

THE REEVE'S TALE



Moore Farm,
Foyles

Vol. 4, No. 3.

March, 1979.

THE RECTOR WRITES

The Cost of Dying

One of the greatest humanitarian steps recommended away back in Lord Beveridge's Report which formed the basis of the Welfare State was the provision of a Death Grant which was introduced in July, 1949, and which at that time was £20. At that time, the average cost of a funeral was about £35, although it was possible to have a very simple one for around the £20 mark; so in fact the grant covered from about 60% to about 100% of the actual costs.

In 1959 this was raised to £25, and again in 1967 to £30, where it still remains.

But to-day, at the latest available figures, the cost of the funeral as available from Funeral Directors, varies from around £220 to £250, so at the lowest of these figures, the grant only covers some 15% of the actual cost incurred by the family.

But worse than this, if a man dies between the ages of 85 and 95, or a woman between the ages of 80 and 90, the grant is only £15, and in the case of small children the grant for babies between birth and three years is only £9, between three and five, £15, and between five and seventeen is £22.50. These figures are derisory, and although it is possible in the case of real hardship to get limited help from the Department of Health and Social Security, this is a most understandable embarrassment for the relatives concerned, for to them, at the time of their grief, it seems all wrong that they should have to go cap in hand asking for assistance, as it adds an element of shame to their grief.

In former times many people took out policies at a couple of pence a week, so that they could have 'a decent burial', and not be a burden on their families, and it is estimated that some 50 or more years since, the Prudential, for example, has around four million such policies on their books. But even they have been overtaken by inflation, and even with 50 years of bonuses on a typical policy, they will only bring in some £50 or so, which still leaves a very large gap to fill.

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Of course there are many people who do have money available to cover the death of a loved one, or who have taken out substantial Insurances to meet the costs, but there are a great many people who are in no position to meet the bills, and in practice wíth a family finds itself in debt to the Funeral Director for a very long time, and is hard put to pay this off, or in a great many cases the Fundral Directtors eventually have to write off many debts, which inevitably must put up the costs of other funerals.

For a long time many people have tried to bring pressure to bear on the Government in power to do something about this, but so far with no effect: the General Synod of the Church of England of which I am a Member passed a resolution to this effect with only one vote against it, and the Churches Mann Committee, representative of all the Churches in the Country of all denominations recently wrote through its Chairman to the Chancellor of the Exchequer asking for a substantial increase in the Grant: that redoubtable champion of the oppressed, Jack Ashlgy, the deaf M.P. spoke very forcibly at the Labour Party Conference last year, saying that the old were skimping on food and heat in their desperate desire to have 'a decent funeral', thereby often hastening their own death, and another speaker said, in words which I am sure we would all echo, 'Let old people die in dignity, and not in disgrace and debt'.

So what can we do ? One thing quite definitely, that is to write to our M.P., in our case Paul Hawkins, c/o The House of Commons, Westminster, London, and ask him to push for an increase, for we know a), that letters to MPs, if there are enough of them, do have a powerful effect, and b). that there ar a lot of back-bench MPs of all parties who agree with a larger grant, and who would be greatly helped by the pressure from their constituents.

So let us strike a blow for justice - the cost ? just one 7p. stamp.

Tim Townshend

CHURCH SERVICES FOR MARCH

Methodist: Revd.Ivor Claydon:31, Trinity Close, Dereham.

4th. Foxley: 6.30 p.m. Rev.I.Claydon. Tel.(9)5528

11th. Bawdeswell: 2.30 p.m. N.Davis

Foxley: 11.00 a.m. I Fisher

18th. Foxley: 6.30 p.m. E.F.Durrant

25th. Bawdeswell 2.30 p.m. Miss Theobald

Foxley: 2.30 p.m. Family Service

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Roman Catholic: Fr.Peter Marsh;Catholic House,35,London Road

East Dereham.Tel,(9)4066.

Mass each Sunday: RAF Swanton Morley 9.00 a.m.

Dereham Catholic Church 10.30 & 6.30.

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AnglicanCanon Tim Townshend:Foxley Rectory.Tel.397

4th. Bawdeswell: 8.30 p.m. Holy Communion:11 a,m.Mattins

Foxley: 9.45 a.m. Family Service

11th. Bawdeswell: 9.45 a.m. Family Service

Foxley: 8.30 Holy Communion: 11 a.m. Methodists.

18th. Bawdeswell: 8.30 Holy Communion: 11 a.m. Mattins

Foxley: 9.45 a.m. Family Service

25th. MOTHERING SUNDAY

Bawdeswell: 9.45 a.m. Family Service

Foxley: 8.30 Holy Communion.11. Mothering Sunday Service.

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FOLLAND COURT

Monday,12th.March. Bible Study: 10 a.m.

Monday,26th.March. Holy Communion 10 a.m.

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Each Wednesday in Lent: Holy Communion:Bawdeswell: 10 a.m.

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WALTER GEORGE (Billy) MANN aged 70 years

We record with sorrow, but, for his sake, with gladness, the death on 11th. February of Billy Mann of Kosikot, Dereham Road, Bawdeswell.

Since the death of his dearly-loved wife last July, Billy had spent the greater part of his time in Hospital, and although mercifully he had little real pain, he had constant discomfort, and could only speak with the greatest difficulty: but he earned the love and respect of those who cared for him, and indeed of his visitors, because he was always cheerful and completely uncomplaining, and I think that those who visited him came away feeling better for their visits, as his sufferings patiently accepted put their own troubles into perspective.

He will be greatly missed by his large family and by his many friends, for he was indeed a gentle-man, and our sympathy goes out to his Mother and his brothers and sisters; but for him we rejoice, for he is now at rest.

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WILLIAM FREDERICK (Billy) HEWITT, aged 70 years

Unlike Billy Mann's, Billy Hewitt's death was very and most mercifully sudden when it came in the early hours of February 27th. at home (as he would have wished) at 9, Paradise Road, Bawdeswell, though our deepest sympathy must go to his wife and his large and devoted family at the suddenness and the shock.

Billy worked all his life as cowman for the Eglingtons in Bawdeswell, and was greatly loved and respected in the village: he rejoiced in his family of eleven children and twenty-one grandchildren, and was much looking forward to the arrival of no.22, as also to his first great-grandchild, but this was not to be.

His funeral will take place on Monday next, March 5th. in Bawdeswell Church, followed by interment in the cemetery. May he rest in peace.

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BAWDESWELL & FOXLEY WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

One hears that Mr. Winter was once again a great success when he showed two more travel films on this his second visit to our Institute in February, and our thanks are due to him.

It has been decided to charge 10p. for the Tea and Raffle ticket from March onwards; the holder of the winning ticket will not have to provide a prize for the following month. Our Speaker in March will be Mrs. Joanne Jolly, and her subject will be 'Keep Fit': it is suggested that, assuming that she wishes to illustrate her talk with action, those Members who wish to take part should come in the right kind of clothes, maybe trousers or a skirt.

A reminder to Members not to forget the Bring & Buy Stall which does so much to help with expenses.

The next Committee Meeting will be on Tuesday, March 6th., at Mrs. Winter's house, and the next Meeting of the Institute, Monday, March 12th., at Bawdeswell Village Hall.

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FRIENDS OF BAWDESWELL SCHOOL

The School Christmas Party made the astonishing total of £204.92, and was a great success; and we are asked to say how very grateful the Committee are to all those who supported it, and contributed so much towards the effort of raising money for a Colour Television for the School: food, raffle prizes, disco, etc. were all gratefully received.

THE HALF-YEARLY MEETING will take place at the School on Friday, 30th. March, at 7 p.m., when all will be welcome, including children. There will be coffee, Bring & Buy and a Raffle, and (we hope) the presentation of the Colour T.V. and a cheque.

THE SUMMER SPECTACULAR - will now take place on Saturday, 16th. June, not on the date previously arranged: so PLEASE KEEP THIS DATE FREE

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IN COMMON with nearly all others in the County, the School had to close for a couple of days in the Blizzard.

BAPTISMS

We welcomed into the family of the Church:

Joanna Mary Everitt on February 4th.

Louise Anne Baker and Lucy May Walters on Feb,25th.

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CONGRATULATIONS to Dean Winter for his splendid effort in undertaking a Sponsored Swim for the British Heart Foundation, and to Fr.Peter Marsh for organising it: Dean raised the magnificent total of £29.45.

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COMMISERATIONS to Lady Freeland, a casualty of the snow and ice, who fell and broke her right wrist on Feb.17th. Astonishingly she was back on the Organ stool in Foxley Church on Feb.25th., and no doubt would have played on 18th., but we had to close the Church because of the snow.

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HEATHER DAVIS is back at home at her own request, and with permission from the Specialist, and is now being cared for by her Mother and the District Nurse.

Some weeks ago, when I was visiting her in hospital, she said that she had a bone to pick with me, in that I had never drawn a cover picture of her much loved home: so the cover this month is really for her, and I was able to take the original to her in hospital a few days ago. She is a very brave girl.

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WE ARE ASKED by the people of Folland Court to express their warm thanks to the Eglingtons for seeing that they were supplied with milk in the snow, when the usual deliveries could not get through.

OUR THANKS ALSO on behalf of Foxley people to the Davis family and Jan who brought our milk round on a sledge when the roads were totally impassible.

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A REMINDER

that the Cambridge Branch of the National Blood Transfusion Service will be at Reepham High School as follows:

Thursday, 19th. April 2-4 and 5-7.30

Friday, 20th. April, 10-12 noon and 2-4.

If you are between 18 and 64, you will be very welcome, and your blood might easily save someone's life.

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DEANERY LENT COURSE

Wed. March 7th. 7.30 p.m. St. Michael's, Reepham;
Subject: Silent Prayer & Meditation: Speaker,
Canon Derek Price.

Wed. 17th. Same place & time: Intercession: Speaker: Peggy Pratten.

Wed. 28th. 7.30. Sparham Church: Contemplative Prayer:
Hilary Wakemsn of the Julian Meeting.

Wed. April 4th. Same time & place. Children's prayers:
Speaker, Myrtle Wayney: Children's Council.

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DON'T FORGET

The Foxley Flower Festival: Friday to Sunday, June 22nd-24th.
Further details later.

VOLUNTEERS STILL NEEDED for the Day Centre at St. Michael's Hall, Reepham, either to help with transport (mileage allowance paid) or to help running it.

If interested please contact:

Edmund Easten: Tel. Saxthorpe 244,

or Michael Pickering, Tel. Foulsham 275,

or Olive Robin, Tel. Gt. Witchingham 381

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