

THE KILVERT SOCIETY

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14th June, 1972

Dear Member,

Most members will know that this year's Commemoration Service is to be at LANGLEY BURRELL in Wiltshire; this was first announced in the September newsletter, last year, and in April this year the date was given (June 25th) and the news that the ADDRESS was to be given by CANON R.W.KILVERT of Catherington Vicarage, near Portsmouth in Hampshire. Here then are the further details.

The service is at 3 p.m. and will be conducted by the Rector of LANGLEY BURRELL the REV. E.H.WADDLETON (who is also Rector of St Paul's, Chippenham).

It will be the simple type of service as used at Hay-on-Wye and at Moccas last year. The READINGS will be by the RECTOR OF HARDENHUISH (Rev.R.J.Thomas) and the VICAR OF KINGTON LANGLEY (Rev.D.G.Gardner). These two parishes, along with Langley Burrell itself are closely connected with Francis Kilvert's parents and their forebears, and it is fitting that their clergy of today should take part in this service--particularly as a Kilvert will be in the pulpit so often occupied by the Diarist and his father. The ACT OF REMEMBRANCE will be by our Worcestershire member and Vice-President, the Rev.D.N. Lockwood, Vicar of Hanley Swan with Hanley Castle in that county. Mr Bryan Gale will be the Organist---as in 1966.

The Society is giving BOOKSHELVES of ENGLISH OAK (for hymn and prayer books) to Langley Burrell Church--to mark this the second COMMEMORATION SERVICE held there. These will be dedicated during the service.

After the service there will be TEA for all who wish to partake of it; in the Village Hall (adjoining the Cricket Ground--as in 1966-- it is away from the church and in the village of Langley Burrell). It will be served by the Ladies of the Church Committee, and the charge will be 25p per person. It is extremely kind of these ladies to give up their time in this way. Payment at the door.

If the children of Langley Burrell school (those who have won prizes, anyway) have been able to come along they will now be given them---by Canon R.W.Kilvert; and if the weather is as kind to us as in 1966 we may find some one or two among those present who will speak, or read.

There is a note on page 2 for those members who would like to visit Langley House (by kind permission of our Vice-President, Major C.R.L.Scott-Ashe) ADMISSION IS STRICTLY BY TICKET ONLY (see page 2 for times of admission and where to get a ticket).

There is no doubt that (as usual) members and friends will come from far and wide to this Commemoration Service at Langley Burrell; the 25th year of such services. A MOTOR-COACH will run from HEREFORD, leaving the TOWN HALL in St.Owen Street at 10 a.m. (prompt). It will be a coach of Canyon Travel Ltd. and the FARE will be 75p per person (this includes gratuities). Seats can be booked at Wyeval Ltd., Photographic Dealers, Bridge Street, HEREFORD (or with the Hon.Secretary). Please book early; it will be greatly appreciated if members and their friends will kindly pay for their seats when booking them. A halt will be made at a suitable spot to eat the picnic lunch which all should bring with them. The coach can travel via Gloucester or via Cheltenham, and pick up en route, providing members notify the Hon.Sec. in advance. We shall hope to arrive at Chippenham early enough to visit an area of interest (by coach) before arriving at Langley Burrell in good time for the 3 o'clock service.

THERE IS AN IMPORTANT NOTE OVERLEAF RE POSTERS

Yours sincerely


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

A NOTE ABOUT SUBSCRIPTIONS

The request in the April newsletter (at the top of p.2) that members in arrears should either pay up or resign has had the desired effect; but there are still just a very few who will definitely receive no more newsletters and will most likely be soon struck off the list of members.

The April newsletter also asked members to send subscriptions to Mrs E.G.Peters (Asst. Hon.Treasurer) at 18 Moor Farm Lane Hereford, and not to Mr Worsey any more. This has been acted upon, and Mrs Peters has had much to deal with. Receipts are being sent out with this newsletter, and this will be the pattern in future, receipts with the next newsletter unless an envelope is sent for them.

SUBSCRIPTIONS CAN BE SENT TO THE HON.SECRETARY IF IT SO HAPPENS THAT THE MEMBER CONCERNED IS ORDERING A PUBLICATION OR CHRISTMAS CARDS--AND THUS SAVE POSTAGE. IT WILL BE PASSED ON TO MRS PETERS AND RECEIPT SENT AS ABOVE.

POSTERS-----MOST OF THOSE MEMBERS LIVING WITHIN A WIDE RADIUS FROM LANGLEY BURRELL WILL FIND THAT A POSTER RE THE FORTHCOMING SERVICE THERE IS SENT WITH THIS NEWSLETTER: SOME MAY HAVE SEVERAL POSTERS ENCLOSED, AND A FEW WILL HAVE A DOZEN OR SO. Please display them (or get them displayed) as prominently as possible; they have a double purpose, firstly to advertise the Commemoration Service and make sure that Langley Burrell Church is completely full. Secondly to bring the Rev. Francis Kilvert, his Diary, and the Society to the notice of people who have not yet heard of either. This is why posters are sent to members living far away from Wiltshire. It is usual to find that shops, public libraries, hotels and churches are nearly always very willing to display our posters...especially now they are smaller than formerly.

NOTES and NEWS (by the Hon. Secretary---with contributions from MEMBERS)

DR. PLOMER-----news of our President and his activities is always welcome, and eagerly read by members, I know. Here are a few items that I have been able to glean just in time for inclusion here.

Wednesday, 19th July at 6 p.m. Dr Plomer gives the Giff Edwards Memorial Lecture at the Royal Society of Literature with its president, Lord Butler, K.G., C.H., in the chair; and he has chosen for his subject "Francis Kilvert & his Diary". How splendid to think that this particular subject should be Dr Plomer's choice for what I am sure will be a most distinguished audience. If it were possible to get a tape recording of this lecture what a treasure it would be for our archives; and maybe for loaning to groups of members in London, Birmingham etc. etc. and for playing over to interested audiences anywhere.

Sunday, 4th June, 1972----- a pity that this newsletter will not be circulated in time for anyone who might like to attend to see if any tickets still available. For Dr Plomer is reading poems as part of "An Entertainment in Words and Music" at Sutton Place ("by kind permission of Mr Paul Getty") in aid of Botleys Park Mentally Handicapped Hospital Patients Community Centre Appeal. The audience are to have "an opportunity to view the house, its fine pictures and furniture and to walk in the grounds", as well as to have a champagne supper.

LANGLEY BURRELL...June 25th 1972 ---- A previous newsletter suggested that Dr Plomer may not be able to be with us at this year's Commemoration Service. Under doctor's orders he has "cut" a number of his engagements (but still has plenty to attend). We shall all be sorry not to have him with us, and shall hope that he can come to Brecon next year.

LANGLEY HOUSE-----among the many members who will attend the Commemoration Service at Langley Burrell on June 25th will be some who (like myself) are always hoping for an opportunity of seeing some house that has close links with the Kilverts, or their family connections, or with others of whom we read in the Diary. For the benefit of these "keen Kilvertians" I have prevailed on Major C.R.L. Scott-Ashe of Langley House to allow any such members into his house at the following times. On Sunday between 4 p.m. and 5 p.m. and for the benefit of those members who will come to Chippenham or Bath (or elsewhere in the area) for the weekend--or for longer--on Saturday June 24th between 5-30 and 6-30 p.m. Major Scott-Ashe has kindly consented to allow such members to see the dining room and drawing room; both of which we read about on a number of occasions in the Diary. I am sure that any who take advantage of this kind offer will be charmed with the "air of yesterday" in these rooms; surely little changed since the days when Francis Kilvert dined with the Ashe family, or drank port with Squire Ashe (the Major's grandfather). BUT IN ORDER TO ENSURE THAT ONLY THOSE GENUINELY INTERESTED SHALL VISIT LANGLEY HOUSE, ADMISSION WILL BE BY TICKET ONLY. Those members who require tickets are asked to write to me at 23 Broomy Hill, Hereford, stating how many they require and giving names of intending visitors to Langley House. An envelope in which to post such tickets would be appreciated.

LANGLEY BURRELL SCHOOL---CHILDREN'S COMPETITION

In 1965 the children of Clyro Primary School were invited to take part in a competition in conjunction with the Kilvert Commemoration Service, which was that year held in Clyro Church; they did essays on their village, and were awarded book tokens as prizes. In subsequent years children of different village schools have taken part--wherever the service has been held. Last year at Hay-on-Wye, when some nice work was again submitted. In 1966 the children of Langley Burrell school did some good work about their parish church, and Dr Plomer gave them their prizes (book tokens) at tea-time. This year they are competing again, and Mrs Burnard (Headmistress) tells me that her Junior Class are doing a written piece about their village, I think it may be about the different types of houses, and also about Maud Heath's Causeway; and the Infants will do a piece of news. They will be judged well in advance of June 25th. We hope that the winners (3 in each class) can come along to the Cricket Field after tea-- for Canon R.W. Kilvert has very kindly consented to give them their prizes.

THE A.G.M. and SOCIAL EVENING

Wednesday evening 28th April and Eignbrook Church Hall was just as full as usual, with members from near and far; for although a number of familiar faces were missing (particularly some Worcestershire members; Swansea members; and a lady member from ABERDOVEY who often turns up, but this time kept away through illness, as was another lady member-from Bristol-who has attended on many occasions) members from other directions came, some for the first time. One of our many London members made the long journey, to go on to Herefordshire friends for a few days afterwards; two of our Bristol members came to their first AGM; and members from Abercynon (Glan) came too; as did Brecon members who were at their first AGM last year. Among our local 'regulars' it was pleasing to note so many founder-members, some of whom rarely miss a meeting. We welcomed a Norfolk member, just moved to Radnorshire. Business was got through as quickly as possible. Officers were all re-elected; as was the Committee, with Mrs G.C. Davies added to their number. Mr J.D.Worsey spoke briefly on the accounts and was congratulated on the very healthy state of them. Two names were added to the list of Vice-Presidents, the Rev.E.H.Waddleton, Rector of Langley Burrell; and Mr D.T.W.Price of Shrewsbury & Lampeter. Mr F.R.C.Hernon was Chairman and at the beginning of the meeting read out the names of those who had died since last meeting and called upon the company to stand for a few moments in memory of them. Business over Mr J.D.Worsey read from Kilvert's Diary...those paragraphs about Kilvert's visits to Leysters, St. Michael's, Tenbury Wells, and Bockleton and this was followed by two committee members taking bookings for the coach tour to visit these places on 6th May. The company then adjourned to the other room for refreshments, completely filling it. Lady members had worked hard preparing the good things to eat and now served them---without doubt to everyone's enjoyment. On returning to the larger room our member the Rev Roger Williams (Pudleston Rectory, Hfds) spoke on Thomas Traharne (see small item elsewhere in this N/L) and Mr L.Le Quesne of Clyro spoke on Clyro in the light of the 1871 Census (just released). Then came the main event of the evening...the Rev L.W.Wray of The Lea (Ross-on-Wye) in a fascinating talk on the Llanthony Valley (in the Black Mountains) fifty years ago when he was a young minister there. This was illustrated by a number of slides (shown by Mr Basil Butcher) and greatly appreciated. Indeed, when 10 o'clock came and Mr Wray was about to bring it to an end (although it was obvious that there was much more than he could tell us) the large company present indicated in no uncertain way that they wanted him to go on, and this he did until 1015. The Chairman thanked him most heartily on behalf of us all; and also gave thanks to the ladies and all others who had worked to provide yet another enjoyable evening associated with the A.G.M.

LEYSTERS: ST MICHAELS and BOCKLETON.....6th May 1972

The "Annual Spring Coach Tour" was to these three places, and turned out to be an event that was voted a great success by all who came. A full coach left Hereford at 2 p.m. and got to Leysters (via Leominster) punctually at 2-45; to find several cars waiting for us near the church. Here we were greeted by Miss M.Prescott of Bockleton Court, the Rev.J.J.Harding (Rector of Leysters and Vicar of Bockleton) and the Rev.Roger Williams, of the neighbouring parish of Pudleston. The ancient church was visited and Mr Harding spoke about it and pointed out its chief features, little altered since Francis Kilvert visited it in October 1871; in the distance is the Old Rectory, and we were told that the stepping stones across the swampy meadows of which we read in the Diary are still there. Then (like Kilvert) on to Wylden Dingle to see the "Poets Stone" by the roadside, the letters W.W. and M.W. still quite legible. On downhill by the un-fenced road-with a number of gates to open (and close again!!)- to St.Michaels, where we found Mrs Paxman waiting to welcome us (the Rev.A.E.Paxman having a prior engagement, but he had most kindly sent the letter etc referred to below); in his absence the Rev Roger Williams spoke about the church and the adjoining College, and about the founder-Sir Frederick Gore Ouseley. Then on through Tenbury Wells for a good tea at the Plant House Cafe at Burford---where the only rain of the day came down during tea!! Afterwards through Tenbury again and out to Bockleton, with Miss Prescott leading the way. First to the Court (now a Field Study Centre for Birmingham children; with the Prescotts living in a smaller but very charming house nearby-on their estate), first to stroll around outside among the trees and lawns that surround the large "red brick house with freestone dressings" and then to go inside to view the hall, staircase and gallery, the recess where billiards was played in Kilvert's time, and the drawing room and dining room (now full of Birmingham children's work about the countryside). The Egyptian style frieze, standing out as if three dimensional, though actually quite flat-attracted everyone's attention, and there was speculation why Kilvert did not mention it, for it was surely there then. A visit most appreciated by all. Then onwards the short distance to Bockleton Church, to find the Rev.J.J.Harding waiting to welcome us, with open door and light and heat full on. All sat to listen to his words about the church and about Francis Kilvert too; words which left us in no doubt about our new member's knowledge and appreciation of Diary and Diarist. Bockleton is a fine church, with many interesting features; doorways, carving, and monuments-one of them being to a Prescott who (sometime last century) sacrificed his own life by nursing a gamekeeper stricken with fever. In the chancel is a brass tablet to the Rev.Richard Mence (Kilvert's host). The homeward run took us past what was Bockleton Vicarage, far away from the church (it is now a private house, with a new vicarage adjoining the church) and to Hereford by pleasant by-ways and the valley of the Lugg.

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Notes: See pages 73 to 76 and also page 208 for Kilvert's visits as above.

The letter we saw at St. Michaels was from Mr S.F.L. Partridge of British Columbia (written in 1970 when he was 90); this is the younger brother of our former member Mr A.F. Partridge (died 1957) who will be well remembered by long standing members as the old gentleman in a white pith helmet who came in it to all our functions; his last appearance being at the 1957 Commemoration Service at Whitney-on-Wye, a few months before he died. It is interesting to remember that Mr A.F. Partridge was baptized by Francis Kilvert--in a bedroom at Clyro Court Farm, because he was a weakly baby and not expected to survive!!)

A VISIT TO MOCCAS DEER PARK

After last year's Autumn Service at MOCCAS (and the visit to Moccas Court) several members asked if it was possible to arrange a visit to the Deer Park; for Kilvert's description of it, and especially of the trees--"the old men of Moccas" he calls them--has made many wish that it could be visited. Until recently this was not possible (though much of it can be seen from the Moccas to Bredwardine main road) but Mr Richard Chester-Master now permits a few organised parties with a leader to do so. I therefore made the necessary arrangements and the announcement was made at the A.G.M. on 28th April that a walk thro' Moccas Deer Park had been arranged for 21st May and those interested were asked to be opposite the Red Lion at Bredwardine at 11 a.m. That day came, and started with a most un-promising morning, nevertheless 8 cars turned up, over 20 members and their friends in all. Some were newcomers who hadn't even seen Bredwardine Church, so the party split and some went there, to see the church and the graves of Francis Kilvert, Mrs Kilvert and "Little Davie" etc--whilst others went on a little way and up to Bodcote Farm (it is really Lower Bodcote). Turn to p.356 of Vol.3 and you will see that Kilvert says "a fine large old picturesque timbered farmhouse in Dorstone parish, but the Prices come to Bredwardine Church". Because of this I had contacted Mr Jones and asked his permission to bring a small party up to view the exterior of his fine old farmhouse (of great personal interest to me too, for it was once the home of some of my forebears) and we found him waiting for us. (Incidentally, Mr Jones was churchwarden at Bredwardine in 1948 when the Kilvert Memorial Seat was dedicated, those who have a copy of "Looking Backwards" can see the photograph taken then, with Mr Jones facing the Dean). Some time was spent in admiring the farmhouse, partly built of stone and part black & white, and in talking to Mr Jones while we looked at his immaculate kitchen garden. Then on to Moccas Park, turning in opposite the main gate to park our cars and have our picnic lunch. (No fires in the deer park, not even gas stoves; and, of course, no dogs). Lunch over and the rain--which had so far been intermittent--gone for a time, we started our walk. There is several hundred acres of Deer Park, going up to the ridge of the hill, from where one looks down into the Golden Valley; so walks are almost limitless. A few elected to go to the top; off they went and we didn't see them again until teatime. Most of us however were content to stroll around the trees (the old oaks of which Kilvert used so many adjectives in a passage that is as well known as any in the Diary...see pp.263/264 in Vol.3) and go some way up the hillside--and then right across until we were looking down on Bodcote Farm where we had been in the morning. By now the weather had improved and (apart from a few showers, from which the huge old trees gave good shelter) more distant views appeared; though not as on a really clear day when the Malvern Hills, the Cleve Hills of Shropshire and some of the Radnorshire Hills can be seen; with Moccas Court and Church and the Scar Rocks in the foreground. Back by a different route to the cars, where all met for tea. We of the "strollers" had seen but a handful of deer, but those who had been to the top reported having seen large numbers, to the delight of the boys of one group of members. Before departing for our various homes we piloted some of the newcomers up Pentre Lane (the road over to Dorstone) then along by Arthurs Stone with a pause here--and on to Crafty Webb for another pause, this time opposite the ruins of the house where Francis Kilvert had his "cottage lecture" every Wednesday evening. We now know which it is, but during wartime a stray bomb blew the end of it away and it is now ruinous; the chimney etc stands among undergrowth and brambles and enables visitors to picture the long uphill walk which Kilvert had each week. Bredwardine Hill than had a hundred houses; now less than twenty. Steeply downhill back to the Red Lion (brakes hard on at times) and off for home. Despite some storms and some mud all seemed to have thought it very worthwhile!!!)

MADLEY FESTIVAL

This year this annual event comes just right to be announced here; for it is from 27th June to 2nd July. In other years our members have supported it I know; some coming from as far afield as Wolverhampton. This year they have the Jaques Orchestra with Robert Aldwinckle (Harpsichord) and Michael Wakeham (Baritone), these seem to be the highlights though there are many other attractions. Programmes from Mr T.W. Lloyd, The Forge, Tyberton, Madley, Hereford or from Musical Instruments (Hfd) Ltd., Broad Street, HEREFORD. The Festival is (as usual) in the very fine Parish Church (often referred to as "Madley Cathedral")--some 5 miles out from Hereford on the road that leads via Moccas and Bredwardine to Hay-on-Wye.

THOMAS TRAHERNE

At the recent A.G.M. our N. Herefordshire member the Rev. Roger Williams of Puddlestone Rectory spoke on Thomas Traherne (1637-1674). Rector of Credenhill (near Hereford), though absentee as chaplain to Sir Orlando Bridgman in London (1669-72). Mr Williams told us these facts and then went on to say that Traherne's best known work 'Centuries' was written during this period, for Mrs Susanna Hopton of Kington—and that his poetic and mystical concern for true happiness give him a sense of kinship with Francis Kilvert. It is unfortunate that Kilvert could not have read 'Centuries' as the book was first published in 1908. Mr Williams said that "as an important 17th Century poet Thomas Traherne seems little known in his native county." On Thursday 1st June the Dean of Hereford is giving a talk on Thomas Traherne in the church at Puddlestone, but by that time this newsletter will be in the process of duplication, though not circulated until nearer mid-month.

Dr Plomer will (I know) be very interested in this about Thomas Traherne; for I well remember taking him to Credenhill Church—several years ago now—when he was here over the weekend of one of our Commemoration Services; and I recall that Dr Plomer was very pleased to see a tablet to Traherne's memory in that church. Pleased, and perhaps a little surprised...in view of the fact that Thomas Traherne is so little known generally and in particular in Herefordshire.

WORLDWIDE

This is truly the word to apply to the circulation of the magazine "IN BRITAIN". I do hope that many members did see the April number, following my note in the last newsletter about the excellent four page article titled KILVERT'S COUNTRY with its splendid pictures of Bredwardine and Clyro etc. It ended with a little note about the Society and gave my name and address for anyone to write to for details. It wasn't long before the airmail letters from overseas began to arrive (and letters from the U.K. too)..... From the U.S.A., Canada, South Africa, Australia (Queensland, Tasmania etc.) and New Zealand; Subsequently there have been orders for our publications, for copies of Kilvert's Diary, and several new members. I will mention something from the most interesting letters. From South Africa (C.P.) one was from Major P. Compston, whose father was Vicar of Bredwardine for several years in the 1920's. It seems as if he hasn't been "home" for many years, but is coming later on in 1972, and we shall probably meet. From New York a lady who was born in Newcastle-upon-Tyne but went to the U.S. with her family when a mere baby, wrote most nostalgically; and from California a lady with Mansell in her name and Shrewsbury connections, she is coming over in September too. Perhaps the most exciting letter was one from Port Moody in British Columbia for it was from Mr S.W. Kilvert, he says "we know that we are related to Francis Kilvert, but the specific relationship has been lost over the years". In my reply I suggested he had a look at p.440 in Vol.3. of the Diary, and that perhaps the Francis Edwin Kilvert mentioned there is an ancestor. If so he is probably a direct descendant of the Diarist's Uncle Richard (1794-1847) who (according to the Kilvert Family Tree) married in Canada and had one son. I have given Mr S.W. Kilvert's name etc. to Miss M.L. Kilvert; she will probably look him up when in Canada later on this year.....see next item. (as I am typing this item a belated enquiry has just arrived...from Barcelona!!)

A KILVERT ADVENTURE

Some many weeks ago a member asked me if I had heard a Miss Kilvert being interviewed (for radio) on her forthcoming journey to Canada and the U.S.A. "in a converted fire engine", and they wanted to know if I thought that she would be of "our" Kilvert family. I wrote to Miss M.L. Kilvert (one of our V.P's and sister of Canon R.W. Kilvert) to enquire about this matter. I received certain details, with a promise of more later on. These arrived at the end of April. I will now quote from that letter. "Yes, I have bought an ex A.F.S. fire tender (she did duty at Biggin Hill R.A.F. Station) and have had it modified so that it is a veritable flat on wheels. There is a 2 berth night cabin, a galley, a shower, w.c. and a dining and writing area; and then the driver and passengers seats in what seems to be an observation coach. I carry 50 gallons of water and about 75 gallons of petrol. I have bought a moped which fits under the dining table; it will do 150 mpg. while Peregrine (from our motto Peregrinamus) only does about 10 mpg. Susan and I (Susan is the daughter of Canon R.W. and Mrs. Kilvert) should be setting off on the evening of 11th June to arrive in Halifax, Nova Scotia, on 12th June. We then hope to look up the Kilverts across the continents. Susan will return for her training course while I go on—to be joined in India by a friend who will come back with me". Evidently Miss Kilvert intends travelling through South America, for she asks me if we have any members there; I have sent her names of members in the U.S.A. Miss Kilvert will keep a daily diary, and hopes to write on her return. Another addition to "the Kilvert Saga" maybe? Just as this newsletter is being circulated to members they will be setting off for Canada, or just landing there. All our good wishes go with them I am sure...and we hope for news of them for future newsletters. What an adventure!!

(see Vol.2. pp.279/280 re
Peregrinamus)

THE TABLET IN WOOTTON CHURCH

The news that all difficulties had been over-come, and the tablet-which was on view in the porch of Wootton Church when the Autumn Service of 1970 was held there- had been fixed on the north wall of the nave, towards the west end of the Church...came too late for previous newsletters; those who have seen it say that it looks very well indeed. The account for it has been paid; so at last all is settled. This is something that members generally will be glad to know--particularly those who supported this project with their donations. Anyone passing through Oxfordshire and finding themselves near Wootton-by-Woodstock should make a point of visiting the church to see it and in particular this tablet. A kind letter from Mr Edward Wright (Rector's Warden) suggests just this, and says how pleased they all are to have this tablet in their church. It reads..."In this church Robert Francis Kilvert-Priest and Diarist- and Elizabeth Ann Rowland of Holly Bank were married on August 20th 1879."

THE CLYRO PLAQUE FUND and THE BRECON ORGAN FUND

Contributions for both funds have been coming in very well. We now have about TWO-THIRDS of the sum we think we shall need for the NEW PLAQUE AT ASHBROOK HOUSE and we hope to come to a final decision about this shortly and place the order so that it shall be fixed during the summer. IF THEREFORE ANY MEMBER IS STILL CONSIDERING SENDING A DONATION FOR THIS FUND WILL THEY KINDLY DO SO AS SOON AS POSSIBLE?

The Brecon Organ Fund has not attracted so many donations as the Plaque Fund (just as we expected) but there is about £25 in hand, which will be sent to Brecon a fortnight or so after this newsletter is circulated; thus giving any member wishing to contribute, time to send in.

Please send contributions for either FUND to the Hon.Secretary at 23 Broomy Hill, Hereford...clearly stating which FUND it is for. Cheques should be made out to THE KILVERT SOCIETY.

NEWEST EDITION OF KILVERT'S DIARY

This is just a reminder that the Society now carries stocks of both the abridged edition and also the new edition of the three volumes. A number of orders came in, following the announcement of this in the previous newsletter; proof of what short-sighted booksellers are missing by not having them in stock. The abridged edition (paperback) is 95p plus 15p if sent by post---and the full three volumes are £12.... plus 25p towards the postage. Please order from the Hon.Secretary and make out cheques to THE KILVERT SOCIETY.

"RADNORSHIRE" by W.H.Howse, F.S.A.

This is the title of one of the range of books that I have from time to time suggested that members might like to read in order to augment their knowledge of the countryside of much of Kilvert's Diary; but it has been out of print for years, and getting more and more expensive secondhand. The RADNORSHIRE SOCIETY is contemplating a reprint, but this will not be possible unless there is sufficient demand indicated. Some of our members may wish to order a copy. If so please send your name and address and state that you will buy a copy at £3.75 if published....to The Hon.Secretaries, THE RADNORSHIRE SOCIETY, c/o County Library Headquarters, Cefnlllys Road, LLANDRINDOD WELLS, Radnorshire (Please state K.S.member) This is (in my opinion) the finest book ever written on Radnorshire--by the late Mr W.H.Howse of Presteigne-the Radnorshire historian.

A LIKELY LAD

One of our eagle-eyed members sent me a half-page of "The Guardian" a few weeks ago. It featured the winner of this year's Guardian award for children's fiction...Gillian Avery with "A Likely Lad".....for they had noticed that the authoress is actually Mrs Cockshut, wife of our Oxford member Mr A.O.J.Cockshut (those who were at Wootton in the September of 1970 and in Wadham Chapel in May 1971 will remember him taking part in both services; and Mrs Cockshut came round with us at Wadham).

Mrs Cockshut has written many books. Her first was "The Warden's Niece" set in Victorian Oxford. Mr & Mrs Cockshut often holiday in Herefordshire and on its borders and it was with the Golden Valley Railway in mind that Mrs Cockshut did a story for BBC Children's Television titled "Jemima and the Welsh Rabbit"....The Welsh Rabbit being the train!

It is always a pleasure to record such activities of members and I only wish that more of them came to my notice.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

The April newsletter hinted at an Autumn Service at ST. HARMON in Radnorshire; arrangements for this are now finalised. It is to be on Sunday afternoon the 8th of October, and the ADDRESS will be by the Rev. Brian James of The Rectory, Talybont-on-Usk, Breconshire, a member of the Society. Mr James was formerly at Rhosgoch Rectory in Radnorshire, and it was at his invitation that we had the 1967 Commemoration Service at Llanbedr-Paincastle. This 1972 service at St. Harmon will be a belated 21st Anniversary Service which should have taken place last year (following 1969 at Bredwardine and 1970 at Clyro--both 21st Anniversary Services) but due to the retirement of the Vicar of St Harmon (the Rev D.A.E. Jones, who conducted the first ever there...in 1950) it could not be arranged. As soon as the Rev. C.J. Colebrook was appointed to St Harmon we got in touch with him and immediately received a warm invitation for the Autumn of 1972, but the actual date (October 8th) has only very recently been settled on. Many members and friends will appreciate the chance of a visit to St Harmon, for it was in 1954 that we last held a service there. FULL DETAILS will be circulated to all members in a September newsletter, a fortnight or so prior to this St. Harmon's service. We very much hope that it will be possible to arrange a WALK on the day previous (something on the lines of last October...on the day previous to the Moccas service). This too would be announced in the September newsletter.

1973 It is not often that next year's Commemoration Service can be announced at this stage--twelve months in advance; but all is settled for BRECON CATHEDRAL on Sunday afternoon the 24th June. This means that members and their friends can have the chance of making their next year's arrangements in such a way that they can be at Brecon for the weekend of 24th June. The old Priory Church (now Brecon Cathedral) is in a lovely setting; as is Brecon itself; we shall hope to arrange opportunities for visits to at least one place of interest (and suggest others); for some may like to arrange a holiday in the area to include that particular Sunday. Further details later on, and final details in a newsletter a fortnight or so beforehand--as usual.

PUBLICATIONS

Our latest publication "MORE CHAPTERS FROM THE KILVERT SAGA" was featured in the April newsletter, and numerous members sent for a copy soon after it was circulated, but there are still very many members who have not yet had one. It is a fact that far more have been sold to non-members through advertisements in "The Times Literary Supplement" and other newspaper and magazine advertisement than to members!! Very surprising when one thinks of how much about the Kilvert family there is in it--in the "Memoirs" of the Rev. Robert Kilvert and the "Recollections" of the Diarist's sister Emily (Mrs Wyndowe), which make up the main part of the booklet....referred to as "this double enlargement of our knowledge of life in the Kilvert family" by Dr Plomer in his INTRODUCTION to the booklet. Copies are 65p each with 5p extra if sent per post. Of the other 4 publications I will here only mention "KILVERT AND THE WORDSWORTH CIRCLE" for this deserves to have far better sales than it has enjoyed so far; perhaps it is that members do not realise fully what it is all about? In a nutshell it is this....in Kilvert's Diary there are many references to Wordsworth and his relatives; and Francis Kilvert actually knew some of them - for Mrs Dew of Whitney-on-Wye (wife of the Rev Henry Dew, who was Rector there for so many years) was a niece of the famous poet. Kilvert refers to "blind Mr Monkhouse" who lived at Whitney-on-Wye too, a kinsman of Wordsworth. The author of the "CIRCLE" (Mr R.I. Morgan, one of our Buckinghamshire members) has painstakingly traced out the relationships of the people Kilvert knew or wrote about and gives much other information of these relatives and connections of Wordsworth; it is illustrated with 9 photographs, 5 of these relate to the main part of the booklet (the "Wordsworth Circle" portion) whilst the other 4 photographs go with the 3 items that make up the rest of it. These 3 items are of great interest and can be found nowhere else. One is the poem found in Kilvert's blotter after his death mainly about Monnington and the Wye, the Scar Rocks and Bredwardine etc; the second is his paraphrase of the 23rd Psalm, with an interesting story as to how the Society got hold of it; and thirdly there is "The Dawn Chorus" as heard by Kilvert early one morning in Clyro as he walked back home after a night in the stable at Clyro Vicarage with a sick horse. A piece of writing in true Kilvert vein. It is out of the unpublished part of the Diary, and we are extremely fortunate in having it at all. Copies of "KILVERT AND THE WORDSWORTH CIRCLE" are 37¹/₂p each and the postage is now 3¹/₂p. Still ample stocks of all our publications at 23 Broomy Hill, Hereford.

CHRISTMAS CARDS

The assorted packet of all seven cards now available is 33p. or by post for 38p (with envelopes) from the Hon. Secretary.

A WEDDING AT LANGLEY BURRELL

One morning not so very long ago I had an example of "not knowing what the postman is going to bring me next". The surprise in this instance was a letter from the Gloucestershire County Archivist. It read "I enclose a copy of a newscutting from the Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette of 27th July 1865 relating to the Rev. R. F. Kilvert, which may be of interest to you. It was found among the muniments of the Sotherton-Estcourt family of Shipton Moyne, Gloucestershire, at present being catalogued in this Office". With this letter was a photostat of part of a page of the above mentioned newspaper, the item of interest is headed LANGLEY BURRELL—and then follows..... The usual quietude of this retired village was strangely and not unpleasantly varied on Tuesday the 25th inst. by the rejoicings which attended the wedding of one of the daughters of the Rev. R. Kilvert, the rector of the parish. The early morning was most lovely; and those of the village, and others, who passed by, must have been struck and arrested by the gay arches of evergreens, relieved with flowers, under which the Church-yard and Church was approached. This part of the preparations for the occasion was due to the villagers themselves, some of whom, with a kindness of purpose which could not be exceeded, and a remarkable amount of good taste, decorated not only the outside but the interior of the building with wreaths of flowers and ferns, and very graceful festoons of evergreens. A little before 11 o'clock the bride and her party, in a succession of carriages, drove up to the main entrance, and were met by an equally large company of friends of the bridegroom (Dr Jardine Wyndowe, of H.M. Medical Service, Madras) who had arrived at the Church shortly before. The ancient building (the grave and sombre architecture of which had probably never looked so animated) was thronged with spectators without and within from the place and neighbourhood, the villagers especially vying with each other in showing kindly and affectionate regard to one whom they had long known; many a hand throwing flowers in her path as she entered the Church—an omen of good wishes that her path in life might be a bright and happy one. The marriage service was read with impressive distinctness by the Rev. R. F. Kilvert of Clyro, Radnorshire, the brother of the bride, who was given away by her father. After the wedding the friends on both sides met at the Rectory, the pleasant grounds of which were enlivened by a gay and happy party; and after the wedding breakfast, at which a large company sat down, the happy pair left for London on their bridal tour. In the evening the school-room of the village, decorated similarly to the Church, was prepared for a feast given by the Rector and his lady to the married couples of the village, who were regaled with roast beef and legs of mutton, followed by plum pudding, with a due supply of comfortable ale. About eighty six sat down to a supper, and had a very joyous and happy meal; separating at a rather late hour in harmony and good will, and without any excess of joviality, all allowing that they had spent a very happy evening.

The bride was of course, the Diarist's sister Emily (born 1842). We read of her return from India in Volume 1; for on 16th May 1870 Francis Kilvert journeyed from Clyro to Langley to greet his sister and her husband and the children (page 136/137). It was then that he dubbed his niece Annie "the Monk".

It was exceedingly kind of the Gloucester Archivist to seek me out and send this photostat; for not only is it good to have this account of the wedding but it is also most interesting to read that Francis Kilvert read the service "with impressive distinctness". If one thinks of this expression in conjunction with what we can read on p. 244 of Vol. 3 — when Francis Kilvert had been preaching in Langley Burrell Church and his father had afterwards likened him to John Henry Newman—who had "the sweetest human voice I ever heard" we can begin to agree with the member who I once heard regret that we hadn't a tape-recording of Francis Kilvert.

The Estcourt family are mentioned in the Diary... at a party at Llanthomas on September 8th 1871 (p. 28 in Vol. 2) Kilvert tells us that among those present were "two Miss Estcourts from Gloucestershire". The question now arises "To whom in the Hay or Clyro area were they related"?

I see that Shipton Moyne is near Tetbury—therefore not very far from Langley Burrell. One can surmise that some of the Estcourt family were at Emily Kilvert's Wedding, and that is why they kept the page from the local newspaper.

FORTHCOMING ENGAGEMENTS — (Hon. Sec'y and Hon. Treas'r) Towards the end of June —
Mr Worsey and I give a TALK WITH SLIDES on Kilvert and the Diary to the senior children of Weobley School.

Tuesday 4th July — a "Parish Outing" from LANGLEY BURRELL is to the Hay and Clyro area (Bredwardine too, no doubt). I shall meet them and help to pilot them around.

Saturday 8th July — I go with Hereford Geographical & Historical Society around Bredwardine, Hay, Clyro etc: then on to Builth Wells for tea; and to visit Newbridge-on-Wye, Disserth etc. This follows an illustrated talk in January.

Monday 17th July — Talk (with slides) to KINGTON (Hfds.) Women's Institute

Thursday 14th September — similar to Eardisley (Hfds.) W.I.

In October Mr Worsey and I give an Illustrated talk to the Hereford Branch of Teachers of English.

MEMO..KINGTON LANGLEY PARISH - April 1858 to October 1868

Wednesday 25th January 1871 (p.299 in Vol.1)—Francis Kilvert writes "A post card came this morning from Daniell, asking me to help at the Langley Fitzurse Penny readings this evening". Daniell was the Rev.J.J.Daniell, Vicar of Langley Fitzurse (or Kington Langley) and his parish records (as above) have very kindly been loaned by the present Vicar of Kington Langley to our indefatigable members Robin and Heather Tanner—who reside in that parish. Mrs Tanner has copied it all out, many pages, and has been good enough to send me a copy.....it is not only a most interesting record of life in Kington Langley more than a hundred years ago, but there are a number of mentions of the Kilverts, the Awdrys, the Clutterbucks, the Colemans—and others that we read of in Kilvert's Diary. The Tanners say "We found it most absorbing, there are entries such as 'Frank Kilvert preached here today'." Detailed accounts of School Feasts and Harvest Festivals, Flower and Vegetable Shows etc. Prices of meat, potatoes and bread etc etc and the inevitable deaths of children. A vivid picture of life in that corner of Wiltshire in the decade just before Kilvert's Diary.

We shall hope to publish this in due course, because it is really not quite enough to make a booklet by itself it will possibly be part of the next booklet; with one or maybe two other articles of similar length to make a sizeable publication. Next year we hope.....much depends on sales of existing booklets (see note re these on another page.)

PILGRIMS TO CANTERBURY

A few lines, with the above heading, in the September newsletter promised something more about the week in Canterbury organised by the Woolhope Field Club (Herefordshire's Naturalist, Archaeological etc etc Club; one of the oldest in the country—Founded in 1851: now with 700 members; for the last 6 years your Hon.Secretary has been its Field Secretary). Forty of us set off one morning in early September, by motor coach; among the party were eight who are also K.S.members, so Canterbury Cathedral and our morning in Faversham were particularly interesting, doubly so to those who again read pages 337-339 in Vol.3. before they started. A break in the journey was made at a mansion near Guildford (Polesden Lacey) where we were joined by those loyal members of the K.S. Mr and Mrs L.V.Johnson of Guildford—members who have not missed a Kilvert Service (both summer and autumn) for a number of years; it was good to have their company around house and grounds and at tea before we resumed our journey. Visits were made from our base in Canterbury to many places of interest in Kent and East Sussex and a particularly interesting time was spent in Faversham, under the guidance of a member of the Faversham Society; we saw much of interest, but I could glean nothing about Preston House—where Francis Kilvert stayed with the Hiltons on two different occasions (see above diary reference). No-one seemed to have ever heard of it, but more on this matter in the next item. Before leaving Faversham our Hereford coach was spotted by a member who lives a few miles away who was shopping in Faversham, she came aboard to see if there was anyone who remembered her family at Monnington-on-Wye Rectory many years ago, to find in me not only the Hon.Sec of the Society to which she belongs but also a neighbour when we were both children in adjoining Herefordshire villages...much talk delayed progress for a little while!! But that is not all concerning our contacts with K.S. members during that week in Kent etc--- a phone call to a member at Ash (near Sandwich) brought an invitation for my wife and I to spend Sunday afternoon and evening with them; and a delightful time we had, for not only does Mrs Goldup really know her three volumes of the Diary, but with her husband has visited Bredwardine and Hay and Clyro, and stayed in Presteigne. So in that far corner of Kent the conversation flowed, and time flew!! Our members are everywhere.

PRESTON HOUSE, FAVERSHAM

By a strange co-incidence not long after our return from Canterbury the advertisement for Kilvert Society Christmas Cards in a national weekly brought an order for some from Faversham. With them I sent a little note saying that it was obvious that the buyer was interested in Kilvert, so what did he know about Preston House? The answer was not long in coming, it was demolished in 1930 but he put me in touch with a professional man in Faversham who has the sale advertisement and photograph of it when it was up for auction in 1910—and I now have photostats of both, plus that of a plan of house and grounds. Furthermore when we have the next "session" copying (photographically) old photographs etc I can send to Faversham for the originals and they will be sent on loan for copying; thus enabling me to add Preston House to the collection of relevant photographs that we already possess. An even stranger coincidence is that our professional friend lives in a house built on part of the beautiful grounds of Preston House which so attracted Kilvert on his visits there. No doubt there will be more to say on these matters in subsequent newsletters. Things seem to turn up so unexpectedly that one never knows what is going to happen next!!!

THE WETTEST JUNE SINCE 1879

A member who was at the Commemoration Service at HAY last July has contributed the following little item.....and very apt it is!!!

I was interested to read that according to the records, June 1971 was the wettest June since that of 1879. Sadly that was Kilvert's last; as he said in his letter to Mary Powell written on July 7th 1879, "We have had so many rainy Sundays this Summer".

It was also the summer of Tennyson's poem called

"Prefatory Poem to My Brother's Sonnets"

in which he wrote:-

Midnight June 30th 1879

Midnight--in no Midsummer tune
The breakers lash the shores:
The cuckoo of a joyless June
Is calling out of doors.

And those of us who were at Hay on July 4th 1971 might echo another verse of the same poem:

Midnight--and joyless June gone by,
And from the deluged park
The cuckoo of a worse July
Is calling through the dark !

APOLOGY TO CONTRIBUTORS

Several excellent contributions are held over (some for the second time) this is either because they are the "un-dated" type of articles that would be just as fresh next year as this year; or because they are about the area of the Welsh borderland. But in both cases held over in favour of Wiltshire area items--as this newsletter is primarily about the service at Langley Burrell. The September newsletter will be centered around the St Harmon service in October and the relevant articles will be used then. This is therefore an apology and an explanation. Will members who are thinking of sending in contributions please do so, and not be put off because there are 2 or 3 on hand; it is wonderful to have items on hand---the more the better; they will all be used sooner or later, so please send them in now.

SAD NEWS FROM CLYRO

Just as this newsletter was being got ready for posting to Lancashire for duplication (on Monday the 29th May) a telephone message from Clyro brought news of the sudden death--on Saturday - of Mr.H.R.Evans, Headmaster of Clyro Primary School. Mr and Mrs Evans have been members since the earlier years of the Society and Mr Evans (organist at Clyro Church) has played for every Kilvert Commemoration Service held at Clyro, and also at Newbridge-on-Wye in 1968. It was largely due to Mr and Mrs Evans that the Exhibition of Kilvertiana at Clyro School in 1965 was so successful, this was the year of the "Centenary Service" held there (when 500 people packed Clyro Church). We also have to thank him for giving us the extracts from the old registers of Clyro School, thus enabling us to know the ages and other details of most of the children that Francis Kilvert writes about in the Diary; for this is the school where he would go to help out with the teaching (as well as to the Penny Readings)--it is very little different now to what it was when Kilvert knew it. It was due to the willing co-operation of Mr Evans and his staff that the Children's Competition was started, at Clyro in 1965, and since then he has judged the entries in other years when other schools have competed--on several occasions.

The funeral is to be at Clyro on Wednesday next; our two local Committee Members (Miss C.A.Powell and Miss M.M.Mantle) have been asked to represent the Kilvert Society; and I have sent a letter of sympathy to Mrs Evans and the family.