

THE KILVERT SOCIETY

Wyecroft,
23 Broomy Hill,
HEREFORD.

(Phone: 2094)

17th June, 1963.

Dear Member,

The ANNUAL COMMEMORATION SERVICE will this year be at CLIFFORD (Herefordshire) on SUNDAY, 30th June, at 3.15 p.m.

It will be conducted by the Rev. C. J. Hayes (the Vicar of Clifford) and the ADDRESS will be given by the VERY REV. R. P. PRICE, M.A., DEAN OF HEREFORD.

It has been arranged that a "WYE VALLEY" MOTOR COACH (or Coaches) will leave the City Library, Broad Street, HEREFORD, at 1.45 p.m. (PROMPT). Seats are 5/- each and may be booked with Mr. G. C. Davies, WYEVAL LTD. Bridge Street, HEREFORD, or at the Hon. Secretary's business premises "CONS" in Widemarsh Street, HEREFORD. The latest date for booking must be WEDNESDAY, 26th June; but if all seats could be booked this week it would be very helpful. If members would kindly pay for seats at the time of booking this would be greatly appreciated.

The route will be via Whitecross, Swainshill and Bredwardine, but the return journey will be via HAY to CLYRO and then through LETTON and SWAINSHILL. Members can be picked up and set down anywhere between Hereford and the Bredwardine turn, providing that information is given when seats are booked.

We are again to experience the hospitality of this border country, for immediately after the service there will be a TEA for everyone, very kindly provided by the ladies of the parish: if fine weather this will be on the Vicarage lawn, by kind invitation of the Vicar and Mrs. Hayes; otherwise in the nearby Church Hall, in two or more sittings.

All those who have not yet paid their current subscription are asked to remit it to our Hon. Treasurer, Mr. J. D. Worsey at 1 Harold Street, Hereford, or to me at the above address, as soon as you conveniently can.

Mr. Worsey is writing a letter on the subject of subscriptions, and this will be circulated with these papers.

Yours faithfully,



Hon. Sec. The Kilvert Society.

Those who do not know the district may find the following notes of interest and help Clifford church is nicely situated on the hilly ground that lies between two main roads to Hay; and from the churchyard and from the nearby Vicarage lawn there is a panorama of the Radnorshire Hills on one side and the Black Mountains on the other, and in the distance - far beyond the town of Hay, are the Brecon Beacons. All so familiar to the Rev. Francis Kilvert, for he frequently

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visited Clifford; the Diary tells us that he preached there on 27th September, 1878; and also of many visits to Clifford Priory, the site and slight remains of which (it was burned down about 1930) can be found a mile or so from the church.

Motorists coming by either the Hay-Bredwardine road or by the Hay-Whitney (Toll Bridge) road will find temporary signs at each point where the by-roads leading to the church turn off.

"NOTES AND NEWS" by the Hon. Secretary 17th June, 1963.

First, an apology for an omission: in the April "Notes and News" reference was made to the death of several members during the past year, but I am at a loss to know how I left out the name of Mr. John Abell. He was a regular attender (with Mrs. Abell) at all our functions for many years; and so many will recall him, I am sure - with his thumbstick. A grand old man, who must have reminded many of the countrymen who Kilvert immortalised in the pages of his Diary.

Very many readers of the Diary take great interest in "the Monk" ... as Kilvert dubbed his little niece when he first saw her on the return of the Wyndowe family from India (see Vol. 1, page 137 and onwards.) She lived to a goodly age and died at Easter in 1954. For the last 40 years or so of her life she brought up many children of folk who were overseas, just as her parents had been. Among these was a lady who is now a member of the Society and lives in Hampshire. She has written a Memoir of Mrs. Phillips (the "Monk") and kindly agreed for the Society to have a number printed for sale to members, who will thus be able to read much of her later years and get to know what a wonderful woman she was. They will be printed before the end of this month and we hope to get permission to have them at Clifford on 30th June, perhaps after tea. The price will be 2/- each or 2/6d posted. The title is "Memories of the Monk" - "A Kilvert Kinswoman".

A few months ago a HEREFORDSHIRE AND RADNORSHIRE NATURE TRUST was formed, under the joint Presidency of Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenants for the two counties. Most people will know the objects of such a Trust; shortly, they are - to preserve the heritage of natural interest and beauty that gives us so much pleasure and delight. Your committee agreed that here was surely something after Kilvert's own heart, and the Society has become a member. However, we do not want individual members to refrain from joining themselves because the Society has done so. We have therefore paid but the minimum subscription of £1. A splendidly illustrated leaflet giving fuller details of the Trust is available and one can be sent to anyone who asks for it.

Members may like to know that the venue for the 1964 and 1965 Kilvert Commemoration Services have been decided upon.

It is to be Bredwardine in 1964 - by kind invitation of the Rev. W. Lloyd (Priest-in-Charge) and Bredwardine Church Council. We have happy memories of the 1956 Service at Bredwardine; although it hardly seems 7 years since we were last there.

1965 is to be CLYRO again, for, as the Rev. T. J. Lewis pointed out when he extended the invitation for this, it will be a centenary service. It was in 1865 that Francis Kilvert first went to Clyro as curate to the Rev. R. L. Venables and this reminds me to mention that it is pleasing to note that our newest Vice-President is Sir Michael Venables-Llewellyn of Llyadinan, Newbridge-on-Wye (Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant for Radnorshire) a grandson of the Rev. R. L. Venables.

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Some few weeks ago a phone call came from a Mr. James Roose-Evans, staying at the Baskerville Arms at Clyro to explore the "Kilvert Country" and get some "local colour" for his forthcoming recitals of Kilvert's Diary. It was arranged that I should meet him at Clyro and take him to some of the odd corners that he had not visited; but he fell ill and had to return suddenly to London, and our meeting did not therefore materialise. A paragraph in the "Daily Telegraph" of 7th June is therefore of interest. It is headed "Literary Innovation" and I will quote an extract from it. It starts by stating that at the Kings Lynn Festival this year (July 27th to August 3rd) James Roose-Evans, the Director of the Hampstead Theatre Club, will read extracts from the Diary of the Rev. Francis Kilvert; and goes on ... "when some years ago William Plomer edited for publication this candid clerical account of Victorian Wales it was quickly recognised as a literary masterpiece. But it was equally quickly forgotten." This latter statement is surely something with which our members and their friends throughout the British Isles - and beyond - will not agree? To say nothing of all those who from time to time have written on Kilvert and the Diary in newspapers and magazines of varying types both in this country and in the U.S.A. A few days ago I wrote a letter to the "Daily Telegraph" but it has not yet appeared: perhaps it is in their W.P.B.!!

One day in mid-May a little party assembled at the Crown Hotel in the town of Hay-on-Wye, there to await the arrival of Wynford Vaughan Thomas and Roland Lucas - of the B.B.C. Cardiff - who were cycling the Welsh border. They had started from Chepstow and had slept the previous night at Grosmont. Then via Llanthony Abbey, Capel-y-Ffin and the Gospel Pass over the Black Mountains to Hay. Here we told them our various stories. First Harry Soan spoke of St. Paul's legendary visit to the Black Mountains - and of his experiences as a sheep-farmer during the recent icy spell. Our well known Hay member Mr. Fred Stokoe gave his personal impressions of his home town and of Father Ignatius and his ill-fated monastery at Capel-y-Ffin. Our member, Mr. R. Jenkins, then spoke on some of the stories and folk-lore of the Radnor border country and particularly of the Vaughans of Hergest and the "black dog of Hergest". Then I told them of the many visitors to the Hay and Clyro area who come to see the beautiful countryside after reading the Diary. As the cycling-broadcasters moved out of Hay and across the Wye into Radnorshire they were met in the centre of Hay bridge by Ald. Kinsey Morgan of Rhayader, vice-chairman of Radnorshire County Council, and given a warm welcome to his county. They then pedalled away for Clyro and the lanes that lead over by Rhosgoch bog to Newchurch en route for New Radnor. All this, and their journey right up the border is being broadcast on the Welsh regional each Wednesday evening. The Grosmont and Hay episodes were on June 5th and 12th respectively, and all can be heard again in August on ALL regionals - but during the mid -morning. The items are titled "Borderline", and there are six in the series.

From time to time members write of going to places visited by Kilvert and recorded in the Diary. Some time ago an interesting letter from a London Member told of a holiday last summer in Somerset and Devon. They say that they spent an interesting morning walking in search of Zealey's Mill (see Vol. 2, page 359) and eventually found it; now called by another name and used as a mill no longer. They also had picnics at "Lambart's Castle", of which we read in Volume 1 on page 384, when Kilvert was on an earlier visit to Hawkchurch and the Axminster district.

Among the goodly number of new members this year are some more citizens of the U.S. ----- Mr. and Mrs. Barrette from a farm in Maine: they were over here in April and came this way specially to see the countryside around Clyro and Bredwardine, for they had been readers of the Diary for some time previously. Mrs. Prosser and I accompanied them on a tour round from Clyro (where they were staying) and they thus found some of the places of the Diary that are not easy on a first visit --- Whittys Mill (ruins of) Bettws Church; Colva and Glascwm; Rhosgoch and Llanbedr; and various farms and houses en route and around Clyro itself. Through these good folk we have also got another U.S. member, and our first member bearing the name Kilvert - Mr. Corey Kilvert of New York. Perhaps when I get the reply to a letter just sent to him we may know something more of family connections.

On 19th June the Old Vicarage at Bredwardine is for sale by auction in Hereford. It ceased to be a Vicarage several years ago. Since then it has been modernised (internally - the exterior is doubtless as Kilvert knew it) and a Hereford industrialist has lived there. It is to be hoped that by the time these notes are circulated it will have been bought by someone who will turn out to be a "Kilvertian".

On the west wall of Clifford Church is a record of the Vicars over a period of hundreds of years. It will be seen that the name Eustace Whitney appears for 1686 to 1714. No doubt of the same family as old Hannah Whitney, of whom we read so often in the Diary. For on page 92 of Vol. 2 Kilvert tells her of the tomb of Walter Whitney in Clyro churchyard and then on page 315 of Vol. 1 we read of Kilvert finding the tomb of Eustace Whitney 1669. Both tombs can be found and the wording very easily read today. And not far away can just be deciphered enough of "the old Catholic tomb of the Relict of Thomas Bridgwater": to be sure that here is where Kilvert would sit awhile and read. Visitors to Clyro often wander round the churchyard and find many of the tombs of the folk who Kilvert knew --- little Lily Crichton, and the Gores of Whittys Mill all in a row - to name but some of them.

In the previous "Notes and News" mention was made of the Herefordshire member who had copied out a number of Kilvert's poems from old numbers of the "Hereford Times" in Hereford Public Library, and the poem titled "Paradise" was mentioned as being one of the most pleasing. It has now been pointed out that this poem is not in "Musings in Verse", for several members have looked this up in the Reference Library. It may therefore be of interest to quote this poem, particularly as so many members know that the house called 'Paradise' is there, just

as Kilvert knew it, not far from Clyro church.

Paradise - Clyro

I met within the village street
A cottage maiden, shy and sweet;
"Whence do you come", I said, "fair child?"
"From Paradise" she said, and smiled.
And as I gazed it seemed to me
How true the simple word might be,
A truth beyond what she could guess,
In her sweet self-unconsciousness.
For there still lingered in her eyes
Gleams from the light of Paradise,
And through her features yet did shine
A likeness of the Face Divine.
Most true the vision that did show
How the blest spirits come and go;
Downward they pass to earth from heaven
To tell how sin might be forgiven
And heavenward - as with a new birth -
To teach our souls to rise from earth.
From Jacob's dream thus may we know
Whence we have come and whither go
To work on earth from morn till even
Then seek our rest and home in heaven,
Sweet child, when thy life's work is done
And thou dost sleep at set of sun,
With the blest angels mayest Thou rise
From Paradise to Paradise.

Eos Gwy.

Clyro. Aug. 28th, 1878.