

THE KILVERT SOCIETY

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June, 1976.

Dear Member,

This year the ANNUAL COMMEMORATION SERVICE will be on SUNDAY, 27TH. JUNE at 3 o'clock at THE PARISH CHURCH (ST. MARY'S) BUILTH WELLS in what was Breconshire, now part of Powys.

There was a preliminary note about this in the March newsletter - here are the full details. IT WILL BE CONDUCTED BY CANON OWAIN JONES, M.A., F.R. Hist. S. - THE VICAR OF BUILTH - who immediately issued a warm invitation for the Society to hold this service in his church upon being told that a number of members had suggested it.

The ADDRESS will be given by THE REV. D.T.W. PRICE, M.A. of St. David's University College, Lampeter - a Vice-President of the Kilvert Society. The ACT OF REMEMBRANCE will be by the REV. R.M.H. JONES, B.A., who is Rector of Llyswen (with Boughrood, Llanstephan, etc., a few miles down the Wye Valley from Builth. He is a member of the Kilvert Society). The LESSONS will be read by the PRESIDENT and the DEPUTY PRESIDENT of the Society.

BUILTH is a place that Kilvert loved. It and the countryside all around is truly "Kilvert Country". There is quite a long item on another page about places around Builth which figure in KILVERT'S DIARY, with suggestions about what visitors for the weekend or longer might like to see - with some extracts from the Diary.

TEA AFTER THE SERVICE will be served in the Church Hall, which is situated in the North West Corner of the Churchyard, at 4. 30 p.m. It is very kindly being provided and served by the ladies of Builth Mothers' Union - need we say more? The charge will be 40p per person, cash will be taken at the door or in the hall. PLEASE TRY TO HAVE THE CORRECT AMOUNT READY. It is a large hall and 200 will be catered for.

AFTER TEA - we can stay on for half an hour - or much longer if need be, and with Mr. Vaughan-Thomas, Mr. Grice and Mr. Price with us, this will be something to which we can look forward. This will also be an opportunity for any member who has come across something of general interest to tell the company about, briefly, of course. There will be the usual BOOKSTALL.

CAR PARKING - there are excellent facilities on the Gro (Wyeside) Car Park, only 100 yards or so from the Church. It is signposted in the High Street. (NOTE... there is NO ENTRY to the Gro Car Park from the Wye Bridge approach road, this is a WAY OUT ONLY. All traffic for the Car Park is via High Street).

A MOTOR COACH will run from Hereford - (two coaches if necessary) - leaving the Town Hall at 1 p.m. promptly, as it is a 40 mile run, and as we are picking up en route it means that it will not be easy to get to Builth by 2. 30 p.m. and thus make sure of good seats in church. THE FARE WILL BE 75p per person. Coach seats can be booked at Wyeval Limited, Photographic Dealers, Bridge Street, Hereford, or with the Hon. Secretary. The route will be via White Cross, Clyro, Hay and Glasbury.

POSTERS will be sent to many members (with this newsletter). We hope that they will be effectively displayed - for they not only advertise the SERVICE but also excite curiosity in the Diary and the Society. There is no doubt that many read the Diary for the first time after seeing one of our posters.

Yours sincerely,



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

Overleaf is an announcement about the Society's gift to the church at Builth - ALSO some details about the WALK on Saturday, 26th. June - and of the Autumn Service.

GIFT TO BUILTH CHURCH -

Following our usual practice the Society will present some item to the church which will not only be of use to them but will also mark the occasion by carrying a little plaque or an inscription - briefly stating that it was given by the Kilvert Society on the 27th. June, 1976. The Vicar of Builth has not finally decided what they would like. It may be a very nice visitors book or it may be a church notice board. Whatever it is, there will no doubt be some members who would particularly like to subscribe towards it. Please send any such donation to the Hon. Secretary, clearly indicating that it is for this purpose.

WALK ON SATURDAY, 26TH. JUNE - it has not yet been decided where this shall be - somewhere up in the Radnorshire Hills no doubt (there is always the old favourite, across to the Rocks of Aberedw, if nothing else suitable, but we hope to find something new, or to some extent new). IF WE ALL MEET NEAR THE BASKERVILLE ARMS IN CLYRO at 11 a.m. that morning we will have it all worked out by then. BRING YOUR PICNIC LUNCH AND TEA - as usual.

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

Normally the reports of the A.G.M., the May coach tour to Aberystwyth, etc. and the walk (Bredwardine Hill again) on May 9th. would come very early in this newsletter, but due to staff holidays with our duplicators, the bulk of these ten pages has to be in their hands very early. This, plus the fact that my wife and myself are to be two of the party of ten going by minibus to the Lake District immediately after the A.G.M. virtually the same party of ten who went to Cornwall last April, makes it that these reports will be a "stop press" later on and will, therefore, appear on the last page (or pages) of this newsletter.

THE AUTUMN SERVICE.

The Society has been invited to hold this year's Autumn Service at KINGTON ST. MICHAEL in WILTSHIRE, and the invitation has been accepted. It will be on Sunday, 3rd. October at 3 p.m. We shall then have visited 3 of the 4 churches of the Chippenham area which have strong Kilvert connections. No doubt Kington Langley (Langley Fitzurse) will be visited in due course. The kind invitation for this service at KINGTON ST. MICHAEL has come from the Rev. Guy Oswald of Hardenhuish with Kington St. Michael. Mr. Oswald is no stranger to us, for he was Curate at St. Paul's, Chippenham with Langley Burrell when we had the 1972 Commemoration Service at Langley Burrell, and it was he who took charge of the competition for the Langley Burrell schoolchildren. It will be remembered that Canon R.W. Kilvert presented them with their prizes in the Village Hall after tea that day. THE SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER NEWSLETTER WILL HAVE FULL DETAILS.

KILVERT ON B.B.C.2.

Last year B.B.C. (Cardiff) recorded a Kilvert feature on various locations in the Hereford-Bredwardine-Hay-Clyro areas, with Sir John Betjeman as narrator. Several of us helped by providing information and photographs. These included Mr. Frederick Grice, Mr. Godfrey Davies and myself - for some time we have awaited news from Mr. Derek Trimby as to when it was likely to appear on T.V. Mr. Trimby is the producer and we have all got to know him over this Kilvert feature. News has just been received - the tentative date for it is July 29th., on the B.B.C. 2 network. We have an idea that it is going to be very good. One important point is that Mr. Trimby knows a lot about the Diary and the Kilvert Country, and he is interested and sympathetic.

KILVERT AND THE BUILTH WELLS AREA.

Builth is most certainly a place most suitable for a Commemoration Service, for it is a place and a district that made a great impression on the Diarist. In his first year at Clyro he walked to Builth ... "the day never to be forgotten when I walked alone over the hills from Clyro to Builth and first saw the Rocks of Aberedw, the day I first saw Painscastle and the ruined church of Llanbedr, and the morning sun shining like silver upon Llanbychlllyn Pool, and descended from the great moor upon the Vale of Edw ... every step was through an enchanted land. There was a glamour and enchantment about the first view of the shining slate roofs of Builth and the bridge and the shining river. A strange fascination, a beautiful enchantment hangs over Builth and the town is magically transfigured still". Then in April, 1875, Kilvert writes in his Diary, "How pleasant and happy it was once more to be in the midst of the throng of the kindly, merry Builth market folk in the sunny afternoon, home returning, the pretty smiling fair-haired girls coming in with their heavy market baskets, the good-humoured crowding, the courteous apologies, the lively animated talk. I always feel so happy and natural and at home amongst the kindly Welsh".

Francis Kilvert often passed through Builth on his journeys between Clyro and Llysdymanor and to Rhayader and St. Harmon. How he loved the Wye Valley and all the places in it. Monday, 12th. April, 1875. (Kilvert had come up from Wiltshire and was staying with his sister at Monnington-on-Wye) ... "I went up to Llysdymanor by the 1. 18 train, and my spirits rose as we passed up the beautiful valley amongst the old familiar scenes. The morning had been grey and overcast, but before we reached Erwood there came a sunburst and the gleam, swiftly broadening as the clouds scattered, stole over the green hillsides and the faint blue far-off mountains till the glory spread over the land of Llewellyn and the river sparkled down to the ford at Caban Twm Bach and the enchanted valley lay smiling in all its loveliness. As we glided up the valley, sweeping round bend after bend we saw new prospects and beauties still unfolding and opening before us ... then Aberedw, the Rocks of Aberedw. What more need be, can be said?"

ROUND ABOUT BUILTH.

Some who come to the Commemoration Service on 27th. June will perhaps stay over the weekend in the area, and some stay longer than that. Others may make an early start and do some "exploring" in the morning. Here are a few hints on what to see and how to get there. LLYSDINAM, to which the Rev. R.L. Venables retired after leaving Clyro in 1872; this is at Newbridge-on-Wye - about 6 miles up the Wye from Builth on the road to Rhayader. The mansion can be well seen from the churchyard across on the other bank of the river. The church itself is interesting, for it was built by Mr. George Venables in 1888 and has many family memorials - windows and tablets. Some 2 miles away, off the road to Llandrindod Wells, is the ancient church at Disserth, offered to Kilvert in 1872 - see pp.278-9 in Vol. 2. (also see p.376 in Vol.1.) About 3 miles up the Wye from Newbridge is Doldowlodd, here is the turn (to the right, almost opposite the Vulcan Arms) for Ysfa, where Kilvert attended the laying of the foundation stone of the little church, and wrote that amusing account of it - see p.104 onwards in Vol. 1. Beyond Doldowlodd it is about 4 miles on to Rhayader, with the delights of the Elan Valley on one side of it and ST. HARMON only 3 miles or so in the other direction. Those visiting St. Harmon should go on up to Pantydwr and see the "upper part of the parish" ... see p.292 in Vol. 3. LLANLEONFEL (see Vol. 2. pp. 362-363) is some 8 miles out from Builth, on another road - that leading to Llanwrtyd Wells. The little church on its hillock above the road on the left, with Garth House across on the right, and beyond Beulah is the church of Eglwys Oen Duw, where Kilvert preached a harvest sermon (p.33 in Vol.2) and a little way further on (towards Abergwesyn) is the lovely old Welsh mansion Llyn Madoc, where some of the Thomas family lived (see p. 33 in Vol.1), and where descendants live today. In Builth itself, from near the Wye Bridge, one looks up over the Royal Welsh Showground to Welfield, now gone back to its old Welsh name, Cefndyrys - the home of the Thomas family (Daisy's father and his brothers, etc) and still in the same family. Beyond it, nearer to Llandrindod Wells, is Pencerrig - now a hotel, but once another Thomas home. Those who go to St. Harmon and Pantydwr can go further afield, on to Llanidloes (see pp. 293-4 in Vol. 3) or from Pantydwr to Abbey Cwmhir (pp. 113-114 in Vol.1) and back to Builth via Cross Gates and Llandrindod Wells. It is not far from Builth to Glascwm (via Hundred House) and from there a round trip can be made to Newchurch, Painscastle, Erwood and back to Builth ... taking in so many places mentioned in the Diary. Yes, Builth Wells is a good centre for exploring much Kilvert Country.

THE ROYAL WELSH SHOW.

The permanent showground is across the river from Builth, at Llanellwedd. This year's show is to be on July 21st. to 23rd. Although Radnorshire is now part of the new County of Powys there is to be a feature at the Show depicting the old county. Kilvert and the Kilvert Country will be included in this, in the main with pictures, I believe. The authorities in Llandrindod Wells have contacted me and I have told them that we shall be delighted to supply photographs and information. This is as much as I know at present, but I feel sure that it will materialise - and no doubt prove of much interest to many of the vast crowds who attend this popular event each year. Hon. Secretary.

KILVERT'S DIARY.

The March newsletter gave the news that sets of 3 volumes were SOLD OUT, but that the Society had a number in stock (with the Hon. Secretary) - which would be sold at £12 a set (plus 75p if posted) as long as they lasted. Many have been sold, and by now we should be without them altogether - BUT - just as the March newsletter was "going to press" the 24 sets which we had asked Jonathan Cape Ltd. to put on one side for us and deliver early in 1976 arrived. So the position at present is that we have some 20 sets in stock at the moment (May) and we should, therefore, be able to fulfil orders for them for many weeks to come. PLEASE DON'T DELAY THOUGH, IF YOU WANT A SET, FOR THEY MAY SELL MUCH QUICKER THAN ANYONE CAN AT THE MOMENT ANTICIPATE - especially when the

news gets around that the next edition of the three volumes will not be out until Autumn or even Winter, AND THE PRICE WILL DEFINITELY BE £20 THE SET. We shall hope to have one or two sets on the BOOKSTALL in the HALL at BUILTH after TEA .. together with a selection of our PUBLICATIONS.

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KILVERT'S VOCABULARY - (A Contribution from our Deputy President).

One aspect of Kilvert's writing that repays study is his vocabulary. In an earlier newsletter I drew attention to the notes which he made on some Radnorshire words, and which, through his friend Mayhew, were eventually published in Notes and Queries, and subsequently in the Hereford Journal; and to the odd names which he used for certain months - Wolf-monat, Barn-monat, Trimilki, etc. - the origins of which have not yet been satisfactorily explained. He was certainly interested in the Welsh language, and knew something about the Welsh origin of the Radnorshire words. From time to time he uses recondite words which even now have not found their way even in the full O.E.D., e.g. zenilla (a kind of umbrella or umbrella fabric), and perth-cart (a kind of conveyance); and among other unusual words in the diary we may list:

sphairistike	-	(the early name for lawn-tennis)
jennetings	-	(a kind of apple)
pintadoes	-	(an exotic farm-yard fowl)
skillings	-	(sheds, outbuildings)

In addition to these rare words Kilvert seasons his prose from time to time with dialect or near-dialect words which he must have picked up from his parishioners. Sometimes he indicates his awareness of their dialect origin by placing them in inverted commas, but more often he uses them as though they were standard forms. A great deal of light is thrown on these words by an interesting book to which my attention has recently been drawn. It is Herefordshire Speech by Winifred Leeds, a past president of the Woolhope Club, and an authority on Herefordshire language and folk-lore. In this fascinating study (which is available from Miss M. Spurway - a K.S. member - at Pound Cottage, Upton Crews, Ross-on-Wye, price £1. 50 plus 10p postage), I have found the following local words used regularly by Kilvert.

askal, asgal	-	a newt
glat	-	a gap in a hedge
gambo	-	a primitive cart
mawn	-	peat
to cratch	-	to eat heartily, like a horse
skillet	-	a small brass or copper saucepan
Kiss-at-the-garden-gate	-	woodruff, pansy
wittan	-	rowan, mountain ash
stoen	-	of stone
to stock	-	to peck
soul bell	-	funeral bell
rotting	-	ratting
to pun	-	to beat, pound

Others which Winifred Leeds does not include but which are clearly local are 'glutch', 'noah's ark', 'bloody man's fingers' and 'bocs'.

One more word remains to be commented upon. Some readers have been puzzled by Kilvert's use of the word 'snobs' in this sentence:

The church (at Sketty) is nice but the lychgate is desecrated by the names of all the snobs of Swansea. D.2. 187.

But an examination of the O.E.D. reveals that Kilvert knew what he was doing. In the 19 C. the word was not only used in the modern sense but had a secondary meaning. A 'snob' was not only a snob in our sense, but a loutish person who imitated in a disrespectful manner the behaviour of his betters. So once more Kilvert, the careful writer is using the word in a perfectly correct form. F. Grice.

Hon. Secretary's Note: I am of the opinion that the word 'Boc' that Kilvert uses for lice (Vol. 2. p 207) should be 'boos' (pronounced 'bows') - for this is the word commonly used in that connection in both Herefordshire and Radnorshire in bygone years. If so, this error in the Diary probably arose because of Kilvert's rather difficult handwriting.

P.S. The Hon. Secretary has a dozen copies of "Herefordshire Speech" in stock. See above re cost.

SOMETHING VERY SPECIAL:

This was the heading to the item about the 90 photostat sheets which William Plomer wrote out for us not long before he died (read in conjunction with the Diary they give a complete picture of Kilvert's three weeks in Cornwall). Due to the kindness of a London member they are offered at the nominal price of £2. 00 (or £3.00 in a cardboard wallet

and posted). Sales have been quite staggering. At this moment we are "sold out", but another batch is on its way.

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OUR PUBLICATIONS:

Mr. Grice's "FRANCIS KILVERT, PRIEST AND DIARIST" is selling well (as it deserves to do). Many buyers have said what good value it is for £1. 00 plus 11p. postage. It has rather overshadowed his "A KILVERT SYMPOSIUM" and, quite honestly, those who buy the one should really have the other too. It is 75p. plus 11p. postage. Both can be posted for 15p. - total cost £1. 90.

THE SOCIETY NOW HAS SEVEN DIFFERENT BOOKLETS. THEY ALL ADD TO WHAT WE READ IN THE DIARY AND ARE A "MUST" FOR THE KEEN MEMBER.

SPECIAL OFFER - all SEVEN for £4. 70 (includes postage).

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MADLEY FESTIVAL 1976:

Each year we give brief details of this splendid event in one of Herefordshire's grandest parish churches, where the Vicar is our member - the Rev. W.L. Paterson. It starts on Monday, 5th. July, with The Culwick Consort, a famous choir from Dublin on its way to the International Eisteddfod at Llangollen. Wednesday, 7th. July, with The Musketts presenting "Harps, Hornpipes and Hurdy-Gurdies". Friday, 9th. July the London Sumpny Orchestra's Wind Ensemble. Saturday, 10th. July, Orchestra da Camera, conducted by Meredith Davies - all at 8. 00 p.m. Sunday, 11th. July, Festival Service. Two Exhibitions. Full details from Mr. T.W. Lloyd, The Forge, Tyberton, Madley, Hereford.

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STONE EFFIGY OF A KNIGHT - (Bredwardine Church) (2).

In silent prayer you lie, in quiet repose,
While round the church the west wind softly blows;
Your stony hands are joined in endless prayer,
Your eyes are closed to summer's golden glare.

When autumn shakes the leaves of red and gold,
You wait as you have done while earth grows old,
And when the snows of winter softly fall,
Your marbled form is coldest still of all.

You followed once a King's emblazoned train
You fought on France's flowered and grassy plain;
Now, while outside the glancing sun is bright,
You vigil keep throughout an endless night.

Gwendoline Calderbank, Cheltenham.

It was last year that Mrs. Calderbank's first poem on the STONE EFFIGY in Bredwardine Church was published in one of our newsletters. Since then she has been to Bredwardine yet again and looked again at the effigies which Kilvert must have seen so many times; but this time after reading (perhaps in Bradley's "March and Borderland of Wales"?) that it is tolerably certain that this is the famous Sir Roger Vaughan who saved the life of Henry V of Agincourt. He lived in Bredwardine Castle, the mounds are now all that remain out beyond the corner of the "new" graveyard where Mrs. Kilvert lies. What a family the Vaughans were; of Kington, Clyro, Tretower - as well as of Bredwardine - and not forgetting the "Swan of Usk" whose tomb we visited with William Plomer at Llansantffraed, after the Brecon Cathedral service of 1973.

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THE WILLIAM PLOMER MEMORIAL SHOWCASE AT HAY:

Following the circulation of the appeal on yellow paper - with the March newsletter, donations have come in very well, but we are still about £100 short of being able to say that the showcase will be paid for entirely by members' donations. So if anyone is still "thinking about" sending something, please "do it now".

Numerous members who have called in at Hay Branch Library to see it have written to say how much they like it and how worth-while it all is. Please note that opening times of the Library were given in the March newsletter - they vary from day to day. It is closed all day on Tuesdays.

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CHRISTMAS CARDS AND GREETING CARDS:

There are now ten different Christmas cards, all of churches, houses and views in the KILVERT COUNTRY (Welsh borderland and Wiltshire). Many of these are also available as GREETING CARDS (with just "Best Wishes"). Assorted packets of either are 10 for 70p (with envelopes). Postage (at present) is 11p on 10 cards; 18p on 20.

Why not send for a sample packet NOW?

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OBITUARY:

The March newsletter was in course of production when the sad news of the death of one of our Vice-Presidents - Sir Michael Venables-Llewellyn, reached us - too late to be slipped in, even as a "stop-press". He was, of course, a grandson of the Rev. R.L. Venables of Clyro, and later Llysdyham - his mother being the daughter whose birth was the occasion for so much rejoicing in Clyro in 1870 (see pp 145-6-7 in Vol.1). We cannot do better than quote the obituary notice in a national daily paper in order to give a full picture of Sir Michael.

"Brig. Sir Michael Dillwyn Venables-Llewellyn, who has died age 76, was the third baronet, succeeding his father in 1951. Educated at Eton and Sandhurst, he joined the Grenadier Guards in 1918, commanded the second battalion in 1941, became a brigadier in 1943, retired from the Army in 1946, and commanded the 159th Infantry Brigade, T.A., from 1947 to 1949. He became Lord Lieutenant of Radnorshire in 1949.

It was in Sir Michael's home - Llysdyham, at Newbridge-on-Wye, (near Llandrindod Wells), that the Prince of Wales was interviewed by David Frost for a colour feature film 'The Prince of Wales'. He married in 1934, Lady Delia Mary Hicks-Beach, daughter of Viscount Quenington, killed in action in 1916, and sister of the second Earl St. Aldwyn. He had a son and a daughter. The heir is the son, Mr. John Michael Dillwyn Venables-Llewellyn, aged 37".

The funeral took place at Newbridge-on-Wye on March 19th. The Kilvert Society was represented by a member who lives locally.

Those who attended the Kilvert Commemoration Service held at Newbridge-on-Wye in 1968 (23rd. June) will remember Sir Michael reading a lesson and after the service welcoming us to Llysdyham where, after tea in the coach-houses turned into a tearoom, we wandered round the delightful grounds and then listened to William Plomer reading to a large crowd from a vantage point above a terrace ... with Sir Michael at his elbow listening intently.

We can ill-afford to lose such an important link with the Vicar of Clyro of Kilvert's day.

SUBSCRIPTIONS:

At a recent Committee Meeting it was decided (by a unanimous vote of an almost complete Committee) that the MINIMUM SUBSCRIPTION should hence-forth be £1. 00 per annum OFFICIALLY - it has been looked upon as being such for some time, but it is now in the minutes as being a minimum of £1. 00.

Very many pay more than the minimum each year - some very much more - and we hope that this will not only continue but increase.

There is one concession that should be mentioned - TWO PEOPLE LIVING IN THE SAME HOUSE (husband and wife, two sisters, two brothers, etc., etc.,) are covered by ONE subscription - but only get one newsletter between them at each circularisation.

At the same Committee Meeting the Hon. Secretary was supported in his efforts to reduce arrears of subscriptions by marking off members as LAPSED much sooner than previously.

The time must be very near when any member more than a year in arrears will automatically be crossed off.

THE ROYAL MAUSOLEUM:

This was the title of an item in the March newsletter. It suggested an explanation of what Kilvert wrote on the death of Princess Alice in 1878 (p 437 in Vol. 3) ... "kissed to death by her suffering children". Several members have since written with more details about this. Here is what one of them says ... "Re your interesting snippet about Princess Alice, (Grand Duchess of Hesse Darmstadt) - her six children and her husband all had severe diphtheria in 1878. The baby, May, died of it and her only son imagined he was dying, so in comforting him Princess Alice kissed him and as a result contracted the disease herself from which she died on the anniversary of the Prince Consort's death, December 14th. 1878. It was Disraeli who first used the words "the kiss of death" about the tragedy. (There are descriptions in several books, including Lady Longford's "Victoria R.I" pp 424-5). Princess Alice was the grandmother of Earl Mountbatten and Great-grandmother of the Duke of Edinburgh.

A NOTE RE "BLOOD MONTH"

A member from Watford, Herts, has suggested another reason for November being called "BLOT MONATH" or "BLOOD MONTH" - (see the last item in the March newsletter). He says "Brewer's Dictionary of Phrase and Fable" was printed in 1870. It mentions these names and gives the reason for the November one - that this was the month in olden times when stock animals were slaughtered for want of Winter keep, leaving the breeding stock. Could it be that Kilvert saw a copy of this Dictionary?

WHO WAS THE INTREPID MRS. NICHOLL? - (March Newsletter)

This item by Mr. W.G.H. Robins of Usk has stirred several members to write, giving their ideas on the matter. All they say is summed up in a letter from Mr. R.I. Morgan. He writes ... "When the 1871 Census of Clyro was taken the Crichtons were absent from Wye Cliff and the house was occupied by a Mr. & Mrs. Nicholl and family. The Mrs. Nicholl recorded was, I imagine, the Mrs. Nicholl of the Diary, and the Nicholl family were, one must infer, very close friends of the Crichtons, who gave them the use of the house while they were away - somewhere or other. Assuming that the Mrs. Nicholl of the Census was the fishing Mrs. Nicholl, then she could not have been the Mrs. Nicholl mentioned by Mr. Robins. However, he will no doubt be interested in the Census records. The following were present at Wye Cliff on the night it was taken:- John Cole Nicholl, 47, J.P. and D.L. for Glamorgan, landowner, Mary D.B. Nicholl, 31. Children (all Nicholls) - John, 9, Mary, 8, Lewis, 6 and Gwenllian, 4. Also recorded are six servants, though whether they were the Crichton's or the Nicholl's is not mentioned."

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THE A.G.M. AND SOCIAL EVENING - 22nd. APRIL, 1976.

This was the second annual meeting held in the St. John Ambulance Hall in Hereford (due to Eignbrook Church Hall, where we have held it for so very many years, being partially demolished and now re-built on a smaller scale) and it produced the biggest attendance ever - well over 100 members from far and wide in addition to those from Herefordshire and all the surrounding counties. The attendance book tells its own story, with addresses in Essex, Surrey, Devon, Northampton, Somerset, Warwickshire, etc., etc. With the Deputy President, Mr. F. Grice, in the Chair, the business part of the meeting was over within half-an-hour, all officials being re-elected. Mr. Worsey spoke on the accounts and answered questions. Mr. Grice spoke on the William Plomer Memorial Showcase in the Library at Hay-on-Wye and the Hon. Secretary reported on the progress of the appeal for same and then asked for someone to come forward as an Assistant Hon. Secretary, giving some examples of the very interesting matters continually cropping up. Before ending this part of the meeting Mr. Grice made a little presentation (on behalf of the Society) to Mrs. E.G. Peters - who has been Assistant Hon. Treasurer for a number of years, dealing with all matters concerning subscriptions. This took the form of a book on gardens - with thanks for her invaluable help.

Then followed Mr. Grice's talk on THE NEARNESS OF KILVERT (illustrated with a number of slides). Mr. Grice covered so much ground that it is impossible to quote but one or two scanty references here. One that stood out was when he told us of the day that we went to Llandrindod Wells to meet officials for preliminary discussions about the Hay Library Showcase, a misty day in early 1975 - but as we progressed it cleared and "I saw this wonderful border countryside opening before us like a book - in a remarkable way a replica, in another medium, of the experience of coming upon Kilvert for the first time, turning the pages and discovering, item by item, a forgotten world brought to vivid life". Mr. Grice's talk will be in due course made available (along with THE HUMOUR IN KILVERT'S DIARY which he gave at last year's meeting) - and we also hope to similarly give members the opportunity of having copies of at least part of the Rev. William Price's talk given later in the evening. Whilst REFRESHMENTS were in progress, an invitation was issued for any member to speak briefly on any subject of interest. Mr. Dover from Epsom spoke of the pleasure it was giving him and Mrs. Dover in attending their first such meeting. Then the Rev. David Lockwood told us of a recent holiday in the Isle of Wight and his visits to places mentioned in the Diary. Mr. E.F. Jelfs underlined the importance of someone coming forward to help the Hon. Secretary and in due course taking his place.

After refreshments the bookstall was virtually besieged by eager buyers of our various publications, sets of the Diary and cards. Others paid their subscriptions or made donations to the Plomer Showcase at Hay. There had been such a rush to book seats for the coach to Aberystwyth, etc. on May 8th. by letter and telephone, that none were left to book at this meeting.

The final period was taken up with the Rev. William Price's talk on "KILVERT AND WALES" (also with a number of relevant slides). This created great interest, especially his translations (into English) of bits from Paynes books (in Welsh) on Radnorshire - with many references to Kilvert. Mr. Price's easy style and flashes of humour delighted the large company who listened with obvious interest. Before Mr. Grice closed the meeting he thanked all who had contributed to this highly successful evening - and in particular the ladies who had worked so hard with refreshments for a larger number than was anticipated.

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IN DOOMSDAY BOOK:

The late Mr. Grant (senior) of Hay-on-Wye once told me the following, which he declared to be quite accurate - and I have no reason for thinking otherwise. Some fishermen were looking in his window, at the fishing tackle. Above was a shelf full of copies of

KILVERT'S DIARY. Suddenly one of them looked up and said, "Look at all those Kilvert books; that's the chap who is mentioned in the Doomsday Book, I think".

(C.T.O. Prosser).

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EXTRACTS FROM THE LOG BOOK OF BREDWARDINE SCHOOL:

Dec. 19th. 1877. The Vicar who conformably to the Time Table gives his religious lesson before the Secular morning instruction, has kindly favoured us with his personal assistance for several consecutive mornings past.

Jan. 15th. 1878. The Vicar gave an examination paper in Religious Knowledge to the three upper standards from 9. 10 to 9. 55 a.m.

March 26th. During the past few days the Vicar has not been able to take his usual Scripture Class owing to Indisposition.

May 14th. Clothing distributed to the Charity children by the Vicar at 1. 30 p.m.

June 6th. The Vicar was unable to take his usual Scripture Lesson this week.

Oct. 21st. The Vicar was kind enough to take all the school in a general scripture lesson, in order somewhat to relieve the Teacher who is suffering from a bronchial attack.

Nov. 25th. The Vicar being very unwell this morning is unable to take his usual scripture lesson.

Jan. 13th. 1879. The Vicar took the whole School in Religious Subjects this morning, and kindly released the Teacher until the time for Secular Subjects had commenced.

Feb. 24th. Mrs. R. East came this morning (Monday) to complain that the girl Annie Farmer had stolen her daughter's gloves. The charge which seemed quite clear against the accused was placed by the Teacher in the hands of the Vicar for him to take what action in the matter might seem to him expedient.

Apl. 28th. During the time for Religious Instruction the children worked an examination paper at the request of the Vicar.

June 10th. Children's school clothing given out in presence of Miss Kilvert and the Vicar.

1879. - The Teachers and School Children at the School received the following letter from Mrs. Kilvert before she left the Parish and all without exception desired that it should be transcribed into the Log Book.

The Vicarage, Bredwardine.
October 27th. 1879.

My dear children,

Mrs. Bates has told me of your kind and loving subscription for giving a present to your late Vicar Mr. Kilvert. I want to thank you, and anyone else who may have joined in it very very heartily. It would have given my beloved husband the greatest pleasure to have a remembrance from you. He would have valued it so much as a proof of your love to him. The kind and hearty welcome from you and all in the parish at our homecoming touched us both very much. I shall carry away with me very kind thoughts of the people in Herefordshire. Your beautiful present I shall always look upon as one of my treasures. It will often remind me of you all, and the kindness and consideration shown to me during these weeks of overwhelming and inexpressible sorrow. Again thanking you all very very much.

Believe me always

Your affectionate friend

Elizabeth Kilvert.

Note:

The Log Book is in the Herefordshire County Records Office in Harold Street. It is produced immediately on request. The above are the only references to Kilvert but the whole Log Book is of considerable interest to any student of the period. Kilvert's signature appears several times in it.

Hon. Secretary's Note: This interesting contribution was sent in by Miss Lois Lang-Sims some while ago, when she lived in Hereford; but there was not room for it at the time and it was put on one side and has only just come to light again. Miss Lang-Sims now lives in Canterbury.

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LUCIEN SAVOURNIN

Numerous readers of Kilvert's Diary have no doubt been puzzled as to why three French children should have been at Bredwardine school in 1879. Page 420 of volume one records that "after tea Lucien and Alfred Savournin with their beautiful little sister Eveline came down to the Vicarage to fetch their school prizes as they were away in London at time

of the school feast". There is a further reference to Lucien Savournin on page 451 of the same volume. A little book with the title LUCIEN SAVOURNIN - VERSES has just come to light and will now go in the Mini-Museum at Hay-on-Wye. It was given to the Society many years ago by the late Mr.G.H.Butcher of Hereford, who was not only a pioneer motorist but all his life a keen cyclist. It is obvious that Lucien Savournin became a keen cyclist too, a member of the Stanley Cycling Club and a considerable contributor to the STANLEY GAZETTE. The little volume of poems which Mr.Butcher gave to the Society contains many which appeared in the GAZETTE, plus a selection of what was found among Mr. Savournin's effects after his death. It appears that he died whilst still a young man, for although the little volume is un-dated the last year mentioned in connection with any of the poems is 1906. The photograph in the front of the book is that of a man not more than about 35 to 40. Mr. Savournin obviously lived in London, or in the London area, for his poems to a great extent are of runs into Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire and up the Great North Road.

Anything further on this subject will be welcomed.

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CAPTAIN COWPER COLES

When HMS CAPTAIN went down off Finisterre on 6 September 1870 on its maiden voyage, among the many who perished was Captain Cowper Coles, designer and captain of the ship, and brother-in-law to Agnes Minna Venables, the second wife of Richard Lister Venables, Vicar of Clyro. Kilvert records how the news of the disaster reached Clyro, and how deeply it distressed Mrs. Venables. (Vol. 1. page 227). It is not generally known that another reference to the disaster occurs in a poem written by the Rev. R.S. Hawker who for most of his life was vicar of Morwenstow, a country parish in north east Cornwall.

THE FATAL SHIP.

Down the deep sea, full fourscore fathoms down,
An iron vault hath clutched five hundred men!
They died not, like the nations, one by one:
A thrill! a bounding pulse! a shout! and then
Five hundred hearts stood still, at once, nor beat again!

That night the Angel of the Lord beheld
A vast battalion of the gliding dead:
Souls that came up where seething surges quelled
Their stately ship - their throne - and now the bed
Where they shall wait, in shrouded sleep, the Morn of Dread!

Fast slept the sailor boy! A silent dream
Softened his brow with smiles - his mother's face
Droops over him - and her soft kisses seem
Warm on his cheek : what severs that embrace?
Death! strangling death! - alive - a conscious burial-place!

And he, the kingly mind, whose skill had planned
That lordly bastion of the world of wave?
But yesterday he stood, in proud command,
And now a thing of nought, where ocean raves
Above his shuddering sepulchre in the weedy caves!

The monsters of the sea will glide and glare:
Baffled Leviathan shall roar in vain:
The Sea Kings of the Isles are castled there:
They man that silent fortress of the main:
Yea! in the realms of death their dust shall rule and reign!

Lord Yahvah of the Waters! Thou wert there!
Thy presence shone throughout that dark abode:
Thy mighty touch assuages the last despair:
Their pulses paused in the calm midst of God:
Their souls, amid surrounding Angels, went abroad.

Several interesting points arise from this poem. The loss of the Captain was clearly a national disaster, and Hawker reacts to it in a manner that reminds us of Hardy's response to the loss of the Titanic many years later; and the complimentary manner in which Captain Coles is referred to implies that he was an unusually gifted man, possessed of a "kingly mind". One would like to know more about this relation of Mrs. Venables who was both master-mariner and designer.

It was his son who came to Bredwardine to be Kilvert's only pupil, but, if Kilvert's observations on him are just, he does not seem to have inherited his father's intellect.

F. Grice.

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AN APPEAL FOR HELP.

Are there any members able and willing to help with such things as POSTER LETTERING; DOING LABELS FOR OUR MINI-MUSEUM at HAY-ON-WYE (by hand or on a first class typewriter); producing a few circular letters when not enough are wanted to get the job done professionally, etc., etc. PLEASE CONTACT THE HON. SECRETARY. Thanks.

A VISIT TO LAKELAND.

The newsletter of last June tells of a visit organised by two Gloucestershire members for themselves and eight friends to Cornwall in early April 1975. Virtually the same party went to the Lake District (again by MINIBUS) in late April 1976. The quite long account of those five days is crowded out of this newsletter - it will appear in the next (Sept/Oct) - and those who think that there are no Kilvert connections with Lakeland - and with the route taken to get there - will be surprised!!!

SATURDAY, 8TH. MAY 1976 - ABERYSTWYTH AND LAMPETER.

Another enjoyable May coach tour, just as was that to Gower a year ago. The coach left Hereford promptly at 10 a.m. with members from far and near - (some even from Herts and Lancs; many from Hereford and all the surrounding counties. After picking up in Clyro, Hay and Glasbury, it was quite full). The day was fine and warm and the morning mist soon cleared so that after a few miles, visibility was good. The Wye was followed through Builth and Rhayader to Plynlimon. Waiting for us at Aberystwyth was Mr. Wynford Vaughan-Thomas and the Rev. William Price. After picnic lunch on the mound - among the castle ruins - the President spoke on the Aberystwyth that Kilvert knew, with special reference to the original University College (adjoining the castle) - built as a huge hotel by Savin, who brought the railway to the town and envisaged the first "package tours", but went bankrupt before the scheme got off the ground and the erstwhile hotel became a college. We took a close look at it - a real Victorian extravaganza. Mr. Vaughan-Thomas felt that Kilvert surely wrote about these places, in the unpublished parts of the Diary - now lost for ever. Mr. Price pointed out the harbour, the bridge over the Ystwyth and Tanybwllch Beach (see Kilvert's poems, pages 28/29 in "Collected Verse" - and Canon Jones' address at Hay in 1971). Then by coach up the hill to the National Library of Wales, after enjoying the grand view from the terraces we went inside and to the Council Chamber, to find laid out for our inspection a number of volumes of the Diary, kept by the Rev. R.L. Venables of Clyro during the years when Kilvert was his curate - most interesting. The Keeper of the Archives was warmly thanked for allowing us to see them. All too soon it was time to leave for Lampeter, first down the coast to Aberaeron and then inland to our destination. Here we found our two leaders waiting to welcome us. The Rev. William Price took us on a tour of the charming quadrangle, the old chapel, library and common room. Then to a very satisfying tea before leaving soon after 6 o'clock. The return was via Llandovery and Brecon, a lovely run on a bright sunny evening. After dropping various members en route, Hereford was reached dead on time at 9 p.m. A MOST REWARDING DAY WAS THE GENERAL OPINION.

PORTRAIT OF GOWER.

Our President's latest book is now on sale at bookshops everywhere. Mr. Vaughan-Thomas brought an advance copy to Aberystwyth and some of us had a brief look at it. It will appeal to all who know the lovely Gower peninsula, and whet the appetites of those who don't!!! It is full of splendid pictures and has several extracts from Kilvert's Diary and is obviously by one who knows it and loves it. Published by HALE, the price is £3.80.

BREDWARDINE HILL - SUNDAY 9TH. MAY.

This was more or less a repeat of last October's walk, but modified to fit an afternoon. The repetition proved worthwhile, for more than a dozen cars turned up - with a totally different party to the previous occasion. After a general look round we moved off up the hill (noting The Cottage en route). The first walk was to The Knapp. Then to the Upper Cwm - some went on to Fine Street dingle - and all noted the Dol Fach above us before we started off by the cars again - to halt opposite the ruins of the cottage where Kilvert held his mid-week service at Crafty Webb. Many gasped at the length and steepness of Kilvert's weekly trudge. Then onwards to park where one starts the walk to the top of Merbach Hill, a gentle walk of less than a mile to a superb viewpoint - the Wye winding below and the Radnor Hills beyond it. A member read the piece from "Diary Extracts" for 14th. August, 1872 (not in the three volumes), whilst we looked down on all he read about. At last we tore ourselves from this grand prospect and made our way to Arthur's Stone (a splendid cromlech - see Diary) and here all consumed their picnic tea. Some left for home immediately after tea, but many found their way to Brobury, for a visit to the Scar Rocks and a walk over the first part of Kilvert's route from Bredwardine to Monnington when visiting his sister at the Rectory there. So ended another sunny day with quite good visibility - several times we heard distant thunder and saw it raining on nearby hills - but fortune favoured our venture!!!