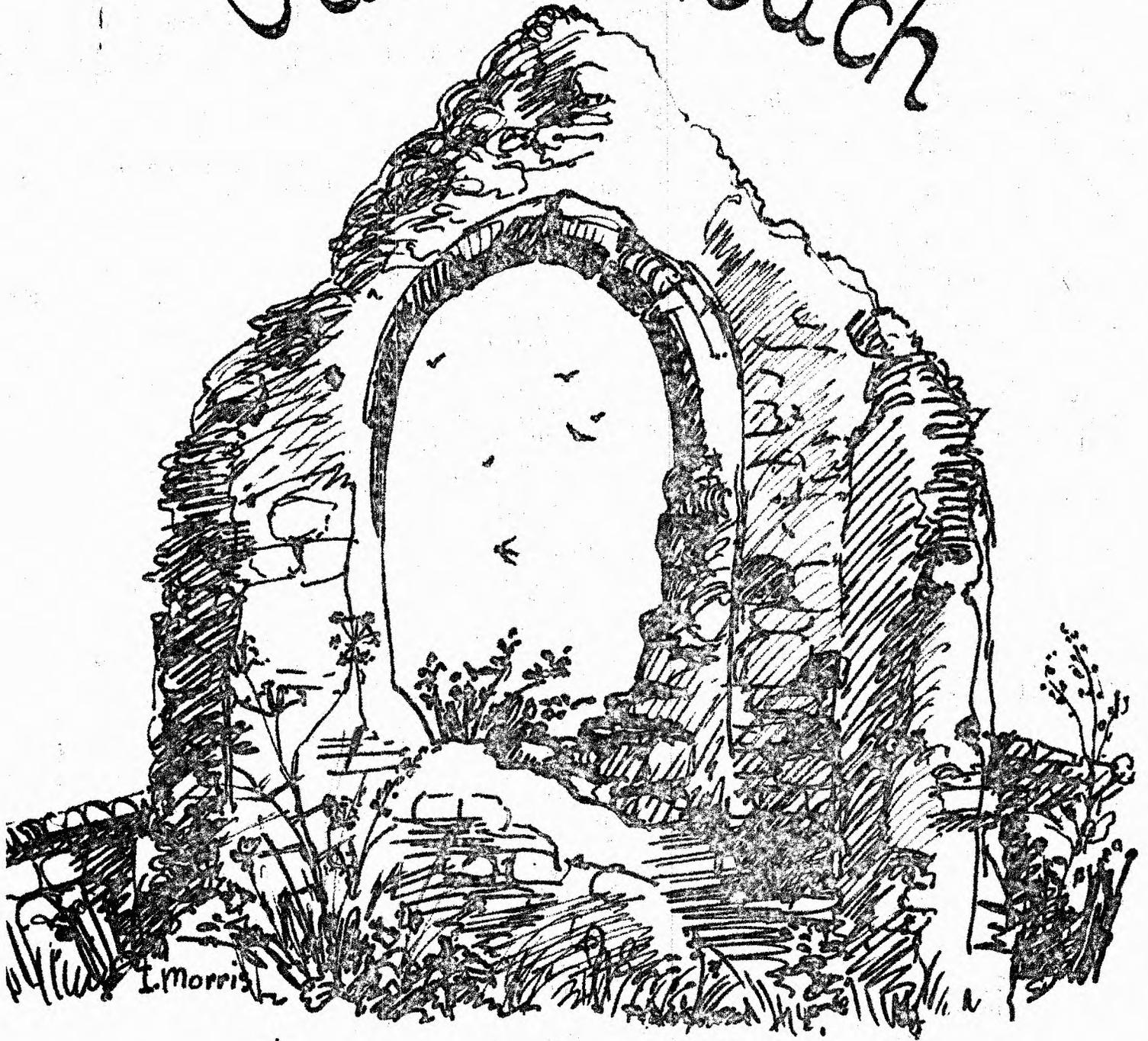


September 1982

Out of Reach



I. Morris

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Vicar: Rev. Canon J.K. Byrom

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This is definitely -
OUT OF

REACH !

September

1982

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* * *

EDITORIAL

This month's issue carries the remainder of the article about the Devil's Dyke, and you will see that advertisers - twenty-two this month! - continue to support the magazine. Please send in your notices of meetings, news items and comments, to make the coming year a real success.

Back to school on 2nd? Mothers with younger off-spring are welcome at the Swaffham Prior Playgroup - contact Judith Neeves, Tel. 742519 for details.

With darker nights ahead, remember to check your bicycle lamps and torches in good time - you'll soon be needing them. I still have some reflector discs, for pedestrians. If you would like one, do call. (They cost 14p each.)

Yours sincerely,

Janet Biggs

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from THE VICAR

Almighty and most merciful Father; we have erred and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep. We have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts. We have offended against thy holy laws. We have left undone those things which we ought to have done; And we have done those things which we ought not to have done; And there is no health in us. But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us, miserable offenders. Spare thou them, O God, which confess their faults. Restore thou them that are penitent: According to thy promises declared unto mankind in Christ Jesu our Lord. And grant, O most merciful Father, for his sake; That we may hereafter live a godly, righteous and sober life. To the glory of Thy holy name. AMEN.

This remarkable piece of writing, the General Confession, as it is termed, probably has a fair claim to be called the best known part of the old Prayer Book. It actually dates from the second English Prayer Book of 1552. Forty years ago it was being held up to us as something like a new discovery, as part of the essence of genuine biblical Christianity, in contrast to the diluted slop with which we had been treated from far too many pulpits since the beginning of the century.

The curious thing about it is that despite the blunt, even harsh, truth it invites us to admit about ourselves, many millions of Englishmen have found, as they still find, no difficulty in saying it sincerely, and even fervently, at least on Sundays, which is also remarkable; for it is telling us that our human nature is deeply flawed and twisted.

On Monday, however, a change seems to occur, even in the Christian mind. Despite the deep knowledge of our human brokenness which we carry over with us into the working week, we frequently accept as a matter of course, as we open our papers, the almost automatic dismissal of public figures whose private lives have revealed those very flaws which we have been publicly admitting before God and each other on Sunday. 'The Victorians', it has been said, 'had not much faith in the common man, - except, of course, on Sunday.' We seem unsure about our faith in, at any rate our knowledge of, fallen man, - except, of course, on Sunday.

It may seem a small point; but in fact we appear to be entering a phase in our national life when events themselves are forcing us to think more rationally and sanely, and I would say Christianly, about this whole matter; and these same events are proving it is a very large matter. And it is complicated, too. In some cases the penalty for private failure seems too harsh; in others, failures at least as serious, though carrying heavy penalties when detected, are in fact very hard to detect, and highly profitable in the meantime. The question is the vast one, of how frail fallible human beings construct a tolerable society.

The solution adopted by the western church in the centuries of its political power, a solution we ourselves have largely taken over, is a two-stage one: there has to be civil order for civilised life to go on at all, and this is preserved by law. But law of its nature is highly impersonal and negative: it simply demands outward conformity. Yet, as St. Paul found ages ago, law has no power to touch or reform the heart: only

WADIV-4-111

the Gospel of peace, promising a Spirit of power to live within the heart, can do that; so that we render with a free heart the obedience the law demands, out of a good conscience and not simply under duress, and indeed go far beyond that, to the second mile Jesus spoke of as its true fulfilment. But one suspects this is a problem we are being called as a nation to rethink from scratch, to bring back reality into our procedures.

J. K. B.

* * *

FROM THE CHURCHES

Worship in September: St. Mary's and Reach

5 TRINITY XIII

8.00 a.m. Holy Communion (Reach)
9.30 a.m. Matins and Eucharist (St. Mary's)
6.30 p.m. Sung Evensong (St. Mary's)

12 and 19: TRINITY XIV & XV

9.30 a.m. Parish Communion (St. Mary's)
11.00 a.m. Family Communion (Reach)
6.30 p.m. Evensong (St. Mary's)

21 S. MATTHEW the APOSTLE

7.30 a.m. Holy Communion (St. Mary's)

26 TRINITY XVI

9.30 a.m. Children's Eucharist (St. Mary's)
11.00 a.m. Children's Eucharist (Reach)
6.30 p.m. Evensong (St. Mary's)

29 S. MICHAEL & ALL ANGELS

7.30 a.m. Holy Communion (St. Mary's)

3rd October: TRINITY XVII: HARVEST FESTIVAL

8.00 a.m. Holy Communion (Reach)
9.30 a.m. Matins and Eucharist (St. Mary's)
6.30 p.m. Evensong (Reach)

* * *

From the Registers:

BURIAL: 9th August: Hans Muller, 6 Ditchfield, aged 60.

JOHN BIGGS

Tel. Newmarket 742039

18 GREAT LANE, REACH

CAMBRIDGE

CBS OJG

PHOTOGRAPHY

FROM FARMHOUSE SCENES TO

PAGE THREE GLAMOUR !

PARISH COUNCIL -

NEWS

The OPEN MEETING to form a REACH VILLAGE SOCIETY which was cancelled owing to the storm, will now be held at the VILLAGE CENTRE on FRIDAY 10th SEPTEMBER at 8.30 p.m. Do PLEASE come along.

In addition to the interesting past of the village, the future matters. Cambridgeshire County Council have carried out a survey on TREES supplied by them to REACH.

Fifteen (15) TREES were supplied. Of these, seven (7) were found to be alive, but in poor condition.

Perhaps residents could help to keep them weed-free and healthy? Unfortunately, one tree in isolation is unlikely to flourish without additional care, and it would, therefore, be really appreciated if residents near the new trees would kindly keep an eye on them, and endeavour to create the conditions they need. This is not easy; we know you cannot guard them all the time - but please help.

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NOTES

COUNTY COUNCIL: STAFF NUMBERS - The downward trend in staff numbers has resumed after a small rise. After two years' continuous reduction, during which numbers fell by 650, there was an increase of 19 for the period ending December 1981. The latest fall shows a reduction of 30 staff, out of 15,768.

In Education, the number of teachers and lecturers dropped by 27 to the same total numbers as in September 1981, thus correcting a small rise at the end of 1981. A reduction of 52 in other staff in Education reflects redundancies and reduced hours of work among ancillary staff, school meals workers etc.

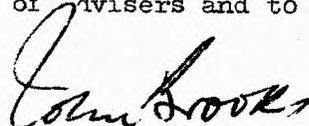
Greater mechanisation and increased productivity have resulted in 17 fewer roadmen being employed.

Improved recruitment has increased the regular police force by 40, over the last 15 months, and the Cambridgeshire force is now close to the approved Home Office establishment.

Social Services staff have increased by 65, but the numbers are still within the budgeted man-power for 1982-3. In effect, recruitment is catching up with this year's budget limits.

EMERGENCY PLANNING - The Peterborough City Council resolved in June, 'that this council follow the example of Cambridge City Council and instruct its officers to take no further part in war-time emergency planning.' Thus, nearly 40% of the county's people, the whole of Peterborough and Cambridge, are now excluded from emergency plans aimed at relieving a hostile attack. I am resisting the temptation to comment.

The County Council, the other district councils, together with most parish councils, continue to support the training of advisers and to encourage local emergency planning.


County Councillor.

EVENTS

We look forward to seeing you at ~

REACH :

Harvest Dance

with "RAINMAKER" 8-11.30 p.m.

FRIDAY 24th Sept.

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FRIDAY 17th Sept.

8.00 p.m.

REACH Branch Conservatives ~

NEXT MEETING at DELVER HOUSE

FRIDAY 17th SEPT. 8.0 p.m. ~ Coffee

Everything you Always wanted to Know About DYKES

But were Afraid to Ask. (concluded).

There is circumstantial evidence that the Dyke may have been constructed hastily (though that is a relative term). The profile of the rampart and ditch varies along its length not as a result of subsequent weathering, but due to its original construction - and there are slight changes in orientation, both of which suggest that work was carried out over the whole length simultaneously, each section being allocated to a separate gang of workers - obviously even a half-built fortification across the whole weakness in the front is better than a completed section that covers only half the distance. Presumably the work would have been crowned with a wooden palisade and logically there must have been a road to the rear to be able to deploy the troops. Perhaps after Adrianople the chief danger perceived was from cavalry - the Dyke would always have been vulnerable to infiltration round either end as well as small surprise raids along its length, but neither would be practical for horsemen. Just as its origins are uncertain, however, so was its effectiveness even if it ever were put to the test. Perhaps, like the Guns at Singapore, it proved to be sited facing the wrong way; when the Saxons did over-run the country, they came from the East coast and not from the Thames Valley. It might even have provided those same Saxons with their own frontier defence against the British to the west.

Originally the Dyke extended as far as the Hythe, which is reflected in the Medieval division of the village between the parishes of Swaffham Prior and Burwell - each had its own chapel, though that in East Reach survives only as a ruined classical window, and even the site in West Reach has been lost. The present Fair Green was not formed until some time in the eighteenth century when the bank was levelled and the ditch filled. The site of the original green is now indicated only by the shape of Great Lane, originally the back lane of the houses facing onto the Green.

Fortunately, at its most impressive point just south of the Swaffham Road, where the Dyke crosses the chalk ridge, the highest point of its whole length, it has been cleared of the scrub and undergrowth that covers most of it and from the road presents a memorable silhouette, as though a wedge has been snipped out of the horizon. Standing on the summit, one can appreciate the sheer scale of the work and the formidable barrier it must have represented. But regrettably most of the Dyke is overgrown with hawthorn, sloe and wild privet, which choke the ditch and reduce the general effect to not much more than a railway embankment.

The Dyke has been designated an area of Special Scientific Interest, and part is being maintained by groups supervised by the Cambridge Naturalists' Trust, who are clearing some of the slopes to allow the chalkland flowers and fauna to flourish; but most is so heavily shaded that nothing can grow under the dense canopy of leaves and even when the scrub is cut right down it quickly regenerates.

For me, it is the perfect place to take the dog without having to worry about the traffic or his straying into the crops. As he needs about one and a half hour's exercise, I have amused myself - while he is occupied with the infinitely more serious business of rabbiting - with cutting back the more overgrown areas where the path had completely disappeared. The greatest problem is not so much clearing the path as trying to dispose of the cuttings afterwards. I frequently come across the evidence of previous attempts to cut back the vegetation, but even in the section nearest Reach, which was extensively and well cut back only a few years ago, the privet is already starting to swamp the grasses and wild flowers along the path. Really, to do a good job, there needs to be a swathe of about five feet on either side of the path, and the overshadowing shrubs need to be cut back so as to let the light in. Perhaps any groups thinking of sponsored runs would care to consider a sponsored clearance instead. The path needs to be kept open on a regular basis otherwise people will be discouraged from attempting to walk it and this just accelerates its degeneration. At the moment, the path is clear and walkable for at least as far as half a mile beyond the Swaffham Road - I am aware that people are using it now by the increased evidence of sweet papers and cigarette packets which now extend along the whole length.

Ideally as well as the path, more of the slope and ditch should be cleared, if only to give a sense of scale to the rest as it is perfectly possible to walk along great lengths of the Dyke and never really be aware of the structure as a whole. This is a great pity because I feel there is a tremendous emotional charge to be experienced standing on the highest point where it has been cleared, and looking out over the countryside and considering the enormous determination and organisation of the people who built the Dyke, which has survived them virtually unaltered for nearly sixteen hundred years.

MICHAEL ALLEN

MIKE AND BRENDA WARRINGTON

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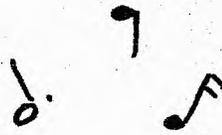
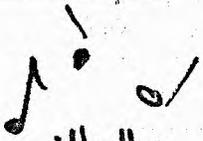
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JUNIOR ASSURANCE	<input type="checkbox"/>	DISABILITY BENEFIT	<input type="checkbox"/>

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