

This flimsy sheet must be the plainest of parish magazines. But now, at the beginning of another year, it serves, we hope, as a greetings card, and bears the seasonal wishes to all our readers. At Bell the rafters of the drawing room are lined with the Christmas cards that came from far and near. The vicar for one will study them at leisure and absorb their good will. His thirty-three years in the same parish show that he is no rolling stone; he is cocooned in the comforting moss of friendships that have stood the test of time and begotten new ones of like quality. Life is change says the Lord Bishop. But so is death.

It was not bonny boats but a benign British Rail that speeded the vicar to Skye in the busy days leading up to Christmas, and obliged him to miss some village functions that he would not willingly miss. A friend of forty-two years, a Scot of the Scots, Robert Bruce Dundas, died on December 8th. His widow was beset by three Presbyterian divines, each of them confident that the funeral should be in his kirk. The vicar connived at her plan to avoid bloodshed. He conducted the funeral service on a helicopter air strip opened by the Prince of Wales as Duke of Rothesay last year. Two of the ministers showed up in the crowd of mourners, and one of them even had the grace to follow the procession led by pipers to a boulder on the hillside where the casket was buried. One thing convinced the vicar he had done right - the weather did a kind of Loders fete act, with the rain stopping and the sun shining just for the funeral. He is sure that his getting from Dorchester to Skye for £2 on the special senior citizens' day trips was not lost on the ministers. But what price the senior citizen of Loders who thought he had been to Afghanistan, radiating a little good will there?

The carol service at the Uploders chapel was one of the events the vicar had to miss. By chance their organist Miss Daisy Boxall was also away at a funeral. The versatile and Reverend Norman Skinner played his electronic organ and conducted the service, which was well attended. Members of his Bridport youth orchestra augmented the organ. He thanked the wife of the chairman of the parish council, Dora Hyde, for helping with the decorations in the continued absence through illness of the chapel steward's wife, Florence Morris. George Hyde, as chief citizen of Loders, was prevailed upon to read a lesson. Now that he has achieved a longstanding ambition to reduce the Loders rate - and at a time when all other rates are rising - he feels it not unfitting that he should lift up his head in public.

Askerswell church was full for its carol service. A full moon and a fine night following much rain seemed to bring everybody out, and many of them had not forgotten to bring torches to help them read the carol sheets in the candle light. The rector remembered to thank the Women's Institute for their solo carols, and their accompanists, but clean forgot to read out a message of remembrance and goodwill from Frank, husband of the late and much lamented Faith Garrard, which would certainly have been reciprocated by the congregation. A copy of the new English bible inscribed to her memory, has been given to the Sunday School. This would doubtless be approved by the BBC religious affairs correspondent, Gerald Priestland, who said "I would vote for the alternative services book; I would read the new English bible; but I would use the book of common prayer and the King James bible".

Loders school was packed uncomfortably tight for the pre Christmas concert. How the headmaster and staff cope, and so successfully, with such overcrowding is an unfailing source of wonder to parents and friends, who were there in full strength, to enjoy first Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves, then the Nativity. Mrs. Willmott thanked all concerned. The little mission sale that followed produced £138 for the church overseas. Parents provided a prodigious tea for the party that brought term to an end. We understand that a deep freeze will preserve the left overs for another feast. Father Christmas posed a problem this year. He was noticeably shorter than he was last year and unbelief had to be nipped in the bud. The headmaster did it with a disquisition on the power of Father Christmas to adjust himself to the size of the different chimneys he had to come down; much too complicated for the vicar, but quite reasonable to the child of today. Weather should not have, but certainly has, much to do with attendance at church services.

This year it was onnducive, and attendance at Christmas was excellent. Loders was thronged for "the midnight", and again for the family service ten hours later. The nave of Askerswell was full for Christmas communion, and Dottery was well filled with the farming community, and the faithful old boys and girls from afar to whom the little iron church is spiritual home. The communicant attendance alone at Christmas totalled nearly 250, which is a fair proportion of a population of 800. At the Loders family service the solo carols from the chancel step were well done by a quartet of former tiny tots in that capacity now grown to young womanhood. And they distributed sweets from the tree to tiny tots in the congregation. This very English proceeding was followed with interest by a bunch of young people from Zimbabwe who were guests over Christmas at Loders Court.

The Christmas congregation of Askerswell were recipients of a Christmas box without knowing it. In his pocket the rector had been carrying a cheque for £500 from a firm of Bridport solicitors, made out to the rector and churchwardens of Askerswell, which he delivered to the treasurer in the presence of the churchwardens, after the service - and therefore after the collection. One swallow does not a summer make! A letter with the cheque said the solicitors were acting for the administrators of the estate of William Alfred George Marsh deceased who died 27th March 1980, and in accordance with

the wishes of his son Mr. Frederick Marsh and daughter Mrs. Sylvia Marsh Gould of the United States of America. The sum was to be used at the discretion of the rector and churchwardens "for the use and benefit of Askerswell parish church in the name of the deceased". Churchwardens and treasurer went home to dinner with a song in their hearts, and the rector trying to frame a letter suitably expressing the thanks of the parish to that kind son and daughter. Using the legacy in "the name of William", the final cause of it, seems to preclude the payment of common pedestrian bills, of which Askerswell church has all of its fair share.

We hear that Eileen Bryan, in her capacity as emissary of the Dorset County W.I., handled the meeting at which Loders W.I. had to decide whether to die or live with a delicacy and charm which were a revelation to any misguided person who might have thought she was an apostle of the letter of the W.I. constitution rather than its spirit. Mrs. Holmes, a comparative newcomer to Uploders, accepted the presidency, and began by presiding so graciously over a dinner celebrating the victory of the will to live that there are now no qualms about the future of Loders W.I. Husbands of Askerswell W.I. who thought they were doing their wives a favour by being their guests at the Christmas dinner at Spyway did themselves a greater service, much to their surprise. The dinner was terrific. Next time the wives will not need to put on their siren act to wean the husbands from the fireside or the box.

Nearly £31 for the Army Benevolent Fund was the sum of the collection taken at Loders school carol service in the church. The lessons were well read and the singing good, and not put off-stroke by the efforts of a boisterous child among the adoring parents to steal the limelight. The carollers from Loders church had to put off their mission to Uploders because of the atrocious weather that day, but were able to warn the hostess there, Frances Sanctuary, not to prepare her usual cauldron of soup. For Loders the weather behaved itself. The Court, Mona Edwards and Vera Budden had parties waiting to hear them and ply them with refreshments. Most of them ended the evening round the fire at Bell. Thanks to kind Uploders people who sent in donations, the tally for the Children's Society was a record £60.

The village hall at Loders had two successful parties on one day - in the afternoon a conjuring show for the children provided by the Entertainment Committee; and in the evening a frolic for themselves arranged by the youth club.

In the midst of the pre-Christmas jollification there was an event of quite a different sort in Loders church. An 84 year old widow who had died at Mabel Gale at Bridport was granted her wish to have a sung service in Loders church, and burial in Loders cemetery. There were but two mourners, and all they could tell the vicar was that she went under various names. The one on the registrar's certificate was Mary Whitehead. The parish clerk, Harold Brown, who knows everybody to do with Loders, is mystified.

To the great regret of the parish Laffey Rust has had to leave Uploders Place for a more convenient dwelling in Lyme Regis. Her successors are Brian Cooks (an Ilminster architect), their daughter Sian aged 17, and son Andrew 15.

The comic hockey match at Well Plot on Boxing Day amused the players, who were fortified on the pitch by punch out of thermos flasks, and left the question of who won, ladies or gentlemen, arguable till next Boxing Day.

Nick Balfour, chairman of Loders village hall, who kindly "covered" the A.G.M. in the vicar's absence, reports that no member of the public attended. It was hoped that the reasonable use being made of the hall would be increased when improvements were completed. Installation of a new ceiling was scheduled for January. The youth club had helped to tile the floors of the entrance hall and lavatories, and raised money for the materials. According to the hon. treasurer money in hand was about £2,200, most of which was earmarked for improvements in the next twelve months.

Anthony Sanctuary reports that the Loders structure plan meeting was attended by at least 45 parishioners, but no representative of the principal landowners, and only one farmer's son representing agriculture. The plan is already in draft form. Local public opinion on it is required before the end of January. When it is presented to the Government next autumn public comment will again be invited but be unlikely to be heeded at that late hour. Loders and Uploders is to receive planning support over the next 15 years to achieve a balance of age groups and prevent the parish becoming a geriatric ward or a dormitory of Bridport. The county planning officer will attend the public meeting in Bridport on 14th January. Robin Upton hopes to get the answers to the questions posed at the Loders meeting before then.

Church services. Loders at 8, 11 and 2 every Sunday with Holy Communion after matins on first and third Sundays. Askerswell at 6.30 p.m. on first Sunday and 10 a.m. on all others. Dottery 9.30 a.m. on first Sunday and 3 on all others. Uploders chapel 6.30 every Sunday.

The old vicarage, Loders. On Christmas Eve the Vicar received the following letter from the secretary of the Church Commissioners, dated 23rd December 1980: "Dear Mr. Willmott - Loders - I am pleased to be able to tell you that the Commissioners have approved the building of a new parsonage house in accordance with the sketch design of Messrs. John Stark and Partners, and in principle the sale of the present parsonage house and part of the grounds. A letter setting out the detailed terms is being sent to the assistant secretary to your diocesan parsonages board, who will advise you of any action you need to take." The letter being sent to the parsonages board is addressed to the assistant secretary because the secretary, Brigadier Wilson, died suddenly shortly before Christmas. He was secretary to the parsonages board for over twenty years, and one of nature's gentlemen. That the way is now clear to have a parson resident in Loders, with charge of the enlarged country plurality, owes much to him. He kept some of the clerical members of his board on the rails of reality.

At Dottery church the evensong on the second Sunday in January was a family occasion for the Marsh clan. It was followed by the burial in the family grave of the ashes of one of their long lived matriarchs, Anne Marsh Marsh, a widow of 98, who had died at Axminster. Her husband, Frederick Charles Marsh, of Charmouth, died at the age of 49 in February 1931. John Marsh, churchwarden of Dottery, says that Frederick Charles had the misfortune to shoot and kill himself as he was getting through a hedge rabbit-ing. His widow endured life without a husband for nearly fifty years. On the principle that a good story deserves embellishment and a bad one needs it, legend asserted that he was also the first to be buried in the churchyard given to Dottery by his family. Those who cherish this legend had better not look at the Dottery burial register, which records that John Lenthall, of Belshay farm was the first to be buried at Dottery, on 10th June 1924. Frederick Charles Marsh was the eighth.

There is to be a coffee morning on 19th February at Pine Cottage, Uploders, in aid of the Wessex body-scanner appeal. It will be from 10.30 till noon with a raffle and bring and buy stall; admission 20p including coffee. The hostess Mrs. Taylor and her helpers hope for strong support of such a worthy cause. This is a further sign that Loders W.I. is still very much alive. It lately enjoyed an absorbing talk on the lost villages of Dorset - in a village hall that gets agreeably warmer as the new ceiling goes up. Mrs. Taylor's big and comfortable room at Pine Cottage has never had a heating problem, and has become something of a substitute for the old Uploders Room. She gave refreshment there to those who attended service in the chapel in Unity Week.

The new year was welcomed in Loders tower by the ringers alone, as usual. At Askerswell the ringers were watched by quite a number of parishioners, which is possible there because ringing is not only on the ground floor but open to the church. The spectators had among them jars of red and white wine and glasses, with which they toasted each other and the new year. Then they joined hands and sang 'Auld lang syne'. All quite natural and pleasant and not irreverent: one felt that the Lord was enjoying it too. And who knows, it may grow sufficiently for parishioners to embrace the whole church from the outside, as the custom of a few parishes still is?

The opportunity to tackle the County Planning Officer on the proposed structure plan for West Dorset was seized by a large number of people. Bridport Town Hall was packed. This created a fug which numbed the thinking faculties of the countryman, but was native to the emissary from County Hall, where the temperature seems always around seventy, and the air unbreathable. To boot, the CPO, Mr. Swindall, is a charming and able civil servant, which with the fug enabled him to get away with all his proposals hands down. The Loders representatives, who engaged him twice, had no objection to his plan for keeping a school at Loders, increasing the proportion of young to old people and providing houses that the young could afford, plus jobs, and all without spoiling the outstanding natural beauty of the place. Like most civil servants the CPO has a touching faith in statistics. He supposes that up to 21,000 more people will be living in Dorset in 1996 according to the present growth rate. But statistics are not people. Statistics a few years back predicted a population explosion. Teacher training colleges, technical colleges and universities were greatly increased to match the expected population increase. But it never happened, hence the present sad surplus of teachers and educational establishments. The teacher training college of St. Michael, Salisbury, which was the expensive pride and joy of the diocese, built to cope with the predicted population increase, was soon declared redundant and sold. So our advice to any who are apprehensive of the structure plan is, "Don't worry, it may never happen."

Older members of Dottery church, who still remember with affection the late Mrs. Russell of Salwayash, who was one of their number, will be interested to know that her husband, William Preston Russell, died at Port Bredy at the ripe age of 87. The funeral service at Weymouth crematorium was conducted by the vicar.

The Reverend John Stevens and his wife Betty and five daughters have sent a long, noway, epistle-general to their friends in Askerswell, thanking them for the gift of £150 which reached them in their Zululand mission station just before Christmas. The letter itself is being circulated in Askerswell. It gives an instance of the sad side of his ministry. He flew a white baby who was desperately ill to Durban. The night was dark and stormy. The doctor aboard trying to keep the baby alive got him to radio the hospital, to have

an ambulance with special equipment standing by at the airstrip, but the baby died as they were coming in to land. Some Askerswell people had the good fortune to see one of their most talented neighbours, Mrs. Dorothy Brook, on Westward I.T.V. on the night of 9th January. She was shown doing a water-colour portrait of Sally Jones, together with other specimens of her art. She herself only knew half an hour before that she would be in the programme. The television screen is said to reveal the characters of those it portrays. Mrs. Brook's friends were no strangers to "the sweet, gentle perceptiveness" which, said one, came through on this occasion.

A Loders girl, Juliet Willmott, will have a leading part in the BBC 2 "Horizon" programme at 9.35 p.m. on 23rd February. It begins with "the lovely home delivery" of a baby in Hackney, but the large, homely midwife presiding over it is not Juliet. The former is black for one thing, and answers proudly to the name of "Sister Lickorish". The background of the film is controversial. It has become routine for babies to be born in hospital, and for the midwife, the accredited specialist in child-birth to be relegated to an ancillary role. Maternity hospitals have acquired some of the characteristics of factory farms. Home, where conditions there are favourable and no complications are likely, is said to be the proper place for birth by those who seek to rehabilitate midwifery. Protagonists of routine hospital delivery are passionately supported by a professor who says "Nature has got it all wrong." Defenders of midwifery are supported by another equally passionate professor who says "A healthy woman who delivers spontaneously does a job which cannot be improved upon." Juliet has written a highly technical article in the January issue of "Nursing". Its editor says of her "She was trained at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, London, followed by positions of staff nurse at the same hospital and at University College Hospital. She undertook midwifery training at the City of London Maternity Hospital and has been a Community Midwife in Islington for the last seven years, with a special interest in promoting natural aspects of physiological childbirth against the present background of interventionist obstetrics."

The recent change of occupants of Myrtle Cottage, Uploders, accords with the thinking behind the West Dorset structure plan. Mrs. Peck, an elderly widow, has gone to live with her family in Egham, and the cottage is agog with young life. The new occupants are Simon and Victoria Connell, their children Tristan (3 years), Alice (18 months) and "one on the way". They come from West Bay. Simon is a director of Britfish, in Bridport. We wish them - and Mrs. Peck - all the best. The aura of Mrs. Peck will not leave Uploders as quickly and decisively as she did. A kindly neighbour is a good thing to have around, especially when she is a clever needlewoman. Providential for the vicar, perhaps, that he is approaching that stage of life where trousers are not needed. Many a jumble pair did she adjust to his person.

Mrs. Doreen Cross, once a next door neighbour of Mrs. Peck, and now living at Mold, writes "Could you print a message in the Parish Notes from the Crosses? Andrew now has a little daughter Sarah, and we would all like to send good wishes for a peaceful new year to the folk in Loders and Uploders, and a special greeting to past and present Guides and Brownies. I was Captain and Brown Owl to quite a number before I took on the Commissioner's job."

Audrey and Desmond Cox, of Wimbleton, who often attended Loders church when visiting his aged mother in Bridport, write "We look upon Loders church, the vicar, and all the good people, as our spiritual home. In our time we have been to many churches, and in some have taken an active part, but we can honestly say that seldom have we experienced the inner peace that we feel after a service in your church. Good wishes to you all for the new year, when we hope to pay our next visit."

The home of Arthur and Kit Shirley at Coneygar had a strong connection with Loders church when they were residents. The connection is being resumed by the new occupants, Anthony and Claire Green, who brought their daughter Nanette Elizabeth to be christened on St. Paul's day. They have spent much time in the Middle East. He is now an air traffic control officer at Yeovilton.

Loders school managers found at their last meeting that they are now called governors. There are 63 children on the roll, with the prospect of 4 more in March. It is now a very young school; only 4 pupils are 11 years old. A few children go home to mid-day meal now it is not provided: the rest bring theirs and this works smoothly. In the holidays the kitchen and cloak rooms were attractively decorated by the authority. A long and interesting letter from a former Loders policeman, now Detective Inspector Bill Edrich, indicates that he and his family are flourishing at Branksome, Poole. His son Eddie, once the naughtiest boy in Loders school, is now part owner of a business college with about 600 fee paying foreign students, and just completing purchase of a £100,000 house in the Surrey commuter belt!

Church and chapel services in February will be as usual - Loders every Sunday at 8, 11 and 2 with one at 12 on 1st and 3rd Sundays; Askerswell 6.30 1st Sunday and 10 every other Sunday; Dottery 9.30 1st Sunday and 3 on all others; Uploders chapel 6.30 every Sunday.

"In the Spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love" says Tennyson. An old man's turns heavily to budgets and the ever rising cost of things. Loders and Askerswell churches have been asked to pay £3,329 towards the 1981 Diocesan budget (Loders £2,729 and Askerswell £600). With this news of the greatly increased quota came an instruction to each church to do its septennial inspection, which means that its architect will present a schedule of repairs needing to be done, in order of priority. So this year Loders church will be putting extra reliance on the fete to foot the repair bill. The fete will be at Loders Court on Saturday 8th August at the kind invitation of the Hon. Alexander Hood. What Askerswell needs to do to pay for the repairs will doubtless be decided at the Easter Vestry.

The new heat conserving ceiling in Loders village hall has now been completed to everybody's satisfaction, and the hall committee is casting an eye here and there with a view to finding the money for the final stage of the improvements. The Youth Club held a pleasant little sale to replenish their own funds and to provide new heaters for the hall. The sale made £37. It is sad that the two heating systems which one after the other replaced the old oil stoves were not as efficient as they. The present heaters make a noise which speakers find difficult to compete with. On a Saturday in July the village green at Well Plot will be the scene of another successful - we hope - village fair. Morris dancers will be among the attractions. Hitherto the Entertainment Committee have run the fair for amusement, aiming financially only to cover their expenses. Time will tell whether they are willing to help the hall improvements on the last lap. The Committee have done yeoman service in getting the hall more used.

All Askerswell seemed to be in mourning for one of its best liked characters, Sidney Fry, who died at Knapp Cottage overlooking The Square after several weeks' illness. He was 79 against his cousin Sam's 90. His family and friends well filled the church for the funeral, and he was buried in the adjoining churchyard. By request there were no flowers at all. Donations to the church instead total - so far - £102, for which the church council is very grateful. In his address the rector cited Sidney as a contradiction of the proverb that good farmers make bad gardeners. He was good at both. He prided himself on the earliness of his spring crops, and usually insisted on giving the prime specimens to visitors who did a tour of the garden with him. Sitting by his window in summer observing any sign of life that occurred in The Square, and beside the fire in winter, he felt he had "done his bit" in his time, but he and his wife were more than ever the centre of unity of a numerous family. Anything that makes for stability in these days of appalling family disruption is precious indeed.

Much sympathy was felt in the High Acres estate, Loders, for Mr. Henry Chaffey, whose wife Hilda died there after a month's illness. The funeral service was at Weymouth crematorium.

We are asked to give advance notice of the Bridport District Guides and Brownies jumble sale in the Bridport United Church hall on Saturday 9th May, 10 - 12 noon. It is in aid of district funds.

We apologise to those of our readers who missed the BBC Horizon programme on nursing in which Juliet Willmott had the chief part. The BBC put it a week earlier than the date they - and we, of course - gave, but with warning enough for the change to be given out in church and at two POC meetings! Everybody appears to think that the programme was well done, with its message coming over loud and clear. Juliet has since accepted an invitation from the president of the General Practitioners section of the Royal Society of Medicine to speak on the rôle of the midwife in home confinements at a 3 day conference in April. Also speaking will be "some of her heroes", the French Dr. Michel Odent and the Dutch Professor Kloosterman. What is said at the conference is to be published by MacMillans.

The solemn season of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, 4th March. It will be marked by the Communion service at Loders at 10 and at Askerswell at 11. The usual church parade of the school will have been at 9.15. It has been remarked on ere now that our three churches engage in no extra activity in Lent. Activity is often mistaken for achievement. You can have a lot of the former with little of the latter. As the hymn says, "The trivial round, the common task, will furnish all we need to ask; room to deny ourselves, a road to bring us daily nearer God." The thing to do is to think and mean what we say or sing in the Prayer Book services. The words and form, based firmly on the Bible, are not ours, but we can make them so, as do the players of the classics in music and drama. At Askerswell there will be one extra Lent activity. A discussion group will meet at Beck Cottage at 8 p.m. on Ash Wednesday, and the five Wednesdays following. Anybody interested can ask the following for information: Stanley and Olive Barrow, Dorrie Fooks, Nick and Eve Nicholson, Leslie and Florence Smith. The subject will be "Jesus, God and Man" and is meant to be an antidote to some of the dubious Christology being given in lectures connected with the Bishop's certificate in religious knowledge.

One of the newcomers to Uploders, Mr. William Burman, of Matravers House, told the vicar when he called to welcome the family, that he was considering late ordination. By profession he is a free-lance economics journalist and book dealer. He attended a selection conference in early February, and, we are happy to say, was recommended for training at a theological college. But on condition that he is able to support his wife and family during training.

David and Susan Wyatt and a phalanx of friends brought their infant daughter to be christened Kelly in Loders church on Sunday 15th February. As Miss Corbin, Susan lived just across the road from the church. Like Kelly the other infants at the service were "good as gold". Old wives prefer "the devil to be cried out". But not the parson: he got a winning smile from Kelly as he held her over the font, and no competition. Bill Budden, owner of the site of the new school proposed for Loders, told the latest meeting of the church council that he was completing the contract of sale, and had been informed that building was due to begin in September 1982. We shall see whether this is yet another of a long string of non-events.

At the said meeting of the church council the Dottery churchwardens reported that the roof of that church had been paint sprayed for the eminently reasonable sum of £70. They were left to negotiate with the kind scion of the house of Turner, who comes all the way from Axminster to cut the churchyard, whether to buy a machine to deal with the mounds.

The Stoke Poges Tabby Cat. A party of motorists returning from somewhere to their home of Gray's Elegy fame, alighted for refreshment at The Travellers Rest, on the border of Loders and Askerswell. Getting back into the car to resume the journey, they found that their beloved tabby cat, travelling with them, had alighted too, and was nowhere to be found. The gallant Major Hall, who resides near The Travellers, and occasionally graces the serving side of the bar, assured the distressed travellers when they had to call off their search that he would make enquiries and keep in touch. So he raised the alarm in Askerswell, where a tabby cat, he learned, had been seen. The alertest gentleman in Askerswell found a tabby cat with no right to be there in his garden - the gentleman, of course, being Nick Nicholson. He first ascertained that the tabby had the identity mark of a nick in its ear, then phoned the gallant major, who collected it, and rang Stoke Poges, who were soon en route to the major. Askerswell people had thought it "positively intriguing" to have a Stoke Poges tabby on the loose in the village, and Nick enjoyed people looking at his halo. But not for long. He received a visitation from the lady wife of Colonel Lewis at Askerswell House. In an icy voice that was hotter than hell she told him he had kidnapped her mother's cat (the mother also lives at the House). There was a conference over the tabby at Major Hall's. As the Stoke Poges people could not be sure whether the tabby was theirs, and Mrs. Lewis was dead sure it was her mother's, the Stoke Poges party wearily wended their homeward way, empty handed. The excitement in the village died down. Then somebody spotted a small notice on the board in The Square that had not long been there, and spread the news - "Found, a tabby cat, Apply Miss Thwaites", or something like that. Now Miss Thwaites enjoys her own company, and that of a regiment of stray cats on her ration strength. She cherishes every one, and it must have cost her dear to part with the Stoke Poges tabby, whose joyful owners came again to Askerswell. So all's well that ends well.

The resuscitated Loders Women's Institute showed further signs of vitality the other morning when a crowd converged on Pine Cottage, the home of Mrs. Taylor, to drink coffee, buy and sell, and enjoy "a tell" in congenial surroundings. The object of the exercise was to raise money for the Wessex body scanner appeal, and this it did to the tune of £90. Mrs. Taylor wishes us to pass on her thanks to all who supported the venture. The Vicar would also like to thank very much indeed the mysterious person, or persons, who caused two loads of excellent logs to be delivered at Bell, presumably because he had twisted a knee, which retarded his own forestry activities. He is grateful also to the local Scarlet Pimpernell, whose famous "get well" cards assumed the form of logs of his own hewing.

The new under gardener at Loders Court is Edward Painter. His wife is Diane, and they have two children, Mark (6) and Claire (4). They come from Bradpole. Diane is a sister of Melvin Hiller, a skilled and fanatical bell ringer. Loders tower could do with a handful of his sort. The other Sunday only three bells were ringing for service.

The Times Educational Supplement of 21st February carried a thought-inducing article on Chaucer by Michael Willmott, who needs no introduction here. It is not often that a working teacher penetrates this holy of holies of the educational elite. He is second in command of the English department at West school, Shropshire.

Mrs. Paul, of Uploders, found the curtain of her neighbour George Crabb's cottage undrawn and the door unlocked on the morning of 21st February. She went in and had the shock of seeing him sitting dead in his chair before the television with the set still on. Only the previous afternoon he had gone as usual in seeming good health to see his cousin at Beaminster. A post mortem had to be held. Cremation at Yeovil was fixed provisionally for Friday the 27th at 2 p.m. with the vicar officiating. He is grateful to the family for inviting donations to Loders church instead of flowers. George was 70 and a brick-layer by trade. He served in the Great War, and was once a Loders ringer. He was a bachelor, living originally with his late sister, her late husband Frank Crabb and their daughter Maureen, now married and living in Bournemouth. So passes another of the nice old Uploders families.

Postscript: Rosamund Gray (nee Willmott) who checked these Notes before they went to press, asked "What do I have to do to get in there?"

After the budget our local pubs could have been expected to be afroth with indignation over the tax increases on drink, petrol and tobacco. But in one of them the complaint was that nobody knew how the date of Easter was arrived at! For the record, Easter is the Sunday following the full moon on or next after the spring equinox, which is 21st March. This links Easter with the delivery of the Israelites from Egypt: the moonlight helped their departure. It was also under this same moon that Jesus struggled in Gethsemane to harness His will to the Father's. A fixed Easter would certainly suit the modern world better, but the moonlight link with ages past is worth preserving. God does not change, neither does human nature. The Easter assurance that death is the entry to a higher form of life was never more welcome than today, when the destruction of the human race seems to be kept at bay only by a balance of atomic power.

Our Easter services will follow the old pattern. At Loders on Maundy Thursday Holy Communion at 8 a.m. At Loders on Good Friday the Litany at 9 a.m. and the devotional service at 11 a.m. At Askerswell on Good Friday the devotional service at 10 a.m. On Easter Day Holy Communion at Loders at 8 a.m., at Dottery at 9 a.m., at Askerswell at 10 a.m., matins at Loders at 11 a.m., Holy Communion at Loders at 12 noon, at Loders christening at 2 p.m., and at Askerswell evensong at 6.30 p.m. There will be evening service at the Uploders chapel at 6.30 p.m. There used to be a 7 a.m. Communion at Loders on Easter Day which was very precious to a handful of the faithful. But now Mr. Leslie Smith's administering the chalice at 8 a.m. keeps that service within bounds and makes the seven o'clock unnecessary. The vicar hopes the lovers of seven o'clock will console themselves with the thought that they are saving his voice.

Are the people of Loders showing enough consideration for their long suffering and faithful servant Harold Brown, clerk to the parish council? He took on the job at the age of 21. When he had done fifty years the parish held a social in his honour, and made him a presentation with flowery speeches. He asked then to be relieved of his office, and the post was advertised. There was no suitable applicant. Five years have elapsed. He has asked repeatedly for a replacement. None has been forthcoming. His mind retains its pristine brightness, but an accumulation of physical disabilities is immobilising him. Among parish clerks his fifty-five years' service must make him unique. Nobody can hope to match his experience and native devotion. But the parish owes it to him to produce a successor quickly. He loves the job too much to leave it empty.

Askerswell Church Council acknowledges with many thanks donations from friends of the late Sidney Fry amounting to a further £30. Loders Church Council is grateful to friends of the late George Crabb for donations of £26.

The Johnston family were out in force for the christening in Dottery church of their latest addition, Stephen Charles, son of David and Peta. This was on 22nd March. On 1st March the nave of Loders church had been virtually full for a double christening. The daughter of Thelma (nee Record) and Geoffrey Pulman was christened Helen Joanna; and the son of Richard and Sue Pawson was christened Thomas Richard. There were lots of infants in the congregation and they attuned themselves lustily to the merry noises coming from the organ.

The friends in Uploders of their former neighbour Captain Spencer Lambert were sorry to hear of his death. He was staying with his son in Cornwall when it occurred. He was 87. In the first world war he served in East Africa, where he was commissioned in the field. He served in the Pay Corps in the second war.

Askerswell village hall was comfortably full, and the car park uncomfortably so, for the annual parish assembly, presided over for the seventh time by Group Captain Deric Newall, who solemnified the occasion by announcing that it would definitely be his last. He was happy to say that parish finances were straight at last: there was £16.82 in the general account, £90.17 in the deposit, and a penny rate precepted to produce £147. Application had been made by Mr. & Mrs. Masefield to rent or buy the parish lands. The meeting decided that the present tenants should continue, as they wished, and at the same rent. The contention of Mr. & Mrs. Masefield that land belonged to them which the parish had always treated as belonging to the parish highlighted the need of proof of ownership of parish lands. It was decided to invite an authority on such matters, Colonel Woodward, to come and advise on this; and also to advise on a suggestion that the governing body of Askerswell, at present a parish meeting, should turn itself into a parish council. The latter proposal evoked refined expressions of horror. One gentleman cast his eye over the other ladies and gentlemen and said 'The present arrangement is simple and delightful'. So it is. Where is the need for a parish small enough to rule itself to delegate the job to a parish council? Especially when, like Askerswell, the parish enjoys doing its own thing? The next item on the agenda was much more of a puzzle: who was to mow the grass of the field adjoining the hall and with what? It turned out that two parishioners with goats were keen to graze it, so they were given permission to do so between 1st April and 31st May, on condition that the goats were tethered. Only thus could the neighbours rest assured of the continuing safety of their washing and dustbins. The meeting then elected their vice-chairman Jill Evans to succeed Group Captain Newall, and Eileen Bryan as secretary. Jill nicely thanked the Group Captain for his seven years of hard labour for the parish.

The steward of the Uploders chapel asks for support for the jumble sale which his chapel and the West Day Methodist Chapel are to hold jointly in the United Church hall, Bridport

on Saturday, 2nd May, 10 - 12 noon. Last year this enterprise contributed handsomely to the running expenses of both chapels, and this year it is being relied on for a repeat performance. Saleable articles or donations may be left with Mr. Joe Morris at New Road, Uploders.

Congratulations to Natasha Bell, daughter of Horace and Beryl, of Purbeck Close, Uploders, on crowning her Bachelor of Education degree of Bristol University with a good Master's degree. It was done under difficulties, while she was still teaching at Colfox and also nursing her sick mother. She is now a lecturer in the Worcester College of Higher Education, but still contriving to keep her place warm in Loders church.

Again, congratulations to Christopher Clements, of High Acres, Loders, who has been promoted from the deputy headship of Bridport St. Mary's to the headship of Blofield primary school in a village five miles from Norwich. He takes up his new duties after Easter. His departure will create a vacancy on Loders parish council, of which he was a valued member. His wife Anne will be staying in High Acres until their house can be sold and another acquired. The housing difficulty is a benefit to the toddlers' group; for she reckons still to be running it till July, when a rota of five mothers will take over. For a while it looked as if the toddlers' group might sink, when other groups started, in Bradpole and elsewhere, but Anne's group has surfaced, and flourishes with seventeen members. Rumour has it that four or five houses in High Acres are on the market, and mostly because their owners are moving to other jobs.

Mr. Leonard Bullen, a former Bridport newsagent, died at Bridport hospital the day after he had been taken there from his Loders home, Woodstock, better known to the locals as Lousy Knapp. He was cremated at Yeovil, with the vicar officiating. He was 71. He had ministered to his wife through her sixteen years of illness and operations with great devotion. Her wish to nurse him at home until the very end was all but fulfilled, to the admiration of all who called on her.

Loders Easter Vestry and annual church meeting will be held in the school on Friday, 24th April, at 7.30 p.m. (That of Askerswell is due on the day we go to print). This meeting receives the church accounts, appoints officers, and offers an opportunity to parishioners to have a say in church affairs. Members of the congregation are also entitled to come and lift up their voices. Few do, but they should, seeing they provide most of the money that the PCC handles.

Jack McDowall, churchwarden of Loders, advanced his ten clocks by one hour on the eve of Sunday, 22nd March, because his diary said summer time began that day. He found he had risen for church an hour too soon, the day having been postponed a week to suit the European community. He is still sore over the loss of an hour's sleep. But his discomfiture was as nothing to the vicar's years ago, when David Thomas brought in summer time prematurely, chiming the bells for early service when the vicar was half dressed and unshaven, milking the vicarage cow.

Our good wishes go with Chris and Joan Anderson to their new home near South Molton, and thanks for their help with Loders May fair, the village fair, the fete and the hall improvements.

Loders vicarage. The present position is one of deadlock between the vicar on one hand and the Salisbury Parsonages Board plus the Church Commissioners on the other. The plan to which the vicar agreed was to sell the paddock with the old vicarage, because it could only be an incumbrance to a new vicar and would greatly enhance the value of the old vicarage. On the 9th February the Parsonages Board wrote "It is felt essential to retain the paddock.....to prevent any developer making use of it". The vicar replied that development of the paddock could be prevented by a covenant in the conditions of sale. In their letter of 11th February the Church Commissioners seemed to suggest, contrary to the Parsonages Board, that the paddock was to be retained only to be sold for development more profitably later - "The Board has now been advised by the agents that a more profitable sale would be achieved if the paddock were sold separately. There is no question of its being retained as a future liability to the incumbent." In a letter to the vicar on 6th March the chairman of the Parsonages Board developed the Church Commissioners' theme - "Within 50 years the paddock will be built on whoever owns it. If the Church retains possession, the timing and kind of development will be within our control, and more important our successors will reap the benefit. If house and land are sold together now the old vicarage might well be demolished and the whole built on quite soon." The area planning authority gave their reasons why permission to build on the paddock was not likely to be granted and confirmed that it could be ensured against by a covenant. They did this in a letter to the vicar which he forwarded to the Commissioners, but neither the Commissioners nor the Board have replied. To the vicar the adage about a bird in the hand being worth two in the bush is relevant here. The paddock is integral to the old vicarage. The price of both sold together now should be more than the sum of both sold separately. And the proceeds are not to be sunk in an inflation-prone investment, but turned into a house which should keep pace with any inflation. As beneficial owner of the old vicarage and paddock only the vicar can sign a conveyance. The Church Commissioners merely put their seal to his signature. He has informed the Parsonages Board that he cannot in conscience be party to the sale of the old vicarage without its paddock. He hopes the Parsonages Board are not thinking of "doing a Broadwindsor" on Loders. The Board had control of that vicarage and it stood empty for three years before it was sold. Loders has been empty for a year.

Sunshine after a seeming eternity of rain made the Easter holiday what everybody likes it to be. Our church services were well attended. Askerswell was virtually full for the Communion on Easter morning, and the Loders matins was crowded. The faithful of Dottery were also out in strength. Together communicants numbered 231, and collections £212.40. The vicar is grateful to all who contributed to the Easter offering. Primroses and daffodils were not as much in evidence because of the lateness of the season, so the predominant colour was variegated rather than yellow. The strong sunshine lit up the art of the decorators to arrest the attention of those coming into church. Loders choir gave an effective performance of an anthem with a local flavour, composed by Sir Francis Dalrymple, an uncle of Lady Laskey. A feature of the morning service at Askerswell was the thanking of those responsible for the splendid new curtains at the south and west doors. These had taken Rae Mabb and Mary Clifford hours of painstaking work to make. Those at the south door hang from a regal structure devised and executed by Jack Stevens. The cost of material was defrayed by donations given in memory of the late Faith Garrard, the Marsh brothers and the Fry cousins. The curtains now give the nearby font a presence comparable with the altar, which is proper.

Askerswell Easter vestry and annual church meeting produced a phenomenal number of apologies for no obvious reason. Perhaps people were exhausted by the massively attended parish meeting a day or two before. Oddly the parish meeting handles only a couple of hundred of parish money and the vestry handles three thousand. Good to see the church trusted for once! The 1980 statement of accounts, presented in parliamentary style by Nick Nicholson, showed receipts of £2095.79 and expenditure of £1595.79. Collections at £763.40 were £100 up on the previous year. Covenants plus recovered income tax were about the same at £299.68. Donations at £691.40 compared with £105.81. Accumulated funds stood at £1724.48 compared with £1499.74. It was decided to use the William Marsh legacy of £500 to refurbish the dilapidated west door, Jack Stevens kindly volunteering to be responsible for the work. The electoral roll, presented by Stan Barrow, stands at 62. Dorothy Fooks consented to be the new electoral roll officer. Captain Michael Lumby was re-appointed Rector's warden, Jack Stevens the People's, and Dorothy Brook and Martin Evans the sidespersons. The non ex officio members of the PCC were re-elected - Stanley Barrow, Dorothy Brook, Dorothy Fooks, Dudley Frost, Ann Lumby, Rae Mabb, Christine Savage and Eileen Bryan. A fund raising committee seemed to be left to the next PCC meeting, as did also the secretary Olive Barrow and the treasurer Nick Nicholson.

The May Fair will take place at Loders school on Saturday, 16th May at 2.30 p.m., and is for many the event of the year. It is also the only source of revenue for the school fund which provides amenities that the education authority does not. In the past it has been generously supported, and we trust this will continue.

Robert Bryan, of Askerswell, was married to Rebecca Bailey of Burton Bradstock, in her parish church on Easter eve by the rector, the Rev. Toby Salisbury. The weather was perfection, and so was the setting. Robert is a fine example of a boy from his village school who, via Colfox and Loughborough University, attained an important post in industry. One of his ushers was Philip Cooper of Uploders, who also followed a similar route to academic distinction. The bride was one of Robert's fellow pupils at Colfox, where the romance began.

Memories of the days when Loders mill was operative and run by the Barnes family were revered by the christening in Loders church of Thomas John Coggins, son of Rachel (nee Barnes) and Paul, and grandson of Teresa Barnes, whose husband Derek died tragically early when he was the mainstay of the mill. A sizeable company of relatives and friends attended, and it being Easter afternoon the church was in all its glory.

The late Jack Dare, who lived near Loders mill at Holehouse farm, was buried in Loders churchyard after a sung service in the church on the Tuesday of Holy week, a large congregation attending. He was 72, and a native of Wootton Fitzpaine. He had lived in Loders for 33 years. A kick from one of his cows was for him the beginning of bad health, which ended in an agonising illness that he endured with unflagging fortitude. He was proud of being old fashioned - of being the youngest of a family of twelve, of having maintained the tradition of family farming, of having a steadfast wife whose devotion came to full flower in the arduous nursing of him. And his favourite hymns were the old fashioned "Jerusalem my happy home" and "For ever with the Lord", which an apparently old fashioned congregation sang with all their hearts.

Loders church council are grateful to those of Jack's mourners who did not send flowers for giving £25 to the church. They are also grateful to Mr. and Mrs. Desmond Cox, Wimbledon fans of Loders church, for a cheque for £20.

A coffee morning and bring and buy will be held at The Crown on Monday 4th May, 10-12, in aid of Loders village hall funds.

We apologise to Bob Boucher for failing to say in our account of the Askerswell annual meeting of the parish assembly that he was elected vice chairman. It improves hot young blood to be cooled by the sober realities of public office!

Loders Easter vestry was well attended, and over in thirty-five minutes - a record. Nobody had anything to "bring up", as we say in Dorset. Revision of the electoral roll had eliminated 13 names and added 15, making a total of 237. Loders accounts, presented by Muriel Randall, showed general receipts of £4682.77, expenditure of £4332.33 and a

credit balance of £350.44. Church collections were £500 up at £2756.62, and covenanted subscriptions plus tax recoveries were £450 up at £1481.94. £2281.70 had been added to the church repair fund, which was well placed to meet the demands of this year's septennial inspection. Dottery accounts presented by Henry Johnston, showed general receipts of £165, expenditure of £195.31 and £1259.87 in the repair fund. After the vicar had thanked all to whom thanks were due, the following officers were appointed: Vicar's warden Loders Bill Budden and Dottery Henry Johnston; People's warden Loders Jack McDowall and Dottery John Marsh; Sidesmen Ron Price, Ron Thomas, Maurice Lawson and Phil Young; Church Council Rowan Stack, Nick Prideaux, Nick Balfour, Frank Good and Christopher Miles; Secretary and treasurer Muriel Randall.

Loders parish councillors are justly admired by their public for the sapience and serenity with which they steered local life through the rocks and rapids of the 1990's as envisaged by the Dorset Structure Plan. A mercy for them that their public were not present to see the whirlpool of confusion and despair into which they were plunged by a letter of complaint about dogs from a lady in High Acres. It began "I wish to draw to the attention of the parish council the problems arising from the footpath leading from High Acres along Smishops Lane to Loders School. The footpath is continually fouled by dogs. This is not only extremely unpleasant but is in fact a health hazard. I understand that dog excreta contains over thirty different viruses which cause illness to humans ranging from mild tummy upset to total eye blindness. As this footpath is used by children walking to and from school it is exposing them to unnecessary risks because of the anti social behaviour of some dog owners who allow or indeed bring their dogs along the path for the purpose of excrement". The foregoing is about one third of the letter. The clerk is too nice a man to give us details of the debate. So we do not know whether the council thought of supplying the offending owners with a sort of worm powder which could purge the extrusions of their pets of these horrendous viruses; or of supplying them with those Kanine Kits used by hygienic dog walkers of the USA which are a refinement of the equestrian bucket and shovel principle. The council eventually passed the buck to the custodians of public health at County Hall. For good measure they asked the vicar to make honourable mention of the matter in the Parish Notes. The path in question is one of the two routes to his new abode, and is much traversed by him. He had noticed nothing amiss. But that is nothing to go by. He tries to follow apostolic injunction, setting his thoughts on things above, not on things on the earth.

To go from the ridiculous to the sublime, the house group which met weekly at Beck Cottage, Askerswell, in Lent, found the exercise so profitable and pleasant that they resolved to continue it monthly, beginning 13th May.

Loders vicarage. The vicar writes: Work has begun on the building of a new vicarage on the kitchen garden of the old. The Parsonages Board appear to have instructed their agents to tell people interested in buying the old vicarage that the auction sale has been postponed, and "It is not known whether in fact it will take place this year." I take this to mean that the Board have no intention of realising the full potential of the property by including the paddock in a sale. Still, it is something to have got them to the point of realising anything at all. In January 1980 they proposed pulling the vicarage down, on the ground that it was unsafe for me to live in, and would cost too much to render saleable. As beneficial owner I had the vicarage examined by various experts, who all reported that the general condition of it was quite sound, and no repairs were needed before sale except to fill in the big exploratory hole the Board had had made in the south wall of the Tudor dining room. The Ecclesiastical Insurance agent sent by the Board to insure me against the collapse of the building, departed saying somebody had been "pulling his leg". The West Dorset District Council architect also went over it, confirmed that it was a listed building of considerable merit, in good condition, and said his department would resist demolition to the utmost. On the strength of all this I wrote the Board (4th February 1980) suggesting that "the vicarage and its curtilage, less the kitchen garden, be offered for sale this summer and a new vicarage built on the kitchen garden." The Board agreed to this on 8th February 1980. On 9th February 1981 the Board departed from this agreement by withdrawing the paddock from the sale "to prevent any development by a purchaser" (which could also be prevented by a covenant in the conditions of sale). So the vicarage is threatened with another year of dereliction. The apparent lack of communication between the Salisbury Diocesan buying and selling departments is disturbing. The beggars urge the faithful to step up their giving while the sellers let valuable property stay empty for years. Easter saw the climax of "Impact", a call to commitment and realistic giving. Parishes have had their quotas sharply increased, nine with a population of 800 to £3,339. Yet the Parsonages Board, had I not stopped them would, without turning a hair, have spent a mint on pulling down Loders vicarage and building a new one, with only a few thousands coming in from the sale of the land. When the Church gives alms, it is told by the Lord not to let the left hand know what the right hand is doing. But surely when the Church is soliciting alms from today's faithful, the left hand should not be begging while the right is squandering the benefactions of the faithful of yesteryear!

Rain interfered with the dancing at Loders school May Fair for the first time in the fifteen years of Mr. Price's headmastership. For the first time in the same period the vicar was not at the fair. There is no casual connection between these two facts, as the superstitious allege, but it has to be admitted that the weather behaved better at Askerswell, where he was honouring a long standing promise to conduct a triple christening, fixed before the date of the May fair. However, the Lord had not left Loders comfortless. The radiant face of the crowner, Mrs. Gladys Newberry, lit up the scene as she performed the office of an archbishop of Canterbury, as the picture on the front page of the Western Gazette testifies. She is the longest serving of the school governors, and their correspondent. It is probable that the profit of £408 is as good as last year's; for this year there were ten less families connected with the school and contributing. The May Queen, chosen by the pupils, was Davinia Draper, and her attendants Tracey Burton, Nicola Cousins and Edward Drummond. The religious might well think that Divine Providence inspired Mr. Price to choose Gladys to do this year's crowning. Early next morning she was moved to bestow on Bell the lovely posy she had been given, and arrived just in time to deal with a situation that could have ended tragically.

For Askerswell to have had four christenings within eight days was rare indeed. Christenings average less than one a year. This is a happy sign of the young life now burgeoning in the village. At the triple christening on 16th May the babes were Victoria Jane, daughter of Frank and Jenny Hemmings; and Aron Robert and Ryan William, sons of Robert and Tamara Cody-Boucher; on 24th May it was Robert Andrew Aubrey, son of Christopher and Janice Clay. On both occasions the rim of the font was ringed with flowers, and there was a bocage beside it, signs of the interest of the church decorators, much appreciated by all four baptismal parties.

An exhibition of arts, crafts and hobbies will be staged in Loders village hall on Sunday 14th June. Exhibits should be there by 9.30 a.m., and the show will be open all day, admission 15p adults and 5p children. Anybody may exhibit, and offer any exhibit for sale.

The jumble sale held jointly by the Uploders and West Bay Methodist churches made a satisfactory profit for their funds of around £200.

Indifferent weather on the May Day holiday brought people to The Crown, Uploders, like bears to a honeypot, to drink coffee and to bring and buy for the benefit of village hall funds. £50 was raised.

Eight parishioners and five parish councillors attended the annual assembly of the parish of Loders in the village hall. Mr. George Hyde, the chairman, welcomed those who had turned out in such unseasonal spring weather. As a countryman himself he knew that had it been good gardening weather the attendance could have been still thinner. Mrs. Jessica Dunn, the rights of way liaison officer, reported that a new bridge over the river at Well Plot was being dealt with by the county council. At Locks Lane the persistent ploughing up of a right of way had been stopped "by negotiation and a threat of prosecution." If parishioners would walk their rights of way, owners would not put pig pens on them, as one did, "because nobody uses it." Mr. Nick Balfour, chairman of the village hall, reported that real progress had been made with improvements. (He was able to do this because carpentering is his hobby and he had done the lion's share of the voluntary work). The new ceiling made the hall warm and cheerful and had helped the acoustics. Part of the kitchen had been turned into two storerooms, one of which was also a committee room. The work had cost £1796, leaving £1000 in hand. Thanks were accorded the Entertainment Committee for £238, the Crown Inn for £50, the Youth Club for £26, and the Women's Institute for £60. As wardens of woods and rivers Mrs. Dunn and Mr. Hyde reported that many dead elms still needed removal. Preservation orders had been made on two woods at Matravers, one at Black Hut, two at The Leazes and on at Hillway. Loders Court woods, Waddon copses and Bunkers Hill already had tree preservation orders on them. To the relief of the clerk-for-nearly-55-years, Mr. Harold Brown, the meeting ended with the news that Mrs. M. Dent, of Yondover, had agreed to succeed him. She has had experience in local government.

The Askerswell parish assembly gathered in strength to hear an expert from County Hall, Colonel Woodward, explain the difference between government by parish council and by parish assembly. At their annual meeting, when the question was raised, there seemed to be a bias towards continuing with a parish assembly. The bias remained after Colonel Woodward's exposition, in spite of his surprising revelation that the chairman of a parish assembly has much more power than the chairman of a parish council, rather like a president of the United States compared with a British prime minister. This derives perhaps from the time when a small parish consisted usually of a squire and his varlets, and it was assumed that the squire would be elected chairman. But Askerswell is now peopled with retired officers of all three armed services, and others who have made their mark in industry and business. There are more chiefs than Indians. It is as well that the parish assembly chose as their chairman a truly feminine and intelligent and humble lady before the awful powers of the chairman were generally known. She has summoned the assembly to meet again to settle what the parish shall do to celebrate the royal wedding in July - a nice, homely, non controversial matter.

Dottery is being put on the map by the lady at The Hermitage, Mrs. Joy Leakey, who asks us to give advance notice of a coffee morning and bring and buy stall there on Saturday,

4th July, 10 - 12 noon, We have no recollection of a coffee morning at Dottery before this. It will be in aid of a very worthy object, the Wessex body scanner appeal. The house to house collection in Loders organised by Mrs. Lowle made a useful £32 for the Cheshire homes.

People have often wondered why Smishops Lane, Loders, is so called. Mrs. Marjorie Vacher, lately on a visit to the parish from Toronto, has supplied the answer. Before her marriage she was Marjorie Budden, of the oldest recorded family in the parish registers; so she knows. There was a blacksmith's shop at the top of the lane, and Smishops was short for that. She is an assiduous reader of these Notes: can she tell us why the now elegant Woodstock was Lousey Knapp in her day?

Recognition of its efforts to encourage community spirit in the village has come to the Loders Entertainment Committee in the form of a certificate of merit from the Dorset Village Venture Competition 1979-81, run by the Dorset Community Council. It is accompanied by a cheque for £25. Mrs. Shelley Upton is the originator and moving spirit of the Committee. She well illustrates the saying that "It is better to get ten men to do it than to do the work of ten men yourself".

The congregation of Askerswell must be admiring of, and deeply grateful for, the professional job that Jack Stevens has made of the west door of the church with the help of Bob Boutcher. It is of specially selected oak, handsome from the outside, and beautifully setting off the tower inside.

The owners of the attractive new farmhouse that the people of Askerswell have watched come into being at the foot of Gipsy Hill have now taken up residence, and a place in church, and are "going down well" with their neighbours. The Service neighbours speak of them approvingly as "reinforcements". The name of the new farm is Askers Down, and it is the home of Colonel Rex Rose and his wife Helen. They have three daughters and six grandchildren. Colonel Rose says he is as keen on farming as he was on the Army, in which he served for thirty-three years. He came to Askers Down from a farm at Hook, Hampshire.

There are two deaths to record, of a parishioner of Loders and another of Askerswell, both of a shy disposition as regards mixing in with parochial life, but both with the welfare of the community at heart, and deeply loved of their families. Moira Woolland was the wife of our welfare officer Nick, in Well Plot, Loders. It was her good fortune to be ministered to in her last illness by the likes of him. She was a keen worker at home for the fete and the youth club, which will miss her. After a requiem mass in Bridport she was buried in Loders cemetery. Frank Hart had with his wife been a resident of Askerswell for eight years, and he was eighty-three. He had been in business as a builders' merchant. By religion he was a Salvationist. The cremation was at Exeter, whose S.A. Citadel he used to attend, and the service was taken by Major Hamilton, S.A. The offer of Mrs. Lowle, of Uploders, to weed the church border under the wall has been gratefully accepted, as was also Jack McDowall's planting of the other border. Mrs. Willmott, who did both borders for years, is in hospital, and making some progress, we are happy to say.

Loders vicarage. The vicar writes: The building of the new vicarage is proceeding well in spite of the bad weather. I am pleased that the contract went to W.J. Copp and Son of Nettlecombe. They employ good stonemasons and carpenters whose craftsmanship is apparent in the stone cottages they have built near the church. The cost of the new vicarage is being met from the sale of Powerstock vicarage, so it is fitting that parishioners of Powerstock should benefit. On 15th May I wrote to the Bishop of Salisbury asking whether he could intervene and settle the dispute holding up the sale of the old vicarage. I have not yet had a reply. I hope the Bishop will summon me to see him so that I can explain my position.

STOP PRESS. A letter dated 27th May has arrived from the Bishop as we go to print. It is too long to reproduce here, and it does not solve the problem. He consulted the Archdeacon and the new secretary of the Parsonages Board. He did not invite me, and preferred reading the minutes of the Board instead of the correspondence file of the Board as I suggested, which gives the true picture. He and I cannot get far together if we disagree on basic facts. He says "I am assured by the Parsonages Board that there has never been any question whatever of demolition". Yet on 27th January 1980, I received from the Archdeacon, who is one of the Board's chief executives, a message that it was proposed to demolish the vicarage. This proposal was debated by Loders church council on 1st February following, and disapproved of. The Bishop says "You yourself admit that the whole responsibility for not proceeding with the sale is your doing." The contrary of this is true. I kept the old vicarage lawns mown all through the season of 1980 in the hope that the sale promised for that summer might yet materialise. The delaying tactics are distinctly traceable to the Archdeacon in the Board's correspondence file, which the Bishop does not claim to have read. The Bishop says "You say that the building of the new vicarage has started. I earnestly hope it will be completed on time, and that you will then carry out your declared intention to retire, and hand over to someone else to begin their ministry in that area". My intention to retire when the house is ready for a new vicar was declared to the Board in my letter of 18th January 1980. But on the natural assumption that I was dealing with honourable men,