

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

**1940.**—My very earnest good wishes to you all for the New Year, whatever it may have in store for us. Please God, it may bring peace to a world distracted by strife and agony. What better words of wisdom can we take as our guide at the opening of the year than those quoted to us by our King in his Christmas broadcast message? "I said to the man who stood at the Gate of the Year, 'Give me a light, that I may tread safely into the Unknown.' And he replied, 'Go out into the darkness, and put your hand into the Hand of God. That shall be to you better than light.' " And His Majesty ended with these words:—"May that Almighty Hand guide and uphold us all."

**Almanacks.**—I have chosen this year a somewhat different type of almanack, which I fancy may appeal to you by its quite beautiful little pictures, first, the welcome home, secondly, "Jack" on leave as he lends a hand to his busy wife, and lastly, the ploughman saying his mid-day prayer as he hears the bell from the distant village church. I ask all our Magazine readers to accept a copy with my best wishes.

**Witham's first Parish Magazine.**—An old parishioner has given me a copy of the first magazine to be published here. It is dated January 1887, and she has thus preserved it for 53 years! The names of the churchwardens are given as Mr. Dixon and Mr. Edward Lloyd; sidesman, Mr. Atter; clerk and sexton, Mr. S. Smith. Among the choirmen are N. Moxon and S. Newham. Among the other names of choir and ringers, are many whom none will remember. There were 14 baptisms during 1886, and one of these is that of George Thomas Pell, son of David and Elizabeth Ann Pell, the only one who still resides in the parish.

**Mr. Halland,** the Vicar, writes some interesting notes. Among other things that he says, he expresses a hope that all parishioners will take in a copy of their own, instead of borrowing their neighbour's! and adds "therefore in this matter also, 'neither a borrower nor a lender be.' " Very good advice, which, I am grateful to say, all our subscribers still follow.

**Christmas at the church.**—Truly were the prophet's words fulfilled, "the fir tree and the pine tree and the box together, to beautify the place of My Sanctuary." For our lovely old church was literally embowered in greenery, at the West a Christmas tree, and at the East the Christmas Crib, to focus our thoughts on Bethlehem. These adjuncts are now to be seen in almost every Cathedral, and in thousands of parish churches up and down the country, and they are in no sense peculiar to Witham. Our collections on Christmas Day, amounting to £2/17/7, were given to the Waifs' and Strays' Society. These, I regret to say, show a drop of a pound on last year.

**The altered hours** of our Christmas Day celebrations somewhat affected the attendance. The Archbishop of Canterbury had secured the consent of the authorities to the lighting of churches on Christmas Day from 6 a.m., but I was informed of this too late to change our already advertised times. The Mid-night Mass, a well-loved feature in thousands of churches, was of necessity cancelled, except where total screening of light was possible.

**The Bus shelter.**—I hear that subscriptions are coming in, but not yet to the extent that we need. We still require about £3 more to pay for this. I am afraid that a cycle shelter in addition will at present be out of the question. I am insuring the shelter, which I consider a wise precaution.

**The Christmas fare**, so liberally and kindly given to the soldiers, stationed "somewhere in England," has been most gratefully appreciated. The recipients wish to thank all the kind donors.

**Repairs.**—Considerable repair work was done to the church last month. So large a building needs periodical attention.

**Collections** for the last quarter, £24/0/8. Total church collections throughout the year, £81/18/0, but omitting the offerings on Sunday 31st. L. H. C.

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

**The Parish Magazine.**—I should like to thank all our subscribers for supporting the magazine so extremely well. Our circulation in January was 80 copies, which I consider quite wonderful for so small a parish as this. This entitles me to about 45 lines of the space available for local notes.

**The 'Bus Shelter** has soon been paid for. £4 was raised by two socials, and another £4 has been given in subscriptions, while the remaining cost was covered by the old Flower Show balance. I feel sure that many will appreciate it, particularly those who live in Witham and Manthorpe. Our example might well be followed by other villages which are off a 'bus route, as was recently pointed out in the local press. The 'bus proprietor has kindly instructed his drivers to halt the South-going 'buses at a point where they can be seen by passengers seated in the Shelter.

**Lent.**—In a week's time from the beginning of this month we shall have entered upon this solemn season. Lent of course depends upon Easter, and as this year Easter Day happens to come almost as early as it is possible for it to be, Lent is therefore equally early. I wonder how many of us ever study those complicated Tables at the beginning of the Prayer Book which tell us how to find the date of Easter. They have always greatly interested me. Those Tables reveal to us the following astonishing facts, namely, that the last time that Easter Day fell upon March 24th, (as it does this year), was no less than 141 years ago, i.e. in the year 1799; and that Easter will not fall again on March 24th until the year 2199, or in other words for two hundred and fifty nine years!

**Services during Lent.**—It is a matter for very great regret that the lighting restrictions must perforce cancel our usual Wednesday evening services, which have been a noticeable feature during many previous years. These were usually well-attended, and greatly appreciated. I suggest that we make up for this deprivation by increased regularity in our attendance on the *Sundays* in Lent, and, where possible, on the week-day morning intercession services. Then we must not allow the Bishop's Appeal fund to suffer by the loss of our weekly Wednesday offerings. So will you ask me for a collecting box to take home, and put your Lent self-denial gifts into it week by week?

**The weekly Vicarage whist drives** on Wednesdays will soon close down until after Easter. Meanwhile, not only have they given a great deal of enjoyment, but have been the means of raising some £7. £6 of this has been allotted to the working party at the Hall for the purchase of materials, and £1 to the soldiers' Christmas gifts. The expenses of these little drives have been almost nil, as all has been given.

**The Parish Quota.**—The first of our quarterly Quota Sundays was on January 21st, unfortunately one of the most bitter and arctic days of this long wintry spell of weather. Nevertheless we collected £2/16/9. The next will be (D.V.) on April 14th, when I hope that we may do still better. We need more regular givers.

**Our Foreign Mission Sunday** comes on February 18th. Please give liberally to this great cause, so near to the heart of our Blessed Lord. Missionary boxes should be sent in on or before this date.

**The Hall Work Party.**—This weekly meeting has completed no less than 203 articles up to date. They consist of 57 helmets, 51 scarves, 15 pairs of mittens, 7 pairs of socks, 8 Hospital garments and 57 Dorothy bags.

**Departures.**—Many among us will miss Mr. Swann and his family, who by the time this is in print, will have left for their new home in Hertfordshire. Few new-comers to the Village have so quickly identified themselves with the social life and well-being of the place as they have, and we shall miss their kind and friendly help very much. The good wishes of many of us will go with them.

**Marriage** (in London).—John F. Samuels and Winifred Mary Peart.

**The Rev. C. W. E. Cleaver**, who died on January 21st, was no stranger to Witham, while to me he was an intimate friend of many years' standing. More than once, since his retirement, I visited him in his Devonshire home, where I would find him always busy helping others, as was his wont. You will remember how, just about a year ago, he made the long journey here, in order to take our services for two Sundays, while I was in Hospital. For a man long past his three-score years and ten, and in failing health, that was a kindness which few would have undertaken, still less in winter. But it was typical of him. I have written a brief memoir of Mr. Cleaver in the Careby notes this month. R. I. P.

L. H. C.

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

**Easter Day.**—Holy Communion will be celebrated at 7, 8 and 11 o'clock, with Evensong at p.m. The very early date of Easter, combined with the unusually late Spring, may render the due decoration of the church somewhat difficult. Gifts of flowers will therefore be specially acceptable.

**My note** last month, on the extraordinary fact that Easter Day falls on March 24th only once the space of some 400 years, has been duly commented on in the Press. It sounds incredible, but it is true! I wonder that so few other writers noted this most interesting fact. Probably, however, long before the year 2199, when according to the rule, it should so fall again, we shall have a fixed date for Easter. There is a widespread demand for it, though I think unfortunately. For Easter is governed by the Paschal moon, and is of Divine institution. Some years ago, a fixed Easter "Bill was introduced into Parliament, but obviously such a Bill cannot be passed to Law without the consent of the Church, and this so far has been withheld on religious grounds.

**The annual Church Meeting** will (D.V.) be held again in Easter week, on Wednesday, March 27th, in the Village Hall, at 6-30 p.m. I wish earnestly to point out the great importance this meeting to all who are in any way interested in the religious life of the Parish, and that of course, ought to include everybody. At this meeting you have the right and privilege to elect your Church Council, your Wardens, your Sidesmen, your representatives, and to make your voice heard with regard to any complaints or shortcomings there may be. Don't hesitate to criticise the Vicar, he will welcome your criticism. At least, let us all do what we can to promote the Glory of God, and the edification of His Church.

**Finance** will also be dealt with at this meeting. You will hear all about our offerings and funds, and how they are spent. I am pleased to say that we ended last year with a good and substantial balance in hand. Come and decide how best it can be used.

**S.P.G. Sunday.**—Once again the arctic weather and almost impassable roads kept many people from church on this annual day of prayer and offering for the work of Foreign Missions. Nevertheless, £2/7/10 was given in the collections, and the Missionary boxes yielded another £2/6/7, so we were able to send up £4/14/5, not far short of last year. I hope to get a request from more people for a Missionary box, it should be a prominent feature in every Christian home.

**Miss Angela Burges.**—It is a great privilege and pleasure to me to be permitted to offer to Miss Burges on behalf of the parish, our very hearty congratulations on her approaching marriage with Mr. A. J. Dearden. She has grown up among us from her childhood, and has endeared herself to all. That the future may hold for her many years of health and happiness will be the wish of her many friends, near or far.

**Clerical gathering.**—On Monday, February 26th, the clergy of the Deanery and others met here. The Holy Eucharist at 11-15 began the proceedings. Afterwards at the Vicarage the Vicar of All Saints', Stamford, opened a most interesting discussion. Twelve clergy were present.

**Forty years at Witham.**—On April 3rd, 1900, I moved into the Vicarage here, which has been my home ever since. Not many in the parish have lived in one house so long. In those forty years much has happened, though on the whole they have been years of wonderful blessing and happiness, for which I never cease to thank God. I have now used up all my space, so in next month's issue I shall be writing more fully of my life and experience during the long time that God has spared me to minister here.

L.H.C.

**Baptism.**—February 25th, Yvonne Margaret, daughter of Thomas and Dorothy Russell.

**Burial.**—February 28th, Louisa Weldon, aged 75 years.

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

**My dear friends,**—I wrote in my notes last month, that I should have more to say to you this month regarding my forty years here. Indeed I could easily write a book about all that has happened in the parish during my long incumbency! I am afraid I shall have to refer to myself more than I generally care to, but the circumstances are very exceptional. Out of the 560 clergy in this Diocese there are now only three who have ministered in one parish longer than I have. These are, the beloved Rector of Lea, near Gainsborough, Canon Fookes, who has been there for 46 years, the Vicar of Keelby, 44 years, and the Rector of Holton, near Wragby, 49 years.

**I have often been asked** why I have stayed here so long, and some have thought that it was because no offers of another sphere of work had been made to me. This however was by no means the case, but as each offer came, I felt that my work here was not done. For one thing I was anxious to get this benefice made unsaleable, and placed in safe and responsible hands, which have now happily secured. It is, as you probably know, by no means a "rich" living, but it has been sufficient for my needs, and that was enough. I have never had any desire for "a better ving," as the saying goes.

**One advantage** of a long incumbency is, as I pointed out in a recent article in the Diocesan Leaflet, that the parish priest gets to love his church enough to see what further enrichments it may need, and then to see them carried out. The money spent on these during my incumbency represents some two or three thousand pounds. I have seen the church literally transformed within. The oak pews, screen, Rood, stained windows and other beautiful adjuncts, have been added one by one, in each case under the guidance of an architect of repute. It is no wonder, having done so much for it, that I love this church as I do, and would not now willingly exchange it for any other.

**With regard to my parishioners,** I feel that on the whole our relations one with another have been more than usually happy. Alas! I have seen in certain parishes friction and strife between priest and people, through ill-advised action, or perhaps even a thoughtless word, which has done irreparable harm. I do not feel that this can be said of us here. My aim has ever been to be the friend of all, and the enemy of none. Had it been otherwise, I could not have stayed here so long. I have ever tried to follow the Apostle's advice, "*if it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.*" My guiding principle has always been, never knowingly to give offence, nor, what is still harder perhaps, never to take offence. Now and again, misunderstandings have unfortunately occurred, which caused me much grief and sorrow at the time, but I have always looked on them as misunderstandings in the true sense of that word, and they have never made any difference to my friendships.

**In a future issue** I hope to refer more fully to different periods in my long ministry, first, my early years here, then the time when Mr. W. Fenwick was our good Squire, then the war years, and then the great changes which followed.

Your affectionate Vicar, L. H. COOLEY.

**The Finland Fund.**—The alms on Palm Sunday were devoted to this most deserving fund, and reached the very satisfactory sum of £2/19/8.

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

**St. George and the War.**—I am writing this on the Feast of St. George, England's Patron Saint; somewhat hurriedly, as the printers are awaiting my written notes. We have just had our Sung Eucharist, to commemorate the great day, while the banner of St. George the Martyr is flying overhead on our flag-staff. Please God it may mark, as another St. George's Day once did, a signal triumph for our arms in this cruel war. *The Times* newspaper of to-day writes: "St. George may well look down on us from Paradise, and rejoice to see that Englishmen are still ready to fight and conquer dragons, however noisome the modern breed may be." Let Sir Roger Keyes' signal at Zeebrugge 22 years ago, be still our battle-cry, "St. George for England."

**In this month of May** come two great Holy Days, Ascension Day, on May 2nd, and Whitsun Day on the 12th. The latter Festival is to be kept this year throughout the country as a special time of intercession for Victory and Peace. Will you all take your part in this great act of intercession? You know *where* prayer is most availing, it is at the Altar, in that intercession which Christ Himself has commanded.

**A beautiful wedding.**—It is not often that our Parish church is the scene of a marriage ceremony so delightful as that on April 12th, when Miss Angela Burges and Mr. Arthur John Dearden were married. The church was crowded with well-wishers, the decorations were profuse and lovely, the music was charming, and to crown it all, the sun shone out brilliantly. This I trust may prove a happy augury for our two young friends, married as they were so hurriedly, owing to War conditions, but married under the blessing of God, and with the most heartfelt good wishes of us all.

**Mrs. Stubley** marked the occasion last month of her silver wedding by entertaining the members of the Mothers' Union to tea, following a service in church. All of us are deeply grateful to Mrs. Stubley for the part that she has played in keeping together our little branch in this parish. In spite of much discouragement and even some opposition, she has never lost heart, but has bravely and loyally carried on. It passes my understanding to think that there can be any who would belittle this great movement, world-wide in its scope, and of such inestimable benefit to the cause of religion. As was recently said by one Bishop, "the Mothers' Union has saved Christianity in many a parish from practical extinction." So I ask you to give it all the support and encouragement that it rightly deserves. If you have not already done so, join it, as a member or as an associate, and a rich blessing will surely be yours.

**Presentation.**—At the close of the meeting above referred to, Mrs. Stubley was presented by the members with a silver candlestick mounted on a marble base, to mark their appreciation of all that she has done for the branch. Mrs. Stubley, who was taken entirely by surprise, expressed her deep gratitude to all the subscribers.

**The annual Church Meeting** took place in Easter week. All the outgoing Church officials were re-elected in office. The financial statement showed the year's income to be £109/10/6, with a balance in hand of £14/16/6.

**The Church collections** for the first 4 months of this year total £29/16/5.

**The Vicar's 40 years' incumbency.**—The promised notes about my early years at Witham must stand over until next month, as no more space is available.

**Baptism.**—31st March. Jillian Sylvia, daughter of John Robert and Constance Millicent Veness Grummitt.

**Marriage.**—12th April. Arthur John Dearden and Angela Burges.

**Burial.**—16th April. Mary Ann Cole, aged 78 years.

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

**The War.**—All lesser interests sink into insignificance, all merely local and parish affairs seem trivial today, in view of the desperate struggle in which this country is engaged with its ruthless and evil enemy. As I write these notes on March 24th (significantly it is Empire Eay), the outlook is dark and menacing. We and our allies are fighting what may well become the greatest battle in history, and on the issue of this gigantic conflict may well depend the destinies of the world. But one thing is certain. By the help of Almighty God, we shall ultimately prevail. Spiritual forces are mightier than mere material forces. God is ever on the side of the right, but we must see to it that we are on the side of God. Once again, as your parish priest, I ask you to be more instant in prayer. "Prayer moves the Hand which rules the world," so it has been wisely said. I therefore call you all once more to constant and fervent prayer. Put all else on one side, and take your places again in the House of God Sunday by Sunday to call down the Divine Blessing.

**A recovery** of extreme archæological interest to our church has been made. Two painted panels, clearly forming part of the ancient Rood Screen, were recently discovered at Lincoln. A label fixed to them states that they were given by the Rev. W. H. Johnson to Archdeacon Kaye, of Lincoln, from Witham-on-the-Hill church. Mr. Johnson was Vicar here from 1835 to 1877, and it was during his incumbency that the church was restored. These panels had apparently been stowed away, and found in some hidden corner by the Archdeacon, at his Visitation, who asked to have them as curios. The present Subdean of Lincoln got to know of them, and at once informed me. Without delay I went to Lincoln and brought them back. I am now having them restored and framed, when they will return to the church to which they rightfully belong. Each measures some three feet six inches by two feet. The figures upon them represent two Deacons, St. Stephen and St. Laurence. The drawing and colouring was probably done locally. These panels are between five and six hundred years old.

**Anniversaries in June.**—First and foremost comes the approaching DIAMOND WEDDING of our old friends Mr. and Mrs. Richard Pick, on June 8th. Sixty years ago they were married in Sutterton church, near Boston, and if ever a marriage has been a serene and happy one, it has been theirs. We shall all, I know, affectionately wish them every blessing and happiness on this wonderful anniversary, and pray that the Peace of God may rest on them in their eventide of life. Mrs. Pick has spent her life in good works in whatever parish they have lived, and here has helped in Church affairs far more than she would like us to say. It is a joy to see her almost every Sunday in her place in church, and particularly at the early service, when many, not half her age, are still in bed! GOLDEN WEDDING.—Mr. and Mrs. Grant, now residing at Toft, will keep their golden wedding on June 3rd. Again in their case, we would offer our very hearty and sincere good wishes, and blessing for the future. One more June anniversary I may perhaps add, it will interest quite a number. It is my own 72nd birthday on the Festival of S. John the Baptist (June 24th). For my happy and greatly blessed life here, I can never give sufficient thanks to God.

**The lawn tennis club** has made a good start. More members will be welcome. L.H.C.

**Baptisms.**—May 12th. Michael John Walter, and Pamela Margaret, son and daughter of Walter Bernard and Margaret Day.

19th. Enid Irene, daughter of Leslie and Annie Stimson.

**Marriage.**—May 18th. Cyril Keith Sandall and Evelyn Annis.

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

My dear friends,—In these grave and anxious times, the words “thou knowest not what a day may bring forth,” are more than ever true. Before these written words of mine are in print, it is quite possible that we may be confronted with new and unforeseen difficulties and trials. And to meet them bravely we shall need great courage, endurance and steadfastness. It will help us in the coming days, if we never allow ourselves to forget that we *must* rely upon the help and protection of God, and for that we must ever *ask* Him. That means that we must have more faith. Will all of you who read these words, say the Lord’s Prayer *without fail* every day, and say the petition “Thy Will be done,” with particular earnestness. It is indeed God’s Will that in this war against evil, right shall prevail. In the end, God’s Will *does* get done, but by our prayers we can hasten that day of victory. Remember, “It all depends on you, and you depend on God.”

**Mr. and Mrs. Payne** are now settled in their new home at Paignton, Devon, and I have heard from them to say that they are happy and comfortable. But they will be greatly missed at Manthorpe, where their unbounded kindness endeared them to all their neighbours. They leave behind them a fragrant memory of friendliness, cheerfulness, and readiness to help in trouble. We would all wish them “God speed” in their new and distant home.

**The bells.**—We greatly miss the sound of the church bells, and particularly the peals which were always rung (not merely chimed) on Sunday mornings and evenings. Their silence however has made no difference to our worshippers, but it cannot but influence those who still alas! “forsake the assembling of themselves together” in the House of God. The sound of the bells do remind them that others are praying, and that they may join in spirit with those prayers if they will.

**The old panels** from the Rood Screen, the recovery of which we described last month, are now mounted on the south wall of the church, near the font. They will repay careful study. Each of the two figures carries the emblems of his martyrdom. St. Stephen holds the stones, and St. Laurence the grid-iron. Each is robed in amice, alb and tunicle, the proper vestments of a deacon, and both carry a book of the Gospels, with which every deacon is always presented at his ordination to this very day, indicating that it is his duty to read the Holy Gospel at the Eucharist.

**Liberality.**—I should like to bear testimony to the increased generosity of many of the parishioners in this time of trouble. It is an encouraging sign. On the recent Intercession Sunday £2/11/4 was given in the church collections, while the flag day which followed it raised £3/11/0 more. Then came the Alexandra rose day (figures not yet available). At the same time our ordinary collections in church have not only not diminished, but have substantially increased. On no occasion since the beginning of May have they been less than £1/10/0 each Sunday. Besides all this there are our War-Savings groups, which have met with quite phenomenal success.

**The School.**—The Managers have selected a new Head teacher to take over the School when Mr. Wells leaves us at the end of the summer term. Miss Chambers will come to us with very high recommendations, and I hope that she may receive a hearty welcome from us all. Her widowed mother will live with her in the School house.

L. H. C.

**Baptism.**—22nd June. John Lionel, son of Lionel and Margaret Stella Atkinson (at St. John’s church, Spalding).

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

**I am writing** my notes for the parish Magazine, as is my rule, a week before the end of the month. And last evening (July 22nd) I listened to the inspiring and earnest words of the Foreign Secretary, who told us plainly that we are fighting a crusade against Antichrist. Lord Halifax is a man of deep spiritual convictions, and it is good to hear a Cabinet Minister tell the Nation that there is one thing above all that we must do, soldiers, sailors, airmen, and civilians, men, women and children all together, and that is that we must *pray*. He quoted what was done in a Yorkshire village, in which the people agreed to form a "sixth column" in which they pledged themselves to give a few minutes each day in God's House to prayer. That is his own custom. Every single day in this busy man's life is begun by his presence at the Blessed Sacrament in church. And in urging us to more faithful prayer, the Foreign Secretary concluded with these inspiring words, "Thus shall we go forward, strengthened by the faith through which, by God's help, as we try to "do His service, we shall prevail."

**The right spirit.**—I have just had a letter from an old lady, who lives in a "prohibited" area, (and a fairly "hot" one too!) She had been urged to join her two brothers in Canada, and this is what she writes: "Can you jolly well see me? Not I. I *far* prefer to stay here and see it "out. It is full of thrills, in spite of the troubles ahead, but we are so absolutely sure of our cause, "and utterly certain as to the end."

**The L.D.V's.**—The men who make up this new Force, now to be known as the "Home Guard," now number over a million and a quarter throughout the country. May I offer a word of hearty congratulation to all those who have joined our local unit? It shows a splendid spirit of patriotism and keenness. All honour to them. But for old age and failing powers, I should probably have been among them myself.

**Thirty-five years ago.**—Once again, I find that space allows me to record briefly some events culled from the Magazine of those far-off days.

- (1) I find a report of the marriage on April 25th, 1905, of Miss L. K. Knipe with Mr. Frank Harris, with mention of her devoted help week by week, in providing and arranging the altar flowers in church, and of how greatly her loss will be felt.
- (2) Our first cottage garden Show was held on Aug. 2nd in the same year. The Hall grounds were brilliantly illuminated in the evening. We were however too lavish in our expenditure, for the deficit amounted to more than £20! But Mr. Walter Fenwick, with his usual generosity defrayed this. One of our visitors on this occasion was the late Vicar, the Rev. J. T. Halland.
- (3) The choir went to Yarmouth on July 20th, 1905, for their annual outing. Mr. Thos. Pick took the party to and from Bourne Station in a waggon!
- (4) All the school children, to the number of over 70, had a Treat in the Vicarage garden on Aug. 16th, 1905. Today alas! there are less than half that number in our school.
- (5) One of Mr. Fenwick's many gifts to the church is recorded in the July Magazine of 1905. This was the pair of massive candlesticks, now standing by the font.

**Our school** breaks up for the summer holidays on August 31st. As at present arranged, it will re-open on Monday, September 9th, when Miss Chambers will commence her duties as Head mistress. We would like to wish Mr. Wells, who has been "supply" teacher here for twenty months, God-speed in his future work.

**The altar flowers.**—The tasteful and beautiful arrangement of these week by week, calls for a word of grateful acknowledgment. It is a real labour of love, and the kind friends who do it and who never fail us, are indeed to be thanked.

**Lord Halifax's speech.**—Copies of this speech (referred to above) will be distributed with this Magazine. Please read it carefully.

L.H.C.

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

**A year of War.**—Just twelve months ago, I wrote an article for the *Diocesan Leaflet*, entitled "Looking Forward." It was to be on the subject of the probable future of the country village. This is an extract from it: "My task is rendered the harder by the outbreak of War, a 'war likely to be prolonged and bitter, the far-reaching effects of which may well alter our whole 'outlook. Probably it will mark the end of an age, and the beginning of a new one, in which we 'shall be confronted with totally changed conditions.'" These words have alas! proved only too true, and still the end is not yet. It may be that many further trials and dangers await our beloved country, before final victory is achieved. But of that final victory we can have no doubt, if we put our whole trust in the help of God.

**National day of prayer.**—Our King has again asked his people to keep Sunday, Sept. 8th, as a day of intercession throughout the Empire, being the first Sunday after the anniversary of the outbreak of War. Let no one fail to keep it. Our Services will be at the usual hours, and copies of the special prayers will be provided in church. I hope that every parishioner will attend without fail one or other of the Services on this great day.

**Thanksgiving for Harvest.**—This has been arranged for Thursday, September 12th, and the following Sunday. Evensong on the Thursday will be at 6-30, when the Rev. F. D. N. Wynne, Vicar of All Saints', Stamford, will preach. Our thank-offerings will be given to the Hospitals as in former years. Please also bring some gifts in kind and fill the tables which will be placed in the church for this purpose. In these days of rationing some of our usual gifts will be impossible, but there are still many articles which we can give, and for which the hospital will be deeply grateful.

**Evensong. Change of hour.**—When October comes, we shall have to go back to 3 o'clock for our Sunday evening service. The Archdeacon has expressed a hope that church windows may be sufficiently screened to allow the churches to be used after dark. With our numerous and unusually large windows however, it is not possible to darken our church sufficiently to comply with the rigid requirements now needed. During the last war we managed to do this, but the total black-out which is now necessary was not then insisted on.

**An old stone.**—When digging a grave recently, a stone was dug up bearing the date 1636. This is by far the oldest grave stone that exists in the churchyard. It has been fixed in a position near the porch. It bears no name or mark beyond the year.

**The Alexandra Rose day collections,** which were inadvertently omitted last month, amounted to £2/19/0. This was made up as follows:—Witham, 2/6/11; Manthorpe 4/-; Toft and Lound, 8/1.

**War savings success.**—The Witham village group has to date (Aug. 24th), reached no less a sum than £134/13/0, while the school group stands at £8/12/0. The subscribers in Witham number about 50. This is wonderful result.

**Obituary.**—Mr. Walter Potter, who for many years had been a great sufferer, died at Toft on Aug. 16th. A devout and life-long churchman, he keenly felt his inability to get to church in recent years, although he managed to come last Christmas Day. I should like to express to his widow and son the deep sympathy of all in the parish who knew him. R.I.P.

**Church collections** for the past 3 months: June £8/8/6; July £7/13/6; Aug. £6/17/5.

**On active Service.**—I am compiling a list of all who are on active service in the parish, so that I may remember them by name at the Altar at every Eucharist. The names I have are: John Peart, Arthur Stubley, Henry D. M. Crichton-Maitland, Ernest Arthur Metherringham, George Harold Pell, David Burges, Cyril Keith Sandall. L. H. C.

**Marriage.**—3rd August. Harold Robson and Ethel Margery Day.

**Burial.**—August 20th. Walter Henry George Potter, aged 69 years.

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

**Evensong on Sunday** will once again be at 3 o'clock instead of 6 p.m. I am well aware that some of our regular congregation find this hour less convenient, but I am sure that they will again make a special endeavour to be present in the afternoon, as they did last year. Then it had very little effect on our numbers. "Where there is a will there is a way."

**On Sunday, Oct. 13th**, I shall be going to Lincoln to preach. This is one of my statutory duties as a Prebendary of our Cathedral church. In my absence, two old friends have, with their usual kindness, promised to fill my place here. Mr. Smith, the Rector of Careby, will take the morning service at 11 o'clock, and Canon Wilgress, of Stamford, that in the afternoon, at 3.

**Quota Sunday.**—The last of the four Sundays in the year, on which our offerings are asked for the Parish quota, will be Sunday, Oct. 6th. The previous three Sundays have already resulted in raising £9/10/5, a very satisfactory sum. But please give once again with the same liberality, so that we may substantially exceed our quota. This we have done for some years, and have thus helped, even in small measure, to make good the loss to the Diocese, by those few parishes which unhappily default.

**Our Harvest Thanksgiving services** were exceptionally well attended this year. Our collections for the Hospitals came to no less than £6/11/6, which is the largest amount given since 1933, and exactly double that of last year. As for the gifts in kind, they were on a really generous scale. I counted no fewer than 80 different commodities on the grocery table alone. The other table (for fruit and vegetables) was equally loaded. If space permitted I should have liked to quote the letters of grateful thanks which I have received both from the Stamford Infirmary, and the Butterfield Hospital, but you may read them for yourselves on the notice board in the porch. It was a great pleasure to listen to the inspiring sermons given to us by the Vicar of All Saints', Stamford, and our old friend Mr. Peacock. I am deeply grateful to them both. It is a good thing to hear from time to time a fresh voice in the church, while for me it is the only opportunity that I ever get of listening to a sermon by another priest.

**On the Sunday of National Intercession**, September 8th, when our King summoned us all to prayer, we gave our Collections to the Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund, as a small token of our gratitude for the amazing deeds of heroism performed by our magnificent airmen. It amounted to £3/10/1.

**Last evening** (Sept. 23rd) I was listening, as all the Empire was, to the King's broadcast message, and heard him tell us to put our trust in God, *as he did himself*. It is good to know of our King's sincere and humble faith in God's Providence, and of the splendid example of devotion which he sets to all his subjects. Much sympathy will go out to the King and Queen, for the destruction of their private chapel at Buckingham Palace, in which their invariable custom was to attend service every day, when in residence in London.

**The W.V.S. Spitfire Fund.**—Mrs. Burges who recently made a house-to-house collection in Witham village for this Fund, raised over £7.

**The clergy of the Rural Deanery** met here in Chapter on September 18th. The "Chapter Mass" was sung in church at 11-15, previous to the meeting at the Vicarage, which followed.

**In Memoriam, Ruth Stubbley.**—The tragic death of this dear child has shocked us all, and our most heartfelt sympathy will go out to her stricken and bereaved parents. Ruth was universally beloved. Her happy and warm-hearted character endeared her to all who knew her. In her younger days she attended our school, and more recently became a member of Miss Bird's girl guides. A tribute to her memory was paid by the Vicar in school on the day of her funeral, and all stood in silence afterwards as we commended her dearly-loved soul to God. R. I. P.

L. H. C.

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

**Notes for November.** **Principal Holy Days** in the month. 1st, All Saints' Day; 2nd, the commemoration of All Souls; 30th, St. Andrew, the Patron of our church.

**Poppy Day** on the 11th. Please give generously.

**Confirmation** in Bourne Abbey church, on Wednesday the 13th, at 3 p.m.

**Whist drive and dance** in the Village Hall, on the 22nd, in aid of the Nursing Association

**Every Wednesday**, a whist drive at the Vicarage, at 7 p.m. Proceeds for the Comforts fund. Owing to limited space, notice from those who propose to come is requested.

**A sad leave-taking.**—After having made Witham their home for nearly twelve years, Mr. and Mrs. Burges will be leaving us this month to reside at Wellbourn, where they have acquired the beautiful old Manor House there for their future home. I know that I am voicing the feelings of us all in saying with what profound regret we shall take leave of them, and how greatly they will be missed from our little village, where they have endeared themselves to the villagers by innumerable acts of kindness and friendship. The old and the needy in particular will lose in Mrs. Burges a kind and bountiful friend. There is something however which they will leave behind, and that is the lovely surroundings of their house here, which they have converted into a paradise of beauty, thereby adding so greatly to the charm of our village. Many a passer-by has been thrilled with the view down this garden, and across the lake to the woods beyond, and people have told me that they have seen nothing quite like it in all Lincolnshire. It only remains for me to say that we shall all follow Mr. and Mrs. Burges to their new home with our very best wishes for their future happiness. I know that they will not quite forget us, if only because of their daughter's marriage in our beautiful church. That will always be a happy link between us.

**Our school numbers** have recently been augmented by new comers, and we now have 40 children. It is a delightful thing to see and hear more young life among us, as we were in danger of becoming almost a childless village. When first I knew Witham, there were between 90 and 100 children attending our school. This number is never however likely to be reached again, unless we get little temporary visitors, in the shape of evacuees.

**Children at church.**—I shall heartily welcome more young people in church on Sundays, and there should be more. It is the duty of parents to ensure that their little ones are taught the habit of worship, which apart from this attendance they can never learn. The ideal way is for parents not merely to *send* them, but to *bring* them. Mr. and Mrs. Newton, who came to Manthorpe for a short stay, and have now alas! left us, brought their 3 children with them regularly every Sunday. Their example might well be followed by others.

**Sunday Evensong.**—I have tried my best to meet the wishes of the worshippers in fixing the time for Evensong, and found that some would prefer 3.30 to 3 o'clock. So for the present 3.30 will be the hour. And now that Summer Time is to be continued throughout the year, there will be no need to return to 3 o'clock, for even in mid-winter it will now be possible, even for the most distant worshippers, to get home before darkness sets in.

**The Parish Quota.**—Last month I appealed in the Magazine for a special effort to make up the sum due to Lincoln from this parish. The response was so gratifying that we have overpaid our Quota by £18/10. In acknowledging our contribution, the Secretary writes: "It is always a great pleasure to receive that extra amount which Witham-on-the-Hill has sent in the past few years, and which is a splendid lead to other parishes."

**Church collections.**—September £15/13/4 (which includes the Harvest Thanksgiving offerings for the Hospitals). October £7/17/11.

L.H.C.

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

**Christmas.**—"Peace on earth, goodwill among men." So sang the angels on the Holy Night, when they heralded the Birth of the Prince of Peace. To-day, in the midst of this cruel and relentless war, such words sound hollow and unreal. But in spite of all appearances to the contrary, God's purpose for mankind is not changed. He still loves the world, into which He sent His Divine Son in order to redeem and save it. Let us trust Him then, and let us make Christmas Day one of special intercession for peace.

**No early service** will be possible, and we cannot begin the great Festival before 8.30. The other Eucharists will follow at 9.15 and 11. As for many years past, so again, our offerings will be for the Waifs and Strays Society.

**Calendars.**—Year after year I have sent one of these to every reader of the Magazine. I feel sure that you will understand the reason why I cannot do so this year, nor give my usual little Christmas offerings as in the past. Ever mounting costs and incessant National calls must be my excuse.

**Church heating.**—Last month we laid in a store of coke at the church, the cost of which was £28/9/4, and the amount obtained for this was just eleven-and-a-half tons. I hope that with strict economy this may tide us over the whole of next year. Meanwhile this has absorbed all our available balance, and I venture to ask for increased generosity in our weekly church offerings, in order to meet this. We should be thankful that we can still worship in reasonable comfort, not for instance, like Westminster Abbey, whose many broken windows makes any heating impossible. Yet even there, the Dean tells us that they still continue the sung Eucharist each Sunday at 10.30, and the attendance runs into several hundreds!

**Poppy Day results.**—This year these were most gratifying. They were as follows:—The sale of poppies came to £7/18/11, of which Witham contributed £5/18/0, Toft and Lound £1/8/8, and Manthorpe 12/3. In addition, the church collections on Remembrance Sunday brought in another £2/10/8, making a total of £10/9/7. Last year the total was £8/9/5, and the year before, £5/16/7. This yearly increase is remarkable, and very satisfactory.

**Mrs. Eliza Pell.**—As I am writing to-day (Nov. 25th), Mrs. Pell lies in a critical condition. It was on Monday, Nov. 4th, that she met with her terrible accident, and was removed to Hospital the following day. At her advanced age (I believe that she is 83), such extensive burns might well have proved fatal. Each time that I have seen her, however, I found her cheerful and comfortable, and there is still hope. The day before her accident she was in church, and seemed particularly well.

**In Memoriam, Rebecca Sentance.**—By the death of Miss Sentance, Witham has lost a familiar and well-loved figure. Born 65 years ago in the cottage in which she had spent the whole of her life, her desire to die in it has been fulfilled, and she passed peacefully away on the evening of Remembrance Sunday, Nov 10th. It is given to few people to be known by a familiar and endearing title by everyone, yet that was her privilege. To old and young alike, even to the little toddlers, she was "Becky." Her hospitable door stood ever open, summer and winter alike, and few passed it without dropping in for a chat with Becky. I am sure that her quiet and uneventful life was on the whole a happy one, she lived for others and their interests. All that concerned her neighbours was her concern, their joys and sorrows were hers. You can often judge of a person's character from their love for children and dumb animals. Becky was passionately devoted to both. By her passing, Witham will be the poorer, and she will be greatly missed. R.I.P.

**Nursing Association.**—The sum of £8/4/8 was raised for this object last month. Guessing a doll's name brought in £5/8/6. Mrs. Bonning was the donor of the doll.

**Christmas Gifts.**—Each man from the parish serving with H.M. Forces is to have a gift at Christmas. Please give generously to this fund.

L. H. C.