

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

**The new year.**—May the blessing of God rest upon our parish and our homes during the coming year, and may it bring true happiness to us all.

**Bethlehem Tableaux.**—On Friday, Jan 8th, the Vicar of Thurlby will bring a party over to us, who will give episodes in character of the story of the Nativity, with Christmas carols. This will take place in the church, at 7.15 p.m. We hope that many will be present to show their appreciation of this kindness. We understand that there will be about 16 performers. A collection will be made at the close in aid of their expenses.

**The annual parochial church meeting** will be held in the Village Hall on Thursday, Jan. 21st, at 7 p.m., to appoint the new Church Council. All parochial electors are entitled to attend and vote, and we hope that many will do so, and thereby shew their interest in Church affairs. Immediately after the above meeting the new Council will meet, when the church accounts for the year will be presented, and other business transacted. Among other matters, the Vicar desires the advice of the Council on the best use to be made of the balance of the special church fund, which was raised by the summer fete, and the October social evening. This sum, which is in the bank, amounts to nearly £17, after paying for the choir outing, and for the new cassocks and surplices.

**The annual fancy-dress dance** will be held on Tuesday, Jan. 12th. We feel sure that it will once more prove as great an attraction as ever. Prizes will be given for the best character dresses, with special prizes for children. Entrance 1/6; children 9d. Mrs. Fenwick has kindly promised to act as judge. Proceeds for the Nursing Association.

**Stamford Infirmary whist drive and dance.**—This is fixed for Tuesday, Jan. 26th. The whist drive is in connection with the Infirmary competitions, and the first 3 winners, both ladies and gentlemen, will be entitled to play in the final drive at Stamford. A dance will follow. At both these dances a good band will be in attendance.

**The dance** given last month for the Cricket club was voted one of the most enjoyable ever held here. The new floor, which Mrs. Fenwick has generously provided in the Hall Garage, came into use for the first time. The room wore a carnival aspect, and crackers and streamers, &c., were liberally distributed among the dancers by Mrs. Fenwick, who also with Capt. Fenwick presented the cricket club with a "mascot," of formidable appearance. We hope that it will inculcate a "dogged" spirit into the club! Unfortunately the attendance was not very large, and the cricket club funds will not benefit very extensively. This is surely an object which should enlist the support of us all.

**We sympathize much** with our churchwarden, Mr. Bradshaw, in his illness, and earnestly wish him a speedy recovery.

**In Memoriam.**—Mr. William Brudenell's death came as a great shock to us all. He left us some two years ago to live in retirement at Bourne, but we still looked upon him as one of us, and we all feel his death very greatly. He was a man widely respected, and a staunch and consistent churchman. Our deep sympathy goes out to his widow and daughters.

We also sympathize with Mr. and Mrs. Birch in the death of their eldest daughter, Mrs. Sneath, who died last month after a long and trying illness. R.I.P.

**Confirmation** instruction classes will begin very shortly.

**Baptisms.**—Dec. 27th, Joan Eileen, daughter of John Henry and Elizabeth Olive Moyses.

      "      "      Walter Cecil, son of Cecil and Hilda Emma Story.  
**Marriage.**—Dec. 26th, William Brocklesby and May Dalby.

**Burial.**—Dec. 22nd, Sarah Emily Sneath, aged 39 years.

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

**The Parish Magazine.**—Our thanks to all the subscribers for continuing their support, and keeping up our high circulation. The cost of printing and postages during 1925 was £6/6/0, and subscriptions paid amounted to £5/16/6, so that it will be seen that no profit is made, and but for the kindness of those who give more than 1/6, the deficit would be considerably greater. There are 10 subscriptions still owing for last year.

**The Village Hall.**—With regard to this too we wish to dispel any idea of "profiteering." The Hall was let for payment 15 times during last year, and after paying all expenses there remained a balance of 15/5. The committee who organized the fancy dress dance have since kindly made a grant towards the funds, and out of it we are purchasing a new urn, more crockery, and four more whist-drive tables.

**Missionary Meeting.**—There will be a meeting, on behalf of Foreign Missions, in the Village Hall on Thursday, Feb. 11th, at 7 p.m., when an address will be given by Mr. B. C. Perry, a layman, who will speak to us about Borneo. Please note the date and time, and endeavour to attend. From what we have heard, we expect that the address will be exceptionally interesting. On the following Sunday, the collections in church will be devoted to the S.P.G. "Freely ye have received, freely give." Missionary boxes should be brought in on or before this Sunday (Feb. 14th).

**Confirmation.**—During this month and next, the preparation of candidates for Confirmation is proceeding. We ask that you will remember them in your prayers. The Confirmation will be in Thurlby church on Wednesday, March the 24th.

**Past events.**—There are so many recent social and other parish events to record that our limited space will not allow of full descriptions. Full reports have however appeared in the local Press. After all, a Parish Magazine is not a newspaper, but is rather for comment and notices than for descriptive details of past happenings, such as a newspaper would provide.

**The cricket club dance** net proceeds amounted to only £1/2/2, which sum has been handed to the Treasurer, Mr. T. Holmes.

**The Fancy dress dance** (12th Jan.) on the other hand was a great financial success, the net proceeds coming to £7/8/10. This dance constituted a record for numbers at any similar gathering in Witham, over 150 persons paid for admission.

**The children's Christmas tree** given by Mrs. Fenwick on December 29th, will long be remembered by her little guests. Thanks to her kindness they had a really splendid time.

**The Nativity Play**, given by our friends from Thurlby in the church on January 8th, was impressive and beautiful to a degree, and we are glad that so many people came to witness it. To us here, it was a new experience to see anything in the nature of drama within the church, but any misgivings that we might have had as to its suitability were surely set at rest by the reverent and restrained manner in which the sacred subjects were portrayed. After all religious plays in churches are no novelty. Our fore-fathers, who had an even greater sense of reverence for their churches than we have, continually used them for religious plays, and in every parish, in olden days, there were the Nativity Play at Christmas, the Passion Play in Holy week, as well as those depicting other Christian Mysteries.

**Another children's party**, for those who attend the church, was given in the Village Hall on Jan. 11th. This too was eminently enjoyable.

**A Vicarage party**, for choir and ringers, was given by the Vicar on Jan. 23rd. The order of proceedings was, a whist drive, supper and games.

**The annual parochial Church meeting** was held on Jan. 21st. Particulars next month.

**Our effort for the Stamford Infirmary.**—On Jan. 26th, a whist drive and dance was held on behalf of the Infirmary. Including donations of over £5, we are able to send in no less than £10/16/0. We thank most heartily all who gave money, prizes, and refreshments. A report will appear in the "Stamford News."

**Lent** begins this month. It is the holy season of penitence and spiritual progress. We can none of us afford to ignore it. There will be special services and addresses, of which notice will be given in church.

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

**The annual Church Meeting.**—We were obliged to postpone particulars of this meeting (held on January 21st) until this issue, owing to want of space in the February number of the magazine. The Church Council, which was elected for this year, consists of last year's members, with the addition of Mr. and Miss Burton, of Toft. The church accounts shew that the collections for 1925 exceeded those of the previous year by a little over £3, and that there is a balance in hand of £5. It was proposed at the meeting to provide rug seating in the church pews, of a uniform pattern. Unfortunately the cost is likely to be prohibitive at present, seating which cost 3/- a yard before the war is now 10/- or more. However the Vicar is making further enquiries.

**The churchwardens.**—Our two excellent wardens were respectively re-appointed to office for another year as from Easter next.

**The S.P.G. meeting** on Feb. 11th was very well attended. Mr. Perry gave a most interesting account of Mission work in Borneo. The sum of £2/12/8 has been sent to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, being £1/14/0 from the collection, and 18/8 from boxes sent in. We earnestly ask for names of others who will take a missionary box.

**Confirmation.**—Our candidates will be confirmed by the Bishop of Lincoln, in Thurlby church, on Wednesday, March 24th, at 2.30. It is hoped that parents and god-parents will endeavour as far as possible to attend.

**The Dancing Classes.**—The season concluded with a "long evening" at Shrove-tide, when the music was supplied by our friends from Little Bytham, known as the "Elysians." This recently formed band received quite an ovation at the conclusion of their performance, which they well deserved. We hope that they may play for us again on some future occasion. These little weekly gatherings have proved thoroughly enjoyable, and have been well attended throughout. If we have them another year, we must try and obtain an expert instructor, to give tuition to the beginners, so that they may become "classes" in more than name. The proceeds from the 12 evenings will be devoted to charitable objects, and a portion at least will be given to the Butterfield Hospital, to which we as a parish owe so much.

**Our best wishes** go out to Ronnie Holmes, who has left us to join the colours. He has enlisted in the "Lincolns," our own County regiment. Ever since he was a little lad he set a good example of service, in the various capacities of chorister, ringer and server, and we miss his valuable help greatly. He served at the altar for over 6 years, being hardly ever absent from his post on Sunday mornings, nor from the choir and belfry on Sunday evenings.

**The Cricket club.**—At a meeting on Feb. 9th, Mr. Walter Dalby kindly undertook the post of Secretary, in succession to Mr. Todd. Fixtures for the coming season are now being arranged, and we hope for a very successful year. Cricket is the national game, and should claim the support of us all, whether we are actual players or not.

**The Village Green.**—We owe a great debt of gratitude to Capt. Fenwick for providing the village with this splendid open space for recreation and enjoyment. When the wall is quite removed, this green will be a charming addition to our picturesque village. Swings and a giant stride will be erected for the children, with seats for the elders. There will be the orthodox duck-pond, and it will only need a donkey and some geese to complete the delightful rural picture.

**Mothering Sunday** is the 4th Sunday in Lent (March 14th). Most of us know how to keep it. Don't let us forget.

**Burial.**—10th February, Henry Smith, aged 85 years.

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

**The Confirmation.**—Thirteen candidates received this Apostolic ordinance at the hands of our Chief Pastor, the Bishop of Lincoln, in Thurlby Church, on March the 24th. A number of friends also went with them. Our thanks are due to the Vicar of Thurlby, and his helpers, for the kind welcome given to us, and for entertaining us so hospitably after the ceremony.

**Passion-tide and Easter.**—If the Magazine is issued and distributed in time, we beg our readers to keep this solemn and helpful season as carefully and devoutly as possible, and in particular we appeal for the reverent observance of Good Friday, the most sacred day in the whole year. In reference to this we quote from an appeal published by the Bishop of Swansea and Brecon. He writes:—“ May I, in the name of the Church of England Men's Society, again appeal to the men of the Church and nation to lend their aid in rescuing Good Friday from the ignominy with which that most sacred day in the whole year has come to be treated? The striking revolt which took place last autumn against the degradation of Armistice Day has its significance. If the better feeling of the nation declared it to be intolerable that the commemoration of our loved ones should be made the occasion for mere revellings, how much more may we anticipate that the deliverance of the day of our Redeemer's dying from the contempt with which it is so commonly treated is now at hand?”

**Appointment of Vicar.**—It may interest the parishioners to know that the “advowson” as it is called, or right of nomination to this benefice, has now been vested in five Trustees, among whom are the Bishop of Lincoln and the Archdeacon. This change has been carried out through the kind co-operation of Capt. Fenwick, formerly the sole Patron, in order to make it possible for the endowment of the benefice to be increased. Hitherto it has been one of the poorest in the Diocese.

**Book cupboard.**—Those who like to leave their books in church can do so with perfect safety if they will place them in the little cupboard by the south door. It is put there for that purpose.

**Summer Time** begins on Sunday, April 17th. Clocks should be put *forward* one hour on the previous evening (not *back*, as we once heard of someone doing!)

**Obituary.**—We regret to record the death of Mr. J. H. Smeaton, of Manthorpe, on March 24th. His was a noteworthy example of “patience under affliction,” he bore the loss of his sight with a marvellous courage and cheerfulness. Only recently, since his illness, the Vicar tried to persuade him to accept a wireless installation, but he was singularly averse from the idea. Had he been in his usual health he would probably have gladly welcomed this wonderful boon to the blind. R.I.P.

**Request.**—The Vicar is anxious to obtain a copy of the Magazine for January, 1925 and February 1926. Can anyone spare them?

**Burial.**—March 27th, John Henry Smeaton.

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

**In May** fall two great Christian Festivals, Ascension Day (or Holy Thursday), and Whitsun Day, the latter bringing to a close the first half of the Christian year, which commemorates in due order the chief Mysteries of Christ's Redemptive work. Beginning with the Incarnation, it ends with the out-pouring of the Holy Spirit, and the birthday of the Christian Church.

**The church spire.**—An opening between the stones near the top had shown itself, extending all round. The structure has now been pointed. Although there was no danger of collapse, yet wet and frost would have done further mischief if the crack had not been filled. Many years ago the spire was struck by lightning, and the top was afterwards re-built, presumably from the point where the crack appeared, just above the upper tier of spire lights.

**Lawn tennis.**—Up to the present the weather has prevented any play, but it will be possible now to make a start very shortly. A new net has been provided, and the court is in excellent order. We hope that the school children's tennis class may be carried on as last summer.

**Parish scholarships.**—In the near future the Trustees of the Church Estate will be enabled to provide scholarships, to enable children who live within the ecclesiastical Parish of Witham to attend a secondary school. The scheme will probably take effect in about two month's time, when we will explain it further. A copy of the draft scheme may be seen at the Vicarage or the Post Office.

**The Vicar** utilized the money given in the Easter offering in purchasing a small oak table for the church. On this table there will be placed hymn books for general use. It is requested that those who take them will replace them after each service. There will also be some tracts or booklets on interesting subjects, which can be purchased at one penny each.

**The dance**, which was organized on April the 22nd by Mrs. Johnson and the staff at the Hall, proved very enjoyable. In spite of the altered date and the inclement weather, quite a number attended. The proceeds have been most kindly promised to the Butterfield Hospital.

**Summer Time.** (An extract from the Vicar's 'foreword' on Sunday morning, April the 18th, and printed by request). "In this enactment there seems to be a spiritual aspect as well as a utilitarian one. Sunlight is one of the Creator's most precious gifts to man, for sunlight is life, and to add to our waking hours of daylight cannot surely be inconsistent with the Divine Will. And yet when the scheme was first introduced there were those who asserted that it was "flying in the face of Providence."! Is it any more impious to call a particular moment of the day by the name of 1 o'clock than it is to call it 12 o'clock? Both are purely human terms of measurement of time. Since the length of the daylight varies day by day, to obtain for ourselves a longer period of the life-giving sunshine during the summer months by the simple device of re-numbering the hours is surely as wise as it is easy. The gifted man who devised this simple scheme never lived to see it passed into law (he is however to have a national memorial), but during his life-time I had considerable correspondence with him, and he persuaded me to try the plan in my own house, and I was in consequence the object of considerable amusement to some of my neighbours during the 2 years that I "put my clocks on"! It is perfectly true of course that the change causes very considerable inconvenience to many, and of that we are by no means unmindful, but surely this is just one of those things in regard to which we must try and consider the greatest good of the greatest number.

**Cricket fixtures for May.**—1st, Castle Bytham, home; 8th, Essendine, away; 15th, Bourne, away; 22nd, Burghley Park, away; 29th, Greatford, home.

**Baptism.**—April 11th, Kathleen Elizabeth, daughter of William Samuel Wilford and Doris Gertrude Sharp.

**Burial.**—April 8th, Selina Louth, aged 78 years.

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

**An historic month.**—May, 1926, will long be recalled as one of the most critical months in our nation's history, when for happily only the brief period of 10 days, the industrial life of this great country was brought almost to a standstill, by the calling of the general strike. The amazing resolution with which the nation set itself the task of facing and overcoming the danger that threatened it, has won for England the admiration of the entire world, and as a result her credit and stability are established as never before. The stern trials of the past month have cleared the air, we are inspired with a new confidence in the greatness of our beloved land, and a new devotion to her service, as we echo the familiar words, "God Who made thee mighty, make thee mightier yet."

**Empire Day.**—On Friday, May 22nd, the Vicar gave a brief patriotic address to the children in the school, after which was sung Blake's "Jerusalem," and "God save the King." A large Union Jack was unfurled, and its symbolism explained. In order still further to mark the day, a half-holiday was granted.

**All will sympathize** with Mr. T. Holmes, our esteemed Cricket Captain, in the injury which he sustained during the match against Burghley Park, on May the 22nd, and will wish him a speedy and complete recovery.

**Cricket fixtures for June.**—June 5th, Greatford (away); 19th, Thurlby (away); 26th, Thurlby (home).

**Dancing-class proceeds.**—The total receipts from the series of dancing classes last winter, were £10/3/8, and the expenses £3/17/8, leaving a profit of £6/6/0. The committee, which was presided over by Mrs. Fenwick, met last month, and decided to allocate this balance as follows:—three guineas to the Lincoln Cathedral Restoration fund, two guineas to the Cricket club, and one guinea to the Butterfield Hospital. As regards the last, the proceeds of the recent dance were also given to the Hospital, the sum sent being £4/1/0. So that the total contributions from the parish thus amount to £5/2/0, as against £5 last year.

**The Stamford Infirmary Report,** issued last month, has once again omitted to record the sums sent in from this parish, which we raise annually by means of a winter social and donations. Both for 1924 and 1925 there is a blank against Witham-on-the-Hill, whereas the sums actually sent were £7/4/6 in 1924, and £8/4/6 in 1925. (This year it was £10/16/0). This omission is all the more inexcusable, as it is the second time that we have been similarly treated. Last year the Vicar pointed out the omission to the Secretaries, and received an apology, and a statement to the effect that it was a printer's error. Imagine his astonishment therefore when he found that precisely the same thing had happened again this year. He has received another apology, but that is not enough. The Report has a wide circulation, and the hundreds who read it naturally conclude that Witham people do not do their share in supporting the Hospital. We refrain from saying more at the moment, but we feel that those of our people who see the Report should at least know the above facts.

**Baptism.**—May 9th, Sylvia Sheila, daughter of Charles Robert and Ada Eliza Pell.

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

**Captain Fenwick**, who has been ordered away for reasons of health, is, we are glad to hear, progressing favourably, and we hope that ere long he may be completely restored to health.

**Mr. and Mrs. Charles Newham** will be keeping their golden wedding on the 11th of July, and we venture to offer them our very heartiest good wishes and congratulations on thus completing their 50 years of married life. The Vicar had the privilege of knowing Mr. Newham's father and mother, and he remembers Mr. Newham, senior, when over 70 years of age as one of the most regular members of the choir. He has baptized Mr. and Mrs. Charles Newham's grand-children and subsequently their great-grand-children also, and so can rightly claim to be an old friend, having thus been associated with five generations of the family.

**Another event** of interest this month is the marriage of Mr. Leslie Metcalfe, only son of Mr. and Mrs. Metcalfe, at Glasgow on July 5th. Many of us will be with him in thought, if not in body, on this auspicious occasion, and will wish both him and his bride every happiness.

**A Kesteven Junior Scholarship** has been awarded this year to Jack Wilson, the 11-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. Wilson, of Witham. We understand that he passed his examinations with unusual distinction. He is the second member of the family to reach scholarship standard. It is cases like these that the proposed scheme of the Church Estate Trustees (to which we alluded in the May number of the Magazine) proposes to assist. The scheme however still awaits the sanction of the Board of Education.

**A Missionary Festival** for our Deanery will be held at Market Deeping on Thursday, July 22nd, when we hope that a good number from this parish will attend. The proceedings will take place in the Rectory grounds, where tea will be provided. A service will follow in the Church, at which the preacher will be the Rev. B. G. Nicholas, Vicar of Spalding. Those who attended a similar gathering at Thurlby two years ago, will remember Mr. Nicholas's striking address on that occasion, and will doubtless be glad of an opportunity of hearing him again.

**Garden prizes.**—Captain Cartwright requests us to state that the same prizes as last year will be given for the best cultivated gardens on the Witham Estate. As in the past there will be two classes, A and B, and the judging will take place about the end of this month. The Hall gardens will again be thrown open on Saturday afternoons.

**The providential escape** of Mr. and Mrs. Redshaw's little grandson, when he fell from a window 18ft. in height, on June 23rd, is a matter for the greatest thankfulness. The little fellow, who is only 17 months old, sustained no injuries beyond severe bruises, although he fell upon a hard and stony footpath below. His wonderful protection from death or at least very terrible injury is a miracle of Providence. "He shall give His angels charge over thee."

**Cricket fixtures for the month.**—July 3rd, Holywell, home; 10th, Essendine, home; 17th, Burghley Park, home; 24th, Castle Bytham, away.

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

**The Mothers' Union.**—It is hoped to form a branch of this splendid Society in our Parish. The Vicar proposes to have a meeting one afternoon in August, and to invite some one who is connected with the Union to come and explain all about it. It is hoped that many wives and mothers will come to the meeting, due notice of which will be given.

The Mothers' Union is one of the most remarkable of modern organizations. It began just fifty years ago in a small Hampshire village, it is now a great organization with more than seventy thousand branches, and some half-million of members. There is no class element about it, it embraces all alike, The Queen herself is a member. This great community of women is exercising an ever-increasing influence for good upon the national life, in upholding the highest standard of marriage, the sanctity of the home, and the wise training of children. It is high time that we, in common with most other parishes, had our own branch of this admirable Union, and if we form one, Mrs. Cartwright has kindly consented to act as Secretary and organizer.

**The Vicarage tennis court** is having a busy time this summer. The "children's hour" after school, when Miss Darnes so kindly takes charge, is eagerly looked forward to by the juveniles, while the elders seldom miss an evening. The juveniles are having a tournament among themselves before the school breaks up, early in August, and several friends have kindly promised prizes for the winners. The Vicar hopes that parents and friends will come and watch the finals. Perhaps he may add, that this use of his court by players, children and grown-ups alike, is the source of the greatest pleasure to him, and he assures them that so long as it is his to lend, it will always be at their service.

**The name Witham.**—This name is supposed to be British in origin, and unlike many other place names, has undergone little change through the centuries. In the Doomesday Book (A.D. 1085) it is spelt exactly as it is to-day. In the 15th century the name is written "Withtham," showing that the hard "th," as all good natives pronounce it still, is correct. In 1670, we first find the variation "Wytham," with a Y, and about 50 years ago, an endeavour was made to establish this spelling. It is probably however only a corruption, perhaps influenced by the Y in the name of the neighbouring parish of Bytham. Neither the Ordnance Survey maps nor the Ecclesiastical authorities have ever adopted this form of the name. In the days when the church registers were written in Latin, the name of the parish was given as "Witham-super-Montem," (i.e. on the mountain!), and this form is to be seen on a mural tablet in Swayfield church, recording the death of a daughter of Abraham Bate, "Vicar of Witham-super-Montem," who married a Swayfield worthy in the 17th century. The majority of place names have altered from time to time almost out of all recognition. Here are one or two, from a map of the district, less than 200 years old. Tharleby, Rial, East Bitham, Oneby, Jernham, Burham, East Sendon. To-day they are spelt respectively, Thurlby, Ryhall, Little Bytham, Aunby, Irnham, Barholm and Essendine!

**The Vicar** would greatly value offers of additional help both in the choir and the belfry, and hopes that we may once again have a strong band both of singers and ringers, as in the past.

**Baptism.**—11th July, Gertrude Violet, daughter of Joseph and Louisa Kettle.

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

**The church steeple.**—As space permits this month, a few notes are given upon the fall and re-building of the tower and spire, gleaned from old documents still preserved among the church records.

**The fall.**—The ancient tower collapsed in 1736, wrecking as it fell a portion of the church itself. This happened probably in the autumn, for while ringing took place on several occasions during that year, and the bells were repaired the same year, we read that on Nov. 1st, 1736, the work of clearing away the rubbish began. (Hence the picturesque legend that the tower fell on Christmas Eve while the ringers were having a "refresher" in the inn opposite, must, alas!, be discredited). And what a clearance it was. It took about six weeks, and as many as 68 men were at times at work together. The pay sheets, with their names are still preserved. One would like to know where all this good building material was removed to, and why it was not re-used. The gaping walls of the damaged church were then shored up, and the "great bell" was temporarily suspended on timbers.

**The re-building** was begun on April the 3rd, 1738. Several designs for the new steeple had been prepared by a Mr. George Portwood, who charged but seven guineas, though he only got five, for his work. One feels inclined to think that even that was more than it was worth! Whatever merits the other designs may have had, that which found favour with the Vicar and churchwardens is hopelessly out of keeping with the church. The new steeple was constructed entirely of new stone, of which 543 cwt. came from Ketton, 33 loads from Bytham, and 10 from Clipsham (for facing the south front). The lime was brought from Whitwell and Easton, and the timber from Lobthorp. The work was completed by December, and the bells were rung again in 1739, so that they must have escaped injury in the fall.

**The cost** of "rebuilding the steeple and a part of the church thereunto adjoining" amounted to £365/16/8 $\frac{1}{4}$ . (The Ketton stone was carted at the rate of 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per cwt., and there was one half-cwt., at 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ d., hence the odd farthing!) The upper portion of the spire, after having been struck by lightning, was again re-built in 1874, and the present weather-cock set up in place of a stone urn. On the south face, over the clock, is the following inscription: "The Revd. Mr. Robt. Alanson, A.M. Vic. J. Hidson, R. Weathers, Ch. Wns. 1738." And on the lead roof of the Transept there is the following: "This steeple and this Cros Ile was rebuilt in the year 1738, by Wm. Jackson and Wm. Chapling, Masons, Robert Withers and John Hidson, Churchwardens, Elih. Porter, Plumber." Festivities marked the commencement and the completion of the work, as these entries from Mr. Hidson's accounts shew. "For foundation ale when the workmen began the steeple, 7/6," and "when ye top stone was set on, 4/-"!

**Reports** of the children's treat, school tennis tournament and choir trip appeared in the local press, so that we need not record these events here.

**On Sunday Sept. 12th** the Vicar expects to be away. Our kind friend and neighbour, the Rector of Careby, has offered to take Evensong on that Sunday, at 7.15. We hope that this will not prove inconvenient to the congregation.

**The Mothers' Union.**—The preliminary meeting referred to last month will take place after Harvest.

**Harvest Thanksgiving Sunday, Oct. 3rd.**

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

**On one Sunday** last month the Vicar was away from home (for the first time in two years). He had arranged and announced that this was to be on Sunday the 12th. However he was obliged through force of circumstances to alter it to the 19th, and did his best to notify every one of the change. The evening service on that Sunday was kindly taken by the Rev. J. D. Day, Head-master of Stamford Grammar School. Meanwhile the Vicar greatly enjoyed the novel experience of worshipping in another church than his, and listening to a sermon! This was at Saltburn in North Yorkshire, where the Choral Eucharist was beautifully rendered, the singing being a joy to listen to.

**The Feast Sunday**, which as all know, is the Dedication Festival of our parish church, falls on October 31st. If our religion means anything to us, we ought to make much of this day, which commemorates the building and the consecration in ages past of our House of God, the source and centre of the religion of the parish for over a thousand years. Within its ancient and sacred walls, the Word and the Sacraments have been ministered to countless generations all down the centuries, while in its shadow rest the bodies of all who have lived and died here since England was first a kingdom.

**New Altar hangings.**—We are still further enriching our beautiful church by refurnishing the high altar (or the "top Table," as some call it!) with new hangings. These will consist of a dorsal, or back curtain, and riddels, or side curtains, of blue brocade. Blue was the chief colour of the Tabernacle curtains, and also as the colour of the sky, is one which is closely associated with Divine worship. Our church is lacking in blue, and we feel sure that the effect will be very striking. At the four corners there will best out octagonal posts (called the riddel-posts). These will be richly gilded. In deciding on this scheme the Vicar took the advice of an expert, who planned the exact dimensions, so as to harmonise with the chancel and the East window. Our altar will now be furnished strictly in accordance with the English plan, as opposed to the Continental or Roman arrangement. No flowers, according to ancient custom, must be put on the altar. If they are used, they must be on the floor, or at the side.

**This improvement** is long overdue. The curtains which have just been removed were bought at a sale twenty-five years ago, for a few shillings, and even then were torn and faded! They were totally unworthy of a place in the sanctuary of God's House, which—so He tells us—must be "exceeding magnificent."

**Fuel.**—This is indeed a "burning" question at the moment for us all. The Vicar and churchwardens, however, will do their utmost to secure the warming of the church as soon as this becomes necessary.

**Members of the congregation** who live at a distance, are again invited to make use of the Vicar's car when returning from church on Sunday mornings. Some time ago, it was thus used practically every Sunday.

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

**November** is commonly regarded as the gloomiest month of the year. The French used to call it the "fog month," and many will agree with Thomas Hood's doleful lines:—"No sun, no moon, no morn, no noon, no dawn, no dusk,.....no shade, no shine, no flowers, no leaves, no birds, no bees, No-venber!" But to the Christian, November is a month of joy and hope, for the Church has consecrated it to the memory of the blessed dead. At its outset stands the glorious festival of All Saints', which seems to shed its radiance throughout it. How fitting therefore it is that Armistice Day should happen to fall in this month, a day now set apart to the memory of "our glorious dead."

**Armistice Sunday** will be observed on Nov. 14th. Our usual commemoration service will be held *in the morning*, when we will remember by name before God those from this parish who laid down their lives in the great war.

**The Harvest Thanksgiving services** were well attended, although the offerings for the Stamford Infirmary were over one pound less than last year. The church was decorated, if possible, with more than the usual taste, and looked most beautiful. All thanks to the many kind helpers.

**The new altar furnishings.**—These were completed in time for the Harvest festival, and were much admired. They give a symmetry and dignity to the high altar, which formerly was lacking. The cost of the posts and rods amounts to about £17, which will be defrayed from the Church Improvement Fund, and the hangings to £5/10/0, which the Vicar himself is giving as a small thank-offering. The iron rods on which the curtains hang, are also now gilded, as the posts. The pair of hanging candelabra, which were presented to the church by Squire Johnson, in 1874, have been moved further west, as in their former position they were too close to the riddel posts.

**Children's collection for Infirmary.**—A special "penny" collection for the new wing of the Stamford Infirmary was recently made by our children, who collected the very satisfactory sum of £2/14/3. This was made up as follows:—Witham, £1/10/5 (P. Sandall and G. Butcher); Toft, 11/- (D. Wallis and D. Haddon); Lound, 8/- (D. Bradshaw and V. Percival); Manthorpe, 4/10 (V. Clements and J. Hall).

**Dancing classes.**—These little weekly gatherings have commenced, and form a welcome break for our young people through the winter months. Our kind and energetic social committee work hard to make them a success, while the Vicar and Mr. Barnett "preside" at the piano, not for the sheer joy of grinding out dance music; but because they feel that they can in this way "do their bit" towards the enjoyment of the younger folk.

**The Mothers' Union.**—Mrs. Bond, the Diocesan Secretary of the Union, has very kindly consented to come from Lincoln to talk to us about forming a branch of the Union in this parish. She has fixed Tuesday, Nov. 23rd. We hope that many will come to the Village Hall that afternoon, at 2.45, to give her a hearty welcome for her kindness in coming so far. Please note the date, and make a point of coming. Tea will be provided after the meeting.

**Communicants** are reminded that the early celebration on Sundays is at 8.30 during the winter, instead of 8.

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

**Captain and Mrs. Cartwright** will be removing from Witham at the end of the month. We feel sure that we are echoing the feelings of many here when we say how greatly we shall regret their departure. For during their very brief stay among us they have won the esteem and respect of us all, by the deep interest they have taken in the place and its welfare generally. They will carry with them to their new home in Norfolk our very real and sincere good wishes.

**The Mothers' Union.**—The inaugural meeting which had been arranged last month to form a local branch of the M.U. had to be cancelled in consequence of Mrs. Cartwright's leaving, as she had kindly consented to undertake the management of the branch. We hear of quite a number of wives and mothers who would welcome the formation of a branch here, and we still hope to form one in the new year.

**Next year's magazine** will contain the "Sign" again as the inside part. Several friends have enquired why we changed, and stated that they preferred the "Sign" to the "Church Monthly." We ourselves feel inclined to agree with them. We hope that all subscribers will continue their kind support, and help to maintain our large circulation. Only let us repeat, no profit whatever is made on the sale, the copies being sold at cost price, which is 1½d. per copy. We find that this is cheaper than any other parish Magazine we know.

**We have to chronicle** two whist drives and dances in November, one on the 2nd, for the children's treat, the other on the 23rd, in aid of the Butterfield Hospital. The latter was organized by Mrs. Fenwick, in the Hall Garage. Both were extremely well patronized, the gross takings being, respectively, £6/17/6 and £9/16/0. We are well aware that there is a certain section of our people to whom this kind of entertainment does not appeal, in particular the older folk, who neither play whist nor dance. But we have tried parish teas, and the last one was so badly supported that we dare not venture on another, while concerts are extraordinarily difficult and costly to organize, what with the entertainment tax, and the heavy expense of providing performers. Unfortunately, unlike many other places, we do not grow our own!

**We respectfully offer** our congratulations to Mrs. Browett, who recently recovered her speaking voice, after having lost it for 22 months.

**Occasionally**, cases of sickness or other personal matters in the parish, fail to come to the Vicar's knowledge. There have been one or two cases quite recently. It would be a great kindness if a member of the family or a neighbour would inform him in such cases.

**During last month** the Vicar received two further proposals for undertaking work elsewhere, one of these was again from the Bishop of the Diocese. After due consideration he has decided to stay on where he has experienced so much kindness, and spent so many happy years.

**Christmas Day.**—Holy Communion at 8, Festal service at 11, with distribution of charities. No evening service. The church will be decorated early in the week. We ask for many helpers.

**The bells.**—It is a joy once again to hear our beautiful bells rung in peal. We look forward now to the formation of a regular band of ringers.