



Ackworth Parish Magazine



Nativity 1474-76 Oil on wood, Museo Lázaro Galdiano, Madrid

December 2004/January 2005

50p per copy (£3 per year)

~ Ackworth Parish Church ~ Who's Who ~

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Dear Friends,

'That time' has come around again, the writing of a Christmas article. For what is the best known religious story in the world, I still find it the most difficult letter of the year to write! You may find that puzzling, as the story of our Lord's birth into this world at Bethlehem is one of the most powerful and compelling accounts in religious literature. It is for that reason I find it so difficult - it is such a striking and well known story with such powerful and obvious messages - how do I write something different for what is now the eighth time?



Whilst searching for inspiration, I came across an advertising leaflet for Christmas cards, one in particular caught my eye. It was quite a simple little card depicting the holy family (& co) in the stable in cartoon-like figures, headed by the caption 'The Inn Crowd'. Not only did I find it amusing (the irony being that caption should have read 'the outside' or 'the 'back of the inn crowd'!) But after thinking about it, I began to realise that it triggered several poignant and quite deep spiritual reflections. Whether the designers of the card intended this, I've no idea, but several things struck me about this scene and its title!

The first thing to strike me - without going on too much about the commercialisation and secularisation of Christmas - is that it is in the Inn (including bars, clubs and pubs) and not the churches (which' our Lord came to establish) that the majority of people in our society celebrate this festival. Not that our Lord ever decried celebration, but I would at least hope that many of the revellers who make the most of Christmas partying might remember what or why they are celebrating!

Going back to our card caption 'The Inn Crowd' - if we changed it slightly by removing the second 'n' to read 'The In Crowd' - would this describe the regular and committed followers of Jesus who will be remembering and celebrating our Lord's birth at one of the many Christian Church services this year? Many may indeed claim to be members of God's chosen people, insiders, or 'the in-

crowd' as regards being recipients of God's grace and salvation offered by Jesus Christ.

However, if we do claim such an honour, then we should be careful about owning it. Let us not forget Jesus' teaching, the last group to claim such an accolade - the Jewish people who created so much opposition to our Lord's life and teaching. Often criticised for their self-righteous hypocrisy, do we want to claim such attention by our Lord?

Let us not forget who it was that our Lord was born onto this earth for! Was it for the in-crowd who were comfortable, well-off respected members of society, those who were confident that they had been saved and were on the right side of God - those who were on the in-side? No, Jesus came as a light to those who were living in darkness; a light that shines for all people, not just a chosen few. He came, not for the righteous, but as one who would *'...save his people from their sins'* (Matt 1:21).

Jesus came not for the IN-CROWD, those who though they were the insiders, or God's chosen, but for the outsiders; the 'out-crowd' if you like.

"No room at the inn". I hope we, who feel to be in-side the church, would not be too ready to extend such a greeting to those on the outside of our churches - especially those who approach our doors for their annual visit or perhaps even for the first time. Jesus was born an outsider; outside the inn and he died an outsider, crucified outside the city walls. We should be careful how we greet outsiders taking our warning from St Paul who wrote in his epistle to the Hebrews (13:2) *'Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some people have entertained angels without knowing it.'*



A Holy and Blessed Christmas and a Peaceful New Year to you all from Paul, Sue and family.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Reading through Saywell's "History of Ackworth" I found an article on The Grotto which is to be found in the Rectory grounds. When I asked the Rector about its whereabouts he said that he had been told that it had been an icehouse and was surprised when I said that it was believed to be a grotto. Apparently it is now pretty much overgrown by bushes and the yew trees which surrounded it are no longer there. This is the account to be seen in Saywell.

The grotto is a modern name given to a small ruin at the northeast corner of the Rectory garden. In 1852, the outer walls only were standing, but soon afterwards, it was roofed and made watertight with some of the refuse left from the Church restoration. What it had been, it is difficult to say, as there is no record of its history. Some say it is a pre-Reformation Oratory; and others, the Sanctum of the Chantry Priest. Of its antiquity there can be no doubt, for the three old yew trees which surround the ruin, are at least three centuries old. The adjacent pond also confirms this theory. It is not a modern pond, as its enormous lilies testify. The piece of land upon which the ruin stands is triangular in shape, and belongs in reality, to no one in particular. All that is known about it is that, previous to 1777, it was part and parcel of the Ackworth Park Estate, and was bought by the then Rector (Dr. Timothy Lee), and (according to the terms of his will,) presented by him to the "Rector of Ackworth for the time being and his successors forever"

Dr. Lee's will is dated March 30, 1777, and the terms of the bequest run as follows: "I give and devise unto Anthony Surtees, of Ackworth, Esq., and his heirs all that small parcel of land as it is now fenced off from the hemp yards in Ackworth aforesaid wherein the Grotto stands not now belonging to the Rectory, but I request that the said Anthony Surtees and his heirs will for ever hereafter permit the Rector of Ackworth for the time being to enjoy and occupy the said parcel of land without paying anything for the same. And I also request that the said Anthony Surtees or his heirs will do any lawful act for conveying and assigning the same parcel of land to my successors the Rectors of Ackworth for ever"

SPARROWS EVERYWHERE

Moving house in the middle of August proved to be a traumatic experience and we've said –Never again! We were very sorry to leave behind all the many varieties of wild birds which we had fed for so long but fortunately our neighbour felt "obliged" to carry on where we left off.

Here we must have one of the biggest sparrow populations in Yorkshire. The hedge alongside the house and the field is just heaving with them and the Virginia creeper, which at the moment covers the house, provides shelter during the day and a roosting place at night. Strange, seemingly unaccountable noises heard when all is quiet in the house are usually caused by some sparrow activity (we think!) We are trying to persuade them to use the newly acquired birdbath rather than the water butts, as the water there isn't as easily accessible when the weather is dry.

We are gradually encouraging other visitors to the garden by varying the food put out in the feeders. At the moment they have no difficulty in getting through four fat balls a day, peanuts and assorted seed. What amazes us is that the sparrows are now every bit as acrobatic as the blue tits and great tits on the nuts, fat and the other food. The robin just patiently waits for his food to fall from their efforts.

All this bird activity has nearly driven the resident cat, Henry, mad! He sits on the various windowsills, lashing his tail, grinding his teeth and howling at them and then taking flying leaps up the window in a vain attempt to capture them. Three pairs of net curtains were left behind in the house when we moved in but they were in shreds in a few days after his "hunting forays". They will not be replaced! He even managed one night to squeeze out of an upstairs window, which was open at the top, climb down the Virginia creeper onto a loggia and onto the ground in a vain safari. He's certainly never bored these days- frustrated maybe!

Meanwhile we await more winter visitors to the garden as the weather hardens and the abundant hedgerow food vanishes.



HANDY HINTS

From a 1954 magazine we have the usual monthly feature for women. Somehow I don't think that their ideas would go down well with today's children! But- just in case- here we have their helpful hint for January.

Parties are still on the go in January, so here are some useful suggestions on what to do with leftovers. Nothing is more disheartening than to be left with a pile of sandwiches, curling at the ends, after a children's tea party, cake and biscuits having vanished like snow in summer! To ensure the swift flight of these stale sandwiches, either make *Butterflies*, by cutting the sides with sloping cuts to make the wings, marking the body with a stroke of marmite for savoury sandwiches, or with a date for sweet ones- or make *Funny Faces*, by cutting the sandwich with a round cutter, and sticking on two sultanas for eyes and a bit of glace cherry for a mouth. A touch of butter will stick them on.

Ackworth Heritage Group Meetings

Last Thursday of month in Parish Rooms at 7.30pm

December

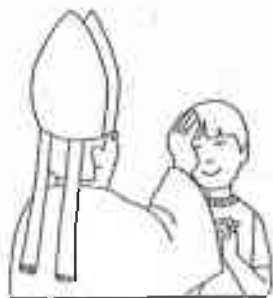
Roy Young entertains with 'Minding Someone Else's Business'

CONFIRMATION

We will be starting the confirmation course for young people and adults about Easter 2005.

If you feel that this the next step for you on your journey of faith, please come and see me in the next few weeks.

The Rector.



CAN YOU HELP?

The Chairman of the Friends of Pontefract Castle Group, Brian Tyson, was so upset when he saw the local milestones in such a very neglected state that instead of just regretting the fact he decided to do something about it.

He began by repainting and relettering the Pontefract milestones. Then in 2003 he kindly offered to repair and repaint the West Riding sign in High Ackworth for the Ackworth Heritage Group.

This year he has been repainting and relettering the milestones in Ackworth. Altogether seven milestones have been restored. All this work is entirely voluntary.

Brian's main concern in all this is that these milestones are part of our local history and they need to be preserved for future generations. All the stones were made before 1880 and many as early as 1760. Now here is how you could help. Brian would like to see someone in the village who would be prepared to "adopt" these milestones and be responsible for their upkeep.

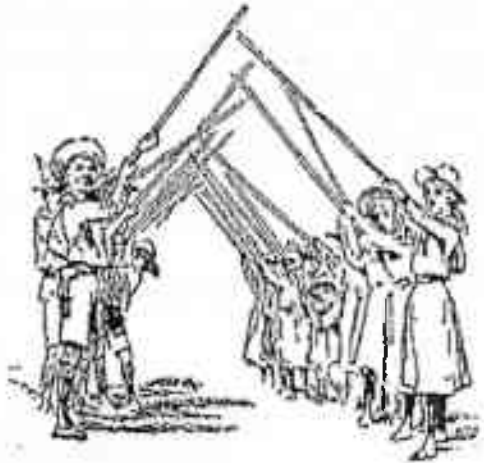


**Mr Brian Tyson, repainting Ackworth Milestone,
Barnsley Road, 2004**

CHURCHWARDENS' STAVES

The Churchwardens' staves are plain to see in St. Cuthbert's Church at the end of the pews and in most churches indicate where the Churchwarden sits. But why are they there and when are they needed? They can usually be seen in use when there is some important visitor to the church but apart from that there does not seem to be much call for them. It was not always so however.

In early mediaeval times a number of Church officials, notably the cantors who led the singing, carried staves or wands for practical purposes. Churchwardens apparently used their staves to clear a way for processions, and for the clergy when they entered or left the church. It should be remembered in those days there were no seats, and the congregation stood wherever they pleased, leaving no convenient gangway. So the staves served a very practical purpose then and now are merely symbolic.



Flowers	SC	AS	Brasses
Christmas	Congregation	Congregation	
Jan 9 th	Jean Reast	Paul Cooper	
Jan 16 th	V&P McWilliam	Flower Fund	V&P McWilliam
Jan 23 rd	V&P McWilliam	Ada Pritchard	V&P McWilliam
Jan 30 th		Flower Fund	



ALL SAINTS' FLOWER FUND

Many thanks to all who have contributed and/or sponsored a Sunday. There have been no worries about funding the flowers and, indeed, with the consent of the contributors, I have been able to make donations from the fund to the Restoration Appeal.

Thanks to Mary, Jean and Valerie who have been responsible for the lion's share of the arrangements. Valerie is very much missed. We would be grateful for further offers of help in arranging the flowers, particularly at festivals.

I would appreciate it if those still wishing to sponsor a Sunday, and preferring a specific date would get in touch with me before the end of the year.

I hope to hold my flower fund coffee morning on Tuesday November 30th. As usual Bring and Buy, only small gifts with Christmas in mind. Berried holly will be cut and "heeled in" in the greenhouse, collect some if and when you wish. Coffee and Christmas fare 50p. There will be a raffle.

My best wishes to all and thanks for all the help.

Ethel



A VISITOR'S TRIBUTE TO THE ALL SAINTS'
COFFEE MORNINGS

I am returning home after spending an enjoyable week in Ackworth with a dear friend. I had been aware for some time that a wonderful effort was being made at All Saints' by ladies holding weekly Coffee Mornings to raise funds for the Church Restoration Fund.

On Thursday 21st October I was privileged to attend the Coffee morning when to my amazement it was announced, with great joy, that this year's target had been reached. This means that £15,000 has been raised in just under three years, the Coffee mornings having been started on December 6th 2001.

With much admiration may I say "congratulations" to all the ladies who work so unstintingly to raise this magnificent figure.

I shall look forward with great interest to hearing of your future efforts!!

Thank you to all of you for my welcome to All Saints. Freda Ince

Dates for Your Diary

Dec. 6	Mon	7.30pm	PCC Meeting	St Cuthbert's
14	Tue	2.00pm	Bell Lane Carol Service	All Saints'
15	Wed	2.00pm	Bell Lane Carol Service	All Saints'
18	Sat	7.00pm	Castleford Male Voice Choir	St Cuthbert's
20	Mon	2.00pm	Howard School Carol Concert	St Cuthbert's
Jan. 6	Thu	7.30pm	Epiphany - Holy Communion	St Cuthbert's
23	Sun	7.00pm	United Service - Start of Week Of Prayer for Christian Unity	Quaker Meeting House
25	Tue	7.30pm	Conversion of St Paul - Holy Communion	St Cuthbert's

A FRESH LOOK AT THE BEATITUDES

- Blessed are those who can laugh at themselves:
they will have endless amusement.
- Blessed are those who can tell a mountain from a molehill:
they will be spared a lot of trouble.
- Blessed are those who know when to shut up and listen:
they will learn new things thereby.
- Blessed are those who are attentive to the call of others with
out thinking of themselves:
they will be sowers of joy.
- Blessed are those who know how to take small things seri-
ously and large things peacefully:
they will go far in life.
- Blessed are those who can admire a smile and ignore a frown:
their path will be sunlit.
- Blessed are those who can keep quiet and smile, even when
someone cuts them off in mid sentence, when some-
one contradicts them, when someone treads on their
toes:
the gospel is beginning to penetrate their heart.
- Blessed are you if you can recognise the Lord in everyone you
meet:
you have true light and wisdom.

EXCELLENT CHRISTMAS PRESENTS!

Church Tea Towels £3.50 each or £10 for 3
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All proceeds towards the church
Restoration, Repair and Reordering Appeal

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Or Ann Attack 610185

THE CHRISTMAS TREE by LAURENCE HOUSMAN

If Christ could ever be born again,
 Who would His mother be?
 "I", said Sorrow; and "I", said Pain;
 And "I", said Poverty.

But how, if Christ should come again,
 Could One be born of Three?
 "Are not the griefs of Earth a strain
 Of the Blessed Trinity?"

And who, on His birthnight, again
 His worshippers would be?
 "Love", said Sorrow; and "Pity" said Pain;
 And "Peace", said Poverty.

And who the Seers, from what far lands,
 Would come to look at Him?
 "The simple of heart with serving hands,
 And little ones light of limb"

And what would the Kings of Earth do then?
 "Put the simple of heart to flight;
 While down in the darkened homes of men
 Little ones cried for Light"

Oh, then, what the use- if once again
 The world rejects the Sign?
 "Christ will still be Lover of men
 And His Heart may be yours and mine"

"For this is the Tree whose blessed yield
 Bears leaf from darkest ground;
 And the wounds of the Nations shall be healed
 Wherever those Leaves are found"



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THE GROTTA OF THE NATIVITY

This extract from a December 1953 parish magazine was written by a man who had visited Bethlehem at Christmas time and was greatly impressed by all he had seen. He writes in detail about all he saw and this piece is about how the Grotto in particular affected him.

"Now we come to the Grotto of the Nativity, and on either side of the stairs leading down to it are Crusader pillars with crosses marked on them. The sacred spot marked by a star in a niche under a rock is said to be the actual place where the King of all kings was born. Countless millions have knelt there and kissed the star. In another corner is the spot where the manger is thought to have been, and a special altar commemorates the visit of the Wise Men. Everything about the church excites a deep sense of pious wonder. It is impossible not to feel awed. Humility brings a lump to the throat. Pride and joy in the knowledge that we are tiny specks in the mystical relationship between man and God almost brings tears to the eyes.

Making our way up again we pass out of the church into the brilliant sunshine. Down the street of the Milk Grotto we can see the Latin bells that ring out their glad tidings every Christmas Eve. By climbing a wall we get a view of the Shepherds' Fields- that green valley where, whilst the shepherds tended their flocks, news came to them of the birth of Jesus Christ. Somewhere in this valley were the fields of Boaz. Ruth, who came from the hills of Moab with Naomi, here gleaned corn. David played as a boy in the very valley before us. All these thoughts fill our minds as we turn to leave. Today the hills are beautiful with the play of light and shadow on them. They demand a last look. They are an integral part of a scene which will always be remembered at Christmas by those privileged to have visited the little town of Bethlehem."

Gift Service

Sunday 5th December
5.30pm at St Cuthbert's

This is your opportunity to make child's Christmas special. Please wrap your gift and mark 'boy' or 'girl' and suitable age.

All gifts will then be collected by the local Social Services to be distributed in time for Christmas.

Please note that any gifts brought to church after the time will have to be stored until next year!



St Cuthbert's and All Saints'

Special Christmas Services

12th December		
3.00pm	Village Carol Service	St Cuthbert's
19th December		
3.30pm	Carol Service	All Saints'
24th December - Christmas Eve		
5.30pm	Crib Service	St Cuthbert's
11.30pm	Midnight Mass	St Cuthbert's
25th December - Christmas Day		
8.30am	Holy Communion	All Saints'
10.15am	Family Communion	St Cuthbert's
26th December - St Stephen's Day		
9.30am	Parish Communion	All Saints'
	<i>(no other services on this day)</i>	

THE PARISH WALK

I thought about going on "the Parish Walk". It seemed like a good idea at the time. After all it is only a matter of "putting one foot in front of the other" as my mother used to say (she'd think nothing of us all walking to my grandmother's. we lived at Intake, Doncaster and grannies were at Mexborough and Swinton--- a Long Way)

I got a lift to St. Cuthbert's after passing The Boot and Shoe on the way. There is a big horse chestnut tree with lots of conkers on the ground. I have to resist the urge to gather them all up as I'm too old to play at "conkers" now. I felt like singing "Hail the Conkering Hero Comes"—but I didn't!

I expected there would be a lot of people walking but I think there were only about thirteen of us. Paul was unable to come as he'd injured his ankle in training. However he said a prayer for us and saw us on our way.

It was very pleasant as I walked with my friend Iris. We agreed to walk seven miles- half way. Again I felt like singing. This time it was "Onward Christian soldiers" —but once more I didn't!

We walked along, quite happily chattering amongst ourselves and generally putting the world to right. I found out that John Issit was walking to raise money to send to Haiti, as a lady in his church came from there. It was for victims of the hurricane disaster.

Again songs came into my head "Merrily along the way we go" and then when it began to rain "Soft refreshing rain" Looking around after the rain stopped I saw a rainbow and the song "I can sing a rainbow" came to my head. The rainbow was there only briefly, then vanished, back from wherever it came

It became slippery and wet underfoot. I was wearing ordinary clothes and shoes, as I don't have hiking boots. Even so I found it enjoyable. Looking around there seemed to be only eight of us left as some had gone ahead quickly before us. Soon one lady and her dog dropped out.

"We plough the fields and scatter" I thought, wishing they'd left the footpaths alone as the ridges we were walking along were getting quite slippery. Before we knew it we were almost half way, We stopped at June's house for a "comfort stop" How kind of her as

we were all a bit wet and muddy. Next stop was All Saints' Church where tea, coffee and biscuits were provided. Most refreshing! "I like a nice cup of tea in the morning" of course occurred to me. We ate our sandwiches and felt quite refreshed afterwards. One more lady dropped out at this point, a resident of St. Clement's Court. As Iris decided to walk the rest of the way I thought that I would also.

We went down Rhyddings Drive and through even more fields. (My feet now began to hurt as I'd rubbed the skin off my toes) We walked by the Turkey farm. I saw a large rock with a strange sort of dog sculpture made out of metal. (This being the entrance to the Country Park). Next stop was at Ada's, but as we were near my own home Iris and I went there for the second "comfort stop", Common sense told me to stop there but of course I decided to go on.

We went over Hessle Common. There was a vast amount of ripe blackberries. I've never seen so many. There were six of us at this point. We continued walking, and as always a song came into my head it was a line from Good King Wenceslas—"I CAN GO NO LONGER". However I couldn't just give up in the middle of nowhere!

We climbed over a stile and felt really pathetic, as I needed help! We walked through a field of young bulls and I was wearing red! A young bull, a most handsome creature, stopped eating grass, looked me right in the eye. I read his mind. He was thinking "You silly old person, you look tired out" Then he went back to his grass. Finally we got back to St. Cuthbert's Church and Paul gave me a lift home. I'm not saying that I was at all tired, but I had a bath and went to bed at four o'clock. Shattered!!!

I was very grateful that people were so very generous and I was amazed to collect £140, which I gave to Paul for the Restoration Appeal. Will I do it again? I don't think so. I'll leave it to the younger ones.

Mary Walker



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THE PRINCE OF WALES HOSPICE by DR PAUL FOX

The Prince of Wales Hospice opened its door to patients fifteen years ago, and has gone from strength to strength since.

The mission statement of The Hospice contains the words "Total Commitment" and "Total Care". This is the essence of what The Hospice strives to achieve through the army of people who work there, from the dedicated clinical staff working on the ward to the volunteer gardeners, or the people who do the ironing. Everyone contributes something to the organisation which supports those patients in need.

The Hospice exists to provide Specialist Palliative Care to those patients in the Five Towns area who are suffering from a life threatening disease, and no further curative treatment is planned. Consequently many people spend their last days there.

However, The Hospice is not a sombre place to work or visit. Many of the patients who visit or stay there are full of joy and life. The Hospice is not about dying, it is about living. Living the life that is left.

The Day Hospice is a place where some patients will visit once a week, to spend some time receiving support from a wide variety of professionals and volunteers. This may be emotional, psychological, or spiritual support. There are many activities taking place on the Day Hospice which helps many people to achieve things that they never thought they would, such as the patient who recently had a book published.

The Lymphoedema service exists to support those patients, who are suffering from swollen arms or legs. This clinic is served by dedicated professionals trained in what is a very specialised field. The Prince of Wales Hospice is only one of a few Hospices in the Yorkshire region to have such a service, and consequently patients are referred from well beyond the Five Towns area.

The In Care Unit has nine beds, and provides care for those patients who cannot be easily managed by their community teams at home. At least fifty per cent of patients admitted to the Unit are admitted for symptom management, and will be discharged home an

average two weeks later.

The Prince of Wales Hospice is a charity, and therefore depends on Fund Raising events held within the community to keep its doors open. The Hospice is eternally grateful for all the help it receives in donations, gifts, or practical help. Without such help, those patients who are in desperate need would not receive the specialised care which they deserve.

THE PRINCE OF WALES HOSPICE ACKWORTH SUPPORT GROUP

Once more, another successful coffee morning was held to support The Prince of Wales Hospice. As usual, planning meetings were held to make preparations and to decide the best way of attracting people so that the event would be a success. Much fun is had during these meetings- how many tombola prizes do we need? Making sure that they are all numbered and that the requisite numbers are carefully folded and kept safely- once they were mistakenly thought to be rubbish and thrown away! Needless to say "panic stations" were on full alert.

The Support Group always tries to provide stalls that are attractive and full of interesting, good quality things to buy.

On October 23rd extra publicity was used and seemed to attract lots of people who we hadn't seen before.

The atmosphere was busy and friendly and everyone seemed to enjoy themselves. It was pleasing to see people of all ages and especially the children, some of whom proved to be helpful at clearing up and generally helping.

As usual, generosity was the keynote and as a result of the raffle tickets sold in the Co-op and the money raised at the coffee morning a total of £929.81 was realised. This was the first occasion on which ALL the raffle tickets were sold!

The Support Group wishes to thank everyone who most generously supported this money raising event and those who have since given donations.

We look forward to welcoming you all in 2005. Perhaps we can top £1,000?

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A TIME TO REMEMBER

Some residents of Ackworth may remember Bob Chambers, who worked on the railway before volunteering for the Royal Air Force during the Second World War. Three of his nieces recently visited his grave in the British Military Cemetery in Budapest, Hungary. Gillian Brewer, Jennifer Myers and Angela Beamish, daughters of the late Alan and Kathleen Parker, Bob's sister, paid the visit to commemorate the 60th anniversary of Bob's being lost during operations on 14th October 1944.

Sgt. Joseph Robert Chambers, whose parents, Fred and Elsie Chambers, also lived in Ackworth before moving to Blackpool, was an Air Gunner in the eight-man crew of a Liberator flying with 178 Squadron out of a base near Foggia in Italy. Their aircraft was one of two that failed to return after a night raid on marshalling yards south-west of Budapest and crashed near a village south of Lake Balaton.

Gillian, who remembered her late uncle well, had carried out a lot of research in the last few years, establishing that, although the authorities in the nearby village had accorded the victims a respectful burial in the village cemetery at the time, the Commonwealth War Graves Commission had brought all the military graves in Hungary together into the British Cemetery at Budapest after the war. The ladies and their husbands spoke to some villagers at the crash site and on 14th October laid a British Legion wreath on Bob's grave.



Gillian said that it had been a very moving experience to recall her youthful uncle. The group reflected with gratitude on the generosity of the local people in such difficult circumstances and on the interest the present inhabitants had shown in their visit. "We felt we had somehow brought the family just a little more together at last and hoped we were representing too the thoughts of the relatives of all those other aircrew who shared Bob's fate and his present resting place."

PCC JOTTINGS FOR OCTOBER 2004

- There is a vacancy at Howard School for a Foundation Governor. It would be preferable if this could be filled by a member of Ackworth Parish Church since the place could be lost if we were unable to identify someone within the church.
- Christmas services:

Christmas Eve	5.30pm	Carols round the crib
	11.30pm	Midnight Mass
Christmas Day	8.30am	All Saints'
	10.15am	St. Cuthbert's
Boxing Day	9.30am	All Saints'
- Proposed bench to be sited on the north side of St. Cuthbert's in memory of Ann Walker's husband.
- 18th December, Castleford Male Voice Choir concert, St. Cuthbert's Church.
- 18th December, Santa Day in the Parish Rooms. The church stall, Wine and Water.
- Parish Weekend 2005, brochures to be looked at.
- Bishop's Development Fund, joke books @ £5 each. Copies to be ordered.

PCC JOTTINGS FOR NOVEMBER 2004

- Foundation Governor vacancy still not filled.
- Disabled ramp installed in St. Cuthbert's Church porch.
- The Harvest lunch raised £162.81 for The Sudan.
- Jars of grace currently available in aid of UNICEF, specifically for malnourished children.
- A new Appeals brochure has been printed and is now ready for distribution.
- A replacement pump has been installed for St. Cuthbert's central heating system.
- The new table of Parochial fees were agreed for the year 2005.

CASTLEFORD MALE VOICE CHOIR

**Christmas Concert in St. Cuthbert's Church, High Ackworth
Saturday 18th December, 7.30pm
Refreshments Served.**

**Tickets: £5, £3 concessions
Available from the social committee:
Biddy Branston
Doreen Seal**

ACKWORTH PARISH COUNCIL SANTA DAY

**Bell Lane Community Centre
Saturday 18th December**

GOLDEN JUBILEE

Father Burtott, the former priest at Our Lady of Lourdes, who has since retired and is living in Rotherham, is returning to Ackworth and Kinsley in December. This is to mark the Golden Jubilee of his ordination into the priesthood. There will be a special Mass to celebrate the occasion and there will also be a presentation.

ACKWORTH CONCERT SOCIETY

**Performances take place at 7.30pm
Quaker School Meeting House**

11th December 2004

**Christmas Music
Sally Burgess, Soprano,
Neal Thornton, Piano.**

15th January 2005

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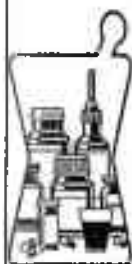
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Views from the Vale*

The move from England's (or Yorkshire's) largest village to the very compact, truly rural village of Elston is now 6 weeks behind us, but it seems quite distant, partly because the change is so great.

Not only have we left many friends, but also the amenities of Ackworth – the shops, the surgery, the filling station up the hill – and the traffic and dirt of the A628. Now, instead of the choice of services at two churches every Sunday, we have one service a week, except the fourth Sunday of the month, when there is none. We belong to a living of five parishes until the last incumbent retired in June, but now in the interregnum and the foreseeable future there are eight.

Elston, founded in the 5th century by the Angles, takes its name, Elvas-tun from Elva, a Viking leader, pointing to the occupation in the 9th century, and it appears in the Domesday book under this name. All Saints' Church dates from the 13th Century, though part of the tower may be Saxon work. It has been described as 'a neat little church' and well restored by various generations of Darwins.

Elston also has a Chapel of Ease, built in Norman times. This delightful little church in a field is now maintained by the Historical Churches Trust and used only for a candlelit carol service and on Rogation Sunday. The Methodist Chapel was built in 1813 and that has a regular Sunday service and Sunday School.

Like Ackworth, Elston has been almost 'in the thick of battle' in the past. The extremely bloody battle of Stoke Fields was fought in March 1487, just between the village and neighbouring East Stoke. This was the final engagement in the Wars of the Roses, when the Pretender Lambert Simnel was defeated by Henry VII. 7000 men are said to have been butchered in a few hours. Later, in the Civil War there was a skirmish on the other side of the village, as Elston lay between Royalist Newark and Parliamentary Nottingham.

The Darwin family have been associated with the village since Elston Hall became their family home in 1680. Charles Darwin's grandfather, Erasmus, an eminent doctor, scientist, poet, inventor, business entrepreneur and sceptic, was born and brought up here. The Hall was not sold until after the Second World War. After housing a boys' prep school, it was finally converted into separate dwellings in the 1980's. The Darwin connection is still important to the church and the village has benefited much from the generosity of the family over the years.

Elston lies between the Trent and the Devon, but is high enough to be

free from fear of flooding. The land is open, with some small woods or copses and gently undulating to fairly flat, so we enjoy the wide skies reminiscent of home in Norfolk. It is excellent for cycling and walking, with a good number of footpaths and bridleways.

There are now about 650 residents in 280 households. It is surprising that there are 26 businesses here, including motor repairs, building trades and beauty and fitness, not to mention The Chequers, which provides food, at lunch times and in the evening and is particularly popular for its Sunday lunches. We are looking forward to a Community Shop opening in the New Year. This will provide post office facilities, basic groceries, local produce, newspapers and magazines, 'café space, where you can make a drink, library and general meeting place.

Communication is important here. As well as two notice boards which are fully used to announce meetings and give other information, the Parish Council has its own board for posting up Minutes and details of the P C members and dates of meetings. It also reports regularly in the magazine on all matters discussed.

The Anglican Methodist junior school is situated behind the church, with the village hall opposite, a recycling area there and a playing field and beautifully equipped play area. This is the hub of parish life – many local clubs meet in the hall and some organisations from the wider area hold their events there. Children pour out of school to join siblings in the play area and on the field after school and this happy time stretches till parents have to drag their offspring away, or the weather makes everyone run. The box that is formed by Top Street, Pinfold Lane, Low Street and Toad Lane is criss-crossed with footpaths, so there are many short-cuts. The nearest we come to a filling station now is the sight of two antique petrol pumps at different places on Low Street – yes, it is lower lying than Top Street! The pumps are beautifully painted – one blue and one green.

Our first Saturday evening here found me in the packed church for a classical guitar concert. My only regret was that as I had left David and Jonathan erecting the bookcase at home, I could not follow the rest of the audience to the hall for some supper afterwards. All traces of regret vanished when I beheld the transformation worked back home! Sunday evening we went to Harvest Festival at the neighbouring parish of Sibthorpe. The small, lovely church was beautifully decorated, and the packed congregation sang lustily. There was a feeling of many there being actively involved in the harvest of crops on farms and in gardens. The lay preacher, Jessica, invited us to meditate on

the progression from preparing the land and sowing the seed right through to harvest, relating this to the way we live our lives. Afterwards we were soon chatting to several members of the church family over a glass of wine and were invited to join them at the Harvest Supper the following Friday.

Again the church was the venue, the pews moved to either side of trestle tables set up in the nave and chancel. It was packed! 80 people enjoyed a three or four course meal – home-made soup, roast beef / chicken or vegetarian dish, with Yorkshires and all the vegetables, a great variety of desserts and a huge cheeseboard. We supplied our own drink. A very happy, noisy evening with all the chatter and laughter and a chance to meet quite a lot of people. A raffle ensured a little extra for church funds, as well as providing more interest and amusement. Each church has its own harvest supper. Though we went to the Festival here at Elston, we were away when the Supper took place, so we have to look forward to that another year. Perhaps some others, too!

Our next service at Sibthorpe was very different. There was a tiny congregation for this 9 am Holy Communion – several regulars away or ill, but the warmth generated between us and the vicar after at coffee meant that we chatted on for half an hour.

So far in the Village Hall we have attended an Open Morning of The Neighbourhood Watch Scheme, complete with bouncy castle and a fire engine with siren blaring from time to time, a meeting of the local history society and an excellent Remembrance-Tide Concert. I have missed a WI meeting and a big open WI meeting, complete with English country dancing, but went to one in the neighbouring parish. I have just returned from the 3rd meeting of the Garden Club, as I sit down to check this through. We are regaled with the church bells at regular ringing practice on Monday evenings, as well as at service times. Brownies and Beavers, Playgroup and Mothers and Toddlers groups all thrive there. There is Line Dancing, Keep Fit and a choir. I think I shall have to go along to the latter to see if it is true I really cannot sing!

*Locals refer to this as The Vale, though we are not strictly within the Vale of Belvoir.

Valerie and David Cook

From the Registers

Baptisms

Sept. 12	Harvey Joel Roberts
Sept. 26	Samantha Alison Davies and Claire Helen Davies
Oct. 10	Nathan James Spence

Marriages

Aug. 29	Christopher Joyce and Emma Louise Foreman
Sept. 4	Mark A. Purchon and Tracey Callear
Sept. 17	Christopher R Laidler and Charlotte K. Palmer
Sept. 18	Shane B. Reid and Tracy A. Frost
Oct. 2	Alistair J. McLoughlin and Helen C. Barnsley Donald Briggs and Delia Chesham

Funerals

Aug. 18	Beatrice Wigglesworth (94), 45 Hillcrest Road
Aug. 20	David Alan Withington (69) 23 Rhyddings Avenue
Aug. 24	George Lesley Booth (86) 44 Doncaster Road Estate
Sept. 3	Gladys Hirst (80) 50 Chapel Garth
Oct. 18	Olive Winnifred Jenno (93) The Croft, Normanton
Oct. 19	Gordon Fell (74) 50 Pontefract Road
Oct. 20	Robert Lawrence (67) 33 Hillside Road

December 2004 and January 2005 Readings and Readers

5 December	2nd Sunday of Advent Isaiah 11:1-10 Romans 15:4-13	SG Mrs Woofinden	AS Mrs Backhouse
12 December	3rd Sunday of Advent Isaiah 35:1-10 James 5:7-10	Brlony Lewis	Mrs M Walker
19 December	4th Sunday of Advent Isaiah 7:10-16 Romans 1:1-7	George Scargill	
26 December	1st Sunday of Christmas Isaiah 63:7-9 Hebrews 2:10-18		Dr McWilliam
2 January	2nd Sunday of Christmas Jeremiah 37:7-14 Ephesians 1:3-14	Jane Siddall	Mrs S Hall
9 January	Baptism of Christ Isaiah 42:1-9 Acts 10:34-43	Sue Hartley	Mrs Backhouse
16 January	2nd Sunday of Epiphany Isaiah 49:1-7 1 Corinthians 1:1-9	Mr Shaw	Mrs M Walker
23 January	3rd Sunday of Epiphany Isaiah 9:1-4 1 Corinthians 1:10-18	Susan Clarke	
30 January	4th Sunday of Epiphany Genesis 1:1 - 2:3 Romans 8:18-25	Miss Parker	Dr McWilliam

Sunday Services for December and January

Sunday Services (usual pattern)

8.30am	Holy Communion	All Saints'
10.15am	Family Communion	St Cuthbert's
3.30pm	Evensong	All Saints'
	(except last Sunday in month)	
4.00pm	Open Door Service	All Saints'
	(last Sunday in month)	

Wednesday Service

9.30am	Holy Communion	All Saints'
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Please note: No evensongs at All Saints' during December except as listed under Special Christmas Services. Other services and times may also be affected by our seasonal services please see elsewhere in the magazine.

Our Lady of Lourdes Church

Sunday	9.00am	Mass
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ACKWORTH COMMUNITY CHURCH

Sunday	10.30am	Worship
	6.30pm	Prayer Meeting
Tuesday	9.30—11.15am	Parents and Toddlers Group
Wednesday	1.15—3.00pm	Parents and Toddlers Group

All services and meetings are held at the Ackworth Parish Council Community Centre, Bell Lane.