

Jan 4, 1902

WITHAM-ON-THE-HILL.

CHRISTMAS-TIDE.—On Christmas-day, in addition to the high celebration, there were two earlier celebrations of the Holy Eucharist, at 8.30 and 9.30. Though there were a goodly number of communicants, many were prevented from attending the services by the almost impassable condition of the roads. The Church was effectively decorated with overgreens, white flowers being used for the altars and font. After the high celebration, the Vicar and Churchwardens dispensed the annual charities to the recipients in the old School, ten coats for men and a sum of money to each widow. In addition to these, the Squire and Mrs. Johnson gave their customary presents, consisting of meat and blankets.

DANCE.—On Monday, the 30th ult., a dance was held in the new School, which was agreed by all to be the most successful hitherto held here. The room presented a thoroughly "seasonable" appearance, being decorated with festoons of evergreen stretching from side to side. There was a numerous company, among whom were Lady Lawrance, Mr. Mrs., and Miss Lawrance, and party from the Hall. Dancing was kept up with great spirit until 2.30 a.m., Mr. J. H. Berry, of Bourne, being the accompanist, and Messrs. T. Pick and Metcalfe M.C.'s. The success of the dance was largely due to Mrs. Berry's able teaching in the dancing classes which have lately been commenced here, and attended by a large number of pupils. The proceeds, which, after paying all expenses, will amount to over £2 10s., will go towards defraying the debt on the Church expenses.

1902

Jan. 25 1902

WITHAM-ON-THE-HILL.

IMPENDING CHANGES.—This week, the Hon. Mr. Justice Lawrance and Lady Lawrance are leaving Witham Hall, where they have resided during the vacations for the past nine years. Their loss will be very keenly felt and regretted in the neighbourhood, and more especially in Witham, where their kindness to all has rendered them much esteemed. We understand that Mr. Justice Lawrance desires, if possible, to remain in the neighbourhood, and will in all probability shortly take another country seat in South Lincolnshire. His Lordship is leaving Witham in consequence of the sale of the estate of Mr. A. C. Johnson, the Lord of the Manor, to Mr. Walter Fenwick, who is purchasing the entire property. Mr. Fenwick will come into possession next month, and will at once proceed to remodel and enlarge the house and lay out the grounds on an extensive scale. We understand that he proposes making very considerable changes and improvements on the property. Mr. Fenwick is married to the daughter of Lord Robert Montagu, uncle of the Duke of Manchester, and has three young sons.

Feb. 1. 1902

WITHAM-ON-THE-HILL.

HARVEST.—The Marquis of Exeter's Harvest was in front of Mr. Andrew's house, on Saturday last. The field, which included the Marchioness of Exeter, was not so large as it might have been, owing possibly to a sharpish frost overnight, which, however, was well out of the ground when the time came for operations. In spite of climatic conditions, which rendered account poor, a fair day's sport was enjoyed.

DANCING CLASS.—The last of the series of Dancing Classes took place in the School on Wednesday evening, when hearty votes of thanks were given to Mrs. Berry for her able and successful instruction, and to the Vicar for acting as accompanist. The Classes have been well attended throughout, and have been thoroughly appreciated and enjoyed by the members. It has been decided to wind up the season with a "Cinderella" dance, for members and their friends, on the Monday before Lent.

Feb. 8. 1902

WITHAM-ON-THE-HILL.

RUMMAGE SALE.—A very successful rummage sale was held on Monday evening, in the School, under the management of the following ladies:—Mrs. Andrew, Mrs. Benton, Mrs. Brackenbury, Mrs. Bradshaw, Miss Cripps, Miss Knipe, Mrs. Metcalfe, Mrs. Moxon, and Mrs. Thos. Pick. The goods were priced at low figures, the object of the sale being rather to meet the needs of the parishioners, at prices within the reach of all, than to make a large profit, and for this reason the sale was not announced beyond the parish. Nevertheless, so ample was the supply and so great the demand that the surprising sum of £3 15s. 2d. was realised in the course of the evening. Doors were open at seven o'clock, and the room was immediately filled to its utmost capacity. So brisk was trade, that within half-an-hour or so the stalls were cleared. The proceeds, which will be banked until the Easter vestry meeting, will go a long way towards extinguishing an old-standing debt on the Church expenses, owing by the churchwardens to the late Vicar, the Rev. J. T. Holland.

March 15. 1902

WITHAM-ON-THE-HILL.

MISSIONARY LECTURE.—On Friday week a well-attended lantern lecture was given in the School by the Rev. W. C. Piercy on the work of the Universities' Mission to Central Africa. A collection was made at the close of the meeting on behalf of the mission, and amounted to 12s. 8d., composed largely of small coins, about one hundred people being among the contributors.

Feb. 15. 1902

WITHAM-ON-THE-HILL.

DANCE.—The last of a series of very successful social evenings was held in the School-room on Monday, when the members of Mrs. Berry's Dancing Class, with their friends, to the number of about sixty, spent a most enjoyable evening. The Vicar played for dancing; and at very frequent intervals he was relieved of his duties by Misses Ethel and Maud Denning, of Stamford, who accompanied on the piano and mandoline. This trio of performers gave the company a musical treat, and deservedly earned the vote of thanks accorded them by Messrs. Benton and Stevenson. Messrs. Pick and Metcalfe acted as M.O.'s. This meeting of the Dancing Class afforded the opportunity to present to the Vicar an electro-plated inkstand, in recognition of his valuable assistance as accompanist at the dancing lessons and practices. The presentation was made by Mr. T. Pick, and the Vicar replied in a neat little speech. As a termination to this incident, the company enthusiastically sang, "For he's a Jelly Good Fellow." During the evening, refreshments were obtainable, and these had been gratuitously supplied by the Ladies' Committee, which consisted of Mrs. Pick, Mrs. Andrew, Mrs. Brackenbury, Mrs. Metcalfe, Mrs. Bradshaw, Miss Knipe, and Mrs. Benton. A vote of thanks was accorded to the Ladies' Committee, on the motion of the Vicar, seconded by Mr. Andrew. To Miss Knipe and Miss Cripps the thanks of the Committee are due, for the assistance they rendered in writing out the programmes for the convenience of the dancing enthusiasts.

April 5. 1902

WITHAM-ON-THE-HILL.

CRICKET MATCH.—On Easter Monday, a match was played between the Estate servants and the village, resulting in a decisive victory for the latter, which was obtained largely by the help of Mr. H. Moxon, of London, who knocked up 87. The total scores were—Village 90, Estate 59.

EASTER-DAY.—A merry peal from the Church steeple in the early morning ushered in the festival, and the bells were again rung at intervals throughout the day. The Church looked extremely pretty in its garniture of flowers: the altars were decorated chiefly with arums, the font and other parts with primroses, daffodils, and violets set in moss.

VESTRY MEETING.—The annual vestry meeting was held on Tuesday, April 1st. The churchwardens and sidesmen of last year were all re-appointed, the Vicar again nominating Mr. Thos. Pick as his warden, and the parish electing Mr. Bradshaw. The accounts for the year were then presented to the meeting. The Vicar observed that the improvement in the weekly Church collections had been more than maintained during the past year, and also that the proceeds of the winter parties and of the rummage sale had been added to the Church fund, the result being a substantial balance in hand, which would enable them almost entirely to defray the debt owing to the late Vicar. The Moulton and Charles Charity accounts were also presented and passed.

March 1. 1902

WITHAM-ON-THE-HILL.

SALE AT WITHAM HALL.—A three-days' sale of the contents of the Hall took place on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday of last week. There was a large attendance on each day, and the prices realised were good. Several curios, books, and engravings went for high figures. Among the large library were many first editions and other books of considerable value.

AN OMINOUS INSCRIPTION.—The following curious legend is engraved upon a brass plate on the staircase of Witham Hall:—"To the intent that it may never be forgot. This plate is inscribed to the memory of the Reverend Woolsey Johnson, who died at Olney, in Bucks., on the 21st day of April, 1756, in the 69th year of his age, and is the first of his family that is buried in the chancel at Witham. He was a man who from his infancy to the hour of his death was exempt from every vice, and adorned with many and great virtues, particularly all the relative ones. He left behind him four children, by name Barbara, George William, Robert Augustus, and Charles Woolsey. He was indefatigable for the good and welfare of his family; he guided them by his advice and by his example in the way to eternal life, and in order to increase their temporal happiness, he with great labour and difficulty obtained an Act of Parliament in the year 1752, to enclose his manor of Witham, and enclosed it accordingly. And that his family might reside upon the same estate, he built this house, which was scarcely built when he changed this life for a better; he would not entail his estate for fear of entailing law suits or other inconveniences upon his heirs; but it was his earnest desire that this his estate might be continued as good or better than he left it, in the male line of his posterity to the end of the world. Cursed be he or she that defaces or removes, or cause to be defaced or removed, this inscription, and blessed be he or she that endeavours to preserve it and keep it clean. This inscription was put up by his widow and executrix, Jane Johnson, June 5th, 1756." Now that the estate has just passed out of the Johnson family by purchase, this old-world tablet has acquired a new and melancholy interest. It remains to be seen what will become of it under the new ownership.

March 29. 1902

WITHAM-ON-THE-HILL.

CORONATION PRIZES.—Mr. Walter Fenwick, the new owner of the estate, has generously promised special prizes to the scholars of the Church School, to be awarded according to merit at the Coronation. The best boy and girl in every standard will receive a prize, and in addition to these, an "extra special" prize will be given to one child who, by regularity of attendance, good conduct, and diligence in work, takes the first place in the whole School.

THE CHURCH.—On Palm Sunday morning, the usual distribution of palms and procession took place. The Vicar has received from Mr. and Mrs. Johnson, as an Easter gift to the Church, a new cassock and cotta for the use of the altar server at the Holy Communion. The temporary chancel screen has been surmounted by a large wooden cross, kindly given to the Church by the Vicar of Castle Nytham, which tends somewhat to relieve the bareness and plainness of the structure. It is hoped that a permanent screen in carved oak may one day be erected in its place, and so complete the design for the restoration of the Church according to the plans of the architect, the late Sir Gilbert Scott.

April 6. 1902

July 75. 1902

ON GOOD FRIDAY, at the Abbey Church, there was a very good attendance at the "Three-Hours' service." The Rev. L. H. Cooley, Vicar of Witham-on-the-Hill, preached on the "Seven Sayings from the Cross." The discourses were of a deeply devotional tone, and impressively delivered. The service was interspersed with suitable hymns.

June 7. 1902

WITHAM-ON-THE-HILL.

INTERESTING DISCOVERY OF A SUBTERRANEAN PASSAGE.—The excavations which have recently been made at the Hall, in connection with the enlargement of the mansion, have brought to light a subterranean passage, running north and south immediately beneath the building, but apparently unconnected with it. The passage has been explored for some little distance in either direction, though without reaching its limit. At present, its origin and purpose remain a complete mystery. The passage is some five feet high by three feet in width, with an arched roof, the masonry being in excellent condition.

CORONATION FESTIVITIES.—The preparations for celebrating the Coronation are proceeding apace, and the following scheme has been drawn up for Coronation-day:—A united thanksgiving service in the Parish Church at 11 a.m., to be followed by a dinner for every man, woman, and child within the ecclesiastical parish of Witham-on-the-Hill. The afternoon will be devoted to sports of various kinds, including a ladies' and gentlemen's cricket match, and every child will be presented by Mr. Fenwick with a Coronation mug and a book. In the evening there will be a display of fireworks. The contributions towards the festivities, paid or promised, amount at present to nearly £35.

July 5. 1902

STACK-FIRING.—At the Police-station, on Monday morning, before E. Sutton, Esq., Fanny Moxon, of Witham-on-the-Hill, was brought up in custody charged with setting fire to a straw stack at Witham, on the previous Friday, the property of Mr. Wm. Andrew. Evidence was given by Mrs. Andrew, Mr. W. Andrew, and P.C. Wilkinson. The former spoke to seeing the stack on fire, soon after nine o'clock in the morning. Mr. Wm. Andrew, who was away from home at the time, valued the stack destroyed at £70. P.C. Wilkinson apprehended prisoner, who admitted setting fire to the stack, and said if she had done wrong she must suffer for it. On being formally charged, prisoner made a statement admitting the offence, stating that she did not think she was doing any harm, although she knew she was breaking the law. Prisoner was committed for trial at Lincoln Assizes.

WITHAM-ON-THE-HILL.

CORONATION DAY.—After much anxious deliberation on the preceding evening, the Committee resolved to carry out the scheme which had been arranged for Thursday, June 26th. The reasons which led them to this decision were, first, the receipt of a re-assuring message from London to the effect that his Majesty was progressing most favourably; secondly, the well-known request of the King that, to prevent disappointment, the provincial celebrations should be held as arranged. The day's proceedings commenced with a celebration of the Holy Eucharist at eight o'clock, offered with special intention for the recovery of the King. A general service of intercession followed at 11 a.m., with an address by the Vicar, in which he appealed to those who were to take part in the festivities to practise self-restraint and sobriety, and not to forget the sad circumstances under which the Coronation had been postponed. He also explained that the local festivities were to be proceeded with, not from motives of selfishness or disloyalty to the Throne, but solely out of consideration for his Majesty's expressed wish. After service, a dinner was served in the School to all the inhabitants. The children came first, and were presented by the Squire each with a "Coronation mug." When dinner was over, a programme of sports was carried out in the Park-field. There were races and contests of every description for old and young, and prizes were awarded on a liberal scale. At five o'clock, tea was served in the School, and was provided—as with the dinner—for all, both children and adults. Mrs. Fenwick, who made her public appearance at Witham for the first time, and who quite won all hearts, then distributed the prizes. First came prizes to children for proficiency in School, consisting of a champion prize to the best boy and best girl in the whole School, and a prize for each boy and girl at the top of every standard. These were given by Mr. Fenwick. The Squire likewise gave three prizes of £1, 10s., and 5s. for the best-kept cottage garden in the village. These prizes were wholly unlooked for, and their announcement came as a very pleasant surprise. They were awarded respectively to Thos. Walpole, Wm. Rudkin, and Thos. Allam. The sports prizes were next distributed. Mrs. Fenwick afterwards proceeded to plant a tree, given by the tenants to commemorate both the Coronation year and also the year of the purchase of the estate by Mr. Fenwick. Mr. Wm. Brackenbury, as representing the longest tenancy on the estate, read a suitable address of kindly welcome to Mr. and Mrs. Fenwick. At the conclusion of these ceremonies, the Squire and Mrs. Fenwick drove away amidst vociferous cheering, a happy augury of the popularity and respect which they will enjoy when they come to live at Witham. The remainder of the programme consisted of a display of fireworks, lighting of the bonfire, and illumination of the trees in the park field. On Friday, a ladies' and gentlemen's cricket match took place, the gentlemen winning by a small majority, after which a supper was served in the School, at which the remains of the previous day's provisions were consumed.

ARSON AT WITHAM-ON-THE-HILL.—FANNY MOXON, 45, pleaded guilty to setting fire to a stack of straw, the property of Wm. Kyneston Lloyd Andrew, at Witham-on-the-Hill, on June 27th.—Sentenced to six months' imprisonment with hard labour.

Aug. 16. 1902

WITHAM-ON-THE-HILL.

CORONATION-DAY.—The bulk of the Coronation festivities having already taken place, the day was not marked by a great united demonstration, such as was originally intended. Nevertheless, merry peals were rung from time to time during the day on the Church bells, a ladies' and gentlemen's cricket match was organised in the afternoon, and a most enjoyable dance in the School brought the day to a close. The music was provided by the Vicar (piano) and Mr. Black (violin). A special service of thanksgiving was held on Sunday evening, the morning service being of a funeral character, owing to the presence of the mourners of the late Mr. Thos. Allam. In the evening, special Coronation hymns were sung, and there was a procession and a solemn *Te Deum* at the close.

DEATH OF MR. THOS. ALLAM.—On Sunday evening, the 3rd, there passed peacefully to his rest Mr. Thos. Allam, whose sudden death came as a sad shock to the entire village. Mr. Allam, who was seventy-one years of age, had been for many years the trusted and respected servant of Mr. A. C. Johnson, late of Witham Hall. He was master of the ringers, and was senior member of the South Lincolnshire Bellringers' Association. The deceased had for some time suffered greatly from rheumatism, and for a week previous to his death had been obliged to relinquish work. However, on the Sunday evening he confessed to feeling considerably better, and retired to rest about ten o'clock in good spirits. A few minutes later, Mrs. Allam was horrified to find that he had passed away, and the passing-bell knolled out the sad tidings to the parish early on the following morning. The body was brought into the Parish Church on Wednesday evening, and remained there during the night, covered with a handsome pall. On the following morning, a requiem celebration of the Holy Eucharist was offered, at which the chief mourners were present. The funeral took place at 2 p.m., and was largely attended, Mr. W. L. Fenwick and Mr. Inglis (steward) being among the congregation. Mr. Johnson was unfortunately away on his yacht at the time, and was in consequence prevented from reaching Witham in time for the funeral. The body was carried to the grave by the Estate servants, and numerous wreaths and crosses, including a very handsome one from Mr. and Mrs. Johnson, testified to the respect and esteem in which the deceased was held. Muffled peals were rung both before and after the funeral, and again on Sunday morning. We understand that a muffled peal was also rung at Edenham on Sunday afternoon.

Nov. 15. 1902.

WITHAM-ON-THE-HILL.

GIFT TO THE CHURCH.—The handsome silver-gilt chalice, which was presented to the Church in 1893 by Mrs. Hailstone, daughter of the late General Johnson, of Witham Hall, has been enriched by the same generous donor with a setting of fine carbuncles. The stones, some of which are of great size and beauty, are arranged upon the base of the chalice, which has been very greatly improved by this addition. Mrs. Hailstone's gift is in memory of her mother, the late Mrs. Johnson, and an inscription in the following words runs around the base of the sacred vessel:—"To the glory of God, and in memory of Lucy Johnson, died Feb. 9th, 1890, from her daughter Caroline." The stones were set by Messrs. Lambert, of Coventry-street, London, by whom the chalice was made.