of Miss Sheila Alford, which was returned by an amiable Frenchman who has since received from Capt. Mason a Bridport souvenir ashtray.

An interesting letter from a Mr. Frederick Gill of Swanage enclosed a donation to Askerswell Fete. It read "Dear Rector - a copy of the Dorset Daily Echo was sent to me a few days ago, and in it I was sorry to read of the dangerous condition of the bells of your parish church. My grandfather, the late George Gill, was born in Askerswell in 1812, and attended school there. Judging by one of his school books dated 1828

(which I have), it must have been a school of superior education. He was a son of John Gill, of Spyway, and Mary Gill, nee Travers, of Loders. My ancestors, who were farmers and landowners, were settled in Symondsbury, West Milton, Powerstock, Loders and Askerswell for several centuries. I enclose £1 for your fund, in memory of my grandfather. I wish I could make it more, but I am now an old retired man. With all good wishes for the success of your appeal, yours etc." The nice sentiment of this letter is matched by clear, shapely handwriting, that deserves to be framed and hung in schools as a model for the rising generation.

Dottery lost its organist by the wedding of Miss Thelma Cleal, and Mr. Peter Billen, of Toller. Very few people in Dottery can play a musical instrument, the church is not easy of access to a visiting organist, and the stipend would not pay his travelling expenses, so Dottery was grateful when Miss Cleal stepped into the breach six years ago. The wedding was at Loders, where her fellow organist Mr. Tiltman made music within, and the ringers made music without. Mrs. Billen is now settled in Toller. She asks these Notes to convey her warm thanks to the members of Dottery congregation who presented her with a pair of Witney blankets. Meanwhile in the absence of other volunteers, Miss Ruth Willmott is playing the organ at Dottery.

Mrs. Roper, of Dottery, is, at the time of writing, making good recovery from a major operation in Bridport Hospital.

Congratulations to Mr. & Mrs. Ward, of Uploders, on the birth of a son, and to Mr. & Mrs. Haines (nee Ann Crabb) on the birth of a daughter.

The Late Miss Mitchell, who died in Port Bredy, was buried in the grave of her step-brother at Askerswell. She had been the proprietress of Askers Road House, but physical afflictions had prevented her from taking much active interest in anything. We wonder what might have been the fate of her huge cat, to which she was devoted.

New Ideas, even good ones, do not readily catch on in Loders. Year after year these Notes urge that more be made of St. Mary Magdalene's day, the 22nd. of July. She is the patron saint of Loders, to whom the church is dedicated and the Sunday within her octave ought to be kept as a high festival of thanksgiving for the gift to us of Loders Church. The dedication Festival ought to be, and yet is not, on a par with harvest. May we not make amends this year, on Sunday July 25th?

One of the beauties of Anglican worship is that it is impersonal in the sense that it is ordered more by a liturgy than by the personal whims of a minister. Yet on occasion Anglican worship can be too impersonal. In June a choral festival was held in Salisbury Cathedral. The cathedral was packed from end to end with church choirs from all over the diocese (including Loders) who had shewn their keenness by weeks of practice beforehand, and coming, some of them, considerable distances. The service was sung magnificently, but it was all over in forty minutes, and just as the choristers were beginning to feel the spell of the service, they found themselves outside the cathedral. The service had contained no word of welcome from the cathedral authorities, and although this vast congregation of singers was in the mood to hear a sermon on some such theme as the part to be played by music in the service of God, no sermon was given, notwithstanding the number of preachers present. Many of the choirs must have come away feeling like our own that a great opportunity had been missed.

In a class by itself. In most villages and towns the prominent building is the church. In Dottery the prominent building is the newly completed public house, the Blue Ball. The little tin church makes a poor showing beside the splendid edifice that has arisen on an eminence in the middle of the hamlet. At first sight the new hostelry is palatial enough to be a police station, and the big blue ball which is its chief ornament fosters that illusion. The relative sizes and conditions of the church and the public house are no reflection on the character of the sober, God-fearing people of Dottery. The Blue Ball is obviously aimed at the passing motorist. When one looks at the photograph of the original Blue Ball, with its long low outline, and its thatched roof, a bit of old England, one cannot but regret the fire which burnt it to the ground in 1947.

Services in July.

Loders. 4th. 8 & 11.45, H.C.; 11 Matins, 2 Children. 11th. 8 H.C., 11 Matins, 2 children. 18th. 8 & 11.45 H.C., 11 Matins, 2 Children.
25th. Dedication Festival. 8 H.C., 11 Matins, 2 Children, 6.30 Evensong
Askerswell. 4th. Evensong 7, 11th. Matins 10. 18th. H.C. 9.30, Evensong 7.
25th. Matins 10.
Dottery. 4th. H.C. 9.30, 11th. Evensong 6.30, 18th. Evensong 3.

Parish Notes (August, 1954)
Loders, Dottery and Askerswell

No Grouse Here. The hunting, shooting and fishing fraternity are pessimistic about the prospects of the grouse season as the 12th. of August approaches. In Loders the key date is that of the church fete, this year Saturday, July 31st. and we contemplate it with subdued optimism. If the weather will behave itself, we are in for a jolly afternoon. His worship the new Mayor of Bridport, who confesses to a soft spot in his heart for Loders, has graciously consented to open the fete at 2 o'clock. It is customary for the distinguished openers of fetes to say their piece, do the round of the stalls, and vanish into thin air. But our secretary has prevailed on His Worship not to vanish until he has (a) judged a contest to decide who ought to be Loders town crier if the need for one should arise; (b) shewn the competitors how town crying should be done; (c) judged the best ankles owned by a lady and (d) the knobbiest knees owned by a gentleman. You will agree that it is very sporting of His Worship to submit to all this. Besides the satisfaction of having helped a good cause, his reward will be a heightened appreciation of the calm of the Mayor's Parlour after July 31st.

Miss Sally Bryant has also promised to add to the enjoyment by bringing her pupils to give a dancing display on the lawn. If the weather is fine, Loders Court will be the perfect setting for this kind of entertainment. Col. Scott, late of Loders, started more than he thought when he hit the headlines with his potato sticking race at Netherbury fete. He inspired our Brigadier Hammond to borrow-and improve on - the invention, with what result we leave the public to judge. We gather that the Brigadier is still desirous of the loan of wheelbarrows for this event, the cleaner the better, for the ladies are to sit in them. The Vicar is still open to receive family treasures for his Exhibition. These need to have a "story" behind them which would be of public interest. For example, Mrs. Martha Crabb is loaning an article she bought from a stall at Loders St. Mary Magdalene Fair, over seventy years ago. Some devoted husbands in the parish say that their treasures are their wives, and offer these for exhibition. We are all for devoted husbands, but we are unwilling to expose them to the dangers of spiritual pride.

Loders Choir hope to give a programme of madrigals and drinking songs at the Social on the night of the fete, and members of the Women's Institute have spent hours at the home of the President practising a play for your delight. Your Editor has heard whispers that he doesn't altogether understand, about a girl called "Hula", and leafy skirts, and Hawaiah, and he passes them on to you, in case you do understand. He heard them a propos of the Social.

Loders Ringers took a large coach full of supporters with them on their annual outing, and shewed them Dartmoor in one of its savage moods. So skilfully had the ringers timed their outing that, to the delights of rolling mists and blinding rains was added the thrill of an escaped convict, who had broken goal the night previously, and was still at large on the moor. The ringers had with them their physician, the landlord of the Farmers' Arms, and thanks to his potent injections they were ready for all comers. It was merciful for the convict that he never met them. One ringer turned up for ringing next morning with his arm in a sling. But this was not, as one might have suspected, anything to do with the outing. From which some of our readers may infer, and rightly, that times may change, but ringers' outings do not.

The Women's Institute Outing to Bath, was, by contrast, a model of decorum. The ladies found their delight in the mineral waters of the Pump Room and the elegant shops of Milsom Street. They also paid a call at Longleat House. Some of them had called before, but they never tire of browsing over the treasures of that famous mansion. For their picnic luncheon in the park they had some of this fitful summer's most convincing sunshine.

Askerswell was set in a flurry by the news that one of The Ladies, who turned out to be Miss Wilkinson, had taken a fall in the pleasure gardens of Bridport and fractured her hip. There is considerable feeling in the parish that Bridport should learn to control its pleasure gardens; for the path along which Miss Wilkinson was walking seems to have had a trip wire drawn across it. Miss Wilkinson underwent an operation in Portway Hospital, Weymouth, and we are pleased to report that she is doing well. Her cheery company is vastly appreciated by the other patients in the ward.

She makes light of what must have been an agonising experience. Shoals of sympathetic letters pour in upon her, and her return home is eagerly awaited, not least by the choir.

Mr. & Mrs. Wensley of Dottery recently celebrated their golden wedding at a party attended by their children and grandchildren. Mrs. Wensley's health has lately taken a turn for the better, and it is good to see her in her usual place in church.

Loders Mothers' Union were recently "at home" to Allington, Bradpole and Yeovil St. Michael's M.U. Their guests and they filled the body of the church, whose flowers, particularly the lilies, were the admiration of all. Mrs. Chase, the Deanery president, gave an interesting account of the Diocesan Executive. She ended her address with a reading from St. John beginning "Beloved, let us love one another", and must have been gratified by the response of a small boy present who at once threw his arms round the neck of his parent. After service the company adjourned to the lawns of the Court, at the invitation of Lady Le Breton, where Loders M.U. served the kind of tea that has made Loders famous. A former member of the Loders branch, Mrs. Heard, late of Knowle Farm, now runs the Yeovil St. Michael's branch.

The Bees which for years have preserved a mysterious connection with Askerswell Church, chose the hour before a Sunday evensong to swarm, and the place they swarmed at was none other than the altar. Mr. Spiller arrived (fortunately well before the service) to find the altar teeming with bees. Mr. Dan Nantes answered Mr. Spiller's frantic S.O.S. and cleared the bees before the congregation assembled. To the superstitious this swarming augurs huge good fortune for Askerswell Church.

Mr. David Le Breton, nephew of Sir Edward, has gone to take up a post in Tanganyika, and is not likely to visit Loders in the next three years. The good wishes of the congregation will go with him. His occasional appearances at the lectern were much appreciated.

Miss Barbara Bryan initiated a parents' day at Loders School with great success. Parents and school managers in large number turned up to inspect the children's exercise books, and specimens of their handwork which adorned the walls. The infants then presented a fairy dance, and the juniors a play. Miss Laramy, the probation teacher who has been helping Miss Bryan, leaves this term for Weymouth College. On behalf of the parents of the Infants, Terence Linee presented her with an equipped sponge bag, and Linette Driver with an alarm clock. Mrs. Willmott spoke of the regret that parents and children felt at Miss Laramy's departure. Alan Wheeler then presented Miss Bryan with a box of chocolates to the applause of the school.

The Lammas Broadcast from Loders Church will be on the Home Service of the B.B.C. on August 8th, at 9.30 a.m. The Director of Religious Broadcasting, Western Region, recently attended choir practice, and formed the opinion that the prospects of an effective broadcast are distinctly encouraging. On the evening of Saturday August 7th., at 7.30, there will be a rehearsal for congregation and choir. The rehearsal is essential. The engineers have to get their microphones into the most suitable positions, and check their timing. So we hope that everybody will turn out for the rehearsal as well as for the service. It is a high privilege to be giving morning service to a huge unseen congregation, and no effort must be spared to do our best.

Postscript. As you read these Notes, skittling for a pig in connection with the fete is in progress behind the Loders Arms, and darts for a bottle of whiskey at The Crown.

Services for August

Loders. 1st. H.C. 8 & 11.45, Matins 11, Children 2.
7th. Broadcast Rehearsal 7.30.
8th. H.C.8, Broadcast 9.30, Children 2.
15th. H.C. 8 & 11.45, Matins 11, Children 2.
22nd. H.C. 8, Matins 11, Children 2.
29th. H.C. 8, Matins 11, Children 2, Evensong 6.30.

Askerswell. 1st. Evensong 7. 8th. Evensong 7.
15th. H.C. 9.30, Evensong 7.
22nd. Matins 10, 29th. Evensong 7.

Dottery. 1st. H.C. 9.30. 8th. Evensong 3. 15th. Evensong 3.
22nd. Evensong 6.30. 29th. Evensong 3.