

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

1931.—With this number of the Parish Magazine we commence the 29th year of its issue, under the editorship of your Vicar. For all these years it has been published without a break. Even through-out the war we carried on, when other parishes suspended publication. It was difficult to keep going, but we did it! The Vicar has collected the local monthly notes of all these years in three bulky volumes, which constitute a complete record of the history of the parish for this long period. He is always pleased to lend these to anyone who is sufficiently interested in Witham and its past history, to care to read them. He hopes that they will ultimately be preserved among the parish documents.

Old photographs of the Hall. A request.—The Vicar is most anxious to trace some old photographic views of the house, taken in Squire Johnson's time, before alteration. He well remembers seeing these framed, in a house in the village, some years ago, but cannot recall whose it was. If the owner of these views should still have them, or if there are other copies in existence, he would be grateful to know of them and borrow them.

The Magazine will now contain more reading matter than in the past. Each month our readers will also be supplied with the little pamphlet entitled "Church Assembly Notes" giving church information of general interest, while each quarter a further pamphlet called "Overseas" will be inserted, dealing with the work of Foreign Missions. We cannot however include these extra insets in those magazines which are sent through the post, as it would render them over-weight.

Christmas at church.—Never do we remember seeing the church look more festive than it did on Christmas day. It was literally embowered in greenery, and our thanks are due to all who helped to make it so. The great Christmas Tree—standing at the West end, was a new and charming feature, and the masses of beautiful white flowers which Mrs. Burges so kindly supplied and with which she garnished the altars so lavishly completed the picture. Another year we must endeavour to have the Christmas crib, now so generally seen in churches, and in many cathedrals.

The Mothers' Union.—We hope to inaugurate our parish branch of this great world-wide institution this month. On Thursday, Jan. 22nd, Mrs. Bond, the organiser for the Diocese, will come to Witham and will admit those who desire to become members. Will all please carefully note this date. The enrolment will take place in the church, and the meeting will be held in the Village Hall, where tea will afterwards be served. The time is 3 p.m.

Church Finance.—It is satisfactory to note that the offerings in church during the year 1930, have exceeded those of the previous year. In 1929 the figure was £57/5/0, but this last year the total amount came to £59/7/3 which, (except for the year 1912 only) is the highest sum ever recorded in one year, even when we had the help of our generous Squire, the late Mr. Walter Fenwick. Of course, money is not everything, but these increasing offerings tend to show an increasing sense of our spiritual responsibilities and of what our parish church means to us.

Concert.—Last month the concert given by the R.E.W. concert party was packed out, and was most thoroughly enjoyed by all. The proceeds went towards providing the children's treat.

The Christmas party for the children, organised by Miss Tiptaft and other kind helpers, was held on Dec. 22nd. A bountiful tea was followed by the distribution of gifts from the Christmas Tree. Many of the presents were kindly sent by Mrs. Crichton-Maitland and a sackful of oranges by Mrs. Burges, besides many other contributions by parents and friends.

Welcome.—We venture to extend a very hearty welcome to Mr. and Mrs. Peart and their family at the school house, and to wish them every happiness in their new home here.

Baptisms.—Dec. 14th, Doris Ada and Frances Mary Adeline, daughters of Ernest George and Rose Alice White.

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Witham Hall.—There are still a few of our readers whose memories go back to those happy years before the war, when the late Mr. Walter Fenwick lived at the Hall. They will remember best, perhaps, his unbounded kindness and generosity to all his tenantry, but they will also recall the intense pride which he took in his beautiful home and its surroundings, where everything was to be as perfect as human care and ingenuity could make it. His garden in particular, was as the very apple of his eye. To all who thus remember the old Squire, it must be a joy and gratification to think that at last the place which he so greatly loved and treasured, and which had since been allowed to fall into such utter desolation, is now in the hands of those who will love it as he did, and who will in time endeavour to restore it to its former beauty and charm. The writer in particular, rejoices that he has been privileged at last to see this vindication of the memory of his old friend and neighbour.

The Mothers' Union.—We heartily thank all who came to the women's gathering on Jan. 22nd, to meet and hear Mrs. Bond. It was a splendid muster. We hope that as a result we shall shortly be able to establish a prosperous and flourishing branch of the Mothers' Union in our parish. We greatly appreciate the kindness of Mrs. Burges in consenting to act as enrolling member, and further, for so kindly entertaining us all to tea after the meeting.

Lent.—This solemn season of penitence begins on Ash Wednesday, Feb. 18th. The 17th century poet George Herbert wrote as follows:—

*Welcome ! dear fast of Lent,
Who loves not thee
He loves not temperance and sobriety,
But is a child of passion.
The Scriptures bid us fast,
The Church says : "Now,"
Give to thy Mother what thou would'st allow
To every corporacion.*

These are wise words. For we keep Lent in obedience to the orders of the Church, our spiritual Mother, who has provided this annual time of discipline for the good of our souls. Will everyone of us endeavour to make some Lenten-rules, and so profit by this great spiritual opportunity.

Confirmation.—The Vicar is preparing several candidates for this solemn means of grace, and hopes to take them either to Langtoft on March 10th, or to Ripplingale on March 23rd, which are the two nearest centres fixed by the Bishop this year. There is also a Confirmation at Bourne on Feb. 27th, but this will not allow time for the necessary preparation. In answer to several enquiries, we should say that it is unlikely that the Bishop will select our own church as a Confirmation centre for some years, as he confirmed here as recently as 1928.

Plough Monday.—We missed the plough-boys' play this year. It is a thousand pities to allow this quaint old custom to drop, handed down as it is through hundreds of years. We hope that the necessary actors may be forthcoming another year.

Bridge Drives.—We have started weekly meetings for the game of bridge, as we did some years ago. There are several new players of this game in the parish, and the meetings are open to all who previously notify their intention of playing. This is necessary, in order to secure the right numbers. The meetings are held at the Vicarage Reading Room.

Our Social gatherings have been far better attended this winter than last. Among these we may mention the Fancy Dress Dance on Jan. 2nd, and the British Legion Whist Drive and Dance on the 15th. On Feb. 5th, we shall have a qualifying Whist Drive for Stamford Infirmary, and a Social for the Football Club at Shrovetide.

Our Foreign Mission Sunday.—Feb. 8th is the appointed Sunday in this Deanery in support of foreign Missionary work. The special preacher at the morning service is the Rev. S. N. Dudley, Rector of West Deeping. Missionary boxes should be brought in during the following week.

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Mothers' Union.—There will be a meeting for all who are interested in the Mothers' Union, on Monday, March 9th, at 3 p.m., when an address will be given by Mrs. Pask Matthews, the wife of the Head master of Bourne Grammar school. Tea will be provided. We hope that not only those who attended the previous meeting, but others besides, will come, and that there will be a large muster. No special notices will be sent out, so that all who read this are asked to regard it as a general invitation.

The parish apportionment.—Every parish in the Diocese is required to support the Diocesan Fund, by sending annually to Lincoln a fixed quota, which is calculated according to the circumstances of each parish. Our town assessment is £11/12/4. This is usually paid late in the year when sufficient funds are available. This year however we were able to pay it off early last month, for the Vicar received a most generous donation of £10, towards the quota from Commander Orichton-Maitland, and remitted the entire sum to Lincoln forwith. The Secretary of the Diocesan Finance Committee in acknowledging the payment wrote "I assure you that we are most deeply grateful to you for this early payment. It would relieve us of a load of worry if every parish followed your most excellent example." We beg to thank the Commander for his very kind gift.

The church.—A great improvement has recently been carried out in re-furnishing the Lady chapel. We have got rid of all the old dilapidated chairs, and re-placed them with others, fewer in number, thus giving an appearance of greater spaciousness. The two handsome standard candlesticks were given to the church many years ago by the late Mr. Walter Fenwick. We are therefore the more glad to find at place for them at last. They have been raised upon wooden bases, which give them the requisite height in proportion to the altar. The whole chapel is now a little gem of beauty.

Foreign Mission Sunday.—The second Sunday in Feb. was the day appointed in this Deanery for the support of the S.P.G. (Society for the Propagation of the Gospel). The Vicar changed over with the Rector of West Deeping in the morning. The collections for Foreign Missions amounted to £1/10/10 and in addition, the contents of five missionary boxes totalled 16/8, making £2/7/6. in all. This is considerably less than last year, when we sent £4/12/0 as the result of our Mission Sunday. There are now ten missionary boxes out in the parish. We earnestly ask that others will apply for a box. It is so simple and convenient, a way of supporting this great Christian work.

Lent.—On the six Sundays in Lent there are courses of addresses both in the morning and evening. In the morning on "self-control" and in the evening on the "Lord's Prayer." There is also a special service each Wednesday evening, when two or three special preachers have promised to come and address us.

Water.—Though set on a hill, Witham has beneath it an abundant supply of water. This has recently been proved afresh by the bore sunk near the Hall. The supply obtained from it is so ample that we are told that the whole of Bourne could be supplied with water from Witham, in case the need arose. The Bywells spring which issues from the Hall garden has never been known to fail, even in the greatest drought.

Mr. Bradshaw, we grieve to say, will be leaving us after Easter. To lose so loyal and devoted a supporter is a heavy blow to the Vicar, and will be regretted we are sure by us all. We shall reserve further comment until next month.

Confirmation.—Our Candidates will be confirmed at Rippingale church on Monday March 23rd, at 2.30. Parents who desire to go are asked to inform the Vicar.

Burials.—2nd Feb., Sarah Jane Clarke, aged 79 years.
3rd. „ Lucy Neal Sawbridge, aged 53 years.

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Easter Services.—There will be early celebrations of the Holy Communion on Easter Day at 7 and 8.30, with the Parish Eucharist at 11. We urge that all may keep the explicit rule of the Church, namely: that "every parishioner *shall* communicate at Easter."

Easter decorations.—We ask for many helpers, and gifts of flowers to garnish the church for the great Festival.

The Annual Church Meeting will be held on the Friday in Easter week (April 10th), in the Village Hall at 7 p.m. Will you who read this, and whose name will be on the electoral roll, endeavour to come, and thereby show your interest in the affairs of your parish church? We shall appoint the Church Officers, and elect the Church Council for the ensuing year. Few of us are fond of attending meetings, but this one is of special importance to us all.

The Confirmation.—We were favoured with a perfect spring day when we went to Rippingale for the Confirmation on March 23rd, and we feel sure that our eight candidates will long remember it with happiness. After the ceremony, the Rector most kindly entertained the whole of our party to tea. about 16 of us, and a photographic group was taken in the Rectory garden. Should these views be satisfactory, we shall be able to obtain copies, if any desire to have them.

Confirmation statistics.—Since 1901, a register of persons confirmed in the parish has been kept, from which it appears that your present Vicar has prepared and presented 227 candidates (108 males and 119 females), which averages out at nearly 8 per year. Of all this large number there are now only 27 remaining in the parish, 200 having gone from us by removal or by death. The Vicar would like to add that of all the spiritual work which his office entails, he has always regarded the preparation of candidates for Confirmation as the most important of all.

Lent.—It is pleasant to record how extremely well our special Lent Services have been attended, and to hope that many may have benefitted spiritually from the better observance of this solemn season.

The Mothers' Union.—The formation of our parish branch is postponed for a time, though we hope ultimately that we may have one here. This is the third time that the Vicar has tried to form a branch, and has met with disappointment.

Ringings.—A meeting of the ringers was recently held, at which Mr. J. Weldon was unanimously elected captain. We hope that under his leadership we shall have a keen band of ringers, and that our beautiful peal of bells may be frequently heard. It was decided, that after Lent, Wednesday should be the usual practice night.

New Kneelers for the church.—We are purchasing one hundred new blue kneelers, to match the rug seating in the pews. These will be furnished with rings, so that they may be hung up when not in use. This device will serve to keep them cleaner, and will make it easier to sweep out the floors of the seats. It is urgently asked that they may not be used as "footstools," except by the old and infirm. Many have an idea that kneelers should be very thick, like stools, but it is impossible to kneel properly on these, as the body is thrown back off the balance. To kneel with ease and comfort it is essential that the kneeling pad should not be higher than 2, or 3 inches at the most.

Mr. Alfred Bradshaw our esteemed churchwarden, is not going further away from us than Bourne, so that we shall look forward to seeing him among us quite often. We know how deeply attached he is to our dear old church, where he has been a regular worshipper for the chief part of his life, beginning as a choir boy. Just 21 years ago he was married here, and but for a short stay at Little Bytham, has lived in our parish ever since. Since 1924 he has worthily filled the office of churchwarden, part which his father had previously held for many years past. It is the hope of us all that after a thorough rest, Mr. Bradshaw may be completely restored to health.

The Cricket club.—We shall include a report on this next month.

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The Easter services were extremely well attended, and at the 11 a.m. service in particular, the Vicar never remembers seeing a larger congregation. The church looked beautiful, as it always does at Easter. The altars were adorned with a profusion of arums and white tulips by Mrs. Burges, and the rest of the church was aglow with daffodils and primroses, skilfully arranged by many kind helpers. The offerings on Easter day, amounting to £5/9/6, were given to the Incumbent, in accordance with ancient custom. He greatly appreciates this kind token of goodwill.

The annual Church meeting and Easter Vestry combined, was held on Friday in Easter week. The Church accounts were presented and passed, showing a balance in hand from last year of £9/10/7, in spite of the fact that certain expenses, usually met from other sources, were paid out of it. The following officers were appointed at the meeting: Mr. W. S. S. Sharp, as Vicar's churchwarden; Mr. G. W. Wallis, as parish churchwarden; Messrs. J. Weldon, T. Peart and J. Wallis, as sidesmen; and Commander C. M. Crichton-Maitland, R.N. as representative of the Parish on the Diocesan Conference. Besides the above, eleven parishioners were elected to form the new Parochial Church Council.

The first meeting of this new Council will be held on Friday, 8th of May, at the Vicarage, at 7 p.m. Will members please note the date, and endeavour to be present?

Two very important Festivals fall this month, Ascension Day (or Holy Thursday) on the 14th, and Whitsun Day (or Pentecost) on the 24th. These two great anniversaries should mean much to us all.

A gift.—Some of us will have noticed a beautiful length of rich lace which was used on the high altar for the first time on Easter Day. This is the work of a lady parishioner, extending over many months, and is a real labour of love. We are deeply grateful for this tribute of affection towards the church. The old lace was too wide, and out of proportion, and the new piece is a very great improvement.

Church kneelers.—Most of the old kneelers are being removed from the church. Many are in good condition, and others only need re-covering to make useful stools in the house. They are to be sold for a few pence apiece. Kindly apply to Mrs. Pick.

Church books.—We ask that all regular members of the congregation will supply their own prayer and hymn books, and not rely on those placed near the door. These are intended solely for the use of visitors. The cupboard near the South door is provided as a place where books may safely be kept, by those who do not care to carry them home every time, or to leave them in their seats.

The cricket club.—A meeting of the club was held on Feb. 9th, at Manthorpe, when the following officers were elected. President, the Rev. L. H. Cooley; Captain, Mr. W. S. Sharp; Vice-captain and Treasurer, Mr. C. Boynton; Secretary, Mr. T. Oldman. Subsequently, Commander Crichton-Maitland was appointed as Patron. Through the kindness of Mr. Sharp, the club has the use of an excellent pitch at Manthorpe, though we hope that some day it may be possible for it to return to its old headquarters at Witham, where the late Mr. Fenwick provided us with the fine pavilion, at present unused and deserted.

Fixtures for May.—2nd, v. Essendine, away; 9th, v. Greatford, away; 16th, v. Castle Bytham, home; 28th, v. Tallington, home.

The Census.—The returns for Witham and Toft-cum-Lound give the following populations:—Witham 188, Toft-cum-Lound 100. In 1921, the figures were 189 and 104 respectively. Manthorpe figures are not yet received.

Mrs. Newham.—At the time of writing, Mrs. Newham is lying at the point of death, and we venture to express our deep sympathy with Mr. Chas. Newham. It is nearly five years since Mr. and Mrs. Newham celebrated their golden wedding, when they were the recipients of many congratulations.

Baptism.—April 26th, Robert James, son of John and Winifred Audrey Holmes.

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

Our numbers.—The recent Census gives the population of our parish as 356, Witham 188, Toft and Lound 100, Manthorpe 68. This is the lowest figure since the Census was first introduced in the year 1801. The Vicar has compiled a complete list of the various figures given at every Census since, which reveals remarkable fluctuations of the population. In the year 1801 it was 453, (W. 162, T. with L. 196, M. 95), Toft must then have been almost as large as Witham. In the year 1841 the population had risen to 563, (W. 235, T. with L. 225, M. 103), while in the year 1851, the highest figure was reached, namely 635. Since then it has declined each ten years, except for the year 1911, when it jumped up about 50, only to fall back at the next decade, until we get today's figure of 356, as stated above.

The Mothers' Union.—On April 29th (too late to record in last month's notes) we formed a branch of the Union, and held a service for the enrolment of the new members. We are grateful to Mrs. Crichton-Maitland for consenting to fill the post of enrolling member.

The Summer Festival of the Mothers' Union arranged for all the branches in the Deanery, is to be held at Witham, on Wednesday, July 1st. There will be a special service in the church at 3-o'clock, after which tea will be served in the Hall grounds (if fine). It is likely to be a large gathering, and the fact that it is to be held here will help to encourage our newly-formed branch.

Whitsunday.—The Whitsuntide Services were extremely well attended, and the very wet morning did not appear to effect our numbers in the least. In the evening, after Evensong, we were privileged to enjoy a rich musical treat, when Miss Sybil Eaton, who was accompanied on the organ by Miss Crichton-Maitland, gave us an exquisitely beautiful recital of Violin Music. We deeply appreciate her kindness in coming to play to us, and in being afforded the opportunity of listening to so gifted a musician.

A Choir Festival is to be held at Bourne in July, when the combined choirs of the district are asked to take part. It is hoped that some of our choir members will be able to go. It will of course necessitate a certain amount of practice.

Proposed Garden Fete.—It will be good news to many to know that a fete is to be arranged in the Hall gardens, by kind permission of Commander and Mrs. Crichton-Maitland, on July 11th. A village fete is always a popular event. Miss Tiptaft has kindly undertaken to act as organizer. A part of the proceeds will be set aside as the nucleus of a fund for wiring the church for electric light.

Sermons.—The Vicar endeavours always to limit the time of the sermon to about 15 minutes, and if possible less in the morning. However, a hundred years ago or so, the congregation would have considered itself fortunate if the sermon was over in an hour! The writer has a number of volumes of printed sermons of the 18th century (which came from the Hall library) some of which occupy nearly 50 pages of closely printed matter. To read such a sermon at an ordinary pace must have taken at least 3 hours! One wonders at what time the unfortunate people managed to get home. Those were the days too, when practically everyone went to church. It is quite possible that some of these old sermons from the Hall were inflicted from time to time on the long-suffering parishioners of Witham! In this connexion the following extract from our old church account book seems less curious than it otherwise might appear. "1625—It is agreed that William Man shall have 6/- for waking sleepers in the church." Probably Mr. Man well earned his salary!

Cricket Fixtures for June.—6th v. Essendine, home; 13th v. Swayfield (2nd XI.), home; 18th v. Swayfield, home; 20th v. Swayfield, away; 24th v. Rippingale, away; 27th v. Swayfield (2nd XI.), away.

Marriage.—25th May, Frank Edwin Wilson and Florence Mabel Haddon.

Burial.—2nd May, Ruth Newham, aged 85 years.

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

Garden Fete.—This, as everyone knows, is to be held in the Hall grounds (by kind permission of Commander and Mrs. Crichton-Maitland) on Saturday, July 11th. We hope that it will be largely attended, and that the weather may be kind to us. It is a long time since these grounds have been used for a similar purpose, the last occasion was in 1921. Since then a long period of neglect had reduced them almost to a wilderness, but they are now slowly resuming their former beauty and charm. There will be many attractions at the fete, including a good band and numerous "side-shows." The proceedings will be formally opened by the Lady Kesteven at 3 o'clock.

Outing.—An excursion for choir and ringers will be arranged before the end of the month. At the moment the place and date are not definitely fixed, but due notice will be given. As usual, there will probably be a few others desiring to share the trip, if sufficient accommodation can be obtained.

Alexandra Rose Day.—On June 11th a house-to-house sale of roses was made by Miss Jean Crichton-Maitland, which resulted in the excellent sum of £29/6. This is the highest total of any parish in the Stamford district, with the exception only of Ketton, which however is nearly four times the size of ours. It is a splendid result, and might even have been higher, but for the fact that outside Witham village the identity of the collector was not generally known.

Church Collections.—At one time we used to record the amounts of the the collections in the magazine, but lack of space led to our discontinuing it. They are now however posted up on the notice board in the church porch, where the totals are recorded every week. It is gratifying to be able to state that for many weeks the offerings have considerably exceeded £1 per Sunday.

Visiting clergy.—On Sunday, July 5th we hope to have with us the Rev. A. G. D. Capel, Rector of St. Winnow, Cornwall, and Rural Dean of Bodmin. Mr. Capel has been here on several previous occasions. He will probably kindly consent to preach both in the morning and evening of this Sunday. It is so good for us occasionally to have a different preacher. Also our friend the Rev. H. S. Taggart, of Sedgbrook, is giving the address at the Mothers' Union Festival Service, on Wednesday, July 1st.

The churchyard.—There are few churchyards which have not been rendered unsightly by ill-chosen monuments, chief among which are those of marble or granite. These are utterly out of keeping with the grey stone of the church, and being foreign importations, are quite out of place in an English grave-yard. Monuments should be either of local stone or of wood. But worse still, are the wreaths of artificial flowers under glass shades. These hideous and tasteless objects disfigure the beauty of God's Acre more than any other form of memorial. In many churchyards their introduction forbidden altogether, and we venture to express a hope that no more will be placed in our churchyard.

School successes.—We are pleased to record that the scholars of our school have won two prizes in recent competition open to all the elementary schools in England, for the best essays on the subject of apple-growing in New Zealand. The prizes consist of cases of New Zealand apples. In the class for senior scholars, thirty schools were successful, ours coming third, and in that for junior scholars our school is classed as second. Thus our school has been successful in both classes. This double distinction reflects great credit on our teachers and scholars.

Cricket Fixtures for July.—1st, v. Rippingale, home; 4th, v. Tallington away; 18th v. Greatford, home; 25th, v. Castle Bytham, away.

Burial.—2nd June, Robert Shinn, aged 72 years.

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

Our Very hearty congratulations to Lieut. Colonel Gordon Halland, O.B.E., C.I.E. on his appointment as Chief Constable of Lincolnshire, in succession to Captain Mitchell-Innes. The Standing Joint Committee of the County elected him to the post last month out of 194 candidates. This village will be justly proud of so distinguished a son, for Col. Halland was born at the Vicarage, during the incumbency here of his father, the Rev. J. T. Halland, who is now Rector of Blyborough. Many of our readers will remember him, and the present Vicar has known him intimately ever since he was a lad. Only last month he was staying here, immediately after his return from India. The Colonel's career both in the Indian Police Service and in the Army has been a very distinguished one, and last year he was chosen to serve as A.D.C. to the Viceroy, Lord Irwin, an honour never before bestowed on a member of the Service. As regards his present appointment, Col. Halland says in a letter to the Vicar, "I dislike intensely giving up my Indian Service just at a time when things are so critical out there, though after all I have done 23 years in India and China." The home appointment of their son will be a great joy and relief to Mr. and Mrs. Halland, neither of whom are now very strong, and who have suffered considerable anxiety on his behalf during the recent serious disturbances in India.

Our recent fete was so well and fully reported in the local papers that any detailed description is unnecessary. Suffice to say that from every point of view it was a most complete success. The day was gloriously fine, the surroundings beautiful, and the attractions numerous. In these difficult times it is no small satisfaction to have cleared at a small village fete so much as £29/5/0. The greatest credit is due to the organizer, Miss Tiptaft, and the large number of helpers and supporters who contributed so kindly towards the success of the undertaking.

Mothers' Union Festival.—The different branches of the Union in the Deanery met at Witham, for their Summer Festival, on July 1st. The address at the Special Service, which was very heartily rendered, was given by our old friend the Rev. H. S. Taggart, of Sedgebrook. Tea was served at the Hall, after which Mrs. Taggart shortly addressed the members. The collection, amounting to over £1, was sent to the M.U. general fund. The weather was beautifully fine, and a happy evening was spent in the Hall garden.

Children's Outing.—Once again, the day was fine for the school children's excursion to Wicksteed Park, (in which all the scholars and many parents took part), on Tuesday, July 21st. The outing was thoroughly enjoyed by all. This is the first occasion that a party from here has visited this place of amusement, where the joys and delights of young people are fully catered for.

The choir and ringers visit Yarmouth, on Tuesday, July 28th, so that we must reserve our report on this trip until next month. The distance is 111 miles, about twice as far as to Skegness, so that quite 8 hours of the day will be spent in travelling!

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Our Harvest Thanksgiving is provisionally arranged for Thursday, September 24th, and the Sunday following. The Vicar of Edenham has kindly promised to preach to us on the Thursday evening, and the Vicar of All Saints' Stamford on the Sunday. In this year of distress and anxiety the "joy in harvest" cannot be quite what it was during the bygone years of plenty, still we must not omit our annual thanksgiving to God for our daily bread, for that is the real object of the Harvest Festival. Our thank-offerings will be given as usual, to the Hospitals.

Choral Society.—Miss Jean Crichton-Maitland is anxious to form a choral society for the parish, and wants everyone who can sing to join it. No previous knowledge of music is necessary. There will be weekly meetings at the Hall during the winter months for practise, and in April the Society will take part, with the other choirs, in the annual festival at Uppingham. These meetings for singing will be a delightful means of bringing us all together, and we feel sure that Miss Crichton-Maitland's kind proposal will be taken up with enthusiasm. She would like to have the names of all who wish to join as soon as possible, so as to commence the practises after Harvest.

Thurlby is shortly to lose its popular Vicar. It is not often that a man so completely wins the respect and affection of his parishioners as has Mr. Davis, during the six years that has been their parish priest. All, be they church-people or not, have ever found in the Vicar a wise counsellor and sympathetic friend, ready with practical help wherever help was needed. Old and young alike will sadly miss him. His enduring work however at Thurlby will be seen in the church. When he came it was in dangerous disrepair structurally, and unsightly and ugly within. Now it is filled with beauty and interest, a true spiritual home, while the whole building has been re-roofed, the walls re-pointed without, and replastered within, and made secure for many years to come. As for the churchyard, it is like a trim garden. A great work, which none but a man of enthusiasm and determination would have attempted. Thurlby owes Mr. Davis a great debt of gratitude.

A Thurlby Festival.—On Friday, September 25th, Mr. Davis has invited our choir to go over and take part in a Festal evening Service, the occasion being their Patronal Festival. We hope that some of the choir will be able to do so.

Our ever-open church.—Several visitors have complained to the Vicar that, to their astonishment, they have found the church locked against them. But this is not the case. The South door is always open. The handle only needs a hard turn. The church belongs to the people, not to the Vicar or the churchwardens, and they have a right to use it at all times. This right should be exercised more frequently. What better place could there be for silent prayer and meditation than the old church, with all its hallowed associations? It is "Our Fathers' House," wherein He specially vouchsafes His Presence.

Flag-staff.—It is proposed to erect a Flag-staff near the South-west corner of the church, from which a flag may be flown on special days of national and religious importance. The Vicar is obtaining estimates, and will have more to say about it next month.

The outing by choir and ringers to Yarmouth on July 28th, was greatly enjoyed by all. The weather fortunately was fine,

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

Harvest Services.—Owing to the late season, the Church Council decided to postpone the Harvest Festival for a fortnight. It will therefore be held on Thursday, Oct. 8th, and the following Sunday. The Rev. D. S. Rowlands, Vicar of Edenham, will preach at the Thursday evening Service, at 7 p.m., and the Rev. C. A. Peacock, Vicar of All Saints', Stamford, at the Sunday evening Service at 6.30 p.m. As these are almost the only occasions year by year when visiting clergy come to speak to us, it is hoped that all will make a special effort to be present at these Services.

The Feast Sunday this year falls on its latest possible date, Nov. 1st, and therefore we shall combine its observance with that of All Saints' Day. Those of us who love our beautiful church should value the Dedication Festival above most others, for it reminds us of what our parish church really stands for, and of the great privileges which are offered to us by its presence in our midst. This Festival is one of thanksgiving for spiritual blessings, secured to us through our holy House of God.

Carlby.—The Rector of Carlby has resigned, after an incumbency of 40 years. We believe that we are correct in stating for 140 years Carlby has only had three Rectors! Both of Mr. Baines' immediate predecessors, the Rev. T. T. Hurst and the Rev. R. Hurt held the living for some 50 years apiece. Carlby church, a complete and beautiful little gem of 13th century architecture, is in the most deplorable condition of dilapidation and decay. We trust that something may now soon be done to preserve it from collapse. It will be delightful to see this desolate little shrine restored once more to order and beauty.

Our flag-staff which has been made and erected by Mr. Pycock, of Tallington, is a truly fine one. The pole itself is some 40 ft. high, while its elevated position in the churchyard adds another five ft. to its height above the road. We hope to have a little ceremony at the first hoisting of the flag on Sunday morning, October 11th, before the morning Service.

Our football club having had a very successful season last year in friendly matches, has now entered the Bourne League, the Bourne Hospital cup, and the Ancaster cup competitions. Commander C. M. Crichton-Maitland has kindly consented to be President, with Mr. H. C. Burges, Mr. W. N. Smith-Carington, M.P., Mr. J. Grant, and the Vicar, as Vice-Presidents. The club has been fortunate in obtaining the old cricket field as a playing ground (by kind permission of Mr. Grant), and the pavilion as dressing room (by kind permission of Mr. J. Todd). Some 24 players have been signed on, including every foot-baller in the parish, and it is hoped if possible to run a second team in friendly matches. In the draws for the Hospital and Ancaster cup matches, our team has been unfortunately drawn 'away' in both.

Fixtures.—Ancaster cup, 1st round v. Deeping Swifts, away, Oct. 10th. Hospital cup, 1st round, bye; 2nd round v. Deeping United, at Deeping, Dec. 5th. Other matches for October are:—3rd, v. Morton, away; 17th, v. Dyke, home; 24th, v. Dyke, away. We hope to chronicle our football teams' fixtures and results in the magazine each month during the season.

In memoriam, Mrs. J. Holmes.—By the death of Mrs. James Holmes, of Manthorpe, one more link with the past has been severed, and among the older parishioners who were here when your Vicar came, very few alas! now remain with us. Mrs. Holmes, who was a native of Pinchbeck, had lived at Manthorpe for some 50 years. In 1922 she became a widow, but continued to live in her Manthorpe home with her son, Mr. J. E. Holmes. In 1917, she suffered a great bereavement in the loss of her son Harold, who was killed in France, at the early age of 24. Mrs. Holmes was one of those who won the esteem and affection of all who knew her. She was a devoted mother and grandmother, and her death is a deep and grievous blow to her surviving family. We desire respectfully to offer our tribute of sympathy with her four sons and three daughters, in their bereavement. R.I.P.

Choral class.—The practices will commence shortly, (at the Hall).

Burial.—Sept. 15th, Hannah Holmes, aged 77 years.

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

Thanksgiving.—It is a long time since we remember such hearty and well attended services as those which we had last month at our Harvest Thanksgiving. It was a delight to see the church practically filled on a week-day evening, and more so, at the Eucharist on the Sunday. After all, this service is the most important of all, for it is Christ's own express command. It was He who instituted, and has commanded us to continue, this "perpetual memory of His precious death." We have therefore no right to substitute any other form of Thanksgiving for this divinely ordered one. Our thank-offerings amounted to the gratifying total of £6/15/10. Of this, £3/15/10 was sent to the Stamford Infirmary and £3 to the Butterfield Hospital.

Lighting the church.—We have received a very kind gift of a second "Aladdin" lamp, and have hung it on the north side of the nave. For this we are most grateful. At present, there seem no signs of the National electric scheme coming anywhere near us, so that it is impossible to foresee the time when we shall have electric light in the church. Perhaps we never shall! This may be one of the penalties that we pay for being so small and remote a village, just as we seem destined to have no 'bus service! A kind friend has offered to provide the candles for filling the two beautiful candelabra in the chancel, so that we can have these illuminated on Festivals.

Carlby.—We have decided to give 40 old kneelers to Carlby church, together with several other things which they need. During the vacancy the sequestrators have placed the parish in the charge of the Rector of Braceborough, who will worthily look after its spiritual needs.

Our church flag, which measures four yards by two, and bears the white cross of our patron St. Andrew, has been universally admired, though on the two occasions that we have hoisted it, there was practically no wind, and its full proportion has not yet been seen. For this we shall have to wait for a stiff breeze. It is remarkable how far the flag-staff can be seen from the road in either direction. The site is almost the best that we could have chosen. The flag will only be hoisted on days of greater importance, and not every Sunday. We should like to have, in addition, a large Union Jack, for days of national observance.

The General Election.—When writing the magazine notes a month ago, we little thought that before October was out a General Election would have taken place. But such is the case, and before this Magazine is in print, the result will be known. Meanwhile we are praying that the issue may be guided aright, for the peace and welfare of our country.

Armistice Sunday (Nov. 15th) will be observed as a day of thanksgiving and remembrance. We venture to express a hope that the local branch of the British Legion will organize the attendance of its members at the Morning Service.

In memoriam.—On the 14th of October, Mr. John Thomas Francis passed to his rest. Strangely enough the last four deaths in the parish have all taken place at Manthorpe. Mr. and Mrs. Francis kept their golden wedding only last May. Although he had not been in his usual health for a few weeks, there seemed no cause for anxiety, and the end came quite suddenly. Mr. Francis had been a resident in the parish for many years, and was universally esteemed and respected. He was a devout and regular communicant, ever since his confirmation in 1914, for which the present Vicar prepared him. We wish to express our deep sympathy with the widow and his four children. R.I.P.

Burial.—17th October. John Thomas Francis, aged 71 years.

Late Note.—We much regret that the football news is omitted this month. It was sent in too late for publication.

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

Christmas.—The services on Christmas Day will follow our usual custom. Holy Communion will be celebrated at 8 o'clock, and the sung Eucharist will be at 11. It is well to remind ourselves that it is this which gives to the great Festival its familiar name, the "Christ Mass." Christmas Day is clearly then a day of religious observance, and the Christian way of keeping it, is by our presence in church. There will be no service in the evening.

The singing class under Miss Crichton-Maitland's skilful tuition is making very good headway the pieces chosen for competition. As the music grows more familiar, it will become more enjoyable. The important thing is for all the members to do their utmost to attend at every practise. Each one missed means one degree less in the proficiency of the final rendering at the trial of strength in April. We believe that we are correct in saying that ours is the only choir outside the County of Rutland which will be privileged to compete. This fact ought to put us on our mettle. We are to have a visit shortly from Sir Walford Davies, the well-known organist and choir-master of St. George's Chapel, Windsor, who has kindly promised to conduct one of our practises. We are favoured indeed.

A dance is to be held on Friday, December 11th, in the billiard-room at the Hall, by kind permission of Commander and Mrs. Maitland. The object of this is to raise funds for the expenses of the singing class, which will amount to a considerable sum per member, covering the music and the cost of the day's outing to Uppingham in April. We hope therefore that it will be widely supported.

Carlby.—On Sunday, November 22nd, your Vicar conducted a service in this church. The only reason for recording so prosaic a fact is, that it is the first time he has ever done so. During his 31 years incumbency of Witham, there are very few churches in the surrounding neighbourhood where he has not officiated, in some of them a great many times, but in Carlby church never before last month! It was quite a new experience, as well as being a very great pleasure. It was pleasing too, to see the new and seemly appointments of the altar, vested and adorned as becomes the Lord's Table, simple and dignified.

Armistice Tide.—We have to apologise for stating last month that Armistice Sunday would be on the 15th instead of the 8th. Although we tried to make it generally known, some of our readers were not present who otherwise would have been. The little service on Armistice Day was altogether delightful, and there was a large muster of older people besides the children, assembled to observe the Silence in the most fitting place, the church. By means of the wireless we were brought into touch with the service at the Cenotaph itself, and heard the music of the massed bands in London, the hymns and the prayers.

The poppy-day collections this year reached the gratifying total of £7/10/6, as against £3/16/7 last year. Of this sum £1/14/2 was collected in church, and the remainder, £5/16/4, was the proceeds of the house-to-house sale of poppies, by Miss Maitland and Miss Wallis.

The football club. Results of recent matches.—Oct. 31st, v. Rippingale, (away), a draw, 5 goals a side; Nov. 14th, v. Rippingale, (home), a draw, 3 goals a side; Nov. 21st, v. Deeping United, (away), lost by 4 goals to 1.

Fixtures for December.—5th, v. Deeping United, (away), Bourne Hospital Cup match; 12th, v. Deeping Swifts, (home); 25th, v. Baston, (away); 26th, v. Castle Bytham, (away), friendly match.