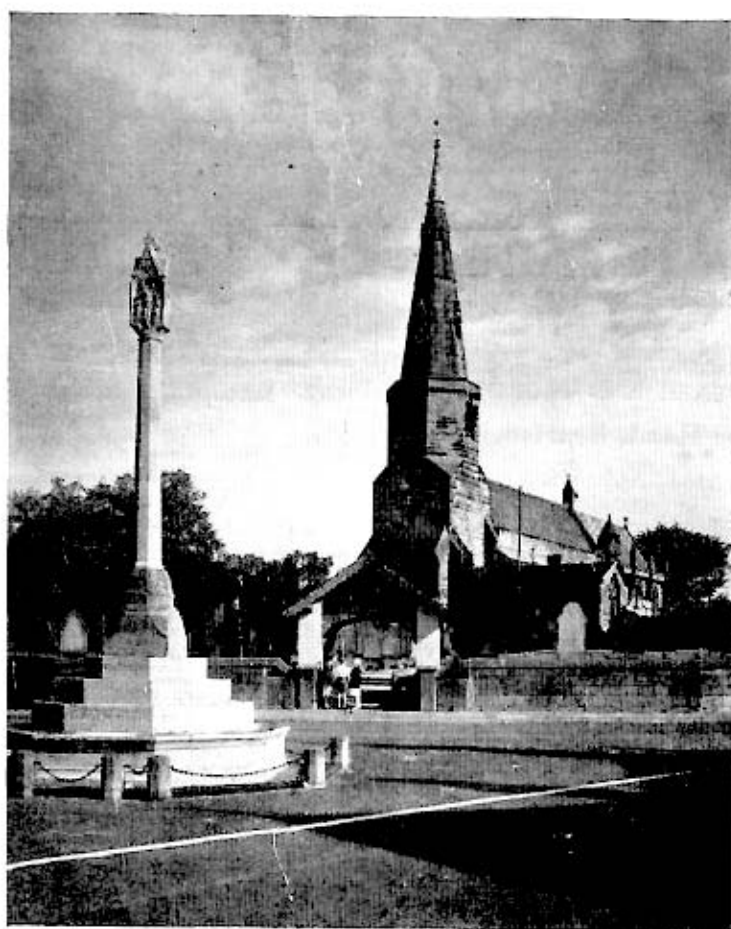


JANUARY, 1966

HALSALL PARISH MAGAZINE



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15th December, 1965

My Dear Friends,

There can be only one way to begin my letter this month and that is to express sincere thanks to you all for such a wonderful year's work in 1965. The effort and sacrifice of so many of the faithful has been rewarded by the magnificent financial results of our year's work, crowned with the tremendous effort at the Bazaar when £750 was raised. I am deeply grateful to you all and want you to know that I think the results are truly wonderful. The P.C.C. had arranged to hold a Gift Day on the Sunday after Christmas Day. I was looking forward to meeting many of you when you brought your gifts to church. The intention was to raise as much as we could in 1965 to save interest on borrowed money in 1966. When the treasurer informed me that as a result of the year's great work by you, only £458 was still owing to Walkers for the new £6,326 organ, I decided not to hold the Gift Day this year. Christmas time is an expensive one for all of us and I felt it was unfair after such a wonderful year to hold the Gift Day on Boxing Day. The organ builders too, have written to congratulate us and have cancelled any interest payments on the remaining £458. This means that we have paid no interest at all on borrowed money and early in 1966 we shall have settled the account with Walkers. What an achievement this will be! We hope in 1966 to repay our kind friends who loaned us money free of interest and helped the parish more than they will ever know to succeed in the great effort for the new organ.

Alongside the work for the new organ the parish commitments have been met in full and we have increased our Missionary giving by 5%, our target for an annual increase. In the day school we undertook a £3,000 project of which the parish share will be 25%. All this speaks volumes for the faithful in Halsall and is a direct result of the success of our Finance Scheme launched in 1962. Because those who joined the scheme have been faithful and continued their support, all the work of church restoration, organ re-building, death-watch beetle eradication, conversion to oil firing, indoor toilets in the school, has been possible.

It has been an inspiration to work with you all and the spirit of fellowship and service has been wonderful. The greatest inspiration, of course, has been our worship together and congregations have been excellent. The Family Eucharist has established itself as the focal point of worship and this gives us all great joy.

My hope for 1966 is that the same spirit of service and sacrifice and fellowship may be with us throughout the year.

Mrs. Bullough joins me in wishing you all a very happy new year.

God Bless you all,

Your sincere friend,

W. HERBERT BULLOUGH

A NEW YEAR MESSAGE

The dying of an old year often enhances our awareness of the passage of time. Each year has its own particular associations, and recedes into the past with its memories of ir retrievable days. There are incidents in this old year which you will never forget, and which I shall never forget — new friendships sealed, old friendships retained — new experiences of good and evil, new insight into our own natures and into the natures of our acquaintances! Above all, will this year be remembered by those for whom it has brought new understanding of the Gospel of Christ, for therein lies the key to the knowledge of ourselves, of other people, and of the world. At this season other years, too, come back to mind — years long since departed, and with them come memories of much that was beautiful in men and women and children of other times. All of us, especially older people, find pleasure, even if at times it is tinged with melancholy, in contemplation of these bygone fields of experience "Where the Enchanted Long Ago murmurs and smiles anew."

But a new year is beginning, in which we have to meet the continued challenge of life, and of our faith. The world outlook is still grim. But whatever life brings, let us believe that the thing of greatest importance is not to preserve our lives, but to spend them well and faithfully in the service of God, and of our fellow men. We must learn not to put ourselves first, but rather to live for others. If we live to give and not to get we shall not be disappointed nor disillusioned. To live in this spirit we need the inspiration of Christ. It is not the life of the "natural man," but the life of the man who has been born again — who has entered into the new life of the spirit and fulfils the loyalties of citizenship in a spiritual Kingdom. This is the life which Christ lived. It is this life we must accept from Him, and use in our turn to transform the world. We can only do this by putting religion in the only place it can be put, that is FIRST. And religion is the worship of God — the knowledge which comes through knowledge of God. Not one of us can say we need to progress no further. There is no time when the Christian can rest, and say, "I've done enough. I understand enough about God." It is far easier to find many men converted to good, than to find one man passing from good to better. In this new year let it be our aim individually, and as a parish, to be more seriously concerned with our religion, and to pass from good to better in our understanding of God and in our fellowship with Him.

A NEW YEAR RESOLUTION

That I may at all times be of cheerful spirit; offering courtesy, kindness, friendship, help always; giving of my time, ability, substance to sustain causes and purposes I believe in.

And when disappointment, failure, ills come my way, may I have grace to bear with a good courage and in silence, giving God thanks for this means of strengthening and improving my character.

And if good fortune or success is mine, to be quietly thankful and the more determined to help those that need:

And in all things and at all times to try and follow Jesus my Guide, Example and Master.

Amen

REFLECTIONS

The season of Epiphany which begins on January 6th commemorates the visit of the Wise Men to Bethlehem. The word Epiphany is derived from the Greek and means "the showing forth of divinity." It is the season of light. Light in the very widest meaning of the word. Applied to ourselves in everyday life it means diffuse light rather than darkness, or dullness. Think for a moment of the behaviour which brings light, darkness, or dullness into life.

Darkness is introduced by the quarrelsome, touchy, selfish, jealous person; by temper, and spite. It is produced by the thoughtless, who indulge in rash speech, who are swayed by prejudice; who have little regard for exactitude; who are content to express opinions very forcibly without recognising any obligation to seek for truth.

Dullness is something not so definite as darkness, yet it dims the light. Dullness is produced by the sort of person we call the "wet blanket," who pours cold water on everything; for whom nothing is ever right. He is the know-all, and the bore, because he is really very ignorant.

If we accept the judgment of Christ, the person who is nearest the image of the Creator is the one who brings light; who is cheerful, generous, tolerant, kind—who would rather forget his own prejudices, and preferences, and try to make other people happy—who is always ready to believe the other person may be right.

Christ said: "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." Here lies the secret, I think. So many people are only half alive. They do not realise the possibilities of their own nature, nor the wonders of the world in which they live. (And many of them would be terrified if they did!).

What a blind, narrow, puny mind is that of the quarrelsome, touchy, criticising, spiteful person! What a slow, muddy, perverted mind is that of the "wet blanket" and the bore!

R. L. Stevenson said that desire and curiosity are the two eyes through which we see the world in its most enchanting colours. To be deeply interested in the affairs of life; to enjoy keenly the varied experiences which the world offers; to enter into life trying to understand, to discover, to appreciate more and more the inexhaustible riches that it holds—this is to be truly alive, to possess light, and to be in a position to give it out. "Vast is the stretch of earth, and wide the territory of one's life should be." Why dwell a mere rabbit of a man in one field and one burrow, when the whole wide world, and the wonderful variety of experience is at one's disposal? "Alack for the years that are forfeit if we fail to perform one great task of happiness, and truly live while alive."

Stevenson epitomised the bore, and the bringer of darkness in the following passage—and this before the days of television!

"The air of the fireside withers all the fine wildings of a man's heart. He is so comfortable that he begins to prefer comfort to everything else on earth. Twenty years ago he was equally capable of crime or heroism; now he is fit for neither. His soul is asleep, and you may speak without constraint; you

will not wake him..." But this is the man who is a perfect menace when he does leave the fireside, and mix for a brief hour with others. He is selfish, self-centred, touchy, self-opinionated, utterly intolerant—as a rule. He has lost the ability to live. He has become a mere cabbage of a man, and he cannot understand those who still can live.

The Epiphany message is to show forth divinity. The fundamental quality of divinity is Light. With all our imperfections we can give light rather than darkness. The ordinary man can bring good cheer and brightness; humour, and generosity into the circles in which he moves—and to conclude with yet another quotation from Stevenson:

"Every heart that has beat strong and cheerfully, has left a hopeful influence behind it, and bettered the traditions of mankind."

LOOKING FORWARD

However good the past, the present and future can be even better. However good the past, it is far from perfection. This is true in our parish affairs, as I believe it is in affairs of business and industry.

Church attendances could still be far better. I am never surprised by the people whom I see in Church, but I AM surprised by the continued absence of so many who do not come, or who come very rarely. There are many people whose Sunday would be wasted if they failed to come to Church, it would be a great thing if their number were far greater.

And now, a word to those who come regularly! New people are coming into the Church continuously. Welcome them. The Church needs all its members to be missionaries.

Another very important matter is one that concerns the individual member of the congregation. We all have our personal likes and dislikes about sermons, special prayers, hymns and chants, and all the details of a Church service. It is an utter impossibility to conduct a service which suits the private fancy of every member of the congregation in every way. It is the responsibility of everyone to put the unity of the act of worship before their own personal preferences. We must "keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace."

Attendances at Holy Communion are far from satisfactory. This is the most important service of the Church, and the general trend today in the Church of England is to make it the best attended service of the day by holding it at a more convenient time than 8 o'clock in the morning. Where this is done, Matins becomes a very subsidiary service, and in many Churches is sparsely attended. We do not want to upset our Matins at Halsall, but we have a responsibility to the whole Church to put first things first, and above all we have a charge from God Himself to make full use of the Sacrament which Christ Himself instituted. These considerations come before any private preferences of any particular parish.

May I suggest that every confirmed member of our congregation should make a point of attending Holy Communion AT THE VERY LEAST, one Sunday a month.

DR. BARBARA HITCH

Link Letter No. 4

Iyi Enu Hospital,
P.O. Box 28,
Ogidi,
Onitsha Province,
E. Nigeria.
7th November, 1965

Dear Friends,

Thank you to those parishes whose correspondents have written to me and to Holy Trinity, Formby, who send their parish magazine. I am always glad to hear from you, though I find it difficult to reply! From my house in the evenings, already I can hear the nurses in chapel practising carols for Christmas. The year has gone quickly and we are so busy that the weeks fly past.

A fortnight ago we held the annual nurses' prize-giving and it was a joyous occasion of thanksgiving. The Hon. Chief, Mrs. Okpara, wife of the Premier of Eastern Nigeria, came to present the prizes. She spoke very well and seemed interested in all she saw. The party toured the hospital, going even into its oldest and most dilapidated parts. Appreciation was expressed of the service the hospital has given for over half a century, but there seems no likelihood of financial help which is needed for new buildings and equipment, and there are no signs of Nigerians or others coming to serve as sisters or as doctors. Since Dr. Edmunds left last July, I have been the only missionary doctor on the staff. Dr. Frazer leaves next year and I, too, am due home and also our invaluable manager, Mr. Johnson, and his wife. So far, no replacements have been found or promised.

The preparations for Church Union continue. We do not experience much change here as in this area the only other major denomination is Roman Catholic. We hope that when the medical board of the United Church is operating it will re-organise and co-ordinate the Christian medical institutions and other Christian medical work. There are still many villages where people suffer and die without proper medical care and there is need for more health education and preventive work, although the regional governments are doing a fair amount. In the east, the government has established health centres in some areas, and it has a teaching programme.

I think you will realise as you read this, and even read a bit between the lines, that there are many points for which we need your prayers. Staffing needs are acute, but more basic than these is the need for guidance for the Hospital Board so that the hospital may be developed along the most useful lines—useful, I mean, to God. In the past, it has done valuable work as a training-school for nurses and midwives, but if it is to continue to train in accordance with new government regulations, standards of equipment and staffing will have to be raised beyond any foreseeable possibility.

More important still is that it should be a training-ground for Christian disciples and a place where others are won to Him. Pray for the Church of Nigeria that former Methodists, Presbyterians and Anglicans may together learn more of the riches of God's grace and how to share them with those who are still far off.

With very best wishes for a joyful Christmas and every blessing in the New Year.

BARBARA HITCH

THE BLURRY AGE

I shuffled down into the smoke-filled room where glistening bodies writhed to the wail of jumbled sounds. A bleary one dripped with sweat behind his drums while the trumpeter weaved and the woman closed her eyes and shrieked of love.

I climbed the marble steps to the Museum of Art and viewed canvasses of splashes, zig-zags, swirls, and blobs. A twisted crescendo of drunken checker-board towered over me, and an ecstatic blob of emaciated people-things glowered in the corner.

I paid the lady in the glass cage 7s. 6d. to see on the screen scattered shreds of life, photographed out of focus and spliced together with masking tape.

I went to a Conference on Relevance, and I didn't know what anybody was talking about.

I attended a Joint-Committee on Theology where they said theology isn't necessary.

I read a book on God which said there isn't any God.

I read a book on morals which said there are none.

Then I turned to the Word of God and read, "The things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."

THE MOTHERS' UNION

On Tuesday, January 4th at 7.30 p.m. in school, we look forward very much to welcoming Mrs. W. Lockett. We shall again have the joy of seeing some of Mrs. Lockett's lovely pictures on the screen. I hope there will be a good attendance.

THE FARMERS' MEETING

On Thursday, 13th January, the subject of our discussion will be "Management Analysis for Profitable Farming" and Mr. W. W. Richardson, B.Sc., N.D.A., Agricultural Economist at Manchester University will be the speaker. This is a very important meeting and I hope there will be a really good attendance for such an important speaker.

SERVERS' ROTA

- Jan. 2—8 a.m. John Pounds.
9—8 a.m. Jim Heaton.
10.30 a.m. Harold Grimshaw, Raymond Juba.
16—8 a.m. Malcolm Serjeant.
23—8 a.m. Peter Balmer.
10.30 a.m. Harold Grimshaw, Tony Gaskell
30—8 a.m. Brian Heaton.

SANCTUARY FLOWERS

- Jan. 2—Mrs. R. Heaton.
9—Mrs. K. Edwardson.
16—Mrs. H. Gaskell.
23—Mrs. T. Sutton and Mrs. R. Lewis.
30—Mrs. Sumner and Mrs. D. & M. Dickinson

SIDEMEN'S ROTA

- Jan. 2—J. Serjeant, J. Banks, E. Grimshaw, E. Gawne.
9—H. Huyton, A. Grimshaw, T. Swift, T. Hunter.
16—R. A. Gaskell, D. Hunt, R. Dutton, T. Grimshaw.
23—E. Serjeant, D. Swift, W. Robinson, E. Blackhurst.
30—H. Baldwin, W. White, J. D. Grimshaw, G. Midgley.
Feb. 6—R. Heaton, J. Colley, J. Cheetham, H. Gaskell.

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November 27, 1965

November 27, 1965

November 27, 1965				November 27, 1966			
1965				1966			
Nett Cash Received				Nett Cash Received			
£ s. d.				£ s. d.			
Donations	42	0	0	5	0	0	
Sale of Thrift Tickets ..	181	9	6	155	5	0	
Pre-Bazaar Efforts ..	60	0	0				
Stalls:							
Cakes	39	5	6	59	13	0	
Apron	55	5	0	40	2	2	
Grotto	8	8	0	9	1	6	
Bottles	33	9	6	44	14	6	
Model Exhibition ..	3	4	0				
Christmas Decorations	8	2	3				
Hand Knitted Goods	26	10	0				
Sweets	1	14	6	6	3	3	
Guides and Brownies ..	2	18	11				
School	4	3	0	6	12	5	
Christmas Gifts ..	142	12	11	*164	9	0	
Fruit and Vegetables ..	70	10	4	55	0	0	
Linen	54	0	6	30	0	0	
Mothers' Union ..	49	8	10	44	2	9	
Barton	16	3	9	36	15	3	
Refreshments	9	2	7	11	2	9	
Raffle	32	12	0	32	13	3	
Whist and Domino Drive ..	10	12	0	12	19	0	
	851	13	1	727	18	5	
Including:							
Guild Stall				6	17	3	
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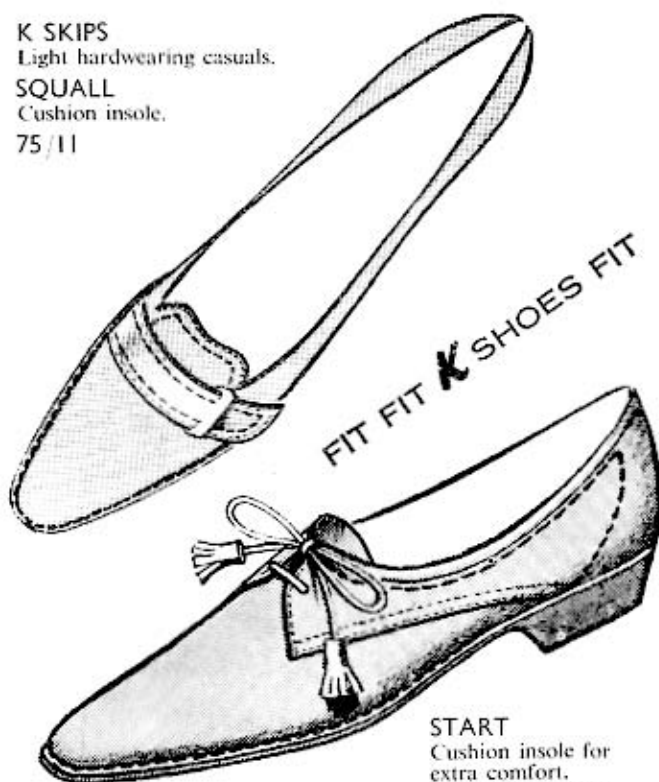
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