

## THE KILVERT SOCIETY

Formed (in 1948) to foster an interest in  
the Rev. Francis Kilvert  
his Work, his Diary, and the Countryside he loved

### PRESIDENT:

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

Hon. Treasurer:  
J.D. Worsey,  
1 Harold Street, Hereford.  
Phone: 3833

Hon. Secretary:  
C.T.O. Prosser,  
23 Broomy Hill, Hereford.  
Phone: 2094

Asst. Hon. Treasurer:  
Mrs. E.G. Peters,  
18 Moor Farm Lane, Hereford.  
Phone: 67375

1st October 1969.

Dear Member,

The "Anniversary weekend" of June 21st/22nd was a highly successful event; full details of it will be found in this newsletter. Hereford Cathedral was a fine setting for the Commemoration Service, and nowhere could have been more fitting for it—the Cathedral of the Diocese in which Francis Kilvert spent the last two years of his short life, and in which he is buried. It was in Hereford too, that the Society started 21 years ago.

But it has also been felt—among members from several directions, as well as among us of the Committee — that it would be rather nice to have an Autumn Service at BREDWARDINE too, with something tangible given to the church to mark the occasion of our visit there just 21 years after the very first Commemoration Service held by the Society — that of July 18th 1948. Accordingly this has now been arranged, the details follow.

It is to be on SUNDAY the 26th OCTOBER at 3 p.m. and will be conducted by the Vicar of Bredwardine — the Rev. W. Lloyd B.A. assisted by the Rev. C.G. Challenger M.A. — Vicar of Almeley and Rural Dean of Weobley. Both are members of the Society.

The ADDRESS will be given by the Rev. D.N. Lockwood B.A. — Vicar of Hanley Castle with Hanley Swan (Worcestershire) — also a member of the Kilvert Society.

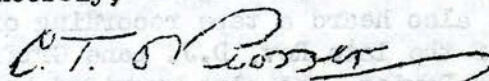
During the service the two ALMS BOX WALL SAFES (one for Church Expenses and the other for the Church Repair Fund) — which we are giving Bredwardine Church to mark the occasion of the 21st Anniversary of the Society, will be dedicated.

After the service there will be TEA for everyone — in the Village Hall which is near the Red Lion Hotel ..... for this there will be a charge of 3/6 per head. It is very kindly being provided by the Ladies associated with Bredwardine Church and they are giving the proceeds to the Church Funds.

There will be a motor-coach from Hereford (Yeomans) leaving the TOWN HALL at 2 o'clock (PROMPT). Bookings at Wyeval Ltd, Photographic Dealers, Bridge Street, Hereford; or with the Hon. Secretary. Fare will be 5/- each. PLEASE BOOK AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE — PAYMENT WHEN BOOKING MUCH APPRECIATED.

Members who have not yet paid their current subscription are asked to remit them without delay to our Hon. Treasurer, Mr. J.D. Worsey at 1 Harold Street, Hereford — or to me at above address.

Yours sincerely,

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

IMPORTANT — a POSTER re the Bredwardine Service will be enclosed with many of these newsletters. Please do your best to get it displayed in a prominent position in your town or village. Even if you live so far from Bredwardine that there is little chance of anyone from your area getting there on October 26th these posters still perform a useful service in letting it be known that there is a Kilvert Society. Many new members have joined after seeing such a poster.



BREDWARDINE....26th October 1969.

The ALMS BOX WALL SAFES that the Society are giving to Bredwardine Church in this 21st Anniversary Year of its existence are something necessary for every church in these days of vandals and thieves. They are to be those made by CHUBBS Ltd. and will defy any amateur trying to get inside them (they do not hold enough to attract the professional thief). The total cost of the 2 safes (fixed) will be approaching £30. The committee decided that the cost should be met from funds and no appeal made. Nevertheless, there may be some members who feel that they would like to share in this gift to Bredwardine Church — and we would, of course, welcome their contributions. These could be sent to either of the three addresses at the head of page one of this newsletter; marked "FOR WALL SAFES".

This October service at Bredwardine has been decided on and arranged since the June service at Hereford Cathedral, and everything is not yet settled (remember, the "copy" for this newsletter was posted to the producers of them on September 16th). Who is to read the LESSONS is not yet known. Then, we hope that Dr. Plomer will be with us once again, a recent letter from him tells us that he very much wants to come, but is most uncertain yet awhile whether it can be managed. He is much in demand, shortly off to York to preside over a weekend school of poetry run by the Poetry Society, just one of his many engagements.

---

THE TWENTY-FIRST ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

This took place on June 21st/22nd ——— according to the details given in the newsletter dated June 5th. Upwards of 100 were present at Hereford Town Hall on the Saturday evening and the gathering was fully representative of the widespread membership of the Society. After the local members the biggest groups were those from London and from Birmingham — others came from places as widely apart as Leeds and Swansea, Hampshire and Shropshire, Aberystwyth and Worthing, Kent and Lancashire, Dorset and Suffolk; and our Wiltshire members were represented by some from Chippenham and some from Langley Burrell. Radnorshire and Breconshire members were with us, as were some from Gloucestershire and from Worcestershire. From across the Irish Sea had come our new member from near Dublin. It was particularly pleasing to have two of the directors of Messrs. Jonathan Cape present, these were Mr. Michael Howard (and Mrs. Howard too) and Mr. Tom Maschler and during the evening we got Mr. Howard on to the platform for a delightful "few words". The evening was as informal as it was intended to be, and apart from Dr. Plomers welcome to all present and Mr. Howards "few words" the only other to speak was the Bishop of Hereford, who looked in (with Mrs. Hodson) for a while — a much appreciated gesture — to tell us that although he had never got round to joining the Society, he is an appreciative reader of the Diary. Interludes of song — some in Welsh — by the "singing twins" from beyond St. Harmon in Radnorshire, one with a guitar, were greatly appreciated; and a lively interlude was provided by our London member Mr. H.A. Feisenberger (an associate of the famous firm of Sothebys) auctioning the autographed first edition of Volume 1. of Kilverts Diary that is referred to on page 3 of the June newsletter, after some spirited bidding it was eventually knocked down to Mr. Tom Maschler for 10 guineas, a useful addition to the Society's funds. The running buffet (by Hereford Municipal Caterers) was much patronised and the goodly spread set out soon reduced. A small bar in one corner provided for those wanting something a little stronger than tea and coffee. There was much chatter and many friendships struck up and, despite the predictions of a few that 4 hours was too long, the hour of departure came unexpectedly on many of us; but before this we had heard from Mrs. E.M. Victor of Hereford the story of her great-grandmother's brooch, which she was that evening wearing, something of great interest to all of us, for Mrs. Victor is a great-grand-daughter of the Revd. Francis Kilvert whose wife was Sophia de Chièvre, a fugitive from the "Reign of Terror" of the French Revolution. We had also heard a tape recording of a number of well known voices among them that of the late Rev. D.J. Lane Griffiths, this was through the kindness of Mr. Godfrey Davies, who also provided background music as occasion demanded. Thus ended our 21st Anniversary evening. How many of us who were at that inaugural meeting at Hereford Town Hall in July 1948 thought that 21 years later many of us would be meeting again in that same building? I suspect the answer would be "not one".

---

THE CATHEDRAL SERVICE

Next day was the SERVICE OF THANKSGIVING AND COMMEMORATION in HEREFORD CATHEDRAL, when a congregation estimated at approaching 300 filled the major portion of the central part of the nave. Many of those distant members who were at the previous evening's function at the Town Hall were staying the weekend in Hereford and



these were joined in the Cathedral by many local members and friends and by others from much further away who could not come for the Saturday evening. The service was conducted by the Dean of Hereford (the Very Rev. N.S. Rathbone, M.A.) and by Canon J.M. Irvine M.A. — both are members of the Society. After the singing of the first hymn (Now thank we all our God) the Dean gave us all a very hearty welcome to the Cathedral. The first lesson was read by the Rev. T. Wigley, Minister of Eignbrook Congregational Church and President of the Herefordshire Free Church Council and a member of the Society. The second lesson by the Rev. T.J. Lewis, Vicar of Clyro and Rural Dean of Hay and a Vice-President of the Society. It was so good to have our President (Dr. William Plomer) with us over this Anniversary Weekend, but the highlight of his visit was to come — the splendidly sensitive address from the Cathedral pulpit, he covered so many aspects of Kilvert, the Diary, the Society and the many types who belong to it, and brought in to it several truly relevant quotations and was listened to most intently by all present. A most memorable address on a most memorable occasion. At the Cathedral organ was the Deputy Organist of the Cathedral, and some of the well known hymns were sung, the service ending with "Fill Thou my life, O Lord my God" — and the Blessing.

---

#### TEA IN COLLEGE HALL

The service over, very many of those attending proceeded to College Hall (in the Cloisters) where an excellent tea at a modest charge awaited them. Mrs. Pannell (wife of a Cathedral vergier) and her helpers had been working hard to get all ready and the large room was soon full to overflowing and a number made use of the seats in the adjacent cloisters. Tea after a Kilvert Service is always something of a social occasion and this was no exception, many met who had not seen each other since the last such service and tea. Dr. Plomer and all others taking part chatted here and there and time simply flew by. At last all departed, some for their homes and others from further afield to stay another night in Hereford, with a few staying on for many days in which to explore some of the "Kilvert Countryside".

---

#### COPIES of DR. PLOMER'S ADDRESS

It was felt that a good many members would probably like a typed copy of this, for it is the first time that Dr. Plomer has occupied the pulpit at a Kilvert Service — and what a splendid ADDRESS it was!! Many of those who were present will surely want a copy and many other members who could not get there will surely want one too. Accordingly a batch has been produced (four clearly typed sheets pinned together) and can be obtained from 23 Broomy Hill for 2/- plus 4d postage.

There are a few similar sheets of Canon Leatherbarrows fine ADDRESS at Hardenhuish last October also still available .. at the same price.

---

#### FIRST EDITION OF VOLUME ONE

A member has for sale a copy of Volume One that is exactly the same in every detail as that sold at Hereford Town Hall on the evening of June 21st for 10 guineas. Anyone wishing to buy is asked to make an offer for it and send same to 23 Broomy Hill, when it will be passed on to the owner.

---

#### THE NEW EDITION OF KILVERT'S DAIRY

These were out in early June — as promised by Jonathan Cape — and, if what members and friends say about buying sets is anything to judge by, then sales must be good. Grants of Hay-on-Wye had a table in a corner at Hereford Town Hall during the evening of June 21st and sold many complete sets as well as numerous copies of the abridged edition, at the same time they also sold a number of the Society's publications "Collected Verse" and "Looking Backwards", and a surprising number of our Christmas cards too. Various members have sent me newspaper cuttings of reviews of the new edition, from far and wide, and all full of praise for it. I supplied the "Methodist Recorder" with photographs of Clyro in bygone days and they produced an excellent item on the Diary; and in a later number a very good account of the Hereford Cathedral service of June 22nd. The jackets, with the photographs of people and places of the Diary have brought much praise..... although there were printers errors in some of the early jackets of the second volume (Clyno for Clyro and "Daisy" Thomas wrongly appearing under the photograph of the Dews of Whitney). Capes tell me that it was soon discovered and all is now well AND THAT ANY WHO HAVE A VOLUME TWO JACKET WITH PRINTERS ERRORS CAN HAVE IT EXCHANGED FOR THE CORRECT ONE BY SENDING IT TO JONATHAN CAPE LTD, AT 30 BEDFORD SQUARE, LONDON, W.C.1. I will end this note on the new edition by quoting the remarks of a Wiltshire member which is typical of numerous such opinions made in



letters from members and friends ..... "I've just given my brother the new edition of the Diary, and am delighted to see it so very handsomely produced; the larger page and the delightful dust covers - with their photographs associated with the text - are a great improvement. Surely it should sell well. When one considers what rubbish many people will squander 7 guineas upon, one has to admit that this 3 volume edition is quite extraordinarily good value."

---

#### MEMBER REQUIRES FORMER EDITION

The first edition of the 3 volumes to have an index is what is wanted; the index is in the end of the third volume. There are surely some of this edition now for sale by folk who have bought the newest 7 guineas edition? Please write to the Hon. Secretary at 23 Broomy Hill, Hereford - stating price required - and you will then be put in touch with the member wanting them.

---

#### OBITUARY

We record, with much regret, the death of several members.

Mrs. T. Lewis of Grosmont (Mon) — only a few weeks after her husband's death, which was in March and recorded in the newsletter of March 31st., and so we lose a pair of faithful old members.

Miss Isabel Snelling of Chelsea, on June 21st. One of our London members who (with her sister Miss V.M. Snelling) had been a member for some years, and had attended several Commemoration Services. We shall always remember the jolly evening with them, Bishop and Mrs. Newnham Davis and Dr. Plomer, prior to the big Clyro service of 1965.

Mrs. B. Philpotts (Eardisley) in August and Mrs. I.F. Griffiths (Hereford) in September. Two of our older Herefordshire members who came to as many of our events as they could manage.

---

#### "LOOKING BACKWARDS"

The 1969 booklet — titled as above — has been on sale since early June, and many have been sold. BUT, WE WANT TO SELL MANY MANY MORE.

This is a booklet that every member should have — surely?

For it contains so much that has never before been made public.

Much about Mrs. Kilvert, by her niece the late Miss M.A. Rowland, who was a bridesmaid at the wedding.

Then there is the full account of the homecoming to Bredwardine, after the honeymoon, the tremendous welcome that the parishioners gave them, the presents and the speeches.

Then Kilvert's death — and the funeral exactly a fortnight after the homecoming.

Then there are several items about Kilvert as Vicar of St. Harmon — telling us things about that part of his life that very very few have known previously; and also of his friendship with Free Churchmen of the district — information gathered by his nephew Mr. Hastings Smith, many years ago.

In the booklet are also many details of the early days of the Kilvert Society, the account of the inaugural meeting at Hereford Town Hall on 17th July 1948, with William Plomers very lively lecture on that occasion — in full.

Next day was the first ever Commemoration Service held under the auspices of the Society — at Bredwardine. Dean Hedley Burrows fine ADDRESS on that afternoon is there — as is the ADDRESS by the Bishop of Swansea and Brecon at the pre-Society commemoration at Clyro in 1946, this event was organised by the Vicar and parishioners of Clyro, an ADDRESS that will be read with pleasure by many of the members of today. There are details of other commemorations too, and a full list of them all. Much else besides .. members reminiscences and impressions .. etc. The booklet has 48 pages and 3 photographs (Mrs. Kilvert, our first President, Mr. Sid Wright and Dean Burrows standing by the memorial seat at Bredwardine). All for 7/6 .. plus 6d postage.

#### "COLLECTED VERSE"

This big booklet of Kilvert's poems (55 of them in all) is still selling steadily and will sell for years to come. Have you had yours yet? They are 8/6 each, plus 1/- for packing and postage.

#### THE 1970 BOOKLET

Plans are now being made for publishing the "Journal" of the Rev. Robert Kilvert (the diarist's father) as the 1970 booklet. This will make really fascinating reading; but it will be a bigger booklet than anything yet published, and will cost a little more than anything previously. We hope that it will be published as planned, but much depends on the sales of "Looking Backwards" — and of our



Christmas cards - between now and early in 1970. We must recover our costs on both of these before we can consider the publication of the "Journal". Please therefore recommend "Looking Backwards" to your fellow members and interested friends ... and our Christmas cards.

#### CHRISTMAS CARDS

Last year there was only one design ... Kilverts Vicarage at Bredwardine from the bridge over the Wye. These sold very well indeed and there are some available for sale this year, either separately or in assorted packets. The two new designs for this year are ... CLYRO CHURCH as it was when Kilvert knew it, for it is a very nice drawing by his sister Thersie (Thermuthis) done in 1865. Then there is the WILTSHIRE CARD ... this is of the two churches of Hardenhuish and of Langley Burrell, side by side in the two halves of a Victorian locket, exquisitely drawn by our Kington Langley member, Robin Tanner. Prices are as last year, 8/6 per packet of 12, with envelopes, or 4/6 for 6. Plus postage (6d) in each case.

Each card has the same simple greeting - suitable for all ... "With Best Wishes for Christmas and the New Year".

ALL PACKETS OF CARDS CAN BE ASSORTED JUST AS YOU WANT THEM ... PLEASE ORDER THEM ACCORDINGLY.

From the Hon. Secretary at 23 Broomy Hill Hereford or from Grants of Castle Street, Hay-on-Wye, who stock all the Society's publications and cards; and in Chippenham, booklets and cards are stocked at THE CHINA BOWL in the Market Place. At the S.P.C.K. depot in High Street, Worcester. In Selborne (Hampshire) at the Bookshop by Mrs. E.A. Mallinson; and in Hereford by Books and Book Services Ltd. in Berrington Street.

---

#### BRECON EISTEDDFOD - 1889

One of our Swansea members one day saw a substantial volume, well bound in green cloth and lettered (in gold) "National Eisteddfod of Wales - BRECKNOCK - 1889" in a booksellers shop in his home town. Its 400 pages contained the whole of the TRANSACTIONS of the event, some in Welsh and some in English. It interested him and he bought it. But this interest increased tremendously when he saw a number of mentions of names familiar to readers of Kilverts Diary. For instance among the PATRONS one finds such familiar names as the Rev. R. Lister Venables (of Llysynam); Col. W. Jones Thomas of Llanthomas; and Walter De Winton Esq. of Maesllwch Castle. These names appear again in the list of SUBSCRIBERS, plus others - such as the Rev. J. Leycester Lyne (Father Ignatius); Miss Thomas of Llwynmadoc and others.

In between the lists of prizewinners of the main competitions there is a full report of an ADDRESS by Father Ignatius (Dewi Honddu) - who told them that he had sprung from an old Welsh family settled in Cornwall, and that he was therefore quite at home at an Eisteddfod. Then there is an interesting account of the arrival of Madame Patti to sing - of the special train that was sent for her from Craig-y-Nos (5 stations up the line from Brecon - for which the balance sheet shows part cost £2=10=0) - of the band of the South Wales Borderers going to Brecon Station to play her through the town to the pavilion, where a vast sea of humanity (12,000 we are told) gave her a tumultuous welcome and then relapsed into silence to hear the Queen of Song, but greeting each with thundering roars of applause.

But what will interest "Kilvertians" most of all is the section for Painting, Modelling, Drawing, Carving etc. ... for the prizewinner for an Original Painting on Fired China was Miss Frances Thomas of Hay. The Society has an example of just this sort of work done by "Daisy" Thomas, given to us by her great-niece from Suffolk when she came over to the Worcester Cathedral Service of October 1967 (see page 10 of the newsletter dated 12th April 1968). This painted teapot and the Brecon Eisteddfod volume - open at the appropriate page - formed part of the Kilvert window display at Hereford Museum in June which is described on another page of this newsletter. It was most kind of our Swansea member to loan the volume for the occasion.

---

#### A VICE-PRESIDENTS GIFT THROWS LIGHT ON KILVERT'S SCHOOLDAYS

Page 8 of the newsletter dated 16th June 1966 refers to a book which was given to the Revd. F. Kilvert of Bath in 1851 by his pupils, seventeen of them having appended their signatures to an inscription appearing in a front page and reading "To the Revd. F. Kilvert, a birthday present, March 29th 1851, from his affectionate pupils". The eighth of these signatures is F. Kilvert. It is pretty certain that this is Francis Kilvert who we know as the Diarist. In 1851 he would be eleven and what would be more natural than that he should pass on from his fathers little school at Hardenhuish Rectory to his Uncle Francis'



school at Bathwick, adjoining Claverton, Bath? There to be prepared for University. William Plomer in his introduction to the Diary. Vol.1. pp. 9-10 merely states "as far as is known he was educated privately, he then went up to Wadham".

At that time the book in question was in a booksellers shop in St. Albans; now it belongs to the Kilvert Society and will be one of the objects of interest one day (we hope) in the Kilvert Museum that we all trust will materialise sooner or later. For when Mr. and Mrs. Feisenberger came to Hereford for the weekend of June 21st/22nd this book came with them and Mrs. Feisenberger gave it to us; inside she has written "Presented by Joan Feisenberger to The Kilvert Society on the 21st Anniversary of its formation. 1969". It is a large book, in morocco gilt, printed in 1828, and all in Latin.

For the present it is at 23 Broomy Hill, with many other items of interest; and can be seen by anyone so wishing.

Thank you Mrs. Feisenberger ... it is a splendid addition to our treasures and at the same time throws light on Francis Kilvert's early education.

---

#### FLORENCE HILL

One of our founder-members (with Clyro connections) has just loaned the Society a photograph of the Hill family of the Upper Noyadde, Llowes. There they are .. Mr. and Mrs. Hill, Florence, Eleanor and Colvyn. Splendid to have it, and copies will be available to members etc. just now.

They are all at least 20 years older than when Kilvert knew them. Has anyone got a picture of them taken in the 1870's? It would be so nice to have this too. WE ARE ALWAYS EAGER TO HAVE PHOTOGRAPHS OF ANY OF THE CHARACTERS OF THE DIARY — AND MOST ESPECIALLY ANY TAKEN IN THE 1870's. (JUST ON LOAN FOR A WEEK OR SO).

---

#### DID KILVERT SPEAK WELSH?

A number of Kilvert Society members were among the party who visited the National Library of Wales at Aberystwyth in July, when the main object of the visit was to see an exhibition of documents and manuscripts relating to a number of the old families of Herefordshire, in some cases taken to Aberystwyth for safe keeping when mansions were demolished. But we were also very interested in a book that was produced particularly for our inspection. This was the record of Archdeacons Visitations (Diocese of St. David's) last century, and our interest was most particularly in the visit to St. Harmon on 23rd June 1877. Here are the relevant details, exactly as in the book.

Robert Francis Kilvert instituted July 1876.

Two full services each Sunday 10.30 and 3 p.m.

Two sermons each Sunday in Welsh.

Weekday services in English.

Litany and Sermon at 7 p.m. in Lent.

16 or 17 communicants at Christmas and Easter, about 12 at other times.

40 at day school; 10 at Sunday school.

Took part in scripture instruction at both.

(Many other details follow)

At the foot of the second page was the familiar signature -- R.F. Kilvert.

What is the solution to this mystery? Did Kilvert speak Welsh? If not then who else preached two sermons each Sunday in Welsh?

But the mystery deepens when one considers that it has always been thought that services in Welsh had ceased at all Radnorshire churches long before 1876. We have several members most interested in all this and they will endeavour to clarify matters. One is on the teaching staff of the University at Aberystwyth and another a Welsh speaking Shropshire member already engaged in just such matters ... connected with his own county.

---

#### MR. VENABLES GOES TO RUSSIA

No doubt many members have seen the tablet to the memory of the Rev. R.L. Venable -- in the church at Newbridge-on-Wye in Radnorshire. It tells us that he died on January 3rd 1894 and that he was married twice -- firstly to Mary Dalrymple, daughter of General Poltoratzky and secondly (in 1867) to Agnes Minna, daughter of Henry Shepherd Pearson. It has always been the second wife that we have been interested in, we have



photographs of her; and she was the mother of the baby girl born on May 31st 1870; an event which caused much rejoicing in Clyro and which Kilvert so well describes in the Diary.

But interest in Mr. Venables first wife has now been aroused - by a member coming across a book, published by the firm of John Murray in 1839. It is titled "Domestic Scenes in Russia -- in a series of letters describing a year's residence in that country, chiefly in the interior" by THE REV. R. LISTER VENABLES, M.A. It is a fascinating book and it is a pity that it is not possible to give more than a few words from Mr. Venables PREFACE as an indication of its contents. He writes - "Being nearly connected by marriage with several Russian families, I accompanied my wife into that country in the summer of 1837, for the purpose of visiting her relations, among whom we spent twelve months, either in private houses in the Interior, or in habits of constant intercourse at St. Petersburg".

Perhaps in some future newsletter there may be room for some details of their long journeys, their adventures, and also of some of Mr. Venables' observations on the country and the people at that time.

It has been suggested that possibly the Mrs. Venables concerned was the child of a Russian General who married a lady of Scottish birth? The name Mary Dalrymple has perhaps given rise to this suggestion?

Her tomb can be found in Clyro churchyard, near the boundary wall and more or less level with the east end of the church.

---

#### THE HAWKSTONE OTTERHOUNDS

One of our Shropshire members - who does Historical Research in that county - has contributed the following for this newsletter. He points out that he does not approve of otter hunting, and no doubt many members will agree with him. But it is always interesting to follow up something that we read of in the Diary, whether we approve of it or not; and for that reason the item appears here.

On page 337 of Volume One Kilvert writes ... Saturday 20th May 1871.

"Mr. Venables took me up to Llysdinam, paying for my ticket, just like the usual kindness. We drove to the Three Cocks at 10.15 in the mail phaeton, the brown and black horses going together splendidly. At Three Cocks we saw an otter huntsman in the uniform of the hunt, scarlet woollen cap and waistcoat, check blue or black coat and knickerbockers. He was leading a terrier by a chain and he carried in his hand a long staff with a metal socket into which an otter spear could be screwed. He belonged to the Hawkstone pack, Capt. Hills".

Our Shropshire member writes ... "the Hills of Hawkstone (near Prees) had otterhounds from at least 1804 and the pack officially became a club in 1870, when the uniform changed from being green to scarlet and blue, which were, of course, the colours which Kilvert saw at Three Cocks in 1871. The master of the pack was in fact Major G.R.C. Hill, not Capt. Hill as Kilvert thought. The pack was kept at Hawkstone until the club was founded (1870) when the kennels were established at Sitwell's in Bucknell. In the 1880's the kennels were moved to Maesllwch Castle at Glasbury-on-Wye and most hunting was done in Shropshire or in Central Wales, although occasionally they went to Oxon, Bucks and Hants. Since 1954 the hounds have been kept at Shobdon (Herefordshire), although most hunting is done in Central Wales".

In a footnote to his letter our Shropshire member tells us that the Burtons of Longner Hall were keen otter-hunters, and it might have been through this that they met Kilvert and later included some of his poems in the Selections from the Poetical Portfolio edited by Mrs. Burton of Longner Hall (this Longner Hall is near Atcham, not the Longnor Hall near Leebotwood on the A.49). (Note .. see reference to Longner Hall on page 4 of "Collected Verse").

---

#### GOOD NEWS FROM CLYRO ----- ASHBROOK IS SOLD

After the laments - in so many previous newsletters - that Ashbrook still stands empty it is very pleasing to be able to give the splendid news that it is sold, and furthermore that it is sold to a Kilvert enthusiast. The first intimation of this came from Dr. Plomer, but it is now generally known round here. The buyer is Mr. A.L. Le Quesne, a historian on the staff of Shrewsbury School, and he and the family will (I understand) be coming to live at Ashbrook in October. I am quite sure that all members will agree with me that this is indeed GRAND NEWS.

---

#### NOT SUCH GOOD NEWS FROM CLYRO

One day in August a letter from Llandrindod Wells brought the news that an application was in for the demolition of the two stone barns in the centre of the village, not far from Ashbrook and opposite the church; and to replace them



with a large asbestos shed. The Society was invited to join the many protesting against these happenings, but only at the last moment was it remembered that there is a Kilvert Society and this left only 2 days before the final date for registering objections. Had we known sooner we could have mounted a massive protest, I am sure. Telephoning the local M.P. and other influential people was the only way and this caused a number of protests to go in. I sent in one on behalf of all our members and another on behalf of Dr. Plomer (which he has since endorsed). IT MIGHT HELP IF ANY MEMBER FEELING STRONGLY ABOUT IT WROTE TO THE CLERK TO THE COUNTY COUNCIL AT LLANDRINDOD WELLS, STATING THAT THEY FULLY ENDORSED MY LETTER OF PROTEST DATED 20th AUGUST 1969. I understand that the Council for the Preservation of Rural Wales has protested and so has the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings. I understand too, that Clyro is now a village that is likely to be designated as a CONSERVATION AREA. It is to be hoped that this will soon be confirmed, and so help to stop such happenings as envisaged here.

---

#### THE BANK MANAGER

Among the names of our founder—members are those of Mr. and Mrs. Edgar Lloyd, then living in Kent but latterly at Brilley in Herefordshire. Mr. Lloyd died in the summer of 1965; among his papers were notes pertaining to his early days in Worcester, and as they link up with what can be read in one part of Kilverts Diary, Mrs. Lloyd has kindly passed them on for use in a newsletter. In her covering letter Mrs. Lloyd tells of how her husband started his working life in the National Provincial Bank at Worcester — in 1906 at the age of 16. Mr. Lodder was the bank manager. After his war service with the R.F.C. (later to become the R.A.F.) Mr. Lloyd left banking for dentistry and in due course qualified as a dental surgeon at Guy's Hospital, and after a career as such in London retired to his native borderland, where for many years those of us who go walking in "Kilvert Country" often had Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd's company on our rambles.

"Thursday, Jan. 31st (1878). Went to Hay Castle to dine and sleep .... Mr. Lodder, the Cashier at the Bank, dined with us"

Kilvert's Diary, Vol.III. p.364.

Mr. Lodder was of middle height, white moustached, with longish silvery hair, bald on top, not plump but with pink rounded cheeks and of rather handsome appearance. His age was about 59. He was rich for a Bank Manager; his wife had her own ample income. They lived at the Cedars, Henwick, a suburb of Worcester, on the other side of the Severn. It was a pleasant looking Victorian house, with a garden running down to the river.

On fine mornings Lodder would cross the river by the ferry below his house and walk the mile across the racecourse and the green meadows of Pitchcroft to the Bank. His light grey tweed overcoat, cut in Raglan style, and buttoned up to the throat on cold days, gave him the appearance of a country gentleman rather than that of a City business man. He was a member of the rather exclusive County Club, next door to the Bank, and always spent his luncheon hour there. He was something of an autocrat and woe betide the customer who dared to light a cigarette when Lodder was in the Bank! All the customers save one! Dr. Gostling who practised in Foregate paid in his takings each morning. He was an inveterate chain smoker. Lodder would glare, but would not venture to cross swords with the Doctor. Any other unfortunate would be told curtly that smoking was not allowed! Once a year, after Christmas, the Bank Staff were invited to dinner at the Cedars. Here, clad in our evening suits of varying age and fashion, and conveyed in an ancient fourwheeler, that smelled of dust and leather, we would be received by Little, the butler. Thin and of a sardonic disposition, I suspect Little secretly felt towards his master's clerks much as Victorian servants were said to regard the governess!

My own relations, as a junior clerk with his chief, were perhaps better than I might have expected. I was a raw country boy and the old man would from time to time take my education in hand. I held Liberal opinions in those days, Lodder was a staunch Tory. He would sometimes give me the Morning Post, with instructions to read such and such an article, usually a political one. But he encouraged me too, and when I passed the first examination for the certificate of the Institute of Bankers (in 1908) he took the trouble to write to me from his holiday Hydro in Buxton, a very kind letter of approval. When I had a sharp attack of 'flu and arrived late at the Bank, looking perhaps not very well, he ordered me briskly back to bed saying "You need your mother to look after you". My last meeting with him was when he invited me to the staff dinner at the Cedars after I had left Worcester. Shortly afterwards he retired.

---



## TALES OF THE BLACK MOUNTAINS

Kilvert tells us (page 279 onwards in Volume 1.) of how an old shoemaker of 77 who lived not far from Hay, gave him much information about the Black Mountains, where his forefathers had lived for 300 years. On the day following last year's A.G.M. quite a party of members joined together in an expedition to visit some of the places mentioned in those pages; some of us were locals (Hereford, Hay and Clyro) whilst others were from the Birmingham and from the London areas and were "making a weekend of it". Taking the mountain road out of Hay and making for the Gospel Pass our first stop was at what is in the Diary as Achalofty (but on the O.S. map as Cockalofty, the name by which it is known locally). Here we parked our cars and visited the little old isolated cottage, now rapidly falling into decay. Then to nearby Twyn-y-Beddau, still a goodly mound - though probably a lesser one than when Kilvert walked past it on his way over to Capel-y-Ffin etc. Then a ramble across the moorland to try to decide where the Church of St. Cellon might have stood but when we found ourselves at the little farmhouse called Cadwgan (see p.52 of Vol.1.) we knew we had gone too far and retraced our steps up the lane and on to the moor again - to come across some large stones and some hollows in the ground. Could this be the site of the ancient church in which St. Paul was said to have preached when he visited Britain? Back to the cars and on up the mountainside and over the Gospel Pass, downwards towards Capel-y-Ffin but halting near the Youth Hostel (The Castle on an O.S. map) to scramble down to the Honddu, cross it by some wobbly stones and then a long scramble up the other side to at last come to what is left of Ty-yr-deol, the house swept away by a sudden mass of snow coming off the mountain down the little dingle in which it stood and causing the death of all who were in it. We were surprised to find so much still standing, in some places to above the ground floor windows; for it may be 150 or more years since it was overwhelmed; Kilvert heard of it in 1870 and it had doubtless happened long ago then. There is something very satisfying about actually visiting these places and finding out exactly where they are; then (as someone once put it) the Diary really comes to life!!!

---

## FATHER IGNATIUS WANTED A REST

The following appeared in the "Hereford Times" for 21st May 1904. Could any of your readers let the Rev. Father Ignatius know if they can recommend a place where he could get rest for a week or two from his ceaseless strain of work - corresponding to the following description:-

1. An old-world inn, or two rooms in a thatched cottage.
2. By a village green.
3. Near an old village church.
4. Two miles at least from any railway station.
5. In neighbourhood of Hereford or Ludlow.
6. Between four and five shillings a day each person.

Kindly reply as below,

Brother Oliver, Llanthony Abbey, Abergavenny.

---

## KILVERT AND THE HEREFORD CONGREGATIONALISTS

--who started something at Eignbrook.

This is the heading to an article in the September number of "Congregational Monthly" -- a copy of which arrived from a Bournemouth member just in time for this newsletter. It is by our Bromley (Kent) member Mr. Frank Buckland; and although a few words repeat what is in the description of the "June weekend" a few pages back it is far too important an item to leave out just for that. There are many who could profit by reading it!!!!!!

What qualities in a diarist offer him the prospect of immortality? High among them must come interest in life and living, candour, observation, a feeling for words and above all, sincerity. Add to these unaffected kindness and an eye for detail and we may see why the diary kept by the Revd. Francis Kilvert, M.A., an obscure Victorian parson in what was then remote Radnorshire has cast so strong a spell over many faithful readers for over thirty years.

These were among the thoughts that came to me on a bright afternoon in June as I sat waiting for the start of the Kilvert Society's Annual Service of Thanksgiving and Commemoration. This year it was held in Hereford Cathedral to mark the 21st Anniversary of the formation of the Society. Previous celebrations have been held in country churches where Kilvert served as curate or vicar, or with which he was associated.

The Kilvert Society has strong Congregational links. Started by the late Sidney Wright of our church at Eignbrook, Hereford, ten years after the first



publication of the Diary, its founder members included no fewer than six deacons of that church. The present minister, the Revd. Thomas Wigley, is a member, and the Society's meetings are held at Eignbrook. Nevertheless, the Society's membership of 500 includes adherents of many denominations and of none.

More than 200 of them were present at this impressive service, conducted by the Dean of Hereford, the Very Revd. N.S. Rathbone, M.A., and the Revd. Canon J.M. Irvine, M.A., (both members), with an address by Dr. William Plomer, C.B.E., editor of the Diary and enthusiastic President of the Society. Lessons were read by Mr. Wigley and by the Vicar of Clyro, where Kilvert was curate. On the day before, we had met at a soiree in Hereford Town Hall, and now after the service many of us took tea and cake in the cloisters. It was the kind of weekend that Kilvert would have recorded with shrewd perceptive care, noting, I think, with innocent pleasure that his admirers came from far and wide. A gift for the illuminating phrase shines in his pages, so that he often blesses us with surprise. Seldom has a writer presented so pleasingly the trivial round, the common task. Yet trivial, would not have been his word, for to him his parochial duties were of first importance. As curate of Clyro (1865-1872) and later as vicar of Bredwardine, he wrote with unconscious charm of his visits to parishioners, rich and poor, with many interesting sidelights on village life in the beautiful Welsh Border country in the 'seventies. He wrote also some poems, marked chiefly by simple piety rather than inspiration. These seldom rise above the level of what the late Sir Arthur Quiller Couch called 'vicarage verse'; Kilvert's gift was for endearing prose; he talks to us and we cannot but listen.

He conducts a christening at Bettws on St. Valentine's Eve, 'the weather fearful, violent, deadly E. wind and the hardest frost we have had yet ... when I got to the Chapel my beard was frozen onto my mackintosh .. The baby was baptised in ice which was broken and swimming about in the font.' Or in June. 'Clyro bells ringing again at intervals today. The great white clematis now in full bloom so sweet in the morning fresh air. The clematis seems to be strangling the mountain ash.' He has Lewis Carroll's eye for attractive children. 'Three children on their way home from gleaning were sitting on the turf at the cross-roads with their little bundles of threshed wheat, one of them a pretty rosy blue-eyed girl with long fair curling hair tossed and tangled wild.'

In his 'villaging' he visits faithfully the deserving and the undeserving. 'The two old women Hannah Jones and Sarah Probert were both lying in bed and groaning horribly. I gave them some money and their cries and groans suddenly ceased.' He calls on the old soldier; 'It was very quiet and peaceful in the old soldier's garden as we sat by the spring while the sun grew low and gilded the apples in the tree which he had planted ... I dug up the half row of potatoes for him which he had left unfinished. Then we went indoors and I read of the old man ...'

'Why do I keep this voluminous journal?' Kilvert asks. 'Partly because life appears to me such a curious and wonderful thing that it almost seems a pity that even such a humble and uneventful life as mine should pass altogether away without some such record as this ...' His decision has left us with what Sir John Betjeman has called 'The best picture of quiet vicarage life in Victorian England that has yet been given us.' The 3-vol. edition recently re-issued by Jonathan Cape has been long awaited. Many will think that in the 22 old notebooks on which the Diary is based, Kilvert may have found his patent from oblivion.

---

#### IMPORTANT

Have you yet decided to send for a copy of "Looking Backwards" and for some Christmas cards?

We hope so, for only if the majority of members do this, shall we be able to produce the "Journal" of the Rev. Robert Kilvert next year; and bring out further designs in Christmas cards.

Full details are in the green leaflet now sent you .. and also a few pages back in this newsletter. Please tell interested friends of our booklets and cards. A SMALL BATCH OF GREEN LEAFLETS CAN BE SENT TO ANY MEMBER ON REQUEST.

---