

Loders, Dottery and Askerswell.

Soliloquy. The last minutes of the old year and the first minutes of the new year have for centuries been subject to the attention of the church bells of England. The last minutes are rung out mournfully with muted clappers; the first minutes are rung in with the joyous impact of metal on metal. The muffled bells lament our sins and shortcomings in the year that is dying; the open bells welcome the chance that the new year gives us of breaking with the past and becoming the sons of God. Milestones along a road tell us our position in relation to our destination; church bells at the turn of the year tell us that we are marching on to God - as the hymn puts it, "Onward, ever onward, journeying o'er the road, worn by saints before us, journeying on to God". And when we meet Him, as meet Him we all must, the thing He will want to know is not whether we have acquired wealth or fame on our pilgrimage, or have had a good time, but whether on our passage through life we have become like His Son. This question is most reasonable; for God cannot enjoy eternity with natures opposed to His. It is well to remind ourselves at the start of a new year that we are in the world for the one purpose of becoming like Jesus Christ, so that we may enjoy God for ever.

Christmas Eve in Loders was a lovely night of flying cloud and frosty light. As the clock neared twelve a stream of worshippers flowed down the long path to the church, and there, in the flickering candlelight, and the glow of the Christmas tree, a congregation of harvest festival dimensions was soon singing "It came upon a midnight clear". At eleven on Christmas morning the church filled up again for matins; and the Sunday School, somewhat reduced by measles, sang four carols from the chancel step; and the Enrolling Member of the Mothers' Union gave each child a present from the Christmas tree. The services at all our three churches were the more delightful because we were joined by old friends home for Christmas. Out of our combined population of 700, something like 500 attended Christmas services, and 200 made their communion. If this proportion were to prevail over the whole country, the Jeremiahs would have to find something else to wring their hands over.

The Carollers who saluted Uploders and Loders collected £9.4/- for the Church of England Children's Society. An additional reason for supporting the good work of this society is that a Loders girl, Miss Janet Symes, is nursing in one of its homes, and an ex-Askerswell girl, Miss Joy Norman, has been accepted for training.

Inspired by the need of the Church in the West Indies lately devastated by a hurricane, the children of Loders School raised the record sum of £28.15/- by their annual mission sale. Kind grown-ups helped them with home-made articles attractively packeted, and their teachers produced a nativity play and choruses which were creditable both to teachers and children. One felt as one watched the children acting the story of Christmas so reverently, and with clear diction, that this was more effective than any sermon. They repeated the performance early in an afternoon so that the old folk might come, and these were deeply appreciative. Askerswell children also came down to see it.

The Christmas parties of Loders and Askerswell schools meant a lot of work for the teachers but were rewarding in the enjoyment they gave the children. On the day that Askerswell children were to sit down to a gargantuan tea, a benevolent Education Authority served up a Christmas dinner of roast pork and plum pudding. Miss Sellers prepared for what the military call "mopping up operations", but we have yet to learn that these were necessary.

Passing of a Patriarch. Many inhabitants of Askerswell, Loders, Chilcombe and places farther afield, claimed relationship with the late Mr. Sam Fry, who died at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Harold Spiller, and in consequence the congregation at his funeral in Askerswell church was very large. At evensong on the Sunday after the funeral the Rector referred to him as an example of industriousness, working in his garden, despite his great age, to within a few days of his death.

-And a Matriarch. Mrs. Sarah Burgess, who died in Uploders, also at a great age, was the mother of twelve children, and long was the procession that followed her coffin to the grave of her husband in Loders cemetery. Driving rain did not prevent the ritual mustering of the family at church on the Sunday after the funeral, and shewed what she had meant to them as a mother.

Mr. Alonzo Cox, who was buried at Dottery, had the misfortune to die two weeks after his wedding. For some time he had been a sick man, but had carried on his taxi work when weaker spirits would have taken to bed. He had the reputation of being a man who kept his word - a virtue which is not too common in Dorset, though it was once the pride of every true Englishman.

Sounds of hammering in the air have been traceable to the tower of Loders Church, where Brigadier Hammond, with the help of Mr. McDowall, has been repairing the louvres. The value of services like this (and Loders church has lately had several) cannot be over-emphasised. In these days of high building costs a man



with a bent for carpentry and the like can, by a few hours work, save his parish church a considerable expense.

A nest of foxes. Mr. Ronald Fry tells us that when the Cattistock Hunt drew a covert at Nallers the other day it started six foxes at once, and the hounds did not know which to follow. Nallers does not seem to have lost any hens to foxes, which is odd with so many about, but, as Mr. Fry says, in a big flock you have to lose a hundred before you miss any.

A weekend in the country. Six officers of the Honourable Artillery Company came from London early in December to spend the weekend at Loders Vicarage (the Vicar being their chaplain). The weather and Sir Edward Le Breton co-operated in shewing these City gentlemen the Dorset countryside at its winter best. With Mr. David Crabb in the congenial role of head gamekeeper, the party did a shoot over Sir Edward's primeval forest on Powerstock Common. Mr. Crabb was worthier of the occasion than the guns; for he put up a creditable selection of the forest's denizens - pheasants, woodcock, deer, and even a fox - but the guns were too entranced by the beauty of the bracken and the forest glades to hit much. Perhaps they were a bit puffed, too; for wading waist-deep through bracken strains the sturdiest bellows. Although the officers had no exciting stories to tell at dinner that night, they enjoyed it all immensely, and are eager to come again. On the Sunday morning they lent a touch of colour to the church service by parading in full regimentals (their spurs being the admiration of the small boys), and one of them, Lieutenant Richard York, read the lesson.

A duty becomes a pleasure. The course of Monday night lectures at Askerswell has ended on a pleasant note. It was put on by the Adult Education Committee in conjunction with the Workers' Educational Association for the benefit of the less educated and was, as always, attended only by the well educated, but, what matter? These had a session they thoroughly enjoyed, studying some of the great personalities of history under the guidance of Mr. Kimber. They went out of a sense of duty, and out of devotion to Miss Webb, the organiser, but found that the lecturer and his subjects "grew" on them. They also found that a talk on the wireless or the television is no substitute for a good lecturer and agreeable company. The series ended shortly before Christmas with a unanimous request to Mr. Kimber to come again next year and expound more great personalities.

The infant son of Mr. and Mrs. Michael Rudd, of Corfe Farm, was christened William in Loders Church, in the octave of Christmas. The church still wore its Christmas decorations, and the relatives on both sides turned out in strength, four generations being present. William had the honour of being photographed in the arms of his great grandmother Rudd, of Chard.

Old Mrs. Eastment, who lived in the thatched cottages opposite the Loders Arms, so rarely went out that some of her newer neighbours did not know of her existence. Yet she had a lively interest in the village and its church, and indeed in national occasions; for on Coronation Day the Vicar found her dressed in her Sunday best, hat and all, in honour of the Queen's Majesty, with her ear glued to a weezy old wireless set. After the Coronation she nailed a poster of the Queen to the wall near her fireplace, and sat under it in her old armchair. It was still there when she died. Her passing was in keeping with her life, serene and unobtrusive. She had a slight stroke on Christmas morning. It was arranged to take her to Bridport hospital in the afternoon, but she ate her Christmas dinner first, then went to the hospital and slept peacefully away. She was buried at Loders cemetery in the grave of her husband, who had long predeceased her. From the age of nine she had worked on the land, and she loved it.

#### Services in January

<u>Loders:</u>	1st. H.C. 8 & 11.45: Matins 11: Children 2: Carols. 6.30.	
	8th. H.C. 8: Matins 11: 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.	
<u>Askerswell:</u>	1st. Matins 10.	8th. Evensong 7.
	15th. Matins 10.	22nd. H.C. 10: Evensong 7.
	29th. Matins 10.	
<u>Dottery:</u>	1st. Evensong 3.	8th. Evensong 3.
	15th. Evensong 6.30.	22nd. Evensong 3.
	29th. Evensong 3.	



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Helping the Newsmongers. With his usual thoughtfulness for others, Mr. McDowall, of Loders, allayed the seasonal shortage of news in February by having a fire which, incidentally, destroyed his garage and car. It was not his fault that there was a complete absence of wind; for a little co-operation on the wind's part might have made an inferno of all the neighbouring thatched roofs, and produced a news story bigger, brighter and better still. The frost did what it could, but that was only to freeze the firemen's hose to the road - when the fire had been put out. The credit for starting the fire must go, it seems, to one of those fire-proof lamps that cautious people put under their cars to keep Jack Frost out of the cylinders, and the credit for calling the fire brigade so promptly belongs to Mrs. Chard, who sent her husband to the telephone kiosk while she fetched Mr. McDowall from the Archers (those Archers will have much to answer for one day). We fear that Mr. McDowall's kindness in filling the hungry columns of these Notes put him to great inconvenience, but the effects of his kindness were greater than he could have foreseen. For instance, all the sick of Loders were healed at a stroke; the rare excitement of a big fire got them out of bed and down the street in no time. And again, the fire and the talk about it were so warming that the inns did their best trade since the inception of television. Anybody who might be encouraged by Mr. McDowall's new car to think that a nice little fire, well away from the house, isn't a bad thing, is hereby warned to beware of insurance company logic. For it seems that if you lose a car when cars are appreciating, the company insist on paying the sum insured. But when cars are depreciating they insist on paying the market value of the car, and not the sum insured. It is to be feared that our hero's cheerful countenance masks a less cheerful heart.

Ringers are much given to changes on their bells, but when it comes to their annual meeting they exclaim all change. Loders ringers re-elected Messrs. Harry Crabb captain, Harry Legg vice-captain, and George Hyde secretary. Mr. Garry Jones was appointed tower warden.

"Court Party", as it is fondly called by the children of Loders, followed its time-honoured ritual in early January. A coach brought small guests from outlying parts of the parish to a conjuring show in the billiard room at Loders Court, and when they had had their fill of magic they got down to the more solid business of tea in the great dining room. They did not quite measure up to the noble opinion of their stomachs entertained by host and hostess; for when they had taken their considerable fill, the magician, coming in late, and seeing the still groaning board, thought he was early. Master David Skeats was admired for the way in which he subdued the riot of cracker-pulling, and in a loud calm voice, thanked Sir Edward and Lady Le Breton, ending with a heartfelt hope that they might live long enough to give many more such parties. As the children left, they received oranges and half-crowns from Master Edward Laskey.

The junior population of Askerswell, in the role of Cubs, Guides and Brownies, were given their annual party in the notably elastic cottage of their beloved Brown Owl, alias The Captain, alias Miss Edwards, and it is almost superfluous to say that a great time was had by all, especially in the tracing of presents on the ends of a network of threads which went all over the house. A handsome cake, made by Mrs. Adams, was the centrepiece of each of the two tea-tables, and the company rewarded Mrs. Barker and Miss Pam Fry with an impromptu play for doing the washing up. One of the Brownies summed it all up at the end thus :- "Whatever we should do without Brown Owl I just don't know".

Congratulations to Mr. and Mrs. H. Newberry, of Yondover, on the birth of a daughter, at Bridport Hospital. Constable and Mrs. Edrich, of Loders, now have the custody of their premature baby, born at Portway Hospital, Weymouth, in November. It has more than doubled its weight, and is doing well.

Uploders was greatly shocked by the death, at an early age, of Mr. Oscar Gale, described in church as one of those friendly keepers of our roads who made the Dorset lanes seem friendlier. Mr. Gale died a few days after an operation which it was hoped would elevate him from indifferent to good health, but a post mortem examination shewed that his illness was deeper than the diagnosis. He had taken his part in the life of the parish, and of the church, which he served as a sidesman and as a church councillor.

Mr. & Mrs. Brake, of Dottery, had the misfortune to lose their first child, which lived only a day. It was baptised Carole Anne at Portway Hospital, Weymouth, and buried at Dottery.

The first grandchild of Mr. & Mrs. Wilfred Crabb, of Yondover, was baptised Sandra Mary at Loders Church. It was the occasion of a great gathering of the Lee and Crabb clans. The parents are Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Crabb.

Time for Stirring. There is a close correspondence between nature and the bible, which is appropriate seeing that the God of nature and the God of the bible are one



and the same. Christmas, the birth of the Light of the world, comes at the turn of the year, when the days are just beginning to get longer. Easter, the triumph of Christ over sin and death, comes when spring is rising out of winter deadness. Lent, the stirring of the soul towards God, comes between Christmas and Easter, when nature is busy beneath the surface preparing for spring. Here is a way of keeping Lent:- read every day a bit of St. Mark's short and dramatic story of Jesus; say your prayers morning and evening; and join in the family worship of God on Sundays. In this district there is a choice of services open to anybody who will make an effort - always an 8 o'clock communion, a matins, an afternoon service and an evensong in one or other of our churches.

Loders Sunday School has now risen to 43 children and this we owe largely to the kind co-operation of parents, many of whom passed themselves through Loders Sunday School. We are also grateful to Askerswell and Dottery parents who encourage their children to the ordinary services. Like the three R's, the good life has to be learnt, and the good life is of greater consequence than the three R's.

Miss Eileen Tilley, after five years training at Carshalton Hospital, has qualified as a state-registered children's nurse, and has gone on to two years general training at the Bristol Royal Infirmary.

The Baiting of Public Servants. Is there a change, and a change for the worse, coming over English character? We seem to be growing more and more indulgent of our own personal shortcomings, and less and less tolerant of any mistakes or signs of human fallibility in our public servants, who were once the nation's pride. Take British Railways as a case in point. At the close of last year there were three accidents in succession. The public got alarmed, the appropriate minister was obliged to make extraordinary investigations, and the sensational press more than suggested that the British railwayman was losing his sense of responsibility for the safety of the travelling public. It is only right, of course, that a vigilant eye should be kept on the public services, but no stranger to our now nagging mood would have guessed that British Railways really have something to be proud of. They struck a bad patch in 1955, but in 1954 they carried their enormous traffic without one person being killed. A comparison of road casualties with rail is startling. Between 1946 and 1952, 331 passengers were killed in rail accidents; in the same period 34,197 people were killed on the roads. The terrible monthly figures of road casualties are tucked away in inconspicuous corners of the newspapers, and we take them from the wireless as a matter of course. But let there be an accident on the railways and at once there is a universal howl. Is it because we, the general public, have a part to play in road safety, and the road casualties are a sign of our own shortcomings, to be treated indulgently, whereas rail safety is the railwayman's business and he, being a public servant, must be altogether infallible, and above making mistakes? That admiration of the world, the English policeman and the English judiciary, have also come in for a nagging. Because the odd policeman has shewn his humanity by doing what he ought not to, the whole police force is suspected of corruption, and the criminal gets all the sympathy. Because three men got wrongly imprisoned, and because there is just a possibility that Evans was wrongly hanged, the English judges are a thoroughly bad lot, the death penalty must be abolished, and the wrongly imprisoned men handsomely compensated. It matters not that Evans told the police three times that he had done the murder, and could not blame anybody but himself if he got hanged. It matters not that the three men who were wrongfully imprisoned were convicted on their own false evidence; were, on their own shewing, on their way to crack a safe when they were supposed to be elsewhere attacking a policeman; and were men with previous convictions. All this matters not one bit - policemen and judges are public servants, and therefore not allowed to make one mistake. It is high time that the great British public stopped measuring their servants by the standard expected of the Almighty, and turned the searchlight of criticism on themselves.

The people that in darkness sat. It was unfortunate for our Women's Institute that the pork supper, which it was anticipating with relish, should be preceded by a violent demonstration of lightning and thunder which kept half of the members away. The lightning disorganised the electricity supply, but candlelight gave the dinner an air of refinement that was not intended. The same night happened to be the monthly meeting of the Agricultural Discussion Club, and the lecturer was in his glory. He had come to talk on insurance, and the perils of lightning - and his words were reinforced by the wail of the fire siren and the glow of a blazing rick near Askers.

#### Services in February

<u>Loders:</u>	5th. H.C. 8 & 11.45: Matins 11: Children 2: Evensong 6.30.
	12th. H.C. 8: Matins 11: Children 2.
	Ash Wednesday. Children 9.15: Communion 10.
	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.      Ash Weds. Communion 11.
	19th. H.C. 10: Evensong 7.      26th. Matins 10.
<u>Dottery:</u>	5th. H.C. 9.30.      12th. Evensong 6.30      Ash Weds. Communion 7