

This issue was begun to be written on Thursday, December 27th, the feast of St. John the Evangelist, and the writer was thanking providence that the tempest then blowing over the west country had not come on Christmas day. Rain was lashing the south wall of the vicarage, having brought down a heap of external plaster and tiles. A post inside the french window of the study only just managed to keep the window from caving in. On the church tower the flag of St. George had been blown off his perch and was clinging miserably to the spout of a gargoyle. In the churchyard the marble tombstone that had been leaning for months at an angle of a hundred and sixty degrees was still leaning at the same angle, while one of inferior stuff that had stood stiffly to attention was flat on the grass, face downwards, and shattered, never to stand again. The river was over its banks, and the victims of the earlier flooding were getting nervous. But what of the dustmen trying to empty dustbins into their juggernaut on the highly exposed road up to Colfox? And having to retrieve the contents of some bins from the road before they could be got into the grinder?

By contrast, Christmas day was perfection. The bitter cold of Christmas Eve that had reduced the attendance at the Loders midnight service from last year's overcrowded to a mere full, was gone. The sun was shining, the hedges glistening, the air not cold but nicely tart. At the Dottery service the farming community and the faithful "old boys and girls" were all on parade, some with their infants, one of whom sang "Baa Baa black sheep" as the communicants went up to the altar. At Askerswell one of two little girls who went up to be blessed - with parents and grandparents - was clutching a big toy fox, which reminded us of the tame fox that lately breakfasted with Miss Thwaites' cats, and has now vanished. At Loders a full church for the family service much enjoyed a selection of carols by the seven young "songsters of Loders church", singing by the tree on the chancel step. In the build-up to Christmas the weather had been a mixture of bad and good. It favoured the Askerswell carol service, for which there was a full church. The readers of the nine lessons performed remarkably well, and were representative of old and new parishioners, neither was there any generation gap. A choir of the local W.I. sang two carols, accompanied by instrumentalists of the Colfox evening class. This was quite delectable, but not enough to satisfy. We hope to have more of them next time. Loders school had a fine afternoon for their carol service in church, and a big congregation of adoring parents. The collection for the children of soldiers killed in Ulster was £30.00. As usual the round of carol services had begun in the Uploders chapel, and this year with a flourish. The chapel was the hub of the parish as cars and a minibus brought in the congregation from far afield. Some twenty members of the Bridport United Church youth orchestra filled the rostrum, and under their conductor - and creator - the Reverend Norman Skinner, proved how well deserved is their fame. The Loders Youth Club made their first venture into religion as a body by singing carols from the gallery opposite the rostrum. The chapel steward, Mr. Joe Morris, welcomed the visitors from other churches. Among these was a little five-year old girl from Wimborne who read one of the lessons beautifully. The collection, of £23, was for the day care centre at Chancery House.

Anxious enquirers after Mr. Leslie Smith, the Askerswell lay reader, who had a fall during the Loders midnight service, will like to know that he was little the worse for it in spite of his hip operation a few weeks ago, and was on duty in Askerswell church on Christmas morning. In the dim light of the Loders "midnight", he was on his way to the altar to assist the vicar in the administration of communion when he tripped over a step, and fell at the feet of the Viscount Hood. Frank Good, a St. John Ambulance officer in the congregation, was quick to see that this was an accident, and not an act of homage, and came at the double to the rescue. Fortunately his skills were not much needed.

Loders children had two Christmas parties this year. There was the usual one for the school, consisting of a super abundant tea, then games, then presents from Father Christmas. This was followed by one in the village hall for village children only, and was the gift of the Entertainment Committee. By all accounts it was hugely enjoyed, and by parents as well as children. One gentleman provided all the entertainment - conjuring, puppets and ventriloquism. Crisps and squash were the refreshment, and Father Christmas had a present for each child.

On Saturday afternoon, January 19th, the Entertainment Committee are holding a jumble sale in Loders village hall for their funds.

The Christmas concert at Loders school was as remarkable for the adroit use of very limited space as for the performance itself. There was so big a crowd of pupils and parents that there seemed to be no room to move, in the auditorium, on the stage, or in the dressing room. Yet the ambitious programme did not suffer. There was a dramatic presentation of ghosts and skeletons called "Hallowe'en"; instrumental items by cello, violins and recorders, and finally a "Nativity musical", where the tiny tots mimed the Christmas story to the accompaniment of Christmas songs by the older children. The sale which followed made £140.18 for the church overseas. Mrs. Willmott thanked the kind givers of saleable articles, and the school for the excellent show.

When some of the young people of Loders told the Village Appraisal that more should be done for the young, they followed precept with a practice. Under their leader, Alison



and, the four girls went carol singing from Well Plot to The Crown, and collected £7 for Dr. Barnardo's Home, and regaled themselves with sausages at their headquarters afterwards. The night before, they had been in the Uploders chapel singing carols for the old. Which is all to the good. The carollers connected with Loders church continued their collecting for the C. of E. Children's Society, which they have done without a break since 1947, and took nearly £56. In Uploders they were entertained by Mrs. Rust and Mrs. Sanctuary, and in Loders by the Hon. Mrs. Alexander Hood, Miss Edwards and Mrs. Budden. They ended up round a blazing yule log at the vicarage. One of the party, Mrs. Reg Kenway, had been one of the party in 1947, but as Peggy Pitcher.

December was ushered into Askerswell by a coffee morning and sale in the village hall. It was the church fund raising committee's last function of the year. It was a very pleasant business, though somewhat overshadowed by the news that Major Toby Gordon-Hall had received advance notice of a posting away from this neighbourhood. He and his wife Pat had been keen workers for the church. This event added £153.79 to the funds.

The last weeks of 1979 were not all merriment in Loders, as the foregoing paragraphs might suggest. We were shocked by the sudden death of Mr. George Owen's wife Jane, at the untimely age of fifty-nine. She was of too shy a nature ever to be in the limelight of village affairs but she was held in high esteem as a wife, mother, and daughter-in-law, and a supporter of good causes. There was a large congregation at her funeral in Loders church. She was buried in the churchyard, and under a mass of flowers. The second sudden decease, which some parishioners may not yet be aware of, was Mr. John Aldridge on the day before Christmas Eve. He was seventy-four. He and his wife lived in one of the former almshouses opposite the Loders Arms. He was usually to be seen at mid-day either going to, or coming from, his daily half-pint, waving his own tankard; and on this sad occasion he died within a quarter hour of coming home. His daughter came from Crewkerne and took the widow to her home. He was to be cremated at Yeovil, possibly after a post mortem examination. He and his wife were amiable components of the village scene, who stuck to their resolution not to get involved in village affairs. He had worked in the security department of an insurance company.

Economy cuts, so it seems, are not going to delay the building of a new school in Loders. Negotiations are proceeding for one on the site above High Acres, and the cost is visualised as being around a quarter of a million. The County are dead set on doing nothing to remedy the deplorable state of decoration of the old school, and the ladies among the school managers are equally dead set on doing the redecorating themselves. They will not believe in a new school before they see it. They will begin work these holidays. The headmaster has made a grant from the school fund to get them started. They hope that a jumble sale will supply the rest. The male managers - both of them - are keeping to what the media call a low profile. To be houseproud is a female affliction. On the afternoon of the Sunday after Christmas there was a full gathering in Loders church of the family of Andrew and Rosemary Thomas for the christening of their second child, Sophie Margaret. They were staying at his parents' home, the Old Mill, for Christmas, and were wearing an enviable sun-tan. Andrew teaches under the auspices of the United Nations in Fiji.

The Boxing Day frolic on the Well Plot playing field had a melodramatic background that the ladies and gentlemen playing hockey and rugby combined were unaware of. It appears that the Ayatollah Khomeini had got wind that one of the players would be - and was - our Commander Jimmy James, who had lately been posted from Whitehall to an assignment on one of our most sophisticated warships. The Ayatollah never underestimates a potential enemy. On his hot line to Kuddles, the star of the Boxing Day frolic, he requested a report on the Commander's moral fibre, as revealed by the frolic. Kuddles siezed this chance of diddling the Ayatollah. But he had to be careful. He rightly suspected that the stranger in the red balloon suit pacing the touchline was an Ayatollah agent checking on him, and that the lone car parked on the other side of the river housed another Ayatollah agent checking on the checker. So these were his tactics:- instead of himself he had a college lecturer, Chris Hill, refereeing the match in an undertaker's top hat to show how seriously the English take their sport. On a corner of the pitch he had a bamboo cage called the Sin Bin, for the incarceration of foul and cowardly players, with the vicar in charge. The Commander was the only player - surprisingly - that the referee relegated to the Bin, and the Commander exposed the depths of his own degradation by foraging in his kitbag as soon as he got into the Bin and swigging the liquor abhorred of the Ayatollah. Kuddles cunningly left the agent to inform the Ayatollah, and headed for The Crown and the hot punch freely bestowed on all comers by the amiable Maurice Lawson; whose life's work now is to stage this annual frolic. But the said Maurice was stripped of the Parochial Information Office and promoted - on the strength of the punch - to the Public Relations Office. He had been absolutely unaware of his part in foxing the Ayatollah!

The pantomime that the Loders Entertainment Committee were to have staged in January is now to be in March - perhaps to relieve the rigours of Lent?

#### SERVICES IN JANUARY

LODERS: 6th HC 8 & 12, Matins 11, Children 2. 13th HC 8, Matins 11, Children 2  
20th HC 8 & 12, Matins 11, Children 2. 27th HC 8, Matins 11, Children 2

ASKERSWELL: 6th Children 10, Evensong 6.30. 13th Matins 10. 20th F.S.10. 27th HC 10

DOTTERY: 6th HC 9.30. All others at 3.



In last month's account of the Christmas carolling we did not mention one in Askerswell, for which we are sorry. A party collected eleven pounds for the Cheshire Homes. Our theme this month is not carolling, but three of the parochial buildings of Loders - the church, the school and the vicarage.

The church has been redecorated. When a fresh whiteness began to move over the ceilings, and a suggestion of primrose across the walls, it was apparent how dingy the building had become. The painters have done a good job. They did it without moving the seats, which have the electric heating attached to them. This meant a lot of erecting, taking down, and re-erecting of scaffolding. They confessed with shame to having fused the chancel and lectern lights, which Maurice Lawson quickly repaired without having to be asked. The foreman came sadly to the conclusion that the ancient plaster ceiling of the nave has almost had its day. Replacing it will be a major work.

The senior classroom of the school was redecorated during the Christmas holidays by volunteers - Mr. & Mrs. Price, Mr. & Mrs. Prideaux, Mr. & Mrs. Collins and Mr. Cook. They made a good job of it, and hope to tackle the main building shortly. The driving force of the operation was Mrs. Prideaux, one of the school managers. It was her idea, and it was certainly not the enthusiasm of the chairman of the managers that propelled her along. She organised a bring and buy, to which the headmaster invited parents of the pupils only, and this raised over £130 to pay for the materials for the impending operation. Which rather supports the thesis that parents in all walks of life who care about their children's education are ready to do some paying and are selective about schools when they have a choice. Loders school lacks many of the amenities that educationists deem essential, but its reputation for teaching is deservedly high. Over a third of the pupils are from outside the parishes of Loders and Askerswell. Their parents deliver and collect them.

The storm of December 27th which took tiles off the vicarage and plaster off the south wall, and let water into the dining room, led to an inspection by the archidiaconal surveyor, who reported to the diocesan parsonages board that the south wall of the fifteenth century part of the vicarage is leaning outward under the weight of the superstructure added a century ago, and needs rebuilding. This would be a major work. It would make the dining room and probably kitchen and study uninhabitable for a while, and the bathroom and bedrooms above them. The vicar has agreed to the suggestion that he might move to Bell, and continue the cure of souls from there. Seeing that Powerstock is to be united with Loders, that the retired priest now caring for Powerstock wishes to be relieved of it, and that a more convenient house has to be provided for the incumbent of the new plurality, it seems probable that the vicar would not return to the vicarage. He could continue his vicarial duties from Bell until his successor was ready to take over.

The Loders Entertainment Committee jumble sale made £28 for their funds. It probably suffered from the school bring and buy the night previously, despite publicity having been confined to parents only..

The Askerswell congregation are pleased to have Nurse Dorothy Fooks in their midst again. She is on two months' leave from her work for the Grenfell Mission in Newfoundland and reckons to be home for good at midsummer. Her recently widowed sister, Mrs. Christine Savage, is appreciating her company.

It was a fine morning, and Loders church was still in the glory of its Christmas decorations, for the funeral of Mr. Roland Banfield, of Uploders, who died suddenly at a friend's party in Bradpole on new year's eve. The size of the congregation which came to sympathise with the widow and the one son was evidence of the general regard in which he was held. Fifteen families of remoter relatives in their cars followed the coffin to the church gate, where the vicar awaited it. To him the procession looked incredibly long. When the head stopped at the gate, the tail of the procession which seemed to reach the village shop, sloughed off and passed the coffin en route for Bradpole - reverent motorists showing a nice old fashioned respect for the dead? After the church service all the relatives followed the coffin to Yeovil crematorium. Later the ashes were buried in Loders churchyard. Mr. Banfield had done good work for the village hall finances as its treasurer. His presentation of the accounts and balance sheet at the annual meeting was a fleeting vision of what budget day at Westminster could be. But coins and stamps were his true hobby.

Susan and Douglas Boston are rejoicing at the birth of a son in Portway Hospital on 4th January. He was seven pounds and ten ounces. They and Susan's parents, Mr. & Mrs. David Smith, of Bridport Nat. West. Bank, are steadfast members of the Loders congregation. Dottery church has had some much needed attention of late. The glazing has been put right, and external paint put where it was most needed. A gale carried away the little heart-shaped window above the door. It was hopelessly decayed. A temporary cover of felt keeps out the weather. The professionals were not drawn to finnick jobs like this, so Mr. Scadden did the necessary. The parish also has cause to be grateful to Mr. Turner for bringing his own roto-scythe all the way from Axminster to cut the churchyard, and to the ladies who not only do the floral decorations but the cleaning of the church as well.

What a spring "Ho down" is the vicar does not know. He is told to say that one will be held in Askerswell village hall on Friday, February 29th. The dress will be Western style. Tickets will be obtainable from members of the hall committee, and are limited



to what the hall can take. Something unusual about the date suggests method in the madness - leap year?

"Black Janiveer" in Loders was lighted and cheered by a joyous wedding. The bride was Linda Newberry, of Post Farm, and the bridegroom Martin Legg, of Loders End, which is the new name for Court Cottages. He is a net machinist, but like his late father has a flair for farm work and is high in the esteem of those farmers who have found him a ready help in trouble. Linda is a hairdresser, in personal appearance an inducement to the ill favoured to make her their beautician. She is also a blessing to Loders church in being a skilled and dependable ringer. Her fellow ringers heralded her procession to, and recession from, the service with campanological fanfares. Choir and organ led a large congregation in the singing, some of whom could only find seats under the painters' scaffolding in the Lady Chapel. The wedding feast laid on at West Mead by Harry, the bride's father, was a model of ungrudging hospitality, enjoyed by everybody except perhaps himself, who was off his oats and drank only two glasses of Guinness, looking as if he needed Oxo. All former fathers of brides in the company felt for him. The greatest tribute to his generosity issued from that other Harry, the ringer. Full of his favourite "gin and pep", he could only say "Caw lummee". Bride and groom will not be obliged to leave the parish, as most young couples are. They are housed in one of the Boarsbarrow cottages, near the vicarage.

New parishioners continue to trickle into Loders, finding the usual welcome, and made to feel at home. There are four for the record. The new assistant gardener at Loders Court is Jack Allen. He and his wife Margaret are Cornish, though they come immediately from North Devon. They have three married children, living in Eire, Taunton and Tetbury. Jack is versatile. He has managed pigs and built a house. At ten High Acres are Robert Knapp, his wife Fiona, and their first babe, Sarah. They are both teachers from a big comprehensive school in Sheffield. Robert is now deputy head of Beaminster school. At fourteen High Acres are another family from the north - Lancashire. They are James Smith, a sales executive, his wife Jackie who works at Harbour House. Their three delightful children are Sharon (16) and Jason (13) at Colfox, and Sanchia (8) at Loders school. Another Lancashire family have been wafted into West Winds, Uploders. They are Michael Galpin, a solicitor with Bridport's Milne and Lyall, and his wife Grace, a primary school teacher. She says that her husband's passion for cricket is "really terrible". It will not be quenched until the Beaminster team take him on. They are somewhat choosy. He plays for the M.C.C.

A treat in store. Mr. and Mrs. Jordan at Purbeck Close are the parents of Patrick, head of the Old Malthouse School, Langton Matravers, whose choir have made a name for themselves singing services around Dorset once or twice a term. His offer to sing evensong at Loders on Sunday July 20th was greedily snapped up. We harbour happy memories of an earlier occasion when Michael Willmott brought the choir of Selwyn College Cambridge to camp on the vicarage lawn, and they gave a concert in crowded Loders church.

The wheelbarrow. All who know the Tudor fireplace in Loders vicarage - and they are legion - acknowledge it the best fireplace in the world. It was the deciding factor in the vicar's acceptance of the benefice thirty-three years ago, and thanks to the manorial lords who have allowed him to feed it on the defunct timber in their rookery, he is its devoted slave. It is beloved too of Sunday school, mothers' union, choir, ringers, church council, most of the congregation and his own scattered family, who have revelled in its warmth and aesthetic satisfaction. When he cut wood, his custom was to wheel the tools to the rookery, leave the barrow on the bank, which adjoins the road, carry the tools to the work, and wheel them home afterwards. One morning a truck drew up and abstracted the barrow from the bank when he was out of sight among the trees. It has not been recovered. He misses it. The tools were:- a 14 lb. sledge hammer, an axe, a crowbar, nine assorted steel wedges, and sometimes a chainsaw, a can of fuel, and a can of oil. But the parish misses it more. Their plaint against the vicar was his inaccessibility - not on the phone and never in when anybody called at the vicarage. The barrow pinned him down. The ladies in the Wednesday bus beheld it and nodded knowingly. It performed the office of an angler's float: the worm was out of sight, but not far away. Church services in February are as usual, except on Ash Wednesday, when it will be the school service at Loders at 9.15, the communion at 10, and at Askerswell the communion at 11.



The arrival of piped water and drainage in our district several years ago wrought a great change in Askerswell and Loders. New houses sprang up, including a housing estate in Uploders and another in Loders. Old cottages were sold at prices that would have stricken their former peasant owners dumb with disbelief. In their resurrected form they are mostly holiday homes, some with the retirement of their new owners as the chief end in view. On the whole the change has been for the better. Our derelict buildings have vanished and we have acquired nice new parishioners whose community spirit is often more robust than that of the "old originals". Change has come at last to Loders vicarage. A small and more convenient vicarage is to be built on the kitchen garden opposite the front door of the present vicarage, and the latter with the remainder of its curtilage sold as soon as possible. It turned out that the south wall of the dining room was not in imminent danger of collapse, as the Archdeacon's architect had supposed. The vicar called in a firm of structural engineers, the burden of whose report was that the rebuilding of the wall was a counsel of perfection rather than of present necessity. The West Dorset District Council architect, who was also called in, said that any application to demolish the vicarage would be rejected in no uncertain terms - the whole building, and not the fifteenth century part only, was protected, and it graced that part of the parish which was a conservation area. The W.D.D.C. architect bore out the finding of the engineers that the building as a whole was in good condition. He said that if the house were his, he would put a buttress to the leaning wall, which has been leaning a long time, and be happy to sleep for the next fifty years in the vicar's four-poster, which is kept poised between heaven and earth by the said wall.

So the vicar's removal to Bell will be a dignified and orderly retreat, not a rout. The transition from gracious living in a baby manor house to cottage life will be traumatic at first, but he hopes to learn, like St. Paul, to be content with whatsoever state in which he finds himself. How are the mighty fallen! For three centuries his spiritual forebear, the Prior of Loders, was effectual owner of the whole village. The new vicar will be sitting on all that is left of this, a tenement on the old vicarage cabbage patch, warming himself with calor gas, perhaps, while a lay magnate sits before the great fireplace where the vicars sat for nearly five centuries. "Money is the root of all evil" is the apposite text here. The stipend of Dr. Edersheim who was vicar in the 1880's was £300. That was then about ten times the wage of a cowman. Now a vicar's stipend falls short of a cowman's. Hence the shortage of clergy and the lumping together of parishes. The next vicar of Loders cum Powerstock and Rector of Askerswell will have five churches to look after. So he can well do without a manor sized house and garden.

Askerswell holds its Easter vestry and annual church meeting early. There was an excellent attendance this time - not that it is ever poor. Mr. Stanley Barrow reported that there were 72 on the church roll, 2 less than last year. Mrs. Barrow, the P.C.C. secretary, reported that the church council only met when necessary, and that was twice last year, and two less than the statutory number which seemed not even to worry Mrs. George Bryan, who is a stickler for the statutes. Mr. Jack Stevens, the people's warden, reported on the condition of the church fabric which was neither in apple pie order nor in need of anything urgent. The deanery synod members, Mrs. Martin Evans and Mr. Nick Nicholson, reported that the new diocesan social officer, who addressed the last synod, was terrific. They could have listened to him all night. Nothing succeeds like success, and by his account of what he had achieved in hot spots like Birmingham he was the obvious man for the job. He embodied all the virtues and none of the vices of the traditional English bobby (here the rector interjected that the officer was an ex Bobby, which pleased Mr. Barrow, who was that too). Major Toby Gordon-Hall presented a satisfactory treasurer's report (good treasurers are never enthusiastic about last year's giving for fear that the faithful might rest on their oars in the current year). Receipts were £1680.58, expenditure £1183.98 and credit balance £496.60. He was quick to point out that next year there might be a deficit. The new quota was greatly up on the old, and other increases in expenditure were a certainty.

The election of officers followed. The rector said he was bound to re-nominate Captain Lumby as his warden because at Bell he would be on the telephone, and Captain Lumby's was the only number he knew - Powerstock 215, in hymns ancient and modern "The Church's one foundation". Mr. Jack Stevens was unanimously re-elected people's warden. The church council and sidespersons were re-elected en bloc with the addition of Mrs. George Bryan to the church council. Major Toby Gordon-Hall announced that an impending posting made it expedient for him to decline re-election as treasurer. Mr. Nick Nicholson was put in his place and Mrs. Barrow re-instated as secretary. Mrs. Savage and Mrs. Barrow were re-appointed to the village hall committee; and Mr. Geoffrey Bellis, Mrs. Gordon-Hall and Mrs. Brook were elected fund raising committee with power to co-opt. As the meeting was about to close, the lay reader, Mr. Leslie Smith, moved a vote of thanks to the ringers, which was a gentlemanly reminder to the Rector that he had only thanked one or two of all those who were deserving of thanks. The significance of Mrs. Garrald's seemingly casual announcement that this would be her last Easter vestry only dawned on the Rector when she told him the following Sunday that she and her husband, an equally devoted church worker, would be leaving Askerswell in the autumn to live with some of their family. They will be missed horribly.

Mrs. Prideaux' Do-it-yourself party has finished re-decorating Loders school. The strikingly diverse colours of the two sections of the main room are the choices of Mrs.



Niven and Mrs. Norman, the teachers, and reflect the differences of their personalities. One of the parents, Mr. Christopher Anderson, has been inspired to propound a scheme for building another classroom on an interest-free loan put up by the school's well wishers. But the new school may not be as far off as the education cuts indicate. Mr. Price sounded County Hall, and the new school is still on the programme for 1981-2. That the Loders Entertainment Committee is still lively was proved by Mr. Nash's lovely posters proclaiming a jumble sale, which made £30. A picture in a local paper of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Good's dance group proclaimed that it is now a year old and full of promise.

Readers of these Notes have usually been eager to get hold of them as soon as they are published. Because they are intensely local, perhaps, hands seem to be waiting inside letter boxes to grab them. If they are late, some readers call at the vicarage and ask innocently if there is a mistake in their almanack. The publisher is deeply grateful to the distributors, who carry on in the spirit of the first distributors, the late Mrs. Olive Legg and Mrs. May Osborne. At Askerswell Mrs. Christine Savage has been functioning for nearly 28 years; at Dottery Miss Rene White has been serving a readership scattered over several parishes, and doing it for over eleven years - on a bicycle. The distributor of the greatest number is Mrs. Willmott, in Loders, who also does most of them that go by post. Mrs. Nash and Mrs. Plows look after High Acres. Lower Loders is lucky to be under the wing of Mrs. Record, who takes them round hot from the press with the daily papers. The glory of Uploders is that distribution there has been an oecumenical effort. For nearly seven years it has been presided over by Mrs. Jessica Dunn, who is a Roman Catholic, helped by Mr. Joe Morris, who is a Methodist, and relieved at holiday times by Mr. Maurice Lawson and Mr. Phill Young, who are High and Low Anglicans respectively. Many hands make light work, but not invariably quick work - apparently - and the vicar was much asked if he could not expedite the Uploders distribution. Fearful of upsetting its oecumenical character, he raised the matter as tactfully as he could with Mrs. Dunn, offering her more help, but some of the correspondence will show that he only exploded the oecumenical effort. He is sorry for this, but assures Jessica that he still has a very soft spot for her. Mrs. Dunn to Mr. Lawson: "The vicar called on me today and informed me that several people felt they did not get their parish notes quick enough. I know that I was rather late at Christmas because of illness. After nearly seven years of trudging round with the notes I find this complaint quite unacceptable and churlish. I've no wish to distribute the notes as from this moment. So I have compiled a list for you and now leave the matter in your hands". Mrs. Dunn to the vicar: "I should be grateful if you would include the attached statement in the parish notes next month. As you will appreciate, I have made many friendly relationships in Uploders while distributing your notes and I have been asked why I have given up. People are quite amazed when I tell them of your complaint. It would appear there are more satisfied customers than complainers. I should like it generally known why I have given up". The attached statement was: "Mrs. Dunn will no longer be distributing the parish notes in Uploders. Her decision follows upon a visit from the vicar, who acquainted her with the fact that some people in Uploders had complained that they did not get the notes quickly enough. Mrs. Dunn has performed this service for the village for nearly seven years". From a grateful parishioner to the vicar: "We would like to tell you how sorry we are that Mrs. Dunn will not be round with the parish notes any more. We would like you to thank her on behalf of our parishioners for her stoical service for the last seven years, delivering them in all winds and weathers, over a large area. We shall miss her cheery face with her kind word for everyone. I hope you will print this in your next notes". Mrs. Hardwick to Mr. Lawson: "Please would you cancel the church newsheet for me. I do not care for its impersonal delivery. Indeed I used to look forward to seeing Jessica more than actually reading the newsheet. I am sure you will understand".

Mrs. "Addy" Twyman of Bradpole, a member of our Paul family - of happy memory - says in a letter to Mrs. Willmott that she is obliged to give up a labour of love. For several years it is she who has been responsible for the floral display in the piscina of the Ladye Chapel in Loders church. When she performed this work of art was something of a mystery. On the rare occasions when the vicar saw her doing it and could thank her she recoiled as though caught robbing an offertory box. Advancing years made Mill Hill too much of a puff for her, and being knocked down by a bicycle did not help.

Thanks are also due to Mr. Jack McDowall and Colonel Rowan Stack for whitewashing the church porch, and to Mr. Bill Tiltman for hanging curtains. The de-wormer of pews would not thank us for mentioning him: he dislikes being too much in the public eye.

The Lord Bishop of Salisbury retires next year. It is fitting that his dynamic ministry should end with a bang, not a whimper. His operation IMPACT, reaching its climax in 1981, is aimed at confronting non-committed Christians in every parish of the diocese with the need to be committed, and the first salvo was his letter, read in every church on the first Sunday in Lent.

#### SERVICES IN MARCH

Loders:	2nd HC 8 and 12, Matins 11, Children 2.	23rd HC 8, Matins 11, Children 2
	9th HC 8, Matins 11, Children 2.	30th (Palm Sunday) HC 8,
	16th HC 8 and 12, Matins 11, Children 2.	Matins 11, Children 2.
Askerswell:	2nd Children 10, Evensong 6.30	23rd HC 10
	9th Matins 10.	30th Matins 10
	16th Family Service 10.	
Dottery:	2nd HC 9.30. All others at 3..	Uploders Chapel: All at 6.30.



A Passiontide and Easter sermonette. Summer time came in by parliamentary decree on Passion Sunday, and was something of a joke. With it in some parts of England came the worst weather of the winter. Here the premature tulips in Miss Smelt's pavement pots and the pink rhododendron at Mrs. Banfield's were blasted by Siberian winds, an indication that the fundamental things of life do not dance to the parliamentary piper. For the vicar the motto of the Carthusian monks in his study took on a new significance. It is "Stat crux dum volvitur orbis", which in these post-Copernican days might be freely translated as "The Cross stands firm while the world goes round in circles". The world turns on the theory that man's highest good is in the pursuit of happiness and doing what he likes. The Cross proves that his highest good comes from doing his duty to God and his neighbour, which means a self-sacrificing life. Where there is no Cross, there can be no Easter crown.

On Good Friday at Loders there will be the Litany at 9 and the devotional service at 11. At Askerswell the devotional service will be at 10.

On Easter Day the services will be: Loders 8 and 12 noon Holy Communion, 11 matins and 2 Children; Askerswell Holy Communion 10 and Evensong 6.30; Dottery Holy Communion 9; Uploders Chapel 6.30. Easter is the one day of the year of which the Prayer Book says that every communicant member of the church should take communion.

The annual church meeting for Loders and Dottery will be in Loders school on Friday, 11th April, at 7.30 p.m. Church accounts are presented and officers appointed for the ensuing year. Any interested parishioner is welcome to attend. Askerswell has a much better attendance record for this important meeting than Loders.

So much for the notices affecting the spiritual welfare of the parish: now for one affecting the body politic, from Anthony Sanctuary, "The Dorset structure plan is now under preliminary public discussion. Anybody who would like further information and who wishes to offer suggestions please contact the Loders Structure Plan Co-ordinator, Councillor Robin Upton, the Crown Inn, as soon as possible". The message was delivered at the vicarage by Councillor Robin himself, who laid it on that this was an opportunity not to be missed for anybody with useful ideas on local development to get them into the County's fifteen year structure plan. For once the County is all ears.

Amber Upton has been awarded a scholarship to the licensed victualler's boarding school at Slough - a credit not only to her but to Loders school, where she has been receiving primary education.

Mothering Sunday saw the customary flower ritual in our three churches. At Askerswell the children brought a colourful basket of posies to the altar at the beginning of service and distributed them to the congregation at the end; at Loders the young ladies of the junior church distributed posies among the senior citizens but hadn't enough for Uploders; at Dottery Angela Johnston was as usual at the church door with her basket of primroses giving bunches to the congregation as they left.

The infant son of Mr. and Mrs. Roy Haggett was baptised Mark Roy in Loders church on Mothering Sunday. They live at Middle Pymore. There was a large turn-out of relatives and friends.

The confetti outside Loders church left the Mothering Sunday worshippers in no doubt that there had been a wedding. It was on the day previous, announced by the chimes, enlivened by the organ, and beautified by the dresses of the bride and her maids. The bride was Karen Jean, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Roy Sheppard, of Uploders Farm, and the bridegroom Richard Hall Goodwin, son of Mrs. and the late Ronald Goodwin, of Weymouth. The large congregation went to West Mead for the reception: some of the Weymouth contingent misguidedly went somewhere else first.

The annual assembly of the Askerswell parish meeting was remarkably well attended. Group Captain Deric Newall said he had been chairman for five years and would like to stand down. He was unanimously re-elected. He insisted on there being a vice-chairman because he was often away. Mrs. Gill Evans accepted this post - a new one for Askerswell - on the understanding that it did not precipitate her into the chair next year. Mr. George Bryan thought his rent for the parish land should be increased from £10 to £12. Recovering quickly from their surprise at this unfarmly conduct, the meeting agreed, and raised the £1 rent of Mr. Churchill's parish plot by 25%. The meeting confirmed a halfpenny precept on the rate for the coming year, and allocated the village hall and the churchyard £30 each out of the proceeds. Mr. Jack Stevens agreed to varnish the parish noticeboard, and Mr. Graham Foot to be Contact Officer for Emergencies to the West Dorset District Council. Mr. Boucher offered to cut certain grass.

By all accounts the leap year "Ho Down" run by the Askerswell Village Hall committee was a great success, and the parish should be the better mentally and physically for having let its hair down.

The headmaster was able to give Loders school managers the good news that the £150 raised by Mrs. Prideaux' working party had been exactly enough to pay for the redecoration of the classrooms. County permission to do the decoration arrived a month after the job was done! He reported that the school had been unable to use the village playing field for matches because it was so soggy. The correspondent was asked to tell this to the parish council. The headmaster reported that next term the number of children taking school meals was likely to shrink from 40 to 25 because of the increase in price to 45p, and only one child would be getting a free meal. The number of children in the school had reached a peak of 78, entitling it to eleven fifty-fifths of an extra teacher, which



meant that Mrs. Jan Collins would be augmenting the staff all day on Mondays. A parent's suggestion that an extra classroom should be supplied from an interest-free loan raised by friends of the school had prompted a request to the County to clarify the position regarding the proposed new school. The County reply confirmed that it was still the plan to build the school in 81-82, but difficulties over the site were holding it up. If these persisted, Loders might forfeit its priority. The correspondent was asked to bring this to the notice of the owner of the site, and beseech his good offices to expedite the business.

A coffee morning held by Mrs. Banfield at her home in Uploders made £31 for the fund being raised for the orphaned daughter of the Beaminster mother who died after a heart transplant operation. Those who ventured into the bitter wind were well rewarded by the hospitality of Mrs. Banfield and her helpers.

Two new families have been welcomed into Loders. Twenty-six High Acres, vacated by Mr. and Mrs. Julian Stone, is now the home of Mr. Robert Smith, his wife Jennifer, and their children Lucy (7) and Anthony (6). They come from Derbyshire. He is a chartered accountant, working with Burroughs, in Bridport. Home Farm Close in Uploders has acquired Mr. Frank Davies and his wife Sarah. They are from Surrey. Their children are away, and married.

Air Vice Marshal and Mrs. Adams reckon to be leaving Loders in June to join their family in North America, so Loders Parish Council will be losing a sagacious chairman, and the West Dorset District Council a conscientious member. The social life of the neighbourhood will be minus the ministrations of a gracious hostess. So embedded are the Adams in the local order of things that it is hard to believe they have only been here seven years. We wish them all the best.

It is gratifying to see the flowering of the community spirit in former stalwarts of Loders church Sunday school. At eleven years Pauline Crabb left the Brownie pack to become pack leader, and was that till she was sixteen. From then till eighteen she was a young leader. Now she holds the warrant of a Brownie guider, and has only missed three of the Friday sessions. Her sister Helen holds a guider warrant with the Guides. Tessa Hyde, slowly recovering from a ski-ing accident, has been awarded the Queen's Guide badge. Hembury Mill, Askerswell, retained some of its old-world flavour after ceasing to be a mill because four of the family who worked it still made it their home - three brothers and a sister - and they had the nice old habit of assembling to receive the Rector when he made a pastoral visit. Sadly that close little community has been broken by the death within two weeks of each other of two of the brothers, Tom aged 77, and William aged 74. They were buried in the same grave, each after a "quiet" service in church suitable to quiet men. The church council is grateful for a donation of £33 to church funds in respect of Tom, and another to come in respect of William. Tom started his working life with horses, successively at the Bridport Greyhound, the Dorchester Kings Arms, and Uploders House. William worked in the mill, humping 240 lb sacks of maize and 260 lb bags of beans from the delivery wagons to the grinding department. When Tom was 19, he persuaded William, who was 16, to go with him to the U.S.A. to work with an uncle who was farming there. They prospered. William stayed for many years and married there. Tom returned after 8 years and bought the mill they had been renting. He used to help poor families when they had a death by taking the coffin to church in his wagon. When William returned to Askerswell he startled parishioners with his zeal for keeping fit. They, coming down the steep road from Eggardon in a car, sometimes passed him running up - at 70 plus. Local hearts will ache for Ella and Bob, the remaining two, in their sadness.

The Vicar writes: "Interest in the vicarage is so lively, and questions so frequent, that I had better give the present position. The vicarage, minus the site of the new one, is to be offered for sale in June. Plans are being devised for a new one on the kitchen garden. A large-scale ordnance map I turned out the other day says that Loders Court is on the site of the old manor house, and the vicarage kitchen garden is the site of the Benedictine priory - built at the beginning of the 12th century. What more fitting than that the new Loders vicarage should stand where Loders priory stood? My wife dug out a school-boy letter from Edward Laskey, then of Loders Court, to my boys Mickey and Chuck. He was writing from London: (original spelling) "I hope you are very well. How are the birds. If they want to go away dont stope them. Because who nose they may come back, next summer. does anyone no about the birds and is Chucles on our side. is the den made you no the ten down in the wood. How are you geting on at scool. P.T.O. Has the horn been taken, dont let anyone see this letter. with love from edward." Edward is now a barrister, and Mickey and Chuck have made their mark in the teaching and military professions respectively.

#### SERVICES IN APRIL

Loders	13th	HC 8, Matins 11, Children 2.
	20th	HC 8 and 12, Matins 11, Children 2.
	27th	HC 8, Matins 11, Children 2..
Askerswell	13th	Matins 10,
	20th	Family Service 10
	27th	HC 10.
Dottery		All services at 3
Uploders Chapel		All services at 6.30.



We apologise to the clerk of the weather for the remarks in our last issue about his perversity. He did us proud at Easter with weather that we ourselves could not have improved upon. It appears to have brought lots of people to church all over the country, and our three churches were no exception. The Loders matins was crowded. At Askerswell and Dottery the attendance was proportionately still more impressive; for at each the number was about half of the local population. Communicants totalled 243 (Loders 165, Askerswell 48 and Dottery 30). The vicar is grateful to the kind contributors to the Easter offering, which is part of his stipend. Altogether the Easter day collections were £206.76 (Loders £141.76, Askerswell £57.60 and Dottery £7.40). In each church the decorators excelled themselves once again: at Askerswell post-reformation history was probably made by the Sunday school, who gave palm crosses to the congregation as they left church on Palm Sunday. Decorators are publicly thanked for their good offices: ringers and choir only privately. The latter also functioned to everybody's satisfaction: at Loders matins the congregation had no doubt of their own ability to sing, but they conceded admiringly that the anthem showed that the choir could do better. Loders Easter vestry and annual church meeting was not well attended. The congregation seems well content to let the vicar rule without parliament. One young lady called him the Ayatollah Willmott: had it been the name of the great John Paul the Second she had taken in vain, she might have gone across his knee. The revision of the church roll had taken off twenty names and put on twenty-three, making the current total 235. All the officials willing to continue in office for the ensuing year were re-appointed, and the few gaps filled. An invitation of the Honourable Alexander Hood to hold the fete again at Loders Court was gratefully accepted, and Saturday August 2nd agreed as the date. This year there is to be a brass band, presumably producing traditional music to marry the delight of the ear to that of the eye. The proposed new school, being a church one, figured appropriately on the agenda. The owner of the site above High Acres, insisted upon by the County, lamented that the County would shortly get its way, having rejected an alternative site he had offered which would have spared the inhabitants of the quiet enclave of High Acres the traffic of the new school. The annual church meeting is one time of the year when the laity are free to express an opinion about the church services. But how great a fire can one spark kindle. A layman asked whether the responses at matins could not be speeded up. The fuse reached the choir in no time and they, naturally, blew up the vicar for not defending them. He thought when their spokespersons upbraided him that he had lost choir and organist for ever. But there they were on the following Sunday as if nothing had happened. The spirit of turning other cheek had prevailed over the tetchy artistic temperament.

The statement of accounts at the Easter vestry showed that Loders church collections for the year ended 31st December 1979 were £2253.02, and covenants with tax recoveries £1018.43. Other offerings came to £564.54. Chief items of expenditure were: Quota £1356, church expenses £1392.41, and donations to missions, Christian aid, Earl Haig's fund and local flood relief, etc. £820. The church repair fund had received £1533.21 from the fete and £579.45 from donations. Trusts and interest had produced £1394.82. A sum of £1800 had been spent on redecoration of the church interior. The treasurer warned that if giving did not increase to meet this year's heavy increases of expenditure - quota, for example, up by £637 - the income and expenditure account could sink into "the red". The vicar remarked that the repair fund looked well nourished, but needed to be to meet the annual rate of dilapidation of a building like Loders church and the costly machinery of organ and bells. Steady annual provision eliminated sudden frantic appeals for large sums.

Dottery accounts showed receipts of £225.08 and a credit balance of £55.44. The repair fund stood at £927.72. The kind offer of Miss Rene White to improve the path from the road to the church door was gratefully accepted. Within a fortnight the congregation found themselves walking on a fine concrete highway, which was air compared with the slippery clay they had had to negotiate in wet weather.

A little local difficulty has arisen at Askerswell over the cutting of the churchyard graves. Last year's operatives were unwilling to renew their contract, so in a spirit of self help characteristic of them, the churchwardens organised a party of mowers and clippers. They bid us thank "Charles, Michael, Andrew, Nick, Stan, Chris and Simon". Future cutting arrangements are to be settled by the executive. The church council are grateful to friends of the late William Marsh for a donation of £32 to church funds in lieu of funeral flowers.

Mr. Joe Morris, steward of the Uploders chapel, writes: "We have to do some outside painting to the windows and door of the little chapel, and we are holding a jumble sale, bring and buy etc., in the hall of the Bridport United Church on Saturday 10th May, from 10 - 12. This will be held in conjunction with our West Bay church, and coffee will be available. I shall be glad to receive any gifts here (Dulcie Domum, New Road) for transmission to Bridport".

Mr. Nick Balfour, chairman of Loders village hall committee, writes: "A meeting will be held in the hall on Tuesday, 6th May, at 7.30 p.m. to which all residents of Loders and Uploders are invited. Its purpose is to give the hall management committee an opportunity to explain their short and long range plans for the improvement of the hall and invite discussion. An appeal will be made for as many volunteers as possible to help in the work to be done. It is hoped that the village will seize this opportunity of doing something practical for their village hall".



The fifth of May is a bank holiday, and in the morning thereof coffee may be drunk socially at the Uploders Crown to the financial benefit of the village hall.

The May Fair at Loders school on Saturday 17th May begins at 2.30 p.m. Mrs. Alex Adams, wife of the chairman of Loders parish council, will crown the May Queen: they are leaving shortly for the U.S.A. Like good wine, the May Fair needs no bush. It is the sole sustenance of the fund so vital to the well being of the school.

Post Farm, Loders, sent a second matrimonial couple to the local altar within three months, which is something of a record. On 19th of January it had been Linda Newberry and Martin Legg: on 5th April it was Derrick Newberry and Dawn Macbeth, the latter having the advantage of a church in its Easter glory as well as bells and organ. The reception was at West Mead. Derrick and Dawn are making their home in a caravan at Post Farm. His work promises to keep them in the parish. A similar promise regarding Linda and Martin has not materialised. They have lately taken over the village shop and post office at Morcombe Lake. The loss of Linda means that the tower is in need of recruits. Captain Frank Good or tower warden Harry Crabb would receive any with open arms.

The late Mr. Reginald Mears, of Melplash, who died in Crewkerne hospital, at the age of 84, was cremated at Weymouth after a sung service in Loders Church, where he and his widow, who is also 84, had been regular worshippers for many years. He had farmed all his active life in the neighbourhood of Powerstock. She was born at Bell, where her father was shepherd. Appropriately again, the church was ablaze with Easter flowers for the funeral.

The Messuriers have left High Acres to embark on restaurant work in Bournemouth which they trust may be more profitable than their enterprise at West Bay; and Mr. Lambert, after a spell in hospital, has gone to live with relatives in Cornwall. He is deeply grateful for the care bestowed on him in his Uploders bungalow by Mrs. Dunn. Mr. Tom Bradshaw is now being cared for in his cottage next Loders village hall by his daughter from Kenya. The erstwhile tiny cottage has undergone a striking - and tasteful - transformation enabling Mr. Bradshaw to have his own suite downstairs.

There was an improvement in the attendance of the Loders parish assembly, presided over for the last time by Air-vice marshal Adams, who was warmly thanked for his services to the parish. He for his part hoped that his place on the council could be filled without the rate having to pay about £100 for an election. Mr. Nick Balfour gave the village hall report and outlined the plan for improvements. We will not repeat it here: our readers should get it first hand at the meeting in the hall on 6th May. The treasurer reported that the parish council had put a precept on the rate for £600 to meet their commitments. The accounts for the village hall for the year ending 31st March 1979 were considered satisfactory. Receipts were £352.59 and there was a credit balance of £145.74. Of the receipts, the "Dorset evening" contributed £46.50, The Crown coffee morning £66, the Bridport jumble sale £49.12, the village hall social £27.90, the youth club bazaar £30, the youth club walk £15, The Crown book sales £37, the bingo £8.23, and the hire of hall £72.25.

A sketch design for the new Loders vicarage is being studied by the parish council. Their first impression could be well conveyed by the word "posh". It is a well conceived bungalow, twice the size of an ordinary bungalow (indeed, floor space 175 square metres to meet official requirements), and probably costly to build even on a site which costs nothing. The local planning authority is known to disfavour bungalows in the Loders conservation area, but may be persuaded that the environment of the new vicarage requires that it be literally low profile. Meanwhile the vicar is feeling slightly episcopal for the first time in his life. A church which contains a diocesan bishop's seat is a cathedral whether the building be a nissen hut or a minster. Any house in which a vicar of a parish lives with official approval is a vicarage. The vicar now lives in Bell (telephone number Bridport 24291) so Bell is for the present Loders vicarage. The former vicarage has done what he did when he reached 70, come of age, and for the first time in its near 500 years is now "the old vicarage".

As the young people of Loders went into Bridport for the St. George parade, Douglas and Susan Boston (nee Smith) brought their youngest child to be christened Mark Johnathan in Loders church. Relatives and friends were there in abundance.

Another apology concludes this issue. It is to Mr. Scott and Mr. Hemmings for omitting their names from the list of cutters of public grass in Askerswell.

#### SERVICES IN MAY

Loders	4th	HC 8 & 12, Matins 11, Children 2
	11th	HC 8, Matins 11, Children 2
	15th	Ascension Day, HC 8, Children 9.15
	18th	HC 8, Matins 11, Children 2.
	25th	Whit Sunday, HC 8 & 12, Matins 11, Children 2.
Askerswell	4th	Children 10, Evensong 6.30
	11th	Matins 10
	15th	Ascension Day HC 11
	18th	Family service 10
	25th	HC 10
Dottery	4th	HC 9.30 - All others at 3.
Uploders Chapel		All at 6.30



The meeting called to improve Loders village hall was well attended, and with Mr. Nick Balfour in the chair soon got down to business. He thanked the entertainment committee for the better use made of the hall, but this was still not enough. The hall needed to be made more comfortable, and more attractive inside and out. There was £1500 in the improvement fund. This would not go far, hence the call for voluntary labour. Mr. Brill and Mr. Anderson had already reinforced roof and floor for the cost of materials only, and were putting in a new ceiling to reduce heating space. The floor was to be planed and sealed. A new kitchen was to be added nearer the main entrance and the old kitchen turned into a meeting room. Paths were to be concreted and the exterior re-decorated. The meeting ended with a good proportion of those present enlisting for work, but there was no taker for the office of fund-raiser in chief.

The parish council of Loders elected its longest serving member, Mr. George Hyde, to succeed Air Vice-Marshal Adams as chairman. Mr. Hyde's local origin is not in doubt, and may be to the few remaining natives of the parish a guarantee that the council will not get up to mischief. As a mark of respect to the patriotic newcomers, one of them, Mr. Clements, was made vice-chairman. Mr. Hyde and Mrs. Dunn continue as the council's representatives on the Poor Lot charity; Mrs. Maurice Crabb and Mr. John Hyde on the school managers; and Mrs. Spafford on the village hall committee.

If two electors of Loders by the 16th June request an election to fill the vacancy on the council left by Air Vice-Marshal Adams, there will most likely be an election, and at a cost to the ratepayers of £100 plus. If any electors of Loders are thick-headed enough to think a councillor worth £100, let them look at the famous advertisement for a liqueur brandy, and note the consternation and horror on the faces in the club when a guest ordered Bisquit "on the rocks". That would be the parish reaction. If there is no election the council can co-opt.

The detailed plan of the bungalow proposed by the Parsonages Board to replace the old vicarage of Loders does not fulfill the early promise of the sketch plan. The thoughts of the archidiaconal architect look to have been in the Mediterranean when he dreamed it up. His roofs are of flaming red pantiles steeped by a Sierra type chimney. A warning to him that it was a house that the planning authority envisaged seems to have gone unheeded. An unobtrusive bungalow, impinging less on the view than a house, might have induced the authority to make an exception to its rule. The parish council made three observations to the planning authority:- (1) "A bungalow development in a conservation area is against established policy. (2) If the planning authority is prepared to consider a bungalow - which the owner of the adjacent property is - the council consider this design to be out of character with Loders, especially in the roof. (3) The council feel that it would be preferable to leave the site as it is, and either to adapt the present building or divide it into two dwellings". Were the opinion of the vicar to be sought, he would disagree with number three of the council's observations. To adapt the old vicarage, unfortunately, would put the church severely out of pocket, and semi-detached vicarages are "out" for obvious reasons. Old vicarages like ours are now selling well. This one could pay for a modest purpose-built house or bungalow with cash to spare, and leave the old house, which is a period piece, untampered with. By nature the church has always to be appealing to the public for money: it owes it to the public to make the best use of what it already has.

It is refreshing to get away from councils and planning authorities to arboreal Askerswell, now in its May prime, where on a glorious evening thirty-eight parishioners in eleven cars explored the countryside around Rampisham on a treasure hunt. The treasure was only a pound, and the entry fee one pound and fifty pence, which seemed rather out of proportion until the hunt ended with a gargantuan supper on the home territory of the Spyway inn. The supper was worth much more than the entry fee. The appreciative noises of the hunters must have made the hostess feel like a haloed saint in the church window. Bob and Tamara Boucher and Frank and Jenny Hemmings found the treasure. Gill Foot and Sheila Neville were heartily thanked for organising it all so well.

Margaret Gladys Marsh, known universally as Madge, died in Bridport hospital at the age of 80. A sizeable congregation attended her funeral at Dottery. She had worked for most of her life in the local twine industry, and lived all of it within a stone's throw of Pymore Terrace. She had a great affection for Dottery church, and used to enjoy her walk across the fields to Sunday service. The new concrete path from the road to the church door drew admiring remarks from the mourners, but they had cause to be silent about the used part of the churchyard, where most of the graves were up for mowing. These are the responsibility of relatives. The cutter of the grass and hedges comes from Axminster, provides his own machine and fuel for a small remuneration, and should not be expected to clip the mounds as well.

A bumper jumble sale. The steward of the Uploders chapel, Mr. Joe Morris, writes: "We had a very successful sale in the hall of our Bridport church. As a result we and the West Bay church will divide £255 between us. The stalls were full of things for sale, and over 200 people had coffee in the morning. We were very grateful for the support of people in Loders and Uploders. We, and Mr. Gilbert Matthews of West Bay, thank all who contributed and helped".

Congratulations to Christopher and Janice Clay on the birth of a son, Robert Andrew, at Portway hospital on 11th May. Their home is at Askerswell, and this event was a timely reminder to the parish that people can be born as well as die. Mrs. Clay was told that



five babies were born at Portwey on the day hers was, and the hospital suspects a population explosion to be under way. The hospital bookings for three consecutive months are a most unusual 90-80-90. It could merely be that certain times of the year are getting popular for hatchings. But the point to take note of is that the statisticians predict a progressive reduction in births. A few years back they predicted a dramatic increase, which did not come to pass. It may well be that the extra teacher training colleges built for the predicted increase, and now disposed of, will be needed for the predicted decrease.

The supposed good standing of the vicar with the clerk of the weather was not invoked for this year's May fair at Loders school (he is chairman of the school managers) because May was in the grip of a persistent anti-cyclone producing perfect weather for outdoor events. People put out of their minds the less fortunate fighters of forest fires and drought-stricken farmers, and flocked to the school field for the maypole dancing. The attendance was the biggest ever, and it included the Vietnamese refugees (the "Boat people") housed at North Allington, who were given seats of honour near The Throne. This year's Queen was Kelly Stone, and her attendants Kay Fulcher and Elizabeth Nadin. Christopher Good was the page. Mrs. Alex Adams, attended by her husband the Air vice-marshal, did the crowning gracefully and with a suitable speech. The gross takings were £430 for the school fund, an increase of £44 on last year.

Askerswell was plunged into sorrow by the death after seeming recovery from an operation of Mr. "Jerry" Clifford. He was 72, and with his wife Mary who is president of the Women's Institute, had come from Radlett to live in the village nine years ago. In business he had been a victualler of ships of the P and O Line: in Askerswell it was the community spirit that his wife and he were so good at feeding. That doyen of golfers, George Houghton, would like us to say - we are sure - that Jerry was also one of them. The P and O Line is not the only breeding ground of civic virtues. The chapel of Yeovil crematorium was just about full of mourners, including many from Askerswell. The rector officiated. The ashes were interred at Askerswell.

The day following Mr. Clifford's funeral saw the nave of Askerswell church full for the funeral of the oldest inhabitant, Mr. Samuel Fry, who had died in the Sidney Gale home after a brief sojourn there, at the age of ninety. His wife had predeceased him by six years. Like other patriarchs before him, Samuel had begun life in delicate health. He could not get through his "medical" for the Great War. Fifty-three years ago he moved from his farm at Sixpenny Handley to the remotest farm in Askerswell, Nallus, isolated enough to have inspired Hardy's "Far from the madding crowd". Later he was joined by his cousin Sidney. There the two families lived for years under the same roof and brought up their children. Nallus used to go public for its Boxing Day shoot: the sight of the table awaiting the return of the hunters and their lucky guests lingers still in many memories. When one of the two cottages fell vacant above "The Square", which the hub of Askerswell is strangely called, Sidney and his wife left Nallus and took it. Looking down on life in central Askerswell was a new experience for Sidney. His ruminant nature found much food for thought, some pearls of which he secreted with the Rector - too choice for a publication like this. When the other cottage fell vacant, Samuel and his wife came to live again next door to Sidney. Nallus knew them no more but life in Askerswell was richer for the nearer presence of Samuel and Sidney. It was horse's work ever to get Samuel to church, but he had the countryman's innate respect for the things of God, and was one of nature's gentlemen. His burial was interesting. The bearers were lowering the coffin on to Samuel's wife's when agitation, urgent whispering, and pointing at the wife's tombstone, erupted around Sidney. It occurred to the rector that he might be burying Samuel in the wrong grave: such things are not unknown. So he went over to Sidney and found what was the matter before doing the committal. And the matter was that the inscription said that Samuel's wife had died on 23rd May. Was not Samuel being buried on 23rd May? Sidney was always a one for omens, prodigies and portents. Samuel's death was the fourth in Askerswell in two months. The average for the ten years leading up to this was one a year. Samuel's death greatly affected the parish philosopher. He was moved to remark "We are dying like flies". The combined age of the four was 314 years.

The coffee morning at The Crown, Uploders, added £37.50 to village hall funds. It had to compete with outdoor weather this year - not typical of English bank holidays.

#### SERVICES IN JUNE

Loders	1st HC 8 & 12, Matins 11, Children 2.
	8th HC 8, Matins 11, Children 2.
	15th HC 8 and 12, Matins 11, Children 2.
	22nd HC 8, Matins 11, Children 2.
	29th HC 8, Matins 11, Children 2.
Askerswell	1st Children 10, Evensong 6.30
	8th Matins 10
	15th Family Service 10
	22nd HC 10
	29th Matins 10
Dottery	1st HC 9.30. All others at 3.
Uploders Chapel	Sundays at 6.30.