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THE KILVERT SOCIETY

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1st October, 1973.

Dear Member,

First of all please note my new address---there is a paragraph overleaf regarding this. NOW FOR NEWS OF ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE AUTUMN SERVICE and UNVEILING THE NEW PLAQUE ON ASHBROOK HOUSE, CLYRO. The June newsletter gave the news that the service was to be at LLANIGON and that the plaque would be unveiled later on in the same day. HERE ARE THE FULL DETAILS.

This will be our second Kilvert Service at THE CHURCH OF ST. EIGON at LLANIGON ...the previous one being in 1959, with the Bishop of Swansea & Brecon giving the ADDRESS. The Society is making a gift to Llanigon Church to mark this occasion.

THE SERVICE WILL COMMENCE AT 2.45 p.m. Please particularly note this. The early start is in order to get the unveiling ceremony at Clyro over before tea. It will be conducted by the REV. I. L. DAVIES, M.A., Vicar of Hay with Llanigon and Capel-y-Ffin; assisted by the REV. D. N. LOCKWOOD, B.A., Vicar of Hanley Swan with Hanley Castle in Worcestershire. The ADDRESS will be given by the REV. J. R. WILLIAMS, who is the Rector of Puddleston with Hatfield; Stoke Prior, Humber and Docklow---a group of parishes near Leominster in Herefordshire. The ACT OF REMEMBRANCE will be by the REV. D. T. W. PRICE, M.A., of St. David's University College, Lampeter. ALL ARE MEMBERS OF THE KILVERT SOCIETY. Reading the LESSONS will be Mr. Melville Thomas of Brecon and Mr M. L. Bourdillion of Llwyn Madoc in Breconshire...both are members of the same Thomas family as the Llanthomas people who figure so largely in Kilvert's Diary (there is a note about Llanthomas etc on a following page) and both are members of our Society.

TEA (in HAY) after the service has been arranged so that those who want to get away early can have it at 4.30 and miss the unveiling at Clyro; whilst those who come straight to Clyro from Llanigon (it is about three miles---via Hay) can have their tea at 5 o'clock or shortly afterwards. This arrangement also suits Mrs. Knights at the OLDE BLACK LION GUEST HOUSE & RESTAURANT (where TEA for 100 has been ordered) as only about half can be seated at one time; although, as it is to be a Buffet Tea there will also be standing room. The OLDE BLACK LION, is in Lion Street, Hay-on-Wye, and there is parking space for about 15 cars (and the big council car park is also not far away). As tea for 100 only has been ordered TICKETS will be needed (nobody admitted to tea without a ticket). THEY ARE 35p EACH, and can be obtained from the Hon. Secretary (address as above), from Wyeval Ltd in Hereford, and from our Clyro committee members Miss Powell & Miss Mantle.

THE UNVEILING OF THE NEW PLAQUE AT CLYRO---with great pleasure we announce that this will be done by Mr WYNFORD VAUGHAN-THOMAS---well known to all of us through RADIO and TELEVISION over a period of many years, and one with a great regard for Kilvert. It was grand news when we heard that, busy man as he is, he was able to accept our invitation to do this. "Honoured" was the word he used. There is a reference to programmes which included Kilvert in which Mr Vaughan-Thomas participated, on another page. THE UNVEILING WILL BE AT 4.30 p.m. Dr William Plomer will be with us both at Llanigon and Clyro and will speak at Ashbrook House...as will other prominent members of the Society. This event will surely go down as a "red letter day" in the annals of the Kilvert Society.

The usual motor-coach will run from Hereford to Llanigon; and afterwards to Clyro and then back into Hay for tea. It will leave HEREFORD TOWN HALL at 1.15 p.m. PROMPT and pick up en route as usual (via Whitecross). Fare will be 40p per person, please book at Wyeval Ltd Photographic Dealers, Bridge Street, Hereford; or with the Hon. Sec. as above. PLEASE BOOK EARLY; cash when booking greatly appreciated.

If a poster (or posters) comes with this newsletter please do your best to get it (them) exhibited as prominently as possible. Those members living in the "KILVERT COUNTRY" (of this Welsh borderland and of Wiltshire) will also find a leaflet enclosed, with full details of the ESSAY COMPETITION that we are running for the young people of those areas....on a subject connected with the new plaque at Clyro; we hope that members receiving these leaflets will use them to bring this competition to the notice of those eligible to compete for the splendid prizes we offer, PERHAPS IN SOME CASES USING THEM AS POSTERS; details of this ESSAY COMPETITION can also be found further on in this newsletter.

Yours sincerely,

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

Overleaf will be found details of the WALK that is being arranged for Saturday the 13th October...now a regular and very popular event on the day previous to a Kilvert Service.

NOTES and NEWS by the Hon. Secretary-with contributions from members.

Hon. Secretary's new address.

By the time this newsletter reaches our members my wife and I will most likely be at our new address...8 Prince Edward Road, Broomy Hill, Hereford; in any case all letters from now on should be addressed there, for we are there every day. The telephone number remains the same. It is a move of only about 400 yards, further up Broomy Hill and around a corner to the right. Members passing through Hereford and wishing to call will easily find us; especially those who have called on a previous occasion at the old address.

THE WALK ON OCTOBER 13th

A walk on the day previous to a Kilvert Service has become so popular that it is something that we must try to keep up. June 23rd was the last such walk (the day before the Brecon Cathedral service) there is a paragraph about it further on. The arrangements for Saturday 13th October are much the same as on the several previous such occasions. Meet near the Baskerville Arms at Clyro at 11 a.m. each bringing their own picnic lunch and tea. The various cars will then proceed over the hills to the agreed place from which the walk will start, perhaps to the usual place from which the walk "over the moors to the Rocks of Aberedw" starts for this is always popular and hasn't been done just lately. Members from Clyro and from Hay will take charge and lead the way, for it is unlikely that either of us can be there (tho' we may turn up); newcomers may like to know that this is an easy walk of about 2 miles each way, over soft turf in most places. Usually we have our picnic lunch where the cars are parked and the walk starts, coming back to the same spot for tea. Those who have a copy of "Collected Verse" should read Kilvert's poem "The Rocks of Aberedw" ---it so well describes this walk.

LLANIGON, LLANTHOMAS, and the THOMAS FAMILY

It is a strange fact that nowhere in Kilvert's Diary is "Mr. Thomas" of Llanthomas referred to as a clergyman, and therefore there is no reference to him as Vicar of Llanigon (which he was...for many years.) This is plainly stated on his tombstone in the churchyard at Llanigon; the inscription reads "Rev. William Jones Thomas, third son of David Thomas of Welfield, Radnorshire. 27 years Vicar of Llanigon; born 4th December 1811. Died 6th February 1886." His grave is to be found below the east end of the church, and alongside are those of Mrs Thomas and a number of the many sons and daughters, one of these being Miss Frances Eleanor Thomas (Kilvert's "Daisy") who died on 18th December 1928, age 76. Llanthomas House was demolished more than twenty years ago and all that remains today to guide one to where it stood is the drive gate, nearly opposite the narrow road leading up to Llanigon Church. Llanthomas Farm pinpoints the site of Llanthomas House, just behind it but a little more westwards.

It is very fitting that two members of the Thomas family should be taking part in our Llanigon service; both gentlemen are descended from the same David Thomas who was "Daisy's" grandfather. Incidentally, the Thomas family are still at Welfield- which has now reverted to its old Welsh name Cefndyrys- the handsome Rouse which looks down on the Royal Welsh Showground near Builth Wells.

Francis Kilvert was a frequent visitor to Llanthomas House, both before and after being refused permission to propose to "Daisy" so it is quite likely that he on more than one occasion preached in Llanigon Church; the destroyed notebooks of his Diary might have confirmed this. We must always remember that the three volumes that we have are themselves but one third of what the 22 notebooks would have produced, if all had been printed in full.

Some will wonder why I put the name "Daisy" in inverted commas. It is because that wasn't her name at all, and the family always called her Fanny. It has been suggested that it was only Kilvert who called her "Daisy", and probably because not only did he have a sister called Fanny but there was Fanny Bevan at Hay Castle, where he was also a very frequent visitor.

MR WYNFORD VAUGHAN-THOMAS

A number of members have already expressed their satisfaction and pleasure that Mr Wynford Vaughan-Thomas is to unveil the new plaque on Ashbrook House Clyro on Sunday...immediately after the Llanigon service. Mr Vaughan-Thomas is an admirer of Kilvert and it will be good to hear him speak at Clyro. I would think that many members and other readers of Kilvert's Diary saw and heard him in the feature on the KILVERT COUNTRY that went out on all stations of the Independent Television Authority on August 14th (in the afternoon). It was so obvious that he has a great "feeling" for Kilvert; we saw him walking slowly up the church path at Clyro, reading from the Diary; and later leaning over the chapel wall at Rhosgoch, again reading from the Diary and again in Hay, beneath the walls of the Castle. The well known episode of the father and children at Mousecastle was pleasingly re-enacted by a bearded "father" and some pretty children who would certainly have touched Kilvert's heart.

This is not the only programme featuring Kilvert and the Kilvert Country that Mr. Vaughan-Thomas has been concerned with over the years...the one that I remember best was back in his days with the B.B.C. — and on radio — he and Mr Roland Lucas had cycled the Welsh Border, coming up from Chepstow and over the Gospel Pass en route to Hay. There a recording was made, with a number of "locals" participating. Mr Stokoe talking about Father Ignatius; Harry Soan on hill farming etc; with me saying my piece about Kilvert and the Kilvert Country; finally the late Mr Kinsey Morgan (as Deputy Chairman of R.C.C.) welcomed them to Radnorshire—in the proper place, the very centre of Hay bridge—where the cyclists left us to pedal their way to Clyro and over the hills to Newchurch and beyond.

Mr. Wynford Vaughan-Thomas is no stranger to Clyro...and I was pleased to hear him say on August 14th that whenever he hears Clyro mentioned the one thought that immediately springs to him is ...Kilvert.

I heard a rumour that this August 14th television feature was being repeated on September 14th. If so then I hope that many more saw and heard it. These sheets had to go away to the duplicators before that date.

THE ESSAY COMPETITION

Someone suggested that we might have a competition for children and young people in connection with the unveiling of the new plaque at Clyro. The committee had already approved the spending of the usual sort of sum on such a competition during 1973 and we were thinking how best to go about it when something happened which enables us to make it open to a wider area (and also with larger prizes) than at first envisaged. This is firstly due to the kindness of Jonathan Cape Ltd in agreeing to give a set of the three volumes of KILVERTS DIARY as a major prize (they are £12 the set)...and secondly to the fact that we are to receive a nice cheque from H.T.V. (Cardiff) for the use of a number of the photographs seen in the programme on August 14th. This allows the Kilvert Society to put up another set of the three volumes as the main prize in the second section (there are to be four sections in all, from senior pupils down to the "under-nines".) Dr Plomer's suggestion for the subject for the essays has been adopted (for all but the under-nines). It is..."Why was a tablet in memory of Francis Kilvert placed on Ashbrook House at Clyro in October 1973? Who was he? Why is he remembered?" There will be plenty of time allowed, for the closing date is to be 1st March 1974; the judge will be Mr Frederick Grice B.A., of Worcester (until recently Head of the English Department of Worcester College of Education—a valued member of the Kilvert Society) and the competition is open to children and young people living in a wide area of what has come to be called "The Kilvert Country". A list of parishes...in Herefordshire, Radnorshire, Breconshire and Wiltshire...appears in the leaflet/poster which is enclosed with this newsletter to all members living in these areas. Any other member who wants one to pass on to someone within the area can have same on request...or several if good use can be made of them. All details concerning this competition will of course be found on them.

PRIZES....Any offers?

It might well be that some generous-minded member may feel like providing one of the major prizes, instead of the Society having to find the money for it. The second set of three volumes will cost £12. Any member who feels inclined to provide this second set will have their name inscribed in them as the donor; and will have the grateful thanks of the Society. Please contact the Hon.Sec.

BRECON CATHEDRAL ———24th June 1973

What a splendid day this was....something really outstanding.

Two motor-coaches (both full) left Hereford in the morning, picked up in Hay, went on via Llanigon and Talgarth (passing Trefecca and Llangores Lake) to arrive in Brecon just right for the company to eat their picnic lunch in the grassy patch beyond the old graveyard and towards the "Priory Groves"; with nice time to see the grand old building and its treasures afterwards and yet get a good seat before it really began to fill up. Folk came from far and near (as usual) and before 3 o'clock the nave looked to be very full indeed, with some in the aisles. About 350 all told; perhaps more, some say nearer 400. Dr Plomer came with us on one of the coaches and just before the service began he was interviewed by Anita Morgan (B.B.C.—Cardiff) and with him Mrs. Hurlbutt of Hawaii—undoubtedly our member from furthest away. No doubt very many heard this next morning in "Good morning, Wales". Full details on who took part were on the front page of the newsletter dated 12th June, but it may not be out of place to repeat the "highlights". The DEAN OF BRECON took the service. Dr Plomer read one lesson and the new Vicar of Clyro (the Rev. D. E. Rees) the other. The singing was wonderful, but we expected it to be...for what a reputation has Brecon Cathedral Choir under David Gedge—with his wife (Hazel Davies) at the organ. The Bevington organ from Hay Castle before the service actually started, and the main "Hill" organ afterwards. A splendid anthem (see p.3 of the June n/1 for notes on the music)...and well known hymns sung as one would expect them to be sung in a Welsh

Cathedral (Kilvert's favourites among them). Then the ADDRESS (or SERMON)—our good member and V.P. the Rev. William Price of Lampeter excelled himself (see footnote re this); and at the end — the Bishop of Swansea & Brecon pronounced The Blessing. An outstanding event that will surely live long in the memory of all present; many have since written in just that strain.

After the service came TEA....more than the allotted 150 were catered for in the nearby Cathedral Refectory; by Mrs. Melville Thomas and her band of helpers. What a splendid tea it was too....tea and chatter and meeting old friends again (and I hear that those who couldn't get in to the Refectory for tea—as they had no tea ticket — were well looked after at the Castle of Brecon Hotel, where we had arranged for an overflow of up to 100.) Then, back into the Cathedral for our "Hour after tea" (the Refectory not being suitable and no other hall nearby), thanks to the kindness of the Dean. Dr William Plomer opened these proceedings with a reading from a little bit of unpublished Diary which still survives...Kilvert's journey to Brecon (by train) to attend an Archdeacons Visitation in what was then the Priory Church (now the Cathedral); How he nearly tempted "Bevan of Hay" to play truant and go walking in the Priory Groves instead, and how "Tom Williams of Llowes" missed the return train, in spite of it being kept waiting quite a time for him (those were the days!!) Following were hymns, beautifully sung as solos —in English and in Welsh—by Mrs Hurlbutt of Hawaii (see footnote). Then Mr Frederick Grice of Worcester read a most interesting paper on "Kilvert's Literary Background"—to be followed by Mrs Hurlbutt giving us further hymns partly in English and partly in Welsh....and our "Hour after tea" was over sooner than anyone could have anticipated. (Mrs Hurlbutt was accompanied on the Bevington organ by the Rev. William Price....our versatile Vice-President).

The day had been fine, but for a shower around tea-time; tho' visibility was poor and newcomers to Brecon went away unaware of the grand panorama of the Beacons from higher parts of the town; our homeward journey (via Bwlch, Cwmdau, Talgarth and Clyro) and our visit to Llansantffraed Church during a break in a thunderstorm is described in the item by Dr Plomer titled "AT THE GRAVE OF HENRY VAUGHAN"—a little further on in this newsletter.

KILVERTS LITERARY BACKGROUND

Duplicated copies of Mr Grice's excellent talk (as given in Brecon Cathedral) are now available at 10p each (stamp for postage much appreciated). They run to 4 pages many have been sold already—but at present still plenty left.

There are still some of his talk given at the A.G.M. in April..."KILVERT-A NEGLECTED GENIUS" (at 15p each-eight foolscap pages)

Please note...you may send postage stamps in payment for either of these; we use such a lot, and this will make it easier for the buyer.

MRS HURLBUTT:

Not everyone knows exactly how Mrs.Hurlbutt fits into "The Kilvert Story"; so a little explanation will no doubt be appreciated.

In the latter part of the third volume of the Diary—when Kilvert was Vicar of Bredwardine—we come across the Powell family of Brobury several times. When Mary Powell of Brobury left home to go out into the world Francis Kilvert wrote her a very kind letter, with good advice. Subsequently she settled in the U.S.A. and became Mrs.Morris, Mrs Hurlbutt is her grand-daughter, she was Miss Mary Joan Morris before her marriage to Dr Frank Hurlbutt. A treasured possession in the Morris home in Pennsylvania is that letter written in 1879 by Francis Kilvert. Dr and Mrs Hurlbutt live in Hawaii, but come to Europe most years; in 1971 they managed to get to our service at Hay-on-Wye; but their 1972 visit was not timed quite right to be with us at Langley Burrell. We are glad that they "made it" for Brecon this year; and very glad that it could be arranged that Mrs Hurlbutt sang in the Cathedral, and so delighted the large company present. Before marriage Mrs Hurlbutt (as Miss Morris) was musical director to a group of High Schools in Pennsylvania, and took part in many a Gymanfu Ganu...for there is a tremendous Welsh influence in that part of the U.S.A.

AT THE GRAVE OF HENRY VAUGHAN

In view of Kilvert's inclination to poets and poetry, and of his love for the Welsh countryside, one might have expected to find in his Diary some allusion to Henry Vaughan (1621-1695), outstanding among Welsh poets who have written in English. Vaughan's grave, only a few miles from Brecon, could easily have been visited by Kilvert, and the deep devotion of the "Swan of Usk" to his native countryside must surely have aroused a fellow-feeling. And if Kilvert knew them he would surely have valued the two most memorable and famous of Vaughan's poems, those beginning.... "I saw Eternity the other night" and ... "They are all gone into the world of light".

The poignant poem by Siegfried Sassoon (1886-1967) called "At the Grave of Henry Vaughan" and written nearly 50 years ago is well known and may have done much to awake curiosity about Vaughan. When I told Sassoon that I had included this poem in a reading at the Three Choirs Festival in Hereford he complained that people were "always" reading it and putting it in anthologies and neglecting his later poems.

While planning the programme for the 24th June, Mr. Prosser, who is a master at filling every moment of a day with activity, had thoughtfully provided that when the Kilvert Society's service in Brecon Cathedral was over, the coaches from Hereford should return, weather permitting, by way of Llansantffread-juxta-Usk, a few miles away, so that we might see Vaughan's grave and pay our respects to his memory and achievement.

Now Brecon, as Kilvert wrote, gets "a deal of rain", and although we had just the right sort of weather for the finely conducted service in the Cathedral, the homeward journey took us quickly into decidedly unpermissive looking weather. Heavy, lowering clouds with a sulphurous tinge, brought repeated flashes of lightning, claps of thunder, and a continuing deluge, so when the coaches stopped below the entrance to the churchyard at Llansantffread there was no reckless stampede to get out of them.

A visit to the Bronte country is best made in rough weather, preferably a blizzard, and a visit to the Vaughan country is perfectly appropriate on a wet day, because it is to "a deal of rain" that the valley of Vaughan's beloved Usk owes its marvellous lush and leafy greenness. Nothing short of a cloudburst or a direct hit by lightning could have stopped us, especially as our much-valued member, the Rev. Brian James, had come from his rectory at Talybont-on-Usk to receive us, and was on the look-out for us, fortunately beneath an umbrella.

Up the sloping churchyard we walked to see the well-preserved stone slab under the yew and to read the inscription and then having repeatedly shaken ourselves like wet dogs in the porch, went into the church. This was built in 1885 but incorporates some monuments from the earlier church as well as a conspicuous marble tablet, dated 1896 and inscribed with clear, if slightly art nouveau lettering, in memory of Henry Vaughan.

To my fellow pilgrims I said a few words about Vaughan, read a poem by him, and ended with Sassoon's moving elegy. One of our good coach-drivers had come along with us, and my heart was warmed by his keen interest in the associations of the place. I think all of us who were there cherish the memory of this experience at the end of a rewarding day. It had been made possible by the enterprise of Mr. Prosser and the kindness of the Rev. Brian James, and fortunately not made impossible by thunder, lightning, and a somewhat lavish "deal of rain".

William Plomer.

COFIO KILVERT

This is the heading to the following item, taken from Y LLAN —the Welsh Church paper; it is by the Rev. William Price and is dated GORFFENNAF 6, 1973. Our Welsh members will no doubt appreciate it, and all other members will be most interested in it, I'm sure, and will probably try their skill at seeing how many words are obvious through their context. (Aberhonddu is Brecon and Abertawe is Swansea)

Cynhaliwyd gwasanaeth arbennig y Gymdeithas Kilvert yn Eglwys Gadeiriol Aberhonddu ar 24 Mehefin. Yr oedd yr eglwys wych yn orlawn gyda aelodau y Gymdeithas a chynulleidfya yr Eglwys Gadeiriol. Yr oedd y gwasanaeth dan arweiniad y Deon, y Tra Pharchedig W. Ungod Jacob, gyda'r Is-ganonïaid, y Parchedigion David Walters a Norman Lea. Darllenwyd y llithoedd gan y Parchedig D.E.Rees, Ficer Cleirwy, a'r Dr. William Plomer, Llywydd y Gymdeithas, bardd enwog Saesneg. Pregethwyd gan y Parchedig William Price, darlithydd yng Ngholeg Dewi Sant, Llanbedr Pont Steffan a rhoddwyd y fendith gan Arglwydd Esgob Abertawe ac Aberhonddu, y Gwir Barchedig J. J. A. Thomas. Yr oedd côr yr Eglwys Gadeiriol yn bresennol dan arweiniad David Gedge, a Hazel Davies wrth yr organ. Ar 61 te yr oedd cyfarfod yn y Gadeirlan i wrando ar Dr. Plomer yn darllen o ddyddiadur Kilvert ac i glywed Mr. Grice o Gaerwrangon yn darlithio ar gefndirllenyddol Kilvert, ac hefyd i wrando ar ganu gan Mrs. Hurlbutt o Hawaii, gyda'r Tad William Price wrth yr organ. Trefnwyd yr holl ddydd gan Mr. C. T. O. Prosser, Henffordd-50 blynedd i'r dydd ar 61 sefydliad Esgobaeth Abertawe ac Aberhonddu.

Yr oedd y Parchedig Francis Kilvert yn gurad Cleirwy (Sir Faesyfed), yn ficer Sant Harmon yn yr un sir, a ficer Bredwardine, ger y Gelli, yn y 1870aid, Y mae ei ddyddiadur yn enwog am lun o fywyd gwledig yng nghanol teyrnasiad y Frenhines Fictoria, ac y mae dros 700 o aelodau yn y Gymdeithas trwy'r byd. Gellir cael manylion o'r ysgrifennydd, 23 Broomy Hill, Henffordd.

A SHROPSHIRE WEDDING

Soon after the sheets of this newsletter go away for duplication our member and Vice-President the Rev.D.T.W.Price will be married, at the Parish Church of Wem, Shropshire---on Saturday 15th September---to Miss Alison Margaret Keeling-Roberts, daughter of Dr. and Mrs.J. Keeling-Roberts of Wem. A telegram of congratulations and good wishes will have been sent to William and Alison..."from all their friends of the Kilvert Society" on the day. This will, I am sure, echo the sentiments of all members, particularly so those who have been at the many Kilvert Services in which the Rev. William Price has taken a leading part. Some of us were privileged to meet his bride-to-be at Brecon in June. We shall hope to see much more of them both in the future.

OBITUARY

We report-with much regret-the death in July of a founder member who had links with Bredwardine and (in a way) with Francis Kilvert. This was Mrs. L.H.Matthews of Hereford, widow of Mr. T. A. Matthews---a very well known Hereford solicitor; who himself was a founder member and a Vice-President.

Members will be interested in the repetition of a little episode in her childhood which Mrs. Matthews recalled and which was the subject of an item in a newsletter of a number of years ago.

Mrs. Matthews' mother was born in Bredwardine; indeed she was the very Jane Davies of Fine Street who Kilvert reported as having to crawl across the square in front of the Red Lion on her hands and knees; because of the slippery ice during the great frost of 1878 (see the entry for 29th December 1878---all editions). James Davies (churchwarden) was her grandfather (Jane's father) and Mrs. Matthews was pleased with Kilvert's description of him..."handsome, grey-haired, grey-eyed" (p.345 in Vol.1).

But this is not all...Mrs. Matthews remembered going with her mother, when a small girl, to put flowers on family graves in Bredwardine Churchyard. Her mother (Mrs. William Pantall, of Old Letton Court) also put flowers on another grave, well away from those of her family. Her daughter enquired "Why"? and was told that "it was the grave of a very nice clergyman they had at Bredwardine, but who died young". (No need to ask his name!!!)

A KILVERT CARPET

The wife of a Bredwardine farmer has at last finished a large carpet---it has been 14 years in the making, and incorporates scenes and pictures of Kilvert interest. This carpet has been exhibited several times in this area and has drawn great praise and much interest. Now it is for sale ---at offers over £300. Anyone interested should approach Mrs. Hughes, The Pentre Farm, Bredwardine, Hereford. regarding further details and negotiations.

A WALK TO "THE ROUNDABOUT"

This aptly describes the walk of Saturday the 23rd June (the day before the Brecon Cathedral Service)...although "The Roundabout" isn't what it used to be (Kilvert calls it the "Clump Hill" in one of the three original notebooks which still survive)...in the days of youth of many of us when it was a landmark for miles around, a great clump of trees surrounded by a stone wall, on the highest bit of the Begyns, just above the road that goes over them from Llowes to Painscastle. I am told that a goodly number of cars turned up at 11 a.m. in Clyro, some from far off. Our two Clyro committee-members; Miss C. Powell and Miss M. Mantle-led the way, towards Painscastle, all parked near Croes-feilog, at about the highest point of this road over the Begyns and, after lunch, walked the two miles or so along the ridge walk and up to the Roundabout. The broken wall is still there and one or two bits of dead tree---and the triangulation point at over 1,350 feet; a grand place for a panoramic view over much of Radnorshire in one direction, with the Wye Valley and the Black Mountains and Brecon Beacons beyond it in the other. After lying around and chatting, and gazing about to pick out landmarks, they all set off back towards the parked cars; ready for tea by the time that goal was reached. It is an easy walk, over springy turf between the bracken, just right for the big company of all ages that invariably turns up on such an occasion. The newcomers especially enjoyed it, and before dispersing one of these (from Worcester) voiced the thanks of the whole company to the two Clyro ladies who had been their guides. Something about the proposed walk for Saturday the 13th October can be found on page 2 of this newsletter.

FROM LANCASHIRE TO CLYRO (ON A BICYCLE)

Our Bolton cyclist member is in the area again as I write this, so perhaps in the Spring newsletter we will have his account of visits to the site of the cabin of the "Solitary" and the grave of "Tom Tobacco"but now I am going to quote from his article in the OLDHAM CHRONICLE of August 4th (1973).

Mr. Winstanley tells me that he has contributed to it each week in summer for the last 19 years, under the nom-de-plume of "Wanderer". In this recent article Mr. Winstanley quotes the passage from the Diary which begins ... "I walked to Clyro by the old familiar fields, and when I looked down upon the dear old village" and ends "my heart went out in love towards the beloved place and people among whom I lived so long and so happily"—and goes on to say that "there are times when I discover a book that gives a beautiful insight of a countryside long ago, and so deeply interested do I become that I just simply have to go and see the places described"; and then he "remembers a grey misty day last year, when with the diary in my saddle-bag I spent a leisurely day in the area between Bredwardine and Clyro searching out many places it described, continually opening and reading the book in the actual spots".

Mr. Winstanley left Bolton at 4 a.m. one day last week to cycle to the Kilvert Country again, to explore it further and visit more spots he has read about. He really should one day meet one of those "clever guys" who think of such visits merely as some form of "hero-worship"; having such little understanding themselves. A little of Mr. Winstanleys Lancashire plain-speaking would do them the world of good!!!

1974 EVENTS

It will be remembered by those who attended the A.G.M. in April that a vote was taken over the venue of the May Coach tour of 1974. The suggestions voted for were GOWER and BATH. Gower got most votes, with Bath a good second. But since then the picture has changed.

We have been invited to hold the 1974 AUTUMN SERVICE at ILSTON CHURCH (in GOWER), the Committee has been consulted and the result is that the invitation has been accepted; even the date is tentatively fixed ... October 13th.

Most members will know the answer for anyone who says "Why Ilston"? for this is where Mrs. Venable's sister was the wife of the Rector, (the Rev. Mr. Westhorp) The Diary tells of several holidays that Kilvert spent at Ilston Rectory (now the old Rectory and the home of H.H. Judge Rowe Harding and Mrs. Rowe Harding, both members of our Society, and the originators of the idea of a Kilvert Service at Ilston).... there are entertaining accounts of Kilvert's visits to many places in Gower to be found in the Diary; no doubt we could include a call on the Rev. T.J. & Mrs. Lewis at Crofty— and a visit to one of the churches that Kilvert described—on the same day as the Ilston service.

This means (I would assume) that we revert to BATH for our May tour, making it a whole day instead of a half. We have a number of members in Bath, no doubt some of them would be our guides on visits to places in Bath with Kilvert connections. Any views, suggestions, amendments etc. by post please, so that it can be fixed up prior to the A.G.M. next April.

It has already been announced that the 1974 A.G.M. and Social Evening is to be on Friday the 26th April; when we are to be entertained by either Mr. Colin Davies and Mr. David Davies (or both) they are K. S. members and well known broadcasters.

The one date not yet fixed is that of the LLOWES SERVICE; but it will no doubt be towards the end of June...we must get it settled before the next newsletter goes out (early April).

CHRISTMAS CARDS

The new card for 1973 is most attractive and is already selling well. There was a description of it in the June newsletter—repeated now.

The view is of THE OTTERS POOL (PWLLDWRGWY)—on the Wye near Clyro. The diary entry for 27th January 1872 tells how Kilvert "set out for Pwllldwrgwy to get some wild snowdrops for Mrs. Venables". The Black Mountains are in the background with the Gospel Pass (Bwlch yr Efengel) at their lowest point. Nearer are the wooded hills beyond Llanigon and Llanthomas; with the Wye in the foreground. This now makes 8 different cards available; all with the same simple greeting which will suit anyone... "BEST WISHES FOR CHRISTMAS AND THE NEW YEAR" They are of Bredwardine, Clyro, Hay-on-Wye etc. and the Wiltshire churches of Hardenhuish and Langley Burrell. Packets of any one card are 5 for 22½p, plus 3½p postage. BUT WHY NOT TRY AN ASSORTED PACKET OF ALL 8? PRICE (WITH ENVELOPES) 38p (plus 5p postage) from the Hon. Secretary. Callers (only) can obtain them from Miss Tong in Clyro and from the Pierpoint Gallery, Church Street, Hereford (and stockists in several other towns etc).

Christmas card stockists also have the Society's PUBLICATIONS for sale. Still fairly ample stocks of "COLLECTED VERSE"..."LOOKING BACKWARDS" "KILVERT AND THE WORDSWORTH CIRCLE"... and "MORE CHAPTERS FROM THE KILVERT SAGA" but all else sold out. £2 will buy all 4 (including postage in bulk) ...so much in them that is NEW INFORMATION that can be read nowhere else.

FROM PAST COMMEMORATION SERVICES

Duplicated copies of the ADDRESS given at a number of Commemoration Services in past years are available (from the Hon.Sec.) at 10p each (plus postage) ...details of which are available supplied on request. Mr.Price's fine ADDRESS given at Brecon Cathedral in June will shortly be available; and, at the same time that given by the Rev. Brian James at St.Harmon in October last, for which many have been patiently (or impatiently) waiting!!

KILVERTS DIARY

Just a reminder that the Society sells the three volumes as well as the abridged edition; and that good stocks of both are held by the Hon.Secretary ready for immediate delivery. The set of three volumes is £12, plus 25p towards the postage; and the abridged edition (paperback) is 95p plus 13p for postage at the new rate. In addition to these the abridged edition is coming out again in hardback, at something over £2 (perhaps it is £2.50, I have mislaid Cape's letter giving me the price and the release date; but it's very early in December--- just right for buying for a Christmas present. We have a quantity on order).

KILVERT AND JEFFERIES IN SURREY

This is the heading to a contribution from our member Mr.Ivor Lewis of Mountain Ash in Glamorgan, where he lives and teaches----he also knows Surrey quite well...as those who read his contribution will soon realise.

Volume One of the 'Diary' (pp.292-298) records a stay which Kilvert made at Claygate in Surrey in January 1871 with his sister Emily ('Emmie') and her husband Samuel Wyndowe ('Sam') home from India the previous May; his brother 'Perch' was at the house as well. Where precisely it was, in Claygate, I have not been able to discover.

In this section of the 'Diary' the most interesting single item is clearly the description of Claremont, just outside Esher, the stately home commissioned by Lord Clive in 1768 in place of an earlier house built for himself on this site by Sir John Vanbrugh. Kilvert was mainly interested in the human associations of the place, especially its links with the French and British royal families, but he gives interesting accounts of house and grounds too. The house still stands and is open to the public, although at rather long intervals.

In addition to this local sight-seeing (for Claygate is but a mile or two away), Kilvert did at least two trips up to London, a place always of interest to him despite his love of the countryside. The nearest suburban railway station at that time was the one at Thames Ditton, three miles distant as he mentions, but a mere saunter for that prodigious walker. It is amusing to think that Claygate now has its own quite flourishing station - it has developed considerably as a dormitory suburb or 'village' - in contrast to most of the other places associated with Kilvert, which have tended to lose their railway stations in the intervening years, not to gain one.

Kilvert gives no particulars of his route from Claygate to Thames Ditton, but it is possible that this was the way still called Claygate Lane and still, in places, of a leafy winding rural character, for all that it is broken into, in its modern course, by the A3, the Portsmouth Road, and by the Kingston By-pass, two roads as formidable as any in the land.

What makes this point uncertain for me arises from the fact that Claygate Lane has been written about by another Wiltshire celebrity, the naturalist Richard Jefferies, who was also in the area in the 1870s. Jefferies moved from Swindon in 1877, in the interests of his career as an author and journalist to Surbiton in Surrey, staying at No.2, Woodside. Edward Thomas, the poet and biographer of Jefferies, writes :

Woodside is a small block of whitish, stuccoed, flat-fronted houses of two storeys, just beyond the last shops and just before Douglas Road, on the righthand side of the Ewell Road as you go to Tolworth...No 2 is the second house towards

Ewell, and has a poor small fir behind the railings of the front garden. It has been overtaken by London for some time (Thomas was writing in 1908), though its front windows have a swelling, leafy view of Hounslow, Richmond Park and Wimbledon Common on one side, and of Hook, Chessington, Claygate, and their woods, on the other.

(I have put in Thomas's description almost in full despite the fact that it no longer applies - Woodside having given way to yet more shops since his time - because it paints Jefferies's surroundings so well and conveys so vividly that interpenetration of town and country in the old London suburbs. Anyone interested in visiting the spot will find the ground of Jefferies's sojourn in the busy Ewell Road directly facing the St Matthew C. of E. Primary School which was built in 1879, just two years after Jefferies's arrival, - built incidentally in that Gothic Revival style which one tends to connect more with village schools in, say, the Vale of the White Horse than with town schools, and so a real reminder of Jefferies's era.)

Jefferies was struck by the degree to which this part of Surrey had retained its country character and a rich bird-life particularly. He did a good deal of walking in the area and wrote several essays about it. One of these, called 'Woodlands', describes the attractions at different times of the year of Claygate Lane; but Edward Thomas states that this article is about "Woodstock Lane from Long Ditton to Claygate". Today Woodstock Lane crosses the Kingston By-pass about half a mile nearer to the big Ace of Spades roundabout than Claygate Lane. Still, whichever way Kilvert travelled, he may not have been his usual observant self - the weather was really cold, "the roads were too icy for the horse to travel" - and the walk home from Thames Ditton on January 12th was "in a brilliant hard frost". But even if the impressions of the two men were contrasting ones, it is pleasant to think of those sensitive Wiltshire observers pacing over much the same ground in outer London in the 1870's and seeing it as not so very different from the thoroughly rural scenes which both of them were more accustomed to.

BISHOP HURD-KINSMAN OF THE KILVERTS

From: HARTLEBURY CASTLE, by ERNEST HAROLD PEARCE. (Bishop of Worcester)

Published in 1926

From the chapter on Bishop Hurd:-

"He had friends indeed for whose welfare he cared, and whom he could help forward. One such was his chaplain, Richard Kilvert, uncle of Francis Kilvert the antiquary, who wrote a life of the Bishop. It must be admitted that he also was of Bishop Hurd's kin, for he came from Condover, where his father, Thomas Kilvert the Bishop's cousin, was a yeoman, and a steward of an estate. Hurd recommended him to George III for a canonry of Worcester; 'you have heard', he told Balguy, 'of the King's favour to me and Mr. Kilvert. It makes us both very happy', and recommended him to the fourth stall on July 7th 1786. This brought to Kilvert (October 18th), the rectory of Knightwick, vacated by James Stillingfleet; on April 17th 1792, Hurd collated him to Grimley, and on May 25th 1793 to Alvechurch, upon which he resigned Knightwick. In June 1798 the chapter gave him the benefice of Kempsey. But Hurd was not content till he had brought his cousin-chaplain to Hartlebury Rectory, which became vacant (October 19th 1801) by the resignation of John Carver. As Kilvert clave to Kempsey till he exchanged it for the benefice of Harvington in December 1804, it is not to be denied that he was well provided for. By way of compensation the house possesses a not inconsiderable set of engravings and etchings of sacred pictures, bequeathed to it in 1870 by Miss Francis Maria Kilvert".

"The Bishop, aged nearly eighty, worshipping in the customary quiet of the old-time church at Hartlebury, to which it was his wont to lead his household, 'feeble, bent forward, and leaning on his staff, but always stopping at the rectorial pew after service, with a courteous inquiry after the health of the Kilverts,' "

Hon. Sec's note: the above was sent in by one of our Worcestershire members. No doubt many will find it of very considerable interest. It is interesting to note that several of the sacred pictures which were given to the Bishop of Worcester by Miss Maria Kilvert in 1870 can now be seen in the vestry of Clyro Church, for a few years ago they were given to the Kilvert Society by the then Bishop of Worcester.

(Francis Kilvert the antiquary was an uncle of Francis Kilvert the diarist)

LLECHRYD(LLECHRYD)

Readers of Kilvert's Diary are often puzzled as to the whereabouts of the railway station referred to as LLECHRYD, of which there are a number of entries in the three volumes, and some in the abridged edition too. An example which can be found in both is that for Saturday 10th September 1870—"We all left Newbridge for Clyro at 12.20. At Llechryd I saw Mary Bevan on the platform waiting to get into our train. Mary of course got into our carriage. At Three Cocks she took Mr. Venables on one side and told him"

Llechryd is more than a mile beyond the little town of Builth Wells, and the station is now known as Builth Road, up to a few years ago there were two stations there, a high level and a low level—now only the high level station remains, it is on the Central Wales line (Shrewsbury to Knighton, Llandrindod Wells, Llandovery etc to Llanelli; from where there is a connection to Swansea). The low level station was on the line from both Brecon and from Hereford (via Three Cocks) to Newbridge-on-Wye, Rhayader, St Harmon etc. One of the routes to Aberystwyth. The name for both stations was altered from Llechryd to Builth Road many years ago; I suspect because Llechryd was too difficult for anyone not Welsh.

The following extract from a "Tourist's Guide to the Wye"—published in 1887 by Edward Standord of Charing Cross—is of interest.

LLECHRYD STATION (p.93) Junction for the Central Wales Railway and the Mid Wales Railway (later to become the Cambrian Railway). This may claim to be the most exasperating junction in the three kingdoms; not only for its general inaccessibility but for the want of communication between the two stations, and the certainty of delay which rarely fails to meet the unfortunate traveller.

p.87...Three Cocks Station...Junction of the Midland Railway from Hereford and the Mid-Wales Railway. "The Wye, from Three Cocks to Glasbury, has been preparing in a considerable curve for the change from its wooded glens to the more open Herefordshire vales; but before committing himself to the tender mercies of the Mid-Wales Railway, which the tourist will find to be neither punctual or swift, he may make a short excursion to Talgarth and Llangorse Lake".

Despite all these shortcomings Kilvert made frequent use of both lines, and never seemed to have any complaints about either.
