

Jan. 1st, 1917

My Dear Friends and parishioners,-

Again, and for the third time, we exchange our Christmas and New Year's greetings under the cloud of war, and such a widespread and devastating war as the world has never witnessed before. We are all more convinced than ever of the righteousness of our cause, and therefore under God's good providence, of its ultimate triumph. The fiery trial has been, and still is, a severe strain on us all, but the heart of the nation shows no sign of flinching- nay, is steadier than ever. Our common cause and the tremendous issues at stake in this struggle (added to the criminal and reckless cruelties of the enemy) have welded the people together in one common resolve, from which, with God's help, we shall never swerve until we have achieved our object and secured a just and lasting peace. Wing, like every other town and village, great or small, throughout the country, has given of her best, and there are (or were, for we have had some sad losses) serving in one capacity or another just over 200 men. We referred to our Christmas presents to the men at the various fronts in our last number. Thanks to the general and generous response to our appeal (£48 was subscribed altogether) 92 parcels were despatched, and Miss H. B. Tatham has already received many acknowledgements from abroad. Our dear lads are much pleased both with the contents of their parcels and with this proof that, though so far away, they are not forgotten at Wing. How thankful we shall be to have them safe at home again! But that, seems at present, I fear, still a long way off.

Here in Wing we have had many deaths during the past year (25 in all). Our dear Parish Clerk, Edward Whitman, broke down in health about last Christmas, and, though at one time we hoped he was rallying, he passed away quite suddenly on June 16th. The death of one so trusted and so universally respected has been a great blow to many, and to me perhaps more than anyone. Levi Rickard died in February, and Thomas Green in August – both of them after many months of suffering, most patiently borne. Many elderly people have also passed from us, Eliza Roadnight (82), Fanny Lovell (88), Rebecca Gibbs (79), Fanny Woodward (72), George Bull (77), Thos. Dimmock (69), Moses Syrratt (79), Martha Pratt (86), Thos, Bolton (76), Mr. John Windmill, of Old Park Farm (89), and lastly, on January 1st, Bernard Burrows (79). The war seems to meet us at every turn. Mr. Long, our headmaster, was called up in May soon after his assistant, E. Samuels, and it has been difficult to carry on the school satisfactorily without him. We miss him much in many things, particularly as Scoutmaster, though, I am glad to say the Scouts are keeping well together, and meet four evenings in the week. We found it impossible to darken the Church in compliance with police regulations, and, since the evenings drew in, have held Evensong on Sundays at 3 instead of 6 p.m. In addition, since or Mission (which took place in early November) Mission services have been held in the Hall at 6, and have been well attended. We shall all, however, be glad to get back to our normal ways, in this as in all other things, when the Zeppelins cease from troubling and the country is at rest.

Your friend and pastor,

FRANCIS H. TATHAM

A united prayer and intercession meeting was held in the Hall on Sunday evening, New Year's Eve. Services were suspended at the Chapels, and there was a very large attendance. The Hall was packed, nearly 500 persons being present. The service was opened with prayer and the singing of "O God our help in ages past", which was taken up fervently, as were all the hymns. Then followed the lesson from John xvi. 18-finish. The Vicar briefly addressed the meeting and said that if our present troubles and anxieties had no other effect, they at least drew us all together in a common spirit of prayer and brotherhood. We were passing through deep waters, and at the close of the most

memorable year the world had ever seen, and now at the threshold of another, which they all hoped would bring at last the blessing of peace, they could not but join in earnest and united prayer for the help and guidance of our Heavenly Father. The Rev. R. Fairley, Primitive Methodist, spoke of the dangers of drifting, and the Rev. J. Ogden, Wesleyan, said that he had attended many meetings, political and otherwise, but never such a meeting or on such a solemn occasion as this when they were all gathered together to worship, and to pray for strength and unity, and neither must they forget how much cause for thankfulness they had. The Rev. A. E. Baynes spoke of the fellowship of men and of the Holy Spirit. During the singing of the last hymn a collection for the Red Cross Society was made, and produced £2 9s. 3d. A prayer meeting followed, in which many took part.

CONFIRMATION –The Bishop of Buckingham will hold a Confirmation at Stewkley on Thursday. Will any intending candidates whom we have not yet spoken to communicate at once with the Vicar or his colleague.

THE RED CROSS

The following statement of our contributions to the Red Cross for the past year, supplied by Mrs. Tarver, will, I am sure, be interesting:-

Money Boxes	24	4	10
Jumble Sale	37	4	0
Whist Drive	14	15	1
Our Day	70	9	2
Special for Star and Garter home5		0	0
Church Collection	5	10	0
Donations, etc.	17	4	10
	174	7	11

£54 0s. 1d. have been expended on materials and wool for the Work Party, and the Secretary still has in hand for the Work Party £15 3. 10d. The rest has been paid in to the Central County Fund.

THE CHRISTMAS PRESENTS TO MEN AT THE FRONT:- I omitted to mention in my letter above that a full list of the subscribers and of the names of the men to whom the parcels were sent, together with an account of the contents of the parcels (which, of course, depended upon their destination to the West *or* the East, Flanders and France, *or* Egypt, East Africa, Salonica and Mesopotamia) has been drawn up and is now exhibited in Mrs. Laurence’s window at the Queen’s Head, High Street. Only one went North, viz., to Jesse Lane, R.N., who is on a torpedo boat in the North Sea, and we were glad to hear from him that it duly came to hand, for our sailors have the hardest time of all, and it is difficult for us to realise their long months of exposure and constant watchings and perils which they are enduring for our protection.

EXTRACTS FROM PARISH REGISTERS

HOLY BAPTISM

Dec. 31st. – Doris Emily (born Dec. 2nd), daughter of Alfred Biggs, R.N., and Salome Amelia Biggs, of Wing.

MARRIAGE.

Nov. 30th. – John Thomas Briscoe (12th W. Yorks. Regt.), of Wigan, and Louisa Maria Yates, of Wing.

BURIALS

Dec. 13th. – Eric John, child of Frederick Corkett, aged 18 days.

“ 18th. – Ellen Jane, daughter of (late) James and Matilda Roadnight, aged 11.

“ 28th. – John Windmill, of Old Park Farm, aged 89.

OFFERTORY RECIEPTS

	£	s.	d.	
Dec 3. 1 st Sunday in Advent	1	4	3	Church Exps.
10. 2 nd “ “	2	3	11	Sunday School.
17. 3 rd “ “ “	1	2	4	Church Exps.
24. 4 th “ “	1	10	7	“ “
24. Grove		5	7	Red Cross Soc.
25. Xmas Day	5	3	7	Sick & Needy.
31. Sunday after Xmas	1	13	5	Church Exps.
31. Collections at Hall	2	9	3	Red Cross Soc.