

THE KILVERT SOCIETY

Wyeecroft,
23, Broomy Hill,
HEREFORD

(Phone: 2094.)

16th April 1966.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING and SOCIAL EVENING

Dear Member,

The Annual General Meeting and Social Evening will be held on

FRIDAY, the 29th APRIL at 7 p.m. (PROMPT)

in Eignbrook Church Halls, Hereford, as usual.

The business meeting will be followed by a varied and interesting programme of talks, readings and tape recordings: details of some of these will be found in the "Notes and News" that follow the Annual Report. This programme will be interrupted at approximately 8 o'clock for light refreshments, again very kindly provided by our President (Mrs Wright) assisted by a number of our lady members.

For the convenience of those who cannot attend, I append a copy of the Annual Report and Balance Sheet.

On another page will be found the date and some details of this year's KILVERT COMMEMORATION SERVICE at Langley Burrell in Wiltshire and of the MEMORIAL PLAQUE to the memory of the Rev. Francis Kilvert which is to be erected there. Please also particularly note details of the Diary readings and the vote that will be taken at the meeting re a coach visit to the places mentioned.

Yours sincerely,

C.T.O. Prosser

(C.T.O. Prosser)

Hon. Sec. The Kilvert Society.

P.S. The Secretary of the Brecon Beacons National Park recently sent me 200 of their coloured folders. Not enough for one for every member, so I am sending them to the more distant ones and keeping a few back for anyone who writes in for one. Clyro is not marked on the little map as it is just outside the Park, but most folk know that it is $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Hay-on-Wye.

ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER, 1965

The Annual Meeting was held in Eignbrook Church Halls on Friday, 30th April, the attendance being between 70 and 80: some had come long distances - from Birmingham, Bristol, Bath, Worcester, etc - others from Shropshire and from Warwickshire, a lady from Aberdovey, and a large contingent from Hay & Clyro. In the absence of the President (Mrs Wright) through illness the Chair was taken by the Rev. D. J. Lane Griffiths (Vicar of Llowes, Rads., and a Vice-President.) Mrs. Wright was re-elected as President and Mr. E. F. Jelfs proposed that our very best wishes be sent to her; this was agreed on whole-heartedly by all present. Vice-Presidents were all re-elected with the addition of Major C.R.L. Scott-Ashe (Langley Burrell, Wilts.); Bishop N. W. Newnham Davis (London), and the Rev. T. J. Lewis (Vicar of Clyro). Re-election of all Officials and Committee was followed by a decision to have a coach tour to the Chippenham district on May 15th (this turned out to be a most happy occasion - a full account of the nice day and the splendid hospitality given us appeared in "Notes and News" of June 15th). We then heard various speakers on different topics--The Vicar of Clyro on the approaching Centenary Service; Mr. H. R. Evans (Clyro School) on the love of the Diary and of the countryside that he was endeavouring to instill into the children; Canon Leatherbarrow (Martley, Worcs.) on the Rev. Awdry and his railway books and his Wiltshire connections; the Rev. Lane Griffiths on the value of photographic records of Kilvert scenes and events, and also of the essay competition for the children of Clyro School this summer; Mr. Worsey then spoke on the balance sheet and the Society's

finances and of the work of Mrs. E. Peters (Asst. Treasurer) in connection with the appeal that raised £113-6-0 for Langley Burrell Church Restoration Fund. The Hon. Secretary spoke on the increasing membership from Wiltshire and the rising membership generally, and on the Exhibition of items connected with Kilvert, his family, and his friends - in Clyro School on June 27th. The films "Kilvert Country" and that recording scenes at a number of commemoration services were then shown by Mr. Godfrey Davies. Votes of thanks to all concerned brought a pleasant evening to a close.

The Annual Service was on Sunday, 27th June, at CLYRO. Being a Centenary Service (Francis Kilvert first became Curate of Clyro in 1865) extra effort was made to make the day an outstanding one. A very large congregation - approximately 500 - came from far and near - some from very long distances - to hear a very fine address by the Rt. Rev. N. W. Newnham Davis - an Assistant Bishop of London. This was given in the presence of the Bishop of Swansea & Brecon (The Rt. Rev. J. J. A. Thomas) who read one of the lessons; the other being read by Lord Borwick - Churchwarden at Clyro. The service was conducted by the Vicar of Clyro (the Rev. T. J. Lewis); and the Act of Remembrance was, again, by the Rev. D. J. Lane Griffiths. We were all so pleased to see that the President (Mrs. Wright) was able to be present. Sitting near her was Dr. William Plomer, who had come up from his home in Sussex once again and who we are always so glad to have with us. It was particularly pleasing to see Sir Michael Venables Llewellyn - and Lady Delia - in the congregation. Sir Michael is Lord Lieutenant of Radnorshire: his grandfather was the Rev. R. L. Venables, Vicar of Clyro during Kilvert's curacy there. Another Vice-President, Ald. Tudor Watkins, the M.P. for Brecon & Radnor was present, with Mrs. Watkins - they rarely miss a Kilvert Service. The list would be far too long if all whose names were of general interest were given. But one more must be mentioned - that of Mrs. Christie of Llangoed (Breconshire), for she was a Crichton of Wyecliffe, a baby when Kilvert so often visited there, now a nonagenarian, although it is hard to believe that this is so. Among the many who came long distances were a number of our Wiltshire members from around Chippenham. Present too, were quite a few from London and its surrounding counties. Perhaps those from furthest away were members from Walmer, on the Kent coast. The weather could not have been better, warm and clear. Some notes on the Exhibition at Clyro School; on Dr. Plomer's readings at Pentwyn; on the children's essay competition; and on appreciations, newspaper reports, broadcasts etc., will be found further on--in "Notes & News".

The total of the collection in Clyro Church on Centenary Sunday, plus the cash from the Exhibition and the proceeds of a collection taken at Pentwyn after Mr. Plomer's readings was £55-4-6. All of this went to Clyro Church Maintenance Fund. It was very gratifying to receive a letter from the Vicar of Clyro (the Rev. T. J. Lewis) in which he said "an excellent total and we are all highly delighted---all reports say what a wonderful service it was and how well organised and interesting the day." Mr. and Mrs. Lewis put a lot of work into preparations for it all, for a fortnight or more beforehand as well as on the day itself. They and their helpers must accept our best thanks - not forgetting all who worked to give refreshing tea to vast numbers in the Village Hall. The churchyard and the village in general looked at its best. It had its reward, for Clyro won the "Best kept village in Radnorshire" trophy in 1965.

IMPORTANT

WOULD ANY MEMBER WHO TOOK PHOTOGRAPHS AT THE CENTENARY SERVICE AT CLYRO LAST JUNE - ESPECIALLY OF THE CHILDREN BEING PRESENTED WITH THEIR PRIZES BY Dr. PLOMER AT PENTWYN; OF Dr. PLOMER READING; OF THE EXHIBITION AT CLYRO SCHOOL AND OF ANY INTERESTING ASPECT OF THE SERVICE ETC. ETC. - PLEASE CONTACT ME AT 23 BROOKLY HILL, HEREFORD.

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Statement of Accounts for year ended 31st December, 1965

Receipts				Expenses			
Balance brought forward from 1964	84	9	4	Subscription to Herefordshire & Radnorshire Nature Trust	1	1	0
Subscriptions	127	7	7	Donation re use of Eignbrook Hall for A.G.M.	3	0	0
Collection at A.G.M.	4	10	0	Expenses re A.G.M.	1	0	0
Coach Fares to Wiltshire	14	0	0	Hospital Flowers	10	0	0
Coach Fares to Clyro	8	5	0	Coach to Wiltshire on May 15th	14	0	0
From sale of Mrs Mallinson's booklet	3	18	0	Coach to Clyro on June 27th	8	5	0
From sale of the Wiltshire Courier	4	0	0	Towards expenses of Preacher at Clyro	5	0	0
From sale of photographs	4	9	0	Work on 5 Kilvert pictures for Clyro Church	3	7	0
From sale of photostat letters	18	0	0	Hanging pictures in Clyro Church vestry	2	15	0
Mr. E.F. Jelfs - donation re photostat letters	2	17	10	Book token prizes for essay competition	3	3	2
				Hire of crockery for Clyro Radnorshire County Council re Clyro School	3	6	6
				P.A. equipment at Clyro	8	12	6
				Use of tape recorder at Clyro	15	0	0
				Tapes, and photographic material and work	8	10	0
				200 photostat copies of letters	7	17	10
				100 copies of Wiltshire Courier	6	5	0
				Upkeep of Kilvert graves	6	0	0
				Printing and Stationery	12	1	5
				Duplicating	34	8	6
				Postage and telephone calls	12	15	1
				Cheque book	5	0	0
				Balance in Hand	114	7	9
	£254	14	9		£254	14	9

Signed: John D. Worsey
Hon. Treas.

14/3/66.

"NOTES and NEWS"--by the Hon. Secretary-----16th April 1966

DIARY READINGS AT THE A.G.M. and the PROPOSED COACH TOUR

It has been decided that some selections from the Diary shall be read at the Meeting on April 29th. About visits by Kilvert to places in the Upper Wye Valley around Builth Wells and beyond. After the readings a vote will be taken for or against such a tour; and then to decide details if it is to be. It would have to be between the 7th and the 15th of May and bookings would be taken at the Meeting. Cost would be around 6/- per person, for a 2 o'clock start - a little more for a 10 o'clock start, and a trifle extra if on a Sunday. Please come prepared to arrive at a quick decision as to whether such a tour through this beautiful region is wanted or not; a majority decision would also be taken as to which day of the week.

LETTERS OF THE REV. R. L. VENABLES and of THE REV. R. F. KILVERT

Mr. J. D. Worsey (our Hon. Treasurer) will read these two most interesting letters during the evening of the 29th April. The former was written from London in 1870 when Mr. Venables was there at the time of the birth of the baby girl to Mrs. Venables, the event which caused so much rejoicing in Clyro. The latter in 1879

from Bredwardine Vicarage to a parishioner who had gone away. She emigrated to the U.S.A. Her descendants are members and a grand-daughter intends being at the Annual Service this year (see note re the Langley Burrell service). Photostat copies of these letters are available to members, and due to the generosity of our Birmingham member Mr. E. F. Jelfs in subsidising their cost they can be had for 1/6 each. They will be on sale during the evening. Also available at the Meeting will be some copies of the issue of the "Wiltshire Courier" which has the 2-page illustrated article titled "The home of Francis Kilvert" - they are 2/- each. A very few of Mrs. Mallinson's booklet "Memories of the Monk" are still on hand at 2/- or 2/6 posted.

It was intended that a list of photographs available should go out to all members with these notes, but for various reasons this will have to be postponed until the next circularisation, in mid-June. If any member would like a list of what are available at present please write to the Hon. Sec. for same.

It was most kind of so many members to send us Christmas cards, far too many to acknowledge individually, so will the senders please accept this as our thanks for them? My wife and I feel that we have made many new friends through the Kilvert Society and we are always glad for any member who comes this way to call at 23 Brooky Hill for a chat and to see the collection of photographs and drawings etc etc that are here. We are easily found, just over half a mile from the west front of Hereford Cathedral - but always best to ring 2094 first to make sure that someone is at home.

THE DAY OF THE CENTENARY SERVICE AT CLYRO--June 27th 1965

The actual service and many facts about it have been dealt with in the Annual Report, but there are interesting details about the day's other events - and some appreciations - that should be put on record.

The Exhibition of "Kilvertiana" at Clyro School was a great success and well over 200 people paid their 1/- for admission, thus adding to the church collection. Mr. and Mrs. H. R. Evans of Clyro School and their helpers had worked hard in so nicely setting out the several hundred items that were on view. Then there was the children's essay competition, the four prize-winning essays were really splendid - although there were some very good efforts among those that failed to qualify for prizes. The work of the lower age group was really remarkable. All going to shew how much about Kilvert and the Diary and the countryside they live in have the children of Clyro School learned from devoted teachers. When Mr. Plomer presented the prizes (book tokens) on the lawn at Pentwyn (by kind permission of Lord & Lady Borwick) he congratulated teachers and children on the "outstanding papers". One of the prize winners was a great-niece of Elizabeth Harris (Gipsy Lizzie - as Kilvert so often called her.) After the presentation of prizes to the children the large company assembled on the lawn at Pentwyn were treated to readings of extracts from the Diary (many about Clyro) by the Editor of Kilvert's Diary - Mr. William Plomer, D.Litt. The setting was perfect and it can be best summed up with an extract from a letter I had soon afterwards from a member who had travelled quite a distance to be at Clyro that day. He says... "I consider the Centenary Sunday was a most wonderful event. I shall never forget Dr. Plomer reading under the old gnarled tree, and beyond him green, pleasant and eternal the scenes Kilvert loved and described so magnificently." Then again, a Worcestershire member sent me a postcard which reads "Congratulations on yesterday's arrangements at Clyro! - it was a most delightful day, and the readings at Pentwyn were to me quite thrilling. I thought the Exhibition extremely well laid out, someone must have gone to endless trouble. And the weather! - mountains, hills and river all dressed in their best for the occasion - it really was a perfect day, and we enjoyed every moment of it." Somewhat similar messages came from London, from the West Country and from Birmingham and elsewhere.

On June 27th just as the congregation was leaving Clyro Church after the Centenary Service the B.B.C. were broadcasting a programme titled "Kilvert of Clyro" which had been compiled for them by Harry Soan a short while previously. Taking part in it were Dr. Plomer, Professor Cecil Price of Swansea, Mr. Fred Stokoe of Hay, The Rev. D. J. Lane Griffiths, Mr. H. R. Evans (Clyro School), ten year old Jennifer Harris of Clyro, Mr. Sidney Wright of Hereford (son of our first President);

my wife and myself, and also the Rev. H. W. D. Fenn of Glascoan (Rads.) who can best be described as an "anti-Kilvert".....there is an item touching on Mr. Fenn elsewhere in these NOTES. Not many members heard this broadcast, due to the unfortunate time it was put out, and I completely failed to persuade the B.B.C. to re-broadcast it another day. Fortunately the Society has a tape recording of it, and a very good recording it is. This will be played over as the final item of the evening of the A.G.M. for we think that this is something that all will want to hear.

Two of our Clyro members - Miss Powell and Miss Mantle - have been doing a lot of useful work in tracing out houses and farms etc mentioned in Kilvert's Diary and listing them, particularly those that are no more and all that they have been able to trace is the site. At the same time they have noted where the same family is still in occupation as in Kilvert's day. They have covered a lot of ground, far beyond Clyro itself, and have had help from others interested, I understand. Their notebook is most interesting and no doubt we shall be able to have an item based on it in these "Notes" just now. We have persuaded Miss Mantle to tell us something about this at the Meeting on April 29th. She is a teacher at Clyro School and I am sure that much of her knowledge of the Diary and the countryside is being transferred to her pupils.

The members in the London area have had their third "get-together". In February, and again at the Chelsea home of those Kilvert enthusiasts Mr. and Mrs Feisenberger; it is splendid of them to have these gatherings as they do, for it does so help to stimulate interest and keep things alive for those members in and around London. This time there were 22 present, Mr. William Ploner was one, and I am told that he treated them to a poetry reading. As previously they all autographed a sheet of paper and sent it to me with their good wishes and again I found that I had met most of them - in Clyro or elsewhere in the "Kilvert Country", often when attending one of the Annual Services. Mrs. Hawton of Elstree deals with correspondence over these gatherings.

Quite recently I had a note from Mrs Feisenberger asking me to bring before as many friends as possible the nation-wide appeal that is being made at WELLS in Somerset for all those interested in lovely old places to join in their protest against proposals that are now being discussed to drive a motor road right through Wells, not far from the Cathedral and very close to the Bishops Moat, at the same time destroying two mediaeval streets. All who are interested in attempting to stop this monstrous scheme are asked to write to Mr. G. V. M. Heap, 25 Sadler Street, Wells, Somerset saying that they want their names added to the protest. THIS MATTER IS URGENT, SO IF INTERESTED PLEASE "DO IT NOW".

All those who were at the Centenary Service at CLYRO last year (and those too, who were there in 1958) will be interested in the news that the Rt. Rev. N. W. Newnham Davis - who preached on both occasions - has moved to St. Leonards-on-Sea in Sussex, for he is now the Assistant Bishop of Chichester. At the time of the 1958 Service he was Assistant Bishop of Coventry and in-between has been an Assistant Bishop of London. Our very best wishes (to him and to Mrs. Newnham Davis) go with him. They have both been members of this Society for many years and last year Bishop Newnham Davis accepted a Vice-Presidency.

Another move is that of the Rev. D. J. Lane Griffiths and Mrs. Lane Griffiths; for on retirement from Llowes they have come to live in Hereford. Mr. Lane Griffiths was Vicar of Llowes for many years and they joined the Society in 1951, very soon after coming there. Latterly he has been Rural Dean of Hay. They have been stalwarts of the Society for many years and we are glad to have them in Hereford, though sorry that Mrs. Lane Griffiths' health is poor and sincerely hope for great improvement as they settle down quietly in Hereford. Members who have been to the three Kilvert Services at Llowes (1953, 1954 and 1960) will not want reminding of the splendid occasions that they were. I cannot recall an A.G.M. without them, with Mr. Lane Griffiths latterly deputising for Mrs. Wright. Llowes Vicarage, so familiar to Francis Kilvert, has been sold and is now occupied privately and the parish is in charge of the Vicar of Clyro (the Rev. T. J. Lewis) and I understand that decisions are now pending as to which neighbouring parish it will be linked with.

MONNINGTON-ON-WYE----the LYCH-GATE REPAIRS FUND

It is likely that many members have visited Monnington-on-Wye when in the "Kilvert Country". It is a tiny village prettily situated about 10 miles out from Hereford and 2 miles short of Bredwardine. The Diary tells us of the many times Kilvert walked there from Bredwardine to see his sister Thersie - wife of the Rector, the Rev. W. R. Smith - attended service at Monnington church and sometimes preached there. The church has been described as a "Carolean gem", built in 1680 (but with a 15th century tower) and has a fine royal arms of Charles II on the south wall, and church furniture all of that period. In the churchyard is a gabled lych-gate to match. But the population - never large - dwindled and floods from the Wye caused much damage; services ceased and this charming little church was in danger of becoming derelict. It was then that the "Friends of Friendless Churches" stepped in, and at a cost of £3,500 it has been well restored and is now in regular use again. The royal arms was splendidly renovated in the Putney studio of the lady who is now accepted as the leading authority on the preservation of mural paintings and such things, and now looks so colourful and grand. BUT THE LYCH-GATE WAS STILL IN A SAD STATE LAST TIME I SAW IT. A recent letter from Mr. Ivor Bulmer-Thomas, the Hon. Director of "Friends of Friendless Churches" tells me that it is being rebuilt and that little new material is needed, so that when finished it will be the same lych-gate that was erected with the body of the church in 1680; the cost will be at least £500, of which nearly half is still wanted. The Kilvert Society is making a small donation from funds; and it is felt that there are probably a number of members who would like to add to this by sending a donation themselves. In this case please send it to the Hon. Sec. of the Kilvert Society at 23 Broome Hill, Hereford. PLEASE STATE CLEARLY THAT IT IS FOR MONNINGTON-ON-WYE LYCH-GATE FUND.

We have had suggestions several times from members that we might at some time have a Kilvert Service at Monnington-on-Wye; a nice idea - it would be very fitting and we shall have to give it serious thought. There are a number of problems to face, mainly concerned with the small size of the church and the lesser numbers that it will seat compared with other churches we have been to for our Annual Service.

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The 1967 Kilvert Commemoration Service is already fixed. It is to be at LLANDEDR in Radnorshire. This is the church where the Rev. John Price ministered so long. The visit of Francis Kilvert to the cabin of "the Solitary" - as he termed old Mr. Price - on July 3rd 1872 is one of the outstanding descriptions in the Diary. Llanbedr is Painscastle's church, a mile or so away from the village, and delightfully situated. We are indebted to the Rev. D. Brian James of The Rectory, Rhosgoch for his kind invitation. He is not only Vicar of Llanbedr but also has the churches at Bryngwyn, Newchurch and Llandewi Fach in his care.

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A booklet on the Rev. John Price--the "Solitary" of Llanbedr--is in course of preparation and will be on sale to members when ready. Members will be advised in a future "Notes & News" when they are available.

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During the year we have suffered a number of losses among our members; Just prior to the Centenary Service at Clyro three died within a few days of each other. Mr. Edgar Lloyd of Brilley (Herefordshire). He and Mrs. Lloyd were founder-members. Of a family well known in the area, Mr. Lloyd came back to his home country on retirement, some years ago now, after long practising as a dental surgeon in London. We have enjoyed their company on several walks in the Kilvert country, both being excellent walkers and Mrs. Lloyd a keen botanist. I represented the Society at the funeral, and with me was Mr. Stokoe of Hay who had come as a very long standing friend of the late Mr. Lloyd. The same week Mr. Geoffrey Hoyland died at Painswick (Glos.) after a long illness. We shall always think of him as a prime mover in the restoration of "Little Davie's" memorial cross in Bredwardine churchyard, and it is his choice of words - so very suitable - that are on the additional base that it now rests on. He was stricken soon after attending the A.G.M. at which the cross project was decided on, but was able to see it completed and back in Bredwardine churchyard - per car and wheel chair. Prior to retirement Mr. Hoyland was Head of The Downs School at Colwall, in Herefordshire. The third loss sustained in that same

week was Mr. Eric Bligh, a Londoner who had been a member since 1953 and had been a number of times to the Annual Service; his friends - Mr. and Mrs. Feisenberger - brought him to the 1964 service at Bredwardine and we like to remember them all at tea here with us the evening before and Mr. Bligh enjoying a quiet chat with Mr. Plomer. A memorial service for Eric Bligh was held at St. Michael's Cornhill on July 15th. His books include "Tooting Corner", and I understand that Mrs. Feisenberger hopes to publish more of his writings in due course. Then in August, Mr. S. T. Callard died: he had been a member since he married Mrs. Shaw some ten years or so ago: she is a founder-member and was Mayoress of Hereford the year that Dr. Shaw was Mayor. Mr. Worsey and I attended the funeral service at Eignbrook Church, where they had always worshipped. Mr. and Mrs. Callard have been regular attenders at our A.G.M.'s and at the Annual Commemoration Service. Our member Mr. E. G. C. Roberts of Wolverhampton died in early December - originally of Hereford but away from it for many years, he joined the Society in 1960, soon after retirement from a Civil Service appointment, when we gained a member and I renewed a boyhood friendship with one I had not seen for a very long time. He and Mrs. Roberts had attended a number of meetings and services. We shall sadly miss all these familiar faces, and offer our sympathy to their relatives and friends.

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There is illness to be reported among our members....our Vice President Mr. E. W. R. Newman (Bishops Castle, Shropshire) has just let me know that Mrs. Newman is in the famous Orthopaedic Hospital at Gobowen with a fractured bone in her hip - good to hear that she is progressing slowly and taking a few steps with help. They rarely miss any of our events--we must hope that they will both feel fit enough for the journey to Langley Burrell! They are founder-members.

My predecessor as Hon. Sec. of the Society--Mr. W. H. Ellis (another founder-member) is convalescing after an operation at Hereford Hospital. He has made a wonderful recovery and last time I visited him seemed very cheery but "itching to go". What a wonderful octogenarian he is!!

Those members who were in the party that went to Wiltshire last May will be specially sorry to hear that Mrs. Harding of Chippenham - it was she who was the organiser of the wonderful tea we had in the Village Hall at Langley Burrell - was in Bath United Hospital last time I heard from Mr. Harding. Her second spell there, for she broke legs in December and had Christmas in hospital. Our best wishes to her and all those members who are ill--whether we know of their illnesses or not.

Our President (Mrs. L. R. K. Wright) is very much confined to her home, although she manages to get to her Church (Eignbrook Congregational) with a great effort and help, but otherwise wonderfully well. She celebrated her 82nd birthday right at the end of March. From the Committee Meeting the previous day we sent her a message of regard and best wishes.

I am glad to report that our Worcestershire member the Vicar of Stoulton (the Rev. Trevor Morgans) who has been seriously ill in Pershore Hospital for some weeks is now back home and very much better. As this "goes to press" a letter has come from him saying how sorry he is that he will not be able to get to the A.G.M. (where he was going to speak of his boyhood days at Whitney-on-Wye and the old folks he remembers, some of whom knew Kilvert). We wish him a speedy recovery and look forward to listening to him at a future date.

THE ABBEYDORE FESTIVAL Many visitors to Herefordshire know Abbeydore, in the Golden Valley, where the parish church is the former Dore Abbey, decayed after the Dissolution and restored to what it is today by Lord Scudamore in 1634 - now in urgent need of £30,000 for repairs. Abbey Dore Festival was started last year, through the inspiration and under the leadership of Donald Gowing, who is Secretary General of the Musicians Benevolent Fund and himself a musician. Although so much in London he has known Herefordshire all his life and comes down whenever he can. We are glad to have him as a member of the Kilvert Society. Last September's Festival was a great success, it made a small profit and, more important, drew much attention to Dore Abbey and its needs. The full attendances had splendid entertainment from the Festival Chorus each day, and from Osian Ellis (Harp), the Hungarian String Quartet straight from the Edinburgh Festival, and the Brass Ensemble of the Coldstream Guards. The Chorus and the Brass Ensemble also took part in the Sunday morning service, an inspiring event, with the Bishop of Hereford giving the Sermon. The Brass Ensemble and the Chorus

rounding it off with a splendid rendering of "Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord" ringing through the ancient building. I was glad to see that among the very large attendance each day was a good sprinkling of members of our Society.

The 1966 Abbeydore Festival is to be on September 16th, 17th and 18th. Mr. Gowing has just been on the phone to me with advance details and I can therefore tell you that among the musical treats that he has been able to arrange are...Paul Tortellier, the distinguished French Cellist and his family, the Allegri String Quartet plus Leon Goossens, the Guards Brass Ensemble, and the Festival Chorus conducted by Maestro Meghini from Turin. Mr. Gowing is arranging for me to have an early batch of brochures of this event and members and their friends are invited to send me a foolscap envelope (stamped and addressed) for one of these: they will be available by about May 1st and afterwards. I hope to have plenty of demand for them and to see our members supporting the Festival again this year.

I have before me a copy of the South African newspaper "The Cape Times" dated February 17th 1966. An interesting item tells how William Plomer's gift of a new German translation of his first novel "Turbott Wolfe" (with other gifts of letters and water-colours) was handed over to the University of Cape Town Library by Miss Zelda Friedlander on her return from a "sentimental journey" to England. This, her first visit, was inspired by reading "Kilvert's Diary"; she was entranced, and vowed to make a "Kilvert pilgrimage" at the first opportunity. She arrived here last October, and came to Hereford for a few days in early November. Mr. Plomer had advised me of this, so that during her stay in Hereford my wife and I took her around some of the countryside of the Diary. She loved every minute of it, for although a cold November day it was sunny and bright and the autumn colours were still with us. Bredwardine and Hay and Clyro, Llowes and Llanigon were all looking lovely and the run over Clyro Hill especially so. Writing to me after her return to Cape Town she said "although the Cape is lovely its beauty is rugged. We haven't the delicate greens and the range of trees and meadows and fields - I hope to return some day." She also told me that the Diary is selling well in South Africa and can be bought in most bookshops now; one big store in Cape Town (she likens it to Selfridges) has a long shelf full and they say it is selling splendidly. She also told me that the Diary is the set work for third year students of English literature at the University of Cape Town: at present there are 86 such students - the "Cape Times" also quotes these facts. Miss Friedlander says that it is the beauty of the language of the Diary that appeals to her so much - "the exquisite prose has completely captured my imagination," she writes. We are glad to have Miss Friedlander as a member of the Kilvert Society.

A Birmingham member recently sent me a copy of one of that city's Sunday newspapers. A page headed "The cleric who lost his heart to Kate, Polly and Daisy" immediately caught my eye. Only a small part of the whole-page article (by someone named Vivian Bird) is about Kilvert, despite the very bold heading, for the bulk of the article deals with what the writer saw and noted in Weobley and Moccas and other Herefordshire villages, and a little about Bredwardine. But "Who was Polly?" I thought, for I had no recollection of that name at all. The index told me that on page 58 of the 3rd volume I could read about Polly Tavener and that she is the only Polly in the whole of the Diary, so she it must be. Turning to page 58 what did I find? Just one line, which said "a splendid romp with Polly Tavener" (Kilvert is at Langley Burrell.) Not much to make a headline out of is it? But it is wonderful what newspaper men can do. I turned to the index again, to see if I could find any clue to the Taveners--and found that by turning to page 196 of the 3rd volume one can read of Kilvert going "to see my dear little lover Mary Tavener, the deaf and half-dumb child - when I opened the door of the poor crazy old cottage the girl uttered a passionate inarticulate cry of joy and running to me she flung her arms round my neck and covered me with kisses." Perhaps Polly and Mary are two different names for the same child? Or were they two sisters? Maybe some of our members down Chippenham way will be able to tell me. We all know who Daisy was; and Kate? Kilvert mostly wrote of her as "Kathleen Mavourneen", one of the bridesmaids at his cousin's wedding--referred to elsewhere in these pages. But why must newspaper men strive after sensational headlines when there is so much in the Diary that gives pleasure to so many? and often try to make "mountains out of molehills"? (Note... The Tavener references can be found on pages 253 and 287 of the abridged edition of the Diary.)

THE 1966 KILVERT COMMEMORATION SERVICE and THE KILVERT MEMORIAL PLAQUE...at
LANGLEY BURRELL (Wiltshire)

Arrangements are well forward for this first such service in Wiltshire. It is to be on Sunday afternoon the 3rd of July, and will be conducted by the Rev. E. H. Waddleton, the Rector (he is Rector of St. Paul's, Chippenham with St. Peter's Langley Burrell) and the Address will be given by the Rev. D. J. Lane Griffiths, until recently Vicar of Llowes (Radnorshire) and Rural Dean of Hay - a Vice President of the Kilvert Society. Fuller details will be given in the newsletter that every member will receive about a fortnight before the date of this service, but it can now be stated that a "Wye Valley" motor-coach has been booked and no doubt will be quite filled, although some are making the journey in their own cars. It will leave Hereford at 10 a.m. and stop for a picnic lunch before we get there; this should enable us to make the journey without hurry and with time to see something of the district around Chippenham, perhaps calling at Hardenhuish Church en route for the benefit of new members and those who would like a second visit there. Members generally seem to be very much looking forward to this first service in the Wiltshire "Kilvert Country" of his birth; many wrote in for the exact date whilst it was being finally fixed and no doubt there will be numbers there from considerable distances as at Clyro last year. Mr. Plomer has every intention of being present - I am most pleased to be able to announce this. There will be quite a contingent from Hay and Clyro, some joining the Hereford coach and some coming by car. There is no doubt but that if our first President (the late Mr. Sid Wright) had been spared a few more years he would have explored the possibilities of a Kilvert Service at Langley Burrell and also made moves towards a Memorial to Francis Kilvert in church or churchyard there. Now both matters are well in hand. For Mr. Waddleton tells me that the Parochial Church Council have taken up our suggestion regarding a Memorial: it has been decided that it shall take the form of a bronze plaque in the porch of Langley Burrell Church - a most prominent position which none can miss. The wording will be to the effect that it is a Memorial to Francis Kilvert, Curate there 1863-1864 and 1872-1876, and also giving a brief history of their ancient church. All matters connected with this Memorial are well in hand and if all goes according to plan it will be dedicated at the Commemoration Service on July 3rd. The cost of this plaque will be at least £50, maybe more. Perhaps we had best think of £60. The Society has made a grant of a sum that will be a start to the Plaque Fund and the remainder will no doubt come from the good folk around Langley Burrell and those members of the Kilvert Society who wish to subscribe individually to it. All those who wish to do this are invited to send their donations to our Assistant Hon. Treasurer - Mrs. E. Peters, 18 Moor Farm Lane, Hereford, clearly indicating that it is for the Kilvert Memorial Plaque at Langley Burrell. No receipts will be given unless specially requested.

The Society now has 15 members in the U.S.A. but it has not so far happened that any of them have been over here around the time of an Annual Service. This year at Langley Burrell we shall have Miss Mary Joan Morris from Pennsylvania with us. I understand that she will be staying in Hereford over that weekend and will probably come with the coach party. Her grandmother was Marianne (Mary) Powell of Brobury, one of Kilvert's congregation there and at Bredwardine - there are several references to her and others of the family towards the end of the third volume of the Diary. The letter which Kilvert wrote to Mary Powell and which is now in Pennsylvania is referred to on the first page of these Notes.

No doubt many of us who were at Clyro on Centenary Sunday had a quiet chuckle at "The Guardian" of Monday, June 28th. For I am sure that all who know Clyro and who have heard the heavy lorries roaring along the by-pass just at the bottom of the garden of Kilvert's "lodgings" at Ashbrook House would disagree violently with the statement that "on a summer evening the loudest noise is of cattle foghoring across the Valley of the Wye"?. Clyro (thank goodness) is still peaceful compared with many places, but not quite the backwater that is thereby suggested. Neither do the villagers "peep out from behind curtains" as the same paper suggested!! But the chuckles must be reserved for the "great nanse clock" that was brought to the Exhibition!! What a description for the dainty travelling clock so kindly brought by Kilvert's relatives from Brecon, the very clock that someone of the Venables family gave Kilvert in October 1870 (see p. 254 of Vol. 1.) and of which we read "a beautiful little travelling clock in its leather case--striking the hours with a sweet soft bell". And who told the "Guardian" that Kilvert was "devastatingly handsome"? Something quite new to

me, anyway. Can anyone enlighten me?

But this is as nothing to the columns of the "Western Mail" of Cardiff, where there are glaring inaccuracies of fact by the Rev. R. W. D. Fenn, Vicar of Glasgwm in Radnorshire. In an article titled "Sentimental Diarist" on June 25th 1965 they say that "Mr. Fenn, who has lectured on Kilvert in University of Birmingham extra-mural courses states that "the Church authorities were not too happy about him" and Mr. Fenn elaborated this in a letter published in the "Western Mail" of July 13th 1965 in which he suggests that Bishop Thirlwall (of St. Davids) did not offer a "living" to Kilvert without good reason, and then goes on to infer that it was Bishop Thirlwall who caused Kilvert to be offered the Chaplaincy at Carnes in order to get rid of him out of his diocese. Whereas the facts are that after Kilvert had resigned the curacy at Clyro and was back at Langley Burrell as his father's curate for the second time he was offered (and accepted) the living of St. Harmon--in the Diocese of St. Davids!! With regard to the Carnes offer, at the time this was made to Kilvert (by Canon Palmer of Eardisley on behalf of that eminent man Canon Walsham How) he had been almost a year Vicar of Bredwardine in the Diocese of Hereford!! The Diary reference for this is p. 397 in Vol. 3 - and for the offer of St. Harmon it is on p. 327 of Vol. 3. (also see p. 265 of Vol. 3. - Monday 24th April 1876). Mr. Fenn of Glasgwm seems to lose no chance to "have a dig" at Kilvert. The occasion that the locum at Clyro Vicarage mistook a bottle of cider for a bottle of wine - to everyone's amusement - he twists into "whom Kilvert sneered at for not knowing his wines too well" (Did Kilvert ever SNEER at anyone?) and then he states (Western Mail of June 25th) that "when Kilvert wanted to marry a Clyro girl her father forbade the match on the grounds that he had no prospects, which was a patent excuse because normally a man in Kilvert's position would have been considered a very suitable husband". But we know that it was no "Clyro girl" who Kilvert wanted to marry, but the daughter from a Breconshire mansion, some miles from Clyro and on the other side of the Wye - where there were 5 daughters, none of whom were allowed to marry. I am told that even when a much respected local cleric (a Canon of the Church, too) wanted to marry another of the sisters, that too was forbidden, and he too, died a bachelor. Folk who do not know the Diary as well as some of us do are apt to take the outpourings of a clergyman who is a lecturer under Birmingham University as being "gospel truth", but I think that I have said enough here to prove otherwise. There are many more points that the reverend gentleman has made that I could disprove by actual Diary references. Why does he do it? Did someone sum it up aptly when they put in a letter to me about this, the following lines:

Two men looked out through prison bars,
The one saw mud, the other stars.

A reminder....the little Index to the three volumes is invaluable in checking references; those who have the original set of three with no index can buy one for a very few shillings. If your bookseller does not stock it, or will not be bothered to order it, please write to me and I will see about you getting one.

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In August of last year my wife and I were down in the Cotswolds for a few days and whilst there called on several members. Among these was Miss Sturt at Uley (we first met her when a party of members went to Uley to see Mrs. Williams - daughter of "the Monk" - some years ago.) We came away from Miss Sturt's house with two pieces of interesting information. One being that Miss Sturt's grandfather was the famous Australian explorer Charles Sturt (1795-1869). His sister Jane married Thomas Venables in 1830, and their grandson is Roger Venables - the poet - who teaches in Lancashire. Miss Sturt told me that Thomas Venables was of the same family as the Rev. R. L. Venables of Clyro. Those who wish to know more about Charles Sturt the explorer can find interesting information about him in Arthur Mee's "Gloucestershire" under CHEWTONHAM.

This Christmas one of our Australian members sent us a calendar for 1966, one of the illustrations on it is of a flower that grows in the Sturt Desert!

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