

THE KILVERT SOCIETY

Wyecroft,
23 Broomy Hill,
Hereford.

(Phone 2094.)

2nd October, 1967.

Dear Member,

The previous newsletter (in June) announced that the SPECIAL AUTUMN SERVICE in WORCESTER CATHEDRAL had been fixed for SUNDAY the 15th of OCTOBER. Arrangements have now all been completed, and it is to be at 2-30 p.m.

This service will be conducted by the PRECENTOR (The Rev. Colin Beswick, B.A.) and the ADDRESS will be given by The Very Rev. Hedley Burrows, M.A., Dean Emeritus of Hereford; who is, of course, one of the founder-members of the Kilvert Society and one of its Vice-Presidents.

The Act of Remembrance will be by the Rev. D. J. Lane Griffiths, T.D., B.A., our President, and the LESSONS will be read by our two Worcestershire clergy-members... Canon J. S. Leatherbarrow, M.A. of Martley and the Rev. D. N. Lockwood, B.A. of Hanley Swan.

A motor-coach (Yeomans Motors) - or two coaches if necessary - will leave from near Hereford Town Hall in St. Owen Street at 1 o'clock PROMPT. This is essential as we must be at Worcester not later than 2 p.m.-- and we shall take the shortest route---via Shucknall and Fromes Hill.

The fare will be 5/- each person: booking is at Wyeval Ltd., Photographic Dealers, Bridge Street, Hereford - or with the Hon. Secretary at 23 Broomy Hill, Hereford.

It is essential that seats should be booked at least a week in advance so that numbers for tea can be more easily estimated. IT IS VERY HELPFUL IF MEMBERS WOULD PAY THE FARE AT TIME OF BOOKING.

Arrangements have been made for a light TEA at the OLD PALACE in Deansway, a very short distance from the Cathedral. This will be at 4-30 p.m. and the cost will be 2/6 per person. There will thus be about an hour between the end of the service and tea: this will give time for something to be seen of the vicinity of the Cathedral (see following pages for a few notes regarding this - and about parking places etc.)

All will hope to see a very large congregation to greet Dean Hedley Burrows, for he is loved and respected by us all. The suggestion for this service came from him and he is coming from his home near Winchester to give the Address. Worcester Cathedral can accommodate a vast congregation, and their amplifying system will enable all to hear equally well.

Some of our friends may wonder why a Kilvert Service in Worcester Cathedral - some notes on the Kilvert connections with Worcestershire can be found overleaf.

Yours faithfully,



(C. T. O. Prosser) Hon. Sec. The Kilvert Society.

Your attention is specially drawn to the showing of MEMBERS SLIDES arranged for SATURDAY EVENING, the 28th of OCTOBER, at CLYRO...full details will be found on page 3.

Car Parking near Worcester Cathedral---there are large car parks within easy distance of the Cathedral. One that is very easily found is adjoining St. Andrews spire (the very slender spire of an otherwise demolished church, not far from the road bridge over the Severn): from here it is a few hundred yards walk along the length of Deansway to the Cathedral. Quite a bit nearer is another large car park in Sidbury, just beyond the Cathedral; it is bounded by King Street and Severn Street and from this park the Cathedral can be approached through the arch of Edgar Tower, and College Green, entering the Cathedral through the Norman (south) doorway which leads on into the Cloisters.

The Dean of Worcester is very kindly allowing the coach (or coaches) to park in College Yard--just across from the main (North) porch of the Cathedral, and a few cars may be able to park there, too. A few may also be able to park in the fore-court of the Old Palace, where we have tea. It is not advisable to park in the streets anywhere, even if there are no yellow lines whatsoever. Those not arriving early are advised to go to a car park.

I have acquired a dozen coloured folders of Worcester; these have pictures and a street plan with car parks plainly marked. They will be sent to the first 12 members who apply to me for same. Only those coming by car should apply.

Worcester Cathedral --- Our Special Service will be followed by the usual EVENSONG at 4 o'clock; there will therefore be very little (if any) opportunity for walking around after our service. Members and friends will have to enquire if this will be possible after tea; presumably this will be so for a while around 5 o'clock. Some of the outstanding features are: the tomb of King John (near the steps of the High Altar); Prince Arthur's Chantry (he died at Ludlow Castle and was brought here for burial in 1502); the carved seats (misericords) in the Choir Stalls; Norman arches; the Crypt; and, of course, the mediaeval Nave itself.

Of special interest to us of the Kilvert Society are the Cloisters and the Cloister Garth within them, where the Kilvert tombstone can be found; it is at ground level and near an opening on the western side of the Garth, and besides the name of Maria Kilvert (died in November 1870) are those of her father and mother; the inscription is in Latin but the names can be seen well enough to leave no doubts.

Kilvert connections with Worcestershire---The Kilverts were a Shropshire family (from Condover) who had migrated to Bath. The Rev. Robert Kilvert, the father of the Diarist, was himself a son of Francis Kilvert of Condover, whose brother Richard was Chaplain to Bishop Hurd of Worcester. This Reverend Richard Kilvert was a Canon of Worcester and lived in the Close. The records tell us that he was Prebendary of the 4th Stall from 1786 to his death in 1817, and that in 1794 he was Vicar of Hallow & Grimley. We also know that from 1793 to 1801 he was Rector of Alvechurch and from 1801 to 1817 he was Rector of Hartlebury....all in Worcester-shire. His wife (Maria) died in 1859 at the age of 95. Their daughter Maria continued to live in the Close (or College Green) right up to her death in 1870. Now the Reverend Francis Kilvert (the Diarist) was Curate of Clyro in Radnorshire at the time of Miss Maria Kilvert's death in 1870; he attended the funeral, and his parents came up from Langley Burrell in Wiltshire to attend it. There is much in Kilvert's Diary about her death and funeral. On page 256 of the first volume we can read of the news of her death. Then on page 268 (and onwards as far as page 276) can be found that most vivid account of her funeral, and the happenings after the funeral. (Most of this is also in the abridged edition, on page 90 and onwards). Kilvert (the Diarist) stayed at the Star Hotel in Worcester over the funeral; this is still there, not far from Foregate Street station. We also read that Mr. Hobbs was the valuer concerned with probate; that name still persists in Worcester today--the firm of Bentley Hobbs and Mytton in Foregate Street. The Diary tells us that Francis Kilvert thought that Miss Maria Kilvert had not left any of her fortune to his side of the family, for she had been offended (for some obscure reason) because his Uncle Francis had edited the "Memoirs of the Life and Writings of the Rt. Rev. Richard Hurd". This Uncle Francis would have been a nephew of Canon Richard Kilvert (Maria's father). But she must have relented, for in fact the Diary tells us - later on - that she left some £7,000 to the Rev. Robert Kilvert of Langley Burrell.

Those coming to Worcester on October 15th would do well to look up the pages as noted above. It is then so easy to visualise the events that the Diarist describes. The fearful struggle up the steps whilst "quite unconscious of the scene, the choir were singing like angels"....."and the great bell boomed overhead."

Miss Kilvert's house is in the far corner of College Green, with its gardens running down towards the Severn. Canon William Purcell lives there today, and he has very kindly offered to allow those who particularly wish to see her house to visit it. Therefore, will any member who would like to take advantage of this very kind offer PLEASE WRITE TO ME AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AFTER THEY GET THIS NEWS-LETTER, AND I WILL THEN REPLY TELLING THEM EXACTLY WHICH IT IS AND AT WHAT TIME THEY CAN GO THERE. I SHALL THEN BE ABLE TO TELL CANON PURCELL HOW MANY TO EXPECT.

There is another connection of the Kilvert family with Worcestershire that has not so far been mentioned.....Miss Thermuthis Kilvert (the Diarist's sister Thersie) married the Rev. W. R. Smith (only son of Mr. T. F. Smith of Broadway, Worcs.) From 1874 to his death in 1889 Mr. Smith was Rector of Monnington-on-Wye in Herefordshire, almost adjoining Kilvert's own parish of Bredwardine. Their younger daughter Essex Smith became Mrs. Essex Hope and died in 1964.

Yet another Worcestershire connection is revealed in a letter in my possession - from a relative of the wife of the Rev. Francis Kilvert - which tells us just a little more about the Diarist's wife. She was Elizabeth Rowland of Holly Bank, Wootton near Woodstock in Oxfordshire and we are told that her mother was a Miss Creek, who came from the Worcestershire family of Prattentons of Clareland, Hartlebury. The writer of the letter suggests that perhaps the best remembered member of this family in Worcestershire is Dr. Prattenton the well known Antiquarian. The member of the Rowland family who wrote this letter (now nearly thirty years ago) says that by virtue of her own descent from the Prattentons "the Worcestershire Archaeological Society elected me as a member, so I keep in touch with my great-grandmother's county."

This might be of some interest to Canon Leatherbarrow in particular, for he is now the President of Worcestershire Archaeological Society.

BIRMINGHAM AREA MEMBERS

THE FOLLOWING HAS JUST COME TO HAND FROM OUR BIRMINGHAM MEMBER (AND VICE-PRESIDENT) Mr. E. F. Jelfs.

"Our very happy occasional and informal "get-togethers" in Birmingham continue, with gradually increasing numbers present. At a recent meeting held, by their kind invitation, in the house of Mr. and Mrs. C. K. Hughes of Moor Green Road, Moseley, about twelve were present, among whom was a distinguished visitor in the person of Mr. E. J. Schatz - a regular contributor to the Birmingham and other papers on nature matters and countryside rambling. After a most pleasant discussion on various aspects of the Diary, the evening concluded, by special request, with the tape-recorded address of the Rev. D. J. Lane-Griffiths, our newly elected Society President, given on the occasion of the 1966 Annual Commemoration Service at Langley Burrell (Wiltshire). This recording is always greatly enjoyed by those who hear it. Our kind host and hostess dispensed generous hospitality in coffee and cakes to bring a most delightful evening to a close. We hope to continue these gatherings on a quarterly basis and at our next meeting to have a contribution by way of a paper read by Mrs A. J. Stanyard of Kings Heath."

Mr. Jelfs tells me that he now has only two or three tapes of the recording of the Rev. D. J. Lane Griffiths address at Langley Burrell. Any member who requires one should not delay; they are ONE GUINEA each and the address to write to is.. Mr. E. F. Jelfs, 8 Clarence Road, Birmingham 13.

AN EVENING OF LANTERN SLIDES AT CLYRO....(Radnorshire)

As announced on page 1, this has been fixed for Saturday evening, the 28th of October, in the Church Hall at CLYRO--at 7-30 p.m. A number of most attractive slides - the property of various members--will be shown.....TEA and BISCUITS.....SILVER COLLECTION TOWARDS EXPENSES.

MEMBERS AND THEIR FRIENDS ARE WELCOME.

THE 1967 KILVERT COMMEMORATION SERVICE at LLANBEDR-PAINSCASTLE,

The afternoon of Sunday, June 25th saw a very large congregation in this splendidly renovated church--beautifully decorated for the occasion. Despite the very many chairs that had been brought in as extra seating a number had to stand at the back and in the porch. No doubt many more would have come had the day been less stormy. Even so we were favoured, for lower-lying Herefordshire had far more rain than up there in the Radnorshire hills. The service was conducted by the Rev. Brian Jones, the Vicar; and a most eloquent address was given by the Rev. Colin Cuttall, Vicar of All-Hallows-by-the-Tower (the Toc. H. church). The Act of Remembrance was by the Rev. D. J. Lane Griffiths, our President, and the Lessons were read by two founder-members, Alderman Tudor Watkins, M.P. and Mr. H. T. Lloyd. Indeed, all who took part are members of the Society. Among the many of the more distant members at this service there were at least eight from London; a family from Buckinghamshire and another from Oxfordshire; many from the Birmingham area; several from Wiltshire (among these one of the Langley Burrell churchwardens and his wife); a number from South Wales; and from nearer came many from Herefordshire and its surrounding counties. A large motor-coach (quite full) came from Hereford itself. All these, and many more, with their friends; and with local folk from a wide area, made up what was perhaps the biggest congregation that St. Peter's Church, Llanbedr-Paincastle has ever seen. On coming out of church after this inspiring service, with its fine singing of the hymns, all were pleased to see the great improvement in the weather. The rain had been replaced by bright skies and there was that wonderful clarity that so often follows rain. The hills around looked fresh and green, and from the church porch the "Fan of Brecon" (as Kilvert termed it) stood up sharply beyond the nearer hills. Before leaving the churchyard many visited the grave of the Rev. John Price (the "Solitary") now well renovated and planted with colourful flowers. Tea followed - in a large barn at Llandevarion Farm; this had been "spring cleaned" and decorated throughout with flowers; it was the original intention to have tea in a very much larger barn close to the farmhouse but the wet weather made it wise to change to one on much higher ground; this change had made much more hard work for willing helpers, and much further to carry hot water from the farmhouse. Here vast numbers enjoyed a splendid tea, all provided locally and almost all home-made. We are told that very many families living in the four parishes gave and helped that day, irrespective of whether they are "church" or "chapel", Mrs. Jones having done the organising beforehand. It is impossible to mention the names of all who helped to make this "Kilvert Sunday" at Llanbedr-Paincastle so enjoyable; but among them I might perhaps mention Mr. Lewis and his sons of Llandevarion Farm for the use of the barn, for parking facilities for the many cars, and for much hot water. Members of the Young Farmers Club for superintending parking in heavy rain; the ladies who so nicely decorated the church with flowers given by many parishioners and for the work on the grave of the "Solitary" (it had been "dug out", the kerbing exposed again after being buried for many years, scrubbed and cleaned, and then "flowered") thanks and great credit to Mr. and Mrs. T. R. Lloyd of the Castle Farm, Paincastle. A little band must have worked very hard trimming the enormous round churchyard. All was "spick and span" both inside and outside.

After tea (and the votes of thanks to all concerned...given by Ald. Tudor Watkins, by the Rev. D. J. Lane Griffiths and by the Rev. David Lockwood of Hanley Swan in Worcestershire) all settled down to listen to Dr. William Plomer talking about Kilvert's connections with Llanbedr-Paincastle, reading extracts from the Diary, and from the booklet on the Rev. John Price just published by the Society (please note the enclosed leaflet regarding this). This sort of thing is a treat that members and friends coming to the Annual Commemoration Service have enjoyed after tea for now the fourth consecutive time. Dr. Plomer must really enjoy coming, for he is such a busy man with his many literary engagements and other commitments, and I feel sure that all of us feel honoured and delighted that he so often comes among us, and is always so willing to delight us with his readings. Those of us who are founder-members will remember the early years with Dr. Plomer at the inaugural meeting, next day reading at Bredwardine; again at Clyro the next year (1949) and on many occasions since. We all have so very much to thank him for!!!

This will be the third year that book tokens have been given to the children of the local primary school for writings of some description that have a link with Kilvert, the Diary or the countryside. This idea started in 1965 when the Centenary Service was at Clyro and prizes were given for some splendid essays on the district that Kilvert wrote about. Last year at Langley Burrell the schoolchildren produced some excellent little illustrated booklets on their parish church. On both occasions Dr. Plomer delighted the prizewinners by handing them their book tokens

in which he had inscribed their names. The Committee of the Kilvert Society decided that this is something that must be carried on each year, wherever the Commemoration Service is held. So that in conjunction with the 1967 service at Llanbedr-Painscastle the offer of book token prizes for writings in a similar manner was made to the children of Rhosgoch County Primary School (this is the school for the district which includes the four parishes ministered to by the Rev. Brian James) through their Headmaster, Mr. T. Murray. The dozen or so little writings that the children produced, almost all about the Rev. John Price and Kilvert's visit to him, were judged by our Breconshire member Mr. D.J.H. Lewis of Llyswen, the Headmaster of Llandefalle Primary School, and three prizewinners decided upon. These were (in order) Malcolm Lloyd, Philip Probert and Valerie Pugh. Dr. Plomer had their prizes inscribed and ready to hand to them after tea in the barn, but no doubt the inclement weather and the fact that they each live at the far end of the district covered by Rhosgoch School was why they were not there. Their book-tokens have since been posted to the school so that the Headmaster could hand them out.

In 1968 when the Commemoration Service is at Newbridge-on-Wye we shall again offer these prizes for the children of the local primary school; and we all must hope that it will be possible for Dr. Plomer to hand them out.

For the benefit of those not able to be at Llanbedr-Painscastle on June 25th this year a few extracts from the Rev. Colin Cuttall's address may be very much appreciated. He said "The story of the Diarist was one of deep pastoral caring, and bore little relationship to many of the modern happenings, which, he thought would have caused him to shrivel up and think blasphemous. Kilvert was a shy man who, with others of his generation, thought it proper to sit, talk, and pray in the simplest of idions in his parishioners homes - a form of ministry which might be overlooked by the high power clergy of today; he had no worldly ambitions beyond that of being a country pastor". Giving examples from the Diary of the visits Kilvert paid to his scattered parish, he said "the Diarist went wherever his feet took him, where a modern motor car wouldn't go; these visits were the very staff of his ministry and glory of the Church--a natural, a born parish priest, a pastor and a lover of souls. All could thank God for the life and example of Francis Kilvert."

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THE St. DAVIDS DIOCESAN GAZETTE.

Our Carmarthen member (Miss Phillis Howell) has a further long contribution on Kilvert's Diary in the issue for the third quarter of 1967. She has made a delightful article out of many extracts from the Diary, interspersed with her comments, and I shall be surprised if just now we do not get a few more West Wales members as a direct result of this article; for it will surely whet the appetites of more than one and cause them to read the three volumes. Among the extracts from the Diary the one dealing with the visit of Kilvert and his father to St. Davids is (very naturally) given, for it is an excellent description both of the situation... "from the glen deep below the village rose the top of the Cathedral Tower" and of the interior "the grand rich Norman arches, the massive round pillars...the four lofty arches and the glory of the roof, the solemn grandeur of the silver Choir and the rich purple of the stone." En route they had a 4½ hour wait in Carmarthen and visited St. Peter's Church in which the Crimea colours - riddled with balls - of the Royal Welsh Fusiliers had just been hung. Miss Howell comments that in the Diary Kilvert makes no mention of the beautiful Priory Church at Brecon (now Brecon Cathedral); only those few who have seen some of the original notebooks from which Dr. Plomer made his selections for the three volumes know that in one of them is a full account of Kilvert's attendance there (from Clyro) for a "visitation"; this was on Tuesday, 31st May 1870; he went by train, and so did "Price of Llanbedr-Painscastle" although Kilvert thought that he might have walked all the way!!! On the return journey "Tom Williams" (of Llowes) missed the train. There is much more: perhaps one day something more from that solitary notebook can be published. Meanwhile, Miss Howell, we look forward to your next contribution to St. David's Diocesan Gazette.

The three volumes of Kilvert's Diary.

It is now almost a year since Mr. Grant of Hay-on-Wye told me that the present edition of these were sold out and that Jonathan Cape Ltd. had told him that more would be printed, but not for some while. Since then several members have written to me stating that they have been unable to buy a set of the three volumes and

asking me to try to get some for them, and also to find out when they will be available again. I have several times written to Capes, but have not had anything very definite in the way of an answer. I have recently made further enquiries and the only answer I can get is that they "cannot yet give a firm date for the re-issue of the 3-volume edition of the Diary". This statement will not give much satisfaction to those waiting to buy the 3-volumes (and there are many that I know of). My own private opinion is that it will surely be "sometime in 1968". It seems a great pity, that folk eager to buy the three volumes are so frustrated, and from the Society's point of view many of these are potential new members. Can it be that Capes grossly under-estimated the demand?

WOULD MEMBERS PLEASE NOTE THAT WE HAVE A LOCAL MEMBER WHO PARTICULARLY WANTS A COPY OF VOLUME THREE. PLEASE LET ME KNOW IF YOU HAVE ONE TO SELL, STATE CONDITION AND PRICE AND I WILL PASS THE MESSAGE ON.

ASHBROOK - KILVERT'S "LODGINGS" ----- (Kilvert Museum?)

This is still unsold: this is a great disappointment to us, for it was so very much thought that perhaps the new owner would rent to the Society one of the rooms in which to house a Kilvert Museum. There is already a large amount of various items on hand which would go in such a Museum, and, once it was started there is every likelihood of much more coming to light and being handed over to the Society.

Has any member any other ideas regarding a site for a Kilvert Museum? If so please let me know and it shall go before the Committee. Clyro or Hay is surely the place for it?

ILLNESS

News has only just got through to me of the illness of both Mrs Lewis of Clyro Vicarage and Mrs James of The Rectory Rhosgoch. Both these ladies have had illness and operations this summer but are now making steady progress and are well on the way to complete recovery. Very many who were at the Centenary Service at Clyro in 1965, and at Llanbedr-Paincastle this year will remember the hard work put in by both Mrs Lewis and Mrs James respectively and will want to be associated with this message of good wishes and good will. What a pity we did not know of all this when in both cases these ladies were in hospital; at those times a brief visit and a few flowers often works wonders. WILL NOT SOMEONE TAKE IT ON THEMSELVES TO LET ME KNOW WHEN A MEMBER IS IN HOSPITAL? I can then pass the message on to a suitable member or, in some cases go myself.

RURAL DEAN OF HAY.

Our Vice-President the Rev. T. J. Lewis of Clyro must often be a busy man. Not only has he four churches....Clyro, Bettws, Llowes and Glasbury (All Saints) but is also Rural Dean of the Hay Deanery. He had not been at Clyro long before we received an invitation to hold the Kilvert Commemoration Service there again: this was in 1958 - the last service at Clyro had been that in 1949 when the Memorial Tablet to Francis Kilvert was unveiled and dedicated. 1962 saw us again at Clyro, to be followed by the splendid Centenary Service there in 1965.

RAIN IN THE HILLS.

Last weekend a day up in the Radnorshire hills had been arranged; members from Birmingham and from Hereford etc. met at Paincastle and were joined by local members from Clyro. Weather was fine but somewhat threatening so a start was made with a walk towards the site of some of the dwelling places of the "Solitary"; cars were taken to beyond Llanbedr Church and then came a pleasant walk up to the Rocks of Pen Cwm, where the heap of stones and an odd beam still marks the site of the little farmhouse of Pen Cwm where the Rev. John Price once lived. From these heights one can look over towards Cwm Ceilo and the site of the "Solitary's" last abode, where Kilvert and his friend visited him. Back to the cars and up to the spot from which a favourite walk across the moors to the Rocks of Aberedw is started. But rain intervened, and picnic lunches had to be eaten whilst sitting in our cars. It persisted until evening when it at last abated: everything was too wet for walking. A car run down to Erwood and up the Wye to Aberedw was enjoyed, and then back to Clyro to the shelter of a Birmingham member's weekend cottage to eat our picnic sandwiches and enjoy their freshly brewed tea in comfort. By some magic all 18 of us were found seats, tongues wagged, and time sped by. The forthcoming Worcester Cathedral service was discussed and the relevant passages read out from the Diary. Despite the Radnorshire rain (or rather because of it) what might have been a most disappointing evening was turned into a lively one through our common interests and the hospitality of our Birmingham friends.

A YORKSHIREMAN'S FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF CLYRO.

Among the number of new members in recent months are several from Leeds, and of these mention must be made of the one whose attention was drawn to the fact that there IS a Kilvert Society when he saw one of our "Information sheets" in Clyro church porch, and lost no time in joining the Society once he got back home. There must be very many keen "Kilvertians" all over Great Britain who have not yet heard of us, although we are all the time getting more widely known through the kindness of such as the Vicar of Clyro in displaying our notices and posters. There was something about the letter from our new Leeds member that made me ask him if he would like to write a little item about his first visit to the "Kilvert Country" for these "Notes". Here it is.

Ever since the happy chance when I picked up in our local library one of the volumes of "Kilvert's Diary" and thought it looked an interesting book - which proved to be my literary underjudgment of the year - I had looked forward to visiting Clyro. A Northerner who lives not too far from Haworth and its moors cannot be unmindful of the influence exerted on a writer by a village and its environs, especially if that writer be a sensitive soul like a Bronte or a Kilvert. So it was with considerable interest and not a little trepidation that after dipping into the Diary during our journey on an August Sunday this year towards Clyro we pulled up outside the Baskerville Arms with its porch surmounted by the statue of a docile Alsatian hound instead of the "enormous coal-black hound with fire bursting from its open mouth its eyes glowing with a smouldering glare, its muzzle and hackles and dewlap outlined in flickering flame" -- as it existed in the vivid imagination of Arthir Conan Doyle. A statue not quite in character we thought. Were we to be in for other disappointments we wondered.

I must confess that somewhere at the back of my rather romantic mind I had tended to link Kilvert's Clyro with Tennyson's Avilion "where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow, nor ever wind blows loudly, but it lies deep meadow'd, happy, fair with orchard lawns--". Yet countering this was a down-to-earth Yorkshire realism that told me not to expect too much because that way lay disappointment. So how delightful to find that Clyro in 1967 still holds the charm that Francis Kilvert imperishably captured for future generations when he wrote his Diary nearly a century ago. If it was too much to hope to catch a glimpse of the old soldier or of Mr. Venables in his dog cart it proved not too much to hope that in the quiet Sunday-afternoon calm of a Victorian Church - for such it seems regardless of when it was builded or extended - we should come to understand where the goodness and serenity of one of our greatest English Diarists came from. To find just how near to the Church Kilvert had lived was something of a surprise. In our mind's eye we saw him with long strides (what a walker he was! we remembered) going swiftly across to the Church gate opposite his rather larger-than-expected lodgings.

It is written of the page to good King Wenceslas that "In his master's steps he trod", and this may now be written of us, too. And the master in our case? The Reverend Francis Kilvert, who has added to our lives a pleasure that only those who have fallen under his spell can understand. If in our first visit to Clyro on this hot afternoon we did not see "an enormous bumble bee crawling over the white cloth and everything else" we did write a postcard to a friend bearing in mind that on a Sunday, delightfully described as "October Morrow", Kilvert wrote in his Diary "At the Vicarage I saw one of the first 'Post Cards' that have been sent".

Hay after Clyro brought us back to earth somewhat. Our car thrust us into the heart of twentieth century Hay in a matter of a few minutes. How much rather would we "have had the satisfaction of managing to walk from Clyro to Hay by the fields without meeting a single person" as had that most companionable of men who rather enigmatically added in the same entry "for I have a peculiar dislike of meeting people." To all those kindly-looking folks who today inhabit Clyro we are indebted for not spoiling a dream. They seemed to realise they were living in a spot which is very special to many people scattered all over these islands and indeed perhaps to folks in countries across the "German Ocean".

Louis Savage, Leeds 6, Yorkshire.

A MEMBER IN OTTAWA

A most welcome new member is Mr. John S. Batts of the University of Ottawa, our first member living in Canada. Mr. Batts is a Lecturer in the Department of English there, and a while ago got his Degree with a thesis on Kilvert's Diary. What better subject - for Mr. Batts is from Hay-on-Wye, where his parents lived up to a few years ago when they moved to Llandrindod Wells. Mr. Batts senior was organist at Clyro Church at the time of the first services there...1949 and

the pre-Society service of 1946.

Mr. J. S. Batts has very kindly agreed to write a series of 3 articles for the next 3 issues of this newsletter--based on his thesis. I am sure that we shall all look forward to these with eager anticipation.

MORE RADNORSHIRE MEMBERS.

It is pleasing to note that just lately several more Radnorshire folk have joined the Society, among them two from Dolau near Llandrindod Wells. There are now a goodly number of members from the county that Kilvert writes of with such affection----- which reminds me to record the fact that the Society may just now investigate the possibilities of bringing out Kilvert's book of poems for sale to members and friends. It is generally recognized that it is not good poetry, and that whilst Kilvert as a writer of prose ranks very high his poems are quite another matter. Nevertheless, now we know that we shall never have any more of the Diary the very fact that they were written by Kilvert might bring a substantial demand for them. The price if in the form of a proper book would be high I am sure - perhaps around £2, perhaps much more. Produced in similar style to the booklet on the "Solitary" etc., would be a very different matter - maybe 10/- or a little more. Has anyone any opinions on this? It would be nice to be able to get some little idea of any possible demand for either.

Two poems that are specially liked..in two different parts of the Kilvert Country - are "The Rocks of Aberedw" and "The church path at Langley Burrell". At the end of volume three is "Clyro Water": this gives some idea of this type of Kilvert's verse.

KIDDERMINSTER MEMBERS

Three of the recent new members are of Kidderminster in Worcestershire. All of them belong to the Kidderminster Field Club and in early September were in the coach party that had a day in Radnorshire and Breconshire; visiting Builth, admiring the grandeur of the Rocks of Aberedw as they went down the Wye Valley to Llysven, and then visiting the lovely little church at Llanfili before arriving at Hay for tea. Then across to Clyro for a talk - in the church - by the Rev. T. J. Lewis, a stroll round the village with special interest in Ashbrook (Kilvert's "lodgings"), and then to Bredwardine to see the church, memorial seat, and burial place. A lovely day enhanced the pleasure of this visit, much of it in "Kilvert Country", and it would not be surprising that from it we get some further members later on - perhaps after more have read the Diary?

THE ISLE OF WIGHT.

Our first I.o.W. member has just joined. For some years he held an important official post in Hereford, and in those days (he tells me) lost no opportunity of getting off into the Black Mountains and the Radnorshire Hills. But that was some time before even the first volume of the Diary was published or else his interest in that countryside might have been doubled. Now he has retired, to the Isle of Wight, near to the places that Kilvert knew and wrote of.

This reminds me to mention that recently a Ledbury member visited the I.of W., went to the church of St. Saviours-on-the-Cliff at Shanklin (Vol. 3, p.36) and sent me a picture postcard of it.

Then the Diary tells us of Kilvert's visits to Yaverland (church and house); the references for this are pp. 38 to 40 in Volume 3. In early September Yaverland Church figured in "Meeting Place" on BBC 1 on a Sunday evening in John Betjeman's feature on English churches; a number of references to Kilvert and the Diary were made, with pictures of the Diarise and of Yaverland.

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LLANIGON CHURCH

The June newsletter reminded members of the 1959 Kilvert Commemoration Service at St. Eigon's Church, Llanigon (Breconshire)---the church for Llanthomas, and where many of the Thomas family are buried (including Kilvert's "Daisy")---- and quoted from the urgent appeal for £1,500 to save the church by re-roofing it. The Vicar of Llanigon (Canon K.V. Evans) has written to thank me for putting this appeal before our members, and also to thank those who have responded to the appeal. It appears that, so far, only a handful of members have subscribed, but those who have done so have been very generous. If there are any other members who feel that they would like to help it is by no means too late, for the target has not yet been reached, in fact, a considerable sum is still needed. Donations should be sent direct to Canon K. V. Evans, The Vicarage, LLANIGON, via HEREFORD.

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OBITUARY.

We regret to record the death of a Somerset member...Mrs. Dorothy Redler, of Trull Road, Taunton. She joined in 1958. Mrs. Redler was a regular visitor to the Black Mountains, and often stayed for weeks on end at Llanthony. She was an artist of considerable ability and this probably explains much of the attraction that the Hendon valley had for her. My wife and I have met her on more than one occasion when visiting the Llanthony district. Mrs. Redler was perhaps at Llanthony just before her death (which occurred on September 16th) for the newspaper announcement states that she died in Abergavenny Hospital.

The death must also be recorded (in August) of the Rev. Crowther Smith - formerly Vicar of Bredwardine. It occurred at Swanage, Dorset--where he was living in retirement. He was not a member of the Society, but we remember his kindly welcome when the 1956 Commemoration Service was held at Bredwardine. He, of course, conducted that service - the preacher being the Rev. A. J. Goss of St. Peter's, Hereford

KILVERT ON TELEVISION .

Members will remember the items in the two previous newsletters about this proposed programme and the fears of many that it might be in very bad taste.

My latest report must be that (1) a letter appeared in the correspondence columns of the "Sunday Times" in July, signed by the proposed producer and written from the BBC Television Centre, which said that he "shared the reverence and affection for Kilvert's writing, and also for his rather sad and compassionate life" and went on to state that "the idea that any adaption would be satirical, frivolous, sensational or scurrilous is simply not true, and that there is not the slightest wish to mock the Rev. Francis Kilvert."

All members will be most pleased to know this, and will undoubtedly make a note of these words. I still maintain that the many members who were so alarmed had every reason to be so, for it is almost incredible that a man could have two such completely different outlooks as to be able to turn from such scurrilous impersonations of clergymen, scoutmasters, pregnant women etc.---all well laced with "smut"---to a straightforward reverent presentation of anything connected with Francis Kilvert.

Much more recently the following information (2) has reached me...this is to the effect that "for the present at least, the rumoured dramatization of the Diary for the B.B.C. is no longer being considered. We think it is rightly felt that the Diary is so beautifully written that it might be a mistake to try and adapt it for another medium than Kilvert's fine prose."

So far so good. In common with a famous politician we must "Wait and see".

AS IN RADNORSHIRE, SO IN WILTSHIRE.

A reader of the Diary has drawn our attention to an interesting coincidence. The entry for 8 March, 1873 reads:

"Anelia Meredith tells me that at Llanhollantine people used to go to the Church door at midnight to hear the saints within call over the names of those who were to die within the year."

This has reminded him of something he had read in THE NATURAL HISTORY OF WILTSHIRE by John Aubrey (1626-1697), the famous author of the Miscellanies. Aubrey wrote:

"It was a custom of some people that were more than ordinary curious to sit all night in their church porch on Midsummer Eve, that they might see the apparitions of those that should die in the parish that year come and knock at the door."

Dr. PLUMER IN THE PULPIT.

In response to my request for news of his engagements Dr. Plumer has given me this information..... "I have accepted an invitation to give an address on THE CREATIVE IMPULSE in a London church (St. Mark's, Hamilton Terrace, N.W. 8.) at 11 o'clock on Sunday 22 October. I am the first of three poets to be asked; I may make some allusion to Kilvert". A pity Hereford is so far from London, else some of us would be there, I am sure!!!
(London members please note.)

KILVERT'S ASSOCIATIONS WITH GOWER.

In the June "Notes & News" there was a most informative article under the above title, by one of our Swansea members (Mr. H. Gregory of Morriston). Among other things it dealt with the family and homes of the forbears of our Vice-President - Sir Michael Venables Llewelyn (of Llysddinan, Newbridge-on-Wye).

Over this I have an apology to make...to Sir Michael for spelling his name wrongly, and to Mr. Gregory for not copying his written script correctly. For Mr. Gregory had the name "Llewelyn" correctly spelled, whereas I put an extra "l" into it, giving it 4 instead of 3. Several members wrote to me and pointed out my mistake. My defence can only be that once used by Dr. Plomer and now adapted to myself.... "Prosser sometimes nods".

NOW FOLLOWS A FURTHER ITEM FROM MR. GREGORY ON KILVERT IN GOWER.

LLANMADOC (Vol. 2, p. 183.)----- On April 16th in company with the Westhorps he reached Llanmadoc and says "Presently there came out the vicar, Mr. Davies." As mentioned in the last bulletin, Mr. Davies was a High Church vicar of this parish, with the church of Cheriton attached. Both churches are ornamented with his fine wood carving. He wrote "The History of West Gower", and died in 1911 at the age of eighty one.

"THE GRAVES OF THE UNKNOWN"-----On his return from Llanmadoc Kilvert and his friends must have visited the passage tomb, covered by the remains of the usual cairn which stood to the west of the remains of the be-sanded church at Penmen. The tomb was roughly cruciform in shape, but only one of the "transepts" is complete. The capstone of the main chamber weighs 6 to 7 tons.

MUMBLES (Vol. 2, p. 187.) ----- "A tramway runs along the roadside from Swansea to Mumbles, upon which railway carriages are drawn by horses". This railway was running until a few years ago, and was the oldest passenger railway in the world. Built in 1804 as a tramway, the first attempt was made to derive motive power from sails attached to the waggons!! When this proved a failure, horses were used. In 1877 steam engines provided the means of locomotion, and in 1925 modern double decker trams were electrically driven.

OYSTERMOUTH and LANGLAND BAY. (Vol. 3, p.427.)-----"Five of us drove to Oxwich Bay through Penrice Park, stopping at the castle to see the pictures. We had a merry windy luncheon near the church gate." Oxwich Bay is regarded by some as Gower's finest bay. The little church, not far from the cliff edge today, is dedicated to St. Illtyd. The tiny chancel is only nine feet long, and in a recess on the north side is a 14th century tomb of the Delameres. Lillian Bayliss, of "Old Vic" fame loved this village and this church; the decoration of the chancel ceiling was done at her expense. Hugh Gore was rector here in Puritan times. Later he became Bishop of Waterford and Lismore, and founded Swansea Grammar School. The sea has encroached here a great deal and the site of the old vicarage which stood under the church, is now drowned by the tide.

PENRICE CASTLE--- from "Pen Rhys". The Rhys family owned the first castle in about the 12th century. From then it passed by marriage, to the Mansels, thence to the Talbots, and lastly to the Blythwoods. The present owner of the new castle - visited by Kilvert - is Mr. Methuen-Campbell.

PENNY HITCH---is a hamlet near Oxwich, and is so called because the miller, at a charge of a penny, used to attach his spare horse to the carts of his customers, to assist their horses in pulling the heavy load of flour up the hill.