

THE KILVERT SOCIETY

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

President:  
WYNFORD VAUGHAN-THOMAS, O.B.E., M.A.

Deputy President:  
Frederick Grice, B.A.  
91 Hallow Road, Worcester.

Hon. Secretary  
C.T.O. Prosser,  
8 Prince Edward Rd.  
Broomy Hill,  
Hereford.  
Phone 2094.

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

MARCH, 1975

Dear Member,

The Annual General Meeting and Social Evening will be held next month; but please note that it will be on a different day to usual, AND IN A DIFFERENT PLACE.

After 22 years at Eignbrook the large hall has now been demolished and we have had to find a new "home". Committee members looked at several halls in Hereford, but none were large enough to have meeting and refreshments both laid out in one hall ... until we looked at the ST. JOHN'S AMBULANCE HALL in WIDEMARSH STREET, and booked it right away. However, it is only free on Thursday evenings, so this year's A.G.M., etc. will be on:

THURSDAY the 24th. of APRIL at 7 o'clock (PROMPT)

Those who attend will find a large, modern hall, with all facilities most conveniently situated ... and its own car park at side and rear. It is adjoining the ancient Coningsby Hospital, and opposite is Henly's Car Showrooms (formerly Fryers). It is just the same distance from the City Centre as is Eignbrook, and but about 200 yards from the RING ROAD (which cuts Widemarsh Street in two), NORTH whereas Eignbrook is WEST.

The Business meeting will come first and will no doubt be over by 7. 30, thus giving half-an-hour for a speaker and for taking bookings for the May coach tour to Gower (see overleaf) ... followed by REFRESHMENTS at 8 o'clock as usual ... served by some of our lady members.

The main part of the evening (from about 8. 45 p.m. until 10 o'clock) will be a "mixed grill" rather than one outstanding feature as in some years.

Mr. Wynford Vaughan-Thomas very much hopes that he will be able to attend, but he is such a busy person that we may not know for certain until almost the last minute. Mr. Frederick Grice will be present, and we can rely on him for something interesting and entertaining; and I know that several other members (old and new) will have something to say ... some on quite new subjects and some with new angles on matters that have been discussed before. We have had many good evenings on these occasions and I feel quite sure that this will be yet another of them.

This year's Commemoration Service is to be at MUCH MARCLE (Herefordshire, but nearly on the Gloucestershire border) on Sunday, 29th. June at 3 o'clock ... a short note about it will be found on an inner page.

The Statement of Accounts for 1974 will be enclosed with this newsletter, on a loose sheet .... and a most important small PINK leaflet with about half the newsletters sent out, the remainder will be circulated with the next.

All this is being posted well in advance of the A.G.M. .... in order to beat the increased postal charges soon to come into force. Please be sure to make a note of the date ... 24th. April.

Yours sincerely,



C.T.O. Prosser - Hon. Secretary.

AN APPEAL FOR HELP:

We cannot have the ST. JOHN'S AMBULANCE HALL until 6 o'clock - just ONE HOUR before the time of the A.G.M. - whereas we were preparing at Eignbrook all the afternoon.

OFFERS OF HELP are, therefore, asked for; if you can be at the Hall in Widemarsh Street at six o'clock on the 24th. April, please contact me at 8 Prince Edward Road, AS SOON AS POSSIBLE - (Telephone is 2094).

NOTES AND NEWS by the Hon. Secretary, with contributions from members.

THE MAY COACH TOUR TO GOWER:

Because it was so dull and drizzly when we went to Ilston in October it was suggested during tea at the Old Rectory that perhaps the May coach tour could be to Gower ... and hope for a better day. Mr. Vaughan-Thomas instantly approved of the idea and said that he would meet us and take us round some of the places which Kilvert visited and wrote about in the Diary. All agreed.

It is to be on SATURDAY, 17TH. MAY, and the arrangements are as follows:-

Coach will leave Hereford (Town Hall) at 10 a.m. (PROMPT); bring picnic lunch. We will find a nice spot somewhere near Swansea for our picnic and Mr. Vaughan-Thomas will then join us. As there can only be ONE coach, priority of booking must be given to members. Bookings will be taken at the A.G.M. on 24th. April, or by the Hon. Secretary up to 24th. April from members only. After that any vacancies can be filled by non-members. Fare will be £1. 25 per person. Route, via Clyro and Brecon. TEA has been booked at the Worms Head Cottage Hotel at £1. 00 per head for HIGH TEA (ham or chicken, etc., etc), or scones, cream, jam, etc. at 45p. As the hotel must know how many for each type of tea well in advance, the simplest way will be for everybody to pay coach fare and cost of tea when they book.

All the above mentioned prices include gratuities, etc. No extras.

To get the most out of this day in Gower members are advised to read through all there is in Volumes 2 and 3 of Kilvert's visits to Ilston Rectory (there is nothing of it in any abridged edition). Those who come without this knowledge are apt to be bored, for Mr. Vaughan-Thomas will take us to such places as the "graves of the unknown" - (see p.185 of Vol.2); and Cheriton church - where there is much carving done by the Rev. Mr. Davies of Llanmadoc, whom we can read about on the previous page. There will, of course, be some walking. If it is a nice day it will not be an early return to Hereford, perhaps 9 o'clock or thereabouts?

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OUR DEPUTY PRESIDENT LECTURES IN CHIPPENHAM:

A member who was present at Chippenham on Saturday evening the 25th. of January has given me the following details about this highly successful event, for which the upper hall of Chippenham Town Hall was packed to capacity, something he had not seen for a considerable time. The lecture, which was promoted by the Chippenham Society of Arts, was given by Mr. Frederick Grice. In the first part of his lecture Mr. Grice went over the life and career of Francis Kilvert with the help of a series of transparencies; and then went on to emphasise the value and charm of his diary not merely as a social document of unique value, but as a genuine contribution to Victorian literature and one of the most enjoyable and uplifting of English diaries. The evening proved that interest in Kilvert in Wiltshire is very strong and Mr. Western, the Arts Society's secretary, expressed the hope that Mr. Grice might follow up his address with a second lecture at some future date.

Several other members have also written me of their delight and pleasure at being present to hear Mr. Grice, and I have heard similarly from some who made considerable journeys in order to hear him ... members from Exeter and from Andover and a number from the Bath and Bristol area. I am told that one London member travelled to Chippenham specially for the event.

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THE ATTINGHAM PARK CONFERENCE:

The October newsletter (p.7) invited interested members to write to Mr. Le Quesne of Shrewsbury for details of this event, which was held on 5th. to 8th. January at this lovely mansion a few miles out of Shrewsbury. It belongs to the National Trust but is used as the Shropshire Adult Educational College. The party was limited to 30, some 15 or so of us actually attended - a cosy, friendly little gathering. Members came from Manchester and Maidenhead, Bath and Birmingham, Lampeter, Worcester, Malvern, Shrewsbury, Hay-on-Wye and Hereford ... so old friendships were revived and new ones made. Mr. Grice and Mr. Le Quesne were the organisers and both contributed to the proceedings ... the former on "The Diary as Literature" and the latter on "Future Research". Other speakers were, the Rev. William Price on "Kilvert as a Priest" and the Rev. David Lockwood on "Stepping Heavenward" (the book which Kilvert so often gave to friends and parishoners) and the Hon. Secretary, (C.T.O. Prosser) spoke on "The Need for a Kilvert Museum". A highlight was the presence of Mrs. M. Halford - (a Shrewsbury member ... and the Shropshire County Archivist) who spoke

on "The Shropshire Kilverts", supported by a splendid collection of documents relating to the Kilverts of former centuries. These included WILLS and among these was a photostat of the will of Miss Maria Kilvert of Worcester. These photostats have now been acquired by the Society and are added to the collection awaiting that Museum. A very worthwhile Conference. Here's to the next one!!!

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#### SOME SIDELIGHTS ON THE ATTINGHAM PARK CONFERENCE:

During a break between sessions about half of those present piled into two cars and did a quick round of the nearby villages which have Kilvert connections. Soon after crossing the Severn at Atcham the first stop was at Berrington where the church was inspected and the nearby farm seen across the lane ... the nice B & W house photographed by some. Here members of the Kilvert family once lived. Then along bye-roads and a ford through the Cound brook to Condoover. Here Thomas Kilvert was Steward to the Lady of the Manor at Condoover Hall (some of the eighteenth century papers we saw told us that he was both trusted steward and friend). He was the diarist's great grandfather. In the churchyard is the tomb of Thomas Kilvert and adjoining the churchyard is Condoover Hall, a grand Tudor mansion now a home for blind children who have other disabilities - (no doubt many members saw it on television quite recently?). Our route then took us past Little Ryton and Pigeondoor, two more one-time homes of members of the Kilvert family - (a document tells us that Elizabeth Kilvert moved to Little Ryton after her husband's death; she died in 1821 after living for many years in Bath. Those of us who went to Bath last May saw her tomb in the churchyard at South Stoke. On the return run we paused to look across the fields to Brompton, a farm with Kilvert associations, and then back over Atcham bridge to the church, where some of the Kilverts were married. Atcham church has other interests for Herefordshire folk - windows to the memory of Blanche Parry of Bacton, she was maid-of-honour to Queen Elizabeth, are to be seen there. They were taken from Bacton church many years ago by someone who thought Atcham had more right to them than Bacton!!! Our round was completed, for the gateway to Attingham Park is opposite the "Mytton and Mermaid" which almost adjoins Atcham Church.

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#### IN THE PICTURE GALLERY:

The fine picture gallery at Attingham Park contains some 60 pictures (and a chamber organ of 1788 ... reminding us of the organ from Hay Castle - now in Brecon Cathedral), but it was picture number 35 which specially caught everyone's eye. It is catalogued as THE FLOWER GIRL, after Murillo 1617-1682. A copy of the picture in the Dulwich Gallery. Kilvert saw the original twice, in January 1872 and in June 1876, and recorded this in his Diary.

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#### A RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS:

Mr. Grice and Mr. Le Quesne are working on a booklet which will contain a complete record of the Conference at Attingham Park. It will be on sale to members (and others) and we anticipate that the 500 copies that will be produced will soon be sold. It is very much hoped that in the June newsletter there will be an announcement that it is ready, and a note about its price.

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#### ILSTON ..... 13th. October 1974:

This "AUTUMN SERVICE" at ILSTON was something quite outstanding, and in a completely new area. It was a shame that it rained nearly all the afternoon and evening and that the visibility was almost nil. NEVERTHELESS it was a most successful and happy occasion. THE WARMTH OF THE WELCOME (BOTH AT CHURCH AND AT THE OLD RECTORY AFTERWARDS) made us forget the weather. The two coaches from Hereford started off in a quite fine morning (at 10 a.m) but beyond Brecon the rain started and persisted for most of the day. The beautiful sweep of Swansea Bay was hardly seen and Mumbles lighthouse only just visible. After picnic lunch in a large shelter near Mumbles Head we proceeded along the coast (according to plan) but it was only where the road runs very near to high tide mark that any of the beauty of the Gower coast could be seen; so Ilston was reached in good time before the service started. Those who were seeing Ilston for the first time were surprised at its quietness, tucked away as it is in its little valley down narrow roads which connect two main roads. No wonder that it appealed to Francis Kilvert. Every corner was soon filled with cars and the church appeared to be quite full long before 3 o'clock, and still the folk poured in. Chairs in every available space made it possible for everyone to be seated, and there were surely nearly 300 in this small church which normally seats less than 200. All was just as planned (see page 1 of the October newsletter). Wonderful singing (especially "Cwm Rhondda") and a splendid address from the Rev. R.L. Brown. The service over we trooped up to the Old Rectory for TEA, many of us by the short cut round the east end of the church - in order to see the grave of the Rev. S.B. Westhopp

(Kilvert's friend) which had been newly cleaned up for the occasion. A happy crowd packed into the coach-house (garnished and decorated so nicely) for a memorable tea, for which we had to thank Mrs. Rowe Harding and her band of helpers. Tea over, all listened to our President and our Deputy President, the Rev. William Price and others. After a hearty vote of thanks to Judge and Mrs. Rowe Harding had been passed we all left at about 6 o'clock. The fact that we had been allowed to have tea at the house which Kilvert knew so well when it was Ilston Rectory and to stroll around its garden and grounds gave great pleasure to many. As usual, members and friends had come from far and wide, perhaps the one from furthest away was a grand-daughter of one of the Llanthomas family - from Suffolk.

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THE SOCIETY'S GIFT TO ILSTON CHURCH:

When we offered to give something useful to Ilston Church - to mark the occasion of this service and to commemorate the close connections of Francis Kilvert with Ilston - their choice was an OAK STAND for their ancient bell (see p.2 of the October Newsletter) and some £26. 00 is in hand waiting to pay for it. But "the best laid schemes, etc" and when we got there the bell was in position on a handsome stand. Before the service really started the Rector explained that when they asked the local craftsman who made it for his account they were told that there was no charge. It was to be his gift to Ilston Church ..... and it was suggested to us that we might like to give them an OAK HYMN-BOOK CUPBOARD instead. We, of course, agreed - and it is now being made by the same local craftsman. We hope to be able to report in the June newsletter that it is finished, in position and has a little plaque on it saying who gave it, and when. We feel quite sure that all subscribers will be as happy as we are over this.

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OCTOBER 12TH. 1974 ... TO THE ROCKS OF ABEREDW.

The walk on the day previous to a Kilvert Service has now become a bi-annual event. It was started primarily for those who came to stay in the area over the weekend and is much appreciated by such members. On the day before the Ilston service about 16 cars turned up at Clyro at 11 a.m. ... so there were nearly 40 walkers. Our first move was (by car) to Llowes Common; and from there we walked the lanes to a point from which there was a grand view of the Wye Valley below us on this bright morning, with the Black Mountains and Brecon Beacons as a back-cloth ... and in the opposite direction (across a dip in the countryside) to the Upper Noyadd, with all its memories of Florence Hill and of Kilvert's description of the warm welcome he got whenever he called there. This was quite a new corner of the Radnorshire Hills to all of us except our three local committee ladies who were our guides. Then back to the cars and over the Begyns to Painscastle and on to the parking place on the hill beyond Llanbwchllyn, picnic lunch among the rocks and then all set off on the walk "across the moors to the Rocks of Aberedw" - a very popular walk which we now do about once every other year. Those who have done this walk many times have never before seen such clarity of vision - it was quite startling and we hoped for similar conditions next day in Gower - but it was not to be!! At the famous rocks one of our members, (Mr. J.L. Fox of Hereford) read Kilvert's poem "The Rocks of Aberedw" from the Society's publication "Collected Verse", a poem so very descriptive of the walk across the moors and of the rocks themselves; the company gathering round to listen. Picnic tea followed the very pleasant walk back to the parked cars, and then our various ways homewards. One group of cars went off towards the Wye Valley and at Erwood took the new road down the track of the old Mid-Wales Railway, halting at the bridge over the Bachowy to look upstream towards the falls of Craig-pwll-du, and again near Boughrood Castle; both of interest as they figure in KILVERT'S DIARY. So ended a near-perfect day in the Radnor Hills.

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MUCH MARCLE ... 29TH. JUNE 1975.

Those who only have an abridged edition of KILVERT'S DIARY may wonder why this year's Commemoration Service should be at Much Marcle ... for it is a tradition that wherever this annual service is held there should be some connection with what we read in KILVERT'S DIARY. Although there is no mention of Much Marcle in abridged editions there is an excellent account of the wedding of Kilvert's friend the Rev. Andrew Pope with Miss Mary Money Kyrle, (for he was best man), as below. Much Marcle is in Herefordshire but on the Gloucestershire border, a few miles from Ledbury and on the Ledbury to Ross-on-Wye main road, though St. Bartholomew's Church is beautifully situated a little way off it. It is an ancient church, with many attractive features and will seat a large congregation. A keen reader of KILVERT'S DIARY suggested Much Marcle as a most appropriate place for a Commemoration Service. The Vicar, the Rev. Graham F. Holley, was asked for his views on this suggestion and he immediately replied with an invitation for 29th. June this year. He will, of course, conduct the service. The special preacher will be the Rev. W.L. Paterson, Vicar of Madley

(Herefordshire) and the Act of Remembrance will be by Canon J.S. Leatherbarrow of Malvern. There will be the usual TEA after the service and we shall hope to be able to arrange for an "hour after tea" to follow. On a fine day there is a nice walk up the drive connecting the church with Homme House (the bride's home, and still in the same family.) Full details of all arrangements will be in the June newsletter. Those members with the three volumes can look up Kilvert's account of "the wedding at Much Marcle" on p.p. 77/78 of Volume 3 .. and on p.p. 73/74 of Volume 1 there is an amusing account of an incident which happened to the Rev. Andrew Pope when he was a young curate in an adjoining parish to Kilvert at Clyro.

#### THE WEDDING PHOTOGRAPH:

The Society has a copy of the photograph of the wedding party, taken on the steps of Homme House - where the original should still be, but it is missing. At present it is shut up, for Commander Kyrle Pope (a son of Kilvert's friends) is elderly and ill and in a nursing home. The family think that the Commander may have loaned it to some interested person a year or two ago, his memory is now very bad. This, therefore, is an appeal to anyone who may have it to return it to me (the Hon. Sec) when it will be forwarded to the appropriate address; or it could be handed to the Rev. G.F. Holley at Much Marcle Vicarage.

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#### A NOTE ON DRAYCOT HOUSE - by our Deputy President.

Draycot House (near Chippenham) which Kilvert visited, and where he went skating in the cold winter of 1870, was the home of the Long Family from about the middle of the fifteenth century. The last male heir died in 1805, and on his death the estate passed to his sister, the well-known Miss Long, about whose disastrous marriage Kilvert learned from his old friend, Alice Banks. There are suggestions in Kilvert's account that the intelligence and energy that had supported the Long family for so long was beginning to fail. The celebrations which marked Miss Catherine's coming of age were very badly handled, and relations between her and her tenants were strained. She seems to have mistrusted them, and had a troop of yeoman cavalry brought into the grounds to keep them from getting at the traditional roast ox; and they repaid her mistrust by rushing into the house when the cavalry, thinking the house was on fire, vacated it, and clearing the tables of every available eatable.

Catherine Long had neither good looks nor good sense; but according to Jane Badeni in her Wiltshire Forefathers she was a very eligible heiress, worth at least £40,000 a year. She had plenty of suitors, but out of them all she chose the dissolute and unscrupulous son of Lord Mornington, Long Wellesley. In spite of all advice Miss Long insisted on marrying him. He took her name, went through her fortune and left her. It was while he was living away from her, in Paris, that she was reduced to borrowing from Kilvert's grandparents, Squire Coleman and his wife. Long Wellesley was an irresponsible and deeply-hated man. Jane Badeni quotes the following extract from the Wiltshire Gazette - (1 Dec.1831).

Mr. Long Wellesley was horsewhipped on Saturday in Fleet Street by a Mr. Derbyshire. This gentleman, having been long connected with the hon. member, and vainly applying for reparation of an alleged repeated ill-treatment, took the law in his own hands.

And when Kilvert remarked that Wellesley was not buried in Draycot, he received the comment, "He wasn't worth carriage".

Wellesley's son inherited Draycot (and his father's title of Lord Mornington) and promised to leave the estate to his sister, Victoria Long Wellesley, but he seems to have been as unreliable as his father. A few days before he died he revoked his bequest of Draycot to his sister and left them to his father's cousin, Lord Cowley. Presumably Lord Cowley was living there in 1870 when Kilvert went skating on the pond and he was the Lord Cowley whom Harriett Awdry hit on the shins with the torch that she threw away. Some time before 1959, the date of the publication of Wiltshire Forefathers, Draycot House, having fallen into a bad state of repair, was pulled down.

Frederick Grice.

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#### SKINNERS DIARY:

A quite recent newsletter suggested that members of the Kilvert Society would probably be interested in this book. (I now find that the correct title is not as above but is "JOURNAL OF A SOMERSET RECTOR. 1803-1834. JOHN SKINNER") ... and that I hoped sometime to read it.

This newsletter evidently got to a Solicitor in Melbourne, named Skinner ... for a few weeks ago I had an airmail from him, asking for more information and saying he was sure that they were related, and he ended up with a request for me to get him a copy if possible.

I approached a member of the Society in Somerset who is a bookseller; his reply was

to the effect that secondhand copies were almost non-existent, but he told me of a publishing firm in Bath who had produced a re-print in 1971. The result is that we now have a number of copies for sale. They are £4. 50 plus 23p postage at present (will soon be much more). It is a large, handsome book, well bound, and as it was £4. 50 in 1971 must be good value now. Something very different to KILVERT'S DIARY but it does give a good picture of life in the Somerset coal field (now vanished) in the early 19th. Century. John Skinner was a very different man to Francis Kilvert; indeed, one feels sorry for him. Sad and worried and in perpetual trouble with his parishioners. But one enjoys his visits to Bath (he had friends at Claverton) and to Weston-super-Mare, etc., etc. He was Rector of Camerton, seven miles from Bath on the Wells road; a village that a little party of Hereford members intend passing through on our way to spend a few days in Cornwall (in April) when we shall hope to get round many of the places visited by Kilvert during his fortnight in Cornwall in 1870 (p.p. 183-208 in Volume 1). Report in the June newsletter.

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#### THREE NEW LEAFLETS:

There are now three new leaflets available for any member who would like a few to give to friends and enquirers. They are:

A blue leaflet describing all Christmas cards and greeting cards available.

A pink leaflet giving details of all publications, copies of talks, etc., etc.

A white leaflet all about the Society; its aims and objects; its annual events, subscription, etc., etc.

The attention of all is drawn to what this leaflet says about new members ... after stating that the membership is now considerably more than 700 it goes on ... "Such is the interest in Kilvert's Diary and all that arises from it (an ever growing interest) that the membership could by now have been more like seven thousand had any attempt been made to canvass or in any way seek members, but the policy is to "sit tight" and let those interested find out about us and then apply for membership if they feel so inclined. We ask members and friends not to make any efforts to get new members, for we have long realised that those who have been in any way induced into joining invariably turn out to be poor members who take little interest and do not even bother to pay their subscriptions, nor bother to resign, thus causing un-necessary work and expense. We do, however, very much welcome the really interested and the enthusiastic who from time to time come along and indicate that they wish to join the Society".

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#### KILVERT'S DIARY - the three volumes.

The item under this heading in last October's newsletter brought a shoal of orders ... from all over the British Isles and some from overseas, so that although we were having 12 sets in every time we ordered we were sold out by Christmas, and the publishers were sold out too; but promised more in February, by which time they would have the last batch of the present edition from the bookbinders. Twelve sets have just arrived (as this newsletter is being compiled, in the last week in February) and twelve more ordered immediately, for orders were waiting to be fulfilled. Interest in the Diary increases every year. In addition, people are waking up to the fact that NOW IS THE TIME TO BUY. At £12 they are good value in these times of inflation, for they were £12 when this edition came out several years ago. By the end of 1975 at latest, maybe long before that, this edition will be completely sold out ... and we shudder to think what the price of the next edition will be. At present the postage on the set of three volumes is 36p, but in March it goes up substantially. Please ascertain how much is postage for a parcel just under six pounds and remit accordingly. All books, etc. mentioned on p.8 of the October newsletter are still in stock, but postage rates will be substantially more than as quoted there. If anyone sends too much it will be refunded.

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#### THE WYE CLIFF ZOETROPE:

On 19th. January 1872 Francis Kilvert was invited to Wye Cliff ... to a children's party and to help to amuse the children. "Wye Cliff was as full of children as an egg is full of meat ... some were looking through a Zoetrope".

That very Zoetrope has now been given to the Kilvert Society by the daughter of one of those children who crowded round it more than a hundred years ago. It has been at Llangoed Castle for many many years (my wife and I saw it there when we called on Mrs. Christy in 1965 ... she was one of the children at that party in 1872; and now her niece, Miss Ann Powell, has so kindly given it to the Society). With it are more than twenty animated strips, and when it is spun and one looks through the slits the figures on them come to life ... for the Zoetrope was a fore-runner of the cinema. We hope to have it on show at the A.G.M. on 24th. April, and if we ever get that hoped-for Museum this will surely be one of its prime features.

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#### ACCOMMODATION IN THE KILVERT COUNTRY:

At this time each year a list of "places to stay" is given in the Spring newsletter. Many found these addresses useful in 1974 and no doubt many more will in 1975. First the three who are members of the Kilvert Society:-

Mrs. Harris, Crossway Farm, Clyro, via Hereford. A farm well situated on Clyro Hill a little less than 1½ miles from the village. Bettws Church and the site of Whittys Mill are quite near, and the road leads over to Rhosgoch, Newchurch, Painscastle, etc. Grand walking country all around.

Mr. & Mrs. Monk, Ashbrook House, Clyro, via Hereford. As the house was not sold, accommodation is offered again this year. Ashbrook was, of course, Kilvert's home for his 7 years in Clyro; it is right in Clyro village and about 1½ miles from Hay-on-Wye.

Mrs. N.D. Jones, Olchon Court, Nr. Longtown, Hereford ... tucked away in the Black Mountains, but only about 10 miles from Hay-on-Wye. Hill walks abound. Llanthony Abbey (Priory) and Capel-y-Ffin are in the next valley.

#### NON-MEMBERS

Mrs. Williams, Brooklands, Lion Street, Hay-on-Wye, via Hereford. Mrs. Lloyd, Hawkeswood Farm, Nr. Hay-on-Wye, via Hereford. Mrs. Lewis, Llanbedr Hall, Painscastle, Builth Wells, Powys. Mrs. Knights, Old Black Lion, Hay-on-Wye, via Hereford ... and, at the other end of the Kilvert Country (towards the St. Harmon area) is Mr. & Mrs. Barnes, Cwmllechwedd Fawr, Llanbister, Llandrindod Wells, Powys.

HOTELS - The Crown and the Swan in Hay-on-Wye and the Baskerville Arms in Clyro (all via Hereford). WHEREVER YOU STAY PLEASE LET IT BE KNOWN THAT YOU HAVE COME TO SEE THE COUNTRYSIDE AFTER READING KILVERT'S DIARY ... for the people of the area still do not realise how much interest it has created, and that people come from all over the world to see it.

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#### THE SOCIETY'S GIFT TO LLOWES CHURCH:

It was decided that when the Commemoration Service was held at LLOWES in June last year the Society should give the church something useful to mark the occasion. Their choice was HYMN BOOK SHELVES, and the Anthonys of Clyro were given the order to make them. They were not ready in time to be fixed before the service last June, but are now in position, and paid for. Cost was £22. 50. The Committee of the Kilvert Society voted for £20 (approximately) to be allocated from funds for this gift to Llowes Church; nevertheless it may well be that there are some members who would like to be specially associated with it and would, therefore, like to subscribe towards it. Any donation to this LLOWES FUND should be sent to the Hon. Secretary, marked accordingly.

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#### OBITUARY:

Too late for inclusion in the last newsletter we received news of the death of a long-standing Cheshire member, Mr. R.W.F. Potter of Heswall ... the member of his family who notified us said that although Mr. Potter had never been able to visit the Kilvert Country or to attend any of our events, he got much pleasure from his membership and was an avid reader of the Diary and of the newsletters and publications.

Those of us who knew Mr. Michael Howard were shocked to learn of his sudden death in mid-December at the early age of 51. He succeeded his father as Chairman of Jonathan Cape, but left publishing in 1969 to live at Boughrood in Radnorshire, where he set up a retreat for writers and artists.

Mr. & Mrs. Howard attended our 21st. Anniversary Celebrations in 1969 ... in Hereford Town Hall. Some of us who went to the Memorial Service for William Plomer in London in the November of 1973 enjoyed his company on the train journey. The "Bookseller" printed a fine obituary notice of Mr. Howard.

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#### A LITTLE MORE OF THE ORIGINAL DIARY:

We know that out of the 22 original black notebooks in which Kilvert wrote his Diary only 3 now remain; but a little un-expected extra has just come to light, nearly 50 typewritten sheets - given by William Plomer to members of the Bevan family of Hay Castle at the time he was editing the Diary and had it all typed out. It mainly concerns the Bevans (and also the Dews) and deals with the Hay, Whitney, Bredwardine and Hereford areas in the main, and most of it has not previously appeared in print. The Society has had it all made into a little booklet (by duplication) and these are now offered to members and friends for 35p each ... this price includes postage at the new higher rate. No doubt many will welcome this rare chance of "something extra". We have only had 200 little booklets produced, so early application is advised. If the demand is good we may follow on with a second batch.

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### THE PALISSERS:

No doubt many members followed this series on TELEVISION, but without realising that two members of the Kilvert Society took an active part in it ... and in doing so maintained a tradition of which we read much in Kilvert's Diary.

We read of archery meetings and on numerous occasions of archery parties, held at one or other of the various houses where Kilvert was a welcome guest ... Clyro Court, Cae Mawr, Wye Cliff, Hay Castle and Clifford Priory ... to name some of them. It is perhaps Hay Castle more than anywhere else that so figures in the Diary ... the home for very many years of the Rev. W.L. and Mrs. Bevan. Their grand-daughter is our Vice-President, Mrs. S. Mumford of Sugwas Court, Nr. Hereford, and it is most pleasing to have Mrs Mumford and her two daughters as members of the Society. The pursuit of archery has continued in that family and it was Miss Rosemary Mumford and Miss Mary Mumford who we saw, together with six others, taking parts as extras in "Episode 21" dealing with Volume 1 of THE PRIME MINISTER. Since part of this novel was set near Ledbury it was fitting that the episode should have been filmed at Eastnor Castle near Ledbury in Herefordshire. The Archers shot with their own Long Bows and arrows, providing them also for Susan Hampshire as "Lady Glencora". These were identical to those in general use in the Kilvert period. It is interesting that Anthony Trollope wrote The Prime Minister only four years after Kilvert alluded to a croquet party being held at Hay Castle in the archery field (Vol.2. page40). This is now the municipal Car Park opposite the Castle.

The B.B.C. went to immense trouble to have the correct clothes and these were in fact original clothes of that period. The ladies also wore boned stays!!!

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### AN APPEAL FROM WOOTTON-BY-WOODSTOCK:

Just in time for inclusion in this newsletter comes an appeal for funds for overhauling and renovating the organ in the Church of St. Mary the Virgin at Wootton. This is, of course, the church in which Francis Kilvert and Elizabeth Rowland were married - on 20th. August, 1879. In 1970 the Society sponsored a Commemoration Service there and gave a flower stand and placed a tablet in the church recording the wedding of 1879. Nearly £2,000 is required and this small parish has already raised £950 towards it. Some of our members will no doubt wish to subscribe. Full details of the organ and what needs renewing can be obtained from Professor E.M. Hugh-Jones, Michaelhouse, Mill Lane, Wootton-by-Woodstock, OXFORD - to whom donations should be sent (marked "Organ Fund" and cheques made out to the Parochial Church Council). Please let it be known that such donations are from members of the Kilvert Society.

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### KILVERT IN KENT:

In 1876 (June) Francis Kilvert was in London, staying with his sister Emily in Victoria Road, Upper Norwood, from where he again went to the Crystal Palace; and to see Maskelynes Mysteries at the Egyptian Hall ... and to "sweet green Dulwich" to see the pictures once more. On Sunday, 25th. June to St. Pauls (by steamboat), where he was "deeply touched" by the singing of the "great congregation" ... afterwards enjoying the sunset and the children playing on the Embankment. Next day he "went to Faversham by Herne Hill to stay a day or two with the Richard Hiltons at Preston House" ... and from there visited Canterbury. His impressions of Canterbury Cathedral make most interesting reading. Therefore when my wife and I visited Canterbury, a year or two ago, with a party from Hereford, it was good to look this up in Volume 2 on the spot.

(Kilvert went to Faversham again in 1878 ... after attending his brother's wedding in London; this time with his sister Fanny - and both stayed with the Hiltons at Preston House from 4th. to 7th. June).

One morning the Hereford party visited Faversham (it is an interesting old town 9 miles from Canterbury - towards London). We were taken round by a lady of the Faversham Society, and therefore saw odd corners which I am sure many never see. I asked her about Preston House, but she nor anyone else seemed to have ever heard of it.

Months afterwards someone from Faversham sent for Christmas cards (after seeing our advertisement in the "Times Literary Supplement"). Here was my chance, I asked him about Preston House. The result was that I was put in touch with a local solicitor who could tell me all about it. Unfortunately I mislaid the folder with all the correspondence and plans, etc. and it has only just turned up, but the information is just as interesting now as then.

The photostat of the particulars of Preston House, etc. when it was up for sale in 1910 tells us that it was "a fine old Georgian residence with 15 bed and dressing rooms; in well-timbered pleasure grounds of 15 acres". Richard Hilton died in 1901 and in 1905 the whole property was conveyed to on Edwin Wood ... presumably this was who sold it in 1910. The Hilton family were Bankers (Hilton and Rigden, now the

National Westminster Bank in Faversham, with virtually the same frontage ... built by Giles Hilton, who died in 1867; he also built Preston House). Preston House was demolished a number of years ago and the grounds divided, and sold. Our solicitor friend (Mr. Leslie Smith) bought a good portion and built his house on it. He has at least one of the "soft green lawns" which Kilvert mentions, and an original greenhouse which he believes to have been an orchid house. I copied the relevant extracts from the Diary for him and he said in reply, "I find deeply touching the sudden revelation to see that a diarist of considerable fame and repute, but of whom I had never heard, visited the actual place where I now live, and described it as "the Paradise" .. where he "walked in the beautiful gardens and over the soft green lawns..." and shall always regard it as a principal incident in my life." Mr. Smith most kindly offers any member of the Society to see his garden, but suggests that to get the full "flavour" of the Rev. Francis Kilvert's description of this episode they should travel by train from Victoria to Faversham. They would then pass through Herne Hill and see for themselves the "green shades of Bromley and Beckenham" and the "waving woods of St. Mary Cray" (some of which are still there despite the frightful urban sprawl on the south side of the line at St. Mary Cray) ... though he is much afraid that he would not be able to arrange for anyone representing "dear Annie Hilton" to meet them at the station.

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Hon. Secretary's note .... how did Kilvert know the Richard Hiltons at Faversham? I feel sure that they were related to some of Kilvert's friends in Wiltshire or in Radnorshire; perhaps the latter, for Mr. Hilton's full name was Richard Jones Hilton. We are tempted to wonder if there was a connection with the Venables of Clyro ... from the references to a Mrs. Hilton in the Diary (see pages 36, 38, 40 and 45 in Volume 2 and pages 430, 431 and 432 in Volume 3). Cannot someone throw more light on this matter?

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A KILVERT PILGRIMAGE - (by a Surrey Member).

One sunny morning in September 1974, my wife and I set out by car for Mitcham, where Francis Kilvert had stayed at a house called "Cranmers" (Diary: 21 Jan. 1870). We had ascertained from the Mitcham Librarian that "Cranmers" had stood on the south side of Cranmer Road facing Mitcham Common, and that the house had been entirely demolished about 1927, the site now being occupied by Wilson's Hospital. We found the site, and enjoyed the view across the Common, which can have undergone but little change over the intervening century.

We then continued through Streatham to Upper Norwood, and turned into Gipsy Hill, where Christ Church stands on the left, a little way down the steep hill. Here Kilvert attended morning service (Diary: 25 June 1876). As I remember the scene over 50 years ago the dominating feature on the northern skyline visible from this point was the great dome of St. Paul's Cathedral, some 5 miles distant: and that feature would undoubtedly have been observed by Kilvert on the occasion of his attendance at Christ Church on "Midsummer Morrow" of 1876, prior to his visit to St. Paul's on the afternoon of that day. The dome may still be discerned from here on a clear day, though it no longer dominates, being much overshadowed by the enormous tower blocks of the modern City of London.

Continuing down Gipsy Hill, and just before we reached the station of that name on the Victoria and Crystal Palace line, we turned left into Victoria Crescent (originally known as Victoria Road). Here, at No. 12, Kilvert stayed with his sister Emmie, (Diary: 22 June 1876). We were fortunate to find the house still standing; a tall typically Victorian semi-detached residence with a flight of steps leading up to the front door. Though fashionable in Kilvert's day, property in the vicinity now appears much neglected and decayed, and, following the fate of other roads in the same locality, these houses may well before long be swept away and the whole area re-developed.

Returning to Gipsy Hill (but with no cuckoo singing as on Midsummer Day, 1876) we then made our way to nearby "sweet green Dulwich", which still merits Kilvert's refreshing description. Here we found the Picture Gallery in its delightfully rural setting, at the apex of Gallery Road and College Road and opposite Dulwich Park. Entering the Gallery, we spent an enjoyable hour in identifying those pictures which so pleased Kilvert on his two recorded visits (Diary: 4 Jan. 1872; 24 June 1876) - in particular "Albert Cuy's cows"; "The two superb and famous Murillos, the two Spanish peasant boys and the Spanish flower girl"; and above all, "Rembrandt's immortal servant girl" still leaning from her window, though a hundred years has elapsed since Kilvert last saw her.

Thus ended a most rewarding excursion.

Kenneth Day, Banstead, Surrey. 22. 10. 74.

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Hon. Secretary's note ... To me it is quite clear that the Thomas family who lived at "Cranmers" at Mitcham were closely connected to those of the same name who lived at Llanthomas and Llwyn Madoc and I one day hope to establish the exact relationship. The first few words of the first volume of the Diary tell us that Kilvert went with Llewellyn and Owen to the Crystal Palace, and next day again with them to the Polytechnic. In the next few days we find them all (with the addition of Hugh) riding about the Common, and playing football there. A fortnight or so later finds Kilvert back in Clyro and at a dinner party with the Bevans and the Crichtons and with members of the Thomas family from Llanthomas, Welfield and Llwyn Madoc; and he and Miss Thomas of Llwyn Madoc talking about "Cranmers" - Llewellyn, Owen, Hugh, etc. "It was a very happy evening."

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ANOTHER POEM FROM CHELTENHAM:

The newsletter of October 1974 ended with a nice little poem "From the past" ... the following is by the same member - after a visit to Bredwardine Church, and after reading in the Diary that Kilvert had drawn the attention of two children to the colours on the knight, of the sun shining through the stained glass window. The letter accompanying this poem ends, "it is such a nice little church, we enjoy visiting it very much"

STONE EFFIGY OF A KNIGHT - BREDWARDINE CHURCH.

Recumbent knight, on your stone couch you lie,  
While round your bed the centuries roll by;  
Men come and go, and lift their songs of praise,  
Silent you lie, withdrawn from earthly ways.

Calmly, within your marble form you lie,  
Idle your sword, and closed your weary eye,  
Stilled with the weight of stone your active limbs,  
Silent you wait, and deaf to prayers and hymns.

Brilliant upon your smooth, worn stone, the sun  
Glancing through ancient, jewelled glass, has run  
Purple and crimson, blue and shimmering gold;  
Sleep on, sad knight, while other men grow old.

Gwendoline Calderbank, Cheltenham.

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A MATTER OF URGENCY:

When I began to compile this newsletter I quite thought that the new postal rates were not coming into force until the end of March; suddenly it was announced that 17th. March was to be the day. It is, therefore, all being rather rushed, for I am determined to post them before the 17th. March and so save the Society more than £20 on this occasion. So if there are errors, and if contributions from members are left out where I really intended that they should be IN ... please blame the Post Office for not announcing this rise in rates much sooner. What a rise it is too!!! 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ p. for a second-class letter; and parcel post rates to be raised by at least 50% ... and this isn't the end of it, we are promised further rises before very long!!!