

The Vicar Writes...

Dear Friends

At Jesus' birth the sky was bright with the guiding star of Bethlehem. As his death approaches light is darkened in an eclipse of the sun, and at his death the earth shakes and rocks split. The army officer, watching everything since he is on duty, and supposedly in charge of a routine execution senses that in fact he is not in control at all; there is a far greater power in evidence here than he has ever experienced, and it is terrifying.

Jesus had once been impressed by the faith of a Roman soldier. Now again it is a Roman soldier who grasps the devastating truth: Jesus really was the Son of God, and he has just been killed.

The full horror of what this means creeps over us, if Jesus is the Son of God we have destroyed our only true source of hope; we have rejected all chance of salvation for ourselves. Seeing it all like this, through the eyes of those who had not yet witnessed the resurrection, helps us appreciate how many must have felt as they watched the body of Jesus being taken down from the Cross that Friday. The appalling misery and emptiness washes over us still.

Throughout his life, Jesus had shown consistently, by his love and care for people's wholeness, by his healing, teaching and transforming, that he was the Saviour, the Son of God. The greatest sign and proof of this came after he was well and truly dead. It was when God raised his Son to new life that he showed us the meaning of all that had happened before.

Suddenly it is clear that Jesus had chosen to die; for otherwise we, as created beings, would never have been able to put him to death. His death must have been a free offering of love for us; rather than the crucifixion blocking off our chance of salvation, it was the act of salvation taking place. His death was not a ghastly defeat, but an earth shattering victory!

So it is that we, who live after the resurrection, are in a position to see God's plan of salvation being accomplished. Jesus, once raised from the dead, is alive; he lives to set us free. He has proved himself to be both human and divine, so that we, with Thomas, can kneel at his feet in joy and say "my Lord and my God".

Happy Easter to you all,

Andrew

EASTER SERVICES

Thursday 29 th March	7.00 pm	Holy Communion for Maundy Thursday
Good Friday	12 noon	A meditation on the Stations of the Cross
Saturday 31 st March	6.00 pm	Service of Light and blessing of Easter baskets
Easter Day	8.00 am	Holy Communion
	10.30 am	Parish Communion
	6.00 pm	Evening Prayer

'We did what we had to'

I don't know about you, but I've heard this phrase used in several different ways and contexts; and just recently I've been brought up short by the depth of meaning behind its various admissions, and the close proximity of its reality. You can 'google it' and come up with colourful explanations of what lies behind this expression, this confession; and right now I am being bowled over by the story of my father's wartime experience, and his decision to relate his own personal story of those turbulent, dangerous years. I'm sure many of us will know relatives who have decided to keep 'Stum' about the part they played during war-time. For them, it might be about tussling with a weighty sense of guilt or disbelief: 'Did we really do all that? Were we honestly playing a part in a mega-battle that changed our lives and perspectives for ever?' Many tight-lipped participants in these frightening times made the decision to come home and keep quiet.

But others decided that their stories should be told, before it was too late. And my father – John (Johnny) Hill - celebrating his ninety sixth birthday this January - has now been involved for almost two years telling my cousin Pam, a very fine author, all about the part he played in World War II. He has a fantastic gift of recall, and can talk for England once he is 'in the groove'! And he paints an amazingly open and honest account of what life was like for him as he trained – in this country, but also in Canada – to become a Mosquito navigator, a participant in war during that most dangerous of times. Pam says in the book, as she reflects on the hours she spent recording and listening to his scary story: 'The whole lucid narrative seemed to be fully formed in my uncle's head, experience remembered with clarity across the years.'

She went on to say, 'This war, more than almost any other, sought to put an end to an evil regime, but it was still war.'

My uncle, a practising Christian who still sings in his church choir, often used the following phrase in his account of the missions they flew: '*We did what we had to do*'. This says it all really; hence it has become the title of our book.'

It is a simple story, focusing in on my Dad's courage, his constancy and his comradeship. I was especially touched by the way he played down the grim and grinding aspects of his work. Knowing him as I do, I had to gulp as I read of these tough times, and of the fragile uncertainties of life in some pretty horrendous situations.

And this final passage that I'm now going to quote from my Dad's story moved me to tears. I include it in this short article to further underline how, as described in many parts of this personal wartime chronicle, there was a huge understatement of the severity of what he, and many other young men - including Court, his Canadian pilot - went through:

'A bond of trust and mutual respect soon developed between us and our ground crew. As an example, on *Operation Clarion*, a daylight raid with greater potential for losses, Court and I had climbed into the cockpit and were ready to shut the door. As we waited for the step ladder we used to be taken away, one of the ground crew, a very tall Cockney, inevitably known as Lofty, said to me quietly, "Please come back, sir." '

He did, and for that I am so very grateful.

Wendy Fellingham

This, the year of 2018, is an appropriate time in our history to think about the dangerous missions of the Royal Airforce, as it contemplates its colourful centenary.

*John Hill's book – '**We did what we had to do**' is available now – see Wendy Fellingham for further details.*

LENT

It was quiet and
Within my mind unbidden did rise a
Cliche filled the space inside: Yes, too quiet!
Which made me smile, at first,
A thought which faded fast
As I did look around
And wondered where I was?
What shore was this?

The silence filled the landscape
Of land beside the sea
But no waves crashed
And no Gulls screeched
Still stranger, no wind did blow
Alone I stood upon this shore
A point in time - a singularity
As all Mankind did hear a call.

Reality stood still and time
Was shown to be but fabric
Woven for us to see the
Grace of God within ourselves
As He called out and showed
The depth of love for us
By being God in Man
To redeem His promise so.

THE Lord was gone, yet
Danced upon that threshold
'tween world and Heaven's realm
As He did slip into the Father's arms
From darkness deep to brilliant light
And silence filled the World behind
As saw I this upon a hill
On mountains far away.

And stood I on the Roman Sea
Where many sailed and fought and bought
Yet I did look towards the Mountains
And saw the darkness of Jerusalem
Quivering with portent deep
How long I stood I know not
But suddenly a light burst forth
A dazzling brilliant sign for Man.

Too soon it faded from Canaan's hill
And all was quiet upon the shore
As I did turn to scan the Sea
My mind still grappling with what I'd seen
Still pondering this mystery so until
With a great crash of sound
The waves pounded the shore again
The wind did blow, and gulls did cry again.

Thus, here I am and far from then
In time and space and culture too
Forever searching through this life
To see that light again
And hear the Master's Call
To feel the stillness of His Peace
I felt upon the distant shore and
Follow Him through Heaven's open door.

John McGill



BROWNSEA CASTLE REBORN *(Part 2)*

After my first visit in 1962, I was ordered to co-ordinate the development of the castle and grounds under the Director of Personnel and I was employed as such until the castle came into operation in 1965. The castle, rebuilt after a fire in 1897, was empty and in a very poor state - broken windows, dry rot, wet rot, woodworm and practically the whole of the outside was covered in ivy. Outside, hundreds of rats ran about quite tame having never known the enmity of man. In the woods on the south side there were some 9 old military buildings from World War II - fuel stores, magazines, two 6 inch gunsites, crew accommodation huts, look-out post and an underground control headquarters.

The John Lewis Partnership had been given a free hand in regard to the castle and there were four possibilities - to leave it and do nothing, to knock it down and leave it, to knock it down and build something in its place or to keep its romantic aspect and renovate. It was decided to choose option four and to make the building and adjacent grounds a suitable holiday place for Partners. There was suspicion locally that we would make a garish place, noisy and brash, "these drapers from London disturbing the local peace", that we would make an eyesore on the landscape. It took some time to convince them that we had only one intention - to make the castle a beautiful place with well kept gardens and grounds not only to please our own visitors, but to enhance the general aspect as viewed from the mainland. One of the Chairman's directives was "we are enjoying the trees planted and aspects planned by people in 1850. Make certain that the people of 2050 are going to say the same thing about us".

Once it was decided to renovate, which was estimated at about £100,000, work proceeded accordingly. The first

thing was to make the castle watertight and safe, and then make it habitable for visitors and staff. There were three other main problems which had to be solved before the castle could operate - rats, mosquitoes, and how to transport Partners and stores to and from the mainland.

Brownsea Island, strange to say, comes under the local authority of Wareham not Poole, so I got in touch with the local council and was referred to the rodent operator at Swanage. He and his dog came over and when they saw the problem both faces lit up! A detailed study of the rat population and their local habits were made and then 300lbs of Warfarin laid at the strategic spots and most of the rats were destroyed. The mosquitoes were a tricky problem as they affected the whole island. We found an expert, Mr Shute who ran the Malaria Research Unit at Epsom, who agreed to visit and after only three days reported that there were 23 different types of mosquito on the island. This was alarming, but our minds were eased when he said that 18 did not bite man. We were advised to clear undergrowth and remove static water from leaking gutters and this would eliminate four of the remaining five types of mosquito. The final one was more difficult as it had a range of 4 miles and needed brackish water for breeding. This occurred in Seymer's Marsh on the north-west corner of the island and was in the Naturalists' sector. Mr Shute advised clearing the weed in March and letting the equinoctial spring tide flow in and out without hindrance. We did this and he was right. Mosquitoes have not been completely eradicated, but they are no longer a major nuisance.

Lastly, transport. It would be necessary to have a seaworthy boat capable of working in most weathers by day and night throughout the season to transfer visitors, luggage, provisions, stores etc. to and from the mainland. I based the design of craft on a police launch I saw on the

River Thames near the Tower of London and got the builders to build one to suit our requirements. The result was "Castello" with a passenger capacity of 28 plus 2 crew. The castle eventually opened in April 1965, some two years later than the National Trust had opened the island to the public.

It is well to remember, in conclusion, that the Partnership was allowed a free hand with the castle, the National Trust had no qualms about the building disappearing altogether. Now that it has proved so highly successful and is such a beautiful place internally and with a restored external appearance, they no doubt have a hankering to have it back for their own use. The lease will be up for renewal in 2061 and as it is the Partnership who have saved the castle, they would have a very strong case to ask for and obtain the freehold, or at least have their lease renewed. Consider the alternatives which could have happened - a holiday camp, a speculative project for the rich, a massive hotel/block of flats. The Partnership has kept its word to make it a beautiful place. The freehold would be a justified reward.

*Captain George T. Cooper O.B.E.
Royal Navy*

"Paraprosdokians" (Winston Churchill loved them) are figures of speech in which the latter part of a sentence or phrase is surprising or unexpected; frequently humorous.

Knowledge is knowing a tomato is a fruit. Wisdom is not putting it in a fruit salad.

They begin the evening news with 'Good Evening', then proceed to tell you why it isn't.

War does not determine who is right - only who is left.



CALENDAR FOR MARCH

Thurs	1	10.00 am	Parish Art Group
Fri	2	10.30 am 5.00 pm	Coffee Morning in hall Lent Devotion
LENT 3			
Sun	4	8.00 am 10.30 am 6.00 pm	Holy Communion Parish Communion Evening Prayer
Wed	7	10.30 am 5.00 pm	Holy Communion <i>at St. Nicolas</i> Lent Devotion
Fri	9	10.30 am 5.00 pm	Baby Group <i>in hall</i> Lent Devotion
MOTHERING SUNDAY			
Sun	11	8.00 am 10.30 am 6.00 pm	Holy Communion Matins (<i>Sunday Club in hall</i>) Evening Prayer
Wed	14	10.30 am 5.00 pm	Holy Communion <i>at St. Nicolas</i> Lent Devotion
Thurs	15	10.00 am	Parish Art Group
Fri	16	10.30 am 5.00 pm	Coffee Morning in hall Lent Devotion
LENT 5			
Sun	18	8.00 am 9.30 am 10.30 am 6.00 pm	Holy Communion Family Service Parish Communion Choral Evensong

Wed	21	10.30 am 5.00 pm	Holy Communion <i>at St. Nicolas</i> Lent Devotion
Thurs	22	3.30 pm	Magazine collation
Fri	23	10.30 am 5.00 pm	Baby Group Lent Devotion
Sat	24	11.00 am	Annual Church Meeting <i>in hall</i>

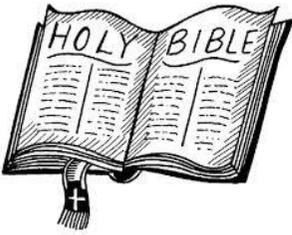
PALM SUNDAY

Sun	25	8.00 am 10.30 am 6.00 pm	Holy Communion Parish Communion Evening Prayer
Tues	27	10.00 am	Craft Group <i>in hall</i>
Wed	28	10.30 am	Holy Communion <i>at St. Nicolas</i>
Thurs	29	7.00 pm	Holy Communion for Maundy Thursday
Fri	30	12.00 noon	A meditation on the Stations of the Cross
Sat	31	6.00 pm	Service of Light and blessing of Easter baskets

EASTER DAY

Sun	1	8.00 am 10.30 am 6.00 pm	Holy Communion Parish Communion Evening Prayer
Wed	4	10.30 am	Holy Communion <i>at St. Nicolas</i>





SUNDAY READINGS IN **MARCH**

Sunday 4th March - Lent 3

OLD TESTAMENT: Exodus 20.1-17

The code of conduct of the Ten Commandments provides the legal basis upon which the old covenant rests.

NEW TESTAMENT: 1 Corinthians 1.18-25

Christ the wisdom and power of God. The message of the Cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

GOSPEL: John 2.13-22

Jesus condemns the secular exploitation of the Temple and makes it clear that he himself is the sanctuary of God.

Sunday 11th March - Mothering Sunday

OLD TESTAMENT: 1 Samuel 1.20-end

Hannah dedicates Samuel to God.

NEW TESTAMENT: Luke 2.33-35

When Jesus is presented in the Temple, Simeon speaks especially to Mary, his mother.

Sunday 18th March - Lent 5

OLD TESTAMENT: Jeremiah 31. 31-34

The prophet heralds a new covenant, a new contract and relationship between God and his people based upon a law of forgiveness planted in the heart.

NEW TESTAMENT: Hebrews 5.5-10

Paul recognises Jesus as our great High Priest after the order of Melchizedek.

GOSPEL: John 12. 20-33

Jesus acknowledges his destiny of suffering which must be shared by all who follow him.

Sunday 25th March - Palm Sunday

OLD TESTAMENT: Isaiah 50.4-9

In this reading from the prophet there is a foretaste of suffering combined with a touch of confidence in God's ultimate victory.

PASSION GOSPEL

An account of the events of Palm Sunday

Sunday 1st April - EASTER DAY

OLD TESTAMENT: Isaiah 25.6-9

Isaiah's prophecy comprises a vision of the Messianic banquet at which God, the host, reveals himself to his guests as their saviour and messiah.

NEW TESTAMENT: Acts 10.34-43

Peter says that deeds, not nationality, constitute the means by which God accepts his disciples and the Jews have no exclusive claim upon God's love.

GOSPEL: John 20.1-18

When Mary discovers the empty tomb she is dismayed. Jesus then appears to her and she goes to tell the disciples what he has said.

LENT CROSS

Anna Castley passed on the idea of the transforming of the Christmas tree into a cross. During Lent the cross will be unadorned, but on Easter Day people are encouraged to bring a short-stemmed flower and when they come up for communion place their flower into the cross, thus transforming it into the Cross of Glory.

St Joseph the Carpenter – gracious descendant of King David

Many people know that Joseph was the father of the most famous man who ever lived, but beyond that, we know very little about him. The Gospels name him as the ‘father’ of Jesus, while also asserting that the child was born of a virgin. Even if he wasn’t what we call the ‘biological’ father, it was important to them that he was a distant descendant of the great King David - a necessary qualification for the Messiah.

It’s obvious that Joseph (usually described as a ‘carpenter’) was not wealthy, because he was allowed to offer the poor man’s sacrifice of two pigeons or turtle doves at the presentation of his infant son. No one expected eloquence or wisdom from this man’s son. Jesus was born into an unremarkable family, with a doubtless hard-working artisan as His father. There would have been few luxuries in that little home at Nazareth.

Matthew begins his birth narrative with the bald statement that Mary was engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together she became pregnant ‘with child from the Holy Spirit’. Joseph was not apparently privy to the divine intervention in her life, and drew the obvious conclusion: it was another man’s child. However, he was not the sort of man who wished to disgrace her publicly, so he resolved to ‘dismiss her quietly’ - end their engagement without fuss, we might say.

However, at that point Joseph had a dream in which he was told by ‘an angel of the Lord’ not to hesitate to take Mary as his wife, because the child conceived in her was ‘from the Holy Spirit’, and that the baby was to be named ‘Jesus’ (‘saviour’) because He will ‘save His people from their sins’.

On waking, Joseph did as he had been instructed and took Mary as his wife.

So far as Joseph himself is concerned, we can be pretty sure of a few things. In human, legal terms he was the father of Jesus, he was a carpenter and he had probably died before Jesus began his public ministry. The little we are told suggests a devout, decent and sensitive man, one who shared Mary's anxiety when the 12 year-old Jesus went missing in Jerusalem, and who presumably taught his son the trade of a carpenter.

Joseph has become an icon of the working man - there are many churches nowadays dedicated to 'Joseph the Worker'. He can stand in the calendar of saints for the 'ordinary' person, a straight-forward craftsman who never expected or chose to be in the spotlight of history. He did what he could, and he was obedient to everything that he believed God required of him. To do the 'ordinary' thing well, to be kind, caring and open to guidance: these are great gifts, and Joseph seems to have had them in abundance.

The Charge of the Light Brigade

150 years ago, this month, James Brudenell, Earl of Cardigan, died. He was the officer in charge of the Light Brigade, who 12 years earlier, following a misleading order, charged valiantly at the massed ranks of the Russian artillery in the battle of Balaclava.

Many of the men and horses were killed, and the rest were forced to withdraw. They had charged at the wrong target – they should have been retrieving some stolen guns from a small unit of Cossacks. The story was widely reported at

home, but the event, and the Earl of Cardigan's role in it, would have been long forgotten had not Alfred Lord Tennyson, six weeks after the news broke, written possibly his best-known poem, 'The Charge of the Light Brigade'.

I remember, perhaps 15 years ago, my son, who was then working for the BBC Sound Archive unit, telling me of his experience while copying and technically improving a batch of very early recordings. He was given one to work on which was Tennyson himself reciting 'The Charge of the Light Brigade'. He described it as an eerie and moving experience – the poet's calm and controlled voice and the profoundly emotional words, full of both anger and admiration. It can be found on the BBC website, via 'Archive'.

Although 'the soldiers knew someone had blundered', they charged valiantly into a hail of shells, 'theirs but to do or die'. Great victories become part of history, but so do gallant defeats. Those 600 cavalymen, immortalised by a great poet, may have lost the battle, but they won many hearts.

A kind-hearted gift

A cash-strapped student woke up from a nap on a train to find that a kind-hearted stranger had left £100 on her lap. While travelling to her home town of Leeds, Ella Johannessen, 23, had made an emotional call to her mother about her financial worries. She had got into debt in her final year at university after giving up her part-time job to focus on her studies. Later, waking from her nap, she found five £20 notes under a napkin - and burst into tears. She said the gesture showed that there was "kindness, and good people, in the world".

(from "The Week", 3rd February 2018)

Article passed on by Beryl Thomas

Four teenagers and a car **To Rome and back in the 50's**

Over sixty years ago my Mother owned a black Jowett Javelin car which myself and three friends drove from Surrey to Rome and back one August. The other girl was a non-driver, and one boy's driving was so awful that we banned him shortly after Calais! The Alps proved to be a problem as the radiator kept boiling, and in desperation we put roadside snow in it. The only answer was to drive over the mountains in the cool of the night. We had packed two tents, and fifteen tins of pilchards and fifteen tins of sausages for the month's suppers. This was unimaginative, but cheap - we needed our meagre funds for fuel and campsites.



I well remember the Jowett Javelin's hand gears on the side of the steering wheel. Third gear always jumped out, so it had to be held in place when in use! The battery was a problem too as it was situated behind one of the wheels. We were nature's children, washing ourselves and our clothes in handy rivers, lakes and mountain streams. Each Sunday on our travels we attended church - a Latin Mass. However, we were delighted to find the English church in Rome near the Spanish Steps, with familiar understandable worship and hymns we could sing. One of us was even asked to take the collection.

In Rome we legitimately parked the car under one of the fountains in St. Peter's Square. There was a convenient wind, and while we marvelled at the interior of St. Peter's Basilica and the Sistine Chapel (no queues in those days), the car got a very necessary wash from the fountain. In Interlaken we all had to sleep sitting up in the car, wet and

hungry, as monsoon-like rain had demolished our tents and supper.

Retrospectively I am amazed that my Mother lent her car for a month to four teenagers to be driven to Rome and back. At the time, with the temerity of youth, I thought she was bound to say "yes". My co-driver eventually became my husband and the non-driving girl my sister-in-law!

There is a black Jowett Javelin car in the National Motor Museum at Beaulieu. Having just discovered the registration plate number of Mother's car, I am writing to them to see if by any coincidence it is the same car.



Anna Castley

P.S. I haven't eaten another tin of pilchards since!!!

God So Loved the World

'For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.' (John 3:16)

This verse has been described as 'the greatest verse in the Bible', as it enables us to understand the events of Good Friday and Easter Day. The cross and resurrection reveal the depth of God's love for each of us.

God's love is unconditional: God demonstrated the extent of his love by sending His Son into this world, to show us what it looks like: 'God with skin on'! God graciously loves us, as none of us deserves it. 'There is nothing we can do to make God love us more. There is nothing we can do to make God

love us less.' (Philip Yancey).

God's love is sacrificial: The cross is the supreme demonstration of God's love, as Jesus identifies with a fallen, suffering world. He died for our sins, removing the barrier between us and God, giving access into God's presence and release from the power of sin and death. God's love is accessible: Jesus' resurrection makes His eternal life available to all who put their trust in Him. It's an offer of life with purpose, in which we can know God personally, both now and for eternity.

Bobby Moore described receiving the World Cup from the Queen in 1966 as terrifying: 'I noticed that the Queen was wearing some beautiful white gloves. I looked down at my hands and they were completely covered with mud'! Although we approach God with dirty and spoilt lives, by the cross and resurrection, we can shake hands with a holy God. He offers us 'life in all its fullness', with healing, forgiveness, peace and a fresh start in life!

The Rev'd Paul Hardingham, Rector of Bolton

To make you smile

It was Palm Sunday, but because of a sore throat, young James stayed home from church with his grannie. When the family returned home, they were carrying several palm fronds. Johnny asked them what they were for. "People held them over Jesus' head as He walked by," his father told him.

"Wouldn't you know it," James fumed, "the one Sunday I don't go, and He shows up."

FROM THE REGISTERS

Funerals

2 nd February	Arthur Clinton Fairchild (92)
16 th February	Elizabeth Ann Walker (73)
22 nd February	Mary Hayward (95)

ALTAR FLOWERS

Sunday 4 th March	Lent (no flowers)
Sunday 11 th March	Mothering Sunday Susanne King
Sunday 18 th March	Lent (no flowers)
Sunday 25 th March	Palm Sunday - Susanne King
Sunday 1 st April	Easter Day - The Guild

(The Guild will meet on Saturday 31st March to decorate the church for Easter)

MAGAZINE DEADLINE

The deadline for the April edition of the
Church Magazine is
Friday 16th March