

THE KILVERT SOCIETY

Hon. Treasurer:

J.D. Worsey,
1 Harold Street,
HEREFORD.

Phone: 3833

President:

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

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

9th April, 1971

Dear Member,

The ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING and SOCIAL EVENING will be held on WEDNESDAY the 28th APRIL 1971, in EIGNBROOK CHURCH HALL(S), HEREFORD (as usual),
promptly at 7 p.m.

There is a large car park at the Horse & Groom Inn (adjoining).

Following the business meeting Mr J.D. Worsey will read some extracts from the Society's newest booklet "More Chapters from the Kilvert Saga" and also some extracts from Kilvert's Diary which deal with the Diarist's visit to Oxford, and in particular to his old College - - - Wadham.

These link up with the coach tour to Oxford on May 16th, when the party will be taken over Wadham College and later on attend Evensong in the Chapel; full details can be found further on in this newsletter.

Subsequently Mrs Peters will take bookings for the motor coach to Oxford.

As usual, there will be a break for refreshments at about 8 o'clock.

This will be followed by speakers on different subjects; these are now being arranged and we shall hope to hear from several Vice-Presidents and members.

A new note will be struck by a short talk dealing mainly with Francis Kilvert's visit to Cornwall (July-August 1870) by a new member, Mr Ronald Davies, B.A., who is Senior Lecturer in English at Hereford College of Education. Both Mr and Mrs Davies are natives of Cornwall. We shall be glad to have them with us for the first time at this meeting.

Then comes what will no doubt be the highlight of the evening, a talk entitled "IN AND AROUND HEREFORDSHIRE" by the Rev. W.L. Paterson, M.A., Vicar of Madley, Herefordshire - ILLUSTRATED with a number of SLIDES. Mr. Paterson is a member of the Kilvert Society and a Kilvert interest runs through much of this feature.

Finally, some members' slides will be shown - - - as many as time permits; it is likely that among these will be some of Clyro with the children being presented with their prizes, and Dr Plomer reading to the crowd at Cae Mawr; also some slides from Wiltshire, showing the "Poets Gate" at Kington Langley - - that splendid piece of work which Mr & Mrs Tanner erected in this spot so beloved by Francis Kilvert.

As for some years now the Statement of Accounts is enclosed as a separate sheet, but this time it bears on its reverse side a nostalgic poem on Radnorshire, which will no doubt bring back happy memories to many.

Members will like to know the venue for this year's ANNUAL COMMEMORATION SERVICE - - - it is to be at HAY-ON-WYE; by the kind invitation of the Vicar, the Rev. I. Ll. Davies M.A. - who is a member of the Society. It is 16 years since the previous service at Hay (1955) and we shall hope to see this large church - - - so well known to Francis Kilvert, quite full on Sunday 4th July. Dr Plomer intends coming; but the postal strike prevented correspondence between us and who we think will be our special preacher and all is not yet finalised, so no name can be given out at this stage. The June newsletter will have full details, and will be circulated about a fortnight beforehand.

Please particularly note the item overleaf regarding RAISING THE MINIMUM SUBSCRIPTION TO MEET EVER INCREASING COSTS.

Yours sincerely,

C.T.O. Prosser

RAISING THE SUBSCRIPTION

The increased costs of printing, duplicating, and now postage(s) has forced the COMMITTEE to the decision that the MINIMUM SUBSCRIPTION must be raised to 50p. (10/-) per annum; and this is what it will be henceforth. Even so, there will be very little surplus over and above the cost involved with the 3 newsletters sent out each year, and we shall be more than ever grateful to the very many members who pay a larger sum than the minimum, with some paying a very substantial subscription every year.

A lower minimum subscription would be possible by cutting down the number of times newsletters are produced and sent out; but so many members write such enthusiastic letters of thanks, many telling how they read their newsletters over and over again, that it is obvious that present standards must be maintained as far as ever possible.

HOWEVER, it is realised that there will be some members who would prefer to pay just THE OLD MINIMUM OF 25p. (5/-) AND ONLY RECEIVE ONE NEWSLETTER EACH YEAR, AND IT IS THEREFORE DECIDED THAT THE OLD MINIMUM IS KEPT ON IN THESE CASES. It will be the SPRING newsletter that these members will receive, for in it are always full details of the A.G.M. and Social Evening and any events that follow it; and the main details of the Annual Commemoration Service; with often a mention of Autumn events too.

An IMPORTANT POINT is that the 50p (10/-) annual subscription can be a household one, so that all living in the same house can share the subscription and share the newsletter which is sent to it three times each year.

The Committee also decided that anyone can become a LIFE MEMBER on payment of TEN POUNDS thus eliminating any further worries about annual payments or further subscription rises.

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NOTES and NEWS ... by the Hon. Secretary, plus contributions from members.

OUR PRESIDENT

I am very much aware of how much members like to know something of the many functions in which Dr Plomer participates. Therefore just before I compiled this newsletter I wrote him specially to ask for information for it. I quite thought that I might get an answer to the effect that there was nothing of much interest to tell me, for our President is not good at "blowing his own trumpet" - - - but I am glad to be able to record the following activities of 1971.

Dr Plomer writes:- "In January, Cape's took the Roundhouse for a celebration of their 50th anniversary. This took the form of poetry readings, with musical interludes and a party for several hundred people afterwards. From the stage, I gave some account of the many & various poets published by Cape and also took part in the readings.

Future Plans: During the Aldeburgh Festival in June I shall be taking part in an evening to commemorate E.M.Forster, O.M., C.H. (1879-1970). Barbara Jefford and I will be reading passages from his writings and the pianist Geoffrey Tozer will be playing music that Forster liked. On 16th July in connection with a National Short Course for Teachers on 'The Experience of Poetry' I shall be reading from my own poetry at Hereford College of Education. And at the (25th) Stroud Festival, on 16th October, I shall also be reading poetry."

Dr Plomer intends being with us at Wadham College on 16th May; and also at the Commemoration Service at Hay-on-Wye on 4th July. We shall look forward to both with all the greater pleasure because of this; I am quite sure that this expresses the sentiments of all members who will attend these events.

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JONATHAN CAPE, PUBLISHER

This is the title of a book by Michael S.Howard published a few weeks ago - something that many of our members will like to read. It is a large and handsome book, exceptionally well bound, and in a most attractive jacket. Its cost is £3.75.

In such a short paragraph as this must be, it is not possible to do more than hint at the wealth of interest and information that is in this book; nor of the host of well known people who come into it. Some are, of course, people that are known to our members, best of all of course William Plomer; Michael Howard and Tom Maschler are known to some of us, they have both been to more than one event of the Kilvert Society; and Mr and Mrs Michael Howard are members (incidentally, we look forward to seeing more of them, once they get settled in their new home in Radnorshire). This interesting and entertaining book is thoroughly recommended to all members and friends.

THE ANNUAL REPORT

As in other years, so much has been reported in the newsletters of 1970 that little is now left to tell - - all the events that took place during the year were well attended and successful; membership has risen slightly since last year; sales of publications and Christmas cards have been very good, and our finances have again improved over the previous year. We now look forward to 1971 and its events and trust that they will be as successful as those of 1970.

OBITUARY

Since the September newsletter went away for duplication (mid-August) there has occurred the deaths of several valued members; these are now reported with much regret. On August 25th HAY-ON-WYE lost one of its best known citizens - Mr John Grant, known to all who visit this little border town and particularly to those who came through their Kilvert interest; for Grants of Castle Street is the "Mecca" for them all. He had been ill for a long time, but managed to keep a lively interest in all that went on, and had a stream of visitors - both to his bed in their upstairs drawing room and during his spells in Hereford Hospital. The funeral - at St Joseph's Catholic Church - was very largely attended, by folk from a wide area and of many denominations. My wife and I represented the Society. In November we lost a long-standing member - Miss E.E.Hudson of Staunton-on-Wye, after many years of illness, during which she still managed to get to some of our events...with her sister - Mrs.E.Richards, with whom she lived. It was a matter of great regret to my wife and I that we did not know of her passing, time enough to attend the funeral. Then in December came the sudden death of a founder member and one of our Committee - Mrs.R.A.Davies, wife of Mr Godfrey Davies; though Mrs Davies had been in failing health for some considerable time, her passing came as a great shock to many of us. Very many members will have known her, for they have been prominent at all our events. My wife and I, Mr Worsey and a number of others of the Committee - and other members too - attended the funeral at Hereford Crematorium; and it was a matter of great regret that we were prevented attending the memorial service on the Sunday following at their parish church - Clehonger. Despite a very wintry day I am told that it was very full, as would be expected. On the last day of January Mrs E.D. Hoyland died very suddenly at Painswick (Glos); she was the widow of the late Mr Geoffrey Hoyland, and with him had attended A.G.M's and Annual Services, and had kept up her membership since his death in 1965. We shall always remember them as the instigators of the search for "Little Davie's" memorial cross at Bredwardine, and also of the subsequent restoration of it. In February we lost one of our BRECON members - Mr John F.Morgan, formerly Editor of the "Brecon & Radnor Express", but latterly a Freelance Reporter who was described as "one of the most prominent journalists in Wales". The long list of his interests and the immense numbers at the funeral tell of the untimely loss that Breconshire has sustained in his passing.

KILVERT'S DIARY - - SET OF 3 VOLUMES: and ABRIDGED EDITION.....(PAPERBACK)

So often over the years have we heard of members who have either failed completely in getting copies of the Diary as above; or have had to wait months and months before the shop from which they ordered them got them in; and so often we have been asked if the Society can supply both the 3 volumes and the abridged, that at last we have arranged with Messrs. Jonathan Cape Ltd. to have a small stock of each here in order to be able to supply members as quickly as possible. We feel that Capes agreed to this with some reluctance, for they would prefer orders for Kilverts Diary to go through booksellers shops, but if such shops cannot be bothered to deal with the business then it is surely only right that the Society must step in and supply members needs. We shall not hold big stocks, so members may have to sometimes wait; but not for months and months surely? Prices are: Three-volume edition £7.35 plus 30p for packing and postage. Abridged edition 95p. plus 20p. for packing and postage. Kindly send your remittance with your order....to The Hon.Secretary, 23 Broomy Hill, Hereford.

THE POETS GATE

Just a year ago the newsletter of 3rd April told of how our good Kington Langley members Robin and Heather Tanner had erected a handsome oak gate, made by a Wiltshire craftsman, with an inscribed slate panel inset telling all who passed by that "this meadow is dedicated to the memory of the diarist, the Rev. Francis Kilvert 1840-1879, who loved this view from 'The Poets Gate'." It is almost opposite their house, and in the middle of a night, last autumn, they heard a screech and a crash, and next morning found gate and slate panel smashed and bits of motor car nearby. The gate is well away from the road, with a wide greensward between; and the old iron gate which it replaced had been there intact for many a long year. No doubt but that some drunken oaf was responsible, but he was never caught. But all is well again, the craftsman lovingly repaired the gate and the friend who inscribed the slate did another - and now those who stop to admire it when going through Kington Langley would never suspect what had happened that Autumn night but a few months ago.

VISIT TO WADHAM COLLEGE - OXFORD - SUNDAY 16th May 1971

This is something that those of us who knew about it last year have been looking forward to ever since; now it is but a few weeks ahead, here are the details and the arrangements.

MEET OUTSIDE ENTRANCE TO WADHAM COLLEGE AT 2.45 pm. for a TOUR of the College and its grounds; we shall be escorted by Mr James Feisenberger - and accompanied by his parents, Mr & Mrs H.A. Feisenberger of London, who are now known to very many members by their loyal attendance at so many of the Society's events; and, as already stated, Dr William Plomer will be with us. Mr James Feisenberger is now in his last year at Wadham, and and it was an extremely kind thought on his part to suggest this visit to Francis Kilvert's old college.

TEA follows - - at the RANDOLPH HOTEL at 4.30 pm. and at a cost of 37½p (7/6) per person. It is quite a short walk from Wadham College to the Randolph Hotel.

IMPORTANT - - our party for tea can be any number up to 100, but the hotel must know exact numbers ONE WEEK IN ADVANCE. It is therefore ABSOLUTELY VITAL that everyone who wants to come to TEA that day must write to me at 23 Broomy Hill, Hereford, not later than May 5th giving me the number in their party for tea.

EVENSONG IN WADHAM COLLEGE CHAPEL at 6.15 pm.

We are invited to attend this service, no doubt much the same service that Francis Kilvert would have attended many times during his years at Wadham. It will be the usual EVENSONG, and will be taken by the College Chaplain... The Rev. J.O. Makepeace M.A. with an ADDRESS by Mr A.O.J. Cockshut, M.A. (Member of the Kilvert Society). Those who were at the service of September last at Wootton-by-Woodstock will remember that Mr Cockshut read one of the lessons that day. He is G.M. Young Lecturer in Nineteenth Century Literature at Oxford University.

SEATING IN WADHAM COLLEGE CHAPEL IS RATHER LIMITED - AND WE CANNOT BE MORE THAN 100.

This is probably just about right, for we hope to be a small coach load from Hereford (a 29 seater is ordered), and it may be an inspired guess that another 60 or 70 will come in their own cars; it is expected that there will be quite a little contingent from London, and a similar one from the Birmingham area; and no doubt members from Oxfordshire and all around; but we must not be more than 100 for Wadham Chapel.

THE COACH FROM HEREFORD

Bookings (and fares please!) will be taken at the A.G.M. The cost will be at least 75p (15/-) per person; may be nearer £1. We shall know exactly by the time bookings are taken. The coach (Yeomans) will start from Hereford Town Hall at 10 am. and travel via Ledbury and Tewkesbury to Stow-on-the-Wold where there will be a stop of about one hour; here the picnic lunch (which each should bring with them) can be eaten. We should arrive in Oxford by 2.30 pm. in order to meet at Wadham College at 2.45. We shall hope to leave Oxford soon after 7 o'clock and get back to Hereford around 9.30. This visit to Oxford will take the place of the Annual Spring Coach Tour; but we hope to arrange a run into Mid-Wales in September or October this year and this will compensate those unable to come to Oxford on May 16th. Details of this in a later newsletter.

NOTE: those who visited Holly Bank at Wootton last September will be interested to know that the Randolph Hotel in Oxford is by the same architect.

THE KILVERT COUNTRY in 1870

After each Christmas my wife and I have to send thanks (in the Spring newsletter) to all those members who so kindly sent us Christmas cards, far too many to thank individually, so once again please take this as our thanks for your kind thoughts and good wishes. Some kind members in Bristol sent us a Christmas gift that was much appreciated ...one of the series of reprints of the first edition of the one-inch Ordnance Survey of England and Wales, and very naturally they chose the RADNOR sheet (No.49). It is fascinating to study this map of the 1870's - and as much of this part of KILVERT COUNTRY comes on the adjoining sheet (BRECON - No.58); we have since bought this, and shall soon be getting WILTSHIRE NORTH (No. 69). May be some members may like some of these maps? With this in mind arrangements have been made to supply them to order. The cost is 75p (15/-) each, and there should be little delay in delivery. All profits will go to the Society's funds, as with sales of Kilvert's Diary. In this connection please see the item headed "A KILVERT MUSEUM".

UNCLE FRANCIS' PRAYER BOOK

The world famous HAY-ON-WYE bookshop (Richard Booth Ltd) has for sale what they quite rightly describe as "a Kilvert relic"; and it is publicised here in the hope that some Kilvert enthusiast might buy it and present it to the Society; either right away, or promise it for that hoped-for Kilvert Museum that we all want to see eventually materialise. It is described as "a nicely bound book of Common Prayer, together with the Psalter (Mark Baskett for the Oxford University Press 1763)". The photostat sent to me shows that the inscription inside is in the handwriting of Francis Kilvert's uncle and namesake, the Rev. Francis Kilvert (1793-1863). It originally belonged to his grandmother, Elizabeth Kilvert, and was presented by him to his wife (Adelaide Sophia) in 1829. The price is £7.10.0. More correctly £7.50.

TWO NEW VICE-PRESIDENTS

Those members who attend the forthcoming A.G.M. will be asked to confirm the appointment of two new Vice-Presidents; purely a matter of form, for it is the Committee who make the decisions on such matters, and then put them to the A.G.M. for confirmation. I suppose it would be possible for the members then assembled to over-rule the committee's nominations, but it has never occurred and is most surely not likely to happen this year....for the two new V.P's are to be two of the Kilvert family..... Canon R.W.Kilvert M.A. of Catherington Vicarage, Hants. and his sister, Miss M.L. Kilvert M.A. of Woodbridge, Suffolk; and there is nothing more certain of the pleasure that will be felt by all members in having as members and as V.P's these two great grandchildren of the Diarist's brother - - Edward Newton Kilvert ("Perch"). Both joined the Society last year when on holiday in Wales, part of which was spent at Clyro - and from there they came to call on us at 23 Broomy Hill, when an afternoon flitted by in conversation and the inspection of some of the items that are here, and which a good many members have seen at different times. Accompanying the Rev.R.W.Kilvert (he has since been made an Honorary Canon of Portsmouth Cathedral) and Miss M.L.Kilvert were Mrs.R.W. Kilvert and a son and a daughter (John Robert Francis and Susan) and I am glad to be able to report that all are now members of the Society. Susan is still at school, John works in Portsmouth - where he is often asked if he is related to Francis Kilvert, the Diarist. It is particularly pleasing to welcome these young members of the Kilvert family to the Society.

MISS MAYHEW - AN OXFORD QUERY

This was the heading to an item in the September Newsletter (p.6). Several members have written interestingly about the matter then raised, but nothing concrete to send to our South African members who originated the query. But one correspondent poses an interesting question..he points out that in books and guides dealing with South Wales, Breconshire, the Upper Wye Valley etc. it is invariably mentioned that it was at Erwood (a few miles upstream from Hay, and a few miles downstream from Builth) that Henry Mayhew stayed for some time at the inn, in hiding from his creditors, and whilst there, ideas came to him which resulted in the creation of "PUNCH". Our member points out that in Kilvert's Diary (p.156 in Vol.2) we read "I had a letter from my old Wadham friend, Anthony L. Mayhew, one of the owners of the Times" and he then goes on to suggest that these literary characteristics might suggest that Kilvert's friend and the originator of "Punch" may have been kinsmen. Incidentally, there are many references to A.L. Mayhew in the third volume of the Diary.

A KILVERT MUSEUM?

Many have spoken, during the last few years especially, on the need for a Kilvert Museum. Perhaps in Clyro, perhaps in Hay. No doubt something could soon be done IF THERE WERE MONEY AVAILABLE. There are very many items of interest in store here (at 23 Broomy Hill) - remember what a show we made in Clyro School in 1965? Perhaps one day a member will have a windfall on the pools and spare a few thousands out of it to buy and endow a cottage, where someone can live rent free and look after it? Seriously, has anyone any ideas? Would it be a good idea to start a MUSEUM FUND and raise some money? What about collecting items for an auction sale as a start? or some other such scheme? Let me have your thoughts on the matter, and any inspirations too.

OUR BIRMINGHAM MEMBERS

The Birmingham and District members keep up their meetings, several each year, with numbers varying between 20 and 40. My wife and I attended the October gathering at the home of Mr and Mrs.C.K.Hughes in Moseley; when the chief speaker was the Rev. David Lockwood of Hanley Swan (Worcs.), and Mrs. M.Mathers gave her account of the day at Wootton-by-Woodstock the previous month; with a short reading of an item from the papers of the late Rev.Trevor Morgans - on his early days at Whitney-on-Wye and his remembrances of folk that Kilvert knew, which I read. The evening ended with splendid hospitality from our hosts. The report of the March meeting follows, and for this I am indebted to a member then present.

.....Twenty five members, including some from Hereford, met in Moseley. It was a cold snowy evening, and a very welcome contrast was provided by the colourful slides of warm sunny days in Radnorshire and Herefordshire, shown by Mr Basil Butcher. Mr Butcher, who was for many years Hon.Secretary of the Herefordshire Photographic Society, had followed the little River Arrow (well known to Kilvert) from its source as a small trickle on Gwaun-cestre hill (Glascwm), to the point where it joins the River Lugg, south of Leominster. All along this course of twenty eight miles he had taken beautiful photographs, and he gave a delightful commentary too, drawing attention to the disused mill wheels, and other traces of some of the thirteen mills which flourished along the Arrow in the early eighteen hundreds; we saw quiet bridges, banks of wild flowers, a fish farm, several fine old houses and churches, and were amused at some of the history and folklore surrounding them. It was a most enjoyable meeting, and we were especially grateful to Mr Butcher, and also to our hosts Mrs Smallwood and Mr Peter Smallwood, for their very generous hospitality. (Next meeting Friday 4th June).

MORE CHAPTERS FROM THE KILVERT SAGA

This is the title of the Society's latest booklet (it almost deserves to be called a book - for it has 128 pages, and there are 9 illustrations too). It is in three parts, first, the "MEMOIRS" of the Rev. Robert Kilvert (the diarist's father) something long awaited and much looked forward-to by many members. Then extracts from Augustus Hare's "Story of my Life" his letters home whilst a pupil at Mr Kilvert's school at Hardenhuish Rectory. Finally, the whole of the "RAMBLING RECOLLECTIONS" of Emily Kilvert (Mrs. Wyndowe); here we are given many peeps into the life of the Kilvert family at Hardenhuish Rectory, particularly during the 1840's and 1850's - the childhood days of Francis Kilvert and his brothers and sisters. The photographs are of Bath, and of Hardenhuish; and family photographs of Mrs. Wyndowe, of Col. "Sam" Wyndowe, their baby daughter Annie (the "Monk") - with a frontispiece photograph of the fine likeness of the Rev. Robert Kilvert which was done in 1840 by his talented brother Edward; this is something we never thought to see, we are extremely fortunate to have it - a gift from some of his great grandchildren. There will be many members who would buy this booklet for that picture alone, even if there was not the feast of reading otherwise in it. Dr Plomer says - in his Introduction to the booklet - that "it enriches our knowledge of the diarist's background" and that "it will fascinate Kilvertians". All the editing was done by our valued Kington Langley member, Mrs Heather Tanner and it is very good value indeed for the modest price of 50p (10/-) with 5p (1/-) extra for P and P. Already it is selling well and the query now is "did we have enough printed?" It may well be that they will quickly sell out and we shall have to have a further batch printed. This can soon be done, for the "plates" are being carefully stored by the printers - BUT THE PRICE WILL BE CONSIDERABLY MORE THAN AT PRESENT!!!

Members are reminded that they can also buy copies of previous booklets:-

"COLLECTED VERSE" at 42½p (8/6) plus 2½p (6d) by post.

"THE SOLITARY OF LLANBEDR" with "RADNORSHIRE LEGENDS -etc" at 25p (5/-) plus 2½p (6d) by post.

"LOOKING BACKWARDS" at 37½p (7/6) plus 2½p (6d) by post.

- and of course, the very popular "KILVERT AND THE WORDSWORTH CIRCLE" at 30p (6/-) plus 2½p (6d) by post.

Then there is "THE CORNISH REVIEW" (noted elsewhere in this newsletter) at 25p (5/-) plus 2½p (6d) by post.

Leaflets are available with fuller details of the above booklets...here and there one will be enclosed with this newsletter. PLEASE DO NOT BE CRITICAL that prices quoted are not in decimal currency - for these leaflets were duplicated well before Christmas, and then the "Saga" booklet was held up in printing and was not out until just before "D-Day"...so the leaflets have been held up too!!

THE PIERPOINT GALLERY

This is now our sole stockist in Hereford - for booklets and Christmas cards - and visitors interested in them may find it more convenient to go there than to come up to 23 Broomy Hill. The Gallery is so central, a few yards up the passageway (Capuchin Lane) from High Town, but actually in Church Street - into which Capuchin Lane broadens en route to the Cathedral. There is always a good stock of all our booklets (and Christmas cards all the year round) at the Pierpoint Gallery; it is an attractive shop, full of books and prints and old maps and anyone going there for our booklets etc. will find plenty to interest them. Mr and Mrs. Beaver have very kindly agreed that letters and packets for me or for Mr. Worsey may be left there; this is most useful and both of us call in at least once a week to collect anything left there addressed to either of us.

A NEW CHRISTMAS CARD FOR 1971

The series of Christmas cards will be brought up to SIX this year with the addition of the new card - just out. It is a scene in Broad Street, HAY (now Hay-on-Wye) many years ago. No-one seems very sure whether it is of the very early years of this century or of the closing years of last century (some suggest that it is further back in last century than anyone would think - when first looking at it). Anyway, we play for safety by saying that it is of "many years ago" and is "of Hay very much as Francis Kilvert knew it". It is obviously market day in Hay, traps and people everywhere, and a lumbering waggon just turning down for Hay bridge, and the road to Clyro. This new card - and the others of the series - will be on show at the A.G.M. and at Hay after tea on July 4th. Prices the same as last year - 5p. each or 5 for 22½p. or 10 for 42½p with 2½p extra for postage on every 5 cards. Assorted packets available, made up as you require them. These cards will also be available at the Pierpoint Gallery in Hereford at Grants of Castle Street, Hay-on-Wye; and at Miss Tong's, Bridge Stores & P.O. Clyro. Probably in other towns and villages too. More news in June.

WOOTTON-BY-WOODSTOCK - THE SEPTEMBER SERVICE: AND AFTERWARDS

This was a most delightful day, and despite the fact that the date was the 27th September we were favoured with a very nice day. "Kilvert weather" as someone very kindly put it! The party from Hereford set off in a big motor coach at 10 am - joined at the last minute by some Radnorshire members who had made an early start from beyond Llandrindod Wells, but had been delayed by very heavy rain for most of the journey. All others were Herefordshire members, with the exception of a lady from Suffolk who had arranged that

contd..

WOOTTON-BY-WOODSTOCK etc. (Contd.....)

weekend with Hereford friends in order to come on the coach to Wootton. We were all specially pleased to see Mrs Victor join the party, for it is always so pleasing to have a member of the Kilvert family with us. As we progressed the weather became even finer and the run through Tewkesbury and over the Cotswolds to Stow-on-the-Wold was really delightful; here we halted, and picked up some Sussex members who had come to Stow for a long weekend. On to the "Rollright stones" for our picnic lunch, to find some Kidderminster members lunching there too; it is an ideal spot for this. After lunch a short run took us to Wootton. Here we were greeted by the church bells merrily pealing, with people and cars everywhere. The Rector (the Rev. L.C. Perfect) led the way to the porch, where there was a display of paintings done by the Rowland family, the marriage register-open at the relevant page, and other items of interest. There too was the tablet recording that the Rev. Francis Kilvert and Miss Elizabeth Rowland were married in Wootton Church on August 20th 1879; the story as to why it was lying loose on a seat in the porch instead of being firmly fixed to a wall is told in the next item of these notes. By 3 o'clock the nave of Wootton church was quite full, with a number in the north aisle too. The opening hymn "Through all the changing scenes of life" had been specially chosen for the occasion. The service was conducted by Mr Perfect, who commenced on a very happy note, a warm welcome to his church.

The lessons were read by our President (Dr Plomer) and by Mr. A.O.J. Cockshut of Oxford University & a member of the Society. The ADDRESS was by the Rev. J. Elphinstone-Fyffe of the Religious Dept. B.B.C. Television - and a member of our Society. It was, of course, Mr Elphinstone-Fyffe who produced that splendid Kilvert feature centered on the Chippenham area last June, with Dr Plomer taking a leading part...and what an excellent ADDRESS it was, so very much "in tune" with the occasion. Mr Elphinstone-Fyffe spoke of two weddings, that of Francis Kilvert and Elizabeth Rowland and also of his own wedding - to a lady of the Rowland Family. One more to add to the long list of memorable ADDRESSES that members and friends have heard in churches of both parts of the "Kilvert Country" in the last 23 years. On coming out of church a laden coach started at once for Holly Bank - the old home of the Rowland Family, almost a mile away and now the home of Lord and Lady John Kerr - who had so kindly agreed that those really interested in seeing it may go there. Meanwhile tea was being served by Mrs Perfect and the ladies of Wootton, in the parish room and in the old Methodist chapel, a splendid tea of home-made goodies. Then Mr Harold Butcher got a second coachload together and took them up to Holly Bank, and they were allowed to roam through the downstairs rooms just as we of the first party had done, with Lady Kerr speculating as to which room Francis Kilvert was in when he showed Mrs Rowland how many ways the Scotch plaid - which they had bought on the honeymoon - could be worn. This visit to Holly Bank was greatly appreciated, and was certainly a highlight of this day in Oxfordshire. Tea over, all gathered on the lawns at Wootton Place (the Old Rectory, it adjoins the church, and is the home of Mrs Clutterbuck - daughter of Canon Marriott, for many years Vicar of Wootton; who had so kindly invited us there) and strolled about in the extensive wooded grounds, laid out by Capability Brown. Many met again who had not seen each other since such a Kilvert service of years ago, and others got to know each other as fellow members for the first time. Many there were from London and the surrounding counties, some for the first time at such a service, for all previous ones have been in country so much further west. A strong Birmingham (and area around) contingent was present, with others from Worcester, Hampshire etc. etc. From Wiltshire one of the Langley Burrell churchwardens and his wife; and members from Bedford with whom I have long corresponded but never before met. Just some of the 200 or so who came that day to Wootton. Indeed "a most successful day" in every way - as Dr Plomer said in a little talk just before we all departed for our various homes, when he paid tribute to all who had helped to make it so; and specially to Mrs Clutterbuck for inviting us to wind up the day in her delightful garden and grounds.

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THE WOOTTON TABLET

No doubt most members attending the service at Wootton-by-Woodstock in September last wondered why the TABLET (referred to above) was displayed loose on the seat in the porch, and not in position on a wall. An explanation must be given, most particularly for the numerous members who so kindly sent donations towards paying for it. A long and complicated story could be told, but the brief facts are....that application for a "faculty" to erect it was made somewhat late, and came up at a meeting of the "powers that be" of the Oxford Diocese that was much too near the date of the September Service, instead of at an earlier meeting. At least this is what we have gleaned from information that has come to us. Meanwhile, the firm of monumental masons with whom our friends at Wootton placed the order had, undoubtedly due to a mis-understanding, got on with the job, and (so we are told) arrived at Wootton with it and were about to proceed to erect it on the very day that news came to Wootton that permission was not granted for its erection as submitted, nor in the porch; and so it just had to be left for display as we saw it that September day. It appears that it is a little too big, and also there is some feature about the lettering that is not approved (to be precise, it is the fact that the words PRIEST and DIARIES are in brackets - my fault; but

contd.

THE WOOTTON TABLET (Contd.....)

there, my ideas were only to be tentative ones, to be altered to suit all concerned when the plan was submitted).

What a pity all this has arisen, for the monumental masons have turned out an excellent job, with very pleasing lettering; something that would surely please any of the many, many thousands of readers of Kilvert's Diary who happened to visit Wootton Church, to say nothing of those who are members of the Kilvert Society. What is going to happen now? All I can say is that after silence since last September I have now heard from the authorities in Oxford. They ask me to tell them why the work was proceeded with before permission was granted!! I was happy to be able to reply that this was a question that I could not answer, AS IT HAS NOTHING WHATSOEVER TO DO WITH ME, OR WITH ANYONE ELSE OF THE SOCIETY. I think that a suggestion has been made that perhaps the tablet may be placed in the church itself, as it does not seem that the authorities favour the porch. We can but hope that this might be done. No doubt by the time the June newsletter is due the matter will be settled, one way or another, and I can report on it then.

But before closing this report there is one more matter that must be explained. The accompanying STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS shows an expenditure of £37.2.0 (£37.10) on FLOWER STANDS ETC. for WOOTTON CHURCH (but nothing about a tablet). The explanation is that when our idea of a TABLET to record the marriage of Francis Kilvert and Elizabeth Rowland was accepted (in Wootton) we were asked if we would like to also give them a flower stand. As our suggestion was for but a small tablet, we agreed over the flower stand. Now there is always the fear that Diocesan Authorities might not agree to a tablet at all - anywhere! If this was so we would then give them two flower stands, suitably inscribed. It appears that our friends at Wootton did indeed get two flower stands (but only one is inscribed - "given by the Kilvert Society". I presume that the other would have been, had the tablet idea not been gone on with). The Society has paid the account for both Flower stands, but when the matter of the tablet is settled (and it paid for) our share of it will only be the amount required to bring total expenditure up to what was agreed for the tablet and one flower stand. Sounds very complicated, but read it carefully and all will be seen to be perfectly clear!!!. - and just as agreed.

THE HON. SECRETARY AMONG THE W.I.'S

The Herefordshire village of Eaton Bishop has a lively Women's Institute, last year they were in the forefront of all that went on to raise a large sum of money towards the restoration of that renowned east window of ancient glass in their fine Parish Church. For their January meeting they decided that they would like to hear more about Kilvert and the Diary, and asked me to do something about it. The result was that on the appointed afternoon my wife and I went out (it is but some 4 or 5 miles from Hereford) with about 100 slides, and I gave them notes and comments as they were put through. A large gathering seemed to thoroughly enjoy the occasion, the slides covered so much of this part of the "Kilvert Country" and also glimpses into Wiltshire; much interest was shown and a number of questions asked. After tea it was we who were entertained, by a number of slides taken at their flower festival, and at other events last year in connection with the window fund. Now they want a tour through some of the Bredwardine, Hay and Clyro countryside - and so it is arranged that one July day we take them round some of the places that many come from far and wide to see, an afternoon to look forward to - particularly if a fine one.

"News spreads" (so it is said) and now another Herefordshire W.I. (Kington) is enquiring about a similar show of slides and a talk - at some future date in 1971 or 1972. This is good news, for it is always nice to hear of more local participation in the ever growing interest in Kilvert (and all that pertains) that is now so evident throughout the British Isles.

BROMYARD - A LOCAL HISTORY

This ancient little market town, in Herefordshire but near the Worcestershire border, has a long and interesting history. A book bearing the above title has just been issued by the Bromyard and District Local History Society in conjunction with the University of Birmingham, Department of Extra-Mural Studies. It has 12 pages of illustrations (photographs and maps) and costs 125np. plus 15 np. postage & packing. and is obtainable from the Hon. Secretary of the Bromyard L.H. Society - Mrs. P.D. Williams, Hamish Park, Whitbourne, Worcester. It is a limited edition and will no doubt sell out quite quickly. This note is inserted here as it is considered that it is just the sort of publication that will interest a number of our members.

FATHER IGNATIUS Any who today visit the Monastery at Capel-y-Ffin in the Black Mountains will find the ruined chapel cleared of rubble and the tomb of Father Ignatius (in the middle of it) renovated and enclosed within railings, all very different to when our party went there in 1967; but much more has to be done, and the Trust has issued a further appeal for at least £400 to make the fabric safe and for other essentials. There may be some members who would like to subscribe. The address is THE FATHER IGNATIUS MEMORIAL TRUST c/o Barclays Bank, ABERGAVENNY, Monmouthshire.

LLWYNBARRIED, NANTMEL and OVER THE HILLS TOWARDS ABBEY CWMHIR

Kilvert's Diary tells us (pages 104/114 in Volume One) of how on April 20th 1870 the Diarist journeyed by train from Hay to Rhayader in order to attend the laying of the foundation stone of Hysfa Chapel; the long account of all the proceedings; and the trials and tribulations that accompanied it - and the events that followed are so well worth reading. Kilvert stayed the night before and the night afterwards with his friends the Middleton Evans' at Llwynbarried Hall, and next day went walking with his host and Cecil (a son) over the hills to Abbey Cwahir. This was the inspiration for a large party of members on September 6th last year, and what an interesting day it was. Page 5 of last September's newsletter has on it the account of the walk to the ROCKS OF ABEREDW that we had done in July; with us on that walk were our members Mr and Mrs Boddy of Llwynbarried Hall, and it was through their kind invitation for a party of members to visit their home that the September day was arranged. This is the first opportunity to give an account of it, for at the time of that walk the September newsletters were already duplicated, enveloped and ready for posting. The meeting place was the car park at Newbridge-on-Wye; cars turned up from all directions, several from Birmingham, others from Worcester, some from South Wales (members from near Aberdare) and a number containing Herefordshire members and Radnorshire members. Our first stop was a few miles ahead, at the little church of Hysfa where we found evidence of that April day in 1870 and speculated on just where the activities that Kilvert so graphically describes actually took place. Then on across Hysfa Common and up the steep bit of road through the entrance gate, just as Kilvert speaks of it, and so on to Llwynbarried...."a nice, old fashioned Welsh country house whitewashed or stuccoed, and with gables"..... Here we were welcomed by our host and hostess, parked our cars, ate our picnic lunches and then set off on the walk "over the hills to Abbey Cwahir", very much as those 3 had done 100 years ago. In a mile or so we came to Nantmel and as our path took us through the high churchyard we paid a brief visit to the church; it proved most interesting, with many windows and tablets to the memory of those whose names we read in the Diary, the Middleton Evans family and the Thirlwalls (of Nantmel Vicarage). On up over the slopes of Cefn Nantmel and well on the way to Abbey Cwahir, our big party straggled out across the hillside - when rain threatened and we turned back, some right away and some going on to the next high point before turning...for the long downhill walk back to Llwynbarried. The rain was but a small storm and no-one got wet, but we were all glad of the welcome cups of tea etc. that Mrs Boddy had ready for us on our return, and glad of the privilege of seeing something of the house that Kilvert found so hospitable too. After tea Mr Boddy took us round outside to see the sundial in the garden, and the pump which still produces water smelling of sulphur, and what no doubt are the same gnarled old oaks under one of which (so Kilvert was told) Oliver Cromwell breakfasted during those dark days in our history, some 300 years ago. So came to an end another most interesting day in "Kilvert's Radnorshire" - with the thanks of all of us to Mr and Mrs Boddy for making it all possible; and off we went in all directions towards our respective homes.

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BRONYDD BAPTIST CHURCH, CLYRO

It will be remembered that when the Society had the 21st Anniversary Service at Clyro last June an ALMS BOX WALL SAFE and HYMN BOOK SHELVES were given to CLYRO CHURCH, and dedicated that day. At the same time a gift of £5 was made to the BAPTIST CHURCH at BRONYDD and to the CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH in CLYRO. The former spent it on a light for the pulpit and the latter on a new music book for the organ. Subsequently an invitation was received for representatives of the Society to attend the Harvest Festival Service at Bronydd on October 11th when the PULPIT LIGHT would be dedicated and officially switched on. Mr Worsey agreed to go as the Society's representative, and my wife and I hoped to accompany him, but much to our regret something cropped up a day or so beforehand which prevented us doing so. The following account has been received from the Secretary of Bronydd Baptist Church...Mr W.T.Walker of Clyro.

"The Presentation took place at the Harvest Festival Service on the afternoon of October 11th and was made by Mr J.D.Worsey, the Hon. Treasurer of the Society, in a speech outlining the aims of the Society and its relations with Churches of all denominations. The Rev.J.Pritchard of Glasbury-on-Wye, secretary of the Breconshire Baptist Association, accepted the gift on behalf of the Church, with a few well chosen words of appreciation of the Society's work. After the dedication prayer the light was switched on by Mr Worsey. The Kilvert Society was also represented by its Clyro members."

Mr.Worsey says that he greatly enjoyed the afternoon, and made my wife and I wish that we could have been there too.

KILVERT ON CORNWALL

On another page is a note about the current number of "THE CORNISH REVIEW" of which the Society has copies for sale to members etc. for in this number is the article with the above title. Now we have a contribution to this newsletter from another Cornish member - Mr Michael Trinick of Bodmin - and with it photographs of Perranwell Station, and a spray of Asplenium Marinum from Gurnard's Head. Members will recall that a previous newsletter told of the photographs of the 1870's, that Mr Trinick had then sent for us...of Tullimaar, Rosewarne and Gwythian; copies of these are now available and to them this latest...Perranwell Station, is now added. Many members will no doubt also recall from that previous newsletter that Mr Trinick has interests in our Welsh borderland as well as in Cornwall...for his grandfather was at one time one of Archdeacon Bevan's curates at Hay, and later Vicar of Newbridge-on-Wye. His contribution is headed KILVERT IN CORNWALLhow glad we are to have it, and publish it here.

"Tullimaar, dear Tullimaar, and the happy days"

Francis Kilvert's diary of his Cornish idyll, 19th July to 6th August 1870, has all the descriptive genius we have come to expect, together with his touchingly romantic adoration of his hostess, Mrs. Hockin, and a splendid comic turn in Captain Parker of Rosewarne.

Tullimaar...the very name evokes peace, beauty, happiness, allied with melancholy, and the place is the same today.

The house stands high above the road from Truro to Falmouth on a steep wooded slope overlooking the head of the Restranguet Creek which runs down to the estuary of the River Fal. Two tiny lodges guard the Truro and Falmouth drives, overshadowed by the tall trees which surround the house closely, common and copper beech, ilex and oak, the graceful Cornish elm.

The garden can scarcely have changed since the Hockins' day, a terraced lawn to the south of the house, sun dappled glades, shady lawns, lovingly cared for by the present owners.

Built in 1830 by Benjamin Sampson, the proprietor of the gunpowder mills in the adjoining parish of St. Gluvias, Tullimaar had been inherited about 1865 by William Hockin whose mother, Ann Hockin, was Sampson's niece. The house has been little altered, a low pitched roof of small Cornish slates, simple stuccoed facades with sash windows set inside shallow recessed arches, the windows fitted with shaped blind boxes, and a plain porch with Doric columns.

To the left of the entrance front there is now a conservatory. In Kilvert's day its place was occupied by a curved stuccoed wall hiding the approach to the back door and decorated with a niche and more recessed arches.

William Hockin's father, the Rev. Henry William Hockin (died 1846) had been Vicar of Perranarworthal, the parish in which Tullimaar stands, and also Vicar of the neighbouring parish of Stithians. He came from a family of Cornish parsons and his brother Frederick, our William Hockin's uncle was at this time Rector of Phillack, near Hayle in the west of Cornwall, as had been his father and his grandfather before him ever since 1763.

There is no evidence in the diary as to what, if anything, William Hockin did for a living. His mother had inherited money from her family, the Sampsons, who were in a considerable way of business. His father had enjoyed two comfortable livings which he held in plurality and was presumably able to leave money to his son. Perhaps, like so many of his class at this time, William Hockin's income was sufficient to live quietly at Tullimaar.

At this time Hockin had three children, Ernest, Florence and Beatrice (Kilvert's godchild) and after the (inexplicable) removal of the family to the Ferns at Taunton in the following year two more were born, one of whom is the father of a member of our Society, Mr J.C. Hockin.

William Hockin had two unmarried sisters, Emily and Charlotte, who lived in Truro, five miles from Tullimaar, and they accompanied the party on more than one expedition during Kilvert's three weeks' holiday. We cannot follow them on these journeys but it is pleasant to record that many of their visits can be enjoyed in unchanged surroundings today. From Truro by boat to Malpas to pick up ginger beer at the inn, and thence down the wooded estuary of the River Fal, to St. Michael's Mount, Mullion and Kynance Cove; to Falmouth for the Regatta; the journey to the Logan Rock where "Captain Parker was the life of the party and kept the wagonette in a roar", and thence to the Land's End; to Lord Falmouth's park at Tregothnan to see the church of St. Michael Penkevil which his Lordship had restored four years before; the marathon expedition to the Gurnard's Head where Kilvert gathered the bright glossy green fern Asplenium Marinum from the rock crevices for Mrs Hockin (it can still be found there today) followed by a midnight supper at Rosewarne. Visits to Tintagel and the wild north Cornish coast and "the last happy day" at Godrevy, visiting the ancient church of Gwithian buried in the sand, with another supper at Rosewarne.

The latter house still stands, a large mansion in beautiful wooded grounds in the busy industrial town of Camborne. It is now most happily a home for spastics. In 1870 it was occupied by Captain Frederick Townley Parker as the Resident Officer for the Commissioners of Lunacy. The house had been bought about the middle of the 18th century

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KILVERT ON CORNWALL (Contd.....)

by the Harris family, who were much concerned with local mining adventures. It was most handsomely rebuilt in granite ashlar by William Harris a few years before his death in 1815. His daughter married in 1819 a Berkshire barrister named Henry Hartley but soon separated from him. She returned to live at Rosewarne in such an eccentric manner that in 1843 she was adjudged incapable of managing her affairs and trustees were appointed. Her son, W.H.H. Hartley, who was also of weak intellect, continued to live here after his mother's death in 1868 and Captain Parker was appointed by the Lunacy Commissioners to manage the estate on his behalf.

He seems to have made very much the best of what was at first sight an unpromising job! Kilvert's description gives no inkling that the Captain was not a substantial country gentleman in his own right.

Parker's humour was perhaps typical of its period. On the Land's End expedition "he said to Mrs Hockin 'If we wanted a donkey to go on what would you say?' Then he added instantly 'Proceed, Edward'. There was a roar from the wagonette, everyone was convulsed, and Edward (the coachman) grinned a tremendous grin, looked somewhat red and foolish and proceeded amid a storm of laughter". When further laughter broke out inside the omnibus on another occasion 'None of your larks' said Captain Parker occasionally and reprovingly to the people inside. But he was the most larky of the party!

Mrs Parker, however, was an admirable hostess in her "hospitable house". Kilvert took her in to supper after the Gurnard's Head expedition and had some talk with her about Wales and Monmouthshire where she had formerly lived.

After the day at Godrevy they called there again, "walked round the pretty flower gardens and fine kitchen garden and visited the fern and fruit houses. Dinner at 8 and a most admirable conger eel. I had no idea conger was so good, or good at all. As we drove away the church clock struck ten and the granite pillars sparkled in the moonlight."

There we must leave the Captain and his wife, whose only claim to remembrance is the brief glimpse which Kilvert gives of them. For on the next day Kilvert's holiday was to finish and when he got back to Tullimaar he was "Packing till after one".

William Hockin drove him to catch the 7.35 train which they missed and had to return to Tullimaar and wait for the 11.5. A chance for further farewells with Mrs. Hockin, "I thought - was it so - that there were tears in those blue eyes when we parted. I know there were tears in mine. Forget me not, oh, forget me not".

But off to the station again Kilvert had to go and this is where we who live in Cornwall must say farewell to him.

Perranwell Station is yet in existence, a sad shell, unstaffed and unkempt, but it is still possible to get there by train from Chippenham, changing at Plymouth and Truro.

The Falmouth branch line, on which it stands, was never more than a single line but double tracks were provided at the stations and Perranwell even boasted a goods shed, now occupied by a firm of agricultural merchants.

The signal box, which controlled the passing loop and the small sidings to the goods shed, is curiously mounted on stilts over the platform so that the signalman could get a view up and down the line.

Only a single track now remains but the station is still a beautiful place with tall clumps of white heath, Erica lusitanica, on the bank above the up platform, Rhododendron ponticum on the side of the cutting as one approaches from Truro, and ferns growing round the cast iron pump which delivers water from the well beside the platform on the down side.

In the station building the doors swing in the wind, the glass in the windows is broken, and a melancholy spirit pervades the place which would not have come amiss to the traveller who left here with bittersweet tears in his eyes on a "fresh cool and lovely morning" just a century ago.

LANGLEY BURRELL FESTIVAL OF FLOWERS

The September newsletter gave notice of this...on September 17th to 20th and suggested that all who could might go to it. My wife and I did just that and were delighted with the floral arrangements in the lovely old church and in nearby Langley House. Many were no doubt as pleased as we were to find ourselves in rooms little different to when Francis Kilvert was a guest there 100 years ago. I understand that Chippenham Floral Society were responsible for most of the arrangements - on themes from Kilvert's Diary. Great credit to all concerned - and for the beautifully kept churchyard. All was most successful, I hear, and I was also glad to hear from a number of members who journeyed there as we did and were equally pleased with all they saw.

HE HELPED TO PULL THE CARRIAGE

There is an interesting note in a letter from some new members who now live in the London area but were previously in South Wales. It reads... "my husband was a curate in Aberdare, and in about 1940 met an old man who had helped to draw the carriage in which Kilvert and his bride rode - over Bredwardine bridge and to the Vicarage, in September 1879".

The account of this homecoming (to be found in "Looking Backwards") tells how a band of men met the carriage, unharnessed the horses, attached ropes and pulled it to the Vicarage door.

How interesting it is to have met one of that very band!!!

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THE ORGAN FROM HAY CASTLE

A member has recently sent me a copy of "The Organs and Music of Brecon Cathedral" (sold at 2/- per copy in aid of the Cathedral Music Fund) and pointed out the item in it that will interest members of the K.S. It reads "there is also an interesting Chamber Organ in the Cathedral, built by the firm of Henry Berrington, possibly in 1798 it is one of the few instruments that retain the old fashioned toe-pedals. It is probable that an entry for Thursday 3rd March 1870, in the now famous diary of the Rev. Francis Kilvert refers to this organ - " - - - luncheon at 12, walked to Hay in the rain - at 2 went to the Castle. The 4 girls singing Pilgrims of the Night round the organ in the Hall, Mary playing". As it is known that the instrument belonged to the Bevan family of Hay Castle. Later the organ was moved to Poole House, Hereford, then in 1923 it was overhauled and presented to the Cathedral. Now unplayable, it is in the northwest corner of the Cathedral; if restored, with an electric blower added, and placed upon a movable platform it could be of great use". This is of course the organ that those of us who went to Penoyre and Brecon on May 9th last year saw in Brecon Cathedral and which our Vice-President, Mrs Mumford spoke about and remembered being in Hay Castle.

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STEPPING HEAVENWARD

A member living in St. Albans (Hertfordshire) has sent in these notes.....

On three or four occasions in the Diary Kilvert presents copies of "Stepping Heavenward" to young ladies.

12.11.71. (Mrs Venables read to Gibbins, the maid, Kilvert's letters to her about the unsatisfactory young Lewis with whom Gibbins was emotionally entangled); "Gibbins thought it was very kind and friendly of me to take so much trouble about the matter. I must give her a copy of 'Stepping Heavenward' - I think it will do her good." Perhaps it did, for a little later we read:

19.11.71 "At the school this morning I had a grateful word and glance and clasp of the hand from Gibbins in return for the book I gave her 'Stepping Heavenward' -".

3.8.72. "After the match Dora and I called at the Brewery and I took a present of a little book for Louie Collett, 'Stepping Heavenward'."

13.5.74. (When Kilvert went 'lilying' with 'sweet Georgie Gale') - - "I had brought a book over for her - 'Stepping Heavenward'. When I put it into her hands a happy smile came into her bright open face and she looked up with a tender grateful loving light in her beautiful speaking eyes. My own dear child, may it be the story of thy life 'Stepping Heavenward'."

Our member then says... "When going through my mother's possessions following her death some five years ago I came across this book. I have it now. It is yellow with age and the inscription records that it was presented to my father - then about 15 years old - in 1902. As this was some thirty years after the Diary entries (and the presentation was not made in Kilvert territory) the book must have been a widespread favourite as a gift for young people for many years."

Just as this item had been typed out, ready for sending (with the other items that make up this newsletter) for duplication, a small package arrived from a member in quite a different part of the country; in it was a copy of 'Stepping Heavenward' and a note to say they had bought it one day in an "Oxfam" shop, for they were well aware how frequently Kilvert gave it, and that it is a book that the Society should have. It is a small book, about 6½ by 4½ but has 273 pages by Mrs. E. Prentiss, printed by the Ballantyne Press and published by Frederick Warne and Co. and is nicely bound and in good condition; we are so glad to have it and shall look upon it as yet another item for our "Castle in the air" - a Kilvert Museum.
