

THE KILVERT SOCIETY

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6th April 1974

Dear Member,

The October newsletter (page 7 ... under "1974 Events") gave the date of this year's A.G.M. wrongly. It will be (as usual) at Eignbrook Church Hall and.....on Wednesday the 24th April at 7 p.m. (PROMPT)

As there are always some (new members and others) coming for the first time it will be useful if brief directions for getting there are given. Take the Brecon turning off the ring road, and in about 200 yards look out for Eignbrook Church on your right—with the Eye Hospital opposite it. The Hall is towards the rear of the church but can be seen from the road. **THERE IS A LARGE CAR PARK AT THE INN WHICH IS NEXT DOOR TO THE CHURCH (the Horse & Groom).** Those coming from the WEST arrive at Eignbrook before reaching the ring road.

The business meeting will, of course, come first—and if we start promptly will be over by 7-30 or thereabouts, giving us half an hour for a discussion about the Kilvert connections with BATH; where we go on Saturday 11th May (see overleaf). Mr F. Grice will read a few relevant extracts from the Diary etc. and bookings will be taken for 11th May. There may also be time for any other member who has a contribution to make towards the evenings entertainment, before 8 o'clock—when REFRESHMENTS will be served by some of our lady members—in the smaller room.

The main event of the evening will commence at approximately 9 o'clock.

This will be given by two of our London members, who are coming specially to entertain us. Their kindness in doing so will no doubt be greatly appreciated.

"THE HAPPY HIGHWAYS WHERE I WENT" -- some memories of the Kilvert Country, narrated by H. Colin Davis; with readings by David Davis.

The Davis Brothers are well known on RADIO; Many will remember David Davis as "Uncle David" of Children's Hour—and both have been heard many times in recent years. Colin Davis takes over the Epilogue on Radio 4 on Sunday nights at 11 p.m. starting on April 7th and will quote from Kilvert's Diary on Easter Sunday night and on the following Sunday.

They will not be far from their "native heath" when with us on April 24th; for both were born and brought up in Malvern.

If time permits Mr Godfrey Davies will give us one or more tape recordings of some past event which many of us may like to recall to mind again.

This year's Commemoration Service is to be at LLOWES (Radnorshire) on 30th June; some details about it, and about the Ilston service in October will be found under "OTHER EVENTS of 1974" on an inside page. Full details about them will be in the newsletters of June and of October.....circulated about a fortnight before each event.

The STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS for 1973 will be enclosed with this newsletter; on a loose sheet.

There follows an item about the late Dr. William Plomer and another one about our new President and Deputy President.

Yours sincerely,

Charles Prosser

(C.T.O. Prosser—Hon. Secretary)

Some members will wonder why they don't get a newsletter this time, it is because their subscriptions are in arrears. In June some who get this one now will perhaps wonder why no June newsletter arrives; ever increasing costs are making us 'tighten up' and those more than a year in arrears will be struck off without notice.

Subscriptions are due on the anniversary of the date on which any particular member joined; this is shown on the MEMBERSHIP CARD which we are gradually issuing to each member; some are going out with this newsletter; some with the next. PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL SUBSCRIPTIONS SHOULD BE SENT TO THE ASST. HON. TREASURER (Mrs. Peters)...but please do NOT send the membership card when paying, the idea is for that to be kept by each member they then stick receipts into it as they are received. To save postage, receipts are usually held over and sent with the next newsletter. Anyone wishing to have a receipt sooner than this is asked to enclose a stamped envelope for it.

Instead of being "overleaf" the details of the coach tour to BATH will be found further on in this newsletter, headed THE DAY IN BATH...Saturday 11th May 1974

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

THE LATE DR. WILLIAM PLOMER:

The sudden loss of our President in September last came as a great shock to us all; particularly so to those who were with him at Brecon in June (and who had looked forward to having him with us at Clyro for the unveiling in October). Some of us had known him since the very early days of the Society, when he was one of the prime movers in launching it at Hereford Town Hall in July 1948. He became our President in 1968 (after graciously declining it in 1950, on the death of Mr.S.A.Wright). Among the many Commemoration Services which he attended—and on numerous occasions took part in—perhaps the outstanding ones are 1961 at Bryngwyn (Rads) when he spoke at the little ceremony outside the churchyard walls when Mrs Wright presented the retiring Dean of Hereford (the Ver.Rev.Hedley Burrows) with a parting gift from the Society; and in 1969 when he gave the ADDRESS at the 21st Birthday Commemoration Service in Hereford Cathedral. We remember too the many occasions when he spoke after the TEA which invariably follows a Commemoration Service, some that stand out being on the lawn at Brobury House after the Bredwardine Service of 1964; on the Cricket Ground at Langley Burrell after the service of 1966, when he unveiled the Kilvert memorial plaque in the church porch; at Llysdimam after the 1968 service at Newbridge-on-Wye; on the lawn at Cae Mawr after the Clyro Service of 1970; in the Hall at Pantydwr after the St.Harmon Service of 1972; and, of course, in Brecon Cathedral last June. Looking back to last June I am so very glad that we came home from Brecon via Llansantffraed so that we could visit the grave of Henry Vaughan and pay our respects to this great Breconshire poet, somewhere where he had often talked of going but it had never before materialised; for I was told that he talked to many about it afterwards, and expressed his pleasure at being taken there to someone who was with him but a short while before he died. I am glad too that Dr. Plomer wrote that piece on his visit to the grave of Henry Vaughan which appeared in the October newsletter.

The Society was represented at the funeral at Brighton by our Vice-President the Rev.D.N. Lockwood, who gave a moving funeral address (more about this further on in this newsletter). The Memorial Service was at St.Martin-in-the-Fields (Trafalgar Square) on November 7th when this famous church was packed with a congregation of folk from many different walks of life. My wife and I went up on the early morning train, with us two committee members (Mr & Mrs West) and I noticed many K.S.Members present. Canon and Mrs.J.S.Leatherbarrow; Miss Susan Hill; Mr & Mrs.H.A. Feisenberger; Mr & Mrs.L.V.Johnson; Miss K.G.Goodwin; Mr & Mrs.H.S.Anderson—to name but some of them; whilst Mr Michael Howard was also there...with the other directors of Jonathan Cape Ltd. Among the many others present were...the Bishop of Hereford and Mrs Hodson; Mrs Jeremy Thorpe; Miss Claire Bloom; just some I happened to notice in church or outside afterwards. The lesson was read by John Sparrow; some of Williams poems were read by John Betjeman; there was music by Benjamin Britten; Peter Pears sang the Lute Song from the opera Gloriana by William Plomer and Benjamin Britten with Osian Ellis accompanying on the harp; and the ADDRESS was by William's lifelong friend Laurens van der Post. Indeed, all taking part were old friends. Quite a unique service, and really quite lovely. William would have fully approved of it, I'm sure.

TRIBUTES --- No doubt many members have seen some (if not all) of the tributes that appeared in newspapers and magazines. Many members wrote to me expressing their sorrow and their sympathy in the loss of a President who was also a personal friend. Quite a number of members have asked me to publish some of the tributes in this or some other newsletter. A nice idea, but there is so much that we have decided that it would be better to bring out a booklet of these tributes, plus other items about William Plomer. This will be done as quickly as possible. I shall hope to have more about it in the June newsletter. It is my intention to ask as many as possible of William's friends to write something for it. Sir John Betjeman has already promised to do so; and no doubt others will too. It will be sold at the lowest possible price.

THE NEW PRESIDENT

"The King is dead—long live the King"

Life has to go on, and whilst we sorrowed over the loss of William Plomer we had to think about his successor. The unanimous decision of the Committee was that we should invite Mr Wynford Vaughan-Thomas to be our next President, and I am delighted to be able to announce that he has accepted. I do not think he will mind if I quote a little from his modest letter of acceptance....."I was most moved to think that you would wish me to become your President. As you know, I am a deep lover of Kilvert but I cannot possibly compete with Dr. Plomer for knowledge and contribution to English literature. It will be a very great honour to follow such a distinguished man".

Now, whilst we hope that Mr Vaughan-Thomas will attend our various functions when possible, we realise that he is a very busy man with many commitments which will prevent him attending on perhaps quite a few occasions. We have therefore decided to appoint a

DEPUTY PRESIDENT additionally. How unorthodox (or otherwise) this is we don't know; but all who have been consulted have said "Why worry, it's a jolly good idea in any case, so why not go ahead without any further ado". This we have done, again the Committee were unanimous in their desire that Mr Frederick Grice of Worcester should be invited to become Deputy President. I am so pleased to be able to tell you that he has accepted, "honoured to accept" were, I think, his words. Mr Grice is a real Kilvert enthusiast, and already well known to many members. Especially to those who were at last year's A.G.M. or at Brecon last June; he has contributed a number of very good articles to these newsletters and given numerous talks and lectures on Kilvert and the Diary, and is due to give more in the near future. Readers of these newsletters will already know that he has recently retired from being Head of the Dept. of English at Worcester College of Education; and of his writing and his broadcasting.

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Turning again to Mr Wynford Vaughan-Thomas whilst he must be well known to everyone who has radio or television in their homes it may not be amiss, now that he is our President, to quote from "WHO'S WHO 1973" so that all may know more about him. It reads thus: Lewis John Wynford Vaughan-Thomas M.A.Oxon. Born 15th August 1908. Educated Swansea Grammar School; Exeter College, Oxford. Married Charlotte Rowlands M.B.E. One son. Keeper of MSS and Records, National Library of Wales 1933; Area Officer, S.Wales Council of Social Service 1934-37; Joined BBC 1937. Director of Programmes Harlech Television Ltd. 1968-71; Commentator Royal Commonwealth Tour 1953-54; BBC War Correspondent 1942-45. Croix de Guerre 1945.
Publications: Royal Tour 1953-54, in 1954. Anzio 1961; Madley in all Directions 1967; The Shell Guide to Wales (with Alun Llewellyn) 1969. Now working on a new guide to Gower. Recreations—Mountaineering, Sailing.

We look forward to having our new President with us whenever possible; he has already indicated to me that he intends being present at our Ilston service in October.

CHILDREN'S COMPETITION The small number of entries for this was most disappointing especially considering the number and value of prizes on offer. As there were no entries in Class A and only two entries in Class B these are both cancelled. Prizes will be awarded in Class C and Class D. IT IS OUR INTENTION TO EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITIES OF RE-OFFERING THE COMPETITION, BUT ON A WIDER BASIS, TO THE CHILDREN OF BRECONSHIRE, HEREFORDSHIRE, RADNORSHIRE and WILTSHIRE.

OCTOBER 14th 1973 The Llanigon Service and the Ashbrook Plaque
This was a really memorable day, and we were favoured with nice weather; no rain, and not at all cold - so that no-one in the large crowd that assembled to see the plaque unveiled (they completely blocked the roadway through Clyro village) complained at the near half-hour it took.
But first of all the AUTUMN SERVICE at LLANIGON...the October newsletter gave full details of all who took part in it, and had notes on Llanigon, Llanthomas, the Thomas family etc. etc. and as all went according to plan there is no need for repetition here...except to say that in addition to a fine ADDRESS by the Rev.J.R.Williams and another very good Act of Remembrance by the Rev D.T.W.Price we had from the Rev. D.N. Lockwood a repeat of the moving ADDRESS that he gave at Brighton on the occasion of the funeral of our late President in September last; I think that this was something greatly appreciated particularly so by those who knew William Plomer or had listened to him on some of the many occasions when he has spoken or read at our gatherings. We felt as if we had been there. There was good hymn singing (as usual), Cwm Rhondda went particularly well. It is worth noting that all four of the clergy taking part are K.S. members, as were both readers of the lessons. Llanigon Church was quite full; it is a deceiving church and holds far more than at first appears, especially when the long pews are full as they were that day. Well over 200, probably getting on towards 300—very good for an October service. THEN ACROSS THE WYE (through Hay) TO CLYRO FOR THE unveiling of the new PLAQUE on ASHBROOK HOUSE; here we found a good crowd already there and our arrival made it into a really big one. Plans had been rearranged, for Dr. Plomer was to speak (he had been greatly looking forward to this event and we sadly missed him). I took over the job of M/C and called on the speakers and introduced them to the crowd. First of all Mr W.H.Monk of Ashbrook House (without whose willing co-operation and help the project could not have been even started) who welcomed us all and expressed his pleasure (and that of Mrs Monk) at now having a plaque worthy of Francis Kilvert. The Rev.David Lockwood then told the story of how it had all come about (for the idea sprang from him in the first place) and of the work that he and the others of their little committee had done in order to arrive at a unanimous decision (see footnote). Then Mr Wynford Vaughan-Thomas was called upon to do the unveiling; he prefaced it with a sparkling little speech which again showed his knowledge of the Diary and his love of the countryside which Kilvert knew, pulled the cord and the handsome plaque with Francis Kilvert's head in relief was revealed. The sculptor (David Verity) was then quickly found, brought up on to the steps beneath the plaque, spoke about three words and was gone (but his fine work speaks louder than any words). Finally, the Rev.D.T.W.Price wound up the short proceedings by thanking everyone who had contributed to bring it all to this successful conclusion.

Many of the party then proceeded back to Hay, where an excellent tea was waiting at the Old Black Lion; enjoyable tho' overcrowded...something for which I must apologise and take responsibility. I should have taken Mrs Knights advice and had a buffet tea; but I gambled on many going to tea directly after the Service at Llanigon (and missing the unveiling). If this had happened there would have been ample room for the second sitting of those who had been at the unveiling. But it didn't work out like that!!! Almost everyone wanted to hear Mr Wynford Vaughan-Thomas and see the plaque unveiled--so that the first sitting consisted of 3 only - who had a long distance to travel back home!!! Nevertheless in the end all had a good tea, and so ended a day to be really remembered.

THE PLAQUE PANEL ... As there were a number of different opinions about the form of the plaque, the lettering, and the material to be used; it was felt (by the Committee) that it would be wise to appoint a panel to sift it out, make decisions and engage the sculptor etc. etc. The following 5 members formed this panel, Dr. William Plomer, Mrs H.A. Feisenberger, Mr W.H. Monk, Mr L. Le Quesne and the Rev. D.N. Lockwood (who acted as co-ordinator and secretary). I am sure that everyone will agree that they made wise decisions and that the result is a credit to all concerned with it. It is pleasing to note that the scaffolding needed was supplied and erected by the Anthony Bros. of Clyro, direct descendants of Henry Anthony who Francis Kilvert knew and wrote about.

THE PLAQUE FUND ... the enclosed Statement of Accounts shows that the cost of the plaque and erection totalled £127 and that donations etc. totalled £86; there is thus a deficiency of £41, add to this the bill for scaffolding and the total deficiency is almost £50. There are no doubt a number of members who did not subscribe when the appeal was made and who will now be glad of this opportunity to have their names associated with this handsome plaque. Perhaps it is a pity that we did not act on the suggestion made by several members...to ask every member for 25p donation to the Plaque Fund, this would have raised more than £175. As it is, about 10% of the total membership subscribed, many generously and the other 90% nothing at all!!! Any contributions to me, please at 8 Prince Edward Road, Hereford. (Receipt on request, please note).

THE SATURDAY WALK ... a walk had been arranged for the day previous (the 13th Oct.) on the usual lines---meet at Clyro at 11 am. proceed in cars up into the hills, some walks and a picnic. Alas! it was a wet day and wet underfoot. A good number turned up (for it has become a tradition to turn up, wet or fine). Many of them went on a car run instead, around the churches of that part of the "Kilvert Country" and down the Edw Valley. The weather must have cleared up, for I heard it talked about as quite an enjoyable day. Better luck on 29th June---my wife and I hope to be with you that day, when there will no doubt be a nice company of walkers, many of them come for the weekend (or longer) in order to be at the Llowes Service next day.

THE DAY IN BATH---Saturday 11th May 1974

It will be remembered that a show of hands was taken at the last AGM as to whether the 1974 Spring Coach Tour should be to Gower or to Bath. Gower won, with Bath a very close second. But since then the invitation to have this year's Autumn Service at Ilston has been accepted (for Sunday 13th October). We shall run a coach from Hereford and "make a day of it" so it was felt that it should be Bath after all in May and Gower in October.

Arrangements are as follows: ... coach will leave Hereford at 10 am (prompt). It will be a coach of Canyon Travel Ltd. (as usual) and will start from near the Town Hall in St. Owen Street Hereford. Each member should bring their picnic lunch, our Bath members are finding a nice spot for us to have this soon after we arrive, most likely in the Parade Gardens where there is a very large shelter if it happens not to be a very nice day. Miss K.G. Goodwin---a long standing member who formerly lived in London, but nevertheless often came to the Annual Service, to walks and to other events---now lives in Bath and has got to know it quite well. She (and, I expect, other Bath members) will be our guides. We shall walk a little and also use the coach for going around the places with Kilvert associations. As the object of this Bath visit is to see these places it is suggested that those who come will add to their enjoyment and knowledge if they look up the Bath references in KILVERT'S DIARY and also in the booklet "MORE CHAPTERS FROM THE KILVERT SAGA", the latter tells us of Caroline Buildings, Widcombe Church, South Stoke and Claverton Lodge; the Diary has many mentions of 13 Raby Place where Thersie lived before coming to the Rectory at Monnington-on-Wye; and maybe the school where Kilvert visited Tilly Vaughan of Newchurch (Rads), still stands and we may see it? There are very many bits about Bath in the 3 volumes, far less in the abridged edition. TEA has been booked at the Rockery Tea Gardens, the cost of this is included in the £1.50 which is the total cost per person. PLEASE BOOK AT THE AGM IF POSSIBLE---otherwise with the Hon. Sec. up to Monday 6th May. PAYMENT WHEN BOOKING PLEASE, THIS SAVES SUCH A LOT OF WORK.

OTHER EVENTS OF 1974

The October newsletter suggested that the LLOWES SERVICE would be towards the end of June. This was quite correct...it is to be on Sunday the 30th June at 3 o'clock; the special preacher to be the Rev.T.Madoc-Jones of Brecon, who tells me he "has fond memories of Llowes" where his father was Vicar for some 25 years. Full details of the service, tea arrangements etc will appear in the June newsletter. We shall endeavour to arrange for a WALK on the day previous (Saturday the 29th June) probably on the same lines as other years, an 11 am meet at Clyro with a leisurely walk over the hills somewhere to follow, and a picnic as usual. Details in the June newsletter.

Saturday 31st August -- we are invited to join in with the pilgrimage to the tomb of Father Ignatius at Capel-y-Ffin in the Black Mountains; this will no doubt appeal to quite a few members. It will not be possible to go by coach for the roads are too narrow--especially on what will be a busy day--so all who wish to join in will go by car. Further details will appear in the June newsletter. We have a number of copies of the 1973 newsletter of the Father Ignatius Memorial Trust, in it is a good description of the 1972 Pilgrimage; anyone interested can have one on application to me. The Trust is in urgent need of more money for restoration work, anyone wishing to support this cause may send something to me...for forwarding to Capel-y-Ffin (Hon.Sec)

Sunday 13th October -- The Autumn Service at ILSTON (Glam); already announced; members are recommended to look up the ILSTON references in Kilvert's Diary; unfortunately there is no mention of Ilston anywhere in the abridged edition. On a map Ilston can be found a few miles west of Swansea, in the beautiful Gower peninsula. Further details later in the year.

ACCOMMODATION IN THE KILVERT COUNTRY

Each year more and more folk want to come to the countryside they have read about in KILVERT'S DIARY, and I get many requests for suggestions of where to stay. The following list may therefore be helpful. Members and others interested have stayed at all of them; there are no doubt many more addresses in the areas concerned where others have stayed and been well satisfied, but I shall just mention those I know of through members etc having stayed there. Naturally I shall give most space to members of the Society who provide accommodation for visitors: Mrs Harris, Crossway Farm, Clyro via Hereford, 2 miles from the village, on Clyro Hill, near Bettws Church and the site of Whittys Mill, grand walking country all around. Mr & Mrs Monk, Ashbrook House, Clyro, via Hereford...this was Kilvert's home for his 7 years in Clyro, much of the Diary was written here. Right in the village and but $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles from Hay-on-Wye Mrs.N.D.Jones, Olchon Court, near Longtown, Hereford...tucked away in the Black Mountains, but only about 10 miles from Hay-on-Wye. Hill walks abound. Llanthony Abbey is in the next valley.

NON-MEMBERS Mrs Williams, Brooklands, Lion Street, Hay-on-Wye. Mrs.Lloyd, Hawkeswood Farm, near Hay-on-Wye. Mrs.Knights, Old Black Lion, Hay-on-Wye. Hotels: the Crown and the Swan in Hay-on-Wye and the Baskerville Arms in Clyro (all are "via Hereford")

I have also two addresses right away from the Hay/Clyro area; on the borders of Radnorshire and Montgomeryshire and therefore not very far from the countryside around ST.HARMON: PANTYDWR, ABBEY CWMHIR etc.

WHEN WRITING TO ANY ADDRESS LISTED HERE PLEASE STATE THAT YOU ARE A MEMBER OF THE KILVERT SOCIETY (or coming through your interest in Kilvert's Diary)...because so many people in the areas concerned have very little idea of how much interest there is in their countryside...from all over the world.

SALES OF PUBLICATIONS AND KILVERT'S DIARY

The enclosed STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS shows how many Kilvert's Diaries the Society are selling; the news is spreading that SETS OF THE 3 VOLUMES can be supplied immediately and more and more people who have failed to get them in even big towns (Oxford and Bristol for instance) send here for them. Sets have been posted to London, Edinburgh, Perth etc and several to the USA. The 3 volumes are £12 plus 30p postage. The new abridged edition in hardback is £2.50 plus 18p postage. The abridged paperback is 95p plus 13p postage if just enveloped, or 18p if well packed. Also in stock is the late William Plomer's "Butterfly Ball & Grasshoppers Feast" with its wonderful illustrations at £1.95 plus 18p postage...and paperback copies of his "CELEBRATIONS" (a selection of William Plomer's poems) at 60p plus 5p postage. The Society's publications sell steadily (again please note the statement of accounts). All four of our booklets can be sent for £2, price includes postage, the "Solitary" etc is now completely sold out. (Hon.Secretary)

A GIFT FROM BRECON The Society lost a valuable member with the untimely death of Mr J F Morgan of Brecon in 1971 (he was a former Editor of the "Brecon & Radnor Express") His cousin-Miss M Walters, also of Brecon-has just given the Society his set of the three volumes of Kilvert's Diary, bought just before his death and in mint condition. They will bring in a nice addition to our funds, and we are extremely grateful to Miss Walters for her kindly thought.

MEMBERS ACTIVITIES:

Again several members have been giving LECTURES/TALKS (call them what you will) illustrated with slides, sometimes to a very large audience. Perhaps the outstanding one was earlier this year at Malvern, by Mr F.Grice of Worcester, when the Hall in which it was given was packed, with many standing. Mr Grice says he was somewhat surprised at the large numbers who came to hear about KILVERT and the DIARY; the authorities who arranged it were staggered--some of them had never heard of Kilvert previously!!!

More recently another member--Mrs Norman Davis of Leominster, spoke on the same subject to a goodly gathering of the LADIES CIRCLE of Leominster plus a number of the same organisation from Ludlow. I was able to help her with some slides, photographs etc.

Away in Kent, Mr Colin Davis has been making further use of the slides loaned him for his talks on KILVERT at Tunbridge Wells.

And in Birmingham in early March Mr E.F.Jelfs was the speaker at a similar ILLUSTRATED TALK on KILVERT at the Birmingham and Midland Institute

CYMRU KILVERT

At last a start has been made on translating KILVERT'S DIARY into Welsh. When the late Rev. D.J.Lane Griffiths helped the ladies from Denmark with the Diary in Danish, he was often heard to say that it was high time it was produced in Welsh. That was in 1960 when "Kilvert's Dagbog" was published. A paperback has recently been produced with the title CYMRU KILVERT, it covers Volume 1 up to the account of Miss Maria Kilvert's funeral at Worcester Cathedral. Its compiler is the Rev.T.Lloyd Evans of Swansea, who tells me that if this first one is well received it is his intention to go on and cover the period that Kilvert spent in Wales. The price per copy is 60p. If there is sufficient demand the Kilvert Society will put some into stock with the other books and booklets...postage is 5p extra.

THE ST.HARMON CHURCH ORGAN---AN APPEAL

Just as this newsletter is about to "go to press" a letter arrived from the Rev.John Colebrook of Nantmel (Radnorshire) who is, of course, also the Vicar of St.Harmon. This sparsely populated parish is now faced with the task of raising more than £1,000 for the restoration of their church organ. It was built in London and brought to St.Harmon sometime last century and is the organ that Francis Kilvert knew when he was Vicar of St.Harmon, for there is a brass plate above the keys stating that it was restored by J.W.Walker in 1861. It has a beautiful case and a sweet tone. It is a G compass organ, very rare nowadays. Sometime during its history a complete row of pipes was lost and there is consequently a non-speaking stop on it. These pipes are going to be replaced as part of the restoration. The work is being done by Percy Daniel and Co.Ltd. of Clevedon---the firm who recently restored the chamber organ from Hay Castle which is now in Brecon Cathedral. Work has started, so donations are urgently required. The Kilvert Society will make a contribution, no doubt there are numerous members who will want to do likewise. Donations can be sent to me at 8 Prince Edward Road, Hereford, or direct to the churchwarden Mr J.M.Williams, Lingen Farn, St.Harmon, near RHAYADER, Radnorshire...anyone sending is asked to let it be known that they are a member of the Kilvert Society.

ST.HARMON CHURCH--- is almost always open until dusk in summer. Anyone who finds it closed can get the key from Mrs.A.M.Lewis of Bronant (a bungalow 100 yards from the church, on the opposite side of the road - in the Rhayader direction)

WORCESTER CATHEDRAL ---A CENTENARY EXHIBITION

Our good member Mr R.J.Collins of Worcester tells me that as 1974 is the Centenary Year of the GREAT VICTORIAN RESTORATION of the CATHEDRAL--in June an exhibition is timed to coincide with the annual Friends of the Cathedral Festival (first Sat. in June) and will go on for a month or more. The Kilvert family will figure in this Exhibition; they would dearly like to have a picture of Miss Maria Kilvert, some of whose generous gifts to the Cathedral are mentioned in Kilvert's Diary (she gave £100 to the first appeal, £400 to the second and £100 to the third). Francis Kilvert mentions the newness of the appearance of the Cathedral Tower..."just restored"... "a grand rich object". (he also mentions £300 that Miss Kilvert had given to the clock and bells) If anyone can help in any way they are asked to get in touch with Mr Collins c/o The Cathedral Office, 8 College Precincts, Worcester.

THE VENABLES DIARIES

A few members are, I think, aware that the Diaries of the Rev.R.L.Venables of Clyro have been deposited (by Sir Michael Venables-Llewelyn, his grandson) in the National Library of Wales at Aberystwyth. Our member Mr L Le Quesne, late of Clyro--now of Shrewsbury--has been to Aberystwyth and studied them. He says that if anyone thinks they are anything like Kilvert's Diary they will be greatly disappointed; for they are very matter-of-fact diaries with brief entries, for Mr Venables was a busy man, much

VENABLES DIARIES contd....

concerned with the administration of Radnorshire, leaving all his pastoral work to Kilvert. However, there is very considerable interest in them—and Mr Le Quesne is working on a contribution for an 'omnibus booklet' which we hope to produce before 1974 is out. It will most likely also contain the "Honeymoon Diary" of Dora Kilvert (Mrs Pitcairn) and re-prints of the Father Ignatius booklet originally produced by the Rev. Ivor Ll. Davies, now Vicar of Hay—as well as a re-printing of our very popular booklet "The Solitary of Llanbedr plus Radnorshire Legends and Superstitions" — and maybe one or two very short but new items too.

BY CLYRO WATER

I wonder how many members saw the article with the above heading in the "Sunday Telegraph" of January 20th...by Hazel Leslie? Obviously Miss Leslie has been to Clyro quite recently, for she saw the new plaque on Ashbrook House— and went over to Painscastle and back through Hay to Bredwardine etc etc. It was all so kindly and so accurate that I forgave the slight error of the Wye running uphill to Glasbury; and the picture of Symonds Yat instead of a scene on the Wye near Clyro (the Otters Pool picture, for instance) that I wrote to her c/o the newspaper and had a nice letter in reply, followed by an order for some of our booklets. How different to some of the stupid wildly inaccurate and unkindly articles that have appeared at times in newspapers. But that is not all the story, Miss Leslie put my name and address as secretary of the K.S. at the foot of her article; this has resulted in scores of letters, some sales, one or two new members and many enquiries from folk who want to visit our "Kilvert country" for a summer holiday.

WHO WAS FANNY HIGGINSON? (a contribution from Dr Plomer)

Who was Fanny Higginson for whom Mrs Venables thought, on 20 Nov. 1870, Kilvert had a tender feeling? Was she the Miss Higginson who had been "all the time" with Mrs. Venables when her baby was about to be born? And who went with Mrs Venables to Llysdiman in Oct. 1878? Was she a friend, a relation, a paid companion? In June 1878 Kilvert had written to her about his refusal of the Cannes chaplaincy. Was she any relation of Lady Frances Higginson and her daughter Adelaide, on whom Kilvert called in Wilton Crescent in January 1870, and whom in January 1871 and January 1872 he seems to have found at home? It will be remembered that Augustus Hare when young had been a pupil at Hardenuish Rectory. Later, Hare's adoptive mother is stated (by Kilvert) to have been one of Lady Frances Higginson's oldest friends. As early as 1855 we find Lady Frances Higginson and her daughter Adelaide (afterwards Mrs Owen Grant) calling on Hare's adoptive mother in Grosvenor Crescent. Lady Frances is said by Hare to have been the second daughter of the first Earl of Kilmorey. Lady Frances's husband seems to have been General Sir George Higginson, who was still going strong in 1892, and who (according to the gushing Hare) had "all the manly straightforwardness of a splendid soldier and the chivalry of the most refined gentleness". In July 1887 Hare says — "Old Lady Frances Higginson frightened a mincing curate out of his life who said to her "Will you take some potatoes?" by saying in her most abrupt way "God bless my soul, aren't you going to give me some?". Here is another Hare link. In Sept. 1887 Hare... "went by rail (with the Bishop of Lichfield and his wife) through the beautiful but drippingly wet valleys to visit the Venables near Builth (i.e. Llysdiman). Our host was the well-known and severe critic in the Saturday— a pleasant old man to visitors, but evidently awful to the younger members of his family. (This was evidently George Stovin Venables)". This was written at Woodlands, Glasbury (which careless Hare spells "Glassbury"). Who lived there then? "This is a charming visit" he writes, "and the place is delightful — close to the glistening Wye, with green hills — 'mountains' in Welsh — folding around, exquisite in the soft haze of early morning".

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Hon. Sec's Note: Dr Plomer sent me this in 1972; there wasn't room for it then and it was put on one side—to turn up just in time for this newsletter. Our beloved late president quite often spotted something of interest for our newsletters—and sent it along.

OBITUARY

Three deaths have to be reported, with much regret: Mrs. E. S. Lloyd of Three Hollies, Brilley, Herefordshire in her 75th year. The widow of Mr E. A. Lloyd who died in 1965. Both founder members of the Society. In earlier years both were great walkers, and led us on numerous occasions over the Radnorshire Hills. I attended the funeral in early January. Mrs. V. D. Lewis of Llyswen, Breconshire wife of the Revd. D. J. H. Lewis—Headmaster of Llyswen V.P. School. Both long standing members; sometime in December. Mr. W. P. Lloyd of Bearwood Farm, Pembridge, Herefordshire, very suddenly in November. One of the Lloyd family of Wernewydd, and brother of our committee member Mr H. T. Lloyd

KILVERT'S AUNT SOPHIA

In my address to the A.G.M. of the Society last year I mentioned that the Bath Reference Library possessed four manuscript poems by Kilvert's aunt Sophia, but that they had unfortunately been mislaid. Happily the poems have now been traced and the Librarian has allowed me to make photocopies. They are all written in a stiff Augustan style, largely in heroic couplets, and all deal with the Bath Literary Club of which Kilvert's uncle was one of the most prominent members. The sequence of poems of which I quote only the first tells of the pleasure and stimulation which Mrs Kilvert received from the meetings of the Club.

They met around the Social Board
With gracious mien and courteous word,
And Learning, Wit and Science fair
Soon filled the every vacant chair;
Each Viand and each Vine was placed
With tempting shew and piquant taste,
But Ah! what crowned the perfect whole?
The feats of Reason and the flow of Soul.

In spite of the cumbrous style and the occasional ambiguity the exalted idealistic tone of the poems confirms what I suggested in my address - that Francis Kilvert was educated in a singularly high-minded family. He may not have inherited the intellectual curiosity of his uncle and aunt (he seems to have disliked argument) but he must surely have been strongly influenced by their generosity of spirit, nobility of sentiment and strong literary impulses.

Mrs Kilvert signs the poems with her full name Eleanora Adelaide Sophia Leopoldina Kilvert and gives the date and place of her birth - 5 August 1789, Paris.

F.Grice

Hon.Sec's Note

In her "Rambling Recollections" (part of "More Chapters from the Kilvert Saga") Mrs Wyndowe tells us that..."in Winter we sometimes went to stay at Claverton Lodge, on Bathwick Hill, Bath; where Papa's eldest brother the Revd. Francis Kilvert lived. How we loved and revered him, and in what awe we stood of our Aunt Sophia, his wife. She was brought over from France in an open boat as a little child during the Reign of Terror, her family, being aristocrats, had all perished on the guillotine. She became a Quaker".

Our vice-president Mrs E.M.Victor of Hereford and her sister Miss C.Cholmeley are great-grandchildren of "Uncle Francis" and "Aunt Sophia".

It had long been suspected that it was at Claverton Lodge that the young Francis Kilvert had received his education...from his Uncle Francis. This was confirmed when another Vice-President (Mrs H.A.Feisenberger) came across a book which had been presented to the Rev.Francis Kilvert in 1851 by seventeen of his pupils---F.Kilvert being one of the signatures---bought it, and gave it to the Society in 1969. It will again be on show at the A.G.M. on 24th April.

FOLLOWING CENTURY-OLD FOOTSTEPS

This is the title of a good two-page article (well illustrated) in the issue of "CYCLING" dated January 26th 1974---more from the pen of our Lancashire member Mr Albert Winstanley, following his cycling tour (with a friend) around the Painscastle area, when they visited Llanbedr Church; Llanbychllyn Pool; the site of the "Solitary's" cabin; and the Rocks of Pen Cwm---visiting the site of Whittys Mill and the Castle Mounds at Painscastle en route. They camped out near Pendre (but didn't see the Mayor!!!) and enjoyed the sharp clean air on a lovely morning after a perfect night. Then across to Hay and the Gospel Pass and away down the Vale of Ewyas.

WHEELERS WORLD

The title of an evening at Pittville Pump Room, Cheltenham on Saturday 13th April. Its sub-title "A story of a Cyclist's own world---the beauty of the countryside and the changing seasons as seen from the cyclist's saddle" by Albert Winstanley of Bolton and Arthur Matthews of Ainsdale. Colour photography superbly blended with music.....script and narration by Albert Winstanley. This promises to be a splendid evening and we are glad to do a little towards publicising it. It is at 7.30 pm and tickets are 20p each, obtainable from the Ticket Bureau, Town Hall, Cheltenham. (Refreshments available)

THE ADDRESSING MACHINE Many who will see on the enclosed STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS an item of £33 for an addressing machine will wonder why it is not being used. The fact is that we are waiting for the new county etc addresses before doing several hundred stencils, perhaps many to be soon scrapped. Hand addressing will continue this year. Afterwards the machine can be surely brought into use.

MISS KILVERT

Members will remember that in June 1972 Miss Muriel Kilvert started her world tour in "Peregrine" and we subsequently had news of her in Canada, in the USA and then in Mexico. I have just heard that she arrived back in England in late December 1973 (too late to do a proper item for this newsletter). 28,000 miles in all—not counting sea and air crossings of the oceans—for her route took her via Hong Kong and Singapore to Bombay, through India and Afghanistan to Iran, Turkey, Greece and Italy, via Munich to Holland for Christmas and home from there. Miss Kilvert tells me of plans for a book; but in August she is off to Iran to teach English for two terms. We shall hope to hear much more in due course — from our globe trotting V.P.

TRUTH IS STRANGER THAN FICTION

This is a true little story concerning one of our Birmingham members, but it was crowded out from the newsletter immediately after the happening, put on one side, and only just turned up. But it is too good to be ignored even tho' not up-to-date. This particular member badly wanted to get to the Langley Burrell service of 1972 (having missed the previous one—in 1966); but on the Saturday evening her car was stolen. She thought it unwise to leave home next day—in case there was news of the car, so missed the 1972 service too. Several days went by; then as her husband was driving north from Birmingham (presumably up the M6) he was passed by his wife's car!!! The police were notified and they quickly found the car—at a roadside restaurant somewhere in the area of the Potteries. The couple who had stolen it were in the restaurant having a meal!!! In the car was their luggage, they were off for their holidays in the stolen car!!! Now, can any member provide a better true story than that?

"THREE LITTLE MAIDS TO SCHOOL" Compiled by Mr Melville Thomas of Brecon; from material supplied by Miss M.A. Parker a great-niece of "Daisy" Thomas.

The maids were:

Anne Elizabeth Pateshall, of Hereford, born 1815 known as "Annabette".
Arabella Emma Gowland, of Cagebrook, Eaton Bishop near Hereford, known as "Bel"
Catherine Thomas, of Welfield, Builth Wells. Born 1814 a sister of "Daisy's" father the Rev. W. Jones Thomas.

Time...1830, when Annabette was 15 and the other two approximately the same age. The three families came to some arrangement about sending the three girls to school in Bath. The journey was undertaken by coach, possibly the Welfield coach, all the way. Catherine was the first to start, and travelled from Builth Wells to Hereford, the first day about 40 miles, then stayed the night with the Pateshalls. The second day Bel Gowland would have been driven in by carriage, with her trunk, and the three girls then proceeded through Ross to Gloucester where they probably stayed the night after the journey of 31 miles. On the third day the final stage of 40 miles from Gloucester to Bath would be completed. All this would have to be repeated in reverse at the end of the term.

Annabette Pateshall, who after her marriage was known as Aunt Evan, was always a "character" and this comes out fairly early. When she was 16, she managed to persuade the headmistress of the Bath school to send her home for a rest. During which time she went six nights running to Balls at Stoke Edith, and only got up each day in time to dress for the next Ball!!!

The romantic outcome of all this coming and going was that Bel Gowland married Catherine Thomas's eldest brother Edward David of Welfield in 1837, when she was about 22 and he was 29. Two years later in 1839, Annabette Pateshall's first cousin, Anne Elizabeth Jones, married another of Catherine's brothers, the Rev. William Jones Thomas ("Daisy's" father) when he was 28. In 1842 Annabette herself married a third brother Evan Thomas of Ffynnonau, Brecon when he was 25 and she was 27. (Eventually she outlived them all, dying in 1910 at the age of 95). The following year 1843 Catherine Thomas married the Rev. Essex Holcombe son of the Rev. John Holcombe, the Rector of Cosheston, Pembrokeshire. The story now moves on—Evan Thomas, a solicitor living in Brecon (a brother of the Rev. W. Jones Thomas and therefore "Daisy's" uncle) received a letter from his wife Annabette's uncle—Edward Burnham Pateshall of Allensmore Court near Hereford. This letter was written by the Rev. P. H. Symonds, probably the Vicar of Eaton Bishop, or perhaps Clehonger. It was written from Cagedale and dated Jan. 6th 1854; in it he deplored the proposed building of a Roman Catholic Church on adjoining land, and sought advice to try to prevent it. Yet only 2 years later a friend who was staying with Mrs Pateshall at Allensmore Court (for the Hereford Music Festival) went with her in the carriage to look at the "most perfect little cathedral, with school adjoining" at Belmont. So, in spite of opposition Belmont Abbey and School were founded.

UNTIL THE HEART CHANGES

This is the title of a book which is printed and published in South Africa, and edited by our Cape Town member Miss Zelda Friedlander. Its sub-title is "A GARLAND FOR OLIVE SCHREINER". (Both were born in De Aar in the heart of the Karoo). It has an INTRODUCTION by William Plomer and one of the articles on Olive Schreiner is by the late Field-Marshal J.C. Smuts.

William Plomer says..."I am glad to be the first to acknowledge in print the sense of obligation to Zelda Friedlander which must be felt by all who care for the memory and ideals of Olive Schreiner and who wish to see them alive and fertile. It is to be hoped that the book will appeal to just those kind of readers upon which Olive Schreiner would have set her evergreen hope that the future might be better than the past".

It is interesting to note that Olive Schreiner was over here in 1915 and then went to stay with friends in Llandrindod Wells (Dr and Mrs. F.H. Parker). She described the lake and the road up to the golf links and specially noted the masses of gorse in full bloom bathed in the sunset glow. She loved going for drives in the very attractive countryside described by Brett Young in some of his novels of Radnorshire. One place she specially liked was Abbey Cwmhir. She once said..."I'm sure that even if I were dying, if I could be got into a car or any vehicle I would want to go there and it would do me good".

(One of the best known of the very many works of Olive Schreiner is "The Story of an African Farm").

WAS KILVERT A MIGRAINE SUFFERER? (from a Cheltenham member)

As a migraine sufferer myself, I have frequently been struck by the symptoms which the diarist records from time to time in his Diary. Any other sufferer will no doubt have already recognised the familiar features, particularly the "eyes a dazzle", "seeing stars and staggering" after a heavy meal, the occasional violent sick headaches, and the painful "face-ache" which Kilvert mentions from time to time. There is the occasion when the glare from a lamp proved painful to the diarist and the kindly Daisy thoughtfully shaded the light from his suffering eyes. Even the occasions of extreme sensitivity to the beauty surrounding the diarist will be familiar to migraine sufferers, as a condition which sometimes exists on the rare occasions when one is feeling exceptionally well and all one's feelings and susceptibilities seem heightened. The occasion too, recorded by Kilvert, when his nerves were so much on edge that he was quite unable to sit, lie or even kneel in comfort, but was forced to pace about the room until the feeling gradually wore off - is recognisable as one of the "gringe" symptoms of migraine. One feels for him when he records taking laudanum and drinking port, in the hope of finding some relief. The laudanum may have helped to deaden the pain, but I fear that the port would only have aggravated his sufferings. If there are any medical members of the Kilvert Society no doubt they will be able to identify these symptoms with more accuracy, but as a fellow sufferer with the diarist, I can only feel pity for him for this added burden which I believe he had to bear, in a century notorious for its ignorance of the causes of so much suffering.

THE STATIONMASTER AT LLECHRYD

An item about Llechryd railway station (now known as Bwlth Road) appeared on the last page of the October newsletter. This interested one of our Sketty (Swansea) members—who wrote to tell me that her grandfather was station master there (top hat and all) of the two stations, many years ago. Now only the high level station remains, and probably that just an un-staffed halt-in keeping with most of the one time busy stations of the Central Wales line. It was, of course, the low level station that Kilvert used most...for some of his visits to Llysdyman, as well as travelling through it on his way to Newbridge, Rhayader, St. Harmon etc. Changing trains here for Killay and Ilston.