

SPECIAL NOTICE ... this is the first newsletter of 1969. Three newsletters were sent out in 1968 (April, June and October). If any member did not receive all three of these, please let me know. The next one will be posted to all members in early June. KINDLY NOTE DATESTAMP ON THIS AND REPORT ANY UNDUE DELAY TO ME ... Hon.Secretary.

THE KILVERT SOCIETY

President:-

Dr. William Plomer, C.B.E., D.Litt.

Hon.Treasurer:

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HEREFORD.  
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18 Moor Farm Lane,  
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31st March, 1969.

Dear Member,

The ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING and SOCIAL EVENING will be held on WEDNESDAY, the 23rd APRIL 1969, at 7 p.m. (PROMPT), --- in EIGNBROOK CHURCH HALL(S), HEREFORD, as usual. Please specially note that this time it is mid-week, as it was not possible to book at Eignbrook for any other evening this year.

We all hope that this change of day will not inconvenience anyone or prevent anyone coming --- and that we shall have the usual good attendance.

Ample parking space in the yard of the adjoining Inn.

The evening's programme is not yet finalised, but it will be on more-or-less the usual lines ... the business meeting, followed by speakers, slides and a film; interspersed with refreshments, at 8 o'clock, served by lady members.

Among the slides will be some new ones, taken at Homme House, Newbridge-on-Wye, and Hardenhuish last year. The film is to be "THIS ENGLAND" ... a companion to that lovely one of Herefordshire's black & white buildings which was shown in 1966 ... and is the prize-winning film for 1968 of the Hereford Cine Society.

Mention must be made here of the arrangements to mark the 21st Anniversary Year of the Society. There is to be a "Celebration Weekend" in June ... with a "GET-TOGETHER" at HEREFORD TOWN HALL on Saturday evening the 21st of June. Next day (June 22nd) the ANNUAL COMMEMORATION SERVICE is in HEREFORD CATHEDRAL at 3 p.m. Further details will be found in this newsletter and final details will be circularised in the June newsletter --- about a fortnight before the "Celebration Weekend".

Each year since 1965 we have had a MOTOR COACH TOUR to places of Kilvert interest a week or so after the A.G.M., but it is not yet known if this will be possible this time. Every effort will be made to arrange such a tour, for they have proved most popular and enjoyable. PLEASE TURN TO THE BACK PAGE FOR A "STOP PRESS" ANNOUNCEMENT ABOUT IT ... this will be the VERY LAST ITEM OF THIS NEWSLETTER.

This year the Balance Sheet is enclosed as a separate sheet - for there are so many items on it. The Annual Report and the accounts of the outstanding events of 1968 will be found in the following pages.

Yours sincerely,



(C.T.O. Prosser --- Hon.Secretary).

SPECIAL NOTE TO THOSE MEMBERS IN ARREARS WITH THEIR SUBSCRIPTIONS ... the notes on this matter in the last several newsletters have brought good results; BUT there are still a few members who have ignored them. This is, therefore, yet another appeal to those few members still in arrears, to PLEASE PAY UP, and at the same time send in a letter of resignation if they do not wish to continue to pay their annual subscription. Until we receive this, we continue to regard them as members.



"NOTES and NEWS" - by the Hon. Secretary, with contributions from a number of members.  
-- March, 1969 --

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#### A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dr. Plomer sends the following, in this 21st Anniversary Year of the Society.

When the Kilvert Society was founded in Hereford in 1948, nobody, I think, was looking towards the then distant future. Our immediate concern was to form an organization which would bring together those who valued Kilvert and his Diary and all its local associations.

It naturally gives me special pleasure, as one of the founders and now president of the Society, to see it flourishing and expanding after 21 years. I recall the enthusiastic initiative of the late Sid Wright, and the generous support of Dean Burrows; I think admiringly of the constant and devoted help of those who have served and are serving the Society in honorary capacities; and I hope as many members as possible will join in the Society's 21st birthday celebrations in Hereford in June.

The Society's declared purpose was "to foster an interest". In this I think it can claim a most gratifying success, thanks to its membership.

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#### OUR PRESIDENT'S ENGAGEMENTS

Dr. Plomer has been elected President of THE POETRY SOCIETY - this is their Diamond Jubilee Year, for they were founded in 1909. There was therefore a GALA at the ROYAL FESTIVAL HALL in February, with a number of well-known poets taking part. It must have been a successful event; for the Festival Hall was almost completely full, and it holds about 3,000 when quite full.

WESTMINSTER ABBEY ..... in May a memorial to Byron is to be put up. Dr. Plomer, as President of the Poetry Society, has been asked to unveil it, and to speak at the ceremony.

These are just some of Dr. Plomer's engagements ... he has also been speaking in Bridgwater, flying to Belfast to speak, and goodness knows what else. For much of June he will be at the Aldeburgh Festival, almost up to when he comes to be with us at our celebrations on June 21st/22nd. We are fortunate in having been able to fix it for a date that suits all concerned ..... and thus to have our President with us on such a memorable occasion.

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#### THE 1970 KILVERT COMMEMORATION SERVICE

A very kind invitation to hold the 1970 SERVICE at CLYRO has been received from the Vicar (the Rev. T. J. Lewis - a V.P. of the Society) and the Parochial Church Council. This has been considered by all members of the Committee and the unanimous decision is that we accept and go to Clyro next year. It will then be 21 years since the first KILVERT SERVICE held under the auspices of the Kilvert Society was at CLYRO - it was on July 3rd, 1949.

(Note ... a splendid SERVICE in COMMEMORATION OF FRANCES KILVERT had been held at Clyro in 1946 -- two years before the Society was formed -- this was organised by the then Vicar of Clyro and his parishioners; attended by a number of members of the Kilvert family and by a very large congregation (I am told). The ADDRESS was by the then Bishop of Swansea & Brecon, and a fine address it was too. We are fortunate enough to have a full copy of it and this will be part of the booklet which will be out in two months or so from now - by or before midsummer anyhow. It is referred to elsewhere in this newsletter; the title being "LOOKING BACKWARDS".)

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#### CLYRO and the INVESTITURE

I hear that Clyro has been asked to do something concerning Kilvert as their part of a programme of events at Llandrindod Wells later this year and in association with the Investiture of the Prince of Wales at Caernarvon. What could be more fitting?

#### MRS. LEWIS of CLYRO VICARAGE

Members generally - and particularly those who have got to know the Rev. T. J. and Mrs. Lewis through Kilvert associations - will be sorry to learn that Mrs. Lewis has had another spell in hospital and an operation. But I am glad to say that all has gone well and by the time this newsletter is in the hands of the duplicators, she will be back home after some three weeks absence from it; all will join in wishing her a speedy recovery back to normal health.



#### A SOMERSET MEMBERS' ILLNESS

Quite a regular attender at the A.G.M., and at our Commemoration Services, and a most loyal supporter of the Society in every direction is a lady member we always refer to as "Miss Porter of Bristol" --- though she lives well beyond Bristol, indeed, well on towards Cheddar. Despite a badly broken arm, she got to Newbridge-on-Wye last June with it heavily bandaged. Since then Miss Porter has been at Bournemouth for treatment and recuperation and was unable to be at Hardenhuish in October, much to her regret. I am glad to hear that she is now back home, and evidently going on well - for a recent letter tells me that she hopes to join us in Hereford again at our functions this year. This is indeed good news and the many who most have got to know Miss Porter over the years will wish to join me in sending her this message of admiration and good wishes. (Hon. Sec.)

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#### THE ANNUAL REPORT

So much has been reported in the 3 newsletters of 1968 (plus what of 1968 is in this one) that little is left for an Annual Report. It can be said that membership is still creeping slowly upwards; the number of new members each year of late slightly exceed losses through death and resignation. We are now well over 500. The balance sheet tells its own tale of a satisfactory state of affairs, despite rising expenditure. Publications and Christmas Cards have -- when taken all together -- not only paid their way, but made a small profit. Much has been done to "spread the news" of Kilvert and the Diary, the fact that not many new members have resulted does not matter, for no attempt is ever made to induce anyone to join the Society. It is very satisfying to think that with the Hardenhuish memorial to Francis Kilvert there is now a memorial to him at every church in Wiltshire, Radnorshire and Herefordshire with which he was most closely associated. 1968 was, I think, a most satisfactory year in every respect.

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#### A PERSONAL NOTE

Once again Mrs. Prosser and I have to thank the many members who so kindly sent us CHRISTMAS CARDS ... each year they seem to get more, and it is quite impossible to send to all who so kindly think of us. Will all of you please accept this message as our thanks? It is so nice to think that we have so many kind friends and well-wishers. Thank you all so much.

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#### ADVICE --- AND HELP

It would be greatly appreciated if any member willing to do some typing would contact me. Either very "ordinary" typing (even as "ordinary" as mine is!!), copying from handwriting or printing --- and also if anyone able to type (and having a suitable machine) good enough for reproduction by the "offset" process, so that we can produce our booklets that much cheaper.

Advice ..... any advice or suggestions re production of booklets, these newsletters, duplication of leaflets etc., would be appreciated. Details of costs etc., of similar productions would be welcomed. (Hon. Sec.)

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#### HARDENHUISH --- 20th OCTOBER, 1968

This was indeed a memorable day in the annals of the Society. Our second Kilvert Commemoration Service in Wiltshire; and the MEMORIAL TABLET UNVEILED and DEDICATED in the place of his birth, and in the very church in which he was baptised. Unveiled by Mrs. E.M. Victor - herself a Kilvert, - her great-grandfather was a brother of the Diarist's father; with another Vice-President -- Canon J.S. Leatherbarrow giving us such a splendid ADDRESS, as well as dedicating the TABLET. The Rev. John Victor reading one of the LESSONS and Mr. A.J. Dann -- member of the Society and a former Mayor of Chippenham reading the other one. The church quite full, any more and the extra chairs that were ready would have been needed. Members and friends from a wide area filling the seats. London members, Birmingham members, Bristol members, South Wales members. Some from Worcestershire and from Hampshire, some from Surrey, others from Buckinghamshire, several from Radnorshire, and in the coach from Hereford (quite full) were members from the City and County of Hereford, one of them a former sexton and vergier at Bredwardine who for years cared for the Kilvert graves in the churchyard there.

Most of our Wiltshire members were present, including a number from Langley Burrell as well as those from Kington Langley, Lacock and Chippenham itself. We were particularly pleased to see our V.P. Major Scott-Ashe present; and members from Devizes and from Bath were noticed there, among many others.



Tea was at Chippenham Girls High School - just down the road, but before going there almost everyone crossed over from the CHURCH to see the neat plaque on the RECTORY opposite, marking the birthplace of the Diarist. Both this and the TABLET have been much admired and a number of letters have been received from members amplifying this, some saying "at last, this is something that ought to have happened years ago".

How Mr. & Mrs. Harding and their band of helpers must have worked to lay on such a tea for us -- in the spacious Assembly Hall of the School; after justice had been done to this, we first of all inspected Hardenhuish church registers with their many entries of the Kilverts (kindly brought along by the Rector - the Rev. John Gardiner; who had conducted the SERVICE). A number of informal speeches (or talks) followed ... Mr. Gardiner, Mr. Dann and others, ending with Mr. Robin Tanner of Kington Langley reminding us that Geoffrey Grigson, who has written much about Kilvert, lives not far away from Hardenhuish.

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#### Canon Leatherbarrow's ADDRESS -- and a PHOTOGRAPH

Members who would like to have a copy of Canon Leatherbarrow's fine ADDRESS given at Hardenhuish on the 20th October last year, can have one by sending 1/- to the Hon. Secretary; a quantity have been done as it is thought that many members may like to have one. Copies of the professional photographer's picture of the unveiling of the TABLET in HARDENHUISH CHURCH, can also be obtained from the Hon. Sec. at 2/6 each plus 4d postage.

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The coach party from Hereford had made a detour after the lunch stop in Malmesbury (where a number visited the Abbey) coming round through Seagrey and Sutton Benger to East Tytherton; it was noted with pleasure that Seagrey Woods (where the nutting party took place) appears to be very much as in Kilvert's time. East Tytherton was of great interest too, with its Moravian Church and the former school behind it, where Kilvert's mother attended, going there on a donkey. The last stop was at Langley Burrell church. At the kind invitation of Major Scott-Ashe we took the coach to his front door and from there went with him across to the church; for some of the party this was their first visit to Langley Burrell and there was thus much to interest them; the 1966 tablet was much admired, the grave of Kilvert's parents was visited, and all too soon we had to depart for Hardenhuish. Among the party from Hereford was Mr. & Mrs. Norman Davis of Leominster, members of the Moravian Church in that town -- the following item will no doubt interest all our members, and particularly those who were in the coach party; it is based on reports in the "Hereford Times" and in the "Leominster News".

#### MALMESBURY ABBEY

On Sunday the 19th January 1969, the EVENING SERVICE at MALMESBURY ABBEY was a United Service of the National Council of Churches, and was held in connection with the Universal Week of Prayer for Christian Unity ... the preacher was Mrs. Norman Davis, B.A., of Leominster, Herefordshire, and the subject of her ADDRESS was "CHRISTIAN FREEDOM IN CHRISTIAN UNITY". It is almost certain that this is the first time that a woman has occupied the pulpit in this ancient Abbey. Mrs. Davis received the invitation to preach there from the Rev. C. F. Smith, the Moravian minister in Malmesbury (formerly of Leominster) in conjunction with the Vicar of Malmesbury (the Rev. Arthur Beaghan) and the Abbey authorities.

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#### CURIOSER AND CURIOSER

In the October newsletter was an item headed "By car and foot in the Radnorshire Hills" -- an account of the day when a party of us took a Birmingham journalist, Mr. Vivian Bird, at his request around some of the lanes and farms of Clyro Hill and to see Bettws Church, Rhosgoch Bog, Newchurch, Llanbedr Church, etc. etc. We, in our innocence, thought he was really interested in it all and wanted to do an item on his day out with us for a Birmingham newspaper; for we have so many members in and around Birmingham that they now have meetings, mostly quarterly, and many of them delight in joining in walks and explorations in "Kilvert Country". Mr. Bird was an invited guest at one such meeting and it was there that his day with us was arranged. We therefore looked forward to seeing his article in the newspaper concerned; but it turned out to be a very "damp squib" -- and was out just in time for a "stop press" note about it to appear as the very last item in the October newsletter. According to Mr. Bird we were (to him) "WORSHIPPERS AT SHRINES" "STANDING AROUND LIKE AN EVANGELICAL GATHERING" and so on.

Following circulation of the October newsletter the post brought a real "crop" of comments from members far and near. Far too many to quote here (and some I dare not quote!!) so I will give but two. One from a retired sea-captain down in Dorset



who ended his comments with the somewhat Churchillian words, "SOME BIRD -- SOME NECK". The other, from one of our most prominent members who said, "Such as Bird are utterly incapable of realizing why Kilvert is remembered or commemorated".

But all this is but a prelude to what arose out of Mr. Bird's item in the Birmingham paper.

I cannot do better than quote the item that immediately afterwards appeared in a Swansea newspaper. Several members in and around Swansea saw it and sent me a copy, accompanied by their comments on its wild inaccuracies. Here it is ... headed "He first saw Diary in Swansea" .....

"It was while visiting a Swansea house that Mr. Edgar Jelfs, of Moseley, Birmingham, was introduced to the diaries of an eccentric Victorian vicar, the Rev. Francis Kilvert. This year Mr. Jelfs is the convener of the Birmingham & District Kilvertians, an unusual society composed of admirers of the diaries. Today, I'm told, this society has about 500 members throughout Britain. An annual commemoration is held and memorials have been placed at Kilvert's various churches in Wiltshire and at Clyro in Radnorshire. It seems he was a man who, despite his calling, had many amorous adventures. He also befriended tramps and finally lived as a hermit in a hovel. He died in 1925 at the age of 85. This unusual tale is told by Mr. Bernard Lloyd, a Swansea man living in Tamworth where he is classics master at the grammar school. Mr. Lloyd's interest was aroused in Mr. Jelfs because it was while in Morriston, Swansea, that Mr. Jelfs first saw the diaries and decided to join the society". (from the South Wales Evening Post of September 17th 1968).

It all gets curioler and curioler --- doesn't it?

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#### THE HON. SECRETARY IN THE MIDLANDS

After having to decline several kind invitations to attend one of the meetings of the Birmingham & District members, my wife and I at last managed to get to one in mid-November, taking with us two committee members (Mrs. Peters and Mrs. Spinks) -- Mr. Butcher and Mr. Bond went up from Hereford too and our two Clyro committee members, Miss Powell and Miss Mantle drove up from there; so Headquarters was well represented in Birmingham that evening. This particular meeting was held at Kings Norton in the home of our good members Dr. and Mrs. Nussey; although (most unfortunately) Mrs. Nussey had gone to hospital the previous day with a broken leg -- too late to postpone it, so it all went ahead with the help of kind friends and fellow members. About 50 were present, filling the large lounge, as anyone would guess. It was fortunate that plenty of stacking chairs were available and with these in rows - cinema fashion - all were nicely seated. Our V.P. Mr. E. F. Jelfs was, as usual, the organiser of this meeting and he first of all showed a number of interesting slides taken at Newbridge-on-Wye and on some of our walks in the Radnorshire Hills. Then it was my turn and my first subject was "The mistakes that newspapers make" - a subject with plenty of scope; but I kept to mistakes that concern this Society, quoting a number and ending up by reading the piece from the Swansea paper that appears above (and was amused to hear someone in the front row wonder - in view of the mix-up between Kilvert and "the Solitary" -- if that particular classics master's Latin was all Greek!!!).

After some splendid refreshments - so very kindly provided by our host and hostess - I then outlined to the company present, the events of the early days of the Society; how it came to be formed and some memories of the early years. A few questions and answers and the evening was gone!! A lovely moonlight night enabled us to make good time back to Hereford after a splendid evening with our Birmingham friends and members.

KIDDERMINSTER was next -- the following week -- another good evening with the Kidderminster Field Club in a nice room at the Public Library; this came about because some of the officials of that club are K.S. members too. The large size screen did full justice to the many slides that I took with me -- slides of Wiltshire, Radnorshire and Herefordshire; telling the Kilvert story from start to finish; and a large audience listened intently to all that I told them as these slides were shown. We were favoured with another nice evening for our journeyings, although by now late in November.

Then STOURBRIDGE -- in mid December: but this was a luncheon meeting of the Rotary Club; where I had to work hard to pack what I could of the story of Kilvert, the Diary and the Society into the 15 minutes available; all seemed to be interested and several of the older ones told me afterwards of how visits of years ago to the Black Mountains etc., were brought to mind again. It is always surprising too how many there are at such meetings who reveal an excellent knowledge of the Diary. Almost 100 were present and there was a good write-up of this meeting in the local newspaper.



BIRMINGHAM --- the meeting of January 31st --- as no-one from Hereford had been able to accept the kind invitation to attend, a report was sent in by Mr.Jelfs; here it is:

This gathering of the Birmingham & District members was held at the home of Mr.& Mrs. C.K.Hughes of Moseley, by their kind invitation. The chief speaker was to have been Mr.C.E.Harvey of Birmingham - a member who for many years previous to joining the Society had spent much time in the Clyro country - but only some hours previously did they hear that he had been in a nasty car crash and had had many stitches. An improvised programme had to be hurriedly arranged. This proved most interesting, with Dr.Nussey and Mrs.Mathers each telling of how they came to be introduced to the Diary and then to the Society. Delicious light refreshments, very kindly provided by Mr.& Mrs.Hughes followed; and a general discussion on matters Kilvertian brought another good evening to a close. The final item was the singing of the hymn, "The Lord's my Shepherd" -- now generally looked on as "the Kilvert hymn".

The next gathering of Birmingham & District members is fixed for Friday, May 30th, in the home of Dr.& Mrs. J.R.Mathers at Northfield ... by their very kind invitation.

Members can get further details from Mr.E.F.Jelfs, 8 Clarence Road, Birmingham 13.

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#### THE LATE REV. E.V.BRIDGER (LANGLEY BURRELL)

One of our Chippenham members very kindly sent me the February number of their local parish magazine. This tells of the death (last month) of the Rev.E.V.Bridger-Rector of Langley Burrell from 1921 to 1962. He was 94.

Those of us who were in the party starting from Hereford, that visited the Chippenham area in 1955 (and there were two coach loads of us) will remember finding Mr.Bridger waiting for us at Langley Burrell Church, being shown around by him, and then - with him piloting us on his bicycle - visiting the Rectory; where he had most kindly laid out ready for us, the church registers, so that we were able to see entries made by Francis Kilvert and by his father. A happy memory of almost 15 years ago.

We had visited Hardenhuish that day and went on from there to Langley Burrell. At Hardenhuish the Rector met us and took us round the church; we also drove through Kington Langley and visited Kington St.Michael and stopped to photograph Lanhill farm en route -- a place so often mentioned in the Diary. Tea was at Lacock, and the homeward journey a devious one, by Biddestone to Castle Combe and then by Badminton towards Stroud - and home. For many of the party this was their first visit to the Chippenham area; but a few of us had visited Hardenhuish and Langley Burrell in 1949 when the late Mr.Sid Wright and several others thought that there might be a Kilvert Service in Wiltshire in 1950, but I see in the report of a Committee Meeting of 1949 that a letter was read - from the Rector of Langley Burrell - indicating that there was little interest in the parish in Kilvert and it was therefore decided in these circumstances that they should not proceed with the suggestion that Langley Burrell be visited in 1950.

It was not until 1965 that things really stirred around Chippenham, and membership of the Society then began to increase rapidly until we now have many members in Wiltshire; and 1966 saw the Memorial Tablet dedicated at Langley Burrell and that at Hardenhuish in October 1968.

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#### DEATH OF MRS.KYRLE-POPE

All those of the large party of members who visited Homme House and Much Marcle Church last May will be saddened by the news of the sudden death of Mrs.Kyrle-Pope less than six months after our visit there. How everyone must so well remember being welcomed on the steps of Homme House by Commander and Mrs.Kyrle-Pope, then taken in parties by them round the house and shown its lovely rooms and their treasures. Then they accompanied us across the Park to Much Marcle Church - to tea at the Walwyn Arms; and our last memory of that most enjoyable day is them waving us off from the forecourt of the Inn. So many came from far afield that day, that this will be the first intimation of the passing of Mrs.Pope to most of that party, and I am sure that -- belatedly as it is -- a strong wave of sympathy will go out to our Vice-President-Commander Kyrle-Pope, in his great loss.



## THE "CELEBRATION WEEKEND" IN JUNE

Here are the details (so far) of what is arranged for the weekend of June 21st/22nd, in this our 21st Anniversary Year.

The Society was formed, in Hereford Town Hall, on Saturday July 17th 1948, so we shall be very near to just 21 years afterwards!!

First suggestions were for a DINNER but this was ruled out as being too formal; almost everyone with whom it was discussed, made much the same point ... that we shall most likely get a goodly crowd and the majority would far prefer to circulate and chat than sit down to a formal DINNER.

The committee were unanimous -- so it is to be a "GET-TOGETHER" for MEMBERS and FRIENDS, with a BUFFET. This is to be in the ASSEMBLY ROOM at HEREFORD TOWN HALL, on SATURDAY the 21st JUNE, 6-30 to 10-30 p.m. Our President, Dr. WILLIAM PLOMER will be there, and perhaps some other notables too.

The Society is subsidising this event so that tickets will be but 7/6d each; they are available NOW (from the Hon. Sec.) There will be a few tickets for members to buy for interested friends.

Negotiations are in progress for some members of a Radnorshire singing family to come and give us a few short interludes of song during the evening. Full final arrangements will be circulated to all members in the June newsletter; about a fortnight before the event.

## SUNDAY the 22nd JUNE ..... THE COMMEMORATION SERVICE.

This is to be in HEREFORD CATHEDRAL --- by kind invitation of the Chapter; and at 3 o'clock in the afternoon.

The ADDRESS is to be by Dr. WILLIAM PLOMER -- OUR PRESIDENT.

Please particularly note that this SERVICE is OPEN TO ALL -- and we shall hope to see the CATHEDRAL really full ..... as it should be for this memorable occasion. It is therefore hoped that all members will spread the news of this SERVICE and bring along as many of their friends as possible.

Afterwards, --- TEA in the CLOISTERS (at a moderate charge) --- PRIMARILY FOR THOSE WHO COME FROM OUTSIDE THE CITY OF HEREFORD; but we are not sure yet how many can be accommodated.

FULL DETAILS OF EVERYTHING CONNECTED WITH THIS SERVICE WILL BE IN THE JUNE NEWSLETTER.

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## ACCOMODATION IN HEREFORD

Now and then I get an enquiry from a distant member who wants to come for a week or a weekend ----- it may well be that there are some who will want to do just this in June. I would, therefore, be glad if any member able to offer accommodation, will let me have full details so that I can put them in touch with any such enquirers. News of any friends or neighbours with such accommodation would also be welcomed.

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## MR. THOMAS LEWIS OF GROSMONT (Monmouthshire)

In the middle of compiling this newsletter, I heard of the death of this old friend, on March 3rd, aged 81. Mr. Lewis was truly one whose roots were in the "Kilvert country", for he farmed at Bredwardine for many years before moving to Grosmont, and he was one of the Lewis family of Dolbedwyn in Radnorshire (mentioned on page 41 of the first volume of the Diary --- there is an interesting story arising out of this entry). Mr. & Mrs. Lewis are long-standing members and rarely missed the Commemoration Service, often taking much trouble to get to it. They were last at Newbridge-on-Wye in June and I had a nice letter from Mr. Lewis in October regretting that they would not be able to come with us to Hardenhuish.

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## PUBLICATIONS

"COLLECTED VERSE" has proved to be a worth-while publication. Enough have been sold to cover production costs of the whole batch, with several hundred still in hand; so that when all are eventually sold there will be quite a nice profit from them for the Society's funds. The economics of the matter are that had we only had half as many done they would have each cost as much as we are now selling them for!! We advertised them in "The Times Literary Supplement"; in "The Countryman" and in "Country Quest". Sales from the first named were slightly the best, the furthest order coming from Cape Town University --- but all three were paying propositions and brought in orders from far and wide. With each an "information sheet" re the Society was included and from these, several new members have joined, some of them with an above-average subscription. Grants of Hay-on-Wye have sold a goodly number and other shops with stocks are the S.P.C.K. shop in Worcester; the Selborne Bookshop, Alton, Hants; and B.A.B.S. Ltd., in Berrington Street, Hereford. Many letters have been received, both appreciative and congratulatory, and it is obvious that this booklet of Kilvert's poems is something that many are very glad to have had the opportunity of acquiring. They are 8/6d each, plus 1/- for packing and postage.

## THE 1969 BOOKLET

This will be titled "LOOKING BACKWARDS" and will be a miscellanea of items of great interest to members especially, and also to all who have similar interests. We hope it will be "out" well before the "Celebration Weekend" in June, price not yet fixed, but it will be less than "Collected Verse".

In this 21st Anniversary Year of the Society, this booklet will "look back" to the year of its formation, with Dr. Plomer's talk at the inaugural meeting in Hereford Town Hall on 17th July 1948, and the ADDRESS given by Dean Hedley Burrows at Bredwardine the next day, when he dedicated the Memorial Seat. Then there will be the ADDRESS at that 1946 Kilvert Service at Clyro (by the then Bishop of Swansea & Brecon); this was organised by the then Vicar of Clyro and parishioners. After several different items concerning Mrs. Kilvert (never before published) and on Kilvert as Vicar of St. Harmons, it will end with the detailed account of the homecoming to Bredwardine Vicarage, the present, speeches, and of the floral decorations put up by the people of Bredwardine and Brobury to welcome them home on September 13th, 1879 -- just ten days before his death. These, and several other items, make up "Looking Backwards".

If these sell as well as "Collected Verse" and the booklet "The Solitary etc." we have something else - equally exciting in view for 1970.

## CHRISTMAS CARDS

These sold well too ... many hundreds of them, despite the fact that there was NO CHOICE, just the picture of Bredwardine Vicarage. All costs have been covered, with enough of these on hand for this year ... and very soon two more cards will be in production, something of Clyro; and one of the two Wiltshire churches of Langley Burrell and of Hardenhuish side-by-side. Thus, members and friends will be able to buy packets of either 2 or 3 different cards, or of one type only. Price as last Christmas --- 9d each. PLEASE ORDER AS EARLY AS YOU CAN.

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## THE NEW EDITION OF THE ORIGINAL THREE VOLUMES OF THE DIARY

Mr. John Grant of Hay-on-Wye tells me that Messrs. Jonathan Cape Ltd., have promised him delivery on the 36 sets that he has on order (as his initial order) so that he can have them on sale on June 1st. The price will be 7 guineas the set (plus 5/- if posted) but it is understood that they will be in a larger format.

Isn't it wonderful that in a little town like Hay-on-Wye (population 1,321) that Mr. Grant can so confidently order 36 sets (and at the same time hold the record of 200 of the abridged edition last year) whilst in many really big towns it is not possible even to buy a single abridged edition!!!

If any member has difficulty in getting the new three volumes in their own town the remedy will be to send to Hay for them!!! The address is H.R. Grant and Son., Castle Street, HAY-ON-WYE, via HEREFORD.

It is of interest to note that Grants' shop incorporates what was Hordens in Kilvert's time --- the Diary tells us how often he patronised Hordens. Among the large series of photographs available to members and friends, is one of Hordens shop - with Mr. H. at the door, taken in the early 1880's. From it, one can easily see what part of the Grants of today was Hordens then; for there is apparently no alteration at all in that part.



#### A FIRST EDITION OF VOLUME I FOR SALE

This is not only a first edition of Volume I, but it is one of the first 500 of those; for it has Kilvert's photograph as a frontispiece; and it has always been understood that only the first 500 had this. It is secondhand, but in very nice condition ..... AND AUTOGRAPHED BY DR. WILLIAM PLOMER, so that we can get a really good price for it to augment the Society's funds. TO BE SOLD TO THE HIGHEST BIDDER. Please send offers to the Hon. Sec., at 23, Broomy Hill, Hereford.

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#### MORE ABOUT "THE OLD MAUSOLEUM"

Page 8 of the newsletter dated 12th June 1967 has an item headed "THE OLD MAUSOLEUM" (except that, most unfortunately, someone altered the spelling of mausoleum after the copy left my hands). It was compiled and written by those good Kington Langley members, Mr. & Mrs. R. Tanner for their house, "Old Chapel Field" is built on the site of the old mausoleum where Francis Kilvert's great-grandfather Walter Coleman was laid to rest.

But there is much more to be found out about it - if possible.

Mrs. Tanner now tells me that after the service at Hardenhuish last October, they were allowed to see the Kington St. Michael parish registers, and there saw that Walter Coleman was buried on May 7th 1782. But there is a footnote to the entry. This says, "The body was afterwards removed to a mausoleum built by himself at Kington Langley".

Just the opposite to what they had thought (that he was buried in the mausoleum and when the chapel it was in, fell into disuse, his body was re-buried at K. St. M.) The puzzle now is, (says Mrs. Tanner) - Is he still here? or was the body moved twice? Perhaps more still about the old mausoleum will come to light as time goes on, and unravel the mystery a little more.

Enclosed with Mrs. Tanner's letter was the following copy of a document which the Wiltshire County Archivist most kindly sent her not long ago. This is most interesting, relating as it does to the chapel and the mausoleum. It is dated 17th June 1771 and reads:-

Conveyance by Walter Coleman of Kington Langley, gent to  
James Mascall of the same, gent  
John Hibbard of the same, baker  
Aaron Millard of the same, yeoman  
James Barrett of Kington St. Michael, mason  
William Baily of Kington Langley, gent

of a plot of land whereon a chapel is intended to be erected situate in a close called Barton Patch in Kington Langley (36 p.)

to hold in trust, to permit Elizabeth Stephens, the wife of Walter Coleman, and her children, born in his lifetime or wherewith she may be with child at his decease, and their descendants, to be interred within the chapel, and any other wife of Walter Coleman or children of him, or any other person as he shall direct in writing, until the chapel be full. No grave where any other person has been interred to be opened again for the reception of any other corpse.

Also on every day of the year, if requested, to permit the chapel to be used for divine service or meditation by any Society of persons professing Christianity (except Roman Catholics) for three hours in any one day. No preference to be given to any Society, but all to keep their turns. If on Sundays more societies desire to use it than time will admit, those that have their chance one Sunday shall give way next Sunday to those who have been refused. Hours from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Trustees to appoint new ones on reduction to two.

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#### EASTER SUNDAY - HIGHEST IN THE YEAR

On Easter Day 1870, Kilvert said, "they have an immense reverence for Easter Sunday". He had been surprised (on April 6th ... page 82 in Vol. I.) by Mary Smith's "curious idea" that it would desecrate, profane or dishonour Easter Sunday, "the highest Sunday in the year" to bring her baby to be baptised on it. Mary was echoing a very deeply-rooted feeling in the Wales of earlier times. In the Vale of Clwyd in the 1880's, the Rev. Elias Oweh was told by an aged ex-gravedigger that the Holy Communion used to be celebrated on Good Friday, Easter Eve, Easter Day and Easter Monday, so great was the number of communicants; and there was a certain "class-distinction", the "great folks" making their communion on Easter Day.



## THE NATURE TRUST

Several years ago the Kilvert Society became a corporate member of the Herefordshire and Radnorshire Nature Trust. When this was announced in a newsletter of that year it was pointed out that this should not in any way prevent individual members from joining it too --- and it is to be hoped that a number of our members have actually joined ..... FOR NOTHING CAN BE MORE SURE THAN THAT THE PRESERVATION OF WILD LIFE OF THE COUNTRYSIDE WOULD HAVE BEEN SOMETHING THAT FRANCIS KILVERT WOULD HAVE HEARTILY APPROVED OF AND SUPPORTED HIMSELF. The Trust now wants more members and more money. Its latest acquisition is a large secluded pool near Kington, in Herefordshire, but very near to the Radnorshire border. This haunt of water fowl and of other wild life must be looked after and work done in the construction of "hides" and in other ways. You can become a member for £1 per annum ..... the Hon. Treasurer is Mr. J. L. Fox of Westminster Bank Limited., Broad Street, Hereford. (Mr. Fox is a K.S. member, too!!!)

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## A FORETASTE OF PARADISE

A member sent a cutting from the "Brecon & Radnor Express" sometime last summer; it could not be used then, was put on one side and has only just come to light. Here it is ..... In the course of years, many criticisms have been passed on the town of Hay-on-Wye (as, of course, of other places); on the credit side its situation on the lovely river Wye and at the foot of the Black Mountains, has been eulogized by writers in all ages, by Francis Kilvert, the diarist, and by tourists from home and abroad. On the debit side of the picture, however, it has been blamed, condemned, and generally slated for its lack of amenities and for the countless ways in which it is alleged to fail to conform with modern standards in all manner of ways. Praise for the small town, however, is forthcoming from Peter Simple, the Daily Telegraph columnist, and in one of his stories last week, he suggests that Hay is a "foretaste of paradise". After telling the story of his visit to the well-known secondhand bookshop in Hay he concludes "What could be better, anywhere, than to live among old books, sorting, cataloguing, coming every now and then perhaps on some single rare treasure and sighing over all those other thousands (600,000 of them) - each one the pride of some long-forgotten writer which nobody will ever read again? But to live this calm yet exciting book life in what is still, even now, 100 years after Kilvert, the diarist, described it so lovingly and well, one of the most beautiful and unchanged parts of the country seems almost a foretaste of paradise".

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## STOP PRESS

GOOD NEWS FROM BIRMINGHAM ----- the accounts of the recent "get-togethers" of our Birmingham and district members was marred by the news of Mrs. Nussey's broken leg and Mr. Harvey's car crash ... but I am glad to say that reports that have come just in time to catch this newsletter are good. Mrs. Nussey is now getting around again very well, only needing the aid of a walking stick. Mr. Harvey writes to say that he is much better, though it will no doubt be some time before he is feeling as well as before it happened. The many who have got to know both of these members - through the Kilvert Society and in other ways - will be glad to hear this.

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## MOTOR COACH TOUR FOLLOWING THE A.G.M.

The note on the front page promised a last-minute announcement about such a tour. Unfortunately, there is no definite news yet. Nevertheless I feel that something will be arranged. It will probably be on Saturday, May 10th, but might have to be on Saturday, April 26th. There may also be a choice of a half-day or a whole-day tour. PLEASE COME TO THE A.G.M. PREPARED TO DECIDE THIS MATTER AND TO BOOK YOUR SEAT FOR WHICHEVER DATE AND TYPE OF TOUR CAN BE ARRANGED.