

We would like to thank our readers, far and near, for their Christmas Greetings, and to wish them a Happy New Year. It was good to be remembered by so many old friends. We would also like to record our gratitude to the Bridport Printing Company for producing this issue during the holiday. It was their suggestion, typical of the courtesy they have shown us (who must be the least profitable of their customers) over the years.

As we look back on a very happy Christmas we marvel at the weather we were spared in this corner of Dorset. We sympathised with the tribulations of the rest of the country, and braced ourselves for what the weather persons said was coming to us. But all that came was a blizzard at the beginning, and that, sadly, cancelled the carol service in the Uploders chapel, which was our only casualty. Parents and friends thronged Loders church on a dry afternoon for the school carol service and came away justly proud of their off-springs' performance. The collection was £33 for the Army Benevolent Fund. It was a rainy windswept night for the Askerswell carol service by candle light, but the church was full, and the readers of the nine lessons were on form. To the delight of everybody one of these was Martyn Evans, whose voice not so very long ago was feared lost for ever. He read perfectly. The practices of their songs in the cold church by the Women's Institute choir issued in a polished performance accompanied by recorders and a guitar. It left the congregation eager for more. In Uploders the peripatetic carollers had a cold job singing, and collecting for the Children's Society, but found that the Cox's, the new owners of Uploders Place, were sustaining Laffy Rust's great tradition of hospitality with the help of the Sanctuaries and Nigel Wykes. In Loders the carollers started with welcome fortification at the Court, and kept going at the victualling stations established by Mona Edwards and Vera Budden. They ended at Bell, round a hot fire and under Mrs. Willmott's mothering, an expedition which had collected £62 for the Children's Society. Intense cold and the weather persons' repeated promises of woes that never came our way may have reduced attendance at Christmas services but this was not much in evidence. The "midnight" at Loders was full, the farmers at Dottery were present in strength, Askerswell had a big communicant congregation. The family service at Loders was also well attended. Former members of the Sunday School made a delightful and accomplished choir of young ladies giving from the chancel step more appetising fare than comes from the pulpit. To the satisfaction of the babes and sucklings in the congregation the Christmas tree came up with chocolates for them.

It seems that the Bryans at Court Farm, Askerswell, who do not claim to be light sleepers, were kept awake o' nights by the shuddering in the high winds of the flag on the church tower. It is a big naval Flag, bequeathed to the church by some admiral or the like, and was trying to dissociate itself from the new aluminium flagpole. The flag on Loders tower was in no position to offend the nobility in Loders Court. The wind had immobilised it, whipping it over the top of the pole, where it drooped like somebody suffering from a hangover.

The Christmas Fair run by Loders Women's Institute in the village hall rose to their highest expectations. It made a pleasant afternoon for all who attended and a profit of £183 to be divided between the W.I. and hall funds.

The mission sale after the Christmas concert in Loders school followed the good example of the W.I. fair, and made a profit of £181.70, its best ever. Mrs. Willmott thanked all concerned.

The Christmas concert was soundly delcared the school's best ever effort. It started with a captive maiden outside a castle rescued by a gentlemanly knight from a dragon of horrific size and ferocity. It ended with the familiar Christmas tableau of the manger, the shepherds and the wise men. What was unfamiliar were Mary and Joseph: their attire was unashamedly Dorset as against the eastern attire of the rest. They could have been Lizzie & Harry Crabb posing outside Rose Cottage in some old photograph, and this local touch was delightful whether intentional or not. How Mr. Price and his staff put on such a show in such cramped condition is a perennial mystery. And how the tightly packed audience contrive to see above, below, around, and through, each other, with such good humour, is a greater mystery.

The school children had their reward at the end of term party. Parents provided enough goodies to feed twice the number. Regretably the surplus could not be spirited away to Poland. It was put in the freezer for future reference.

The Askerswell pre Christmas church party in the village hall was a dream come true. Whatever might have happened behind the scenes everything seemed exactly right - the ratio of attendance to the size of the hall, the variety and quality of the buffet, the gusto of the games and the worthwhileness of the prizes, and the courtesy of the serving wenches and valets. The charge for this equivalent of two hours at the Ritz was £1 per head, yet a by-product of it all was £70 for church funds.

There is said to be nothing like a holiday for making one appreciative of the simple delights of home. Perhaps it was this that moved both our Women's Institutes to venture into Bridport for their Christmas parties. Askerswell felt deliciously naughty and extravagant in the banqueting hall of the Haddon House Hotel; and Loders loved being "Madamed" and "Sirred" and cosetted in the dining room of The Five Shoes. It is these exhilarating extras that a frolic on home ground lacks.

"All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy" may have moved Eve and Nick Nicholson to devise a frolic for the study group that meets monthly in their home at Askerswell. The cats and drinks they provided were delectable: the other members of the group provided



most of the entertainment. It was comforting to learn that Leslie Smith, the lay reader, is the owner of a complete set of the stamps emanating from the state of Israel. It was uncomfortable to be lowered so graphically with Arthur Brook down the deepest pothole in Yorkshire, Gaping Ghyll, in primitive days when it was like going down a bottomless pit that zigzagged, in a bucket. Always a methodical man, he sketched what he thought it was like as he went down, and showed us the sketches.

We are pleased to have Mark and Georgina Burnham back at Matravers after his long tour of military duty in the U.S.A., where, happily for Askerswell and Thelma its organist, he has not lost his devotion to the organ. He is a ready help in time of trouble.

It always seems to happen that at least one family in the community is saddened by death at Christmas. This time there were several. Doris Joy died at Pymore at the age of 70, and was buried in her late husband's grave at Dottery after a sung service in the church. She was one of the few remaining links of the mill with that church. Then Elizabeth Marsh, formerly of Membury, Askerswell, died in Bridport shortly after her ninetieth birthday. She was buried in the grave of her husband Fred, who predeceased her by twelve years. They had both been active and esteemed parishioners of Askerswell, and regular members of the congregation. Old friends attended the funeral. Their sympathy was very much with the two daughters; with the elder, whose husband died at almost the same time, and with Ella, the younger, who had lived with her mother and cared for her for so long. Finally, Henry James Tucker, of Uploders, died on Christmas night at the age of 83. He was a native of Nettlecombe, and a great gardener, who had learned his craft at Mappercombe Manor and Loders vicarage. He contrived to get into the Great War before he was eighteen, and came through the awful battles of the Somme and the Marne, being twice wounded. He was gardener at Uploders Place. He was sergeant in the local Home Guard in the last war. He and other old warriors like the late George Randall used to be a club which met at The Crown under landlord the late Jack Verrinder. Ironically Jack lost both his legs from getting a thorn in a toe while pruning roses, but lived on heroically in a wheel chair. Henry Tucker was due to be cremated at Yeovil on New Year's Eve, the vicar officiating.

There were three burials of ashes in December. Those of Tina Hileary, sister of Beryl Stack of Uploders were committed to the sea she was so fond of and near which she had lived at West Bay. Those of Jack McDowall's sister Connie were scattered near the grave of his late wife Jill in Loders churchyard. The ashes of Doris Rudd of Corfe Farm were buried in Loders churchyard beneath a stone to the memory of her and her late husband Tom. The PCC is grateful to her daughter Alison Ellis for a gift of £100 to the church. The vicar officiated at all three committals.

The organiser of the comic hockey match at Well Plot on Boxing Day (Maurice Lawson) was delighted to find that the new Viscountess Hoad is a "sport". She accepted his invitation to begin the battle between a team of ladies led by Janice Crabb, and one of gents led by Captain Hughes R.N. (retired). She tossed a coin with the vicar beside her in his new office of her domestic chaplain. A naval computer programmed by Captain Hughes made the game a draw by declaring both sides to have won 6-1. Monty Dent, trying to function as linesperson without his monocle, may have put the computer off its stroke.

Tailpiece. The business of establishing the new benefice of Askerswell, Loders and Powerstock proceeds slowly but surely. The Pastoral Committee's intention to give the nomination of the first incumbent to the Dean and Chapter of Salisbury was opposed by the three church councils, and is now to be exercised first by the Lord Chancellor, followed by Lady Laskey. Royal assent to the scheme is expected soon.



Our day and age prides itself on its mobility and quick communication. The January blizzards over Europe and North America were a salutary reminder that man is not the absolute master of mobility and communication. The gentle snowflakes like to waltz down from heaven like falling feathers, but when fierce winds blow them into huge drifts, and Jack Frost turns these into icebergs, our vaunted technological civilisation is reduced to a snail's pace. Living now in the country lanes instead of on the main road, the vicar had his admiration for the family farmers on either side of him well and truly kindled by the weather. The snowbound fields confined all their animals to the cramped area of the farm buildings; water could not stop freezing; milk had to be got through blocked lanes to the collecting depot; dung had to be got back on to the fields; and to crown all the ewes were lambing. One of the farms is run by Steve and Harry Newberry and the son of each; the other by Raymond Crabb and his four daughters. The vicar is still a firm believer in the natural dominance of the male, but he marvelled to see the girls measuring up to the emergency.

Church services were reduced in numbers and attendance. One Sunday there was no service at either Dottery or Askerswell because the vicar could not get through, and Leslie Smith the Askerswell lay reader was on business in Harrogate where, incidentally, the roads were free of snow. Major and Mrs. Hall, unwarned of the cancellation of the Askerswell service, arrived in vain from St. Luke's, and surprisingly did not go on to the Spyway inn to make their effort worth while. At Loders all services were maintained. Some of the congregation were those who live furthest from the church. The diplomatic corps showed their mettle. They were there in strength, rightly demonstrating that contact with the Lord must be kept in all circumstances. Arriving at the church gate for the eight o'clock Communion, and breathing the Epiphany prayer "O God, who knowest us to be set in the midst of so many and great dangers that by reason of the frailty of our nature we cannot always stand upright," the vicar and his lady found churchwarden Bill Budden shovelling away the snow. At the church door it was clear that he had been hard at work there, too. Meeting him later in the village with an expensive looking sledge, the vicar thought the snow had had a rejuvenating effect on this seasoned churchwarden, but was assured that he was only taking the sledge to some nice little boys in Well Plot.

Loders school, to the annoyance of the pupils, was only put out of action for a day. The remotest teacher, Mrs. Niven, got out of Chilcombe by tractor and land rover; the headmaster did not succumb to a first excruciating attack of lumbago; and the Bradpole parent who cycles her offspring to school in front of a box on two wheels was not defeated.

Our January number was greatly taken up by accounts of Christmas parties and an unusual crop of funerals. The Askerswell wit, Geoffrey Bellis, said "You were full of parties and departees." Sadly, a crop of funerals is a feature of this month also. May Hope-Hall, who had taxied to Loders matins from West Bay for several years, died unexpectedly in her ninetieth year, and was buried at Netherbury in the grave of her husband who died twenty-five years ago. The vicar officiated, and all her widespread five children managed to attend. It was no simple matter for the bearers to hold on to their dignity. The path down to the grave was steep, narrow and slippery, and twice, overhanging branches of the yew trees lifted the wreaths from off the coffin. It was raining, too.

Frederick John Marsh, patriarch of the family which has made Askerswell famous for its Hereford herd, also died unexpectedly, and active to the end, in his ninetieth year. The weather upset the funeral arrangements. Service sheets had been printed, but many of the family could not get through, so the burial alone was proceeded with in the hope that a memorial service could be held later. The undertaker's car picked up the rector at a point in Loders. He arrived late at Askerswell and a blizzard was blowing as he committed the body to the grave. Fred's widow, Minnie, insisted on attending, and stood in the driving snow protected as best they could by her children. The undertaker's car was in difficulty getting back to Loders, so the rector alighted at Matravers and walked back to Bell, feeling luckier than the poor sexton who had to fill in the grave and try to drive his van home to Stoke Abbot. It is hoped to incorporate a memorial service with an Askerswell evensong.

Edward Church, of Home Farm Close, Uploders, died in Bridport Hospital at the age of 84. He had been secretary and staff manager of Pickfords. He enlisted in the Great War at 18. He was a prisoner for two and a half years, and escaped four days before the Armistice, only to be recaptured by Alsation dogs. Few of his relatives were able to attend the service in Loders church which preceded cremation, but the number of neighbours who came and joined in the singing was a sign of the affection that he and Florence his wife had attracted in their two years in the parish.

Reginald Loveless, of Dottery, also died in Bridport Hospital, aged 80, and was buried in his mother's grave in Bridport cemetery. He seemed to be allergic to parsons. When the vicar called, his answer was "Not today, thank you," as to the milkman or the baker. He was a bachelor, abrupt in manner, but esteemed by his workmates at Brit Engineering as an upright, reliable character. To the vicar's surprise he left instructions for a funeral service with hymns in Dottery church. To the vicar's greater and happy surprise, the good neighbour who took him meals said he was a daily reader of the Bible. He was on safer ground with the Bible than with some of today's clerics.



Mabel Holden, an aunt of churchwarden Bill Budden, died at the age of 84. She had been living with her daughter at Chalfont St. Giles, Bucks. When she lived at St. Andrew's Well, Bridport, she often walked to church at Loders, the home of her family for generations. Sympathy will be felt for her sister Marjorie Vacher, herself no stranger to Loders church, who is now the last of her generation. She lives in Toronto, returning home to the sad news from a happy Christmas holiday.

And now for a brighter subject. On Boxing Day William and Lily Scadden, who live near Dottery church and voluntarily take care of it, celebrated their golden wedding. The local press gave a good account of it, so we need only add that the happy couple were delighted with it all. Said Lily "We loved it. We were inundated with flowers: it was like harvest festival in here (the living room)." She indicated another present also giving much pleasure, framed water colours of Bridport and West Bay by the esteemed local artist William Colby.

With respect, may we offer our warmest congratulations to a faithful member of Loders church, Mr. David Hirst, Q.C., on his appointment as a judge of the High Court. In that capacity we are not likely to see him running the bottle tombola again at Loders fete. "To be or not to be?" Loders Parish Council are considering entering the West Country section of the "Britain in bloom" competition, 1982, but before doing so would need to be assured of adequate support in the parish. The aim of the competition is "to enhance the floral effort" in the area, in private gardens, public premises, churches, schools and businesses, as well as in open spaces and roadside verges; in brief to grow more flowers everywhere. There will also be a children's poster competition. Comments and offers of help would be welcomed, preferably before the end of February, by parish councillors and the clerk, Sheila Dent, Brook House, tel: Bridport 23882.

Mention of flowers reminds us that Lent will be upon us on the 24th of this month. Lent means spring, the spring of the soul, and the 24th is Ash Wednesday. There will be the school service at 9.15 and the communion at 10 in Loders, and the communion in Askerswell at 11. The communion service is not popular in the present moral climate but is entirely scripted. Sin is regarded lightly by us, but not by God. It landed Him on Calvary, and according to the Epistle to the Hebrews when we of today sin, we "crucify Him afresh and put Him to an open shame."

The vicar received the following letter from the Bishop of Sherborne dated 18th January: "My dear Oliver, I gather that the new vicarage in Loders is almost ready for occupation. Naturally we do not want the house to remain empty for long. I should appreciate it if you could tell me what your own plans are for the future so that we can plan accordingly. I remember that you did indicate to me about two years ago that you would plan to retire when a new house was built. I would gladly come and have a talk with you if you would like me to do so. With my best wishes to you and your wife, Yours ever, + John."

The vicar's reply, dated 20th January, was: "My dear Lord Bishop, Thank you for your letter of 18th January. My immediate plan is to await (a) the Queen's approval of the new benefice of Askerswell, Loders and Powerstock and (b) the sale of the old vicarage with its paddock. When I promised you, as I had already promised the Lord Chancellor, to co-operate in setting up the new order here, I was of course unaware that the Arch-deacon's department would declare the vicarage unsafe for me to live in, and propose its demolition and the sale of the paddock at valuation. As beneficial owner I could not be party to what seemed to me - and to the experts I called in - a dissipation of the monetary value of a building which was also listed. As you reminded us at your recent meeting with the Chapter of this Deanery, there is a grave shortage of active clergy and an abundance of retired clergy. When the Lord Chancellor has a candidate ready for consideration, I will make way for him. Yours sincerely, Oliver Willmott."

School news: At their last meeting the managers accepted with regret and thanks for past services the resignation of Mrs. Vickery. The head master reported sixty-nine on the school roll, which would be reduced by two or three in March and fourteen in September. Money problems had relegated the building of the new school to 1983-4. For physical training in the winter use was being made of Loders village hall. A photograph in colour was taken of the school's celebration of the wedding of the Prince of Wales and the Lady Diana Spencer, by John Miles. It was so much to everybody's taste that he kindly enlarged it, and John Hyde made a pleasing frame for it, to hang on a classroom wall.

The architect's septennial report on the fabric of Askerswell church has been received. It envisages immediate repairs costing nearly £4000, and eventual repairs costing a further £7000 (25000 of this on the boundary walls). Both prices are mere "guesstimates" and do not say whether they include V.A.T. and architect's fees.

Jill Evans, the chairperson of Askerswell parish assembly, tells us that at a recent meeting of parish council officials Mr. Bugler of Beaminster said farmers deserved rates relief if only for having saved the country in the two world wars. The speaker, Colonel Woodward, was quick to add that by the same token so did all who served in the armed forces of the Crown.

In the recent snow the vicar met a fox coming up Yellow Lane as he was walking down it to church. The fox evidently considered the vicar too tough an old bird, mounted the bank with dignity and vanished. On his way back up the lane the vicar met a cock pheasant, which about-turned and ran away. Had Reynard got his timing wrong? What would his tactic have been with a pheasant in the open? In the confinement of the vicarage a fox had killed a dozen hens and taken one; and eaten the heads off three geese!



A contract for repairs to Loders church costing nearly £7000 was awarded by the Church Council to Messrs. Bailey of Beaminster on the merit both of price and recommendation by the church architect. Messrs. Spillers' estimate was £8500. The Council heard from their treasurer, Miss Muriel Randall, that income from offertories and covenants for the year ending 31st December last had increased by £115 to £4352. Total receipts for the current account, which excluded the fete, were £4989; but expenses were £5126, giving a deficit of £137. The quota payable for 1982 had been increased by 40% to within £100 odd of £4000, whereas the increase apportioned to the Deanery as a whole was no more than 26%. Miss Randall had drawn the attention of the Deanery treasurer to the seeming injustice of this, but he was unrepentant. He had reached his figure by including the repair fund in the assessable income. What to do about this provoked the usually placid councillors to turbulent discussion. As the repair fund had been built up with the eventual overhaul of the fine and valuable Hill organ in mind, it was decided to consult the experts as to whether the fund might be expended on the work now, so depriving the predators of more prey. The vicar felt strongly on two points:- first, that as the Deanery quota had been increased by 26%, every parish should be increased by 26%, no more, no less; and second, that as the repair fund had been solicited expressly for the repair of Loders church, it could not properly be diverted to a different purpose.

Askerswell church council heard from the treasurer Nick Nicholson that their quota for 1982 had gone up to £730, an increase of less than 22%. This happy state of affairs stems from their different method of paying for church repairs. They make no annual provision for a repair fund. When a job has to be done, they take the bit between their teeth, raise the money by special parochial effort, and ask for no outside help nor alleviation of the quota. Obviously this method pays. They have rehung their bells on a new frame, increasing the peal to six; repaired the roof and the floor, and kept the church and churchyard in general good order, all without a repair fund to whet the tongue of a hungry Deanery treasurer.

It has to be said in defence of Deanery treasurers that the task of assessing parish quotas is no easy one because of the different approaches to church repairs. Every so often the Diocese presents each church council with an architect's report on the fabric and a schedule of repairs. But the obligation to do the repairs is only moral. If they are left till the church is ready to fall down the parish panics, calls on its neighbours and all building charities for help, AND usually gets from a sympathetic Deanery treasurer alleviation of quota while the delayed job is being done. Some parishes have copied those cathedrals who have "Friends" to raise money for repairs. By this device some money going to the church escapes assessment for quota. As the doing of the repairs in the architect's schedule is not compulsory, neither is the paying of the quota. It is still defined in the book of words as a voluntary payment. But those parishes who put less into the quota than they get out might soon suffer if they did not pay, and would certainly blight their parson's chances of promotion.

Dottery's Mr. Sidney Morris died suddenly last month, and was cremated in Yeovil at a sung service conducted by the vicar and attended by a full muster of the family. He was 81. His working life had been spent in the electrical business. He, his wife and a married son with family came to Dottery from Croydon eight years ago, and being of a nice neighbourly disposition soon found a niche there. They brought a whiff of the great metropolis to our farmyard smells. The son is a dealer in exotic birds. A discreet notice outside the cottage invited inquiries within for love birds, parakeets and the like. The memorial service at Askerswell for the late Fred Marsh on the evening of the third Sunday in February drew a congregation of harvest festival proportions, and at the family's request included the hymn "We plough the fields and scatter". The service was timed to suit one son, Peter, who farms in Canada, and he and his family "made it". Another son, Alan, of Corscombe, read one of the lessons. In the address the rector traced Fred's career, from birth on the family farm at Bradpole eighty-nine years ago to his death on the farm at Askerswell of his son Tom, now famous for its Hereford herd. Fred started farming on his own account at Meons, Uploders. After four years there, he put in twelve years at Milborne St. Andrew, followed by twenty at Sidling St. Nicholas. A move to Leigh near Sherborne was shortlived. It dawned even on him that at eighty-one he could not do what he did at twenty-one, so he moved finally into the bungalow at Hembury that he called his "layby". Fred was a master of all the arts of agriculture, and could be frighteningly self sufficient. Once when a reaping machine failed to appear he took a scythe and cut an eight-acre field of corn alone. Farming is a vocation, and in Minnie he found himself married to the right wife for fifty-five strenuous but happy years. So united a family were they that all their five children took to the land for a living, and made a success of it. The feature of East Hembury Farm might well be the prize bulls in the estimation of Farmer Tom, but in the rector's it was the prize character of the late Fred and his widow Minnie.

The nave of Loders church was well filled for the funeral of Rose Silvester, who at the age of 89 died while on holiday with one of her children at Bristol. The home of her daughter Barbara in New Street Lane was the base from which she sallied forth to visit her numerous and widely spread family, who held her in the warmest affection and esteem. She was buried in the grave of her husband in Bridport cemetery.

The church councils of Askerswell and Loders gratefully acknowledge donations in memory of Elizabeth Marsh. Fred Marsh and Rose Silvester.



The proverbial "little bird" whispered to the vicar that Robert and Adelaide Twyman, of Bradpole, have their golden wedding coming up on 28th March. Genealogy is not one of his hobbies. For years he had been content to know "Addie" as a delightful little woman with a great love of Loders church who walked up from Bradpole week by week to put flowers in the Ladye Chapel until deterioration in health stopped her. She was a doer of good by stealth and he revered her shyness by never asking her questions. Neither did he ask anybody questions about her - until now. There was no reason to suspect that she had a husband, and his excursions into the Loders marriage register had never registered her entry with him, although it is there. He suspected that she might be a member of the Paul family because she showed some of their endearing characteristics. This has been confirmed. In congratulating Addie and her spouse on the joyful coming event he prays he may not have fallen from grace in her sight.

A discussion group has been meeting for a year now at Beck Cottage, Askerswell, the home of Nick and Eve Nicholson. They are good company, who find that talking over the big subjects deepens and widens their knowledge in a way sermons cannot. Recruits are always welcome. Normally the meetings are once a month on a Wednesday at 8 p.m., but in Lent they are once a week on the following dates:- Wednesday, 3rd March, subject Jesus is the Gospel; 10th March subject Jesus the revolutionary?; Thursday 18th March Jesus and His death; Thursday 25th March Jesus and discipleship; Wednesday 31st March Jesus and His resurrection.

The Easter vestry and annual church meeting will be held in the village hall, Askerswell, on Tuesday 9th March at 7.30 p.m., and in the school, Loders, on Friday, 16th April at 7.30 p.m. They deal with the business side of the church and need to be well attended to be really effective.

"Mine own executioner". The vicar writes: - I have heard from the Lord Chancellor that the enquiries relating to the new benefice of Askerswell, Loders and Powerstock were completed early in February and that the Royal assent may have already been gazetted. Majesty having done her part, it now behoves me to do mine. The new benefice cannot be born until I liquidate the old one of Loders and Askerswell by resigning it. Being a life freeholder, my incumbency of the two parishes cannot be liquidated by anybody but me, so, like Socrates, I drink the hemlock, with good grace I hope, because the three parishes have got what they so earnestly wanted. Unlike poor Netherbury, Salwayash and Stoke Abbot, which look to be on the point of absorption into the Beaminster team ministry, we retain our identity as parishes each with a church council, but united under one incumbent living in the new vicarage, now completed, and readily accessible to all three parishes next door to Loders church. The Lord Chancellor has helped us very much indeed to this end. We for our part managed to secure that he and not the Dean and Chapter of Sarum should appoint the first incumbent of the new benefice. That is not an easy job in these days of clergy shortage. He has reminded me, gently but firmly, that he cannot offer anybody a job which does not exist until I have resigned Loders and Askerswell. I have told him that I will do the resigning quickly when I know the date of the sale of the old vicarage with its paddock. I have asked the Diocesan secretary, Lt. Col. Ross, for the date. He says I shall be hearing from the parsonages committee. At the time of writing this, I have not heard. If the parsonages committee raises no difficulties, I can have ceased to be vicar of Loders and rector of Askerswell within a few weeks, leaving my successor a clear field, which it is necessary that he should have. I would not have relished my predecessor and his lady still filling the horizon when I took Loders. But parting will be "such sweet sorrow".

My making such an issue of the sale of the old vicarage may puzzle some people, but this is why:- Neither the Diocese nor the parish provided the old vicarage. As we have it now, it was in effect supplied entirely at his own expense by Dr. Edersheim, who became vicar in 1876. Until fifteen years ago the vicars following him paid for the repairs ordered by the Diocese and the rates out of their own pockets. These are now paid by the Diocese out of the quota paid to it by the parish, but as the vicarage was reckoned unsuitable for modern clergy and ultimately to be disposed of, the Diocese spent not a penny more than it had to. In 1980 as beneficial owner I was able to prevent the Diocese pulling it down and disposing of the paddock at valuation. The Diocese agreed that if planning permission could be obtained for a new vicarage on the old kitchen garden the old vicarage with its paddock should be sold as soon as possible. Well, the new vicarage is on the kitchen garden; the old vicarage has remained empty and unsold for two years. The Diocese has given a string of implausible excuses for not honouring the agreement, and wasted a considerable amount of good church money in the process. It is my duty to see that no more is wasted, especially as the Diocese is claiming from the new benefice a quota of £6029 for this year. Incidentally, I would like to congratulate neighbouring Bradpole on their superb expertise in getting away with a quota of only £2,358. They have a population of 2,400 and only one church. We have a population of 1192, three parish churches each with a peal of six bells, and two chapels of ease!



Here at Bell Cottage the March that came in like a lion looks set to go out like a lamb. Lambs here are the arresting feature of the countryside. When they are let out of the fold they frolic down the hill in the morning sunshine. The triplets are naughty. The black faces of all three peep through the wicket on to the road where they would prefer to play were there no vicar to shoo them back. He is grateful to them, however, for making the Bible come alive. A children's rhyme asks: "Little lamb Who made thee? Dost thou know Who made thee? Gave thee clothing of delight, softest clothing woolly bright? Gave thee such a tender voice, making all the hills rejoice?" The frailest and loveliest of the domestic animals is the symbol of Jesus Christ. He is the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world on Good Friday. On Easter Day He is the triumphant Lamb that was slain, worthy of blessing, honour, glory and power. In church we shall be trying in the seasonal services to identify with the Lamb in His progress from death to victory. On Good Friday there will be in Loders the Litany at nine and the devotional service at eleven; in Askerswell the devotional service at ten. On Easter Day there will be Holy Communion in Loders at eight and twelve noon; in Dottery at nine and in Askerswell at ten. There will also be matins at eleven in Loders and evensong at half-past six in Askerswell.

Thursday, the eleventh of March, was the beginning of the end of the vicar's thirty-five year and thirty year incumbency of Loders and Askerswell respectively. On that day he posted his resignation (with effect from April the thirtieth) to the new Bishop of Salisbury; notice to the Lord Chancellor that he had done this; and notice to the Diocesan secretary that the Diocese should honour without further delay the agreement it had made with him and the Church Commissioners in 1980 to sell the old vicarage with its paddock. He did all this sadly, not wanting to part with the flock he loves, but forced to acknowledge by the march of events that this was best for the new benefice of Askerswell, Loders and Powerstock, and the new vicarage, and the vicar-to-be.

The Lord Chancellor acknowledged the notice by return and sent personal good wishes. The new Bishop wrote a fortnight later, and in his own hand, thus: "Dear Mr. Willmott, Thank you so much for your letter of March 11th, enclosing your Deed of Resignation, which I have signed and passed on to the appropriate quarter. Having been here so short a time I have unfortunately had no chance of getting to know you and your ministry at Askerswell and Loders, but I am very much aware of how unusual it is today to find a priest who has served one particular area and community faithfully over a long period of years as you have done. There are some things that only a priest who has been part of the fabric of life long enough can do, and many people must be deeply grateful to you for such self effacing service. It does mean of course that your departure will be a great wrench for you and them, but there will be much, too, to look back on with thanksgiving. May you find much happiness and fulfilment in many years of retirement, with good health and congenial opportunities for ministry. With every blessing, yours very sincerely, John Sarum."

A letter from the Diocesan Secretary, bearing the same date as the Bishop's, said "I must apologise for the delay in acknowledging your letter of 11th March. I regret that I have no further information for you regarding the disposal of the property". The property, of course, is the old vicarage, and it is a pity that the Diocese has not reciprocated the vicar's gesture of good will in parting with his life freehold in the interest of the new benefice. The saga of the old vicarage is a murky one, which the vicar still hopes will not have to come into the clear light of day. But while he has possession of it, he has taken the precaution of getting it reported on by the experts who examined it in January 1980, and disagreed with the Diocesan agents' report that it was unsafe for the vicar to continue living in. Examining it again, after two years that included one of the worst winters on record, the experts are sure that the diagnosis of the Diocesan agents was wrong.

March the Tenth was a portentous day for believers in astrology. For the first time since the year 1803 and the last until 2357, the sun's nine planets, including the earth, were all within an area of 96 degrees on the same side of the sun. Disasters from India to California were predicted - earthquakes, riots, outbreaks of disease, etc. and perhaps tidal waves. Thousands of people were reported to have flocked to mosques, temples and churches in Kashmir for prayers to ward off the predicted catastrophe. But nothing happened. This, of course, can be interpreted in two ways; either the prediction of the astrologers was wrong, or they were right and the prayers in mosques, temples and churches were answered by God in the affirmative. Astrologers who are not prayerful may be comforted to know that on March 10th the long regime of the Rev. O.L. Willmott as vicar of Loders and rector of Askerswell came effectively to an end. On that very day he happened to write the letter of resignation which ended his regime and extinguished him as a vicar and rector. It also extinguished the longest tenure of an incumbency in the counties of Wiltshire and Dorset that comprise the Diocese of Salisbury. One of Shakespeare's dicta came readily to the vicar's mind: "When beggars die there are no comets seen; the heavens themselves blaze forth the death of princes". But this seemed not to apply to him. As vicar he had been a beggar, certainly, but not a prince of beggars. The latter, surely, are those professional tear jerkers who raise a lot for deserving charities and pocket fat commissions. Perhaps the words put by Thomas Hardy into the mouth of the exiled Napoleon make a better epitaph: "Great men are meteors that consume themselves to light the earth: I am in the burnt out stage".



Jack McDowell, people's churchwarden of Loders, asks for this notice to be inserted: "It is not often that the churchwardens have the privilege of appearing in the Parish Notes, but they wish to voice the genuine regret felt in his parishes at the forthcoming departure of Mr. Willmott. No priest could have been more conscientious in his service to the church and pastoral work of visiting the sick. The parishes are planning their official farewells in due course."

The annual assembly of the parish of Askerswell was very well attended. Not surprisingly Gill Evans, the retiring chairman, was the only nominee for the vacant post, and was unanimously re-elected. She got the business of the meeting through expeditiously yet courteously, and with an elegance supporting the view that women are a civilising influence. The mood of the meeting rubbed off on the other candidates for office. Bob Boucher was not allowed to refuse nomination as vice-chairman, nor Eileen Bryan as clerk. Those parishioners who attended in the expectation of fireworks over alleged boundary rigging and harbouring eyesores must have been disappointed, as the doers of the alleged misdeeds refused to be ignited. Perhaps counsel for the prosecution was too gentlemanly, but he would not be able to help that. The art of the professional was apparent in the way Colonel Rose expounded Askerswell's role in nuclear war. It would, he thought, be restricted to coping with fall out and refugees. His suggestion that a committee be set up was agreed to. Any suspicion the fearful might have had that he was secretly informed of an imminent holocaust was allayed by his offer to mow the playing field again this year. It was accepted with alacrity, and his sangfroid betrayed no sign of turbulence when somebody remarked that he was "better than the goats." Geoffrey Ballis offered to do what was necessary for the health of the Jubilee and Aylmer memorial trees, with Mr. Haseltine co-operating. There were numerous volunteers to keep The Pound free of unwelcome vegetable and mineral matter. Geoffrey warned them to be gentle with Mrs. Bellis, who was the only animal they were ever likely to find in it. Eileen Bryan, the treasurer, sent the meeting home happy in the knowledge that, thanks to a ha'penny precept on the rate, the parish was not in its usual state of near bankruptcy. There was £110 in the kitty.

A morning christening was more convenient for Major John Dean, home on leave from Germany, to have for his infant son Rupert Anthony, so it had to be at Loders after matins on 7th March, and not Dottery, where the Major and his wife Susan live at Colley Farm. Loders church was also more commodious for the crowd of relatives, friends and tiny tots attending.

Dottery church was the only one of our three where Mothering Sunday was marked by a distribution of flowers. These had been picked and choicely posied by Angela Johnston, who put in some corn dollies for good luck. Young life was much in evidence at the service, but not so much so as to make the sermon inaudible. It was lovely to have them.

Lieutenant Commander Clay and his wife Janice, of Askerswell, are to be congratulated on producing a girl to balance their two boys. She is Joanna Elizabeth Alice, born at Portway hospital on 6th March, and doing splendidly.

The Askerswell Easter vestry and annual church meeting was well attended. The revised electoral roll, presented by Dorrie Fooks, is now 62. People's churchwarden Jack Stevens reported on the general condition of the church fabric, which is satisfactory, and told of the minor jobs to be done. He is no mean craftsman himself. His appraisal of the architect's monstrous recommendations in the septennial survey of the church reduced them to size, so robbing them of their terrors. Olive Barrow, the secretary, had no difficulty in chronicling the meetings of the PCC, for they are infrequent, the parish being allergic to over-government. Everybody sympathised with Gill Evans, who as one of the parish representatives on the Deanery synod, had to make some sort of sense out of that body's deliberations. This is not the fault of the Deanery body, but of the whole synodical system. It seems to have been inspired by the digestive system of the cow, except that it has three stomachs and not four, and in the synodical system the rumination lasts for years instead of hours. General synod passes masses of indigestible matter down to the Diocesan synod, which chews it over then relegates it to the Deanery synod, which also chews it and gurgitates it back to the Diocesan synod, which regurgitates it to the General synod. The Rector was quite unable to shed light on Gill's problems. He and she seemed to be in different stomachs. It was refreshing to move from synod to a lucid exposition of church finances by Nick Nicholson. They are in good shape. Receipts for 1981 were £2523 (£428 up), and expenditure £2280 (£232 up). Church officers were re-elected (with thanks for past services) with the exception of Gill Evans, who could not face another session of the Deanery synod, and was relieved nobly of the job by Olive Barrow.

The vicar writes: "Vicars go, and come, but Loders fete remaineth, and rightly so. Its committee has had its first meeting, fixing the date for Saturday, 7th August at Loders Court. A wedding in the church will be on Saturday, 31st July, so a clash like last year's will be avoided. I, of course, shall not be doing the collecting, but I hope that those who have volunteered to replace me will be received in the same kindly and generous spirit. At present it seems that the churchwardens will be responsible for getting officiants at the Sunday services. The regulation which will prevent me taking a service in Loders, Askerswell and Dottery for two years is one I was unaware of. It might seem harsh, but the principle is right. It ensures that a prospective incumbent is not confronted by an old war horse grazing on his pasture, which can be off-putting. Ideally the retiring incumbent should not be living in the parish. I am living here only because I was meant to be dead. Bell cottage was acquired during my tuberculotic period."



The superb weather on Easter Day must have tempted people to the sea rather than church, but church seemed to win. Congregations at our three churches were numerous. For the matins at Loders not only was the chancel full but people were standing at the west end. An itinerant Welshman who attended this service was surprised by the singing, especially the anthem, as if good vocal music outside the Principality were bound to be playing truant. The deft fingers and lively imaginations of the decorators, with an abundance of flowers to work on, had given the churches a little of the air of the Chelsea flower show, which accorded with the Easter theme. Out of those who attended the services 236 made their Communion. The collections were £253. These now go to the vicar's expenses of office. Were they called Easter offering under today's order of things they would benefit him not at all.

In spite of many valid apologies for absence the attendance at the Loders Easter vestry was passing fair. A feature of this meeting which puzzled the vicar was that nobody left on urgent business before it was over. The puzzle ceased to be such at the end, when glasses of some amber fluid on trays were borne in from behind the scenes, and given to the smiling audience. As became a church meeting, the fluid had probably been selected with the not-drinking-and-driving-gospel uppermost in mind. As senior churchwarden Jack McDowall proposed the health and happiness of the Vicar and Mrs. Willmott in their impending retirement. He was surprisingly witty, and just the one to propose anybody else's health; for the speech showed how excellent his own must be to have withstood the vicar's sermons for 29 years. In that time he had missed scarcely one. He had worked out for how long he had listened in minutes, hours and days. Muriel Randall, who seconded the toast, had listened for 35 years, but was not as flush with spare time as Jack - who has been retired for 30 years - to put it in minutes, hours and days. In his reply the vicar was secretly wondering whether they would both be looking so fit under such a dollop of anybody else's sermons.

All the church officers were re-elected at this meeting, with the exception of Miss Elsie Male, whose present poor health moved her to resign as one of the four representatives on the Deanery Synod. Miriam McDowall succeeds her. The revised electoral roll numbers 226, and Maurice Lawson was appointed Master of the Roll in the vicar's place. He combines this office with that of Church Information, Honorary Verger, Public Relations, Personal Power and Master of the Churchyard Mower (what would there be of him without the church, or of the church without him?). The Dottery accounts, presented by Henry Johnston showed receipts of £503.07, expenditure of £211.56, and a credit balance of £291.51. The Loders accounts, presented by Muriel Randall, showed receipts of £4,989.65, expenditure of £5,126.54, and a debit balance of £136.89 which was more apparent than real. The church repair fund showed income at £4,857.19, expenditure of £121.90; and a credit balance of £4,857.19, which will be more than wiped out by the repairs on order. The fete at Loders Court will take place on Saturday, 7th August, at the kind invitation of Lord and Lady Hood.

During the interregnum the services at Loders and Askerswell will be at the usual times. The Rev. William Cole will be in charge, with the lay reader Mr. Leslie Smith to help. Mr. and Mrs. Cole are living in the house on the Burton Road, Bridport, that they acquired from churchwarden Bill Budden. Their phone number is Bridport 56289. The Rev. Ben Knight a much loved rector of Symondsburry and no stranger to us, will be in charge of Dottery. His phone number is Bridport 24909. Services at Dottery will probably be reduced to two a month, of which one will certainly be the Communion on the first Sunday at 9.30 a.m. Both these priests have the departing vicar's connection with the military, but a much stronger one. Mr. Cole was an army chaplain for 20 years, becoming a Deputy Assistant Chaplain General; Mr. Knight was an air force chaplain for 26 years, becoming an Assistant Chaplain in Chief and an Honorary Chaplain to the Queen. Top brass, both of them! And the more valuable for being antiques.

May Day, which is 3rd May, will see the usual coffee morning and bring-and-buy at The Crown, Uploders, in aid of the village hall. It will be from 10-12 noon, admission 25p. The May Fair at Loders school will be on Saturday, 22nd May, at 2.30 p.m. Its financial aim is to replenish the school fund, which is important but incidental to the main endeavour of recreating Merrie England for a couple of hours.

The steward of the Uploders Chapel, Joe Morris, reminds us of the coffee morning and bring-and-buy to be held in the hall of the United Church, Bridport, on Saturday, 1st May from 10-12 noon. It is a joint effort with the West Bay Methodist church which has greatly helped the little Uploders community in the past and is hoped to again this time.

There are three funerals to record. First, that of Penelope Glover; who used to live with her brother Bill in Uploders before they discovered a more convenient domicile in Allington. They continued to worship in Loders church and were vigorous workers for the fete. They came of a banking family in Cheshire. Brother and sister lived together, each working in a bank, and not knowing life without each other. The sympathy felt for Bill was apparent in the attendance at Loders church for the funeral. It was followed by cremation at Yeovil and burial of the ashes in Loders churchyard. The second funeral was that of Dorothy Westendorp at Yeovil crematorium. She and her late husband Jerry lived high and lifted up in their Waterleaves cottage in Uploders, where their value as good neighbours, and jolly companions on a "binge", was much appreciated. Jerry had been a pilot in the Great War. A vivid picture of his flying machine hung over his fireplace. But it was the daredevilry of his shopping expeditions to Bridport on a boneshaker of a bicycle when



he was supposed to be in bed dying that captured local imagination. The third funeral was that of Connie Wilkinson, wife of the Reverend Norman at Walditch church. They liked to attend Loders' services when they could, and when the vicar was away Norman conducted them. She was aptly described as "a sweet little woman whose Christian spirit shone through her". The Rev. Graham Loughlin, vicar of Walditch, was in charge of the service, with the vicar of Loders reading the lesson, and the Rev. W. Tanner taking the prayers and the committal. Mr. Tanner had known Norman for forty years, serving under him as junior chaplain at Cranleigh school.

Higher Pynore Farm, Dottery, had an unusual experience one evening in April. The two big downstairs rooms of the old farmhouse were full of people, young and not so young. Tables laden with a luscious variety of food, and a look of giving rather than getting on everybody's face, was a sign that churchwarden John Marsh and his wife Brenda were not in process of selling the home of his ancestors. And the central figures, the Vicar and Mrs. Willmott, were the focus of a reverent attention not often bestowed on auctioneers. The flock that he had tended for thirty-five years were giving a party to mark his retirement. One of the joys for him of this flock was its marked identity with the flock he had inherited. Natural wastage had robbed it of its elders, but their children and children's children were there. The Dottery population is not as fluid as those of Loders and Askerswell. By the look of all the food provided, the company expected to be there a week, but all was over in two hours - alas! Churchwarden Henry Johnston made a speech. The flock are not naturally articulate, and he is one who can be understood when he is, so this function usually falls to him. With him brevity is the soul of wit. Before the vicar knew it he was holding a magnum of sherry, and an envelope that Henry called "the change"; and a bottle of vintage port from Philip Smith (there is much to be said for a flock being as knowledgeable of its pastor as he of them). This was followed by a framed sketch of Dottery church by Angela Johnston; and a long handled basket with Madagascar jasmine climbing up it for Mrs. Willmott, which delighted her because it matched her Ascensiontide hat, and looked as if its perfumed flowers would be in full bloom by then. Later that night, when she was not about, the Vicar investigated Henry's packet of "change". It was £164, and in banknotes, in which farmers always seem to do their really important transactions.

The Askerswell party will not be in time for these Notes, but will doubtless feature in the next. We are asked to say that there will be a Loders party in the village hall on Saturday, 15th May, at 6.30.

By coincidence the quarterly meeting of the West Dorset Guild of Ringers could not be held at Broadwindoor as intended. Askerswell deputised on what happened to be the eve of the Rector's last Sunday. To mark the occasion the ringers began with a quarter peal of "Cambridge", which is in a minor key indicating that a ringer of sixty-one years' standing can not be far off what the Salvationists call "promotion to glory". At the tea in the village hall which followed the service, the branch chairman, Ivan Andrews, made a felicitous speech, and gave him a token for a book which the company hoped he might be spared to read. A letter of sympathy and reminiscence was read from the Ringing Master of the Salisbury Guild, which itself becomes a century old on the 14th September. Loders ringers marked the Vicar's last matins there by ringing after as well as before the service, at which his daughters Juliet from London, and Rosamund with family from Radlett, were able to be present. That evening at Bell the Vicar had the additional pleasure of listening to Juliet on Radio Four. She was holding her own in battle with the medical establishment in the "You the jury" programme. She was grinding her usual axe, that human hens should have a cluck as to how they hatch (a fine mixing of metaphores here). Her side won by 58 votes to 32.

That same evening the Vicar had another bonus, a congratulatory call from Marjorie Vacher in Toronto, ending with an anxious question as to the future of these Parish Notes. That probably rests with the new vicar, but Christopher Miles has been persuaded to be editor during the interregnum. He will be relying on the parishes to supply him with their news items. These, of course, welled up in the old vicar in the course of his pastoral duties but they will not well up in Christopher as he runs Barclay's Bank in Bridport by day and equitates on an Irish thoroughbred round our lovely lanes by night. The old vicar is sorry to part with his readers far and near, whose unflagging interest has been the motivating force of his writing all these years. "What can't be cured must with patience be endured, As cheaply can we laugh as cry".

And now for the final paragraph, which perspicacious readers turn to first: The Vicar writes "The long and wearisome conflict over the old vicarage seems set to end at last. The new Bishop (God bless him!) is to see me at his home in the Close, Salisbury, on my last day as Vicar of Loders, and he can settle it".



There is good news for all those readers to whom the favourite last paragraph of these notes is as necessary a part of life's pattern as the 6 o'clock gin and tonic - the latest part of the Vicarage saga is in its usual place.

For those who have not rushed to the back page, the Notes turn to the retirement of the Vicar and Mrs. Willnott. Rather than give a formal account of the presentation at Loders, we would like to pass on the contents of a letter from the Vicar. It reads:- "Would you kindly allow my wife and me to express our heartfelt thanks to all who had any part in launching us so feelingly and generously on the uncharted sea of retirement. The Dottery farewell was the first to appear in the Notes, and an account of Askerswell and the School will doubtless appear elsewhere. It remains for me to comment on the ceremony in Loders Village Hall. We arrived in good time to receive the guests, but found the Hall already half full of them, sipping white wine, nibbling savouries and enjoying a good Dorset "tell" with each other. Beside the faithful everyday faces were those who had left the Parish long ago, and not so long ago (some who could not be present had already made long journeys to Bell to bid us farewell or sent cards). My wife and I were so flushed by the warmth of the reception that our faces could not show the blushes that the speeches of the Viscount Hood and Lady Laskey should have brought to them. My wife was surprised and delighted to receive the token of a freezer, since delivered at Bell, and I equally so by a cheque for £1420 which would almost exactly pay for replacement windows on the south wall of Bell. What touched us most was a box of Mars for Beano our yellow labrador, who still escapes to the old Vicarage when the way is open. Presumably it was from the bitches of Loders - certainly not from their owners. We were overawed to see later in the Bridport News that donations all together were around £2000. My wife was obviously uppermost in the donors' minds!"

The service at Loders on the morning of the last Sunday in April was a very sad occasion, being as it was the last to be taken there by the Vicar. Under the rule laid down by the last Bishop of Salisbury the Vicar may not take a service in any of his former Churches until two years have passed after the date of his retirement. The attendance at Matins on Easter Sunday had shown that the faithful were mindful of the fact that it was to be his last as Vicar of Loders, and the turn out on this occasion proved that he and Mrs. Willnott were still very much in their thoughts. At the end of so moving a service it took many people until the last verse of the final hymn to collect themselves together sufficiently to be able to sing with much vigour. It is good to know that both the Vicar and Mrs. Willnott will be as close to their friends as ever they were since they remain at Bell.

In lovely spring weather Group Captain and Mrs. Newall's enjoyable coffee morning at South Eggardon produced £93 in aid of Marriage Guidance. We are sure that this event was planned with a missionary spirit in mind, it being for the benefit of those in far away places rather than those in West Dorset.

Doomsday in Askerswell - A village meeting on 12th May listened to a talk on defence. Those attending gathered that if they were in a blast area the only useful precaution to have taken would have been the making of a will, but that in a fall out area much could be done to stay alive. A committee, nicely balanced as to male and female, the services and civilians, comprising Captain Lumby, Colonel Rose, Eileen Bryan, Bob Boucher and Gill Evans are to consider ideas suggested at the meeting. We feel sure that they will be sensible of the regard which many of us have for Askerswell and its residents when they plan out the size of their shelter - a little extra room for the rest of us would be much appreciated. Before you reach for your shovels and spades, will Askerswell residents please note that Nick Nicholson is your correspondent during the Interregnum. Please let him have details for inclusion in the Notes by the 20th for inclusion in the following months copy.

Mrs. Doris Strachan died at home in Beaminster at the age of 68 after a long and trying illness. Much sympathy will be felt for her husband Leslie in Loders, where they lived at Purbeck Close for five years. She was on Loders Church Council at that time, and had been a worker for the Fete. Many of her friends in Beaminster, where she was a member of the W.I. attended the funeral service which was conducted at Yeovil crematorium by Mr. Willnott.

Dottery news. The Priest-in charge, the Rev. Ben Knight, officiated at the funeral of Mrs. Elizabeth Rendall, who died in Weymouth hospital at the age of 86, and was cremated at Weymouth. She had lived in Dottery at Waddon Barn, and was an aunt of Mrs. Smith of New Close Farm. The Church is grateful for donations totalling £16 in lieu of flowers. Dottery is settling to a new regime of two services a month - morning Communion on the first Sunday and afternoon Evensong on the third. On Rogation Sunday afternoon the Reverend Ben had the congregation out in the open air, beating the bounds of the Church.

The youngest daughter of Neville and Judi Welch, of Walditch, was baptised Tiffany Marie in Loders Church on 28th April by the Vicar. She is a grand daughter of



Leon Wanstall and wife, who run the Travellers Rest in Uploders. Her uncle, Michael George, read the lesson.

The evening of 8th May found nearly fifty villagers enjoying a sort of Ploughman's Barn Dance in Askerswell Village Hall. We hasten to add that we do not use 'Ploughman' in the Gray's Elegy plodding sense, anyone who attended will be able to tell about the way in which the dancers were efficiently organised into groups who were anything but plodding (although the actual dancing of some might not have been as efficient as the organisation of it). The term is however appropriate to the type of food served as an adjunct to the essential liquid counterpart, and very good it was too. As always the organisers demonstrated what value for money is all about - managing to provide an enjoyable evening and a good spread at a very modest price. A very good time was had by all, the only regret being that it had to come to an end.

The coffee morning held at the Crown, Uploders, was both an enjoyable gathering and a profitable one. It raised £22 for the Village Hall. The Wessex Morris Men are due to appear there on 28th June at 9 o'clock to perform their dances in front of the pub - if past experience is anything to go by it should be a lively evening with plenty of liquid refreshment conveniently close to hand.

Mr. & Mrs. Leakey are holding a coffee morning at The Hermitage, Dottery, on Saturday 3rd July in aid of the Wessex Body Scanner Appeal. It is to last from 10 till 12.30, and there will be a bring & buy stall. A similar event last year raised the sum of £157.

From Mr. Joe Morris, steward of the Chapel at Uploders:- "A coffee morning and sale of produce on 1st May held in our Bridport Church Hall was very well attended and Uploders and West Bay divided £200 between them for their Church funds. Thanks to all who made it such a success. The Superintendent Minister of our Circuit, the Rev. Allan Dowers from Seaton, will be coming to Uploders to conduct the service on June 13th at 6.30 p.m."

Welcome to Mr. & Mrs. Adams, who have moved into No. 7 Purbeck Close in Uploders. We do not know anything about them, but are sure that they will already have made the acquaintance of those around them.

The Parish Assembly of Loders was fairly well attended, George Hyde, chairman, presided and announced with pride that the local rate rise was negligible. He wished Mr. & Mrs. Willmott well in their retirement. Sheila Dent, the clerk, noted with sorrow the absence of any local interest in the Beautiful Village competition, and this despite her own success in softening the grandeur of her "Loders Castle" home at Yondover with the most lovely array of flowers. Maurice Lawson was thanked for saving the Parish money by doing his usual skillful servicing of the Cemetery mower.

The absence of the Vicar from last year's May Fair at Loders School (he was already committed to a Wedding at Askerswell) was supposed by many to have been a possible cause of the rain which fell that afternoon. The almost miraculous way in which the sun shone through this year on an otherwise heavily clouded day proved to those who had not actually seen him there that he was in attendance. Mr. John Hyde made a presentation to Mr. Willmott on behalf of many people with past and present connections with the School, and wished a happy retirement to them both. Mrs. Chris Prideaux, looking as radiant as the newly arrived sunshine, crowned the May Queen, Leila Collins, and the dancing followed. Not only was it all the ideal of a pleasant English afternoon, it also raised the sum of £438 for our Village School where we know it will be wisely used.

Loders and Dottery residents - your correspondent during the Interrognum is Christopher Miles at Oak Cottage in Loders (or Barclays Bank by day). Please pass on to him any items for inclusion in the Notes. You may alternatively be able to catch him as he passes by on his horse, when it would be helpful if you could write the bits of news on a scrap of paper as Mr. Finn's memory is inclined to get muddled. This may well be something to do with his part Irish blood, which no doubt helps to make him the character that he is. Also, should Mr. Finn leave "a little something" behind for your roses it is a mark of great respect - the Vicar knows what good stuff it is, and it is only left for the best people.

We asked Mr. Willmott what came of his interview with the new Bishop of Salisbury and gather that he was well satisfied with it. It lasted for over two hours. The Bishop has since informed Mr. Willmott that the Parsonages Board plan to sell the old Vicarage without reference to its paddock has been dropped. The Vicarage will now be offered in combination with the right to an agricultural tenancy of the paddock which gives the purchaser security of tenure. The terms of the tenancy are such that in the unlikely event of the paddock ever qualifying for planning permission, possession of it would revert to the Church, which retains the freehold separately from the new Vicarage and its curtilage. Mr. Willmott has agreed to all this, and thanked the new Bishop for settling the dispute so amicably and swiftly.

Loders and Askerswell services all continue at the usual times, with Loders Matins on 13th June being taken by the Rev. Neil Howells, the Vicar of Bray, who is a good friend of Loders and many of its inhabitants.