

No. 22

DECEMBER, 1959

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# MARSTON NEWS

INCORPORATING  
CHURCH & LOCAL NEWS



*P. A. Reuter*

# ST. NICHOLAS CHURCH — OLD MARSTON

## SERVICES.

**Sundays.** Holy Communion 8.15 a.m.  
also on First Sunday of the month 12 noon,  
also on Second Sunday of the month 7.30 p.m.  
Morning Prayer 11.0 a.m. (Sunday School during  
Sermon).

Sunday School 3.0 p.m. at Old Marston Secondary  
School.

Pathfinder Bible Classes—

Boys and Girls : 10.15 a.m., Church Hall.

Evening Prayer 6.30 p.m.

**Saints' Days.** Holy Communion as announced.

**Holy Baptism.** Fourth Sunday of the month at 4.0 p.m.  
Notice must be given.

**Holy Matrimony.** Banns to be given in at the Vicarage.

## CHURCH ORGANISATIONS & MEETINGS.

**Discussion Group.** All welcome. Thursdays at 8 p.m.

**Mothers' Union.** Fourth Tuesday of each month in the Church  
Hall at 2.45 p.m.

**Young Wives.** Alternate Wednesdays in the Church Hall at  
at 7.45 p.m.

**Pathfinders.** Each Friday (Girls) in the Church Hall at 5.30  
p.m. onwards.

Tuesdays (Boys) in the Church Hall at 6.30 p.m.

**Cubs.** Wednesdays in the Church Hall at 6 p.m.

**Scouts.** Thursdays in the Church Hall at 7.15 p.m.

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**Vicar :** Rev. Paul N. Rimmer, M.A., 11 Elsfeld Rd., Old Marston.  
Phone. 47034.

**Lady Worker :** Miss M. S. Liles, The Flat, 15 Mill Lane.

**Churchwardens :** Prof. V. T. Harlow, Fir Tree House, Oxford Road.  
Mr. B. G. Oliver, 13 Jack Straws Lane, N. Marston

**Secretary of P.C.C. :** Mrs. Harlow.

**Verger :** Mrs. Brain, Cranmer, Elsfeld Road, Old Marston.

The Vicar would be grateful for notification of any parishioners  
who are sick, or who would like a personal call.

MARSTON VICARAGE,  
OXFORD.

**My Dear Friends.**

What a wonderful season Christmas is! As we hear the bells of Bethlehem peal out on Christmas morning, and listen to the broadcasts from all parts of the Commonwealth, we begin to realise what a wonderful privilege it is to belong to the family of Christ, scattered throughout the world.

The Christmas message is so all-embracing too. It brings good tidings of great joy to all men, who hearken to it. It draws labouring folk and intellectuals, shepherds and men of wisdom. It speaks to the young and to the aged, from the Virgin Mary to the aged Simeon and Anna.

And this year in particular we are reminded that it speaks especially to the refugees and the homeless, for Jesus was born in a stable, as there was no room in the inn.

Yet not long ago, someone said to me: "I dread Christmas! There's so much to do!" Beware lest that feeling comes upon you too! Don't let the sending of Christmas cards swamp the meaning of Christmas for you. Don't let the purchase of presents put you into a bad temper. ("I don't mind what on earth you get. Buy anything!").

Determine this year that the Message of Christmas is going to mean more to you than ever before. Read through a portion of the Christmas story (St. Luke 1, and 11, or Matt. 1 and 11) each day. Let God speak to you through it..... and through you to your home, and to your work-mates, to your friends, and casual contacts.

Let the Peace of the Bethlehem scene, the warmth of Love of the Child in the Manger, the simple faith of the shepherds, the devotion of the Wise Men..... let all this surround you, and bring new happiness to you and yours. May Christ be very real to you all on this His Birthday, in your homes and in your worship.

With sincere good wishes,



**CHRISTMAS SERVICES IN ST. NICHOLAS' CHURCH**

Sunday, December 20th. 6.30 p.m. CANDLE AND CAROL SERVICE.  
CHRISTMAS EVE. 11.30 p.m. Holy Communion with hymns and short address.

CHRISTMAS DAY. 7.15 a.m., 8.15 a.m. and Noon, HOLY COMMUNION. 11 a.m., Family Service.

(For other services, see calendar at back of magazine).

N.B. New Year's Eve. 11.30 p.m., Watchnight Service.

**CHURCH NEWS**

The St. Nicholas Young People's Group have had two very happy and successful Breakfasts after Holy Communion on the first Sundays of October and November. On the third Sunday of each month after Church we have discussions, film-strips, or meet other members of similar groups from the Churches nearby.

This Group is open to membership for any confirmed young person over the age of 15 years. Associate membership is open to those who hope to be confirmed in the near future. The first Enrolment Service will be held on Sunday, December 13th, during Evening Service.

**Pathfinders**

The Boys' and Girls' Bible Classes which have been meeting simultaneously on Sundays at 10.15 a.m. and followed by Morning Prayer have proved successful, and have really encouraged the young people of eleven years and upwards with the thrill of worshipping as a family on Sundays.

The girls also meet on Fridays from 5.30 p.m. (according to age) for Toymaking and other handicrafts, games, and careers talks.

#### **Sunday School.**

Many children now attend our Sunday afternoon time of worship in the Secondary Modern School at 3 p.m. Several new Teachers have now come forward to help, as well as the faithful few who have been helping for some considerable time—Mrs. Bolton, Mrs. Marsh, the Misses R. and G. Beater, A. Green and K. Mason. This School is for any children aged 4 years to 10 years.

#### **Carol and Hand Bell Party.**

Once again a party from church will be going round the parish to sing and ring out the Christmas message of Joy. Any donations received will be divided, the major part going to World Refugees, and the remainder to the Choir and Bellringers Fund. In order that we may sing the carols reverently and meaningfully it is essential that we practice together. Carol practices will therefore be held in the church hall on Friday evenings at 7.30 p.m. and volunteers to sing will be most welcome. Although we may not be able to cover the whole parish in detail, we shall be singing from 7 p.m.—9 p.m. in the following areas:—

Monday, 21st: Raymund Road, Arlington Drive, Cherwell Park, Cavendish Drive, Cotswold and Windsor Crescents, Haynes Road and Salford Road.

Tuesday, 22nd: Mortimer Drive, Lewell Avenue, Rippington Drive, Nicholas Avenue, Fairfax Avenue, Cromwell Close.

Wednesday, 23rd: Beechey Avenue, Oxford Road (South of Recreation Ground), Gordon Close, Cherwell Drive, Ashlong Road, Elms Drive.

Christmas Eve, 24th: Oxford Road (North of Red Lion), Boult's Lane, Elsfeld Road, St. Nicholas Park and other Caravan Sites, Mill Lane.

#### **Thank You!**

We are most grateful to Mrs. Jennings who (besides arranging a beautiful vase of flowers each week in the church) has been responsible for the finance and distribution of the Marston News over the past years. Mrs. Holmes has now taken over this work, and we are most grateful to her for her willingness to do so.

Mrs. Cattermole would also like to thank all who helped in the collection for Dr. Barnardo's Homes. This came to £17 7s. 0d.—just under £3 more than last year.

#### **Confirmation.**

The Confirmation Service will be on December 3rd (Thursday) at 7.30 p.m. and will be taken by the Bishop of Dorchester.

Please be sure to be there. Pray for the candidates and welcome them into the full fellowship of Christ's Church.

There will be light refreshments in the Church Hall afterwards, which will give us all an opportunity to get to know our new members more fully.

#### **Patronal Festival and Gift Day.**

Our church is dedicated to St. Nicholas, and this year our Patronal Festival falls on Sunday, December 6th, when all those who have been confirmed recently will make their First Communion at the 8.15 a.m. Service.

Special Thankoffering envelopes are provided which may be placed on the plate during any of the services on that day.

#### **Bellringers.**

Oxford Diocesan Guild.

St. Nicholas Church—on Saturday, 24th October, 1959. A Peal of 5,040 Reverse Canterbury Pleasure Bob Doubles in 2 hrs. and 38 mins.

Treble: Serce Zvengintzova\*. 2. Alec Gammon. 3. Nicholas J. Martin\*. 4. Roy H. Jone. \*1st Peal.

32nd Peal on the bells—rang for United Nations Day.

#### **Special Notice for all Young Mothers.**

Please note that there will be no clinic in the Church Hall on the afternoon of Thursday, December 3rd. You are asked to be kind enough and make this as widely known as possible.



*In a Manger Laid*

Driving and striving with restless feet,  
 All night long thro' the narrow street,  
 Camels, caravans, men and mules,  
 Jostling together, scholars, fools,  
 The portly rich with swaggering tread,  
 The arrogant, and the underfed;  
 With angry tumult, shout and cry,  
 The heedless world went hurrying by;  
 And nobody noticed the stable poor,  
 Or the glimmering light thro' the  
 broken door:  
 And of all the busy bustling throng,  
 Only the shepherds heard the song,

That night on the hills of Bethlehem.  
 'Glad tidings of great joy'—to them  
 And to the labouring earth Goodwill,  
 And Peace shone out serene and still,  
 Like a white star above the din;  
 The wise men bowed and entered in.

\* \* \*

I like to think the door was wide  
 And little children ran inside,  
 That Christmas morn,—to see, where  
 lay

God's Wonder on a bed of hay.

REX F. HOPES

## The Christmas Challenge

By THE RT. REV. R. L. HODSON  
FORMERLY BISHOP OF SHREWSBURY

ONE sometimes hears the expression—"The Traditional Christmas," which not infrequently appears in hotel advertisements towards Christmas, suggesting people should quit their own homes to celebrate Christmas without any trouble elsewhere. Here the emphasis lies obviously on the secular and material aspects, which are increasingly and mainly associated with the Sacred Season.

Thus the truth that the Heavenly Father in the fulness of time presented to the world His Son to be the Saviour of mankind is obscured and tends to be lost sight of. Christmas cards of all kinds and shapes, adorned with wonderful pictures of dogs and cats and a variety of other subjects, sometimes of a ribald nature, take the place of the presentation of that wonder of wonders, the Child in the Manger Cradle at Bethlehem, with all He is and came to do.

Christmas is usually regarded as a time to remember the poor, out of respect for Him who found no room in the Inn at Bethlehem that first Christmas night. But the sad thing is that too often there is no room found for Him in many of the philanthropic hearts He came to seek and to save. Fireworks and crackers are exploded for fun, but the fact that in the stillness of that Christmas night the heavens were rended by God out of His sheer love for man, is frequently ignored.

Many look forward to turkey and plum pudding, and all the food and games and drink of the so-called traditional Christmas, but are unmindful of Him Who is the Bread of Life, failing to welcome Him at the Holy Communion, or only doing so because the midnight service suits their convenience and saves them the self-discipline of an early rise.

We are not meant to eschew all these accompaniments of the traditional Christmas and be cheerless, for joy is an essential ingredient of the Christian life, but our attitude and acceptance of them should not be allowed to hinder us from the recollection of the great truths which Christmas heralds. These should help us to consecrate our use of secular and material things in the service of God and to His unending glory.

Christmas is not just a public holiday, but a Holy Day which witnesses to the stupendous fact that the Eternal God took direct action in the world, and through the birth of His Only Begotten Son gave to man his one true hope and security here and hereafter. Christmas testifies to the fact that God is a spiritual force in History, working in and through all life for the peace, unity and happiness of mankind and that, in spite of everything which appears to the contrary, He is bound to come into His own in the end.

Here, then, is the Challenge of Christmastide—the right adjustment of our individual relationship with God and, consequent upon that, our collective relationship one with another:

"A little Boy of heavenly birth,  
But far from home today,  
Came down to find his ball—the  
earth—  
That sin had cast away.  
O Comrades, let us one and all  
Join in—to get Him back his  
ball."



Bust of Handel on the original MS. of the "Messiah"

*The Heavens opened and I saw  
the great God Himself . . .*



## Handel and the "Messiah"

GARTH CHRISTIAN



"**W**HAT would you do if there were no congregation to hear you sing?" someone asked a young choirboy of All Saints, Margaret Street.

"But we don't sing to the congregation," replied the boy.

How George Frederic Handel would have liked that! For from all we know of this great composer who died 200 years ago, in 1759, it is clear that he shared this chorister's

belief that the purpose of music in worship is to honour God. And, therefore, only our best is good enough.

Only the best. That might well have been the motto of this big, jovial churchman, son of a celebrated barber-surgeon in the German town of Halle, whose music prompted the ever-generous Beethoven to call him "the greatest composer who ever lived."

Yet in this past year, as choirs all over Britain heeded the plea of the Royal School of Church Music that his works should be heard in church, there must have been many people who began to appreciate the reasons for Beethoven's judgement. Indeed, to hear the famous choirs of Yorkshire or the Potteries sing the "Messiah," with its dramatic unfolding of the events leading up to and succeeding the first Christmas Day, can be a profound spiritual experience that leaves one wondering: "What manner of man was Handel? How did the 'Messiah' come to be written?"

It is easier to ask these questions than to answer them. Over-much speculation and plain fancy have clouded like a mist the good name of the composer, and only now are we beginning to separate the fact from the fiction.

According to tradition, Handel's father loathed music. Only through the silent hours of the night was his son able to practise—on a clavichord, smuggled into a garret while the family were sleeping. Always quick to turn difficulties into opportunities, the young Handel worked hard at his music and, at the age of 17, became organist of the Calvinist Cathedral at Halle. Yet he had been educated at a Lutheran grammar school.

It is from his mother's clerical ancestors that he may well have inherited his remarkable gifts, and she probably encouraged the young musician to make the best use of his talents. Three years in Italy, the home of good music, profoundly influenced his life. "He came here a German, but he leaves us an Italian," said a friend. Soon, in 1726, he became a naturalised Englishman.

Londoners liked him. Bluff, even brusque on occasions, though often amusing, he was a big man in more ways than one, a loyal friend and a generous critic. Twice every day

he is said to have spent a period alone in silent prayer, and Sunday by Sunday he worshipped in the parish church of St. George's, Hanover Square.

It was this strong religious faith, no doubt, which gave him the power to triumph in his frequent struggles against failure and ill-health. Though assured of a Royal pension as music master to the Princess Amelia, the failure of several operas reduced him to acute poverty. He knew well the pain of disappointment and distress caused by indifference and neglect. "I was sorry to see the audience so insipid, tasteless . . . and unkind as not to give the poor man the benefit of applause," wrote Lady Shaftesbury, after a performance of "Alexander's Feast".

Nor did his somewhat uncouth ways improve matters. He went to tea with Sir Hans Sloane, founder of the British Museum, and allowed a buttered muffin to fall upon one of his books which it stained. "I offered my best apologies," complained Handel, "but the old miser would not have done with it. Muffin and butter! Ah, mein Gott, I said to myself 'That is the rub—it is the butter'"—which it was, though not for the reason Handel supposed.

Strengthened and sustained by the power of prayer, Handel repeatedly turned near disaster into triumph, working in feverish bursts of inspiration to compose oratorios, concertos, operas and anthems that remain full of glorious life for every generation.

Then on August 22, 1741, his friends observed the great man, though threatened with paralysis, working with immense energy on a new score. Hour after hour, pages of new music tumbled to the floor. Had the hours of patient, persevering prayer, the slow yielding of soul and mind to Christ been a preparation

for this moment? For now as the "Messiah" was written, it was as if he lived through the events of the first Christmas and its sequel, the first Good Friday and Easter Day. "The Heavens opened and I saw the great God Himself." Within three weeks the "Messiah" was written, a wonderful blending of noble poetry and splendid music which was to leave listeners in every age convinced that "Here spake the Lord."

"Ladies are earnestly requested not to wear hoops," pleaded the organisers of the first performance in Dublin. The plea was obeyed and 700 people crowded into the hall, to leave the composer's favourite charities richer by £400.

In the years which followed, an

annual performance was given in aid of Captain Coram's Foundling Hospital, of which Handel was a Governor. Then in 1759 the composer, though blind, conducted a performance at Covent Garden that proved too great a strain on his ailing body. He fainted, was carried to bed and died on April 14, on the eve of Easter Day. "In his character," wrote a friend, "there was nothing mean . . . he was liberal even when he was poor, and remembered his former friends when he was rich . . ." For had not God been generous to him and to all men—appearing on earth at the first Christmastide?

Handel, the man and his music, owed more than words can express to that supreme event.

Chichester Cathedral Choristers rehearsing Carols

Photo: The Times



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## Church Notes and Views

◇

### Wooden Spire

**T**HE graceful shingle spire of West Hoathly Church is characteristic of Sussex. The shingles are thin 'slates' of wood, usually oak, and are cleft, not sawn. They are still made, although cleavers are not easy to find nowadays. The shingles last about 100 years.

### A Slight Mistake

**T**HE late Dean Burgon of Chichester was noted for his love of children. On one occasion he accepted an invitation to a Children's Christmas party. "Don't wait," he said to the maid who opened the front door to him. "I'll announce myself." The maid retired and as the Dean removed his great coat he saw on the floor a tiger skin rug. He picked it up, wrapped it round him and roaring loudly, crawled on all fours into a room whence came the sound of voices. To his surprise his entrance was greeted with perfect silence, and when he looked up he found himself in the presence of two shocked and horrified old ladies, sitting by the fire, having their tea. He had come to the wrong house!—MISS F. M. BALLARD (WORTHING).

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### TO OUR READERS

We offer five shillings for every photograph with notes which we print on this page, and half-a-crown for every paragraph without a photograph. Entries should be sent to: The Editor, 11, Ludgate Square, London, E.C.4.

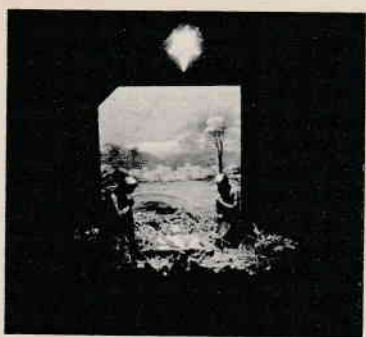
### Faithful Service

**I**N Wetheral Churchyard (near Carlisle) is an old tombstone erected to the memory of John Hodgson, who died July 10th, 1804, after 53 years' service as Parish Clerk. Embodied in his epitaph on the stone is the following: "During his long term of office, he was never absent from a service, had attended at 5,013 baptisms, 4,699 funerals and 2,112 weddings and had served under 53 ministers."—REV. F. W. HICKLING (WETHERAL, CARLISLE).



### Wellingtonian Warrior

**A**WAY down on the south part of the churchyard of St. John the Baptist, Smallbridge, Rochdale, is a Healey (a well-known family in Smallbridge) Vault, in which is buried one of Wellington's soldiers. The carved record reads "Henry Butterworth, Esquire, a Magistrate for the County of Lancaster, born 18th March, 1783, died 8th June, 1860 at Heybrook, Rochdale. Formerly a Lieutenant in the 32nd Regiment of Foot and was engaged in the Battles of Rolicca, Vimiera, Salamanca, Talavera, Pyrences, Nivelle, Nive, Orthes and Waterloo." The old fashion for recording the occupation of the deceased was followed in many cases and in St. John's graveyard lie an iron-founder, tin plate worker, stonemason, farmer, machinist, weaver, apparitor and butcher.—M.H. (ROCHDALE).



### Holy Night

THIS wonderful little scene always awaits us as we come to celebrate Holy Communion on Christmas Eve at the Parish Church of St. Peter and St. Paul, Wincanton, Somerset. The enclosed photo I took last Christmas Eve.—CYRIL E. MARTIN (WINCANTON).



### Stained Glass Pig

PIGS are not common in English stained glass, but a pig is one of the symbols of St. Anthony and an example may be seen in a church window at Winscombe, North Somerset. The pig wears a bell. St. Anthony (of Padua) was a lover of animals: born at Lisbon in 1195, he entered the Order of St. Francis and travelled through many lands.—P. STEPHENS (MINEHEAD).



### Halter Devil Chapel

CLAIMED as the smallest of the established churches, Halter Devil Chapel, near Mugginton, Derbyshire, has a curious history to explain its strange name.

The story goes that Francis Brown, farmer, decided one stormy night, while under the influence of drink, to ride to Derby 7 miles away. His wife's protests only drew forth the remark, "Ride I will even if I have to halter the Devil." Securing his horse in the paddock, Brown tried to put the halter over its head. At that moment a flash of lightning revealed that the animal had horns and Brown was knocked senseless! Upon recovering, Brown was so certain that it really was the Devil he had tried to halter, that he became a sobered man and built this chapel adjoining his house. The explanation, of course, is that Brown tried to halter a cow which resented the application of the bit to its mouth! All this happened in 1723, and until about 60 years ago a tablet on the end of the chapel recorded:

Francis Brown in his old age  
Did build him here an hermitage;  
Who, being old and full of evil,  
Once on a time haltered the Devil.

The chapel has never been consecrated, but a service is held here on the last Sunday of each month by the Rector of the neighbouring village of Mugginton, under whose care it is.—FRANK RODGERS (DERBY).

★ ————— ★

## Weekday Pages for Women

Conducted by Marion Hurst

★ ————— ★

### Monday—Washing

To keep the glaze and slightly stiffen cotton dresses after washing, add one dessertspoonful of borax to the last rinsing water for each dress.—MRS. E. M. HILDESLEY (CHELTENHAM).

### Tuesday—Knitting—Sewing

Use up odd balls of 3-ply wool by casting on 45 stitches on No. 8 needles and knit squares. Sew them together and it will make a car rug, that useful extra blanket or, better still, the Oxford Famine Relief Fund will welcome it for Refugees. For the latter it should measure at least 3 ft. by 4 ft.—MRS. W. F. KEMP (SPALDING).

### Wednesday—Nursing

*Remedy for chilblains and chapped hands.*—Mix equal parts of glycerine and methylated spirits. If the chilblains are unbroken, rub well in the skin before going to bed. Leave on all night and great relief will be found.

### Thursday—Cooking

*Chunky Cake*—the children love it! 4 oz. margarine; 4 oz. sugar; 6 oz. plain flour; 1 heaped teaspoonful baking powder; 1 teaspoonful vanilla essence; 2 eggs; 4 oz. plain chocolate.

Cream the fat and the sugar. Add the flour and baking powder alternately with the beaten egg. Cut the chocolate into small pieces and add gradually. Mix well together and bake in a greased tin in a moderate oven (350) for 40/50 minutes.—ANON. (CHIPPENHAM).

If saucepans are smeared round the top edges with butter they will never boil over. When boiling ham or bacon which you think may be salty, put a potato in with it. This takes the saltiness away.—MRS. R. LYNCH (NEWPORT PAGNELL).

### Friday—Household

If you have a fall of soot on your carpet, sprinkle it with salt. It will then sweep up perfectly clean and will leave no mark on the carpet.—MISS FLENTY (WITHAM, ESSEX).

### Saturday—Children

*Toddler's Shoe Laces.*—Laces in gym shoes or outdoor shoes are frequently a problem to small children. To overcome this, remove the laces, then insert elastic (of the appropriate colour) thread it in and out in the usual way, and firmly stitch the ends together. The elastic "gives" sufficiently to enable the shoes to be removed easily, and yet will hold firmly enough to prevent the shoes slipping



off at the wrong time.—MRS. M. HOOD (ILFORD, ESSEX).

### SOME CHRISTMAS "SPECIALS"

*Christmas Decorations.*—Flowers are scarce and fairly expensive at Christmas time, so make the most of dried leaves and fir cones. These latter can be frosted or coloured and together with brightly coloured candles and glass balls make a very effective table decoration. Bright ribbons, too, can be used. One very gay arrangement can be made by the use of a mirror to represent a pond with holly or evergreens around the edges. Cotton

wool and 'frost' complete the centre piece, and little figures such as are used for decorating Christmas cakes all help. Whatever your imagination conjures up can be effective and often very amusing!

*Chocolate Almond Christmas Cake.* 10 oz. margarine; 10 oz. castor sugar; 5 eggs; 10 oz. plain flour; 3 level table-spoonsful of cocoa; 1 teaspoonful baking powder; 6 oz. chopped almonds.

Grease and line an 8 in. cake tin. Cream the margarine and sugar together until light and fluffy. Gradually add the well beaten eggs. Fold in the sieved flour, cocoa and baking powder and finally the chopped almonds. Bake in a slow oven Reg. 3 for 2 hours. Decorate—if



"Desire of all Nations"

Photo: A. E. Dowdeswell

desired—with a thin layer of almond paste. Ice with glacé icing and ornament with silver balls and holly leaves.

*Peppermint Swiss Milk Toffee.*—1 lb. white sugar; 1½ table-spoonsful of syrup; 2 oz. butter; 1 small tin of Swiss milk; ½ teaspoonful peppermint essence.

Rinse a saucepan in cold water and leave one teaspoonful of the water in it. Add the syrup, butter and sugar. When melted, add the Swiss milk and stir frequently for 20 minutes. Lift from the stove and stir in the peppermint. Pour on to a buttered dish. Mark when

almost cold and break into pieces when finally cold. Wrap in gay striped paper. When packed in transparent bags, these make nice stocking fillers.

*Christmas Packings.*—Gaily wrapped parcels always look more exciting than plain ones, and an ordinary gift, if attractively packed, is much more appreciated. Odd pieces of wallpaper, plain coloured paper with cut-outs from old Christmas cards, odd bits of coloured ribbon or string etc., all help to keep down costs, and with a little imagination very luxurious looking parcels can be made up. Children, especially, love to have unusually-dressed parcels, and scraps cut from magazines and picture postcards may be used. Ribbons saved from chocolate boxes and made into bows all add 'Glamour'.

### WREATHE ME A GARLAND

Red berries, white berries, holly bough and mistletoe,

White for a Baby, red for a King;

Wreathe me a garland of deep green branches,

Tell me the story the angels sing.

There in a manger, out in a stable,

Innocence sleeps, pure and undefiled;

Wreathe me a garland of deep green branches,

Red for a King's Robe, white for a Child.

Shepherds and Wise Men out on the hillside,

Seeking a King, travel on their way.

Wreathe me a garland of deep green branches;

Sleep, little Child, on your bed of hay.

Red berries, white berries, holly bough and mistletoe,

White for a Baby, red for a King;

Wreathe me a garland of deep green branches,

Tell me the story the angels sing.

THEKLA RODD

★ ————— ★  
GLAD TIDINGS SING, WE MAY . . .

## *The Ever-Popular Carol*

MARGARET G. ALDRED,  
F.R.S.A.

★ ————— ★  
**T**HE word 'carol' derives from 'cantare' to sing and from 'rola', an interjection of joy. It might truly be said that the carol was born with those words of hope, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

The earliest known English carols were plain in composition, simple and easily understood. Apart from a few hand-written copies of carols, the words were handed down from father to son by word of mouth and it was not until 1521 that Wynkyn de Worde, Caxton's successor, published a set of carols of which only a fragmentary page remains. The poet Warton, in his "Story of English Poetry" (1562), notes a licence granted to John Tysdale for printing "Certayne Goodly Carowles to be Songe to the Glory of God, as well as a Collection of Creestmas Carowles authorised by my Lord of London." Somewhere about 1620 a book of carols was published in Edinburgh, and this despite the fact that under the influence of John Knox carol singing in Scotland had fallen from favour.

In England, at the time of the Reformation, an attempt was made to supplant the well-loved and popular carols by those of a more religious nature or by those felt to be more in keeping with the solemn significance of Christmas, but the attempt was not successful any more than the effort to abolish Christmas was

successful under the Lord Protector. In 1642 there was printed "Psalms and Songs of Sion turned into the Language and set to the Tunes of a Strange Land, the work of William Slayter", and a former owner of this book, which is now in the British Museum, was obviously keenly interested in carols and songs for he made many notes about the tunes to which some of the carols in the book were sung. For example, against Psalm 6 he wrote 'Jane Shore' and against Psalm 47 'Garden Greene'.

While many of the carols are traditional, or adaptations from continental carols, English poets, divines and writers composed several of these songs of praise and made many allusions to carols, as did Milton in Book 12 of *Paradise Lost*:

His place of birth a solemn angel  
tells

To simple shepherds keeping watch  
of night.

They gladly hither haste, and by a  
quire

Of Squadron'd angels hear his  
carol sing.

With the increase in printing and a more literate population, carols became very popular, especially in the 18th and 19th century when Christmas-time found the carol hawker in the street selling his song sheets. These were often illustrated by woodcuts of the Three Wise Men or of the scene in the stable, with particular emphasis laid upon the animals. In 1826 a carol book, consisting of ninety carols, was printed and I quote a few lines of one which might well be revived:

He neither shall be clothed

In purple nor in pall.

But all in fair linen

As were babies all.

He neither shall be rocked

In silver nor in gold.

But in a wooden cradle

That rocks on the mound.

The carol singers of today are in a direct line of descent from the Waits. Now, it is not possible clearly to define the meaning of the word "wait" as the evidence is somewhat conflicting, though Dr. Busby in his *Musical Dictionary* asserted that the word really meant hautboys. In Scotland a rather similar word—"waith"—comes nearer to the meaning of today, for it was defined as wandering about. It would also appear that the Waits were not only minstrels, but also a body of men attached to the court of the king for the purpose of patrolling the streets to guard the inhabitants and to call out the hours during the night. It was not unusual for Corporations to employ Waits to entertain people at certain festivals. During the 15th century Exeter had a company of Waits who, besides acting as street patrols, had an unusual function in that the Yeoman Wait stood in attendance during the night vigil of new Knights of the Bath. His fee was the watching garments worn by the knight or knights. As late as the mid-sixties of the last century in London, usually two or three weeks before Christmas, a band of Waits

appeared in the streets playing the popular carols, mainly on wind instruments.

Many old Churchwarden Accounts give the sums paid to carol singers, as this entry from St. Mary-at-Hill, London, under the date 1537 shows:

Sir Mark for Carrolls for Christmas and for Five Square Books: iijd. iiijd.

In Wales carols were sung not only for Christmas but on many joyous occasions. The *Lyffyr Carol-ean Book* gives 66 carols for Christmas, with 5 carols for summer; and the *Anthology of Wales* includes 48 Christmas carols with 9 summer carols, including three for the month of May, and also a delightful, if discreet, carol to or for Cupid.

To end with, here are two verses from an old Scots carol, which I think are quite charming:

I come from Hevin to tell  
The best Nowells that ever befell.  
To you this tythings trew I bring  
And I will of them say and sing.  
This day to you is borne ane Childe  
Of Marie meeke and virgine milde.  
That blesit barn bining and kinde  
Sall yowe rejoyce both heart and mynd.

*Carol Singers—Boys of the Heritage Craft School, Chailey, Sussex*

*Photo: The Times*





## The Tithe

VIOLET GINEVER

MRS. LANE could not find her purse anywhere. It was not in any of her pockets or in her shopping basket. She must have dropped it in Woolworth's when she was buying one or two extra Christmas cards. She put on her coat and hat again, trying not to feel disturbed. They were nice young girls in Woolworth's; they would keep her purse safely for her. That is, if it had been found and handed in to them. She hurried back along the street—a small, slight, elderly figure in black. The store was very crowded when she reached it. Christmas week was always a busy time and, of course, the children were on holiday from school. The counter where she thought she had left her purse was very congested. The assistants were sorry for the old lady, but they had not seen or heard of her purse. They went on serving. Mrs. Lane went to the office, but no purse had been handed in there either. It really was lost.

She walked back home rather slowly. Losing her purse was a serious matter. At home she got out the little tin box, which held the few shillings she was able to save from her pension. She knew it was practically empty now because she had bought her Christmas presents out of it the previous week. Fortunately, she had already paid the rent for her bed-sitting-room and there would be enough in the box

to pay for weak tea and bread and margarine and gas for the ring for her kettle until she drew her pension next time, but nothing for coal to warm her room. She was half-way through the last bucket now. When the coal-man called this afternoon she would have to say "Not this week, thank you."

It was a bleak prospect. But she had only herself to blame. It was a good thing she lived alone; no one else would have to suffer for her carelessness in losing her purse. She hoped that whoever had it was in real need of the money. She smiled to herself ruefully—she had often said she would rather be hungry than cold. It seemed that she would soon be both! She *could* borrow some money from a friend, but she did not feel happy about borrowing money. Besides she would have to pay it back again next week and it would make her short of money for another week. No, she would just have to make the best of it.

Of course, there was her Tithe that she could use. Mrs. Lane took the envelope out of the tin box and held it in her fingers, while the temptation darted in and out of her thoughts. Her Tithe was her voluntary offering, a tenth of her income, which she put away methodically, whenever she drew her pension. Out of these few shillings came her Church collections, money for flag days and for charities she wished to

support.

Chiefly, however, it was for the wool for the sea-boot stockings she made all the year round for deep-sea fishermen. There was a pair to be finished now. She remembered that she ought to have bought some more wool for them when she was out. She had promised to have them ready by the 23rd. They were to go in a parcel of presents that would be dropped by aeroplane on Christmas Day to a ship in mid-ocean. She could, of course, use the money for coal instead of wool and say she had been unavoidably prevented from finishing the stockings.

The temptation, darting about in her mind, found no lodging-place there. It was turned out abruptly. She had given her word about the stockings and someone at sea would have to go without them if she failed to keep it. Besides, she had been brought up to look upon Tithing as one of the laws of the Kingdom of Heaven. God was hindered from keeping His promises to us if we failed in our obedience. She would go on doing her part and trust in God to help her through the cheerless days over Christmas. When she was sitting shivering by her fireless grate on Christmas Day she would feel that she was sharing the discomfort of hundreds of fishermen in ships at sea who had no fires to sit by either. Then she would be happy to remember that one of them was enjoying the warmth of the stockings she had knitted with her Tithe money. She put the envelope back in the tin box. Presently she would go out to the wool-shop.

The stockings were finished in time to take them down to the Seamen's Mission to be packed. A brisk walk in the open would do her good, thought Mrs. Lane, putting on her hat with chilled, cramped fingers. It was not very pleasant being without

a fire. It was all right when she was in bed, but she couldn't stay there all the time. She tried to think sympathetically about all the people who, like herself, had no fire to sit by. There were out-of-door workers, particularly those handling fish and meat, or gathering vegetables in windswept, frozen fields. There were policemen on point duty, motor cyclists, postmen walking or cycling through the rain in country districts, and people like herself who could not afford to have a fire. As she considered them all, her thoughts became a prayer that they all might be consoled and helped to bear discomfort bravely.

Down at the Mission they were very busy and the person in charge looked harassed. She looked at Mrs. Lane speculatively and then spoke to her.

"Have you made any plans for Christmas Day?" she asked her.

"Well, no, Mrs. Tompkins," Mrs. Lane faltered, "except to go to Church as I always do."

"Then I wonder if I could persuade you to come along and give us a hand here? I should be most grateful if you would. You could come along straight from church. We need someone to help with serving the dinner, and with the washing-up afterwards. Christmas is always a difficult time with voluntary workers; they all have their own families to look after. You would have your dinner here, of course."

Mrs. Lane smiled, and her little round face flushed with pleasure. Of course she could manage it and would be glad to be of use. There was only herself at home to consider. Afterwards she remembered that her Christmas dinner was to have been tea and bread and margarine. Truly God was good! It did not occur to her that had she failed to finish the stockings and take them to the Mission

the suggestion would not have been made to her.

She had scarcely reached home when the Vicar called. He often came to see her about parish matters, for she was very active with magazines and sick-visiting. Her room was stone-cold and smelt of damp soot. She hoped he would not notice the empty grate.

"Mrs. Lane, I've been very busy this last week allocating the Christmas coal under the Tithe Bequest, but there are so few people nowadays who really need it that there are a number of bags left over. I feel sure that I should not be misinterpreting the intention of the donor if I gave them to those who work for the Church so selflessly all the year round. I wonder if you yourself would accept a couple of bags of coal?"

Mrs. Lane could not believe that she had heard aright. This was the kind of thing that happened in fairy stories—first a Christmas dinner and now a present of coal, all coming to her from nowhere, as it were. She hesitated.

"That's very kind of you, sir, but aren't there other people more entitled to have it than I am?"

The Vicar smiled. "There may be, Mrs. Lane, but I don't know them. They're not in my parish, I'm quite certain. I'll call at the coal-office and arrange for it to come at once. They're only waiting for your address."

When he was leaving a few minutes later, the Vicar turned and asked Mrs. Lane conversationally if she had ever heard the origin of the Coal Bequest.

"The donor, whose name has never been disclosed, had a special Tithe Account at the Bank during his lifetime, into which he conscientiously put a tenth of his income. He used this Account to help in the support

of the Church and various charities each year, but there was always a certain residue. It had grown to a very appreciable sum at his death and in his will he directed that this was to be invested as the Tithe Coal Bequest and the interest was to be used at Christmas to send coal to the needy." He smiled at Mrs. Lane. "It's a very good thing, this Tithing. I wish more people would do it. It would solve a lot of problems of one sort and another."

Mrs. Lane smiled back at him and her eyes lit up.

"It would indeed, sir," she said. "I quite agree with you."

\* \* \*

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## HOLY BAPTISM ARTICLE c. 4.

### The End of the Church Service and the Beginning of Service in the Church.

How long will the service take? The question is often asked by mothers, anxious that their babies won't cause any disturbance during the christening. Instead of replying: "About three quarters of an hour," we should really say: "About fifteen years," depending on when the child comes forward for Confirmation. At this service the candidates stand up in front of the local congregation, 'confirm' before the Bishop the promises made on their behalf by their godparents at their Baptism. Before they are presented to the Bishop, who is not only the Father in God of the Diocese, but also represents the Worldwide Church to the local congregation, they have already received a certain amount of instruction in the Christian faith.

They have been taught the meaning of the Creed and the Catechism, so that they will stand firmly in the faith.

They have learnt the Lord's Prayer, and learnt how to pray, and he need for prayer. They have studied the Ten Commandments, so that they have a guide in the matter of right and wrong.

They have in fact reached, what the Prayer Book terms, "the age of discretion." After "confirming" their Baptismal vows, the Bishop prays that all the candidates may be strengthened by the sevenfold gifts of the Spirit, as they dedicate themselves to active life and witness in the Christian fellowship.

As each candidate kneels in turn before him, he lays his hands upon each, after the custom of the Apostles (Acts 8), and prays this ancient Christian Prayer:

"Defend, O Lord this thy child with thy heavenly grace, that he may continue thine for ever, and daily increase in thy Holy Spirit more and more, until he come to thy everlasting kingdom. Amen."

As the candidate rise from his knees, it is very likely he will not feel any different. The Holy Spirit is a Person, Who will strengthen him by His Presence, and is not like a kind of electrical current. But as the candidate goes back to school, or to work, or tackles the job of managing a home and children he or she will know that in every decision, in every time of temptation, in every opportunity for witness the Holy Spirit is there to empower, and guide.

It was a wise Vicar who suggested that instead of giving his confirmation candidates a neat little devotional guide to the Holy Communion Service, they should all be presented with alarm clocks! We become full members of the Church at Confirmation. We have left the Territorials and moved into the regulars. We have signed on, and we have been commissioned by the King of Kings. But we don't fight God's battles by lying in bed when we should be up reading our Bibles, and praying.

There is a life of glorious adventure ahead, in the most wonderful fellowship imaginable, made up of peoples of all races and colours and outlook. Confirmation means that we pledge ourselves to go out and fight alongside them, to bring down the strongholds of Satan, and to win the world for Jesus Christ. Listen to these final words of the Bishop as he blesses the candidates:

"Go forth into the world in peace; be of good courage; hold fast that which is good; render to no man evil for evil; strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak; help the afflicted; honour all men; love and serve the Lord, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit."

## BAPTISMS

"Welcomed into the family of Christ's Church"

- Oct. 25. Graham Paul, son of Kenneth and Eileen Baker.  
Mark Leonard, son of John and Norma Brandon.  
Julia Caroline, daughter of Brian and Brenda Cairns.  
Nicholas John, son of John and Valerie Duckett.

Paul Michael, son of Charles and Sheila Kelly.  
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 Phillip Michael, son of Gerald and Margaret Round.  
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### PARISH CALENDAR FOR DECEMBER

- Dec. 1. Tuesday. 2.30 p.m., Pram Service in Church.  
 " 3. Thursday. 7.30 p.m., CONFIRMATION BY LORD BISHOP OF DORCHESTER.  
 " 6. Patronal Festival. ST. NICHOLAS' DAY. 2nd Sunday in Advent.  
 8.15 a.m. and Noon. Holy Communion.  
 (Young People's Brakfast after 8.15 a.m. H.C.).  
 11.0 a.m. Morning Prayer.  
 3.15 p.m. Children's Service.  
 6.30 p.m. Evening Prayer. Preacher: Rev. P. G. Cottingham.  
 " 9. Young Wives Group, 7.45 p.m. "Christmas or Xmas." The Vicar.  
 " 10. 7.30 p.m. Parish Intercessions in Church.  
 8.00 p.m. Bible Study in Vicarage.  
 " 13. 3rd Sunday in Advent.  
 8.15 a.m. Holy Communion.  
 11.0 a.m. Morning Prayer.  
 6.30 p.m. Evening Prayer.  
 " 15. 2.45 p.m. Carols and Nativity Tableau in Church (M.U. and Young Wives).  
 8.00 p.m. Men's Forum meets in Vicarage.  
 " 17. Thursday. Scout Party in Hall.  
 7.30 p.m. Parish Intercessions in Church.  
 " 20. 4th Sunday in Advent.  
 8.15 a.m. Holy Communion.  
 11.0 a.m. Morning Prayer.  
 6.30 p.m. CANDLE AND CAROL SERVICE (Come early!).  
 " 21. St. Thomas' Day.  
 11.0 a.m. Holy Communion.  
 " 24. Christmas Eve.  
 11.30 p.m. Holy Communion with hymns and short address.  
 " 25. CHRISTMAS DAY.  
 7.15 a.m., 8.15 a.m., and Noon, Holy Communion.  
 11.0 a.m. Family Service.  
 " 26. St. Stephen's Day.  
 11.0 a.m. Holy Communion.  
 " 27. 1st Sunday after Christmas. St. John's Day.  
 8.15 a.m. Holy Communion.  
 11.0 a.m. Morning Prayer.  
 6.30 p.m. "What Christmas means to me," by a group of laymen. (Carols).  
 " 31. New Year's Eve.  
 11.30 p.m. Watchnight Service.

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**Pathfinders.** Leader : Miss M. Liles, The Flat, 15 Mill Lane.

**Scouts.** Leader : Mr. R. Jones, 118 Oxford Road.

**Young Wives.** Mrs. P. Clay, Above Mead, Barton Lane, Headington.

### LOCAL.

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**Choral Society.** Sec. : Mr. L. E. Hodgkins, 59 Copse Lane.

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