



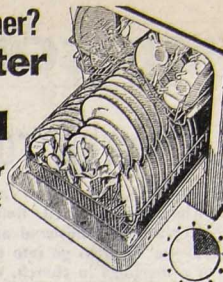
FEB 1972

CAVERSHAM BRIDGE

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Chris Brodan calling



What's the use!

A team from one of our modern universities was recently well and truly beaten on 'University Challenge'. In fact they only just got off the ground.

It wasn't long before letters appeared in the local press.

"This is a technological university. Students spend their time acquiring useful knowledge. They don't stuff their heads with biblical myths and the antics of ancient Greek Gods, which are the only subjects asked about on this programme".

In other words, the only knowledge worth having is practical knowledge, and the only things worth having are things which have a practical relevance.

Obviously when we buy something which has a specific job to do we expect it to work, and we judge it by its effectiveness. No matter how beautiful a car may look, it's not much good to us if it won't start.

Soft options

But it seems to me that we're in danger of judging everything solely by the test of its usefulness.

What happens when a piece of sculpture is put in the middle of a city? 'What's it for?' we ask, and somehow feel a bit better if we can justify its existence by saying that it is a landmark, a traffic island or something.

This kind of attitude creeps in to everything. It shows itself in the fact that in schools there are cinderella subjects like music, art, drama, which are not quite respectable because they don't appear to have any immediate relevance to earning a living. They are thought of as soft options, as time wasters.

Practicality

It shows itself in our reluctance to subsidise orchestras, theatres, art galleries which are incapable of standing on their own feet and making a profit. And in our eagerness to spend money on bigger and better roads which have some obvious immediate use.

It shows itself in the erection of buildings which look ugly and depressing, but which are perfectly functional for the job they have to do.

If the yardstick of practicality is the only one we use, then many of the beautiful things that make life worth living for me are going to be lost.

In that case human life will become sterile and impoverished. There are signs that it is happening.

THAT'S LIFE

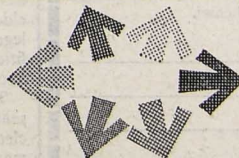
A NEW SERIES OF PICTURES THAT HIGHLIGHT THE HUMAN SCENE



AGAINST THE ODDS

Dr. Fred Milson is a Methodist Minister and a prominent member of the staff of a well known Midland College of Education. Before the war with Pakistan broke out he visited India to see for himself the refugee situation on the Indian-East Pakistan border.

As he stepped from the plane and met those who were to guide him around



the squalor and misery he said—foolishly as he himself later admitted — "show me the worst, I want to see it all".

What he saw had a shat-

tering effect upon him. Although he had read about the misery and seen the pictures of the plight of refugees on television and in newspapers, nothing in the mass media had brought home to him the absolute horror of the situation.

The stench, the misery, the hunger hit him harder than he thought possible and he returned to England feeling that he had been involved in a nightmare.

He felt most deeply the absolute immensity of the problem. A problem that wasn't going to be solved by anything other than the most

massive aid on an international scale. He knew that there was very little that he could do personally to ease the situation. Any money that he could raise would be as a drop in the ocean, and yet he knew that for his own integrity he would have to do something.

By skimping and scraping from his own income and cadging from friends he raised £200 which he sent to the relief fund for the Pakistan refugees. He knew how little it was. He knew that it was hardly worth the doing. Yet at least he did it. He didn't shrug his shoulders and say 'what's the use?'

PERSONAL POSERS

WE WANTED TO BE MARRIED IN CHURCH

Recently I married in a register office. I had been divorced. Before going to the Registrar my husband and I had called on the Vicar to go into the possibility of a marriage in church, which we both very much wanted. The Vicar told us that we would actually have to be married in a civil ceremony — but that we could have a service of blessing afterwards. We refused that because it seemed so hypocritical. Can you explain what to us seems a ridiculous double-think?

J. H. Ipswich.

The Church of England's rules officially do not permit marriages in church when one or both of those to be married have a previous marriage partner still living. The idea of this rule is to emphasise the permanent nature of a marriage vow.

Yet many clergy will give a service of blessing to "second" marriages after they have been solemnised in a register

office. They feel that a "second chance" honestly entered into is under the blessing of God, particularly as repentance and a fresh start lie at the heart of the Christian Gospel.

The Church is stretched on the rack between wanting to serve those who, with real seriousness, want to marry a second time and the need, somehow, to state how solemn the marriage bond is. It would be irresponsible to arrive at a snap and early answer to such a thorny problem which is so vital to our society. But the Church is officially giving serious thought to this problem, which has been raised by puzzled clergy, like your Vicar, trying to serve the deep-felt needs of people such as yourselves.

The current position does seem two-faced. It is the result of this period of changing policies.



Have you got a problem?
Readers are invited to

write to "Personal Posers".
Our special team of experts
at 319, Gazette Buildings,
Corporation Street, Bir-
mingham, 4, will do their
best to tackle your queries.

SHOULD MY HUSBAND SHARE THE CHORES?

I was always taught by my mother that running the home, cooking, cleaning, looking after the children, was the wife's job. It's hard work and often drudgery but I accepted it happily as my duty... until recently. A new neighbour tells me I am foolish not to get more out of my husband in domestic work and looking after the children. What's more she tells me it creates a more healthy atmosphere for the children's growing up. What do you think?

M.B., Cricklewood.

Without wishing in any way to dodge the issue I must say that I think the answer depends to a certain extent upon the wife's particular situation.

If she is at work full time and is as much a bread-winner as her husband then I believe that she has a right to expect a full amount of help in the home. If she does not go out to work and her husband's job is demanding then I would feel that the wife must bear a greater share of household chores and responsibilities.

No one pretends that running a house

and looking after children is easy or pleasant. Very few women actually are fulfilled by the chores of housework. But all jobs have their hardships and it would be wrong to expect that a man carrying a responsible job should also bear the burden of running a home, especially if he is responsible for such things as the garden and the maintenance of the car and the do-it-yourself things about the house.

In any decent marriage responsibility and chores have to be shared. It's not very easy for an outsider to decide what is the right model of sharing for any family. Personally I don't go much on your neighbour's attitude of 'getting as much as you can out of your husband'. This doesn't smae of a very happy relationship and certainly wouldn't get my vote as the basis for a good marriage.

One thing you might do if you haven't already done it is to talk the whole thing over with your husband, especially if you feel you are getting a raw deal. At least discussing the matter is likely to lead to the right solution for you.

...letters

The Health Service

Sir,
The letter from Miss Few in your November issue is for the most part unmitigated propaganda for the present Government and apparently stems from the fact that she has been appointed to a "whitewash" Steering Committee and finds the present Minister "charming".

She deals very briefly with the Environmental Health Services but fails to mention Housing, which is a very important aspect. The "charming" Minister was responsible for Housing during the 1959-1964 Tory Government and carried out rigorously the provisions of the 1957 Housing Act which was a Landlords' Charter and under which thousands of people left their homes either voluntarily or compulsorily because of exorbitant rent demands which they could not meet, or direct harassment by the landlords or their agents. I suppose from the genteel remoteness of Buckinghamshire Miss Few has never experienced "Rachmanism" where elderly and infirm persons were forced from their homes by direct cruelty and the "charming" Minister, despite representations from many Boroughs, did nothing about it.

I know this from first hand experience because I was then and subsequently the Chairman of a Health Committee in a London Borough and so I want to record and establish this for it is the truth. Sir Keith Joseph is a "hard line" Tory whose sympathies will never be with the poor, the elderly and the under-privileged and is completely unfitted to be the Minister for Social Services.

The intention of the present Government is very clear, they intend to dismantle the Welfare State, to place the onus for further expenditure upon Local Authorities and individuals in the place of expenditure by the Central Government in order to cut Company and Super Tax. The loser will be the public, the ordinary people

without great wealth, because Local Authorities either cannot or will not bear the financial implications and thus the N.H.S. will be deprived of funds and eventually discredited and dismantled.

Miss Few's knowledge of contemporary events would appear to be sadly lacking. The Conservative Party in Parliament voted against the introduction of the National Health Service. In 1956 the Tory Minister of Health set up a Committee under the late Professor Guillebaud to enquire into the N.H.S. in the hope the Enquiry would give them reason to dismantle the Service. However, that Committee amongst its 23 recommendations said this:—
(i) The structure of the N.H.S. was correct.
(ii) The N.H.S. should receive at least £36 million per year for Capital Building.
(iii) There should be less interference by the Ministry of Health in pay negotiations between the employers and the employed.

As a probability of how much notice will be taken of Miss Few's Steering Committee this is what happened in 1957:—

(i) The Capital Expenditure on the N.H.S. was £9 million.

(ii) The then Minister of Health refused to sanction two modest pay claims (one for 3%) which had been agreed by the relevant Whitley Council.

The contrast of pay awards to N.H.S. employees (including Miss Few) of an average of 14% by a Labour Labour Government and Capital

Expenditure on N.H.S. buildings of over £100 million per annum during its period of office is worthy of note but my recommendations would be:—

(i) The expenditure of £150 million per annum on the N.H.S. Capital projects with a million unemployed such expenditure would (a) give us a chance of more and better facilities for Geriatric and Mental Hospitals; and (b) reduce the numbers who are unemployed.

(ii) Eliminate private beds in N.H.S. Hospitals.

(iii) Cease charges on prescriptions.

(iv) Restore meaningful negotiations on Whitley Councils.

(v) Allow a higher degree of participation in management by all grades of employees in the N.H.S.

(vi) Take notice of patients' complaints and suggestions.

(vii) Restore free school milk and other welfare foods.

Good health cannot be commanded or purchased. What can and should be done is to ensure those with illness or handicap receive from those who are in good health the best possible treatment and attention, irrespective of their social position or their income. This is my position as a Christian, but it certainly is not that of the present Government.

Yours faithfully,

C. D. MOSS,

London, N.22.

Wives for Sale cheap

Sir,
Eric L. King's humorous article about the above (December 71) called to mind a similar case reported in the Lancaster Gazette on May 22 1804, as follows:

"Mr. Thomas Harrison, of Ellet Chapel, was married to Mrs. Jane Whittingham, at Cockerham Church. The bridegroom was about 70, and the "blooming" bride about 50 years of age. He had bought her twelve years previously for 4s. 9d. and they had lived together ever since."

Yours faithfully,
J. Sharratt, Wigan.

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KALEIDOSCOPE

LOOKING IN ON THE POLITICAL SCENE



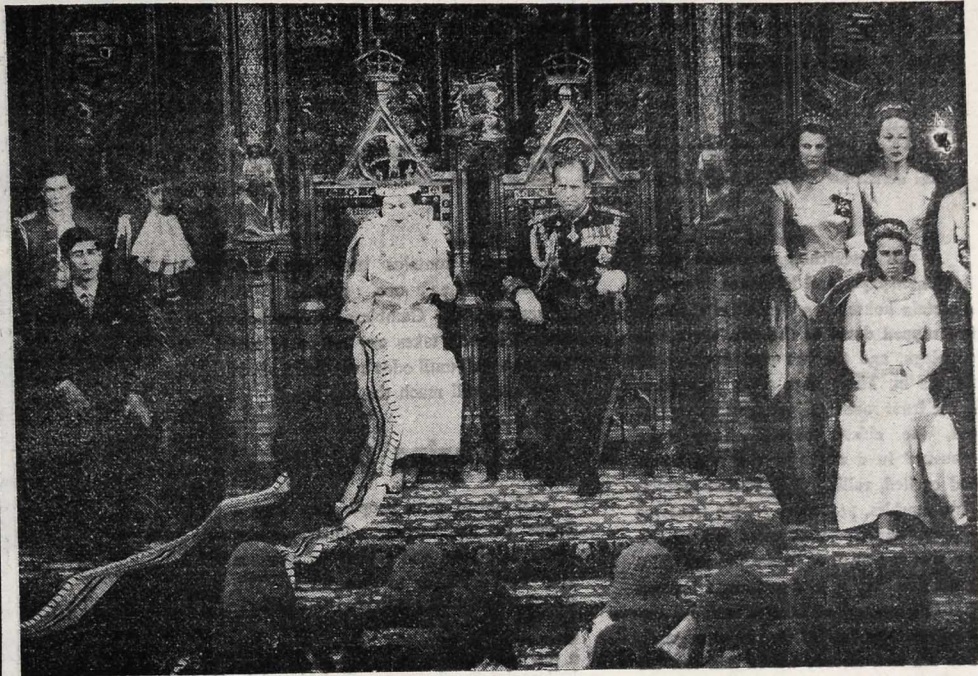
THE NEED FOR A UNION

The Industrial Relations Court comes into operation this month, as laid down in the Industrial Relations Act. Tom Chapman thinks that it will not be adequate to protect workers who are not well organised.

A questionnaire recently sent by a small newly-formed union to its members to enable the committee to obtain a picture of wages and conditions in the industry contained a question asking "What would you most like the union to achieve?" Apart from the expected demands for better pay and conditions and a five-day week, the following replies evidence the need for a union in this industry. "Security of employment", "The stopping of unjust dismissals for so-called breach of regulations", "Relief from victimisation", "To be paid extra for working Bank holidays", "Stop the steady decrease of wages", "More security", "Protection of staff on the premises (from banditry) and insurance for money carriers", "Improve the appalling conditions in which we work", "Superannuation", "A lunch break on Saturdays".

It is evident that even in these modern times the employees of an industry without a union to represent them still feel subject to exploitation. Employers can and still do exercise pressures that can prevent effective representation for their workers. In this case 50,000 people are concerned, a small section of the thirteen million people in this country either not members of, or covered by, known trade unions.

It can be said that there are more good employers than bad ones in this country but two hundred years of experience have proved that organised bargaining power is still a vital need. Yes—unions are necessary.



The Queen's Speech from the Throne at the opening of Parliament outlines the main items of legislation which the Government hopes to introduce.

Plain Man's Guide to Bills and Acts

There are two main sorts of Parliamentary Bills: Public Bills, which concern everyone; and Private Bills,

which are put forward by individual groups or people and only concern a limited number of people.

The Government promotes most Public Bills but some, called Private Members' Bills, are presented by individual back-benchers.

Sometimes it is hard to put a Bill in one category or another. They are known as Hybrid Bills, and the Speaker has to decide how to label them.

The process by which a Bill becomes an Act can be complicated, especially in the case of Private Bills.

Government business has precedence at all except a small number of sittings of the House of Commons. For a Government-sponsored Public Bill there are eight stages it has to go through from the time it is presented in its finally approved draft form and perhaps included in the speech from the Throne until the time it is law.

1. First reading in the House of Commons and, on the same day, appearance in print.
2. Second reading and passing on to a Standing Committee.

3. Three months or so of Committee work.

4. Report Stage, giving chance for new amendments, leading to third reading.

5. Reading in the House of Lords. If the Lords wish to introduce amendments, then these have to go back to the Commons for approval.

6. Return from the Lords to the Commons.

7. Receiving the Royal Assent. The Assent has not been given in person by the Monarch since 1854.

A Royal Commission meeting in the House of Lords, with the Commons also present, formally and in Norman French announces the Assent. If a Bill can't make its way this far during one Session of Parliament, it has to wait its turn and try again next time from stage one.

8. As an Act of Parliament it is in the Statute Book and comes into operation as part of the law of the land and can only be cancelled, or repealed, by another Act of Parliament.

PROFILE

MR. EUROPE

"Too tough to be intimidated, too quick-witted to be out-manoeuvred, never losing his temper, except on purpose."

An expert commentator sums up Geoffrey Rippon, the man who negotiated Great Britain into the Common Market.

If that assessment is accurate, then in Mr. Europe we have a living example of the old phrase our country usually depends on, "Cometh the hour, cometh the man". From the Conservative's election victory in June, 1970, until the sudden death soon after of Mr. Iain Macleod, the chunky form of the M.P. for Hexham was filling the post of Minister of Technology. After Macleod's death he became Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, a fine old title which, in his case, meant quite simply the order, "Get us the right terms for Europe".

Called by some "the short-sighted man with the long-sighted vision", Geoffrey Rippon must have smiled. In 1957, three years before the E.E.C. was launched, he put down a motion, backed by 100 M.P.s but not by the then Conservative Government, urging Parliament to put Britain into Europe at once.

Fourteen years and several doses of de Gaulle later, he has made it, though his Parliamentary experience in that time



was mainly on the home-front—Housing, Land, Local Government and Defence.

He has however travelled widely on official visits to many countries.

When we become part of the E.E.C. on January 1st next year, this 47-year-old barrister-politician will have completed his most remarkable achievement.

It is the sort of achievement which puts a man firmly in the history books. It may, just as firmly, bring him higher office in the years to come. The Foreign Office is tipped by some observers. A few think higher still.

TREMOL TREATMENT

for relief from the effects of PSORIASIS.

- PSORIASIS forms a white lustrous scale on a reddened area of skin. Both the scale and skin are always dry unless broken or brought away by too much scratching or combing. In most cases the reddened skin is of normal temperature and the scale thick and raised on the skin, especially on the scalp, elbows and knees. Where the skin is of a finer texture as on the body, scaling takes place as thin flakes or a light powder.
 - PSORIASIS may be hereditary, may occur with puberty, may follow injury, exposure, shock or worry, or may be due to faulty nutrition and faulty elimination. It may also be persistent and recurring and sufferers often despair of ever having a clear and healthy skin.
- UNDER the Tremol system your own treatment is specially prepared for you to suit your individual needs. You apply the treatment in the privacy of your own home, without any interference with your work or pleasure. Sufferers in all walks of life have applied Tremol Treatment in this way with gratifying success. Why not you?
- Think what a healthy skin means to you. No unsightly scale and distressing patches of redness, no irritation and freedom from embarrassing anxiety when you are at work or with your friends. With a healthy skin you can work with pleasure, you can join freely in sports, recreation and social activities, you can dress with pride and share the freedom and happiness of holidays. A new life is opened out to you.

Here is the opportunity you have sought. Write today, enclosing 6p. in stamps for Brochure and full particulars of Tremol Treatment. Address your letter to—

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Enquiry Department 6A,
208 GREAT CLOWES ST., SALFORD, M7 9YS.

GAMBLING FEVER

The secret sickness

I was researching a feature for a local newspaper and happened to call at a certain house on a council estate. Dad had nipped down to the pub, mum was at bingo, and the two sons had invited friends in. There were seven youngsters in the front room, the youngest nine years old, the eldest twelve. They were crouched in a circle on the rug, intent and excited, rolling dice. Pocket monies, glass marbles, penknives — the treasures of boys pockets—were piled against the knees of two or three 'lucky winners'. The game was deadly and serious. I learned that this was not an isolated incident, but a regular schedule of these youngsters. One lad had already betted and lost his pocket money for weeks ahead, and issued i.o.u.'s to the winners . . . out of the seven, at least two were 'hooked' as compulsive gamblers into the future, and could look forwards to broken marriages, imprisonment for fraud and dishonesty, or suicide.

Horse-racing, football pools, greyhound tracks, card schools, roulette, prize-fighting—these are the better known forms of gambling. But it is safe to say that gambling exists where any combination of uncertain outcomes exist, where

any event contains the possibility of more than one solution. A spokesman for Gamblers Anonymous says: "Nobody takes any notice of two flies on a wall until odds are offered about which one will reach the top first."

Offering Odds

Of course, most people who 'have a flutter' do not become addicts, do not cause heartache and misery to relatives and dependents, or to themselves. The person who makes his living from 'jockeying' the Stock Exchange usually has the respect of society; the person who puts a few bob each week on a charity football-pool earns the approval of his neighbours. The person who buys a lottery ticket from his local vicar is usually regarded as a pillar of the community.

Gambling has been with us since the dawn of Man. History is full of gambles



"My Mummy's a gambler . . . my Daddy backed a loser . . ."

Archie Hill investigates CAUSES FOR CONCERN

and gamblers—each battle, each victory or defeat, has been the outcome of a gamble. Soldiers gambled for Christ's robe at Calvary. There have been, and will be, honourable gambles as well as dishonourable ones.

The Lucky Ones

But what of the casualties arising from social-gambling which has its roots in money and greed? Of all gambles and games of chance, Bingo seems to cause the most damage . . . it has been aptly said that Bingo's luckiest players **LOSE QUICKLY**. This way, they have sufficient sense to know that the game isn't worth the candle. For those who start off on a winning streak, the game soon becomes an addiction greater than any known drug, including alcoholism. The sad fact is that Bingo attracts mostly women—wives and mothers—and no one can even hazard a guess as to how many shattered victims emerge from each game. Recently, a London housewife killed herself by throwing herself from Waterloo Bridge. She left a note explaining how she'd spent the family savings on Bingo, and had gotten into debt as a consequence. Similar letters emerge from gas-filled kitchens, or are held down by empty tablet bottles, the victim having chosen suicide as the only way out from the mess. The RSPCC reports that increasing reports come to their officers of children and babies being left alone while the mothers 'go to bingo'. Reports come in of children literally starving, foraging in dustbins for scraps of food, because the mother has spent the housekeeping money at the local bingo hall. A spinster, secretary to a firm of solicitors, embezzled

£4,000 from her employers in order to attend bingo sessions, then tried to kill herself when discovery overtook her.

Marriage Guidance Councils cynically describe bingo as 'the hidden correspondent' behind many marriage breakdowns. Criminal Courts are increasingly aware that bingo is far too often the accomplice of crime . . .

Shoplifting is one crime that has increased since 'housey-housey' left the home and entered the High Street under the name of 'Bingo'; women who spend their housekeeping money on the pipe-dreams of 'clickety-click' and 'all the fours' are forced to steal from shops and supermarkets in order to keep the pantry filled. Probation Officers books are heavy with case-records of women who defraud their employers, forge cheques, help themselves from tills and shelves in order to keep their bingo-addictions **ACTIVE AS WELL AS UNDISCOVERED**.

Way of Life

Bingo shows an annual turnover of £100,000,000 for England and Wales. Ninety per cent of this comes from women. The secretary of the Churches Council on Gambling says: "Compulsive gambling is more than just having an irresistible itch to gamble. It is a way of life, a complete involvement, with every other facet blacked out . . ."

Bingo is the 'soft drug' of gambling; up ahead, for seasoned addicts, lie the 'hard stuffs' of roulette, baccarat, poker. Many addicts will remain at the bingo level until emotional and financial exhaustion removes them from home and family, and social-normality . . . beyond any hope of recovery.

For our children's sakes, we need to prevent this . . .

... three young children were found locked in a bedroom. They had been imprisoned for several days without food—their mother had been doing the bingo rounds. She was found on a railway line after the wheels of an express train had sliced through her body . . .

REPORT

IN LIVERPOOL
NEWSPAPER 1971

for smart people

Harris cleaning

BRANCHES ALL OVER THE MIDLANDS

CAVERSHAM BRIDGE

February, 1972

THE NEWSPAPER OF ANGLICANS, FREE CHURCHMEN AND ROMAN CATHOLICS IN CAVERSHAM

Number 89

Not for Publication

THERE APPEARED IN THE GUARDIAN ON DECEMBER 13TH AN ARTICLE ABOUT CAVERSHAM PARK WRITTEN BY ELISABETH DUNN.

In view of certain statements I felt obliged to write and point out the real position of church life at Caversham Park. I received a formal acknowledgement to my letter but nearly a month has now passed and nothing has been published to give Guardian readers the correct information. It surprises me that a paper with such a great reputation should be reluctant to admit mistakes.

"There is no pub", wrote Elisabeth Dunn, "because although Davis did manage to sell the building to a brewery, the brewery did a little belated market research and decided that a pub in Caversham Park wouldn't pay". But the fact is that there is no pub simply because no one has built one. A brewery bought some land but that is as far as the venture went.

"One of the churches", continues Elisabeth Dunn, "is built but since Davis cannot find a denomination to run it, it is thought unlikely that the second one will ever materialise". The fact is that there is no church building and in any case I would have thought that Elisabeth Dunn might have been expected to know that it is not the practice for estate developers to build a church and then look for a denomination willing to buy it. I was in fact in touch with Davis Estates as long ago as 1963: they were then asking £6,000 per acre for land for a church and I believe their price to-day would be rather higher. Having already four churches in this parish we took a decision which I am sure has proved to be the right one—we bought a house (with generous help from the Diocese of Oxford) and appointed a priest to live and work at Caversham Park, and so in February, 1969, the Rev. John Crowe, who has just left, began his ministry on the estate. Since then the Church has been growing and in that sense the Church has been built: Holy Communion is regularly celebrated in homes, for a year now a weekly ecumenical family service has been held on Sunday mornings in the primary school, and the Parochial Church Council has given financial backing to the scheme for a community centre.

But what Elisabeth Dunn does not discuss is the important question of whether it is possible to create a community merely by having imaginative planning. It is only fair to admit that a good deal of imagination was shown by Davis Estates when Caversham Park was conceived. But a community is not created as easily as are paper plans. It was a nice sales device to call Caversham Park a village but a village is not something which grows overnight as the bricks go up. A village evolves over a long period of time and consists of people of a mixture of ages and of social classes living in homes that are varied in size, character and design. At Caversham Park there is very little variety in the houses, and the population contains a great many recently married couples and very few elderly people. Furthermore "open plan" living is not suitable for everybody.

Nearly all the houses contain just a small kitchen and one large living room, though some have a dining recess in the kitchen. Families who want two separate living rooms cannot make a home at Caversham Park unless they are prepared to make some extension to the houses as originally built.

Caversham - Milan Bridge Scheme Link

It is by no means unusual to hear of communities developing voluntary schemes of social help. As readers know Caversham has had its Bridge scheme of social service for some years now. But the "Caversham Bridge" was very interested to hear recently of a scheme in Milan. Not only does it act in cases of emergency like the one here, it also bears the same name—Bridge Operation. As the leaflet which arrived on the editor's desk explains, the scheme represents a small group of people who act as a bridge between those who give and those who receive. It is entirely voluntary and free and as it doesn't pursue any political or religious aim collaboration is open to all.

How long the scheme has been in existence is not known, and it would be useful to have some information on how the statutory services compare with those in this country, but the list of the kind of help it gives is impressive and wide-ranging.

It offers the visiting and transport facilities to sick and elderly people that are available under Caversham's Bridge Scheme; also baby sitters and temporary hospitality for children. It lends books and records to the chronically ill and can call on the skills of electricians and radio technicians to do repairs in cases of financial need. But the advisory role it plays on a wide variety of problems suggests that it may be working within a less well developed state structure than is the case in Britain.

This Italian Bridge scheme gives advice on educational matters such as helping parents to work out their relation to their children's schools, or coaching children in certain subjects. If you are not sure how or what to teach your child about sex, or have marital problems Bridge Operation will counsel you. There is also a child counselling service for those between the ages of 3 and 15, who have psychological difficulties related to school and family. Should your problem be money or should you need legal advice in a hurry there is an emergency advisory body to deal with it. The scheme is even prepared to provide someone to translate urgent messages from or into foreign languages.

In an increasingly technological and impersonal world it is good to hear of such neighbourhood schemes of social service. Caversham wishes its twin in Milan well. Perhaps it can learn something from the way "Operazione Ponte" is tackling some of the human problems of 20th century urban life.

(Continued from cols 1 and 2)

With the arrival soon of a new priest-in-charge to live with his wife and children at 2 Blackwater Close the life of the Christian Church will enter a new phase as he builds on the foundations laid by his predecessor. Certainly the Christians in Caversham Park are concerned to do all they can to promote the growth of a community sense. With their help, and the help of other people of good will Caversham Park may yet overcome some of its disadvantages and eventually acquire something of the character that is found in villages throughout the country.

John Grimwade

CAVERSHAM BRIDGE

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A CAVERSHAM CHILDHOOD IN THE NINETEEN-TWENTIES

Having lived almost fifty years in Caversham and spent all my childhood here except for the first three years, I have many memories of growing up in a rather different place from the Caversham of today.

At the junction of Highmoor road and Darell road there was a large barn, now long vanished, and I can just remember going up to look at the cart horses kept there. A dear old black horse lived in a small field along Woodcote road just before you reached Highmoor road. Many

of the tradespeople used horses. Mr. Hatto, the bearded greengrocer who had a small holding in Kidmore road, came round with a pony and cart; so did Mr. Fielder, the milkman, also from Kidmore Road. Then the baker arrived by horse and all had to be fed with the odd tit-bit and given a pat. Outside the Griffin you could often see a couple of brewer's drays each drawn by a fine pair of huge beasts happily munching from their nosebags or dancing about in the gutter because they were fresh to the day's work and wanted to be off once more. On our trips to the "Bottom", as we called Lower Caversham, the one thing we hoped to see was a piebald pony or horse for then we could have a wish before we saw its tail. Where this idea came from I don't know; perhaps it was thought up to keep us quiet!!

DROVERS AND COWS

Herd of cows were regular occurrences along the

Woodcote Road as they were driven either into or out of Reading market and among them were often several shaggy Highland cattle. If you met them as you were out walking you dived into someone's garden and made sure the gate was shut fast.

THE OLD SHEPHERD

I can remember sheep in the meadows off Chazey Road and in the fields which are now covered with the houses of Woodcote Way. A wonderful old shepherd looked after them—a real countryman with a thick, white, curly beard, rosy cheeks and twinkling eyes. He had a shepherd's hut with solid iron wheels which was moved from field to field. We often went to see him and took him the paper and a basket of goodies.

TOBOGGANING

Several deep snowfalls sent us along to the Grassy Slope, now Grass Hill, with a large black tin tray on which we careered down to the Warren, always hoping we would have a super run and just manage to stop on the river bank! A few years later we were given a real toboggan and we joined the gay crowds on the steep hillslopes of Bugs Bottom, now a housing estate.

SUMMER PASTIMES

Summer also gave us plenty of fun. Almost every Sunday evening we walked, even when quite small, either to Mapledurham Village and back or along past our sledging fields and out to Tokers Green.

A great treat was to take a picnic tea under the oak tree in the dip in Chazey Road. After summer storms there would be heaps of fine sand washed down the slopes to the bottom and we built many sandcastles. We were right in the country there. Wild roses were abundant and we gathered pounds of mushrooms in the Playing Fields and meadows that are no more.

On really rough days we took the kites, and if we couldn't get them to fly and it was dry enough we lay in the long grass and watched the clouds, each of us telling the other what we thought we could see. Ranges of mountains, calm seas running between headlands and strange imaginative creatures all swept across the sky.

One day we were amazed to see a small biplane land in one of the fields—a great thrill.

Back on Grassy Slope in Summer we sailed home made boats down a swift running streamlet which flowed three parts of the way down the hill to the river. This has now vanished, possibly having been piped underground.

THE TOWN REACHES OUT

Not all my memories are of a rural character. Reading was gradually reaching out into Caversham with all its amenities and the Heights bus service was one such instance. The buses were double deckers with open tops. We children liked to go upstairs—a great treat. A great laugh too when grandmother's hat was knocked off by a low branch on the Mount.

Coming home on the bus could be hair-raising. A large wooden mallet was kept under the stairs to put behind the back wheels if the bus stopped when changing gears on the steepest part of St. Anne's Road! It just kept the bus from slipping back if there was trouble and gave everyone a chance to get out and walk! I only remember it happening once but for ages I was terrified that it would be repeated and we would go over the mallet and backwards into Bucksdown before we had time to get out.

MORE MEMORIES WELCOMED

There will be plenty of readers whose memories of Caversham go back far beyond mine. No doubt they have earlier and more interesting accounts of their childhood in Caversham. I would be glad to hear from them and it is hoped to publish more accounts of life in Caversham in earlier and more leisurely times.

M.K.

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Random Jottings from an R.C. Layman

CONSECRATION OF AN ALTAR

I do not suppose many of you have been present at such a ceremony. Those of you who have been lucky enough to have experienced this will realise what a beautiful ceremony it is.

Recently the convent in East Berkshire where I had been at school decided the chapel must be enlarged and refurbished. The school had grown enormously since my time there and the enlargement was necessary in order that the entire school could get into the chapel at any one time. A new altar was necessary so that the sanctuary could be satisfactorily altered for the new rite of the Mass. Old girls of the school had undertaken to be responsible for the payment of this. It was therefore to the consecration of this altar that the Old Girls of the school were invited. This was to be conducted by the Bishop of Portsmouth, and it was to hear him 'live' as it were, having been an admirer of his for some time, as much as to the consecration of the altar that I decided to go.

Admittedly, the consecration was followed by a celebrated Mass, a short sermon by the Bishop and we had the privilege of receiving Holy Communion under both kinds, but at the end when I looked at my watch I could not believe we had been in church for two solid hours.

As you can imagine, being a convent chapel everything was immaculate down to the smallest detail. The new altar or Communion table was, to my mind, out of this world and I thought it must have come from Italy; there seemed a distinctly Italian influence in the balance of

the gilding and the coloured marbles. This may sound heavy and ornate, but the design was so skilful that this was not so. I learnt afterwards that the altar had been made in this country and felt thrilled at this proof that such furniture, requiring real craftsmanship, could still be obtained.

The ceremony itself is interesting. The altar got sprinkled and crossed with holy water. The relics were brought in procession—in this case they were those of St. Cecilia from Rome and some of the English Martyrs—and were then sealed in the cavity in the centre of the altar by the Bishop. The Master Mason then advanced, looking more like a Church Warden than a Mason on the job), tidied up and made sure the Bishop had done the job properly. Then the Bishop anointed with oil of chrism the centre and four corners of the altar table. After that the really spectacular part of the ceremony took place. Five heaps of incense were piled up on the table and then lit. Of course everyone knew what they were up to, but I could not help feeling anxious as to what the little bonfires might do to the surface of this wonderful table. Everything was quickly cleaned up, rearranged and we then proceeded briskly to the Mass.

I had a distinct feeling that we had just leapt back in time and taken part in an Old Testament rite with references to Jacob, Melehi-sedech and at one time the choir singing, "The angel stood at the altar having a golden censor in his hand, and the smoke of the incense went up before God".

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RODS, POLES AND PERCHES

by Roving Reporter

Do you return from a short shopping expedition in Caversham village with a sense of strain not entirely explained by the difficulty of finding the goods you want or the money to pay for them?

Street furniture

No, I'm not advertising a new brand of salts for tired feet; I'm merely suggesting a little more thought on the part of the local authorities. For, in that short walk round the shopping area, even on a day when there aren't many people around, you've probably dodged anything up to sixty items of street furniture, maybe more.

For the benefit of the uninitiated perhaps I should explain that street furniture is not—as you might think—seats or benches on which to rest aching limbs; it is the term given to the veritable forest of lamp standards, telegraph poles, parking notices, traffic signs and so on, which you have to negotiate. And should you be badly sighted, elderly, pushing a pram or a shopping trolley, or even holding youngsters by the hand, you will find it

doubly difficult and many of the pavements are narrow, even dangerous.

Survey

Caversham Residents' Association have recently carried out a survey of street furniture in the area roughly bounded by St. Anne's Road, to the west, Church Street and Gosbrook Road as far as the recreation ground on the south, Westfield and Cromwell Roads to the east, and from the top of Cromwell Road, across Prospect Street, Oxford Street and Priest Hill to the north. Within that area alone there are no less than 291 poles or obstacles of a similar nature to be dodged, many of them seeming to serve no purpose whatsoever.

Double Functions

Now it would seem to the ignorant layman that a bit of foresight could cut down the number of obstacles involved with little difficulty. Admittedly some of the posts do serve a double function, but surely many more parking signs, etc., could be fastened to lampposts. One lamppost in Prospect Street, for instance, does manage to support a bus stop notice; would it be too much for it to hold up the litter bin which seems to be the sole purpose of a

post not more than two yards away, at the same time.

And considering the feats of architectural engineering accomplished by our ancestors centuries ago, surely in this technical age a canopy could be provided for the precinct shops facing the main road without recourse to the array of poles which confront the pedestrian on that side of the road.

Safety Fences

One even wonders what purpose is served by the safety fences which appear at odd places. Surely they are not for protection of pedestrians, since the one in Church Street, for example, would appear to stand very little chance against any heavy vehicle colliding with it. And as to keeping small children from running into the road, with so many unprotected stretches along the main roads it scarcely seems worthwhile to bother with such small areas.

A walk for the councillors

But perhaps I'm merely displaying ignorance; perhaps after all there is a good reason for all these rods, poles and perches which we have to dodge. If so, I'm quite willing to be corrected.

I'm not suggesting that Caversham is any worse than a lot of places in this respect; what I do suggest is that one or more of our local councillors might find the time to stroll round the Caversham streets and, for the sake of our safety and comfort, see if some of these menaces can be removed.



Walton Adams



Walton Adams

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MAPLEDURHAM PARISH COUNCIL

The monthly meeting of the Mapledurham Parish Council was held on Thursday, 9th December, 1971. Mr. W. H. Wheeler, Chairman of the Council, presided at the meeting.

Reference was made to the unanimous approval given at a Special Parish Meeting held on the 2nd December for the Parish Council to be given loan sanction to enable the Council to borrow a sum not exceeding £15,000 for the purpose of building a new Hall. At the meeting residents were advised of the present dilapidated state of the existing Hall, and also the many demands that are made for improved Hall facilities in the urban area of the Parish.

The Council expressed its concern that some of their views regarding the

proposed re-organisation of local government have been mis-represented. It has recently been stated by the major local authorities in this area, Reading and Berkshire, that Mapledurham wished to go into Berkshire. What the Parish Council stated last May, when the original comments were requested, is that the Area most advantageous from which the Parish and the surrounding area should be administered is the Berkshire area. The Council also stressed that it strongly desired to maintain its connections with Henley, regardless to which authority Henley was finally absorbed.

The Council were advised that the County Planning Authority have given conditional approval for the construction of two houses in Hewitt Avenue. In view of the circumstances of this case, the Council are seeking more information.

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ROUND THE CLUBS

ROSCHILL W.I.

There was a large attendance at the "open" meeting in December. Mrs. Russell took the chair and after dealing with the business, handed over to Mrs. Green, acting President, as this was our Members Meeting. The result of the Christmas Fayre was very good and enabled us to give a donation of £60 to the RNIB and Xmas gift parcels to local elderly people. There was a good response to the competition, a Christmas stocking; these together with a gift of toys are being sent to the NSPCC. It was reported that the clinic for the elderly will now re-open, with the prospect of a luncheon club also in the near future. Mrs. Beasley reported on the International Coffee morning held at Watlington House in November. Mr. A. Harder, of the National Dairy Council gave an interesting talk on English Cheeses Competition results—1) Mrs. Coombes, 2) Mrs. Grey, 3) Mrs. Roberts.

CAVERSHAM HEIGHTS TOWNSWOMEN'S GUILD

The entertainer for our Christmas party was Mrs. Margaret Hill of Aldershot Guild who certainly had us 'singing for our supper'. Accompanying herself on her guitar she led the singing of folk songs and carols from all over the world. One of the carols 'London City' had been written by her son and brought home to us the spirit of Christmas in the modern idiom.

The committee had prepared the sandwiches, sausage rolls and, of course, mince pies and Christmas cake all of which seemed to disappear in double quick time. After this repast those of us who were able joined in more carol singing, accompanied by Mrs. Gant on the piano.

EMMER GREEN TOWNSWOMEN'S GUILD

A Series of three British Transport films were shown which proved both interesting and entertaining. "Between the Tides" gave us an

insight into the varied and numerous marine and bird life which abounds around our coasts. Followed by which we were taken on a film journey to Seaspeed hovercraft to the continent. Finally we viewed some of the magnificent scenery of the Scottish Highlands and Islands.

Business was brisk at the Christmas Stall.

Mrs. Gillings was the winner of the Old People's Parcel Competition. These parcels will be handed over to the old people of Emmer Green.

BLAGRAVE W.I.

At the birthday party in the Memorial Hall, Upper Woodcote Road, the President welcomed 20 guests from neighbouring Institutes and members of the local Meals on Wheels Service. Miss Monica Dart entertained with a selection of songs and led the audience in Carol singing. The stall and raffles did a brisk trade and over £20 was realised. The winners of the bottles of homemade wine were Mrs. Pert, Mrs. Waite and Mrs. Hector. The cushion was won by a visitor from Sonning Glebe Institute. The tea was given and served by the Committee. Mrs. Wright made and iced the birthday cake.

THE BOYS' CLUBS

The past year saw some interesting developments and achievements made by the two boys' clubs functioning at the Toc H Centre.

The West Caversham Boys' Club held its annual Indoor Games Tournament in the early weeks of the year, presentations being made to the winners in March. Soccer friendlies were played against local sides, and the team also visited Birmingham and the Rhondda Valley. On May 21st an evening charity walk was undertaken in aid of the Multiple Sclerosis Society, when over £10 was raised. The club participated in the Reading Festival events, notably the swimming gala and the Bonanza 5-a-side competition. The annual jumble sale took place on 25th September. Also in that month, the club was admitted associate membership of the National Association of Boys' Clubs. During the closing weeks of the year, success reigned supreme at several events. Geoffrey Powell won the finals of the Reading Area Youth Clubs' Table Tennis competition, having beaten John Home who had also reached the final. On December 12th Geoffrey represented the Reading juniors against the rest of Berkshire, but lost in the final. On the same day, young Kevin Douglas thrashed his way through the rounds of the Berkshire Boys' Clubs Badminton Championships, but gallantly lost the final.

The newly-formed Lowfield Boys' Club began its operation in the New Year, meeting on Tuesday evenings. Its purpose was to provide recreational facilities for boys from Caversham Park and Henley Road districts. Indoor activities proved extremely popular, and a soccer



Walton Adams

Original Decorations

A new feature of the decorations at Christmas in Caversham Parish Church this year was the striking mobile made by eleven-year-old Sally Briggs of Woodcote Road.

team was soon established. Seven boys took a course of instruction on Fire Prevention at local Fire Stations, and were presented with their Proficiency Awards by Major M. Paxton on 30th November. The Boys' Club concert was also a successful experiment, when a number of the members took part in musical items at St. Andrew's Hall on October 9th.

Joint events are organised from time to time, and one of these occasions was the interesting visit to the BBC TV Studios at Shepherds Bush to see the recording of an episode of Bachelor Father last August. Both teams play in the Reading and Caversham Junior Soccer League, with West Caversham, at the end of December, top of the League. Also Lowfield have one team and West Caversham two teams in the South Oxfordshire 5-a-side League. Members of both clubs are encouraged to undertake community service. This Christmas, the traditional Christmas Pudding distribution to the elderly was extended, when Lowfield took on an additional area in Lower Caversham.

Both clubs have interesting and exciting projects for 1972, including a combined holiday in August to the Austrian Alps.

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FAREWELL TO JOHN and UNA CROWE

A farewell presentation was made to the Rev. and Mrs. John Crowe in Balmore Hall on Sunday evening, December 19th. Tributes to their contribution to the life of the church in Caversham and Mapledurham were paid by Mr. Alfred Martyn-Johns, Mrs. Justine Mair and Mr. Geoffrey Goldsmith. Mr. Martyn-Johns spoke as Churchwarden of Mapledurham as when the parish of Mapledurham first came under the pastoral care of Caversham much of the work had been done by Mr. Crowe. Mrs. Mair, a Roman Catholic, spoke of ecumenical work in which she and Mr. Crowe had participated, and finally Mr. Goldsmith as a resident of Caversham Park paid tribute to his work there.

Mr. Burnside as churchwarden presented Mr. Crowe with a Flymo lawnmower and a cheque for £52.



A Message from the Rev. and Mrs. J. Y. Crowe.

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"We would like to say a very warm 'thank-you' to all who contributed so generously to our farewell presentation. The Flymo lawnmower will be an enormous help with a large Vicarage lawn—and the cheque will be used to buy a nest of coffee tables, a standard lamp and one other small item.

We shall miss many aspects of our life in Caversham — not least the many friends we have made during our 4 years' stay. A Warm welcome will be given to anyone who feels like breaking a journey at Evesham, or making a day trip from Caversham. So that we can be prepared it would be helpful to be contacted by phone.

Our address and phone number are:

Hampton Vicarage,

Evesham, Worcs. Phone—Evesham 6381."

RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

It is a commonplace that Reading undervalues its position on the Thames. As for the Kennet, it seems to bear a positive grudge against that poor river. The Caversham banks of the river are certainly on the whole attractive but the same cannot be said when we look across the river.

A committee has recently been set up in Reading to look at the possibilities of its waterways. We have invited Mr. d'Arcy Lee, its secretary, to come to speak to us about Reading's waterways and especially about our stretch of the Thames at our Annual General Meeting on 5 March. He will show the splendid film about Reading waterways which students from the College of Technology have made. This really is a must for anyone who values the rivers of Reading.

So make a note of the date NOW.

6 March at Church House, Church Street.

The film and talk will be preceded by our Annual General Meeting which will start at 7.45 p.m. In addition to the review of our year's

work and election of committee, there will be an opportunity for members to bring up any matter of general concern to Caversham. Although only members may vote (membership 25p per household per annum) all are welcome to the A.G.M. and the meeting afterwards.

EMMER GREEN SUPERMARKET

An action committee, on which Caversham Residents' Association is represented, has been set up to look into possibilities of getting the Secretary of State's decision modified or reversed. The legality of a decision reached after secret discussions and on different grounds from those the Secretary of State stated that he wished to consider, has been questioned. Certainly the end has not been heard of this matter.

STAMP VENDING MACHINE

This is another matter which we are continuing to pursue. There is a real demand for it and we are not prepared to accept that it cannot possibly be met.

M.C.

CAVERSHAM HEIGHTS TOWNSWOMEN'S GUILD

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St. John's Church, 11 a.m., age 9 upwards. Superintendent: Miss K. Harris, 4, Valentine Crescent. Tel. 472084.

St. Andrew's—St. Andrew's Hall, 11 a.m., age 4 years and upwards.

Methodist Church

Gosbrook Rd.—In Church, 11 a.m., age 3 years and upwards. Superintendent: Mr. R. Hodgkinson, 22, Church Hill, Sonning Common. Tel. Kidmore End 2785.

Caversham Heights—In Church, 11 a.m., age 3 years and upwards. Superintendent: Mrs. P. Court, 3, Woburn Close. Tel. 474478.

Baptist Church

11 a.m., aged 3 years and upwards. Also West Memorial Hall, 2.45 p.m., aged 3 years and upwards. Superintendent: Dr. J. Rothwell, 16, Albert Road. Tel. 474478.

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February Sunday Services

ANGLICAN

St. Peter's

8-00 a.m. Holy Communion.
9-15 a.m. PARISH COMMUNION.
11-00 a.m. Matins (Holy Communion, 3rd Sunday).
12-15 p.m. Holy Communion (1st Sunday).
6-30 p.m. Evensong

St. John's

8-00 a.m. Holy Communion.
9-15 a.m. FAMILY EUCHARIST.
6-30 p.m. Evensong (1st Sunday).

St. Andrew's

8-00 a.m. Holy Communion.
9-15 a.m. FAMILY EUCHARIST.
11-15 a.m. Holy Communion.
6-30 p.m. Evensong

St. Barnabas

8-00 a.m. Holy Communion.
9-15 a.m. FAMILY EUCHARIST
11-15 a.m. Family Service (2nd Sunday).
6-30 p.m. Evensong

St. Margaret's, Mapledurham

8-00 a.m. Holy Communion (2nd and 4th Sundays).
9-15 a.m. PARISH COMMUNION (4th Sunday Matins).
6-30 p.m. Evensong (1st and 3rd Sundays).

NORTH CAVERSHAM BAPTIST CHURCH

10-45 a.m. Morning Service.
6-30 p.m. Evening Service.

CAVERSHAM BAPTIST FREE CHURCH

11-00 a.m. Morning Service.
6-30 p.m. Evening Service.

CAVERSHAM PARK SCHOOL

11-15 a.m. Ecumenical Half Hour Family Service.

METHODIST CHURCHES

Caversham Heights

11-00 a.m. Morning Service.
6-30 p.m. Evening Service, (not 3rd Sunday)

Caversham

11-00 a.m. Morning Service.
6-30 p.m. Evening Service.

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ROMAN CATHOLIC

St. Anne's

8-00 a.m., 9-30 a.m., 11-00 a.m., 7-00 p.m.—Mass.

Our Lady of Caversham

8-30 and 10-30 a.m.—Mass.

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The Rev. John Stevinson, Mapledurham Church House, 222, Upper Woodcote Road. Tel. 471605.
The Rev. Peter Atkinson, St. John's House, 9, South View Avenue. Tel. 471814.
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The Rev. Laurence Stevens 80 Balmore Drive, Tel. 478668.

METHODIST

The Rev. Terence Harris, 7, St. Annes Road, Tel. 472223.

PRESBYTERIAN

The Rev. George Shearer, 41, Highmoor Road, Tel. 477490.

ROMAN CATHOLIC

The Rev. William O'Malley, The Presbytery, 2, South View Avenue. Tel. 471787.

We record . . .

BAPTISED

St. Andrew's
Dec. 4—Sarah Hunter.

St. Barnabas'
Dec. 19—Andrew Misell.

Caversham Park
Dec. 12—Samantha Garfoot.
Toby Carter.

MARRIED

St. Peter's
Dec. 4—Christopher Graebe and Diane Anderson.
Malcolm Boswell and Margaret Fennell.

St. Andrew's

Dec. 11—Ronald Skingley and Jennifer Ridley.

St. Barnabas'

Dec. 18—Clifford Short and Anne Woolford.

BURIED

St. Peter's
Dec. 23—Mary Goldsmith.

St. John's

Dec. 10—Faith Bance.

St. Barnabas'

Dec. 3—Elizabeth Heath.
6—Kate Squires.

WHOM TO CONTACT

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PARISHES OF CAVERSHAM AND

MAPLEDURHAM

SYNODICAL GOVERNMENT MEASURE

New Electoral Rolls have to be prepared before the Annual Church meetings in March 1972. This means that all persons who are at present on the Electoral Roll are required by law to complete a new form if they wish to vote and take part in the Annual Meetings.

The Annual Parochial Meeting for the Parish of Mapledurham will be held on Wednesday, March 1st, and no names can be added to the new Roll after Sunday, February 13th.

The Annual Parochial Meeting for the Parish of Caversham will be held on Thursday, March 16th, and no names can be added to the new Roll after Tuesday, February 22nd.

Electoral Roll forms are now available in all the churches of the two parishes, and anyone who wishes to remain on the Roll or to put their name on for the first time should obtain a form without delay and return it either to Caversham Rectory, or for the parish of Caversham to Mrs. D. E. Gillings, 22 Courtenay Drive, Emmer Green, and for the parish of Mapledurham to Mrs. P. Foster, 93 Woodcote Way, Caversham.

Round the Anglican Parish

Staff appointments. New priests have been appointed for St. Barnabas and Caversham Park and in both cases they hope to move here shortly after Easter. Further details of these appointments will appear shortly.

A few statistics. The mild weather was probably the reason why the congregations at Christmas were better than for some years: in all districts there was an increase of communicants on Christmas day and the total was exactly 1,300. In addition many household people received the Sacrament in their homes later in Christmas week. With Christmas falling on a Saturday it was to be expected that congregations would be small on the Sunday but there were in fact over 250 communicants that morning. Throughout the year congregations have kept remarkably steady and there has been no significant change in any congregation. The total of 30,384 communicants was 125 fewer than the figure for 1970. During the year there were sixty six baptisms, and it is interesting to note that no less than eighteen of these were of children living at Caversham Park. There were fifty seven weddings, the lowest figure for eight years. Forty nine candidates were confirmed.

ST. JOHN'S NEWS

A Christmas Evening

Those members and friends of St. John's, who took time off to spend an hour in church on the Tuesday evening before Christmas, must have gone home feeling not only that the time had been well spent, but also that they had been helped to celebrate the real meaning of Christmas. Using the talents of a wide cross section of the church, young and not so young, Yvonne Milne presented a varied programme of music and readings to counterpoint tableaux depicting the traditional nativity story. Carols and other Christmas music were sung by the church choir and the Summerdown singers, with solos from Pauline Weston and Mamie Hoad, and instrumental items on flutes and recorders added musical colour. The readings, from medieval and contemporary sources, were an attempt to root the reality of the incarnation in the world of today, for as one of the passages, about Christmas in a prison cell, put it "it is possible for the candles and the lights to blind our eyes, so

that we can no longer see the essential element in Christmas." The Christmas evening was a shot at trying to discover something of that element. Many thanks to Mrs. Milne and all who took part, for such a rewarding evening.

Scout and Guide Party

The combined party, in St. John's Hall just before Christmas, was further evidence of the fact that the scout and guide movements in the districts are growing in numbers and enthusiasm. About 200 people including parents and friends came, not only to join in the usual fun and games, but also to learn more of what the scouts and guides are doing. It was also a good opportunity for parents to be introduced to the new Group Scout Leader, Mr. Wise and Mr. Davis who is looking after the cub scouts. A film of the group's camping activities added to the enjoyment of all present but the highlight of the evening was the ceremony in which six of the cub scouts were welcomed formally into the scouts.

There is clearly a revival of scouting and guiding at St. John's thanks to the hard work of leaders past and present. It is hoped that some of the parents will be prepared to help in future activities. There is a particular need for someone to assist Mrs. Turner with the guides. If anyone can help please contact her at 41, South View Avenue, tel. 477781.

ST. PAUL'S NEWS

St. Paul's Presbyterian Church is actually outside Caversham, but about half the members of the congregation live in Caversham. A good many Caversham residents do not know where St. Paul's is—it is to be found in York Road, off Caversham Road opposite the E.P. Collier school. Here Presbyterians make their witness inconspicuously but effectively.

A look back over the year's records reveals that there were in 1971 five Baptisms, four marriages and nine funerals, but only one or two of these were of church members. The decision has now been taken on Presbyterian Congregational Union, and the members are wondering how this will effect this congregation. Of course St. Paul's has enjoyed good relations with St. Andrew's, the other Presbyterian Church in Reading and joint services and socials have been held on a number of occasions.

The minister himself has had a pretty full year. His daughter Margaret was married to Richard Heath in the summer and his son James married Peggy Duncan of Hartford, Conn. U.S.A. at Christmas. So in addition to visiting the Community at Taize in France—an unforgettable experience, he had to fly across the Atlantic to take part in his son's wedding in America. Moreover the British Council of Churches has appointed Mr. Shearer to go on a two month preaching tour in the States in the summer of 1972. One gathers that this is a rejuvenating experience.

ST. ANDREW'S MOTHERS' UNION

The Annual Party given by members of St. Andrew's Mothers' Union for 24 visitors from Borocourt Hospital took place at St. Andrew's Hall on Dec. 15th. A very jolly evening was enjoyed by everybody. After supper, Mr. Kent and his family organised their ever-popular 'Punch and Judy' Show. Musical games were then played after this, and these were followed by Carols which were sung with great enthusiasm. Mrs. Gant was at the piano.

Before leaving each visitor received a present from the Christmas tree and when it was time to reluctantly say 'Goodbye' for this year, Mrs. St. Alphonse told them that we shall look forward to next year's party as much as they will! They went home by coach.

ST. MARGARET'S

Mapledurham Parish Social

"Why was there no Harvest Supper in 1971?" "Because due to the pressure of other business it was postponed to spring 1972, and we have much pleasure in inviting you to a Parish Supper and entertainment in Trench Green Hall on 'Shrove Saturday', 12th February at 7-30 p.m. Admission by ticket only, 25p. each, obtainable from Greendene Farm and members of the Church Council.

Lent

This begins on Ash Wednesday, 16th February, when there will be a celebration of Holy Communion at Mapledurham Church House at 8 p.m.

During Lent, as in previous years, House Bible Study Groups will be meeting throughout the parishes of Caversham and Mapledurham, composed of members of the different Christian congregations in the two parishes. Anyone wishing to join one, and not already invited to do so by then, should inform the priest in charge by the week-end the 12th and 13th of February.

St. Margaret's Annual Vestry and Parish Meeting.

This year this will be held at St. Margaret's House on Wednesday, 1st of March, at 8 p.m.

TOY AND CAROL SERVICE

The Annual Toy and Carol Service was held at Caversham Heights Methodist Church on the afternoon of the Sunday before Christmas. The service was conducted by the minister of the church, the Rev. Terence R. Harris.

It had been specially requested that the toys, which were sent to Borocourt Hospital, should be constructional toys, large wooden jigsaw puzzles, or toys that would help children with poor manual dexterity, also cuddly or squeaky toys, large picture books, and Ladybird type teaching books. There was a splendid response and a large number of gifts were sent to Borocourt.

The whole Sunday School took part in a Nativity Play, devised and produced by Mrs. Enid Caddy. About thirty children, dressed in authentic looking costumes, mimed the familiar Christmas story, whilst the rest joined in with carols and readings at the appropriate times. It was a memorable and moving performance, greatly appreciated by a congregation which filled the church to capacity, and credit is due to all who helped in the production.



Borocourt visitors at St. Andrew's

CAVERSHAM BRIDGE, FEBRUARY, 1972—SEVEN

CAVERSHAM METHODIST CHURCH

BOYS BRIGADE

Reading Battalion Carol Service for Junior was held at Caversham this year. The Schoolroom was packed with boys and friends from all over Reading and district. Carols were sung and readings given by the boys. The 1st Reading presented a Nativity Play and the address was given by the Rev. Neil Hall of Kings Road Baptist Church. A collection was taken for the Sunshine Homes for Blind Babies.

hot mince pies. The sum of £5 was raised for Church Funds.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

A very successful party was held on Saturday, Dec. 11th for the Children of the Primary Dept. of the Sunday School. Ray and Jean Hodgkinson with the help of all the Primary teachers organised party games and a very nice tea. The children all received a lollipop from the lollipop tree and a pleasant and an enjoyable time was had by everyone.

TOY SERVICE

On Sunday 12th December at 11 a.m. a Christmas Toy Service was held when an officer from the Berkshire County Children's Dept. received gifts from the Children. Nativity tableaux were given by the Sunday School and the church was filled to capacity for this happy family occasion.

EVENING CAROL SERVICE

On Sunday Dec. 19th at 6-30 p.m. the Church Carol Service was held. There were special carols by the Choir and readings by members of the congregation. The service was conducted by Rev. T. R. Harris.

COFFEE MORNING

The Young Wives held a very successful coffee morning on Sat. Dec. 11th. About 40 people supported this function and all enjoyed a nice hot cup of coffee and

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John Earl of Kildare, William Bullivant Williams, Stephen White and others. Few people in Caversham have probably ever heard of these names but as a result of various legacies left by them and other people over the centuries there exists what is now known as the Caversham Consolidated Charities. These are administered by a group of Trustees of which the Rector is always one and others are appointed by the Borough of Reading and by the parish councils of Kidmore End, and Eye and Dunsden as these civil parishes were formerly in the ancient parish of Caversham.

Although the annual income is small the Trustees are always glad to make grants to people in need. Grants can be made to persons who are sick, infirm, convalescent or in need of change of air; grants can also be given for travelling expenses for persons visiting sick relatives, and contributions made towards bedding, food, fuel, furniture or other useful articles. Assistance can also be given to students in need of books or necessary tools.

The clerk to the Trustees is Mr. P. Tipton, of 73 South View Avenue and anyone wishing to apply for a grant should contact him.



Hyma Photographers.

Miss Margaret Fennell was married recently at St. Peter's to Mr. Malcolm Boswell.



Ian Gordon who was associated with St. Peter's Scout Group for many years was married recently at St. Peter's, Edenbridge, to Miss Elizabeth Vine, a former pupil of the Chiltern Nursery Training College.

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BILLY RUSSELL — A MIRROR TO LIFE

In November last year, at the age of 78, Billy Russell died as he would have wished—in harness. He was waiting for his call during rehearsals for a television series. Had he been writing the "script" of his own life he couldn't have chosen better.

A Caversham resident for many years, with his home in Star Road, he is best remembered for his music hall character "Old Bill", though his first stage appearance was in Gloucester in 1900 at the age of seven. The foundations of his career were laid in the early days when he worked the small halls up and down the country, always reflecting the distinctive humour and accent of each region be it Tyneside or Birmingham. Since that time he has been in 3 Royal Command Performances. Never offensive in his humour, Billy Russell in his own words, spent his life "holding a mirror up to people". He helped people, even through some very hard times to laugh at themselves, their failings and weaknesses.

Then at an age when most men are easing themselves into retirement, Billy found he was in demand as an actor and made many appearances in films, television and the theatre, thus becoming familiar to a generation too young to remember his music hall days. There were frequent character parts in several television series and plays—

readers may remember a delightful cameo as a retired miner in a recent play "The Pigeon Fancier". And not much more than a year ago he was in the long running "The Contractor" on the London stage. His film work included "I Start Counting" with Jenny Agutter, and Stanley Kubrick's new film "A Clockwork Orange".

During such a rich and varied life in show business Billy made many friends—leaving through his personal photograph album is like wandering through a theatrical hall of fame, and he treasured the encouragement given him by many well known artists. But his public will also be the poorer without "Old Bill". Caversham people must be proud of the fact that he made his home among them.

HELPING ZAMBIAN FARMERS

A most successful sale was organised by the Overseas Group at St. Barnabas and £85 was raised towards the purchase of a pump and piping for irrigation at the Mpongwe Farmer Training Centre in Zambia. Thanks are due to Mrs. Russell and other members of the group who worked so hard for this cause.

CAVERSHAM PARK

House Communions will be held at 10.30 a.m. on Feb. 9th at 4 Redbery Close and on Feb. 23rd at 76 Lowfield Road.

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The man with NO NAME

by
Ronald Adkins

It was only a few minutes short of midnight and I was feeling very tired. It had been a busy day but there would be nothing more for me to do until the next morning. So I thought but I was wrong for, at that moment, there came a knock at the front door.

My landlady had gone to bed and so, very wearily, I went to the door and opened it. On the door-step there was an old man whose clothes were both dirty and ragged and whose face was filthy.

As a Curate in a big North London parish I had come across some pretty bad cases but I had never come across before anyone so terribly unkempt.

"Give me half a crown, sir, for the love of God."

COME AGAIN

His breath stank of drink but he was a pitiful sight—and he had appealed to God's love.

I knew that I ought to talk to him and so find out how best I could help him but I was so tired that I was nearly asleep on my feet.

I pulled out a half crown from my pocket (those were the days when half crowns were welcome) and pressed it in his dirty outstretched hand.

"Look," I said, "will you promise me to come and see me to-morrow night. Not as late as this," I added, "about ten o'clock, I shall be free then."

He stared hard at me for a moment and then smiled and said, "I'll come."

As he disappeared into the darkness I felt puzzled, his appearance was so utterly destitute but his voice had an educated tone about it. I felt too that I hadn't done my job properly in letting him go but, above all, I felt tired and weary.

Next night came—and went, and my midnight visitor failed to appear. The following night there was still no sign of him. I sighed, I was not going to see him again.

MR. NOBODY

I was wrong, the next night at about half past ten there was a knock at the door, when I opened it, there he was.

A few minutes later he was drinking a hot cup of coffee. "I'm sorry, sir," he said, "that I did not come two evenings ago."

I noticed he gave no reason for not coming then and I did not ask.

"You've not always been like this," I said.

He did not answer for a moment and then all he said was, "I must go."

"First," I murmured, "tell me your name."

"I have no name," he muttered, "if you like, you can call me Henry Nobody."

"Come and see me again," I said.

He did not answer me directly, "you'll hear from me," he murmured.

Several weeks elapsed and then I did hear from him or, to be more accurate, about him.

I received a message from a hospital saying that a man wanted to see me. He had been knocked down by a car and was not expected to live long. His name was Henry Marshall. Somehow I knew that he was my Henry Nobody and that, at the end of his life, he had resumed his proper name.

There was a screen round his bed and, looking down at him, I saw that the end was near.

He opened his eyes and gave me a faint smile.

"I see," I said, "that you are no longer Nobody".



He gave me another smile, "Very soon," he murmured, "I shall be a dead body."

"Very soon," I said, "you will be with God your Father." I paused for a moment and then added, "I will arise and go to my Father."

Suddenly, very weakly came from the bed, "And will say unto him, Father, I have sinned."

THE STORY

"You know," I said, "the story of the prodigal son."

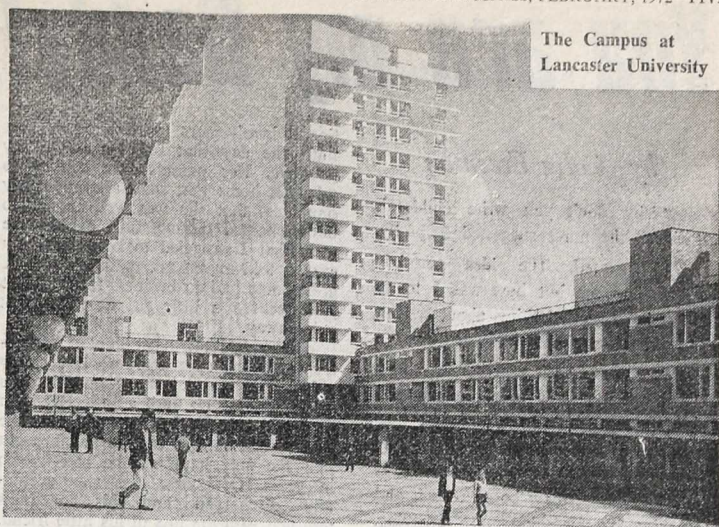
"I should do," he murmured, "as a young man I thought of training for the Ministry. And then the whole wretched story came out, bad company, drink, gambling—and then destitution.

"And now," I said, "you are going home."

"God forgive me," he muttered.

"He was lost and is found," I murmured.

Two hours later he went home.



The Campus at Lancaster University

Lancaster Chaplaincy

One of the most courageous experiments in Christian Unity is being tried at Lancaster University. Whereas at other universities each particular denomination tends to retain its own identity Lancaster simply has a Chaplaincy Centre.

It is the first combined chaplaincy in any British university. The decision for the venture was taken when the university was in the embryonic stage, the moving spirit being Charles Carter, the Vice-Chancellor.

Opened in April, 1969, it cost £170,000, money being raised both locally and nationally. The cost of the so-called 'social parts' came from the University, that for the specifically religious being raised by the various Christian churches and the Jewish community.

It has two chapels, one shared by Anglicans and Free Churches, the other being Roman Catholic. By

means of sliding doors and use of the central concourse, these can easily be converted into one large worshipping area. On Sundays Catholic and Anglican-Free Church Eucharists are celebrated at the same time, with a sharing of some parts of the service and the fellowship afterwards in the central concourse of the Chaplaincy Centre.

All the users of the Centre share the small discussion rooms, library, coffee bar and offices.

Although there is a daily programme of separate denominational services, shared religious experiences are part of the fabric of life within the Centre. Discussions, both formal and informal frequently take place between Christians, Jews and Muslims.

At Lancaster the multiplicity of denominational societies spawned by other universities has been fore-

stalled by the creation of the Christian Association whose umbrella is large enough to shelter most shades of opinion.

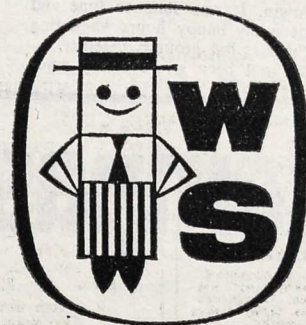
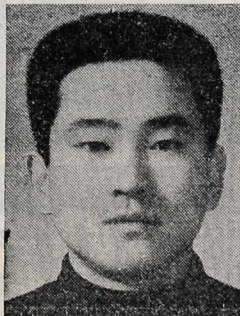
Unlike chaplaincies in other universities the Lancaster Centre does not offer theology courses. This aspect is admirably catered for by the Department of Religious Studies with its open lectures and optional courses offered to all students as part of their General Studies.

Commenting on this the Anglican Chaplain, Mr. Warren, said "We have to be very careful not to equate religious or Christian life within the university with the Centre."

Father Turner, the Roman Catholic added, "It has never been the idea that every Christian activity should happen here. I believe that the Christian should be where things are happening and making a Christian contribution."

PEN FRIEND FOR OVERSEAS READER?

Woon Young Park, a 25-year-old Korean, has read a copy of "Compass" and has written to us asking for a pen-friend. He is a Christian, though not baptised, and is anxious to improve his English. His interests include reading, travelling and dancing. Would any reader who would like to correspond with him, write c/o "Compass", 319 Gazette Buildings, Corporation Street, Birmingham 4.



WALTER SMITH

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FAMOUS FOR
ENGLISH
MEAT & POULTRY

26 Shops and in The Bull Ring

You are my Daddy!

by Colin Freeman

"Why don't you write children's stories?" the nurse suggested helpfully.

I shrugged. The idea certainly appealed to me but how was I to go about it. I knew nothing about writing and even less about children.

It was my tenth year confined to a wheelchair in a unit for chronically disabled young people in a Yorkshire hospital. Until recently I had been fully occupied with tapestry work but I was becoming increasingly bored with it and searching for something more satisfying.

"If you want to see the children next door it would give you inspiration to write," the nurse continued.

Although only a few yards away the children's ward might have been on another planet for all I knew of it or its occupants.

After a few more days of hesitation I finally plucked up sufficient courage to go round there. The sister was most encouraging when I explained the purpose of my visit. It would be good for the children too if I popped in to see them, she told me. With notebook and pencil at hand I wheeled myself somewhat nervously into the playroom.

"You are my daddy," a little boy grinned taking hold of my hand. I later discovered that his parents had deserted him.

"Can I sit on your tummy?" asked another toddler climbing onto my wheelchair without waiting for my permission.

"Draw me a house," demanded a pretty, five-year-old blonde, imperiously handing me my notebook.

My life changed completely from that point. Rarely a day passed that I didn't spend several hours playing with the children and enthusiastically entering into their world of make-believe. I began to write short stories, but collecting material for these was no longer my real reason for visiting next door. I simply loved being with the kids.

Of all the children Carol was my favourite. An eleven-year-old with asthma and a mischievous grin she soon persuaded me to teach her to play the mouth-organ. It was summer time and we spent many happy hours wandering round the hospital grounds together. I had not been aware of my emo-

tional involvement with the children until the day that Carol came to say goodbye. Her parents were coming to take her home that same afternoon. My happiness that she was well enough to be discharged did not fully explain the tears that I struggled to keep from my eyes. I told myself not to be so soft. A grown man had no business to feel upset just because a little girl he knew was going away.

However, I had to get it out of my system. I wrote a short story about a lonely old man in hospital who spent his days gazing into space until a little girl from the children's ward befriended him one day. It transformed his life and brought him the only happiness he had known in years. Of course, she was eventually discharged and his loneliness returned with the loss of his little friend. He was staring sadly at the children's ward one day when his little friend arrived to tell him that she was going to visit him every week.



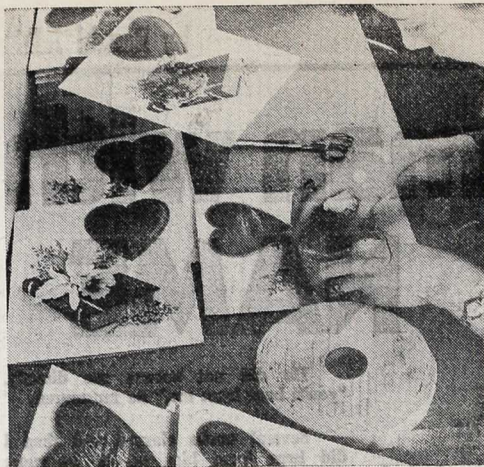
The story was titled "Carol" and it was published in the children's section of a local paper.

I considered obtaining Carol's address and sending her a copy of the story, but decided against it. I really must stop being so sentimental. Besides, she would have forgotten all about me by now.

Soon afterwards I was sitting outside the ward day-dreaming one afternoon when the sound of a mouth-organ interrupted my reverie. I looked up and a lump came into my throat. Carol was standing there—the familiar mischievous grin on her face.

"My mum says I can come and visit you every Saturday if you want me to," she announced eagerly.

I nodded happily as once more I struggled to keep the tears from my eyes. My little story had come true.



Valentine's Day began as a Pagan Festival

BY S. NAPIER

In the hours preceding February 14th this year the Post Office will be deluged with 20,000,000 Valentine Cards. And the senders of three-quarters of them will be women.

Saint Valentine's Day has been a date sacred to lovers for at least 2,000 years. It is the one day in the calendar when Cupid reigns supreme.

The day has long been held as a festival—first by the pagan Romans who celebrated it as a fertility festival, and later by the early Christians.

Yet it was only during the reign of Queen Victoria that it came into its own as a red letter day for timid lovers.

To-day St. Valentine's Day booms: not only in Britain, but in the New World as well.

The modern St. Valentine's Day is held on the date on which Roman youths chose their lady loves for the year.

But it takes its name from a bishop of the early Christian Church who was famed for his great deeds of charity.

Behelved by the Roman Emperor Claudius, the Christians chose him many years later as the patron saint of their festival held on 14th February.

Valentine, who became a convert to Christianity, was first thrown in prison for helping to hide and comfort

his fellow Christians, Then he was martyred.

In later years he became the patron saint of lovers and February 14 became an official day for couples in love to become engaged.

In the Seventeenth century the custom again changed. It became the day on which men and women had the chance to find a special friend for a year.

But the heyday of the Valentine's popularity was the last two decades of the Nineteenth Century. It was all the rage then to give and receive gaily decorated cards. These had pictures and verses which would melt the heart of a stone.

So enthusiastic were the Victorians that the Post Office authorities had to treat St. Valentine's Day mail like a miniature Christmas rush. In desperation they issued appeals to the public to 'post your Valentine's early—otherwise they won't be delivered on time.'

The practice of giving presents on Valentine's Day is much older than that of sending cards. But it is the cards which have remained part of the custom until the present day.

Now more than 3 million are sent and the Post Office collects over £500,000 in postage stamps to deliver them.

Acknowledged as 'Lovers Day,' February 14 is surrounded by unusual customs Superstitious Victorian

young ladies believed that the first unmarried man seen on the fatal day would soon be married to one of them.

If a maiden saw a rooster and a hen early on the morning, it was believed that she would marry before the year was out.

But the fashion of sending Valentines had almost disappeared at the beginning of the present century. Yet by 1926, business in the lovely greeting cards was beginning to boom again.

Just before the last war the GPO cashed in on the rising popularity by making a specially designed greeting card available.

Even during the war the sending of Valentines continued with brisk trade overseas—and even by air-graph.

The earliest celebrations on February 14, had their origins in the February feast of the Ancient Romans when young men drew the names of their young women-to-be from boxes. But maybe its real romantic associations lie in the fact that it was on this day also that many birds were supposed to choose their partners.

To-day February 14th gives all a chance to pause—and reflect upon the good bishop of long ago who showed love to the world in hiding and comforting his fellow Christians. And finally giving his life for the thing he loved—his faith.

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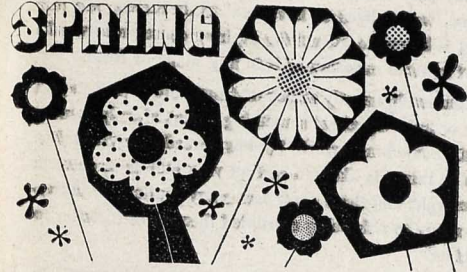


Oops!

Girl students of Kings College and University College, London, at the start of their Shrove Tuesday Pancake Race — organised on behalf of the Save the Children Fund.



SUDDENLY IT'S SPRING



Maybe the snow will be ankle deep on the ground when you read this! And according to the calendar Spring does not begin until March 21st. But JUNIOR COMPASS smells Spring in the air in February, and spots the bulbs nosing their way up through the ground. So now's the very time to start a SPRING DIARY. You could either get a small notebook for your records or you could make a chart to hang on your bedroom wall.



THINGS TO NOTE

Enter when you see the green tips of the first snow-drop and crocus. Then make a note of when you see the first flowers. An old tradition says that birds begin to mate on February 14th. So keep a watchful eye on the bird life in your district. Make a note of the first bird songs and any signs of nest-building. Plan your notebook or chart to cover one month, and you'll find lots of interesting facts to enter. Make notes about the weather too. And remember that you could make the notebook or the chart look really gay by decorating it with coloured illustrations.

FOR OLDER READERS

Here's something for you to puzzle out. A hen and a half lay an egg and a half in a day and a half. How many eggs do seven hens lay in a week? Check your answer with the answer at the end of next column. Then try the puzzle on Mum and Dad!



VALENTINES

February 14th is known as St. Valentine's Day. But the sending of Valentines really has no connection at all with the man called St. Valentine, who was martyred in 270 A.D. because he was a Christian. Valentines were sent round about February 14th in very early Roman times and were connected with the worship of the Roman goddess named Juno. But however they started, there's lots of fun in sending and receiving Valentines. You can make one by folding a sheet of thick white paper. If possible gum some lace round the edge of it. On the front, draw a large red heart with an arrow piercing it. Compose a verse saying how wonderful the person is who is going to receive the Valentine, and print the verse inside. You can make the verse as sloppy as you like. That adds to the fun. Put a big question mark at the end of the page to leave the person guessing as to who has sent it. Then address the envelope in disguised handwriting. You could post your Valentine to a friend, or even to an older brother or sister as a joke.



PECULIAR FEBRUARY

We've mentioned before that 1972 is Leap Year. That means there are 366 days in the year instead of the usual 365. The extra day is February 29th. Remember that February usually has only 28 days? Leap Year won't come again until 1976.

LOVELY THINGS

*Bread is a lovely thing to eat—
God bless the barley and the wheat!*

*A lovely thing to breathe is air—
God bless the sunshine everywhere!*

*The earth's a lovely place to know—
God bless the folks that come and go!*

*Alive's a lovely thing to be—
Giver of life — we say — bless Thee!*

ANSWERS TO PUZZLE

Answer to puzzle: 32 and two-thirds eggs. (One hen lays one egg in one day, or two-thirds of an egg in one day. Multiply two-thirds of an egg by seven for the number of hens and then multiply the answer by seven again for the number of days in the week.)



YOU TOO CAN HAVE YOUR OWN CAR NUMBER

SAYS A. IRWIN

If you search far enough and carry a cheque book with you

The 14/20th King's Hussars Regiment wanted to give Princess Anne, their Colonel-in-Chief, a suitable number plate for her car on her 21st birthday. They found what they were looking for when they came across 1420 H on a milk float. It is now on Princess Anne's car.

There is nothing new in this as the search for personal car number has gone on ever since cars first came on the road. Earl Russell started the vogue nearly 70 years ago when he queued up all-night to get A1. His all-night vigil has paid off especially for local authorities. Each time you transfer a number to a car, you pay the local authority £5. A1 has changed hands 39 times. A short while ago, it was sold for £2,500 in aid of the Guide Dogs for the Blind. Still around somewhere, you might come across it if you keep a look out for a red Jaguar.

Individuals will go to great lengths to get a personal number. Often selling the unwanted car at a loss to get the coveted number plate. The Duke of Bedford purchased a hearse to get DOB 1. A public relations officer bought a broken down green-grocer's van and scrapped it for the letters PRO 1.

Other well-known people have been in the hunt. Holder of the first Aviator's Certificate of the Royal Aero Club, the late Lord Brabazon's hunt ended when he tracked down FLY 1. Lady Brabazon's car now carries this number. Sir Gerald Nabarro has NAB 1 to 8 and 10 for his vehicles. He is busy hunting for NAB 9 to complete the series.

Famous stars have also been in the chase. Those that have succeeded include Joe Davis CUE 1; Tommy Trinder TT 1; Max Bygraves MB 1; Jimmy Tarbuck COM 1C

and Harry Secombe HS 92. Asked what the figures stand for, Harry replied: "That's my waist measurement".

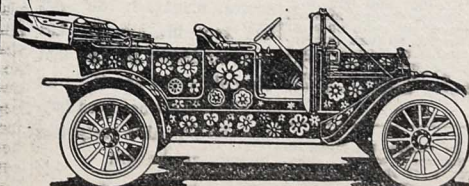
One number plate of interest is 1066 AD but don't get misled, it doesn't belong to a William Norman. In fact, it belongs to Mr. A. F. Roberts of Cheltenham who is connected with car sales. A clergyman was so insistent to obtain HAM 135 that officials asked him why. He said: "HAM for him stood for Hymns Ancient and Modern and 135 was his favourite hymn".

Business firms are just as keen to get plates that stand for the initials of the firm. For instance, the L.C.C. issues GPO to Post Office vehicles. Cars of the New Zealand Public Trust Office all bear the letters PTO. Doctors in Quebec are allocated M.D.

Children when out in a car like to play funny car number spotting. They might spot a BAD, MAD or SAD motorist in Gloucester. Another motorist might be a OAF in Cornwall; FLY or SLY in London; GAY in Leicestershire; FAT in Hull; WET in Rotherham or HOT in Hampshire.

Perhaps the most popular with children is the animal series: CAT and BAT (Hull); COB and DOG (Birmingham); OWL (Oxford); BEE (Grimsby); EEL (Bournemouth); COW (Southampton) and ANT (Shropshire). There are many more. Then there is the eatable series TEA (West Bromwich); JAM (Wilts); EGS (Perth) and even EAT (Kingston-upon-Hull) itself.

A newspaper invited readers to write in if they saw any unusual numbers. One lady wrote and said: "I spotted OMO near Severn Bridge but I am sorry to say it was filthy dirty at the time!"



LOOKING IN WITH ERIC LAWSON

A LIVELY LOOK
AT THE TV SCENE



Frank Finlay as Casanova with Zienia Merton as Christina filming in Venice for the first play in the Casanova series — "Steed in the Stable".

More than a Family Show



It was inevitable that there would be a fair acreage of bare flesh in Dennis Potter's six play series *Casanova* screened on BBC-2 last December. And it was equally predictable that there would be protests from the self-appointed guardians of the nation's moral fibre.

Cannily, the BBC prefaced each transmission with a warning that the play reflected the bawdiness of the age in which the story was set. I am bound to say, therefore, that those who took the trouble to look in and then complained, remind me of the lady who protested vehemently that if she stood on a chair and leaned far enough out of the window she could see her neighbour sunbathing in the nude. *Casanova* was screened on the minority channel at 9-20 in the evening when the children ought to have been safely tucked in bed. It was not put out on a popular channel at prime-time between the cornflakes commercials. You had, in effect, 'to stand on a chair and lean out of the window' to watch it.

Anyone who switched on expecting a titillating orgy of libidinous lechery must have been rather disappointed. There were, it's true, a few shots of almost total nudity, most of them flashed on the screen with subliminal brevity, and the girl in the hip-bath in episode three—which seemed to spark off the outcry from the clean-up brigade—could not compete in eroticism with many a bath-soap commercial.

Any play about the life of Casanova, the archetypal libertine, was obliged to have 'sex' as its theme, and this subject is bound to attract the aspiring censor who would protect us from exposure of it in any shape or form.

Censorship usually means that someone objects to you seeing or knowing about something he has already seen or knows. Something which he has already survived but which he thinks is likely to corrupt your morals or damage your morale, and there never seems any shortage of individuals ready to risk being corrupted themselves in order to protect us!

Attitudes to TV censorship in general and in particular to a series like *Casanova*, depend upon whether we want television to be like moving wallpaper, an endless belt of harmless, mind-numbing entertainment, or to be a vehicle for the creative artist or playwright. If Shakespeare were alive to-day he would no doubt—like Dennis Potter—be writing for television. And surely he would have been among the first to fall foul of the clean-up people. Would they have allowed Romeo to shin up to the bedroom of fourteen-year-old Juliet, or Falstaff his bawdy roisterings with the doxies in a down-town tavern?

Whether or not *Casanova* will be regarded as 'significant' television drama only time will tell. But unless TV is to be just an innocuous soporific aimed only at the mindless masses, then a writer of the calibre of Dennis Potter—he wrote 'Son of Man' remember—must be allowed to experiment with the medium of the age. And for that we must have a channel like BBC-2.

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SPORTS SPOT by Stew Linnel

Consider for a moment that you were manager of England...

In 1966, a quietly-spoken, grey-haired, slightly balding man was constantly repeating a sentence which could have proved to be his undoing. The man was (now Sir) Alf Ramsey; the sentence was, simply, "England will win the World Cup in 1966." The accent was always, pointedly, on the word "will."

Rather than proving to be his undoing, that sentence was to achieve entirely the opposite effect. As history now tells us, England did win the World Cup in 1966, and for the first time, the name of the England team manager was as much a household word as those of the players he selected.

An even more astounding fact is that, in this day and age of uncertain employment for the less successful soccer managers; Sir Alf has kept his job. He has done so despite the fact that virtually every sports writer in Fleet Street has been baying for Sir Alf's scalp like hounds at the kill.

on reflection, played apallingly in Mexico in 1970, bearing in mind the form one knows they are capable of producing; true their performances since have left a lot to be desired (that Switzerland should have been allowed to look so good at Wembley in November is one of the most glaring examples). It is not true, however, neither is it fair to lay the blame on Sir Alf's doorstep.

Consider for a moment that you are team manager of an internationally successful soccer club. You are guaranteed attendance of 100,000 for every home game. The world's top reporters follow your every move. You have steered your team to the quarter finals of the second most important competition in which you take part. You are then faced with a situation, whereby you will not be able to assemble your players together until a few days before those quarter-finals, with the strong possibility that a number of key players will not be able to attend. Add to that the fact that the quarter-finals are no less than five months away and you can then begin to grasp the problems facing Sir Alf Ramsey when he arrived back from Athens at the beginning of December, England having

just defeated Greece by two goals to nil.

Is it any wonder, then, that so few young players manage to emerge as international stars? Sir Alf can hardly be expected to give them their "chance" in games as important as the last few England games have been.

Thus Sir Alf is forced to rely upon players of proven international ability. A team described by one leading sports writer as "a team that remains difficult to beat but one which is finding

victory increasingly difficult to achieve."

Sir Alf Ramsey needs, indeed, deserves assistance. The Football Association and the Football League must cement their own relationship more firmly, and do something constructive to help, particularly over the subject of the

release of players for Internationals and the timetable of such games.

Action must be taken soon, before Sir Alf is tempted away to the comparatively simple task of managing a league club. Who would blame him if he was to "succumb"? Would you?



Sir Alf Ramsey giving a pep talk to the England Team