

WITHAM ON THE HILL, MANTHORPE, TOFT AND LOUND.

Looking Back.—The year that is gone has been one of change unparalleled by any within human memory, in so far as our parish is concerned. Old faces have gone, and fresh ones have taken their place in almost half the houses in the village, while the number of deaths in the parish has been as great as ten, the highest number probably ever recorded. Among those taken away from us by death have been four widows, Mrs. Kettle, Mrs. Sentance, Mrs. David Pell and Mrs. Browett,—all old parishioners, also Mr. Bent and Miss Fisher,—truly a sadly representative list. The past year has witnessed also the sale and break-up of the Witham Estate, which for centuries has been held by successive "squires,"—a title which now comes to an end in Witham. Such is the record of the year 1929. What of the future? Let us hope that, under new conditions and altered circumstances, the blessing of God may continue to rest upon our parish and our historic old church, which has looked down upon the changes and chances of over 8 centuries, and will continue to bear its silent witness for many centuries to come. Meanwhile, it is ours to use and to love, and to hand on to our children's children as their most precious possession.

Church Notes.—Owing to all these exceptional changes, it was inevitable that the church attendance should be affected during the year, and worshippers and communicants be reduced, though we hope that this is only a passing phase. However, from the point of view of the offerings, the outlook is more encouraging. The total collections during the past year amounted to £57/5/0, an increase of £14 on the previous year,

as against £43/4/0 for the corresponding period of the previous year.

Christmas Day.—The church was profusely decorated with evergreens, and looked very beautiful. White flowers, kindly given by Mr. Burges, adorned the altars. Though the number of communicants at the early service was large, it was less by nearly twenty than a year ago.

Social Activities.—This winter we have had our full opportunity of enjoyment in the way of whist drives and dances. All thanks to the hard-working organizers. Many enjoyable social evenings have served to bring us together more than usual. As we write, we are looking forward to our chief winter's attraction, the fancy-dress dance.

Children's Party.—Owing to Mr. Mansell being away for Christmas, our children's party had to be held before the Festival, on Saturday, Dec. 21st. In every respect it was one of the jolliest and most successful that we have ever had. Every child in the parish was invited, even babies-in-arms, and there was a tea and gifts for all. A new feature this year was "Father Christmas" himself, who arrived in time to dispense his presents from the heavily-loaded Christmas tree.

The Magazine will be found this year to have a new "inside," which we hope will interest all our readers.

In Memoriam, Mrs. Browett.—On Friday, Dec. 20th, Mrs. Mary Ann Browett, who has been in failing health for some years, passed peacefully away. She had been a resident in the village for some 50 years, and lived here throughout her married life. She survived her husband about eight and a half years. Latterly, she lived a life of comparative retirement, and few of the present generation of villagers knew her, though in her husband's life-time she was well known to everyone, and in the village shop she had a kind welcome and friendly greeting for all her customers. Her husband took a prominent part in the affairs of this place, and for some years held the office of churchwarden. Mrs. Browett was a staunch and devoted churchwoman. "I love every stone of the old church," was an expression she frequently used. Until about a year ago she was a regular attendant, even when she was hardly able to walk there without assistance. We extend our deep sympathy to her devoted sister, Miss Gilbert, who nursed and tended her unremittingly to the end. R.I.P. Miss Gilbert has asked us to include a message of grateful thanks for all the sympathy and kindness shown by so many friends.

Baptism.—1st December, Kathleen, daughter of William Herbert and Lizzie Stringer.

Burial.—23rd December, Mary Anne Browett, aged 73 years.

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Church Heating & Lighting.—At a Church Council Meeting held on January 15th, two matters which closely affect the comfort of our congregation were dealt with, namely the imperfect heating and lighting of the church, and steps were taken forthwith to remedy them both.

The present heating apparatus was inserted just over 26 years ago. For the last two or three years a marked diminution in the heat which it gives has been noticed, and, on examination, it is discovered to be in great need of repair. The necessary repairs are being put in hand at once. The apparatus is one which is entirely out of sight, so that the church is not disfigured, as many churches are, with unsightly radiators and pipes. Even the chimney is concealed. A further advantage is that there is no danger of damage by frost. In many hundreds of churches, the intense frost of last winter did irreparable damage to hot water systems, entailing costly renewals. That, at least, we have been spared. The renewal of the apparatus in 1903 cost £58. £30 was given by the Church Estate, £10 by the late Mr. Fenwick, and the balance from church funds, socials, etc. To prove that our hot air apparatus, when it is in proper order, is capable of adequately warming our large church, we quote a paragraph from the Parish Magazine of November, 1903. "The new heating apparatus gave us an example of what it could do last Sunday. In the morning we were almost overpowered, and were obliged to let the fire out, or there would not have been much left of us by the end of Evensong!"

Lighting.—Before very long the scheme for the supply of electricity to rural districts is expected to be extended to Witham. We should then be enabled to instal electric light in the church. Meanwhile we propose to purchase at least a couple of "Aladdin" incandescent lamps to improve the light on winter evenings.

A memorial inscription.—The Vicar has placed in the church a small framed inscription to record that the picture in the Lady Chapel is in memory of Miss Fisher. In another frame may be found a description of the picture itself, which will interest visitors to the church. The small reproduction of this beautiful painting upon the almanack which was distributed last month, is a very good one, and many who have got it may care to go and read for themselves all about the original.

The fancy dress dance was very successful and well attended. In spite of the heavy cost of a special band, the sum of £3 was sent to the Butterfield Hospital out of the proceeds. It was a great pleasure to have Mrs. Crichton-Maitland among us. She has always taken a kind interest in Witham, and has played her 'cello here, both in church and at concerts on many previous occasions. We note from an old copy of the Parish Magazine that, as long ago as 1896, "Miss Elsie Birch-Reynardson, of Holywell, was among the performers at a concert given here in the Feast Week.

A cupboard is being made for the safe custody of our excellent set of hand-bells. The front will be glazed, so that they may be on view. It will be fixed in the ringing chamber. The use of hand-bells is found by many ringers to be a great help in learning change-ringing.

Mrs. Allam completed her 99th year on Dec. 27th last. She remains in excellent health. Many villagers were shocked at the sad news of the death of her son, Mr. H. Dallywater, who was a frequent visitor to Witham. He was killed on the railway on Jan. 2nd, while on duty on the line.

Date of Confirmation.—The first Confirmation in our neighbourhood will be at Barholm church, on Wednesday, March 19th. It is important that the Vicar should have the names of intending candidates without further delay.

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Lent, upon which we are now entering, is intended to be kept as a season of special penitence and prayer, in order to help us to amend our lives, and follow more closely in the steps of Our Master. For the Christian, it is the most precious and helpful season in the whole year. Let us try and use it as best we can, by being more diligent in all our Christian duties, particularly by more regular attendance in the House of God, and at the Holy Sacrament.

Sunday, March 16th will be set apart as a day of intercession for the Church in Russia, where a persecution, unparalleled since the days of Nero, is endeavouring to stamp out religion by the wholesale slaughter of all who practice or profess Christianity. On this Sunday and during the week following prayers of intercession will be offered in every Christian country throughout the world for the suffering Christians in Russia.

Sunday, March 30th is Mothering Sunday. We would call attention to the beautiful custom which consecrates the 4th Sunday in Lent as "Mother's Day," when we remember the best friend we have, our mother, send her a token of love, and wear a flower in her honour.

The Village Hall has been quite transformed with the large framed pictures purchased at the late Mrs. Browett's sale. We have long wanted to cover the bare walls with decorative pictures, and have been able to do so at last.

Miss Gilbert has now left the village, and has gone to live with her brother at Cheltenham. She will be greatly missed here, and not least from her place in church, where she was a regular and devoted worshipper. She was a particularly liberal supporter of our mission fund, and her generously-filled missionary box year by year was a real evidence of self-denial in the sacred cause of missionary work. The good wishes of many friends will follow her to her new home.

Church heating apparatus.—This has at last been repaired, and we hope that all will find the church comfortably warm for the rest of this winter, and for many winters to come. For four Sundays we were without the furnace, and as these happened to be four of the coldest Sundays during the present winter, we suffered considerable inconvenience, and were obliged to shorten the services. On one Sunday we omitted the sermon both morning and evening, for the first occasion on record.

The cross placed at the head of Miss Fisher's grave is made of teak wood, which is almost as imperishable as stone. When toned down by weather, such a memorial harmonizes particularly well with the surroundings of a country church-yard. We feel sure that it is just the type of memorial that she would have liked. Later on, the grave will be enclosed with a stone curb.

A Concert was to have been given here on February 26th by a party of friends from Bourne, but, owing to the illness of Mr. Clement Smith, who was chief organizer, we were obliged to postpone it. We hope that it may take place after Easter.

Felling.—The wholesale demolition of timber which is taking place around us is a sad sight to those of us who love the amenities of Witham, once described as "the most picturesque village in Lincolnshire." To many of us trees are like old friends, and we miss them as keenly.

The Parish Magazine.—For the information of our readers we give a balance sheet for 1929, so that all may know how we manage to keep this useful little monthly issue running. Total subscriptions, £6/12/5, total expenses (printing and postages) £8/11/0. The deficit was met by a grant of £2 from last year's garden fete proceeds. We may add that there is only one subscriber out of the whole 73, who has not yet paid for last year.

Stamford Infirmary.—£3/10/0 was sent from the proceeds of the whist drive and dance on January 31st.

Marriage.—February 4th, Albert Edward Harris and Doris Bone.

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Easter Day.—The Holy Communion will be celebrated at 7.30 and 9.0, in addition to the Sung Eucharist at 11.0. "Every parishioner *shall* communicate at Easter," so runs the well-known rule in the Prayer Book. As faithful sons and daughters of the Church, let us keep it, and at least win for ourselves the blessing which comes from obedience.

Good Friday.—The services on this solemn day will be at 11.0 and 7.30.

Summer Time comes into force this year before Easter, the alteration taking place on Palm Sunday, April 13th.

Lent.—Our Week-night Services have been extremely well attended so far, and it is obvious that their introduction was widely appreciated.

Lantern Lecture.—There was a very good muster on March 20th to hear Canon Bolam's interesting lecture on John Bunyan. We much appreciated his kindness in coming, and hope that he will bring his lantern again.

More Changes.—Lady Day departures. We are extremely sorry to lose several old Witham residents this month. Mr. and Mrs. Butcher and their family, who have lived here for a number of years, will be very greatly missed from among us, and besides them we are to lose Mr. and Mrs. Goodacre, Mr. and Mrs. Kettle and Mr. and Mrs. Healey. We take leave of them all with sincere regret. The Vicar would like specially to express his keen appreciation of Mr. T. E. Butcher, who has recently been one of our younger sidesmen, besides giving valuable help in many ways, notably as a bell-ringer. To all our departing friends, we wish every happiness in their new homes.

The School.—All these changes mean the loss to the School of quite a number of children. The diminishing numbers in the School have recently become a source of regret and anxiety to the Managers, and it is greatly to be hoped that with the arrival of new families there may be many children of school age to fill up the gaps.

Twenty-five years or so ago, we had almost 100 children on the school registers. This drop in numbers, which most schools nowadays have experienced, is a very disquieting symptom in the national life.

The Annual Church Meeting will be held (D.V.) in Easter Week. We shall then elect the Officers and Church Council for the year, and submit the Church accounts.

The Social in aid of the Church funds, held just before Lent, was quite a success. Miss Tiptaft, who kindly organised it, has handed the sum of £2 4s. 6d. to the Vicar. The repair of the heating apparatus will make, we fear, a big claim on our funds.

Ringin.—Our beautiful bells have been heard rung up (and not merely chimed), much more frequently than they used to be. This is owing to the fact that we have two or three new recruits in the steeple, and we hope that a regular band of ringers may once more be formed.

The British Legion.—Mr. Todd having resigned the secretaryship of our local branch, Mr. Mansell has kindly taken on the post. In a recent letter received by Mr. Todd from the Bourne branch secretary, there is the following tribute. "Please allow me to thank you very sincerely for all the good work you have done for our cause in the Witham district. There is no doubt in my mind that the Witham sub-branch would not have been what it is to-day but for yourself. I should be very sorry indeed to learn of any slackening of interest in this wonderful organization of ours, which enables us all to put into our daily life that wonderful word *service*."

Baptism.—March 9th, George Laurence, son of Charles William and Eva Merillian Brewster.

Burial.—March 31st, Elizabeth Allam, aged 99 years. (There will be a note on Mrs. Allam's

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Easter.—The church was very beautiful for the great Festival, and we are deeply grateful to all the kind helpers who decorated it so lavishly and tastefully. Mrs. Pick most kindly washed all the altar linen, and Mrs. C. Pell, many of the surplices.

The Electoral Roll.—When revising this list for the year, we had to cross off as many as 77 names of those who have gone. About 40 new names have to be added, so numerous have been our changes in the short space of a year.

Mrs. Allam's death took place after going to press last month, we therefore now record a few notes on her long life of 99 years. Born in 1830, she died in 1930. She was baptized in this church on Jan. 5th, 1831, when she was only 9 days old, possibly in consequence of her being a weakly and delicate child. She was three times married and survived her third husband for 27 years; of her six children, three are living, and there is one great-great-grandchild. The tragic death of her youngest son, Henry Dallywater, last January, was a great shock to her, and undoubtedly hastened her end, for she was greatly devoted to him, and he constantly used to come to see her. Up to last summer she lived alone in her little cottage here, and did her own domestic work. A few years ago the Vicar ascertained her true age from the registers, and great was her satisfaction when she realized that she was a year older than she thought she was!

The Bede-house charity.—This charity which is properly called the "Hospital of St. John and St. Anne," is a private benefaction in the gift of Capt. Johnson, of Ketton, and has no connection with this parish. We state this, as there is some misconception on this point. Those who receive it here owe it to the fact that Captain Johnson is an old friend of the Vicar, and is kind enough to give it sometimes on his recommendation.

Witham Hall.—According to the local *Press*, which is our only source of information, it appears that the Braceborough Spa Co. propose to purchase the Hall. The businesses which it is stated they intend to undertake include those of caterers, purveyors, launderers, hairdressers, licensed victuallers, as well as manufacturers of a variety of commodities, including confectionery, chemicals, perfumery and soap, though whether here or elsewhere does not seem quite clear. *Sic transit gloria mundi*, which being interpreted is, "You never can tell!"

Careby church.—Our neighbours at Careby are greatly to be congratulated on the singularly beautiful new altar and furnishings, which it was the privilege of your Vicar to dedicate on Easter Eve. The whole scheme is completely satisfying from an artistic point of view, while the restored Lady Chapel is entirely delightful. We recommend our churchpeople to go and see for themselves.

A nurse for Witham?—The Committee ladies of the Grimsthorpe branch of the County Nursing Association have very kindly suggested that their nurse, who is stationed at Edenham, might include Witham in her district, providing that we can obtain a sufficient number of subscribers. The Vicar would be glad to have the names of all who would like to become members. The subscriptions are very small, and are payable quarterly.

The Bishop's week.—The Bishop of Lincoln proposes to hold a short Mission in this Deanery in the autumn. Each parish will have its own missioner, while the Bishop himself will visit each parish once. The Mission lasts only from Friday until Tuesday. The Bishop has honoured Witham by selecting our church for his visit on the Sunday morning. As the Deanery contains 14 parishes, and ours is one of the smaller ones, this is a great privilege for us. Our Missioner will be the Rev. H. S. Taggart, Rector of Sedgebrook.

The annual Vestry and Church meeting was held in Easter week. The report of this is held over until next month.

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The Annual Church Meeting was held on the 25th April, but, owing to the lack of space last month, we could not report it. Firstly, our two excellent churchwardens, Mr. Bradshaw and Mr. Wallis, were again appointed. The sidesmen elected were Mr. Sharp, Mr. Curtis and Mr. Weldon. Those appointed to serve on the Rural Deanery Conference were the two wardens, together with Mr. Sharp and Mr. Mansell; and Mr. Wallis was elected as a member of the Diocesan Conference. Finally, Mr. Mansell was chosen as Secretary of the Church Council. It is a great pity that the annual Church Meeting is not more largely attended. It is convened in accordance with the Enabling Act, and all whose names are on the Electoral Roll of the parish are entitled to come, and take their part in electing the members who are to serve on the Church Council, &c. Thus an opportunity is given for all the churchpeople in the parish to have a voice in the affairs of their church.

Church Finance.—The accounts presented to the meeting showed the collections for the year to be £57/5/0, the highest figure reached since the year 1912.

Cricket Club.—It is good news that we have once more a club in the parish. Thanks to the kindness of Mr. Sharp, an excellent ground at Manthorpe is available. At present, owing to the sale of the estate, the historic cricket ground at Witham, with its splendid pavilion, cannot, alas! be used. We heartily wish the new club every success.

Lawn Tennis Club.—This club has started its new season, and some excellent games have already been played upon the Vicarage court. The Committee have decided not to play on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The reason for this is that the court gets too worn if played upon daily. We hope that many matches with other clubs may be arranged during the season. Mr. Mansell is kindly acting as secretary.

The Village Green is now the property of the Church Estate Trustees, to whom it was presented by Captain Fenwick. It has been enclosed by a light fence, in order that it may be grazed, and the rank growth kept down.

The Rev. J. T. Halland, who was Vicar of this parish for 15 years before the present Incumbent, is still affectionately remembered here by a few parishioners. Lately, he underwent a very serious and grave operation. We are glad to state, however, that he bore it well in spite of his age, and is making a good recovery. He was greatly touched when he knew that prayers were offered for him in his old church.

Golden Wedding.—On June 8th (Whitsunday), Mr. and Mrs. Richard Pick will have completed fifty years of married life. We respectfully offer them our warmest congratulations, and heartiest good wishes for long-continued health and happiness.

Four Marriages of recent parishioners will be of interest to many of us,—that of Miss V. Redshaw on May 24th, of Miss Winnie Metcalfe on June 7th, and of Mr. Jack Harmston, and his brother, Mr. Stanley Harmston, who are both to be married on June 9th. Our very best wishes go with them all.

The Grimsthorpe Nursing Association.—Mrs. Burges has very kindly consented to act as our village secretary, and will be glad to have the names and subscriptions of those who wish to join. So far, only a few names have been given in. The annual subscription for Class A is 4/4 a year, payable quarterly.

Thurby Church.—Last month we commended Carey church to your notice. This time we should like to say a word in praise of Thurby church. Those who have not visited this wonderful old church for some time would hardly recognize it. All the roofs have been renewed, the walls re-pointed and re-plastered, and the whole interior has been transformed. A truly magnificent high altar, glowing with colour, and hung with rich tapestries, dominates the church, while the surrounding side-chapels are also beautifully furnished, notably the "children's chapel" on the north, and the Lady chapel on the south, which is specially appropriated to the Mothers' Union. The church is filled with objects of interest and beauty, while the churchyard is like a trim garden, with shrubs and beds of flowers.

A Choir Festival will be held at Bourne, on Thursday, July 10th, for combined village choirs. Our own choir may possibly be able to take part.

Eggs for the Hospital.—During the 'egg week' last month, 280 eggs were sent from this Parish to the Butterfield Hospital. The collection was organized by Mr. Mansell through the school children.

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The Nursing Association.—The County Superintendent has called to see the Vicar, and has informed him that she agrees to the inclusion of Witham Village in the area served by the Edenham nurse. The arrangement is to stand for one year. If by the end of a year it is found to be satisfactory, it will then be made permanent. As a considerable portion of the parish has for some time been served by the Grimsthorpe Association, it seems fitting that Witham itself should also be included. Mrs. Burges has kindly consented to act as local organizer, and to her all subscriptions should be paid. We trust that many will subscribe, and prove by so doing their appreciation of the kind offer which has been made to us. The Vicar wishes to make it clear that the services of the nurse at Edenham were offered to us. We did not ask to be included in her district, but the proposal first came from the Grimsthorpe Committee themselves.

The Vicar expects to be away on two Sundays this month, July 13th and 20th. Will our congregation please note the following arrangements?—On Sunday, July 13th, there will be Service at 11 a.m. only, and on the 20th, there will be Holy Communion at 8, and Evening Service at 6.30. Our old friend, Mr. Reade, is taking the Services at 11 and 6.30 respectively, and the Rev. C. W. E. Cleaver will take the celebration at 8, on July 20th. Will everyone please make a special effort to attend these Services, if only out of courtesy to our kind visitors. As for the Vicar, he will have something of a "busman's holiday," for on the first Sunday he has undertaken the Services at a church in Essex, and on the second, those at his brother's church in Somerset. However, a change is usually the best holiday of all!

Foreign Mission Sunday.—On August 3rd, our offerings and intercessions will be on behalf of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. All who have Missionary boxes are asked to bring them in on that day, or during the previous week.

The Bishop's week.—This, to which we have already alluded, will be held during the first week in October. The Bishop of the diocese and the Bishop of Grantham will both visit us. Our special missionary, the Rev. J. S. Taggart, hopes to come over in August, and explain the object of the Bishop's week one Sunday evening. Meanwhile let us remember it in our prayers, that through it our parish may be abundantly blessed.

Summer Sundays.—We quote the following from the Vicar of Oakham's advice in his parish magazine. "If you are going out for Sunday, then come first to the early Communion Service, or arrange to get back for Evensong. The determined effort will repay you a hundredfold. If you let your Sunday go by without your worship, I am sure your life will be the poorer. If your regular Sunday worship is missed you lose more in character and the power to live than you can possibly gain from the Sunday outing." We would do well to ponder these wise words. One sometimes sees people actually starting for a walk as the bells are calling them to church, although they have had the whole day at their disposal.

The Church Council held a meeting on June 20th. The following subjects were dealt with among others. (a) Arranging the altar flowers. Three more ladies volunteered to undertake a month apiece, Mrs. R. Pick, Mrs. Stubbley and Mrs. Gedge. This, with Mrs. Burges, Mrs. Eriksson and Miss Blackburn, makes six monthly decorators. (b) The choir outing was arranged for the end of July. As no special fund has been raised this year to pay for this, it will have to be carried out as economically as possible. £5 was voted from the Church funds. (c) The re-covering of the kneelers was left in the hands of Mrs. Pick. (d) The Sunday class was discussed. It was felt that the attendance of the children might be larger and more regular. (e) The chairs in the Lady chapel were becoming worm-eaten, and must be attended to. (f) The ladies of the Council undertook to overhaul the vestments, and do any necessary repairs. (g) The spare-books in the church should be left for the use of visitors, and regular worshippers should provide their own. (The above points are from the minutes of the meeting taken by Mr. Mansell, the Hon. Sec. to the Council).

Marriage at Skellingthorpe church (by the Rev. L. H. Cooley), June 7th, Arthur George Pearce and Winifred Annie Metcalfe.

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The Nursing Association.—After all, we are not to be allowed to join the Edenham Nursing Association. We greatly regret to be obliged to make this announcement, after raising the hopes of the parishioners. As long ago as May, we wrote in this Magazine that the Edenham Committee had offered to include Witham in their Nursing area, as they had already included Toft and Lound. Later the County Superintendent visited the Vicar and Mrs. Burges, and gave due approval to the scheme. On the Vicar's return home, he was astonished to find that this approval had been withdrawn. So there the matter rests for the time being. It is an unsatisfactory business, and sets us wondering what has happened behind the scenes.

The Vicar's holiday.—Mr. Reade most kindly came to the church on the 13th and 20th of July to conduct the Services, and the Rector of Careby celebrated the Holy Communion on the latter Sunday. There were good numbers present at all the services. The Vicar spent the first Sunday in Essex, where he preached three times, and the second in Somersetshire, preaching there twice. One thing that impressed him was the strength of the Church in both these districts. We hear much in these days about empty village churches, but in a small parish in Essex, with a population of 234, and a church three-quarters of a mile from the village, there were exactly 68 people present at the Morning Service, and considerably more in the evening.

The Rev. J. S. Taggart, Rector of Sedgebrook, near Grantham, will preach here at the evening Service on Sunday, August 24th, when he will explain the meaning of the "Bishop's Week" in October, during which he will be acting as our special Missioner. Will everyone please make an endeavour to come and hear what he will have to tell us about it.

S. Paul's Cathedral, the great mother church of London, which is known and loved the world over, was re-opened about a month ago, after a restoration lasting 17 years. The present cathedral was built to succeed the old St. Paul's, which perished in the great Fire of London in 1666. It is interesting to record that the people of Witham sent a contribution towards the re-building of S. Paul's, as the following extract from our church records show. "*Memorandum.* There was collected in the town and parish of Witham within the month of November, 1678, towards the re-building of the cathedral church of St. Paul's, London, the sum of sixteen shillings and a penny. Collected by Thos. Troop, Vicar, and Will. Pell and John Boyall, churchwardens. The said collection was acknowledged in the hearing of the parishioners." The amount seems a small one to us in these days, but we must remember that the value of money was far higher then than now.

The church vestments have recently been thoroughly overhauled and repaired by the ladies of the Church Council, who turned out the vestment press, and restored all to neatness and order. Although we do not possess any vestments of a costly nature, such as are seen in many churches, those that we have are quite seemly and suitable. The white and the red chasubles were given by the Communicants of the parish about 35 years ago. After constant use for all these years, the white one is hardly even soiled, thanks to our clean country air. We hope that our kind helpers will next turn their attention to the altar frontals which need some renovating, and the cassocks and surplices of the choir.

During his recent absence from home, the Vicar received a warm invitation to accept an attractive parish in Essex. At the request of the patron whom he met, he was asked to go and see it, and did so. However he finally decided that to leave Witham, with all its past associations and its kind and friendly people, would be too great a wrench.

The choir outing, which was kindly organized by Mr. Mansell, was thoroughly enjoyed by all, and a happy day was spent at Skegness, under fair weather conditions.

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Foreign Missions.—The amount sent up to the Treasurer of the Society for the propagation of the Gospel (S.P.G.) last month was £4/12/0. The collections in church on Sunday, Aug. 3rd, which was our special Foreign Mission Sunday, amounted to £2/4/2, and the contents of the Missionary boxes added another £2/7/10. This is the highest figure reached except in 1927, but even so, we must try to do better still in the future. The Vicar earnestly pleads that those who do not possess a missionary box will ask him for one. There is no obligation in taking a box, nor is there any invidious distinction, as only the amounts (and not the names of box-holders) are published. If, let us say, 30 households had a box apiece, and contributed to them one half-penny a week only, we should have nearly twice as much to send to this great cause. The home missionary box, placed where we can see it, is a constant reminder to us of this great duty of ours to help foreign missions, and teaches us besides the principle of systematic giving.

The Bishop's week, what is it?—Each year the Bishop of Lincoln selects one Rural Deanery in the Diocese, to which he and his colleague, the Bishop of Grantham go, together with a number of earnest and devoted priests, in order to arouse the parishioners of the various parishes, and re-kindle the spirit of devotion. Both of the Bishops visit the parishes in turn, and a special missionary is assigned to each. Our Deanery (that of Ness) contains 14 parishes, we therefore consider ourselves fortunate in the fact that the Bishop of Lincoln comes to Witham on the Sunday morning, and the Bishop of Grantham will preach at the concluding Service on the Tuesday evening.

Our Missioner.—As everyone already knows, our chosen Missioner is the Rev. H. S. Taggart, the popular Rector of Sedgebrook. Since Mr. Taggart is not likely to read this Magazine, we can write quite freely about him. A man of deep spirituality, and earnestness, he possesses a charm of manner, and a kindliness which captivates all who meet him. The Vicar recently went over to Sedgebrook, and found that the Rector had won the hearts of all his parishioners, especially the children and young people, who loved and trusted him. Such is the man who is coming to us in the Bishop's week. Let us give him a very warm welcome.

The Harvest Thanksgiving will co-incide with the Mission, and the special Harvest Services will be on Friday, October 3rd and the Sunday following. Mr. Taggart will preach on Friday and Sunday evenings, and the Bishop of Lincoln on Sunday morning.

An Explanation.—Our parish Mission has nothing to do with *Foreign Missions*, as some seem to think. It is a mission solely to ourselves.

The following Letter has just been received from our Missioner, and we gladly include it in this month's issue.

St. Lawrence's Rectory, Sedgebrook,

27th, August, 1930.

My Dear Friends,

Your Vicar has, with the Bishop's approval, asked me to conduct the Short Mission in your Parish from the 3rd to the 8th October, and I am looking forward to the pleasure of being with you during those days. Some of you I have already met, and in doing so I could not but feel, as we shook hands together, that there was already a real spirit of friendliness and goodwill between us. I am very thankful for this, as it is to me a good omen. Not only is the Mission short, but the time of preparation is also short, nevertheless if we all pray about it daily, and use it fully when the time comes, we may depend upon it that God will bless it to us, and will bless us to His service.

Believe me, yours very sincerely,

HUGH S. TAGGART.

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

Mr. Mansell who has received the offer of a mastership in a school near Manchester, will soon be leaving us. He has only been with us for the short space of a year, too short a time really to get settled down, and feel at home among us. It used to be said in the old days that it took ten years really to know your neighbours in a Lincolnshire Village! However, this perhaps is not so true nowadays, when we all move about so much more than we did in days gone by. In returning to their old home and neighbourhood, we venture to wish Mr. and Mrs. Mansell every happiness and success.

The future of the School.—The Managers are now endeavouring to find a new Head Teacher, and parents may rest assured that they will do all they can to make a good and suitable appointment. In one respect however, they are now limited. The County Education Authorities will only sanction the appointment of a woman teacher, owing to our diminished numbers. This will be one of the most revolutionary changes that has ever taken place here. Witham has had a Schoolmaster for as long as it has had a school at all, and that is for considerably over a hundred years, and long before the introduction of compulsory Education in 1870.

Two old Wills.—The following extracts from Wills made by two parishioners four hundred years ago are taken from the Probate Registry at Lincoln.

(1.) 1530 A.D. I John Frawce, of Lownde, within the parysh of Witham makes my last Will and testament. My body to be buried in the churche yerde of Witham. To the high altar of the parysh churche of Witham xijd. To the bellis (bells) of Witham xijd. To the gyldes of Witham xijd. To the mother churche of Lincoln xijd. The resydue of my goodes I gyff Agnes Frawce, my wyff, she to dispose them for the helthe and salvacion of my soule as she thynks best.

(2.) 1530 A.D. I Robert Bocher of Witham makes thys my last will and testament. My body to be buried in the parysh church of Witham. To the high altare of the parysh church of Witham iiijd. To the warkes (works) of our Lady of Lincoln ijs. To the gyldes of Witham too strykes barly. To a prest (priest) to say v messys (masses) for me and my friends xxd. This beryng wytness, Sir John Jameson, the Vicar, with othar.

Mr. Cecil Story who has been a patient in Peterborough Infirmary for so long, is sadly missed by his many friends in Witham. At every service we feel a sense of loss, when we fail to see his familiar figure in the steeple, and in his corner by the organ. We can assure his wife that everyone feels most deeply for her in these weeks of anxiety, and we pray that it may be God's will to raise him up and restore him to health and strength once more. It was a kindly thought of those who organized a skittle tournament recently, and raised a small fund to defray the heavy cost of Mrs. Story's frequent visits to her husband's bedside.

Our young friend, Ernest Stringer is to be congratulated on his providential escape the other day. His injuries, serious as they were, might have been far worse. Mercifully he is making a good recovery, and we hope soon to see him home again.

The Dedication Festival is our annual day of thanksgiving for spiritual blessings, symbolized to us in our beloved parish church. The Feast Sunday this year falls on October 26th.

The Harvest Thanksgiving services will be held on Friday, Oct. 3rd, and Sunday Oct. 5th, when the Bishop of Lincoln will preach in the morning. This is also the time of the "Bishop's Week," of which we wrote fully last month. The preacher on Tuesday evening Oct. 7th, is the Bishop of Grantham, who has not previously been to Witham. All the other addresses will be given by the Rev. H. S. Taggart.

The Thankofferings during the Harvest Festival will be given to the Hospitals.

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

The Bishop's Week.—In many ways this short time of preaching and prayer in our parish proved most helpful, and we look back upon it with thankfulness. Our special missioner, Mr. Taggart, made a deep impression upon us all by his eloquent and yet simple addresses, full of wise counsel and deep earnestness. Those who failed to hear him missed a great opportunity. The numbers at the different services varied somewhat, though we were pleased to see such large congregations when the Bishops of Lincoln and Grantham addressed us on the Sunday morning and Tuesday evening.

A Women's Meeting will be held on Monday, Nov. 17th, at 3 o'clock, when Mrs. Taggart has most kindly consented to come over from Sedgebrook to give a special talk. Will everyone please make a note of this, and reward her kindness by coming. It will be held in the church. As an outcome of this meeting we hope to form a branch of the Mothers' Union in the parish. After the meeting, tea will be provided by the ladies of the Church Council.

The Offerings at the Harvest Thanksgiving amounted to £6 8s. 9d. £3 8s. 9d. was sent to Stamford Infirmary, and £3 to the Butterfield Hospital at Bourne. The fruit and vegetables were taken to the latter Hospital.

A Lecture, illustrated by cinematograph views, will be given in the Village Hall on behalf of the Royal Society for the prevention of cruelty to animals (R.S.P.C.A.) on Wednesday, Nov. 13th, at 6.15 p.m. This is chiefly for the children, but all are welcome.

The School.—The Managers have offered the Head-teacher's post to Mrs. C. L. Peart, head-mistress of Mellis School, Suffolk, who has accepted it. She will commence her duties on Monday, Dec. 1st. Mrs. Peart has, in addition, kindly undertaken to act as organist.

The Hall.—Rumours are busy with regard to the future ownership of Witham Hall. One proposal is that it should become the County Asylum for Rutland and the Soke of Peterborough, though we still hope that it may be purchased as a private residence. Possibly, by the time these words are in print, the matter will be settled.

Sunday Morning.—Some time ago the Vicar's motor-car was used regularly to convey worshippers from a distance, for whom the double walk was too great. He still gladly offers it for this purpose, and regrets that latterly so few have availed themselves of the proffered lift. Also, if previous notice is given, he will willingly send it to bring anyone up, either at 8 or 11.

Sunday Worship.—There is one service alone that claims our first attention on the Lord's Day, and that is the Lord's Service itself. The following statement by the Bishop of Lincoln may help us to realise this. He says: "The Holy Eucharist is clearly meant to be the chief Sunday morning service, at which the chief congregation is expected to be present. For it is the one service at which the Prayer Book appoints that a sermon shall be preached, the alms offered, the notices given out. There is no provision whatever for sermon, alms or notices at Mattins or Evensong. If we go behind the Prayer Book, to that Catholic order which it is the plain purpose of the Book of Common Prayer to continue and maintain, the implication is equally clear. The Eucharist, without doubt or question, has always been treated as the chief Christian service. It is the service which our Lord Himself appointed, and the *Lord's Service for the Lord's Day* is a plain and simple rule which the Church has always observed. So far, therefore, the duty of the faithful priest seems to be unquestionable. He will earnestly desire so to train and win his people that the Lord's Service may take the position which is due to it in the life and worship of his parish. He can do no other. The parish priest who loves his people will not lack the patient strength & wisdom to win them to that fuller worship which is only possible when the Lord's people meet together in the Lord's Service on the Lord's Day." This clear and concise statement of our Bishop puts the matter very plainly, and will explain why on Sunday we give the chief place of honour to the Service of the Eucharist, and consistently teach its paramount importance. To do other would be unfaithful to Christ, who not only "instituted," but "commanded us to continue, this perpetual Memory of His Precious Death until His coming again."

Late Note.—We deeply regret to record the death of Mr. Cecil Story, which took place at Peterborough Infirmary on All Saints' Day (November 1st.)

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

The Hall.—Our paragraph last month regarding the future of the Hall no doubt somewhat prepared our readers for the welcome news of its purchase by Commander C. M. Orichton-Maitland R.N. of Ketton Grange. Speaking for himself, there is no one whom the Vicar would have been more glad to have as residents here, than Commander and Mrs. Crichton-Maitland, whom he is privileged to count among his oldest and most valued friends, and we feel sure that the whole village will share with him, in giving them a very hearty welcome. The connection between Holywell and Witham in days gone by was always a close one; and so it is specially fitting and happy that the daughter of Colonel Birch-Reynardson should choose Witham as her future home.

The Special Meeting arranged for women in church on Monday, Nov. 17th, was very well attended; and Mrs. Taggart gave an exceedingly helpful address, which was much appreciated. She urged her hearers to endeavour to form a branch of the Mothers' Union in the parish, and this proposal was discussed at the subsequent tea, which followed the meeting. All present were in favour of the proposal and so after Christmas, there will be a special meeting for the enrolment of members, when Mrs. Bond the Diocesan Secretary, will attend. Mrs. Burges, at the request of those present at the meeting, was asked to act as enrolling member.

Confirmation.—The Vicar will be glad to have the names of candidates for Confirmation not later than the end of this Month.

Forthcoming Concert.—A Concert will be given on Tuesday, Dec. 9th, by the "R.E.W." concert party from Stamford. The party are kindly giving their services gratuitously, and we therefore hope that it will be largely patronised, more especially as the proceeds will be in aid of a Christmas party for the children.

The Lecture given by the R.S.P.C.A. on Nov. 12th, proved being enjoyable, and cinematograph pictures of animals, were shown on the screen. Several people afterwards said that they did not know about it, as also the womens' meeting, mentioned above. Moral; read the magazine with greater care!

Christmas Day.—There will be a celebration of Holy Communion at 8 o'clock (not 8.30) and Choral Eucharist with Sermon at 11. After this Service, the Christmas Charities will be dispensed by the Vicar and Churchwardens. Evensong will not be said.

Decorating the Church.—We shall greatly welcome all who will give some help in garnishing the church for the great Festival. The Christmas decorations—in our estimation—are more important than any others, more especially as they are left up over the three following Sundays (to include the Feast of the Epiphany with its Octave).

Mrs. Bradshaw who recently underwent an operation in Stamford Infirmary, is, we are pleased to say, making very good progress, and we look forward to seeing her about and among us again soon.

In Memoriam.—Cecil Story, who died on All Saints' Day in Peterborough Hospital, will be greatly missed from our little community. For owing to his kindly and genial temperament, he was a favourite with all. A member of our Church Council, a regular ringer and organ-blower, he gave of his services to the Glory of God, gladly and readily. He leaves behind him a fragrant memory which will not be quickly forgotten. To his bereaved wife and family, we offer our deep sympathy in their great loss.

R. I. P

Mrs. John Holmes, who died in Stamford on Nov. 24th, was for many years a resident in this Parish, living latterly at the Post Office, where her sister, Miss Lydia Francis, was Postmistress. Her husband died over 13 years ago. Two sons and three daughters survive her, to whom we respectfully offer our deep sympathy. R. I. P.

Baptism—Nov. 30th. Nancy, daughter of Arthur Hilton and Freda Fanny Metheringham.

Burials.—Nov. 5th, Cecil Story, aged 29 years. Nov. 27th, Annie Mary Holmes, age 73 years.