

WITHAM-ON-THE-HILL, MANTHORPE, TOFT AND LOUND.

1918.—As we stand upon the threshold of the new year, one thought fills our hearts: may it bring the long-deferred and looked-for peace. It would be idle to pretend that we can look forward with much joy to the early days, at any rate, of 1918, in all probability there are even greater sacrifices and anxieties in store for us than any we have yet experienced. Still the darkest hour is usually that which comes before the dawn, and it may well be so during the year that is coming. The one thing needful for us is a brave and resolute endurance, a steadiness of head and heart, facing the future with courage and confidence. And so, in the belief and hope that this to be the year of victory and peace, we wish our readers a "happy new year."

Sunday, January 6th, has been appointed as a solemn National Day of Intercession, by Royal Proclamation. A copy of this Proclamation is being sent to every house in the parish. After all, we are a Christian nation, and is just as it should be that our King should call upon us to turn to God, and tell us in so many words that victory depends upon our prayers. We earnestly trust that every man, woman, and child in the parish may see their way to fulfilling this Royal summons on the appointed day. The services will be at 8, 11, 3, and 6.30, and the special forms of prayer appointed for use will be provided in the church.

Christmas Day.—Our grateful thanks is due to all who kindly helped on Christmas Eve to decorate the church with such profusion and taste. In our opinion it never looked better. The altar flowers were the generous gift of an old friend. The number of the communicants was slightly above the average, though we missed some. Perhaps they will be able to come instead on the Festival of the Epiphany, January 6th.

Christmas Gifts.—Those who have received the kind and generous presents from Mr. and Mrs. Fenwick may, we feel sure, desire to record their special thanks this year, for they were, we know, largely unexpected, and more than all they value the kind thoughtfulness which prompted them.

The Children's Prizes.—The Squire has once again most kindly given prizes to the head children in each standard, which he distributed to the delighted and grateful winners after church on Christmas Day. The following are the names of the prize-winners:—Infants, Lewis Bonnet and Hilda Pell; Standard I, Nellie Wilson, Margaret Wallis, and Bertie Wand; Standard II, Ivy Wilson and Walter Warnes; Standard III, Vera Wilcox and Willie Bonnett; Standard IV, Millie Harmston and George Haddon; Standard V, Nellie Bonnett, Rowland Ash, and Willie Bent; Standard VI, May Dalby and Stanley Harmston.

Chestnuts.—The winners of the prizes offered for the largest collection of horse chestnuts were Vera Wilcox (1st), and Effie Warnes (2nd).

Church Lighting.—The Vicar has secured a sufficiency of paraffin oil to last during the winter, so that there will be no interference with the Sunday evening services.

The Netley Hut.—Miss Ida Brudenell has been kind enough to take over the monthly collection of subscriptions, in the Vicar's place. We appeal most earnestly to former subscribers to renew their support, and to others to give month by month a small donation—1/-, 6d. or 3d.—which Miss Brudenell will call for each month. Our parish contribution to this important fund has fallen away sadly.

Baptism.—December 2nd, Omer, son of Walter and Rose Fanny Warnes.

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The circulation of the Magazine keeps up in this the sixteenth year of its issue. The number of subscribers is the same as last year, and actually exceeds the number of inhabited houses in the parish. For this support we beg to express our hearty thanks, also for the kindness of the many subscribers who not only pay in advance, but at the higher rate of 1/6. All the non-resident subscribers value. It is for their benefit that we occasionally chronicle events which are well known to us here, but which are interesting items of news to those far away. The Vicar will always gladly publish letters or items of news which anyone may wish to send, *e.g.*, tidings from boys on service, particulars of the clubs, notices, &c., or even letters of criticism! The latter can be published anonymously, if desired. We want the magazine to be really interesting to all.

The Post Office.—We much regret to hear that Mrs. and Miss Holmes will relinquish their duties in April, after managing the Post Office so ably and well since the death of Miss Francis in October, 1916. We understand that Mrs. Holmes proposes to live in Stamford. This regret is also shared by the Postal authorities, as their place will be by no means easy to fill.

The Day of Intercession was, on the whole, well observed here. Unwontedly large congregations were present, and the special forms of service issued by authority were used throughout the day. The services, we are told, made a deep impression on many. The collections (£1/6/6) were sent to the Red Cross Society. This solemn day must be the key-note for the year. We should try to make a far greater use of our weekly Intercession every Sunday at 11, and if it really is the case that we can come to one service only, let it be then rather than in the evening.

Once on Sunday.—A habit is growing up, which with some appears almost to amount to a principle, that one attendance only is sufficient on the Lord's Day. One noticed this even on the Day of Intercession, when of all days we had thought that one could not spend too much time in prayer. So too, on Christmas Day. Many who were present at one of the early morning services did not come again for worship, and so missed all sound of the beautiful Christmas hymns and Christmas music. This "oncer" habit (as the late Mr. Gladstone used to call it) suggests a serious falling off in zeal and earnestness, and an absence of the *joy* of Divine Worship. It is not perhaps generally known that the King and Queen unfailingly attend Divine Service in the evening as well as the morning, though the latter only is chronicled in the "Court News." In this they set an admirable example to their people.

Mr. Thomas Pick will forgive us if we venture to express our deep satisfaction at his wonderful improvement in health, which we trust will shortly result in a complete recovery after his long and critical illness. Sunday after Sunday through all these months we have prayed for him in church, and God has heard us. It was a pleasure indeed to see him once more among us, collecting the alms as of old. Though we greatly regret his removal from the village, we are glad indeed that he still remains among us, in his old home at the Elderwood. We feel also that we speak for all in saying how heartily we welcome Mr. Edgar Pick's return home, which happily coincided with the commencement of his father's improvement in health, and probably even contributed to it.

Mr. Fenwick has asked that a statement be made in the Magazine that he intends to give prizes this year for the best cultivated gardens on the Estate, and that the judging will take place at the end of July.

The Social Evening, organized by the Committee of the Reading Room on December 27th, realized a net profit of £9, £3 of which has been sent already to the Netley Hut Fund, to be followed by a further contribution at the end of the season, if the funds allow.

Lent.—The Vicar earnestly invites the parishioners to make good use of this solemn and helpful season. The Sunday services will be of a special character. Owing to the great cost of lighting and heating, we must forego special weekday evening services in church this year. For this reason let us all endeavour to make a more diligent use of the Sundays in Lent.

Obituary.—We deeply regret to record the death of Mr. John Holmes on the 4th of January, after many months of suffering. From the very first there was grave suspicion of trouble beyond human aid, but his partial recovery revived our hopes, until the last relapse came, when there was no longer any doubt of its fatal nature. The one bright feature of this tragic case was the wonderful patience of the sufferer, and his resignation when at last he knew that there could be no recovery. We venture to offer our sympathy to his relatives, and especially to his sister, Mrs. Weldon, with whom he had lived so long. R.I.P.

Baptism.—3rd January (privately) Sydney Charles, son of Charles Robert and Ada Eliza Pell.

Burials.—7th January, John Henry Holmes, aged 51 years.

8th " Sydney Charles Pell, aged 8 days.

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"Missing."—Just as we write for the press comes the intelligence that Capt. A. L. Fenwick is reported "missing, believed killed." The news will be received by us all with grief and dismay, for "Mr. Tony" was so widely beloved, and popular with everyone. We shall all of us feel the deepest sympathy with his mother and family in their anxiety, and earnestly hope that better news may follow shortly.

Easter Day (the 31st of March).—Let none of us fail in obedience to our Saviour's command and the rule of His Church to receive the Holy Sacrament on this great day. It is the plainest of plain duties. If we have doubts or difficulties, be sure that a humble faithful obedience will remove them, and bring its own reward. Meanwhile we have the remaining weeks of Lent to help us to get ready. There will be early Celebrations for Communion on Easter Day at 7.30 and 9, and Choral Eucharist at 11 o'clock.

The Bells.—It is a great pleasure to hear the bells rung up every Sunday, and we are grateful to the ringers for their regularity and keenness. In a very short time now it will be possible to ring for the evening service and we shall specially welcome the evening bells after the long interval of silence.

Summer Time is to be introduced this year on Sunday, March 24th, when the clock will be advanced one hour. The time of Evensong on Sundays will then be 7 o'clock as last year, instead of 6.30.

Confirmation.—No candidates will be presented at Market Deeping this month. The Vicar decided not to seek any for preparation as there is to be a Confirmation at Bourne in November, which will be more convenient for us. Parents of young people of age to be confirmed are asked to bear this in mind.

A Cupboard will shortly be fixed near the South door in the church, in which members of the congregation may place their books. The cupboard will be locked during the week and open on Sundays, so that books may be taken out by their owners before the service and replaced afterwards. This will avoid the necessity of carrying books backwards and forwards, and it is hoped that it will be generally used. The cupboard is handsomely carved, and came from the house of an old parishioner.

The Netley Hut collection.—Since Miss I. Brudenell has taken over this collection the amount given has been more than doubled. We are deeply grateful to her and to the new subscribers whom she has persuaded to support this deserving fund.

Lent Offerings.—A weekly collection is being made during Lent, at the 3 o'clock service, for the Waifs and Strays Society, instead of the purses formerly given out. In addition to this, a special box is placed in the church for offerings at other times, and we beg for contributions from all, so that we may have a goodly sum to send in at Easter. The amount collected is posted up each week in the porch.

Sick Cases.—We are very pleased to record Mr. H. Sentence's recovery after his serious illness, and trust that Mrs. Sentence may shortly be restored to health. We sadly missed Mr. Matt. Pell from his accustomed place and duties at the church last month, and are pleased and thankful to see him back once more.

On Leave.—Several of our boys have recently been home on leave from the front, including Sergt. C. Birch, Ptes. Walter and William Archer, and Gunner A. Pick, all, we are glad to say, looking well and fit. Pte. J. W. Haddon, wounded last year, has also been home lately, before going abroad again.

Mentioned in Despatches.—L. Corpl. William Holmes, who is now in Italy, has been recently "mentioned in despatches" for "conspicuous bravery." We are proud indeed of one of our former servers.

Miss Clara Holmes, his sister, is the first of our girls to don khaki. She has enlisted in the W.A.A.C., and is already in France.

Shrove-tide Social.—This was once again a most successful affair. The management was in the hands of Mr. Lawley and a Committee, who are to be congratulated on the result. The sum of £6/6/0 was handed over to the funds of the Nursing Association.

A Working Party will be held every fortnight on Tuesdays at the Hall from 2 till 4, to make arrangements and comfort for the troops. The first meeting will be on Tuesday, March 12th. It is earnestly

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The Magazine.—The cost of publication has been advanced still further this month, and is now not far short of 2d. a copy. It is hoped, however, to continue it throughout the year, with the concurrence of the three other parishes. In order not to drop it altogether, the Vicar will bear the additional cost, and he thanks the many subscribers who have paid 1/6, without which it would hardly have been possible to continue publication.

Obituary.—We regret to record the death of Mrs. Henry Sentence, who passed peacefully away on the 13th of March. By her death another link with the past is broken. She was married in this church on May 18th, 1863, and has lived in the village ever since. She had never been really strong since her accident about two years ago, and the shock and strain of her husband's illness told upon her. A good wife and an affectionate mother, she will be sadly missed by her family, and indeed by the village generally. R.I.P.

Lady Day is always a time of change in our country parishes, and we shall have to say "good-bye" to Mrs. Holmes and family, who are leaving for Stamford, also to Mr. and Mrs. Bonnett, who, with their children, will be much missed. To both we wish every happiness, in their new homes. Mr. and Mrs. Lambert are coming to the Post Office, and Mr. and Mrs. Wand go to the Home Bottom Farm. In Toft we are sorry to hear that we are losing the Wilsons, whose children will make still another gap in our dwindling school, while Mr. and Mrs. Francis return to Manthorpe.

Miss Lee.—We shall all deeply regret Miss Lee's illness, which may later on, we fear, necessitate an operation. If so, she is assured of our sympathy and good wishes. Miss Lee has undertaken many unobtrusive good works in the parish, not the least of these is her arrangement of the flowers on the Altar week by week. So we shall sadly miss her, and earnestly hope for her speedy restoration to health.

St. George's Day.—Tuesday, April 23rd, is the Festival of St. George, the Patron Saint of England. The Royal Society of St. George has proposed that the day should be kept as a great National Festival, as is St. Andrew's Day in Scotland, and St. Patrick's Day in Ireland. The revived observance of St. George's Day would be a great incentive to patriotism. In place of the rose, the national emblem, we have the *primrose*, which our forefathers wore on this day.

More Light in Church.—Now that the dark evenings are over, we propose to remove the distemper from a portion of the West window, which will let in much additional light. Should it unhappily be necessary to screen the windows next winter, which please God may not be the case, we shall provide a curtain in its place.

Lent Savings.—The special collections in church for the Waifs and Strays, during the six Sundays in Lent, amounted to £2/0/7, a most gratifying and generous sum. Including the usual collections, the amount given in church during Lent averages close upon £1 per Sunday.

Easter Offerings.—The Churchwardens, unknown to the Vicar, decided in accordance with ancient custom, to give the collections on Easter Day to the Incumbent. He is deeply conscious of their kindness, but whatever the amount may be, he will accept it only on condition that he may devote it towards a fund for providing a memorial to our fallen soldiers. We hope, after the war, to erect some standing monument to commemorate their names for ever, and the Easter offerings shall form the first instalment of this fund.

Lieut. Fenwick has been recently appointed as General Staff Officer on the Defence of London. We congratulate him on this appointment, which is a gratifying tribute to his military ability. As a consequence, we shall see but little of him here, and the Hall will be closed.

Sewing Meetings.—In consequence of the above, the proposed fortnightly Red Cross Sewing Meetings at the Hall will have to be abandoned, but the Vicar has suggested that they might be held at the Vicarage, if there is a further supply of material to be made up. Due notice will be given should this be arranged, and we hope to enrol many fresh helpers.

The Vicarage Garden is always at the disposal of those who care to use it. If the weather permits of tennis, the lawn will be prepared during the present month.

An Easter Social is to be held on Easter Monday, the proceeds to be given towards presents for our soldiers.

The Easter Vestry Meeting will be held (D.V.) on Monday, April 8th, to which all parishioners are cordially invited. The church and charities accounts will be presented at this meeting, and the churchwardens and sidesmen chosen.

Marriage.—March 16th, William Ewart Kelby and Millie Breathwick.

Burial.—March 18th, Eliza Sentence, aged 75 years.

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Easter.—No sadder Easter surely has ever dawned for us before, for it came just at the time of our greatest national anxiety. For that very reason its message must have brought infinite comfort to many a soul in deep distress. The church was, as usual, beautifully decorated, and we thank all our kind helpers and the donors of flowers. The Easter offerings amounted to £1/18/6, which the Vicar proposes to give towards the memorial to our fallen soldiers.

Second-Lieut. Leslie Metcalfe.—On the morning of Easter Day Mr. and Mrs. Metcalfe received news that their son was reported missing since March 21st, the first day of the recent great enemy offensive. The tidings threw a gloom of sorrow and anxiety over us all, and the deepest sympathy was felt for all Mr. Metcalfe's family, to whom the news came, tragically enough, shortly after returning from the early celebration. After nearly a fortnight of suspense, it became known that he was a prisoner of war and unwounded. Particulars at the time we write are still lacking, but it is supposed that under cover of a ground mist his detachment was cut off and enveloped by the enemy and captured bodily. In any case, we are more thankful than we can say for the news that he is alive and well, even though a prisoner.

L.-Cpl. Jack Haddon, we grieve to say, died on March 25th from diphtheria. He was taken to a clearing station in France on the previous Saturday, and lived only two days. The news of his death was not received by his family until Easter Eve, and cast still another shadow over the Easter Festival. We venture to express our heart-felt sympathy with his parents and family. Born at Manthorpe in 1896, Jack Haddon had lived all his life in the parish, and was closely associated with us as chorister and ringer. With his sunny and engaging disposition, he was a general favourite, and his loss will be mourned by many beyond his family. By a tragic coincidence his sister's marriage was arranged to take place on Easter Monday, and had to be carried through, as the bridegroom was home on leave from Italy, but a gloom was naturally cast over the ceremony.

Pte. Alfred Weldon, who has been missing since last June, is now presumed dead, and official notice to that effect was received by his mother last month. It is supposed that he was killed in action on June 7th, 1917, when the Lincolns covered themselves with glory at the storming of the Messines Ridge. We all deeply sympathize with Mrs. Weldon and her family, who have had to bear this cruel anxiety for all these months.

A Memorial Service in memory of both the above lads was held on Sunday, April 14th, and was largely attended. Both were baptised in our church, both had been choristers in the past, and they were confirmed together eight years ago. -R.I.P.

Capt. A. L. Fenwick.—We deeply regret to state that the report of Capt. Tony Fenwick's death, on February 16th, has been confirmed. His body was found and was buried in a cemetery near the lines.

The Social Evening which had been arranged for Easter Monday was rightly cancelled, in view of the widespread grief and anxiety.

The Easter Vestry Meeting was held on Tuesday, April the 9th. Mr. Thos. Pick and Mr. G. W. Wallis were re-appointed as churchwardens, and the following were chosen as sidesmen: Messrs. F. Browett, W. Brudenell, J. W. Redshaw, and W. Wilcox. The church collections for the year amounted to £34/15/0, being over £10 larger than the previous year. This is a most gratifying result, especially now that other calls on our generosity are so numerous.

The Annual Parish Meeting (Witham) was held on Tuesday, April 2nd. The Vicar was appointed chairman, and Messrs. W. Plaskitt and W. Wilcox overseers.

Second-Lieut. C. Haslam, son-in-law of Mr. Groves, has been missing since March 21st, and his relatives are anxiously awaiting tidings of him, which, up to the time of writing, they have not received. It is hoped that he, like Mr. Metcalfe, may be a prisoner of war, as they were attached to the same Division.

The Two Great Festivals of Ascension Day and Whitsun Day fall within this month.

Marriages.—April 1st, Sydney Raymond Tunnicliffe and Jane Ann Haddon.

Frances Katherine Redshaw.

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Measles.—At the time of writing an epidemic of measles is among us, and most of our children are down with it. As a consequence the school has to be closed, but we trust we shall be able to reopen on June 10th. We have also abandoned our Sunday afternoon service for two or three Sundays, for the same reason. Never do we remember so widespread an epidemic, and we trust that all the little patients will soon have recovered.

The School.—Mr. Metcalfe has accepted (for the present) a post of teacher of woodwork in the larger schools of the district, a gratifying tribute to his ability, and to the success with which he has taught this subject in our own school. Meanwhile Miss Pykett of Great Gonerby is ably filling his place here, as a "supply" teacher sent to us by the County Education Committee. We are very pleased to welcome her.

Religious Inspection.—The Rector of West Deeping, religious Inspector of schools in this Deanery, visited our school on April 30th. In his report he says that, although his visit was two months earlier than it otherwise would have been (owing to his leaving the district), he found all well. "Indeed," he says, "I reckon that the children have done even better than they did last July." The school is classed as "very good," which is a gratifying testimony indeed. Our Church school exists (as the inscription on the foundation stone tells us) "to the Glory of God," that is, that before all else our little ones should learn the saving truths of our holy religion.

Prisoners of War.—On the eve of Whitsun Day (18th of May) after eight weeks of suspense Mrs. Haslam received news of her husband, 2nd Lieut. C. Haslam, who, as we stated last month, had been missing since the German offensive on March the 21st. It appears that he was taken prisoner on that day, after having been severely wounded. We are thankful indeed to record this good news, and to know that he is progressing favourably. He testifies to the skilful treatment of the German surgeons who operated upon him, and says that he has received every care, and hopes soon to have quite recovered from his wounds. Mr. and Mrs. Metcalfe have also heard direct from their son, 2nd Lieut. L. Metcalfe, who is well and comfortable. Both these letters took six weeks in coming from Germany, though in Mr. Metcalfe's case a telegram from Geneva was received a full month before the arrival of the letter, to relieve his parents' anxiety.

Killed in Action.—We deeply regret to have to record the death in action last month of Pte. Charles Wells, the second of Mr. James Wells' sons to make the great Sacrifice. He has thus lost three sons within two years, and not long previously his wife. We venture to extend to him and his family our deep sympathies in their bereavement. Pte. Wells leaves a widow, who is living at Huddersfield. R.J.P.

Flags in Church.—British flags flanked by those of France and the United States have been placed in position over the high altar. Thus they typify our prayers for God's blessing upon our arms and those of our Allies when we offer the Holy Sacrifice Sunday by Sunday, at our solemn service of Intercession.

Y.M.C.A.—A collection was made in the parish last month by Miss Evelyn Rawlins and Miss Lily Smith in connection with the Bourne Y.M.C.A. Week, which resulted in a sum of £2 2 3. In addition the school children subscribed 5. We have also received an urgent appeal for help from the Church Army, which has lost over 100 of its huts in the recent offensive on the Western Front. The Vicar has promised, subject to the consent of the churchwardens, to have a special collection for this object during this year.

The Lessons in Church are now read as arranged in the new revised lectionary, recently drawn up by Convocation. This differs considerably from, and is a great improvement upon the table of lessons given in the Prayer book.

Holy Days in June.—Nativity of S. John the Baptist (Monday, 24th), S. Peter, Apostle and Martyr (Saturday, 29th).

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The recent Epidemic of measles has at last passed away, but not, unhappily, without fatal consequences, for one little one, the infant son of Mr. and Mrs. Walter Warnes succumbed to the complaint. We deeply sympathize with the parents in their sad loss. An unprecedented number of children were attacked, and hardly a child who had not previously had the complaint escaped. Fortunately, serious cases were rare, and the warm, dry weather was all in the patients' favour. As a consequence the school has been closed for as long as four weeks, which, added to the Whitsuntide holiday, has made a very large gap in the school year.

Pte. Arthur Crowson, who was at one time an under-gardener at the Hall, is, we grieve to say, reported killed through gas poisoning. All of us who remember him will hear of his death with great sorrow, for Arthur Crowson was a capital fellow, one of those lads whose influence was entirely for good. The Vicar used to hear from him from time to time, and he always wrote with a cheerfulness and courage which was splendid. Some of these letters he has still kept, and the following quotations will show how strong and firm was his faith. "We still keep smiling," he writes, "and know that God will hear our prayers, and do the best for us. Dear sir, I myself and all of us have more need of God than ever we had before, and we know it too." In another letter he writes: "Well, dear sir, I see no fear when in danger, as I have always God on my side, and if it is His good will to take me to a better place where there is no pain and no enemies, He will do so." Well, He has done so, to his great gain, no doubt, but to our very great loss, for fine manly young lives such as his are the very salt of the earth.—R.I.P.

Joined up.—We have recently lost a very useful helper in John Lound, who has now joined the colours. We owe him much gratitude for his valuable help in the belfry, and his unfailing attendance there to ring for all the services. We trust that his example may be followed by those of our young ringers who still remain, so that we may be able to assure him that we are still "carrying on," as he hoped we would.

The Stamford Infirmary.—We are asked once again to have a house-to-house collection for the Infirmary during the present month. In spite of the numerous appeals for help which are made to us in consequence of the War, we must not forget this deserving cause, even if we can only give a little. Last year we collected £5/12/0, which was the largest sum but one raised in any parish in the district. We may not perhaps send quite so much this year, but let us do what we can.

The Cottage Gardens will, we understand, be judged about the end of July, when the Squire has kindly promised to give the usual prizes.

The Sunday Afternoon Service, which was dropped for four Sundays during the prevalence of the measles, has now re-commenced. We are pleased to hear from more than one how greatly they missed this service, and how very much they appreciate it. We venture to invite the attendance of more "grown-ups," especially parents. With an increased attendance this service might become even more delightful and helpful than it is. But we must make it an addition to, not a substitute for the Lord's Service—that must always come first.

We miss Mr. and Mrs. Morris and their children, who have removed to Charlton Kings, near Cheltenham. There they will find a well-appointed and beautiful church, offering every privilege.

The Postage of the Magazine is now 1d. instead of ½d. Will subscribers please note.

Burial.—19th June, Omer Warnes, aged 7 months.

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Sunday, August the 4th, being the fourth anniversary of the outbreak of war, is to be kept throughout the Empire as a solemn day of prayer and thanksgiving, with special commemoration of the fallen. The King and Queen will join with the Members of Parliament in a special service at St. Margaret's, Westminster, and every parish in the land is asked to unite with them in prayer on this solemn day. I venture to ask that all parishioners will make a special endeavour to attend our services at Witham on this Sunday, and as far as possible in the morning, when the Holy Sacrifice will be offered to Almighty God as the central act of intercession on this great day. Copies of the special form of service will be provided in the church.

Recent events give us increasing cause for thanksgiving, but the need of our prayers is great and urgent. Let none of us fail to take our part in the great stream of prayer that will ascend up to God on this day, for our dear ones, for our country, for our homes. We can all help in this way to hasten the day of victory and peace.—L.H.C.

The Bishop of Lincoln paid a brief visit to Witham on Monday, July the 22nd, when he asked that he might meet the Vicar and Churchwardens. This is the first time that the present Bishop has ever been to us since his Consecration eight years ago. But in this great diocese, with its 600 parishes, we cannot expect very frequent visits from our chief Pastor. The Bishop was very kind and helpful, and cheered both the Vicar and we feel sure, the churchwardens, with his encouragement and sympathy. He was full of admiration for our beautiful and interesting church, and expressed his opinion that it was a model of what a village church should be. There was nothing that he would like to see altered, and his one criticism was that there should be a font cover worthy of the rest of the appointments in the church.

On Leave.—We were pleased to see and welcome three of our soldier boys who were home on leave last month. Sgt. Charles Birch and Pte. Walter Archer who have both suffered from gas poisoning, are now quite recovered, and have re-joined their units. Sergt. Arthur Francis, who has been out in Mesopotamia, has not previously been home for more than two years. While there, he has been seriously ill, and at one time his condition was critical. We were all the more thankful, therefore, to see him back once more, looking wonderfully well considering what he has been through. We have also had a visit from Clara Holmes, our "W.A.A.C." (or more properly Q.M.A.A.C.) home from France on a fortnight's leave, and looking so smart in her becoming military uniform. By the way, several thousand recruits for this Corps are needed, both for home service and service overseas. If any of our girls are desirous of joining, the Vicar will furnish them with all particulars and necessary information. Applicants must be over 18.

Flax.—Many of us have never before seen a field of flax, and the growth of it in our parish has been interesting to us all. Flax, which provides us with both linen and linseed, was once extensively grown in England, and our old church account book refers to it as grown in the parish in 1548. Now, when our supplies from Central Europe are cut off, flax has once more to be grown in England, where the cultivation of it had practically disappeared, owing to foreign competition.

The School will close for the summer holidays on Friday, August 16th, and will re-open on Monday, September 30th.

Personal.—The Vicar wishes his parishioners to know that, after consultation with the Bishop as to military service, he has received orders from his Lordship to remain at Witham.

Baptism.—7th July, Doris, daughter of James Horace and Edith Annie Boddy.

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Remembrance Day.—The fourth anniversary of the war was well observed, and the increased numbers at all our services were inspiring, particularly at both the Eucharists. The collections were morning £2/2/0, evening £1 3/6, total £3/5/6, which sum was sent to the local Prisoners of War fund.

The Stamford Infirmary.—Most grateful thanks to all subscribers towards the house-to-house collection. Nearly everyone helped, and many of the contributions were on a most liberal scale. Witham (exclusive of the Hall) gave £2/12/2, Manthorpe 13/9, Toft and Lound 15/5. Mrs. Wilcox, Mrs. Ash, and Miss Lee again kindly acted as collectors.

The School was closed a week earlier than the date originally fixed, owing to the forward state of the harvest. It will re-open on Monday 22nd September.

Flax—In reference to our note last month in regard to the growth of flax in the parish, Mrs. Hailstone writes to say that her father General Johnson grew flax on his estate here in the "forties," and that some of the linen sheets woven from it are still in use.

Boy Scouts.—It was a pleasure to welcome the scouts from the flax camp at Hale House to our service on Sunday morning. The Commandant stated how pleased he was to find a church in the neighbourhood where they could attend the choral Eucharist, as that was the service he wanted most of all for his boys.

Garden Prizes.—The prize winners were: Mr. Wilcox 1st., Mr. Dalby 2nd., and Mr. Garner 3rd. "Very highly commended," Mr. Rawlins, Mr. Smart and Mr. Redshaw; "highly commended," Mr. Newham and Mr. Sutton; "commended," Mr. Battram, Mr. Rollins and Mr. Lambert. So close were the first six competitors, that there was only a difference of four marks between the first and the last. Mr. F. J. Foster, head gardener at Grimsthorpe Castle, kindly acted as judge.

Local Prisoners of War Fund.—Miss Ida Brudenell has received the following letter from the Countess of Ancaster, President of the Bourne branch of the British Red Cross Society:—

"Dear Miss Brudenell.—There are now 63 Prisoners of War whose homes are in Bourne Red Cross "district, exclusive of Bourne Parish. (Those whose homes are in Bourne Parish are being dealt with "separately). A 15lb parcel of meat, biscuits, tea, sugar, jam, margarine, tobacco, etc., is sent to each of "them every week, and in addition, 9lbs of bread once a fortnight. The cost is 19/- a week for each "man, or about £240 a month for the 63. Netley Hut funds being sufficient for immediate needs, it "was agreed to suspend the Netley monthly collections in favour of this more urgent call for our "Prisoners, and I shall be grateful if you will kindly undertake the new collection in your area.

"Yours truly, E. L. ANCASTER."

We venture to ask all the monthly subscribers to Netley Hut to continue their donations to the new fund instead, and that many fresh subscribers also will come forward. The sum collected at present is £1/1/6 per month; cannot we endeavour largely to increase it? At present we have, fortunately, no prisoners from the parish to help (2nd-Lieut. Metcalfe, being a commissioned officer, is not included), but we may have. Meanwhile, let our sympathy go out to those poor fellows from the parishes around us who would starve but for the food sent to them in their harsh captivity. (See enclosed leaflet).

The Harvest Thanksgiving will be held (D.V.) on Sunday, September 15th, and the Rector of Careby has promised to preach at Evensong. God has favoured us indeed in this our great necessity. Hardly ever has the outlook before been so hopeful, not only as regards the abundance of the crops, but also the wonderful weather for the ingathering. This, combined with the glorious news of our victories in the field—coming, as it were, in direct response to our prayers—should bring us before God with the most heartfelt of thanksgiving. The collections will be given to Red Cross Society.

Church Collections in August.—4th, morning £2/2/0, evening £1 3/6; 11th, morning 9/3, evening 7/5; 18th, morning 11/5, evening 5/5; 25th, morning 6/9, evening 3/3.

WITHAM-ON-THE-HILL, MANTHORPE, TOFT AND LOUND.

The Harvest Thanksgiving was held on Sunday, September 15th. Unfortunately the day was dull, with rain in the morning, doubtless preventing many from attending the morning services. The Rector of Careby preached a helpful sermon at Evensong on the subject of the food of the soul as supplied in the Holy Communion, a most necessary reminder to us all. The collections, amounting to £2/11/3, were given to the Red Cross Society.

Confirmation.—The Bishop will confirm in Bourne church on November 11th. The Vicar hopes to have the privilege of preparing some candidates for confirmation on that day, and asks for their names *without delay*.

Evensong on Sundays will be held at 6.30 again, now that we have gone back to "normal" time. Alas! it is still necessary to screen the windows, and a new curtain has been fixed over our great west window, from which the dark distemper was removed in the spring to give more light in the daytime. We hope too to secure sufficient fuel for the winter heating of the church, and oil for lighting, but both these are matters of some anxiety.

War Aims.—A public meeting will be held in the school on Tuesday, 1st of October at 7 p.m. by the local War Aims Committee, which is likely to prove most interesting and helpful. We need to understand with the utmost clearness *why* we are fighting.

"Our Day", the annual great effort of the British Red Cross Society, will be held again this month. Whatever is arranged, we ask earnestly for generous support from all.

L.-Cpl. William Holmes is home again on leave after a long spell of hospital treatment and an operation. We are unfeignedly glad to see him. It is some two years since he was last home.

Gunner A. Pick is (we have just heard) in hospital in Scotland, suffering from a slight wound received recently in France. We shall look forward therefore to seeing him home before long.

Mr. Henry Sentence will shortly be giving up his home to go to live with his son at Wakerley. We venture to say that he will carry with him our best wishes for a happy and peaceful evening of life. He was born in the house where he has lived so long, so that he will feel a wrench at leaving the old home.

The Dedication Festival (Feast Sunday), falls on October 27th. It is a day of great meaning to us who love our ancient and beautiful church, with all it stands for in our lives. Let us try and make it a day of real thanksgiving for spiritual privileges, and many blessings.

The "one thing needful".—For many years the service of the Holy Eucharist has been restored among us to its rightful place as the most important of all our services. And why? Because it is the only one which our Blessed Lord has commanded. So that by offering it to God we are worshipping Him in accordance with His will. No other form of service therefore can take its place. It is called the Christian Sacrifice, because when we offer the Holy Eucharist we show forth Christ's Death before our Father in Heaven, offering His Sacred Body and Blood as the propitiation for our sins. In order to make this still clearer, the new Prayer Book, now being drawn up by Convocation, will contain the following words in the Consecration Prayer. "Wherefore O Lord and Heavenly Father, we Thy humble servants do celebrate and make here before Thy Divine Majesty, with these Thy Holy Gifts, the Memorial which Thy Son hath commanded us to make". These words will help many to a better understanding of the Service, although they merely repeat after all what is already said in the Consecration Prayer, namely that our Lord "did institute, and in His Holy Gospel command us to continue, a perpetual memory of His precious Death"; or the words of the Catechism which states that the Lord's Supper was ordained "for the continual remembrance (before God) of the Sacrifice of the Death of Christ." In both these passages quoted, we see that the Memorial is to be frequent, "continual" and "perpetual." Surely this means at the very least that we should offer it every Sunday as our "bounden duty and service." This has been the ancient Christian practice from time immemorial, and we are but carrying it out here at Witham. We trust that this little explanation may prove a help to many who may not at present quite understand "what we do" on Sunday morning.

Collections in September.—

	1st.	8th.	15th.	22nd.	29th.
Morning	6/2	6/1	£1/1/4	6/4	8/7
Evening	4/-	5/10	£1/9/11	3/10	3/10

Marriage.—14th September, William Holland and Mary Elizabeth Peasgood.

WITHAM-ON-THE-HILL, MANTHORPE, TOFT AND LOUND.

The Magazine.—We hope, with the goodwill of all our subscribers, to “carry on” next year. After having managed to keep going for so long, in face of difficulty of every kind, it would be a great pity to give up just at the end, the glorious end of the agony which has overshadowed us for more than four years. We ask, therefore, that if there are any who do *not* want the Magazine next year, they will kindly let the Vicar know *during November*. The continued publication is very costly, and the price paid does not nearly meet the expense as it is, so that we are anxious not to order more copies than are required.

“The Turning of the Tide.”—On August 4th we prayed for victory and peace. The nation was on its knees in a united effort of prayer greater and more universal than ever before. Since that day we have never looked back, our armies have gone from victory to victory. Can any thinking man fail to see the hand of God in all this? Our prayers have been answered, answered so wonderfully that we are filled with awe and gratitude. The great day is coming at last. Praise be to God! But we must not slacken effort, rather re-double it. We are asked not to talk or think too much of peace, lest, in that very way, we even hinder its coming.

The “Boys”—A large number of our soldier boys have recently been home on leave, among them have been J. Lound, F. Rawlins, W. Dalby, W. Archer, G. Archer, A. Pick, A. Francis, W. Haddon, and L. Harmston. It has been a real pleasure to see them, and to wish them God-speed and a safe and speedy return. By-the-bye, Christmas is on its way. Before long we shall begin to think of those gifts which hitherto we have never failed to send them all at this festive season.

The Parish Clubs.—A bonus of 4/- was given to each member of the Clothing Club in October. As regards the Coal Club, owing to the rationing scheme, a distribution of coal to club members is prohibited. The Vicar therefore must return the payments, as he advised the members at the beginning of the year he might have to do. Interest at the rate of 3d. in the shilling will be paid on the amounts already deposited.

The School.—Mr. Metcalfe has decided for the present to resume the head-mastership. This is good news to us all, for there was no one who did not deeply regret the prospect of our losing him, and none will welcome him back more heartily than the children themselves. We hope now that he may be able to stay with us at least until after the war, and until the new Education Act, with all its drastic changes, comes into force.

The Confirmation—Eight candidates are being prepared for confirmation, which will be administered by the Bishop of Lincoln in Bourne Church on Monday, November 11th, at 3.30. It is hoped that parents and sponsors will make a special endeavour to be present. The Vicar has in all prepared 146 candidates during his incumbency, 77 males and 69 females.

“High Church” and “Low Church.”—An explanation. These expressions took their rise in the 17th century, as party terms, but the one was a term of honour, the other of reproach. “High” meant spiritual, heavenly, while “low” signified earthly and unspiritual, as regards the standard of Divine worship. Now-a-days, unfortunately, they are often used without much thought of their meaning. For instance, in one place the ever-open doors of the parish church invite our entrance. Within all is seemly and beautiful, the services are reverent and solemn, a shadow and type of the perfect worship of Heaven, there is an air of mystery and awe, and we feel that “this is one other but the House of God, and this is the gate of Heaven.” We call it a “high” church. In the next parish perhaps we find God’s House locked and bolted. If we go inside, it is ugly and bare, with a bareness of which, in our own houses we should be ashamed. The services are cold and perfunctory, and alas! often slovenly. This, we say, is a “low” church. However, we greatly dislike these terms, and plead for their disuse. We want to emphasize our unity, not our divisions. Such party names are an offence against the unity of Christ’s Mystical Body to which we all belong, the Holy Catholic Church.

Collections in October.	6th	13th	20th	27th
Morning	7/7	6/7	5/10	7/0
Evening	5/3	4/9	4/0	6/5

WITHAM-ON-THE-HILL, MANTHORPE, TOFT AND LOUND.

Thanks be to God.—With unspeakable joy and gratitude we ascribe the praise to Almighty God. Even now it is difficult to realize how mighty is the victory which we have won, with what sweeping completeness we have attained every single object for which we drew the sword. Almost as suddenly as it began, so did it end, "the cruellest and most terrible war which has ever scourged mankind." The agony of these four awful years is over, and we are free. We know it is the Lord's doing, the whole nation knows it, and has acknowledged it in one great spontaneous outburst of thanksgiving, as inspiring as it was wonderful.

Our own Thanksgiving Services were inspired by the greatest heartiness and fervour. The flags and wreaths of laurel with which the church was hung fittingly emphasized the great occasion, and never were more heart-felt praises sung within its ancient walls. The special form of thanksgiving issued by the two Primates was used, and the *Te Deum* was solemnly sung before the principal Eucharist, and after Evensong.

The Fallen.—Amidst all our rejoicing our thoughts have turned instinctively to our gallant dead who have given their lives for us. Let us raise a worthy memorial in their honour. Our offerings on Thanksgiving Sunday have already been set apart for this purpose.

The Children had a great day on November 12th. Arrayed in the weirdest of fancy costumes they paraded the parish in procession, in company with all the teachers, bearing flags and banners. It was a happy idea of Mrs. Metcalfe's thus to impress upon their minds the greatness of the occasion, which they will never forget. A collection was made on the round, which totalled £7, and was given towards the soldiers' Christmas gifts.

Social.—The farmers' committee organized a most successful whist drive and dance on November 20th for the Boys' Christmas gifts fund. The proceeds amounted to £12, and further subscriptions brought the total up to £53. It is proposed to send £1 to every soldier whose home is in the parish, as was done last year.

The Prisoners of War Fund is now closed. We tender our heartiest thanks to the many monthly subscribers, and to Miss I. Brudenell for acting as collector.

A Prophecy Fulfilled—The Vicar's prediction of the end of the War, which was widely known for many months past, has now become a matter of such curious interest that he ventures to add a word on the subject. It was in February last that, late one evening, when using the war intercessions and thinking when the end might be, a sudden premonition came into his mind with such extraordinary clearness that he took down his diary then and there, to record the date before it should pass from his memory. It was no mere guess, but a vivid suggestion from without. The impression which it made upon him was so great that he consistently maintained his belief, of which he made no secret, that in spite of all appearances to the contrary, the war would be over on or about November 10th. Why he, of all people, should have been vouchsafed this revelation (if revelation it be), or what is the explanation of this phenomenon, are questions which he is unable to answer. Nevertheless, the facts are exactly as stated.

Christmas Day.—Let us keep it as never before, let us render "the glory to God in the highest" in glad thanksgiving for the coming of "peace on earth, and goodwill towards men." Holy Communion at 7.30 and 9. Sung Eucharist at 11, "our sacrifice of Praise and Thanksgiving."

The Vicar has been appointed Guardian and Rural District Councillor for the parish of Witham.

The Confirmation Candidates will ever remember the day they were confirmed. We were actually on our way to Bourne when the great news came to us.

Collections in November.		3rd	10th	17th	24th
Morning	5/2	6/6	£1/11/7	5/5	
Evening		4/11	£1/7/3	4/9	

Marriage.—November 26th, Charles Phillips and Louisa Weldon.