

## Loders, Dottery and Askerswell

The Habit of our great contemporary, the Bridport News, of filling its columns with extracts from these Notes, has put Loders on the map. This is the kind of thing you are now likely to hear: "Where did you say you lived?" "Loders". "Oh, I know. Haven't you a Vicar there who shoots badgers in his nightshirt?" And in the cake shop a saucer-eyed girl behind the counter says, with bated breath, "I'm not wrong in thinking you are the Vicar of Loders, am I?" "No", says he, and her eyes get bigger and she gives his change to the next customer. With a supreme gesture of faith in the Bridport News not to destroy the reputation it has built up for the Vicar, we record a fact well known in Loders - that the badgers got the last laugh. While the Vicar was at Farmer Eade's, in the dead of night, keeping watch with him for a badger that had visited his hen roost the previous night, what seemed to be the excited ghost of a lady in night attire appeared to the two watchers, scaring them stiff, and telling them that badgers were busy in the Vicar's hen roost. So, it transpired, they had been, but by the time of the reverend gentleman's arrival they had withdrawn, leaving a dead hen in their haste. Obviously, they too were readers of the Bridport News.

Before we forget, may we remind Askerswell readers that the Community Club are holding a jumble sale in the school on the afternoon of Saturday, May 21st? Mrs. Marsh and Miss Croxton will be grateful for anything saleable.

The fears of the decorators of our three churches that the cold weather might make them short of Easter flowers did not materialise. Thousands of primroses and wild daffodils were brought in by the children, producing a colour scheme in keeping with the hedgerows, and the churches have never looked prettier. The eleven o'clock service at Loders was crowded, and the congregation heard a fine new anthem in which the solo was taken by Mr. Tilley. The communicants at the early services were slightly fewer than last year, 155 (Loders 95, Dottery 30, Askerswell 30). A sad feature of the otherwise bright services at Askerswell was the absence from their Easter communion of most of the last batch of confirmees.

This year's Easter Offering amounted to £31.16.7d (Loders £28.13.7d and Dottery £3.3/-). For the first time since the Church Commissioners introduced minimum stipends they will not count this as part of the benefice income - it will be an extra - and although it is still liable for income tax, Mr. Butler's budget has put it well beyond the grasp of our friend in Top o' Town, Dorchester. Wives seem to have a greater interest than their husbands in the latter's pay increases so, at the Easter vestry, the Vicar thanked the parish on his wife's behalf. Those who would question the seemliness of this have only to peep into the Vicarage kitchen, preferably on wash days.

Last month saw the departure to Bradpole of Mr. Tom Pitcher and his daughter Mary, and the Farmer's Arms, Loders, has passed into the custody of Mr. and Mrs. Maddison, who come with their daughter Pat from Gateshead. Loders will take long to adjust itself to the idea of no Tom at "The Farmer's". He seemed as much part of Loders as the old house itself, and in the days when he was sexton (like his father before him) and an active ringer, he seemed part of the church as well. We know his heart is still in Loders, and in wishing him a happy retirement, we nurse a hope of often having the rest of his body back to keep it company. Meanwhile, Mr. Maddison, though new to the ancient profession of innkeeper, is exercising it like a practised hand, and bids fair to be a lover of Loders, for the beauty of the country alone, which strikes him after Gateshead.

The staff of Bridport Hospital have no excuse for not knowing of the existence of Loders. Last month every other patient seemed to be from Loders. Mr. "Bunny" Green, and Mr. George Crabb, occupying beds opposite each other in the men's ward, saw Mr. Raymond Crabb taken into the X-ray department, and Mr. Billy Bagg being wheeled into the operating theatre. In the women's ward Mrs. Randall had the company of Mrs. Chilcot, and when the former came home her bed was taken by Mrs. George Hyde. It is a pity that Mr. Hansford, of Cuckolds Corner, had to be in Dorchester Hospital among strangers, and Mrs. Tattershall at Weymouth Hospital.

Obituary. Mrs. Mary Pitcher, the oldest inhabitant of Loders, and mother of Mrs. F. Osborne and Mr. T. Pitcher, died at the Loders Arms after a long illness. For many years she had been a martyr to arthritis, and she had needed the help of Mrs. Osborne in dressing since the latter's wedding day. She is remembered by the old inhabitants not only as a good and very quiet neighbour, but as a concocter of most excellent homemade wines. Miss Rose Pearce, who was buried in the family grave in Loders churchyard, is well remembered as a resident of Yondover. She died in Damers House, Dorchester, having moved there many months ago from Port Bredy Hospital. The death of Mr. Fred Cleal, churchwarden of Dottery, came as a great shock; for none outside his family knew how ill he really was, and he carried his seventy-six years very lightly. His parents had been staunch supporters of Dottery Church, and he carried on the tradition. He will be greatly missed, not least on



parish outings, when his humour livened many a rainy day.

Farm Sunday, which is our own name for Rogation Sunday, when God's blessing is asked on the growing crops, falls this year on May 15th. The "farm service" in Loders Church is now almost as popular as harvest, and those who do not come in time run the risk of having to search for a seat. The service is attended by the Askerswell Young Farmers' Club, the Loders Discussion Club, and the local branch of the Agricultural Workers' Union, who all supply a reader of a Lesson. The service is held at 7 p.m. for the convenience of those who have to milk, or come from other parishes.

The Wedding of Miss Theresa Le Pennec and Mr. Derek Barnes, being held on the Saturday after Easter instead of in sombre Lent, had the advantage of a church in all the glory of its Easter decorations. Loders turned out in force, which was proof of the way in which the bride from Jersey had won a place in our hearts during the few years of her sojourn here. As the young couple motored through Bridport, setting off on their honeymoon, the banging of a tin can on the back made it clear to the crowds of Saturday shoppers that the bridegroom had not altogether succeeded in his efforts beforehand at hiding the car from wellwishers.

It is reported that a live rabbit was seen in the vicinity of Knowle Lane one day last month. Is this a record?

Quick Work. At Loders Easter Vestry complaints were made about the dilapidated state of the prayer books in Loders Church. A generous offer by Mr. Graves towards a supply of new ones was quickly taken up by Mrs. Henderson, Mr. Rice-Oxley, Mr. McDowall and Brigadier Hammond, and as a result, forty new prayer books are on order. Those of the congregation who were foxed by the Roman numerals in the old books will be pleased to hear that the new books have English numerals. But isn't it nice these days to have a church where the prayer books get hard wear?

It was a mark of the interest that Loders takes in its church that the schoolroom was well filled for the Easter Vestry. Some of the electors were surprised that as large a sum as £800 passed through the accounts last year, and that as little as £25.17.2d stuck fast in the process and remained as a credit balance. But this is the sort of thing that happens when the fabric of an ancient church is being put into good repair. When Loders is got right, it will be time to turn to Dottery, which has got shabby inside, and is not at all weatherproof. Askerswell accounts were in the unusual position of being able to shew a healthy balance of £38.15.10d, but this was more apparent than real, for it did not reflect the fact that a big proportion of an equivalent amount, spent on repairs, had been taken from reserves. The Vestry wisely decided to make a special effort later in the year to replenish the repair fund. The election of officers at Askerswell produced no change; at Dottery Mr. Lock was elected sidesman, and it is hoped that he, with his previous experience of churchwardening at Stratton, may be prevailed on to fill the churchwarden's office vacated through the lamented death of Mr. Cleal. At Loders, Mr. F. Gill was added to the sidesmen, Brigadier Hammond to the Ruri-Decanal Representatives, and Messrs. R. Dennett and E. Bunnell to the Church Council.

#### Services in May.

<u>Loders:</u>	1st.	H.C. 8 and 11.45:	Matins 11: Children 2.
	8th.	H.C. 8:	Matins 11: Children 2.
	15th.	H.C. 8:	Matins 11: Children 2: Farm Service 7.
	19th.	Ascension Day.	H.C. 10.
	22nd.	H.C. 8 and 11.45:	Matins 11: Children 2.
	29th.	Whitsunday.	H.C. 8 and 11.45: Matins 11: Children 2.
<u>Dottery:</u>	1st.	H.C. 9.30.	8th. Evensong 6.30.
	15th.	Evensong 3.	22nd. Evensong 3.
	29th.	Evensong 3.	
<u>Askerswell:</u>	1st.	Evensong 7.	8th. Matins 10.
	15th.	Matins 10.	19th. Ascension Day. 11.
	22nd.	Evensong 7.	29th. H.C. 10; Evensong 7.



## PARISH NOTES (JUNE, 1955)

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Loders Organ has lately been inspected by three organ builders, who are in process of submitting estimates for its overhaul. One of these, a London firm of high repute, had not met our organ before, and were greatly impressed by the workmanship of it. We were able to tell them that it had once belonged to Exeter Cathedral, and they did not doubt this. They asked what it was insured for, and said that the sum should be not less than £5,000. Our present insurance is for £2,000 only. This is a matter for the Church Council to go into when it meets on June 7th. The fete on the Saturday before August Bank Holiday is to be for the organ restoration, and it seems that every penny the fete can raise - and more - will be needed.

The sale held in Askerswell school by the Community Club produced the gratifying sum of £25.13.6d. This, like most of the proceeds of the Club's activities, goes towards a village hall. A hall is badly needed, but the Club are aware that the problem is not a simple one. It is not just a matter of getting a hall, but of maintaining it when it is got. A hall needs a caretaker, heating and lighting, and keeping in repair, and the prospect of raising revenue by letting is rather dim. In the matter of dances, for instance, its amenities could hardly compete with the Askers Road House. The school, which at present is the only place for social functions, has many inconveniences, but there is this to be said for it, that it only costs ten shillings a time. Askerswell, a tiny community not even large enough to have a parish council, is already responsible for two public buildings - a school and a large church - and the adding of a third requires thought. From Askerswell's point of view the easy solution might be to make Askerswell the school for Loders and Askerswell, giving the children of both parishes the big advantages of a two-teacher school, and improve the school building so that a new hall would no longer be necessary.

The Young Communicants of Dottery, twelve in number, organised a party to join in the archdeaconry youth service at Sherborne Abbey on St. Aldhelm's day. They travelled in cars manned by Mr. Robert Barnes, Mr. Michael Gill and the Vicar, and on the way home they stopped in a forest glade for a picnic supper. The weather was much better than last year, and the light of a kindly moon was appreciated in dealing with the supper.

A Triple Christening. Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Fry, of Nallers, made ecclesiastical history on Whitsunday when they convened the whole of their sizeable family in Askerswell Church for the christening of their three grand-daughters. For as far back as we had time to look, Askerswell registers shew no previous record of three grandchildren being christened at once. The daughter of Mr. and Mrs. T. Foot, of Grimstone, Dorchester, was named Bridget Jean; the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. F. Davis, of Seaton, was named Greta Marie; and the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. K. James, of Pulham, Dorchester, was named Janet Edna. After the service the large congregation took off in a fleet of cars to Nallers. Mr. Fry said it was nothing new to have the whole family round the ancestral hearth.

Whit Sunday was a popular day for christenings. Besides the three at Askerswell, there was one at Loders, where the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Cornish (nee Jean Rogers) was baptised Susan Louise; and the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Billen (nee Thelma Cleal) was baptised at Toller. In the early days of the Church Whit Sunday was the day of mass baptisms, and is so called from the white robes worn by the candidates.

The Rook Shooting at Loders Court fell on a day that was abominably wet, and in consequence few guns turned out. The bag amounted to some forty rooks and the telephone wires (as a result of the latter, Loders was out of touch with civilisation for many hours). Defaulting guns, having since learnt of the crates of refreshment lying about at Loders Court unopened, are cursing the rain. They should be repenting; for their generous host had provided mountains of food as well, which, in these days of peace and plenty, are not easily disposed of.

The Steward of the Uploders Chapel has again asked the children of Loders Sunday School to sing in the chapel, and this they will do at 3 p.m. on Sunday, June 12th, the anniversary of the re-opening of the chapel.



Loders School Success. The two pupils of Loders school who sat for the Grammar School examination have done well. Brian Bolton has passed, subject to an interview, and Bernard Paul has passed with the highest marks in the Bridport district, which is a credit to him, and to Miss Bryan, who is at present teaching thirty-one children between the ages of five and eleven single-handed.

The Farm Service at Loders again produced a crowded church and some excellent singing. The lessons were read by Miss Buckler, Mr. Dennett and Mr. Graves. The old plough that Mr. Wilfred Crabb kindly resurrects and brings to church for this service was in its accustomed place in the chancel. As one of the farm workers remarked, it must be a good plough, because it is the only one that goes to church. It was pleasing to have at this service whole families of farm workers, from the eldest to the youngest.

It may be news to some that mere election by the Easter Vestry does not make a person a churchwarden. He is not legally a churchwarden until he has been admitted by the Archdeacon's Court, which is usually held in May. All our churchwardens (excepting Mr. H. Sanders, who was excused) attended the Archdeacon's Court in Bridport, and were duly sworn in. They were treated to an interesting account of the churchwarden's office by the Archdeacon, by which it appears that anciently the churchwarden was the chief officer of state in each parish. He was responsible not only for the fabric of the church, but for maintaining the roads and bridges of the parish, and relieving the poor. The churchwarden-in-vestry levied a rate for this purpose. He was also custodian of public morals, whose duty it was to present irregular persons to the proper authority for punishment. It is not to be wondered at that many good men and true declined this onerous office, but, if the parish elected them, they were compelled by law to serve. Times have changed, and the churchwarden's job, or most of it, has been distributed among parish, rural and county councils, public assistance officers, police and magistrates. But Archdeacon Chute reminded his churchwardens that they were still expected to be a "tranquilising influence" in the parish. Your editor has recollections of a dear old churchwarden of his, a retired bacon curer, whose tranquilising influence was a subdued snore during sermons.

Birthdays. There has been a spate of these, lately. The Women's Institute celebrated its eighth birthday by inviting Salwayash to a party, and Mrs. Richard Hyde cut a cake presented by the president, Mrs. Howell. The Mothers' Union had a twenty-fourth birthday party (they are reaching an age when they will begin to be reticent about their birthdays), at which Mrs. Cecil Marsh cut the cake. The senior children of Loders Sunday School celebrated Whitsuntide, the birthday of the Church, by playing cricket on the Vicarage lawn, doing a ramble round Boarsbarrow, and returning to the Vicarage for tea.

Some of Loders ringers joined the large party that went to Marlborough for the annual meeting of the Salisbury Diocesan Guild of Ringers. On the outward journey they rang at Longbridge Deverill & Devizes, and, on the return journey, at Bishops Canning. Our own ringers hope to do a coach trip through the Wye Valley in July, and would be glad to contact people who would like to join them. (Cost about 12/-).

Other parishes please note. The public spiritedness of aspirants to public office in this parish has spared Loders the indignity of too many candidates scrabbling for too few seats on the parish council. No unnecessary polls and consequent inflation of the rates here! When four candidates were nominated for the three places resigned by Messrs. Pitcher, Bishop and Brown, the would-be councillors conferred as to how democracy could be served without the expense of an election. The upshot was that the chairman, Mr. C. Gale, who topped the poll at the last election, surrendered his seat to the new blood of Brigadier Hammond, Messrs. D. Crabb, A. Wells & G. Hyde, and these, with Messrs. W. Crabb, H. Bartlett & C. Harris, constitute the new council, which has it within its power to reward virtue by co-opting Mr. Gale as chairman. When the public spirit of the nation rises to the level of Loders, we shall be spared the indignity and expense of general elections. Then, it will be "Over to you, Tony", or, "After you, Clem old boy".

#### Services in June

<u>Loders:</u>	5th. H.C. 8 & 11.45; Matins 11: Children 2.
	12th. H.C. 8: Matins 11: Children 2; Evensong 6.30.
	19th. H.C. 8 & 11.45: Matins 11: Children 2.
	26th. H.C. 8: Matins 11: Children 2.
<u>Askerswell:</u>	5th. Evensong 7. 12th. Matins 10.
	19th. H.C. 10: Evensong 7. 26th. Matins 10.
<u>Dottery:</u>	5th. H.C. 9.30. 12th. Evensong 3.
	19th. Evensong 3. 26th. Evensong 6.30.