

PARISH NOTES (JANUARY, 1959)

We wish our readers a happy new year. And that includes, of course, the large company who have a well-thumbed copy of these Notes posted to them, sometimes in remote corners of the world, by friends at home.

Christmas in Church has left us with very pleasant memories. For the first time (as far as we know) Askerswell had a Christmas tree and a crib. The tree had done previous service at the school party, and was the top of a fifty foot giant felled at Nallers by Messrs. Sidney Fry and Tom Foot. The crib had come from South Eggardon, and, the star, precariously dependent on energy from the organ, was an engineering feat of Wing-Commander Newall. The Lodgers tree had also done service at the school party. Messrs. David Crabb and Horace Read had carted it all the way from Sir Edward's primeval forest at Powerstock. (He has supplied so many trees at Christmas that the staff now have to go far afield to find one). In spite of the unseasonal rain and fog, congregations were large. Some familiar faces were lacking, where parents had gone away to their children, and some, alas, were in hospital, but it was cheering to have with us many former parishioners who still regard us as home. Dottery Church, small concoction of tin and wood though it be, has an amazing hold on its old boys and girls. Some of them came quite a distance in the rain to be at the nine o'clock Communion on Christmas morning, and one who could not be there, sent a generous donation. The midnight service at Lodgers came nearest to a seasonal setting. It had a moon, and the flying clouds and frosty light beloved of Tennyson. The crowd that came to this service tasted the essence of Christmas, though the lights on the tree failed at the last moment, in spite of the doctoring they had had a few hours earlier from a co-operative Electricity Authority. Thick rain was unable to reduce very much the attendance at the family service on Christmas morning, when the Sunday School children sang four carols from the chancel step. They, and the children in the congregation, were given sweets from the tree by Mrs. Lenthall, the Enrolling Member of the Mothers' Union, and, with the help of firm parents, resisted the temptation to eat them in church. Christmas ended for Lodgers with the carol service on the Sunday following. The rollicking old tunes were sung with gusto, and the congregation loved to see some of their neighbours undergoing the ordeal of reading the lessons. For the first time, perhaps, the opening verse of the first hymn, "Once in Royal David's city", was sung by a choirboy of Salisbury Cathedral. Those who care about figures may like to know that those who made their Communion at Christmas numbered nearly 200, and the collections topped £30. It was lovely to have so many of God's family in His house at Christmas, but, as always, it was the missing faces that the pastor found himself thinking of, wistfully.

Servants of the State are not expected to be high yielders of the milk of human kindness, but your Editor is always glad of evidence to support his contention that they are at least human - and very human sometimes. Mrs. Bradshaw, of Yonderover, tells us that a young nephew of hers once posted to her a toy envelope stamped with a toy stamp, and the postman duly delivered the letter, to the little boy's subsequent delight. This letter, with the toy stamp properly postmarked, is one of Mrs. Bradshaw's treasures, and your Editor has been allowed to see and handle it. To some it may be news (but we have always known it) that the police are human too. On Christmas morning the Vicar received a letter bearing the ominous caption "Dorset Constabulary". His wife, knowing that a strange policeman had caught the car ecclesiastical without lights at the Askerswell whist drive, and being not at all consoled with the Christmas news that His Holiness Pope John the Twenty-third had a brother who was once a gaol-bird - feared the worst. The Christmas services were not in jeopardy, however, for the letter declared that "after giving this matter consideration, the Chief Constable has decided that no further police action will be taken in this case", and closed with a caution. Doubtless the Chief Constable in his wisdom was aware of what the strange policeman was not, that the place where the rest of the whist drive cars were parked, also without lights, was also a public thoroughfare, and justice would have entailed a veritable massacre of the innocents.

Baby News. Mrs. Herbert, of Lodgers, proudly presented her husband and two small daughters with a baby boy for Christmas. She arranged things well; for she expected to be in hospital over Christmas, whereas she was at home, and with the boy on which all the family had set their hearts. The infant daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John Marsh, of Dottery, was christened Annette Bridget on the Sunday after Christmas. It will never be said of her that she let the family down by not "crying out the devil".

The ashes of the late Harry Philip Castree, a prominent and well-liked business man of Bridport, who died at Weymouth at the age of 86, were buried in the Samways family grave in Lodgers churchyard, beside the ashes of his wife, who was a sister of Miss Samways of Uploders.

Mr. Raymond Pitcher, of Boarsbarrow, was married to his cousin, Miss Joyce Churchill, at Martinstown Church shortly before Christmas, and has taken a farm at Puncknowle. Mr. Pitcher has been a nice friendly feature of the Lodgers scene since his family came to Boarsbarrow in 1940, and we are glad he has not gone so far afield as to

ceptive us of it entirely.

December in Loders was brightened for us by bells, organ, top hats and tails, and visions of bridal and bridesmaid beauty, when Miss Diana Forbes, of Lower Sturthill, was married to Mr. William George Hunt, of Beaminster. It was also an occasion for the Askerswell and the Beaminster Young Farmers' Clubs, with which bride and groom are connected. The Vicar of Broadwindsor, who nurtures the spiritual side of the Beaminster Club's activities, gave the address. The wedding feast at the Greyhound in Bridport still warms the cockles of the guests, and they still chuckle over the witty speech of Brigadier Forbes, and the surprising eloquence of the bridegroom. Those who do not read the "agony" columns of the Daily Telegraph were for the most part unaware that Mr. and Mrs. Whittle, of Loders, were celebrating their diamond wedding on December 17th. Mr. and Mrs. Whittle counted themselves lucky in being spared for this great event; for shortly before it Mr. Whittle, whose age is reaching into the stratosphere, had a nasty fall. However, he recovered in time to enjoy the anniversary and the company of his family.

Last of a line. Miss Ethel Resleigh Martin, of Bridport, was buried at Askerswell after a choral service which was attended by several old friends. There were no relations to attend, as she was the last of a family. She was buried with her twin sisters, who had lived in Askerswell. All the sisters had artistic gifts, and many homes in the neighbourhood are adorned with local scenes from their brushes.

Well satisfied. At their annual meeting, Loders ringers re-elected all their retiring officers, so that Mr. Harry Legg continues as captain, Mr. Harry Crabb as vice-captain, Mr. George Hyde as secretary, and Mr. Bill Maddison as treasurer. Mr. Legg and Mr. Crabb were re-appointed tower wardens.

From the financial point of view, which in this case is the important one, the Mission sale was a great success. It raised £33.10/- for the work of the church overseas. The nativity play, produced by Mrs. Hinde, and the children's songs, were also well done, and hugely enjoyed by the concourse of adoring parents. This time the children are indebted to the weather for repenting of its threat, earlier in the day, of storm and tempest, and producing a fine evening. They also wish to thank the grown-ups who make them things to sell, and support them so loyally each year.

It will interest our children to know that Loders is helping to feed the giant Panda in the London Zoo. When an appeal was made for bamboo shoots, the nursery garden of Loders Court responded by despatching a few pounds, and has since been listed as a reserve supply.

Mr. and Mrs. Vincent, of Long Sutton, have come to live in Court Cottages, in the place of the Misses Hinks. Mr. Vincent works at Loders Mill. His three children, Raymond, Maurice and Carol, will be welcome reinforcements for Loders School, which is going through one of its periodic shortages of pupils.

Carolling has been very much in vogue at Askerswell this Christmas. Miss McCombie and past and present pupils of the school sang at all the homes within range, on two nights, and received a great welcome, being plied at house after house with refreshments which defeated even their appetites. On the first night, one of steady rain, the hot mince-pies and coffee were specially welcome, and the carollers wish us to extend their thanks to all who received them so hospitably. Askerswell bell fund has benefitted by £6 from the collection. Loders Choir did its customary round on behalf of the Children's Society, and with the help of the Paul Masters choir at Matravers, collected £10. Their progress was not as Bacchanalian as Askerswell's. At Upton Peep they enjoyed Mrs. Lenthall's customary hospitality, and further fortification from Mrs. Dennett. After singing on the second night, they repaired to the big fireplace in Loders Vicarage for the usual winding-up feast, and were pleased to have with them a former parishioner, Lieut. Donald Scott, who was on Christmas leave.

The Whist Drive run by the Askerswell Community Club in aid of the School made the satisfactory profit of £18.7/-.

Children's Parties. After doing a nativity play which produced £3.4/- for the School fund and entranced the parents, Askerswell children devoted themselves to their own amusement - games, Christmas tree, presents and tea. Captain Mason brought them in a supply of pop for the games, and gave a prize for a competition. The children, and indeed all the parish, were grieved to know that on the day following their friend was in hospital, and very ill. Loders children also had a gay time, with tree, games, presents, and a sumptuous tea. Later, the parents made a presentation to Mrs. Hinde. For Loders children the dull days after Christmas were enlivened by Sir Edward and Lady Le Breton's party at Loders Court, which followed the time-honoured ritual of conjuring and Punch and Judy, followed by tea and crackers, and the presentation by Master Edward Laskey of an orange and a half-crown to each child. Cheers for host and hostess were raised by David Skeats. The 60 guests included five sets of twins!

Services in January

<u>Loders:</u>	4th.	H.C. 8 & 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>Askerswell:</u>	4th.	Evensong 6.30.	11th. Matins 10.
	18th.	Evensong 6.30.	25th. H.C. 10.
<u>Dottery:</u>	4th.	H.C. 9.30.	11th. Evensong 3.
	18th.	Evensong 3.	25th. Evensong 6.30.

Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent, falls early this year, on Feb. 11th, because Easter is early. An early Easter means a certain amount of inconvenience for schools, and is not welcomed by those who cater for holidaymakers. So your Editor was not surprised to be asked recently by a schoolmaster and a caterer what on earth could be the objection to a fixed Easter. The caterer had grudgingly to admit that fixing Easter would not fix the weather; for English weather utterly abhors working to rule; and the schoolmaster had to admit that there is something to be said for keeping Easter under the same moon as looked down on Jesus Christ in the garden of Gethsemane. Only bad customs should be allowed to die. Thank goodness the almost universal English custom of "threshing the hen" on Shrove Tuesday is quite dead. On Shrove Tuesday any hen that had not laid was liable to be chased round the farmyard by the men, blindfolded, with cudgels, and the one to kill her got her for his dinner. If the hens were all laying, then a cock would be the object of this sport. Sometimes he was suspended in an earthenware pot to be shied at, becoming the property of the first man to kill him after the pot had been broken. The custom of the Shrove Tuesday pancakes has not only survived, but is "going strong". A writer in 1634 might well be describing something that still goes on in some of our old schools today, and is echoed in every home, when he says: "Every stomach is fritter-filled, as well as heart can wish; And every man and maid doe take their turne and tosse their pancakes up for feare they burne; And all the kitchen doth with laughter sound to see the pancakes fall upon the ground". The pancakes may, and should, remind us of the Lenten fast that they precede, and the name Shrove Tuesday should remind us of the sins which need to be repented of and forgiven. Lent is nowadays more honoured in the breach than the observance, and at a time when the need for it is greater than ever. This is what a business man (not a clergyman, mark you), a loyal son of the English Church, wrote about Lent in the seventeenth century:- "The Lenten fast is undertaken to restrain the looser appetites of the flesh, and to keep the body under; to give the mind liberty and ability to consider and reflect; to humble ourselves before God under a sense of our sins and the misery to which they expose us; to express revenge against ourselves for the abuse of those good things God alloweth us to enjoy and of which we have made ourselves unworthy by excesses; to raise in our minds a due valuation of the happiness of the other world when we despise the enjoyment of this. Above all, to make it acceptable to God, it should be accompanied with fervent prayer, and a charitable relief of the poor, whose miseries we may the better guess at when we are bearing some of the inconveniences of hunger". If you are one of those who say There are no poor nowadays, we would answer Look at the refugees.

The church services on Ash Wednesday will be: Loders, 9 a.m. and 10 a.m.; Askerswell, 11 a.m.; Dottery, 7.30 p.m. There will be no special Lent services because the ordinary services offer ample opportunity for the discharge of the duty of public worship.

The infant daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Francis, of Yondover, was christened Anne Leslie during the children's service in Lodgers Church on Jan. 25th. A boy was born to Mr. and Mrs. Hiscocks, of Welplot, in Bridport Hospital on Jan. 16th. At first his condition gave rise to anxiety, but at the time of going to print he was making progress.

Young life at Nine Bottles. Mr. and Mrs. Bailey and their three young children have arrived at Nine Bottles. They come from Cadnam. Mr. Bailey is the new cowman at Lower Sturthill. The two cottages at Nine Bottles now contain twelve young people, which just about equals the rest of Askerswell's juvenile population together. The village school is grateful for this unexpected accession of reinforcements. For the first time in many years it is the proud possessor of twins, the daughters of Mr. and Mrs. Turner, newly arrived at North Eggardon; and it has welcomed Andrew and Christine Gill, from Mauritius, who are staying for the present with Miss McCombie. Which goes to show how unpredictable is the future. Estimates of the future population of the school, often gloomy ones, are made, and fears are entertained for the continuance of the school; then the very heavens seem to open and rain down children.

Taking the plunge. Mr. Charlie Barnes, of Dottery, and his fiancée, Miss Phyllis Lee, of Bothenhampton, caused a flutter-in-the-dovecotes among their many friends and admirers by getting married, and thus bringing to fruition a courtship which is reckoned by those who know to have been twelve years in the budding and blossoming. As our readers will already have supposed, Mr. Barnes had to face a barrage of banter at the wedding feast, but his own good sense of humour enabled him to return all that he received, with interest. To the jest that he and his lady had been a long time sizing each other up, he could reply that there was more in them than in most people to consider. His bride and he had this further laugh over their friends, that when they did elect to take the plunge, they chose the wettest day imaginable, ensuring that everybody should take a plunge of some sort. But the elements without only made the gaiety within the village hall of Bothenhampton more congenial. Mr. and Mrs. Barnes are to take up farming on their own account at Waytown. They will be sorely missed on their parents' farms, where by all accounts they more than pulled their weight.

The advantage of a church school belonging to the Diocesan Voluntary Schools Association has long been apparent to the school managers, and should now become clear to the people of Askerswell. Shortly before Christmas, the County Architect did his routine inspection of Askerswell school, and noted certain very necessary repairs. A builder has since estimated the cost of these at £148. Were the school outside the Voluntary Schools Association, the entire cost would fall, through the managers, on to the parish. But because the school is a member of the V.S.A., and pays an annual premium of £14, the V.S.A. will pay the whole £148, which is extra to the £25 it paid for repairs last year. Askerswell School lacks wash-basins, such as were fitted to Loders School, and Miss McCombie suggested converting the present fuel store into a cloakroom. The Architect said that this was feasible, and a builder has estimated the cost at £142. As an improvement, this would be outside the scope of the V.S.A., but would attract (lovely expression, this, and official, too) a Ministry grant of 50%, and possibly more. At their next meeting the Managers will have to decide whether to embark the parish on this project. The school is parish property, and there is likely to be no hesitation about improving the building at the Ministry's expense. Askerswell Church has not yet been asked to find the £14 school premium. In the hey-day of the Community Club, the hiring of the school financed the premium, and now that the school is in less demand for social purposes, our old friend the jumble sale has come to the rescue. Loders school is also a member of the V.S.A., from which it has reaped considerable financial benefit. Being a bigger school than Askerswell, it has to pay a bigger premium, £20 per annum. Of this, the church collections have always contributed £10, leaving the managers to find the rest. The church collections cannot reasonably be expected to pay the whole school premium; for church expenses, notably that large item called The Quota, are always increasing, whereas the collections are not. At present the Loders managers are £20 in arrear with their share of the premium. Last time they were in arrear, one of their number, Mrs. George Randall, raised what was necessary by means of a social. It is hoped to discharge the present obligation by a jumble sale on Thursday, Feb. 26th, at 3.30 p.m. Jumble and anything else, especially cakes, will be welcome at the school, and we are sure that all who value the village school will rally to its support.

The excessive rain of January caused little in the way of flooding in our neighbourhood, but produced many landslips in our steep-banked lanes. The knights of the road were to the rescue with their usual alacrity, but found that it was not always a simple matter of shovelling loose earth into a lorry. One innocent-looking heap of earth in School Lane had inside it a boulder which all the king's horses and men could not lift into a lorry. By the way, a coal merchant's lorry that was descending Yellow Lane found the road completely blocked by a landslip. Using all his skill, and with some good luck, the driver managed to back up the steep and narrow way, and came down School Lane, intending to approach Bridport by the road round Loders Court. But as he neared the Court, a tree fell across the road, and the driver, thanking his lucky stars that he had not been a minute or two sooner, backed again, and this time made for home via New Road. For the ladies, January made local history in that the washing hung on the line for a whole week, and one housewife, who is normally scornful of all human contraptions, was found in Bridport enquiring about something called a spin drier. She even commended it to the Vicarage, as a worthy object of the next Easter offering. We have had so many enquiries about the assistant Sunday School organist's adventure in France, that we make bold to answer them here. For those who do not know, she is an eleven-year-old daughter of the Vicarage, Juliet Willmott, who is doing six months at a French school in Le Mans. This is in exchange for the hospitality given to a French boy last summer. She had a sad parting with the three cats who share her attic bed in the Vicarage. (They, with Snowball the white rabbit, and Isaiah the hamster, were all on parade to see her off). She did the sea journey from Southampton to Le Havre alone, and arrived safely at Le Mans under escort, where she has had her first meal of snails, and is settling down, albeit a little homesickly. Her first letter began "Dear Everybody - How is Tiddles?" and ended with copious love to all the animals. With apt symbolism, on the first Sunday of her absence, the organ failed at Sunday School, and the light went out of church and vicarage.

Services in February

<u>Loders:</u>	1st.	H.C. 8 & 11.45: Matins 11: Children 2.	
	8th.	H.C. 8: Matins 11: Children 2.	
	11th.	(Ash Wednesday) Children 9: Communion 10.	
	15th.	H.C. 8 & 11.45: Matins 11: Children 2.	
	22nd.	H.C. 8: Matins 11: Children 2.	
<u>Askerswell:</u>	1st.	Evensong 6.30.	8th. Matins 10.
	11th.	(Ash Wednesday) 11.	
	15th.	Evensong 6.30.	22nd. H.C. 10.
<u>Dottery:</u>	1st.	H.C. 9.30.	8th. Evensong 3.
	11th.	(Ash Wednesday) 7.30.	