

Witham-on-the-Hill, Manthorpe, Toft and Lound.

From the Vicar to his parishioners.—My dear friends—I am writing my usual New Year's message to you on Christmas Day. I have just been keeping the great Festival in our lovely old church for the 39th year in succession, and my thoughts go back over the many years that I have been spared to minister here. I can call to mind generations of past worshippers, and of the happy relations that always existed between us, and of all that they and I did together for this dear church, and now the names of most of them are but a memory.

I have been looking through the registers, and I find that during my incumbency of well-nigh 40 years I have taken 319 baptisms, have solemnised 65 marriages, and have conducted 177 funerals here.

I was first appointed as Vicar in 1900, when Squire Johnson was Lord of the Manor. Two years later Mr. Walter Fenwick purchased the Estate, adding to it almost the whole of Manthorpe, Toft and Lound. The Hall was to be the country seat of his family for generations to come. Under his indulgent care Witham became renowned as a model Estate, where all were prosperous and happy under its kind and generous Squire. His early and untimely death in 1914 was the beginning of a new and disastrous era. Within three weeks the Great War broke out, and Witham became a different place. At last came the crowning tragedy, when the whole Estate was broken up, and sold piece-meal under the hammer. And so of all those high hopes and cherished plans of my old friend, nothing now remains here to perpetuate even his name, except a grave in the church-yard and the Christmas window in the church.

And I, who have witnessed all these tremendous changes and vicissitudes through which this parish has passed, am still here. Surely a unique experience for any parish priest.

I cannot say how much longer my time with you may be, but while health and strength last, I shall continue to serve this church and parish to the utmost of my powers, and try to be a friend and helper to you all.

What the coming year may have in store for us we cannot tell. That lies in the hands of God, but if we serve Him faithfully we shall find that He is indeed "our hope and strength, a very present help in trouble."

And so I wish you all happiness, and above all, peace, in the new year.

Your affectionate old friend and Vicar, L. H. COOLEY.

The church.—How beautiful again the church was at Christmas, with its rich garnishing of evergreens and white flowers. Again the tall Christmas tree stood in the nave, and the charming Crib in the Lady chapel.

The offerings on Christmas Day, for the Waifs and Strays Society, amounted to £3/17/3.
The Archbishop's Appeal for refugees.—On Sunday, December 11th, in response to this appeal, no less a sum was collected than £5/10/6

Calendars.—With this number the Vicar is presenting to each subscriber a copy of the "Witham-on-the-Hill Calendar."

In Memoriam, Eliza Bradshaw.—The death of Mrs. Alfred Bradshaw on November 29th, has closed a fragrant and useful life, though one of great and prolonged suffering, which she bore bravely and uncomplainingly to the end. She was a devoted and consistent Church-woman, and when residing at Lound, she and her husband were present every Sunday at church. In addition, she held a Sunday class for children at Toft. She was married from the Hall on March 28th, 1910. To her husband and two daughters we would offer our deep sympathy in their tragic loss. R.I.P.

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The Magazine keeps up its excellent circulation and, we hope, its interest. We should like to thank the very kind distributors—Mrs. Green, Mrs. Skellett, Mrs. Oldman, and Miss N. Wallis, not only for delivering the copies through the parish, but also for obtaining payment from all to whom they deliver them. There are, however, still a few subscribers among those to whom copies are sent by post or by hand, who have not yet paid for them. The Vicar would be very grateful to receive their subscriptions, so that he can make up the year's accounts. There is, of course, no profit whatever on the Magazine, but always a slight loss.

Lent.—Before the end of February, this sacred season will have come round again. If ever this time of recollection and renewal were needed, it is this year, when the world seems out of joint. Will you all specially concentrate on our Wednesday evening services, so long a prominent feature of the Lenten observance here? In the past, these little devotional services have attracted large numbers, often larger than on Sundays.

Mrs. Ash, who died at Aslackby on December 26th, was for a number of years resident here, first at Manthorpe, and later at the Palace Farm. Of a friendly and genial nature, she took a leading part in all parish activities. No social event was complete without her cheery presence. But the Vicar remembers her chiefly as an invaluable member of our ladies' choir. What wonderful things we did with the help of that ladies' choir, of which Mrs. Ash was our strongest soprano. Every Sunday morning we sang the Eucharist to various settings, and every evening rendered an anthem, thus putting our musical talents to their highest use, the Glory of God.

Death of another old parishioner.—We regret to record the death of Mrs. Worthington, who for many years resided at Witham. She, too, and her daughters, were also members of the ladies' choir. There are many left who will still remember her. Much sympathy will go out to her husband and daughters, Mrs. Warr and Mrs. Barnett.

Thurlby.—On the 11th of January the Vicar of Thurlby passed to his rest. His successor, whoever he may be, will find a warm welcome waiting for him. The Church folk of Thurlby, we find, are kind and friendly to a degree, devoted to their church, and active in working for it.

The "Six Bells" Inn.—It is good to know that the big tree opposite to the inn is to be spared the woodman's axe, for that tree was the reason of the inn being built. The late Squire had planned to erect it at the cross-roads, but the Vicar eventually persuaded him that it could hardly serve the village at such a distance. He then suggested to him the present site, and they then went out together, armed with pegs. Taking the big tree as the centre, they staked out the plan immediately fronting it, so that the tree might shade the courtyard in summer, the idea being suggested by the "Black Horse" at Grimsthorpe. It is therefore due to the Vicar that the inn is where it is!

The Village Hall Whist Drive.—Our thanks to all who worked and gave so kindly. The net proceeds amounted to £4/3/0. Many replacements and improvements are now possible. Apart from this help we should have been badly in debt.

The Choral Society's Dance.—This was, as always, a most successful and enjoyable affair. We hear that the takings were well over £10.

Foreign Mission Sunday.—This will be on Sunday, February 19th. Missionary boxes should be sent in during the month.

The Church Accounts for 1938 are now made up. The collections through the year came to £91/18/1. Thirty pounds, or nearly one third, very properly went to outside appeals. There remains a balance of £10/15/0.

Marriage.—January 7th. Frederick William Day and Edna Mary Pell.

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My dear friends and parishioners,

It is a very great disappointment to me to have to forego my work here for another spell, owing to the need of undergoing a further operation. I am writing these notes on February 20th, and go into the Stamford Infirmary this afternoon. I am more than grateful to the various clergy who have promised their help in my absence, help so substantial that not one single service will have to be cancelled, and none of the spiritual privileges which you enjoy here will be withdrawn. In particular, I should like to mention the very great kindness of my dear old friend Mr. Cleaver, formerly Rector of Careby, who is coming all the way from distant Devonshire to take the services on the first and second Sundays in Lent. Then on the next two Sundays another very old friend, Canon Wilgress, will take certain services, while the rest will be conducted by Mr. Smith, of Careby, and Mr. Hopkins, of Edenham. Further, the Vicar of Bourne is undertaking the Lent Wednesday evening services, so everything will go on as usual. I quite hope, please God, to be back at work myself again after three or four weeks.

On Palm Sunday, I am to have the privilege of preaching in Peterborough Cathedral. This is an old-standing engagement, but by then I hope to be fully up to fulfilling it.

While I am in the Infirmary I shall be in daily touch with Witham, and any messages that there may be for me will be delivered each morning. I believe that I shall be able to see visitors at any time, should they be kind enough to come!

Your affectionate friend and Vicar, L. H. COOLEY.

Departures.—It is with very great regret that we have to record the impending removal from the village of Mr. and Mrs. Miller, who will be leaving next month for Pointon. During the ten years that they have spent in Witham they have ever been foremost in every good cause, and have taken their full share in all the social activities of the parish. In particular, the Silver Jubilee celebrations in 1936, and the present King's Coronation celebrations in 1937 owed their success mainly to Mr. Miller's untiring efforts as Secretary for both. As an organiser, he carried through all the many details of the programmes on these historic days with a thoroughness that was simply wonderful. We all owe to him a deep debt of gratitude, indeed we hardly know what we shall do without him, when he and Mrs. Miller leave us. Our very good wishes will follow them to their new home.

Mrs. Charles Bradshaw, who died at Bourne last month, survived her husband for just over 4 years. He was Churchwarden here for no less than 27 years, and only resigned on his leaving Toft to reside in Bourne. His son, Mr. Alfred Bradshaw, later succeeded him in office. Only two months ago we chronicled the death of Mrs. Alfred Bradshaw, so that he has now suffered within the space of a few weeks the double bereavement of both wife and mother.

The death of Miss Susan Holmes has removed a familiar figure from Manthorpe. She was born there, and lived there the whole of her life. Except for a brief visit to America many years ago, she never left home. R.I.P.

The Bishop's Appeal.—The offerings at all week-day services in Lent will again be given to this fund. Please place your gifts in the white box, near the door in the church.

Baptism.—February 18th. Roy, son of Alfred Henry and Doris Ward.

Burial.—February 11th. Susan Holmes, aged 77.

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The International outlook, as we write these notes (March 23rd), is a grave one indeed. But so it was just six months ago. And what happened then? God delivered us, in answer (there can be no possible doubt) to *prayer*. And we must pray now with renewed earnestness, all of us. Your Vicar calls upon you all to join with him in fervent intercessions in God's own House of prayer. Pray at home, but not only that, join yourselves together with others in *combined* prayer. It is *this* prayer which God specially promises to answer. You know the words:—" *Thou dost promise that when two or three are gathered together in Thy Name, Thou wilt grant their requests.*" There will be intercessions for peace at every service; come and join your prayers with ours.

Easter Day.—The Holy Communion will be celebrated at 7, 8 and 11. Every parishioner, so our Prayer Book states, "shall communicate" at Easter.

Holy Week and Good Friday.—The special services for this sacred season will be announced in church.

The Annual Church and Vestry Meeting will be held on Easter Tuesday, April 11th, at 7 p.m. Please come, and thus show your interest in your church and its welfare.

The offerings for Foreign Missionary work, in connection with the S.P.G., amounted last month to £4/17/1. Of this sum nearly half was raised by the holders of Missionary boxes. Again we ask for the names of others who will take a box. On days when perhaps we have been prevented from coming to church, our weekly offering can be put in the Missionary box. In this way we shall be helping the work which must surely be nearest to the heart of our Blessed Lord, the spread of His Kingdom on earth.

The County Library.—The Vicar has been informed by the County Librarian that it is hoped to re-open the Witham centre at the end of June. This will be good news to many who sorely missed their books when it was closed about 8 months ago. Mrs. Starbuck has very kindly consented to supervise it for a brief time, until a permanent school-mistress is again appointed.

Diocesan Association for Moral Welfare.—Mrs. Tinsley, of West Deeping Manor, has most kindly undertaken the supervision of this greatly-needed work in the Deanery of Ness. Recently a meeting of delegates from the several parishes was held at her house, to hear an address on the subject by the Archdeacon of Lincoln. Mrs. Burges and Miss Angela Burges attended as representatives of this parish, and we shall soon be asked, all of us, to give one penny a year towards this deserving cause.

Dates to remember.—Uppingham Festival, 20th April; County Agricultural Show at Bourne, June 21st—23rd; Grimsthorpe Castle Fete for the Bishop's Appeal, 7th August.

Canon Wilgress will once more take Evensong on Palm Sunday, when the Vicar preaches at Peterborough.

The Vicar desires to express his heartfelt gratitude for all the great kindness which was shown to him during his illness, and particularly for the many prayers which he knows were offered for his recovery. Thank God, those prayers have been abundantly answered, and he has been brought safely through a great danger, to minister here for a while longer. For the present he asks the forbearance of the parish until full strength returns.

Church Collections during the quarter.—January, £7/6/10; February, £5/19/1; March, £7/8/11; Total, £21/14/10.

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Easter Day.—The church was, as always, richly garnished for the great Festival. In his morning sermon, the Vicar referred to the fact that that was the fortieth Easter Day that he had celebrated at the Altar here since his first appointment, when he came to the parish in April, 1900. Incidentally, he was wearing the same vestments as he had worn then, vestments which had been presented to the church by the communicants of the parish some years before he came! So clean is the air here, that after being in regular use for the best part of half a century, our white chasuble is hardly soiled. It has been worn too by many others who have officiated at our Altar, not the least among whom was the great and saintly Bishop King. It is therefore quite a historic possession.

Our old churchwardens' account book.—This is to be exhibited at the forthcoming Diocesan Exhibition to be held in Lincoln during July. We are informed by the Cathedral archivist that it is among the oldest, if not quite the oldest of such books in the Diocese. It dates from the year 1548. We believe that this great treasure was at one time lost, but was recovered by Mr. Halland during his incumbency. He may perhaps tell us something about it, for publication in next month's magazine. Such a possession as this surely deserves to be kept in a fire-proof and theft-proof safe, such as we have at last obtained.

Magna Charta.—The Cathedral Church of "Our Lady of Lincoln" has lent to the United States of America, for exhibition at the "World's Fair" in New York, its most priceless and treasured possession, namely the copy of "the Great Charter," which was signed by King John, at Runnymede, in 1215. This was brought back to Lincoln by Bishop Hugh of Wells, one of the Bishops then present, and deposited in the Cathedral archives, from which it has never been removed until last month, when it was conveyed under vigilant protection to America. Your Vicar was among the Canons who were summoned by the Dean a few months ago to give their consent to this loan. The people of the U.S.A. have in the past been so generous in their gifts to the Cathedral Restoration Fund, that it was felt that the request for the loan of this treasure could not well be refused. Incidentally, it has been insured by the Office of Works, who guarantee its safety, for no less a sum than a hundred thousand pounds!

The annual Easter Vestry meeting was held on Easter Tuesday. The new churchwardens are Mr. T. E. Peart and Mr. S. C. Skellett, and the sidesmen, Commander Crichton-Maitland, Mr. C. Green, Mr. J. Sandall and Mr. F. Ward. Commander Maitland was also re-elected to represent the parish on the Diocesan Conference. The church accounts, which were presented and passed at this meeting, showed a balance in hand of £10/5/8, out of a total income from collections of £105/18/7.

Mothers' Union.—The triennial Diocesan Festival will be held in Lincoln Cathedral on Friday, May the 12th. The members of our branch will be conveyed by bus. They also hope to join with the Careby branch at Careby on St. Mark's day, April the 25th, for a special service and address, and will be the guests of the Careby members at tea.

Notice.—The proposed fete at Grimsthorpe on August Bank Holiday is—we are informed—postponed *sine die*.

Baptism.—9th April. Elsie, daughter of John and Winifred Prentice.

Burial.—17th April. Joseph Kettle, aged 59 years.

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Our Bishop returns.—After an illness lasting many months, our Chief Pastor, the Bishop of Lincoln, has sufficiently recovered in health to undertake once again the care of this great Diocese. Our best wishes go out to him for his continued health and strength.

Mr. and Mrs. Richard Pick will (D.V.) celebrate the 59th anniversary of their marriage on the 6th of this month. We would all wish them health, joy and happiness in the evening of their long and wonderfully blessed married life.

The Rev. J. T. Halland, who was Vicar of Witham for 15 years before going to Blyborough, is, we believe, resigning his incumbency there this month, and will live in retirement at Welton, near Lincoln. It is our fervent hope that, relieved of parochial cares, he may long enjoy his well-earned rest. Some two or three years ago Mr. and Mrs. Halland celebrated their golden wedding. The Vicar called to see them the day that these notes were written (May 23rd) and found them both moderately well. It will, however, be a wrench for them both to leave the home in which they have lived for nearly 40 years.

Rural Deanery Conference.—This is to be held on Wednesday, June 14th, at Braceboro' and will be addressed by the Archdeacon of Lincoln. The Rural Dean is anxious that all the members of the Church Council will if possible attend.

The Village Hall.—It is thought by some that the charge for hire is unnecessarily high, but this does not really cover the cost of maintenance. The lettings this year up to date have brought in just £2, though the outgoings have amounted to £4/8/11. It is true that we have spent more than half of this in repairs and renovations which were really necessary, but had it not been for the whist drive last January we would have been seriously in debt.

Two memorable days at Lincoln.—The first of these was the great **Mothers' Union Service** on May 12th, when the vast Cathedral was packed to the doors. As we saw the long procession in which some 80 banners belonging to the various branches in South Lincolnshire were carried, we wished that our own branch might have thus been represented with a banner of their own. Some day we hope that it may be. An inspiring address was given by the Bishop of Derby, in the course of which he said that, as an influence for good in the homes of the people, the Mothers' Union was the backbone of the religious life of the Diocese. No one who was privileged to be present at this wonderful and inspiring Service will ever forget it.

Then on May 19th we were again present in the Cathedral for the **Moral Welfare Service**, at which the collectors from all the parishes in the Diocese solemnly presented their offerings at the Altar. As we stated in the April magazine, every parishioner was to be asked to give one penny in support of the Diocesan Association for Moral Welfare. The collection in our parish was made by Mrs. Burges and Miss Angela Burges, and amounted to the goodly total of £2/4/0. We believe that they met with only one refusal, though it is inconceivable to imagine **any one** so churlish as to refuse to contribute so small a gift to so worthy a cause.

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Our Rural Dean.—The bestowal of a Canonry on Mr. Talbot, the Rector of Braceborough' and Rural Dean of Ness, will give great gratification to all who know him. If we may venture to say so, no one could be more deserving of this honour than he, and we wish to congratulate him most heartily on his well-merited distinction. For Mr. Talbot is and always has been, a faithful and ardent worker, although handicapped by much physical suffering. To him alone is due the great work of rescuing Carlby church from almost certain ruin, and carrying out its complete restoration, while his devoted work as Rural Dean for the last six years has endeared him to all the clergy of the Deanery.

The annual Rural Deanery Conference was held at Braceborough on June 14th, when the Archdeacon of Lincoln gave an inspiring and notable address to the delegates from the various parishes. Among the large attendance were eleven members of our own Church Council. Among the many helpful suggestions which he made, he urged on all members of Church Councils to co-operate more closely with their parish priest in forwarding the work of the parish, stressing regular worship as one of the most important of all their duties. No Sunday should pass, without their attendance at Divine Worship.

Our church flagstaff, thanks to Mr. Peart, has received a much-needed coat of fresh paint, and its appearance thereby is greatly improved.

The Vicar preaches in Lincoln Cathedral on Sunday, July 23rd, at 10-30 a.m. The Eucharist at 8 o'clock will be celebrated here as usual, but for the later service he will depend on the kindness of someone else. Due notice of this will be given.

The Bishop.—It was a joy to see the Bishop of Lincoln presiding once again over the Diocesan Conference at Lincoln on June 16th, after his long and serious illness. He appeared to be almost in his usual health and spirits, although he told us that he would have to "go slow" for some little time yet.

The next quarterly quota Sunday will be July 16th. We earnestly appeal to all—whether church-goers or not—to contribute on this Sunday, by either giving in church, or sending to the Vicar, to the best of their ability. The church belongs to us all, and all have their responsibilities towards it. It should not be left, as the Archdeacon told us, to the generosity of the few. The minimum asked from this parish is £11/12/4 a year, but we should endeavour to contribute more than that minimum, and so set an example to those parishes who unhappily default in their payments.

Lawn tennis.—For more years than we can remember, the Vicar's lawn has been used for a parish tennis club, and again a club has been formed. We hope for many members, and good season.

The annual choir outing will be arranged towards the end of this month. We hope that many friends, as in past years, will accompany us. Names of those who wish to go should be sent in by July 15th.

Mrs. Matthew Pell.—We much miss Mrs. Pell from her little widow's cottage, and shall be very pleased to see her home again after her illness, which necessitated her going into hospital at Stamford.

County Library. This is once more open for exchange of books on Wednesdays, as formerly **Church collections** during the quarter ended 30th June, £21/9/7.

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The School broke up for the summer holidays on July 27th. It will re-assemble on Tuesday, August 29th.

"Links with the past."—Under the above heading, the following paragraph appeared recently in *The Times* newspaper: "Lieutenant-General William Augustus Johnson, late Lord of the Manor of Witham-on-the-Hill, Lincolnshire, was born in the year 1777, that is, 60 years before Queen Victoria came to the Throne. His youngest daughter is still happily living. Thus these two lives have so far extended over a span of 162 years!"

General Johnson, who succeeded to the Witham Estate on the death of his uncle, the previous Squire, in the year 1814, must have been in every way a remarkable man, and a splendid pattern of the old-time country squire, known far and wide, respected, honoured, and not a little feared. He was a Magistrate, and was deputy-Lieutenant for the Counties of Lincolnshire and Northants, and Sheriff of Lincoln in 1830. For the long space of 32 years he was Chairman of the Kesteven Quarter Sessions. In 1821 he entered Parliament, where he sat, first as Member for Boston, and later for Oldham, in the Liberal interest. The General remained unmarried until his 58th year, when he surprised everyone by wedding the eldest daughter of the Rector of Dowsby, still in her "teens." Thereby hangs a tale, which we may relate on some other occasion! He died in 1863, at the ripe age of 86. His body rests in the Johnson family vault, beneath the chancel of the church. The East window was inserted in his memory. He gave our treble bell, with its extraordinary and often quoted inscription. He also had the remainder of the peal re-cast, and made heavier. His relations with the Vicar, the Rev. Henry Johnson, who was his cousin, were at times somewhat strained, as was occasionally the case between Squire and Parson!

"Looking forward—looking back."—Under this title you will see in this month's Diocesan Leaflet, which is inserted in this magazine, a short article by your Vicar, which was written at the earnest request of the Editor. When asked to write such an article, he pleaded that he was not qualified in any way, living as he did in a quiet backwater far from Lincoln, and out of touch with Diocesan affairs. If he wrote at all, it could only be on matters of purely personal and local interest. However, the Editor replied that those were the very subjects he wanted most! So there was no escape!

The lawn tennis club is this year proving a great success, and has a larger membership than for some years. A tournament among the members has recently aroused considerable interest. An open tournament has been arranged for Saturday, August 5th, in aid of Church funds.

Outing to Skegness.—The Vicar is writing these notes in an atmosphere of unusual quiet, for all his staff and many from the village are off to the seaside. Two buses have taken some 60 souls to Skegness, where they are undoubtedly enjoying this most exceptionally beautiful day. It is strange how fortunate we usually are in having fine weather for our Church outings.

We regret to have to record the death of Mr. Rodgers, late of Toft, who died at Stapleford two or three weeks ago. Many will remember him. We ask Mrs. Rodgers (who is one of our regular readers) to accept our deep sympathy in her great loss.

Late Note.—Since going to press, we have heard with deep sorrow of the death of Mrs. Halland, the wife of the last Vicar. We wish to offer to him our most respectful and heartfelt sympathy. A memoir will appear next month.

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The International situation is—at the time of writing—an anxious one indeed. The month of September is likely to be fraught with the gravest issues. Peace and war hang, as it were, in the balance. But let us remember Who it is Who holds that balance, and can control the destinies of men according to His Divine Will. Why, it may be asked, are we still so apathetic in regard to our prayers and intercessions for peace? Our appeal for members of the "League of Prayer and Service" has faced the passers-by from the church porch for some months now, all must have seen and read it, but few have been the enquiries for cards of prayer. Do we after all really believe in prayer? or that by its power we can move the Hand which rules the world?

Wonderful Thurlby!—The Bank Holiday Church fete at Thurlby resulted in raising no less than £115! The presence of Mrs. Davis as opener, with her daughters, no doubt influenced the attendance, for the good people of Thurlby still have a very warm place in their hearts for Mr. and Mrs. Davis, even though they left the parish over 9 years ago.

Our lawn tennis tournament which had to be postponed for a fortnight owing to the weather, was successfully played off on August 19th. We are most grateful for the many gifts received in connection with it. All the prizes and all the refreshments were given, and the only expense was the purchase of new balls. The net proceeds came to just £4.

Flower Show fund.—Our village Flower Show, once so popular an event here, came definitely to an end in 1923. Mr. Metcalfe, who used to act as Hon. Treasurer, has drawn the Vicar's attention to the fact that a sum of £8/7/5 is still standing to the credit of the Show in the Bank. The question now is, what shall be done with this balance? One suggestion made is to provide a bus shelter at the cross-roads, another, to hand it over to the Butterfield Hospital. Will any of our readers offer their views on the best use which they think should be made of it?

Mrs. Halland, whose death we briefly recorded last month, was buried in Blyburgh churchyard on the 29th of July, beside the grave of her beloved daughter, Irene. The Bishop of Glasgow, Mr. Halland's nephew, took the Committal, and your Vicar read the Lesson. Even before she left Witham over 39 years ago, Mrs. Halland's health prevented her from taking any very active part in outside affairs, and consequently she was obliged to live in quiet retirement, although her deep and kindly interest in all around her never failed up to the end of her long life. It is tragic to think that she did not live to enjoy the charming little home that had been made ready for her and Mr. Halland at Welton, to which she was removed only a month before her death. R.I.P.

Our deep sympathy goes out to Mrs. Gedge in the loss of her only sister, Miss Gertrude Smales, who died here last month. R.I.P.

A parish "Terrier."—A terrier is a list of the property possessed by the Church in any parish, and we have in one of our old registers a copy of such a Terrier drawn up by Dr. William Quarles (the Vicar who founded our widows' charity) in the year 1708. It is a long but extraordinarily interesting document, describing among other things the old Vicarage House, the manner of collecting the tithe, the Easter dues, paid in kind, the church plate, and other kindred matters. The old handwriting is in some places so faded as to be almost illegible. From time to time we hope to give extracts from this old document, if there be space in the Magazine; which is not often the case!

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The Outbreak of War.—In the last issue of the Magazine I wrote that the month of September was likely to be fraught with the very gravest issues. For these we had not long to wait, for on September the 3rd, while we were actually in church, war was declared. Just over 25 years ago we saw the outbreak of the last war. For that we were unprepared, we were taken by surprise, but not to-day. To-day we are ready, we are strong, and we cherish no illusions as to its probable duration, and what we must all steel ourselves to endure, though we know one thing, and that is, how it will end. Of that there is no question, be it long or short.

I have turned up the Magazine for September, 1914. Here are a few extracts from what I wrote then, some of my words written then might equally apply to-day.

"It behoves us all to be prepared for a gigantic and protracted struggle, in which the utmost might of England must be put forth in defence of our very existence. Never has this country fought with a clearer conscience, or for a juster cause, and it behoves us all to do everything that lies in our power, and give the utmost help that we can in this hour of our country's need. We must everyone of us be true patriots."

After mentioning the many ways in which we can help, I added :—"Last but not least we must help with our PRAYERS. There must be a constant stream of intercession to Almighty God to give us the victory. We know our cause is just, therefore we must pray for that cause." And I quoted the Archbishop of Canterbury, who urged that the Holy Eucharist Sunday by Sunday should become the chief solemn act of intercession in every parish throughout the war. For the National relief fund we had a special collection on Sunday, August 16th, the second after the outbreak of war, at which our people gave no less than £5/5/7 ! Such was the spirit of self-sacrifice and readiness to help twenty-five years ago. We shall, I know, show that same readiness to-day. There will be many calls on us all. We must have working parties to supply the needs of the hospitals, and of the men at the front, and the Red Cross Society is to have a "flag-day" on Oct. 11th, on behalf of which we must give the utmost that we can afford, and even more!

The hours of Sunday worship have been altered as follows :—Holy Communion 8-30, and Evensong at 3. I do appeal to you all so to adjust your accustomed times on Sunday that you will attend the latter service as regularly as you did that in the evening. This change is, unfortunately, a matter of absolute necessity.

The Village Hall.—We have already adequately screened the windows, so that the Hall can be used after dark. I hope it will be frequently used, and contribute to the social life of the parish.

The Harvest Thanksgiving will be held on Sunday, October 8th. The Vicar of All Saints, Stamford, who was to have come to us in the evening, is now of course prevented. Generous gifts both in money and kind are again asked for. We must not let the Hospitals down.

The Mothers' Union will meet on Tuesday, October 10th. We want more new members, and old members to re-join. There will be much useful work for all to do.

I have written a further article in the Leaflet. I wonder what you will make of it !

The collections in church during the last quarter amounted to £17/11/6. L.H.C.

Witham-on-the-Hill, Manthorpe, Toft and Lound.

My dear parishioners and other friends,

In the past I have been in the habit for the most part of writing these monthly notes in an impersonal manner, as does the editor of a newspaper, but I now feel that a direct talk to you, just as I should if I came to see you in your home, is the more friendly way of writing, and I feel sure that you will appreciate it, so in future there will be fewer "We's" and more "I's" in these notes!

Our Harvest Thanksgiving offerings have been acknowledged by both the hospitals to which they were sent, and I have received letters of gratitude both from the Stamford Infirmary and from Bourne. The Matron of the latter hospital in particular, when writing to me of the groceries and other gifts which were sent there, says, "Will you please tender my most grateful thanks to your parishioners for their very generous contributions of groceries, fruit and vegetables." These letters and receipts were all posted up on the church notice board inside the porch.

My second article which I wrote for the "Diocesan Leaflet" in September under the title of "Looking forward—Looking back" was crowded out of the last issue, but the Editor tells me that it will be inserted in the November Leaflet, which is supplied with this Magazine, if you care to turn to it.

The church-yard.—I have long been ashamed of the neglected condition of the north side of our church-yard, overgrown as it was with ivy, elder trees and rubbish, with quantities of old tins, bottles and junk of all sorts, thrown under the trees and bushes. So we have made a great clearance of it all, no small effort in so unusually large a church-yard as ours. The trees have been lopped and trimmed, cleared of ivy and elder bushes, the walls stripped of ivy, and the paths weeded. Some of the grave stones were so completely hidden by rank growth as to be entirely invisible and lost. I hope you will go and see for yourselves what has been done, and particularly mark the north side of the chancel, where high unclimbable railings once enclosed a sort of forest ungle! Now all is order and tidiness, and so long as I am here, I hope to keep it so.

Mr. Pochin's grave.—This grave, near the north door, is in my opinion the most satisfying of any in the church-yard. With its beautifully proportioned little cross, inscribed with the simple prayer "Jesu mercy," and its handsome wrought iron railings, it is the grave of Mr. Ashby Pochin, the second son of Mr. William Ann Pochin, the one-time Lord of the Manor of Toft. He died from a fall in the hunting field nearly 60 years ago. His home was the large house at Toft, built for him by his father, and now owned by Mr. Wallis. In his memory his widow gave the great stained glass window in the Lady Chapel, one of the most lovely adornments which our beautiful church possesses. Later, she married as her second husband, the Vicar of Witham, the Rev. W. N. Leeson. Mrs. Leeson is still living, and her daughter tells me that she is now in her 94th year! Though of course I never knew Mr. Ashby Pochin, I well remember his father, who used to ride over from Edmondthorpe to attend Church Estate Trustee Meetings, when I first came here.

Quota Sunday.—This will be on Sunday, November 5th. In order to meet our obligations for the year we shall need just £3. I hope that you will therefore be generous in your gifts on this Sunday.

The War.—I have deliberately refrained from alluding to the War in this issue. Events move so fast that it is impossible to say what may happen by the time this is in print. But I do most earnestly ask you all to be constant and faithful in your prayers for peace, Sunday by Sunday.

Armistice Sunday, November 12th. There will be special services of remembrance and dedication, with offerings for Lord Haig's fund.

Red Cross flag day.—Miss Angela Burges most kindly undertook this collection in the village. The proceeds amounted to £1/15/3.

L. H. C.

Witham-on-the-Hill, Manthorpe, Toft and Lound.

Christmas.—Sunrise on Christmas Day is at 8.7 a.m. Our earliest service therefore will be at 8, the next at 9, and the Parish Eucharist at 11. We shall decorate the church during the previous week. Please help, all who can. Above all days, Christmas is the Festival when we need most to beautify the House of God. Our offerings will again be given to the Waifs' and Strays' Society, whose needs this year are greater than ever before.

The Bus Shelter.—On November 20th I received the consent of the County Council to erect this shelter, and the very next day it was up! I was anxious to lose no time in getting it erected, with the near approach of wintry conditions. So it was all made ready beforehand for erection, and I decided to risk the possibility of a refusal! I was obliged, however, to sign an undertaking to remove it within a month, if, later on, the Council considered it to be in the way, that is, obstructing the vision of motor traffic. But as this is not the case, I think and hope that it will be allowed to remain where it is. The shelter faces due south, and will get the maximum of sunshine. The residents of Witham and Manthorpe will now be able to wait for their buses in comfort.

And now, as to the cost. The estimate was £16/5/0, and towards this, I have the old Flower Show Committee's balance of £8/7/5, more than half. The remainder will, I am sure, be raised without difficulty. There must be many who will help with subscriptions to so useful and indeed necessary an object, and any remaining deficit can be wiped out by a social gathering.

Motor Service.—I have been in correspondence on the subject of altering the morning and evening "School" bus, which was previously so great a convenience to many, especially the scholars attending our School, and those who went to Stamford. But I have failed to get it restored. The reason given by the proprietor is that he has to convey workmen to Stamford, and must leave Bourne by 7-45, and that he has obtained the consent of the Traffic Commissioners to cancel the journey up to Witham, on the ground of the "very steep hill" which had to be climbed in low gear, and descended only by braking! He also complained that he was obliged to turn his buses "on private property"! So it seems likely that the daily service to Witham is definitely ended, and that both the children and others formerly patronizing this bus will have to rely on "Shanks's mare." This seems to be our penalty for the otherwise delightful privilege of living on a hill!

Holly berries for Christmas.—When clearing the churchyard recently, I purposely spared one large holly tree which was covered with berries. It is just outside the north door. I shall be glad if anyone, who would like sprigs of berried holly for their homes, will go and help themselves. When Christmas is over, it will be trimmed up like the other trees.

Generous response to appeals.—Last month I ventured to ask for the large sum of £3 on the Quota Sunday, in order to discharge fully our obligations to Lincoln. In response, the collections on that Sunday came to no less than £3/9/2, so that we were able to send over 9/- beyond our statutory quota. I am very grateful. Then the recent Red Cross flag day raised £3/0/2. Later, the sales of poppies in the parish on Armistice Day brought in the splendid total of £7/1/8, while the church collection of £1/7/9 on Armistice Sunday brought it up to £8/9/5, thus exceeding last year's effort by £2/12/10.

Village Hall socials and the weekly Vicarage whist drives have all proved extremely popular. In each case these were in aid of the Red Cross.

Confirmation.—I am hoping to prepare candidates for Confirmation early in the new year, and shall be glad to have the names of those who seek Confirmation. I trust they will be many.

L. H. C.