

THE KILVERT SOCIETY

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September, 1976.

Dear Member,

For this year's AUTUMN COMMEMORATION SERVICE we go to WILTSHIRE, for what will be the fourth Kilvert Service in that county (see note overleaf about the previous services in Wiltshire). It will be at the Parish Church at KINGTON ST. MICHAEL on Sunday, 3rd. OCTOBER at 3.30 p.m. (Please note the time, a little later than in the preliminary announcement in the June Newsletter).

The kind invitation to go to KINGTON ST. MICHAEL for this service came from the REV. J.E.G. OSWALD, M.A. who is Priest-in-Charge of HARDENHUISH and KINGTON ST. MICHAEL - he will conduct the service and also give the ACT OF REMEMBRANCE.

The ADDRESS will be given by the REV. J.J. HARDING, - until recently Priest-in-Charge of Bockleton with Leysters in the Diocese of Hereford. He is a member of the Kilvert Society.

The LESSONS will be read by Mr. Daniel Awdry, T.D., the Member of Parliament for the Chippenham Division and by Mr. J.A. Payne of the Old Brewery House, Langley Burrell - a member of the Kilvert Society for many years.

Kington St. Michael is about three miles from Chippenham (in a northerly direction) and only about two miles from Junction 17 on the M4 Motorway. It is in the Diocese of Bristol. There are very many references to Kington St. Michael in Kilvert's Diary. The Rev. Francis Kilvert knew it well and often walked over from his home at Langley Burrell Rectory (or was driven) to call on the Rev. Edward Awdry at the Vicarage or to preach in the church. More details of Kilvert's associations with Kington St. Michael will be found overleaf.

It is a large church, we would like to see it full, not only with our members but with their friends too, and we hope to see plenty of local folk there also. Sometimes a wrong idea gets spread around, that our services are for members only. We try to dispel this by heading our posters "YOU ARE INVITED". Will members help by making it known that we welcome anyone interested enough to come and join us at this service.

After the service there will be TEA in the Village Hall, very kindly provided and served by the ladies of Kington St. Michael Church - at the modest charge of 40p per head. This will be taken at the door or in the hall - and we can stay on afterwards for the usual three quarters of an hour or so for talks, etc. by members and friends. Those who have been to previous Kilvert Services will know what an enjoyable session this always turns out to be. There will be the usual bookstall in a corner of the Hall, with our publications and Christmas cards, etc.

Those who come by car will, I think, find many places in which to park them within a short distance of the church. A MOTOR-COACH WILL RUN--FROM HEREFORD - leaving the Town Hall at 10.30 a.m. Please bring picnic lunch. We should be at Castle Farm, Marshfield, (about 8 miles from Chippenham) by about 12.30 p.m. Here we can eat our lunch and then see the FOLK MUSEUM which our members (Mr. & Mrs. R.W. Knight) have established in the LONG HOUSE which has been there for centuries - the charge is 25p., but Pensioners are admitted for 10p. If time permits we will make a little detour between Castle Farm and Kington St. Michael, to run through Biddestone, one of the pretty Wiltshire villages which Kilvert knew so well - (see Diary). THE COACH FARE WILL BE £1.00 PER PERSON - SEATS CAN BE BOOKED AT WYEVAL LTD., PHOTOGRAPHIC DEALERS, BRIDGE STREET, HEREFORD, or with the Hon. Secretary of the Society. DO BOOK EARLY PLEASE. The route has not yet been decided, it may be via Gloucester and Nailsworth or via the Severn Bridge. We shall come straight back to Hereford as soon as the proceedings at Kington St. Michael are over.

POSTERS will be sent to many members, over a wide area (with this newsletter). PLEASE DO YOUR BEST TO GET THEM WELL DISPLAYED...no doubt many people read Kilvert's Diary for the first time after seeing these posters - just what we want to happen.

Finally, a reminder to those who have not yet paid a subscription in 1976 - there is now only three months of this year left!!!!

Yours sincerely,



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

P.T.O. - re a WALK on Oct. 2nd.

NOTES AND NEWS - (By the Hon. Secretary with contributions from members):

GIFT TO KINGTON ST. MICHAEL CHURCH:

Following our usual custom of giving something to the church where we hold a Kilvert Service (to mark the occasion), we made such an offer to Kington St. Michael, and the decision is for an OAK COMMUNION WAFER BOX AND CRUETS FOR WINE AND WATER. Cost will be about £20. We can meet this from our funds, but there are always members who wish to contribute to such a gift. Please send any such contributions to the Hon. Secretary of the Kilvert Society.

A WALK IN THE RADNORSHIRE HILLS:

Again following a usual custom there will be a walk on Saturday, 2nd. October. Meet near the Baskerville Arms in Clyro at 11 a.m. Bring picnic lunch and tea. We hope to break new ground and visit the grave of "Tom Tobacco" high up on the hills beyond Llanbedr Painscastle (see pp. 228/229 in Vol.2) (185 & 189 in abridged editions). (NO SMOKING ... NO PICNIC FIRES ... PLEASE BRING FLASKS).

LIST OF MEMBERS - NAMES AND ADDRESSES:

Many times over the years it has been suggested that such a list be made available. Now a Dorset member has undertaken to provide us with a quantity. They will be ready by the end of September or thereabouts and will cost 25p each, plus a stamp for postage.

OUR PUBLICATIONS, ETC:

The June newsletter (p.5) had a note about these and a special offer of all seven for £4.40 including postage. This still applies, please note. William Plomer's 90 sheets on Kilvert's holiday in Cornwall (pp. 4 & 5 in the June newsletter) have now sold out, but by the time this newsletter is circulated another batch will be available - thanks to our London member.

FATHER IGNATIUS' MONASTERY AT CAPEL-Y-FFIN ... Holidays in the Black Mountains:

Family apartments are now offered in this quiet but beautiful spot - for details please write to Mr. Wilfred Davies, The Monastery, Capel-y-ffin, Abergavenny, Gwent.

KINGTON ST. MICHAEL:

First, previous services in Wiltshire. 1966 at Langley Burrell, when the handsome tablet in the porch of the church was dedicated. 1968 at Hardenhuish, when the marble tablet in the church was dedicated, and at the same time a small one put beside the door of the Rectory opposite. 1972 at Langley Burrell, when Canon R.W. Kilvert (great-nephew of the Diarist) gave the address - and now, Kington St. Michael - "the parish of my forefathers" as Kilvert called it. There are very many references to Kington St. Michael in KILVERT'S DIARY and we recommend anyone coming to the service on October 3rd. to look them up. An amusing entry is that on p.150 of Vol.2. - about the new east window, the section of it which illustrates "Suffer little children to come unto me" was (presumably) paid for by Mrs. Prodders (who, I am told lived at the Manor House) and the mother in that window is Mrs. Prodders and the children are her children!!! I saw it only a few Sundays ago and no doubt many will look at it on October 3rd. Another window in Kington Church is interesting too, a brass tablet under it tells us that it is in memory of John Aubrey, F.R.S. and John Britten, F.A.S. both of Kington St. Michael. They were "both distinguished by their writings on the antiquities of Wiltshire". Another window is to the Mascalls, kinsmen of the Kilverts (see pp. 274 and 388 in Vol. 2 and 149-50 in Vol. 3). The former Vicarage is just beyond the churchyard - Kilvert frequently called there to see the Rev. Edward Awdry, and was visited by him at Bredwardine. It is therefore very fitting that a member of the Awdry family is taking part in our service today. Kilvert often preached at Kington, a typical entry is that for September 7th. 1873 (p.367 in Vol. 2) when he preached at Evensong. Another amusing entry in Kilvert's Diary is that for August 12th. 1875 (p.218 in Vol. 3) when Kilvert "walked across to Kington St. Michael for the school feast". This is where we can read of the episode of the little girl who was swinging under the elms on Tor Hill - an episode referred to in the recent BBC 2. feature "Vicar of this parish".

JOHN AUBREY:

One of our members recently sent me an interesting contribution on this famous son of Wiltshire (born at Easton Piercy in 1625, died at Oxford 1697 .. historian and scholar). But in the ups and downs of the last few weeks it has become mislaid. No doubt it will turn up and be published in the March newsletter. John Britten was born in 1771 and compiled one of the most lavish books on English scenery and architecture. He died in 1849.

THE SERVICE AT BUILTH WELLS - 27TH. JUNE 1976.

This was another outstanding occasion - on a very hot day. St. Mary's Church was quite full, and it is a large church, as one would expect to find in an important little market town like Builth. We were honoured with the presence of the Town Mayor of Builth - Councillor Colin Davies and Mrs. Davies; The Clerk, Mr. Eric Finch; and a number of Councillors were also present. We were pleased to see Lord and Lady Watkins, for Lord Watkins is a founder member of the Society. Many of our more distant members were there, some of those from furthest away being from Jersey, Ireland, Devon, Surrey, Hertfordshire, Essex and Kent - and the usual support of members and friends from not so far away. Many of our members in Wales were there, among them being Dr. Phil Williams of Plaid Cymru. Taking part in the service (which was conducted by the Vicar of Builth, Canon Owain Jones, who, in welcoming the Society, said that their first formal visit to Builth represented the annexation of Builth into the "Kilvert Country") were our President and Deputy President; The Rev. D.T.W. Price of Lampeter (a V.P.) who gave a really outstanding address; the Rev. R.M.H. Jones of Llyswn who did the Act of Remembrance; and the Rev. Hugh Lewis (also of Llyswn) gave the Blessing at the end of the service .. all members of the Society. At the organ was Miss Alvine Morris and some very good hymn singing was heard. The church was beautifully decorated with flowers for the occasion.

After the service came the usual tea - this time in the Church Hall just across the churchyard. Such a good tea too, thanks to the ladies of Builth Mothers' Union. 150 were provided for, but I am sure that in the end many more than that were catered for. After tea came the speakers. First the Vicar of Builth who spoke on Builth in Kilvert's time. Then Mr. Wynford Vaughan-Thomas, whose theme was "The Land of Llewellyn". Following him was the Rev. D.T.W. Price and Mr. Frederick Grice, both speaking on subjects of much interest to the large audience. Altogether a very worthwhile evening. The coach with the Hereford party made the return journey down the secondary road on the Radnor side of the Wye, through Aberedw and Boughrood to Glasbury-on-Wye and thence homewards via Clyro - halting en route to look at the gorge of the Bachwy, where less than a mile upstream from where the Bachwy enters the Wye is the famous waterfall, Craig-pwll-du. This section of the road is on the track of the old Cambrian Railway, so much used by Kilvert and enthusiastically written about in the Diary.

THE DAY BEFORE - on Saturday, 26th. June, there was the usual walk on the day before a Kilvert Service. I understand that about 20 members and friends turned up at Clyro at 11 a.m. Our two Clyro committee members - Miss C. Powell and Miss M. Mantle, were the leaders and it all followed the usual pattern of that ever-popular walk "Across the moors to the Rocks of Aberedw" ... that is, by car through Painscastle to the starting point of the walk - high up on the slopes of Llandeilo Hill. Picnic lunch - then the walk, which took up all the afternoon until it was time for tea when the party got back to the parked cars - perhaps a little bit more leisurely than usual on such a hot day. I believe they halted at Llanbedr Church on their outward journey from Clyro, and also at the high spot from which the Rocks of Pencwm and the approximate site of the cabin of "the Solitary" can be pointed out. Something particularly appreciated by those members doing the walk for the first time .. members from Jersey, Ireland and Devon among them.

OBITUARY:

Several deaths have to be reported, with much regret. First, one of our Vice-Presidents the Hon. Mrs. Talbot Rice of Castle Weir, Lyonshall, near Kington in Herefordshire. She died around Easter-time, after a short illness, but I did not hear about it until after the June newsletter was circulated. The deceased lady joined the Society back in 1949. She was a sister of the late Lord Hereford. Before marriage she was a Devereux of Tregoyd and a near neighbour to Llanthomas, and has talked to me about "Daisy" and other members of that family. Tregoyd and the Devereux family have several mentions in the Diary (54 and 263 in Vol. 1. - 83 in Vol. 2 and 271, 272 and 284 in Vol.3). Another Vice-President, Commander Kyrle Pope of Homme House, Much Marcle, Herefordshire died on June 1st. 1976. He was 88. He was a former Deputy Lieutenant and High Sheriff of Herefordshire and a well known and much respected figure, taking an active interest in local affairs after retiring from the Royal Navy - which he joined in 1902 and was one of the earliest submarine commanders during the First World War. Cmdr. Pope won the D.S.O. in that war - retired in 1929 but was back in uniform in 1939, seeing service in Egypt. To us he was, of course, the son of Kilvert's friend, the Rev. Andrew Pope, who married Miss Mary Money Kyrle of Homme House in 1874 at Much Marcle Church - Kilvert being best man. Those of us who were in the party of members who visited Homme House some few years ago will remember the warm welcome given to us by Commander and Mrs. Pope (she died in 1968) and the jolly tea party at the local inn afterwards, with the Papes at the head of the table.

OBITUARY (Continued):

And now, with great sorrow, I have to announce the death of my own dear wife .. on 22nd. June, quite suddenly (cerebral thrombosis) although there was a history of heart trouble going back twelve years. We had been married 45 years and had hoped for a 50th anniversary, but it was not to be. Our last week together was a very happy one, with a day spent in her beloved Radnorshire, a day out with the Woolhope Club, and on the Sunday evening at Hereford Cathedral for a recital of poetry and prose by Dame Flora Robson and Robert Eddison. The funeral was on Saturday, 26th. June, largely attended by many members of the Society and other friends from a wide area in addition to members of the family. At the Buih Service next day moving tributes were paid by the Rev. D.T.W. Price, by Mr. Wynford Vaughan-Thomas and by Mr. Frederick Grice .. in church and hall. Mr. Grice has sent a copy of his tribute for inclusion in this newsletter; here it is.

Margaret Eliza Joyce Prosser.

This weekend, chosen for us to commemorate the life and achievement of Francis Kilvert, is clouded by the sudden and untimely death of one who was known to and loved by all of us. I feel that it is very presumptuous of me to stand here and take upon myself to speak of her, for there are many in this room whose friendship was of a far longer standing than mine. How I wish that our late President, William Plomer, was here in my place. He would have paid a more eloquent tribute than I can voice, because I know that Mrs. Prosser stood high in his esteem. He told me on more than one occasion how grateful he was for her hospitality, how impressed he was by the serenity and composure of her temperament, and how much he felt at home with her. He was not the only one to feel at home with Joyce, for she had that great gift of making people feel welcome and acceptable in her presence. She was, one might say, a natural Kilvertian, for she seemed to be endowed with the best of his qualities - natural kindness, fellow-feeling, courtesy and sympathy. But she had other no less estimable qualities, and among them a calm common sense that was more than common sense - a real understanding, a power of judgment, an ability to see things in their proper perspective, and to resolve difficulties by her intuitive insight. On many occasions it was her calm and sensible interposition that resolved daunting problems and made difficulties seem difficulties no longer. In all her demeanour she was guided by a concern for tolerance, trust, understanding and harmony.

I have ventured to add these few words to the moving tribute paid to her yesterday by her pastor in the Church of St. Nicholas, Hereford, being only too aware how inadequate they are to pay proper respect to a dear and valued friend. We shall not easily forget all that she did for us and for the cause that unites us.

THE ROYAL WELSH SHOW - BUILTH WELLS:

The June newsletter gave the news that at the 1976 Show (on July 21st. 22nd. and 23rd) there was to be a KILVERT FEATURE as part of the exhibition "RADNOR IN POWYS" and that we were supplying photographs, etc., but the Architects Department at County Hall in Llandrindod Wells were staging and mounting it all. They made a very good job of it, and as I was sent an admission permit and car parking pass, I went there on July 22nd. taking some leaflets and doing a good "stint" in the afternoon keeping an eye on things, talking to the many interested visitors and handing out leaflets. The whole pavilion was given up to the theme "RADNOR IN POWYS" and many aspects of the old county were on view. A lot of interest was created, and I feel sure that many would go away and either read KILVERT'S DIARY for the first time or re-read it after perhaps many years. I did not go round the rest of the Show to any great extent or I may have seen something I'm sorry I missed ... somewhere in the Show (so I was told afterwards) was the work of competitors who had to produce just such a picnic as Kilvert might have been invited to. Sounds very like something the W.I. might have staged, but I am told that this time it was not the W.I. Perhaps someone will be kind enough to write and tell me all about it? FULL MARKS ANYWAY, TO WHOEVER WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR IT. Slowly it is beginning to be realised how world-wide is the interest in Kilvert and the Diary.

WHO WANTS AN ABRIDGED EDITION OF KILVERT'S DIARY?:

One of our South Wales members, Mr. S.B. Johns of 12, Forest View, Neath, West Glamorgan offers one of these for £2. 20 post paid. Will anyone interested, please write direct to Mr. Johns. These abridged editions are very useful to keep for lending out, they thus help to keep one's three volume set at home!!!!

SUMMER HEAT:

A member has drawn my attention to page 53 of volume three - the entry for July 18th. 1874 - Kilvert has gone back to Wiltshire to be his father's curate again.

"The heat still continues very great. The ponds are visibly shrinking and drying up in the fierce glare. The meadow grass crackles and rustles under the tread like dry hay and seems to burn the feet. Day after day the sun rides in the cloudless sky burning and scorching everything with his withering glare. 'It goeth forth from the uttermost part of the heaven and runneth about unto the end of it again and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof'.

To-day I found a boy, Frederick Compton, Mrs. Gough's nephew, suffering from sunstroke, and no wonder, for the foolish fellow had lain down to sleep in the sun.

There is a report that a woman named Cole has died of sunstroke at Langley Fitzurse".

This surely could just as well have been written in 1976 as in 1874?

KILVERT'S EXHILARATION WITH WORDS - by Sidney Ball of Swindon:

Our Secretary's Newsletters abound with stimulating information about Kilvert's wide interests - in things like music, flowers and old customs. Mr. Grice has called attention to Kilvert's fondness for unusual words, including names for the months. A Watford member suggests that these may have come from Brewer's Dictionary of Phrase and Fable. I think not, for some of Kilvert's months are not in "Brewer". My thought is that our diarist had an almanack for 1871, which showed these ancient month names. Their origins go back into the dark ages of English and Scandinavian heathenism. Even Kilvert's most unlikely month name - TRIMILKI - for May (Vol. 1 page 327) was mentioned by Bede in his "De Temporum Ratione". And Bede was writing in the eight century, about things long before his time!

Kilvert's January is WOLF MONAT (Vol. 1 page 289). This is Wolf Month, when presumably danger from Wolves was greatest. But it could have originated in a Saxon corruption for GUILI (the modern Yule), which Bede said was used by the heathen for both December and January.

February to our diarist is SPROUT KELE (Vol. 1 page 300). Now, Old English cabbage was CAL (Cale) - hence when cabbage sprouted. The O.E. word sproute - a sprig, sprout - was used by Chaucer in the fourteenth century and by John Clare in the nineteenth century.

March is LENET MONAT (Vol. 1 page 307) - from O.E. "lencten", the season for Spring (compare our Lent). Bede, who has a different word for March, wrote also that April was named after the goddess EOSTRE. This heathen lady gives us our name for Easter. Now look at Kilvert's name for April - OSTER MONAT (Vol. 1 page 317) !

Our diarist spells his months without the final "H". It should really be MONATH, as nearer the way the Saxons would have pronounced it. Our word month derives from O.E. monath, and they got it from Mona, their word for the moon (months in olden times were lunar).

Volume 1, page 383 gives August - BARN MONAT, and Volume 2, page 25, gives September - BARLEY MONAT. Our word barn stems from O.E. "bere-ern", a barley-house. Kilvert's August implies harvesting - getting crops into a barn - and September signifies malting, of barley. In Plantagenet times, the "Labours of the months" were shown in imagery in churches; a few still survive, like the fine misericords in Ripple Church, near Tewkesbury. If members are Ripple way, do have a look at the misericords - they will remind you, as they do me - of Kilvert's months, for August is depicted as harvesting, while September is taking barley for malting!

October for Kilvert is WINE MONAT (Vol. 2 page 48). O.E. for wine was WIN, so October is Wine Month, the time of vintage. Bede's name for October - Wintirfyllic - would have pleased our diarist, but not Blotmonath for November. This is not Blood Month (O.E. blod, blood) but the month of sacrifice (O.E. blot, sacrifice). Kilvert preferred WIND MONAT (Vol. 2 page 78). He says "and true to its old Saxon name, the month has come in howling. A Wild wind is blowing". But the derivation is more likely from Saxon windan, to wind - when the fishermen wound in their nets and ceased fishing for the winter.

There are no entries in 1871 for the first days of June, July and December, so we do not know what Kilvert called these months. Bede wrote that June and July were brought together under an ancient heathen name, Litha, which had some connection with the moon. Kilvert is more likely to have had "Sere monat", the dry month for June and "Mead Monat", the meadow month for July, and perhaps "Yule Monat" for December.

What an interesting assortment of Kilvert's "unusual" words Mr. Grice brought into the June Newsletter! Some of these are local - Herefordshire - dialect words, but I have found some used in other counties. These include ascall (newt), gambo (a two wheeled cart), wittan (rowan or mountain ash) and glutch (to swallow). "Skillet" was a widely used word for a small, flat saucepan, and is found in old inventories, including that made for Bess of Hardwick's will in 1601.

KILVERT'S EXHILARATION WITH WORDS (Continued):

"To cratch" (eat heartily, like a horse) comes from an old word for a hay-rack or manger (compare creche, as cratch is from old French). The delightful name Kilvert had for a pansy, "Kiss-at-the-garden-gate" was once common; W.H. Hudson in "A Shepherd's Life" - written in 1910 about my county, Wiltshire, has for a pansy "Kiss-me-John-at-the-garden-gate".

Shakespeare knew "to pun" (to beat, pound) for in Troilus and Cressida, Act 2, Scene 1, we read "He would pun thee into shivers with his fist". It would be interesting to find out what other unusual words Shakespeare and Kilvert both used! There is no end to the matters of interest engendered by Kilvert's Diary and kept alert by our Secretary's Newsletters!

KILVERT ON TELEVISION:

Vicar of this Parish, BBC. TV 2. 29th. July, 1976. Produced by Derek Trimby.

This was the longest and most ambitious tribute to Francis Kilvert that the BBC has ever mounted, and all Kilvert lovers must have been delighted with the beauty of the visual images that were chosen to accompany John Betjeman's script - the vicarage at Bredwardine, the views of the Wye and the Black Mountains, etc. The whole programme was a sympathetic and complimentary portrait of the diarist, and from the letters I have received I am convinced that many who knew nothing of Kilvert will now be anxious to make the acquaintance of his journal. The programme was not without its imperfections. I would never have included the passage about the frog-woman of Presteigne. It is wholly uncharacteristic of Kilvert who was the last man to make capital out of physical abnormality; and the snigger that accompanied the reading of the passage suggested, quite wrongly, that Kilvert too had been making fun of that unfortunate woman. Mention of Hannah Whitney was accompanied by a photograph of someone else, and on other occasions the photographs were only bare approximations to the text. Perhaps the least satisfactory feature of the programme was Betjeman's reading of the diary. He is a sympathetic reader, but his rather dull monotonous and ageing delivery failed to match the vigour and youthful ardour of Kilvert's prose. The diary is far more exciting than Betjeman made it out to be.

But, in all fairness, it must be said that the programme was beautiful to look at, and the visual images conveyed the lyrical quality of the diary.

Derek Trimby's approach was respectful, just and sincere. It will be interesting to see how many new readers it will bring to Kilvert.

F. Grice.

Hon. Secretary's Note:

I wonder how many of our members saw this? Very many I would think, judging by the numerous letters I have had .. a "mixed bag" of praise and of criticism. Perhaps the most valid criticism came from those who know Llanleonfel Church (the correct spelling, it is wrongly spelt in the Diary, but will be corrected in the forthcoming edition) for the church shown (a ruined church near Ross-on-Wye) is not a bit like it (now or at any other time). These critics said (quite rightly) that those who now go to look at Llanleonfel Church will be utterly puzzled. There were difficulties of course, for Llanleonfel Church was restored and brought back into use not very long after Kilvert visited it and described its ruinous condition (it is in quite regular use now) - so a photograph of it today would not have been suitable. Some suggested that no picture of it at all might have been the best solution!!!!!! Llanleonfel Church is some 7 or 8 miles beyond Builth Wells, on the road for Llanwrtyd Wells - on a hillock on the left of the road as one goes towards Llanwrtyd.

NATIONAL TRUST VISIT TO THE KILVERT COUNTRY:

On Saturday, 10th. July, Mr. Grice took a large party of members of the Worcester and Malvern Branch of the National Trust on a tour of an important corner of the Kilvert Country. The visit was a follow-up of the lecture delivered by Mr. Grice last winter. So many people wanted to go on this visit that Mr. Grice was asked to repeat it next year. As it was, no less than fifty three National Trust members visited Whitney, Clyro and Clyro Hill, Llowes, Hay and Bredwardine - in perfect weather.

CHRISTMAS CARDS:

Now is the time to think about buying these. The Society has 10 different cards; all of scenes and places in the KILVERT COUNTRY (Welsh borderland and Wiltshire).

They are... 1. Bredwardine Vicarage, from the bridge over the Wye. 2. Bredwardine Church, from the lane leading up to it, an exquisite drawing by Robin Tanner. 3. The two Wiltshire "Kilvert Churches" - (Hardenhuish and Langley Burrell) in a Victorian

CHRISTMAS CARDS (Continued):

locket, another fine drawing by Robin Tanner. 4. Clyro Church in 1865, a drawing by Kilvert's sister Thersie. 5. Clyro Village, many years ago, shows the Baskerville Arms and Ashbrook, a charming drawing by a Herefordshire artist. 6. Hay (now Hay-on-Wye) Broad Street many years ago, much as Kilvert knew it. 7. A Black Mountains Farm, typical of many "Kilvert Country" farms as Kilvert knew them. 8. The Otters Pool (Pwllldwrgwy) on the Wye near Clyro. 9. The Gospel Pass in the Black Mountains. 10. The Old Rhydspence Inn at Whitney, as Kilvert saw it on his walks. Packet of all 10 cards is 70p. plus 10 if posted. Individual cards are in packets of 5 for 35p plus 9p if posted. Two packets of 5 can be posted for 10p. Please order early (from the Hon. Secretary). All cards are in B. & W. and with envelopes.

A VISIT TO LAKELAND - a literary pilgrimage:

This item was crowded out of the June newsletter. It is in detail - for the benefit of others who may care to do likewise.

In April 1975 two of our members from the Forest of Dean organised a highly successful few days in Cornwall for themselves and some of their friends. We followed Kilvert around Cornwall quite faithfully. It was fully reported in the newsletter for June, 1975. This inspired the same two brothers to organise another such visit, this time to the Lake District, starting soon after the A.G.M. again a party of ten, with one of the brothers driving the minibus that was hired for the venture. "But Kilvert didn't visit Lakeland", many will say. Quite true, but it all links up - for we have his sister Dora's "Honeymoon Diary" (soon to be published as part of the "Kilvert Omnibus" now in course of preparation); and it was Ambleside that the Pitcairns made the centre for their honeymoon. Dora Pitcairn's account of visits to Rydal Mount, etc. their walks, rowing on the lakes, crowds of excursionists, steamers packed with humanity, etc., etc., all make fascinating reading. Then we have two books of colour-washed drawings, by the Rev. Edward Kilvert (1807-1867) an uncle of the Diarist. One book is of "Scenes in England and Wales", done in the 1830's. It is now in the William Plomer Showcase at Hay. This book was a deciding factor in planning our route to Cumbria - which was via Central Wales to Bala and Llangollen, and then across Cheshire to the motorway, for one of the drawings is of the famous waterfall, Pistyll Rhaeadr - (a few miles west of Oswestry and a few miles north-east of Lake Vyrnwy) and another is of Telford's well known high aqueduct (Pontcysyllte) which still carries the Ellesmere Canal over the Dee as it did when opened in 1805. But although we passed quite near to Pistyll Rhaeadr we decided that it would not be worth visiting with so little water coming over - and pushed on over the Berwyns to Bala, for our picnic lunch in a delightful spot by Bala Lake. Then down the valley of the Dee to Llangollen. Here we spent an hour or more - comparing the ancient bridge over the river to another of the drawings of 140 years or so ago. Then looked at the Hand Hotel (where Kilvert stayed with his father) and saw that the lawn across the road and overlooking the Dee is just as described. Other extracts from the Diary (and from George Borrow's "Wild Wales") were read, and before leaving a visit was paid to Plas Newydd (home of the "Ladies of Llangollen" - who entertained so many celebrities - literary and otherwise - there). Then a few miles down the Dee to see Telford's aqueduct, 127 feet above the river, with the narrow boats still passing over it as in the drawing. Then quickly through Wrexham to Nantwich and the motorway, to come off it near Kendal, followed by nearly 40 miles of Lakeland roads to our guest house beyond Keswick. In the days that followed visits were made to Wordsworth's birthplace at Cockermouth, his homes at Dove Cottage and Rydal Mount, his school at Hawkshead and finally to his grave at Grasmere. Quite different was the visit to Beatrix Potter's farm, Hill Top at Sawrey - then on to Conistone to John Ruskin's home, Brantwood, and his grave in Conistone churchyard. Most of the lakes were seen, including lonely West Water. A diversion was the 8 mile trip on the little railway from Ravenglass to Eskdale (all of us but the driver, he met us with the minibus at Eskdale). Then over Hard Knott (quite a thrill, for it is 1 in 3 with corkscrew bends) and then over Wrynose (not quite so tough). One evening we took the beautiful but narrow and winding road to lonely Watendlath - high up beyond one end of Derwentwater and once the haunt of Lytton Strachey and the Bloomsbury group, and the setting for Hugh Walpole's "Judith Paris", etc. One evening some members from Barrow-in-Furness motored up to join us for the evening meal and to spend a pleasant hour afterwards. There is always something nice about getting to know some of our distant members.

Next day we returned to Hereford, calling first at the old church on the outskirts of Keswick to see Southey's grave and his one time home nearby. Our return journey was by devious ways (as was the journey up). From Kendal to Kirkby Lonsdale to see the church (very worthwhile) and then Ruskens Walk, leading out of the churchyard - high above the Lune - to the spot from which Turner painted his famous picture of that river. Then on to Cowan Bridge, where a plaque on some houses tells us that this was the Clergy Daughters School (Lowood) which the four Bronte sisters attended in the 1820's -

A VISIT TO LAKELAND (Continued):

followed by a call at Tunstall Church, two miles away. This is the "Brocklebridge Church" to which they went every Sunday, in the winter often paralysed with the cold. Before long we were at Caton and on to the road for the Trough of Bowland - to cross miles of high moorland and eventually reach Clitheroe for lunch. Then on to near Preston and the motorway again. This carried us quickly into Cheshire and we left it near Congleton to visit the lovely old "magpie" Little Moreton Hall. After this the miles went quickly by and we found ourselves in Ludlow (via Shifnal and Bridgnorth) sooner than anticipated - finally to a well-known inn in North Herefordshire for a dinner party to celebrate this most enjoyable visit to Lakeland - then to Hereford and our respective homes.

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LLANSHIVER:

Coming as I do from Wrexham in the Northern Marches of Wales, I have been well used from an early age to the odd things which can happen to place-names in such a territory. Generally it is the abuse of old Welsh names through giving them an anglicised pronunciation and this sometimes comes about through English slackness over allegedly difficult sounds, transforming for instance LLAY into CLIGH. Sometimes the blunder is facetious, as when ACREFAIR (correctly pronounced something like AKK-RU-VIRE) becomes ACRE FAIR; sometimes adjacent villages, HOPE and CAERGWRLE (rightly pronounced KYRE-GOOR-LAY), give rise to a comic jungle:

Live in Hope,
Die in Kygurly.

In a comparable area of the Southern Marches like Kilvert's Radnorshire, the process seems to have gone further. In the north, Welsh maintains a vigorous life still within 7-8 miles of the border, but in the south the Welsh words often live on only on the map, and with names like Llowes the words have probably not been pronounced locally in a Welsh fashion for generations.

Kilvert himself was not incurious about the Welsh language, although he does not seem to have heard it spoken often; but a comment such as his reference to the derivation of the name MOCCAS reveals some interest, if only of a passing sort (perhaps Nature's dabblers make the best diarists) and that he enjoyed mingling with thoroughly Welsh people is indicated by his entry about being in Builth Wells (12.IV.75) and in other tributes too. Nevertheless, the fact that he did not regard his own parishioners as Welsh is illustrated by a remark such as that in the entry for 3.X.70: "Called on Mrs. Corfield. Below her cottage...I met a wild sharp-looking Welsh lad, with a bright face, laughing eyes and windy hair. He was driving a lean white pig for whom he apologized saying she had been suckling young ones and was poor".

A peculiarity here in the south is the existence of hybrid names, half-Welsh and half-English. In the north, names (like the already quoted Hope and Caergwrle) tend to be one thing or the other and in various parts of Wales places have both Welsh and English forms (such as Brecon and Aberhonddu, Mountain Ash and Aberpennar), often quite separate in their meanings, though by no means always; but in the south you can find instances of Welsh-English compounds, my title furnishing one example.

The farmhouse bearing this name is a place which Kilvert renders truly memorable, so that one is surprised to discover how few are the actual references to it in the Diary, as we have it at least. For some time I have had a desire, stimulated entirely by Kilvert's brief but sinister allusions, to visit this spot; and at last got around to it the other day. In some ways the expedition was a disappointment, for the sombre features so much stressed by Kilvert were just not visible. I cannot be certain as to the disappearance of the yew tree, as that famous land-mark had slipped from my mind which in any case was fully occupied with placating a sheep-dog and avoiding treading down a number of pert ducklings. Also there was nothing to indicate that the approach deserved to be called, in Tony Lumpkin's phrase, "a damned long, dark, boggy, dirty, dangerous way". I spoke to the farmer's wife, who seemed a trifle hazy on the subject of Kilvert, without absolutely denying all knowledge of him, and there arose for me the slightly embarrassing question as to whether I should mention the diarist's views on the place. I decided that a modified candour might be best and touched upon what Kilvert had had to say. The lady, while admitting to having a cold at the time, spoke up stoutly for the health-giving properties of the Llanshiver of today and I hastened to check or suppress any signs of disbelief, declaring furthermore that in a hundred years much might have changed. As a reward for my tact, I was invited inside, where I saw what was certainly a delightfully comfortable farm-house, a pleasant blend of ancient and modern.

Of course, this summer of 1976, Clyro Hill is possibly in a dryer condition than it has been for a very long time and Kilvert, in any case, may not have taken the most favourable approach to the farm. My own, incidentally, was past Saffron Hill, once a dwelling-place, which reminded me of the number of sites in Kilvert country with London associations. English names you might expect, but London ones you are less prepared for. Saffron Hill, which still survives in E.C.1. as the name of a short, fairly unimportant

LLANSHIVER (Continued)

street, was in Kilvert's day a much longer affair, the street which Dickens had in mind when devising Fagin's den in 'Oliver Twist', a notorious centre of thieving and prostitution in Victorian times. Then there is the celebrated but now forlorn Whitehall; and, further off, that alternative name for Crafta Webb on Bredwardine Hill - Hyde Park Corner.

But, to return to Llanshiver, as it is indicated on modern maps, I should guess that originally it had a fully Welsh name, the second element of which may not have been unlike SHIVER in sound. The SHIFR which is the form used by Kilvert is not Welsh, but is slightly more Welsh-looking than SHIVER and may have been a concession of that period to Welsh appearances, while retaining the aural suggestions of the English word 'shiver', no doubt considered appropriate by those like Kilvert who judged the area at that time or earlier to be swampy and feverous. Apart from the issue of its physical qualities, it had too its psychological links with a notorious murder to create a shiver of quite a different kind.

Reverting in conclusion to this question of verbal hybrids, it would be interesting to hear of others which may have been observed, to see if anything amounting to a distinct tendency can be claimed. RHYDSPENCE would probably qualify - a real frontier spot. How many more await discovery?

Ivor Lewis.

(Mr. Lewis is a long standing and most loyal member of the Kilvert Society. He teaches at Mountain Ash in South Wales).

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SOLUTIONS AND MYSTERIES:

On 28th. January, 1878, Kilvert makes a puzzling entry in his diary.

Letters from Morrell saying he had offered Mayhew the living of Moultsford.....

Nothing Kilvert had previously said about his friend Hopeton Morrell would have led anyone to suspect that he was the patron of a Church of England living; and nothing he adds later tells us how Mayhew responded to the offer. However, the Clergy Lists for the period covered by the diary (published by G. Cox of London) throw some light on this puzzle. Up to 1878 the incumbent of Moultsford had been the Rev. G.K. Morrell, and the patron the Rev. D. Morrell, both, presumably relatives of Kilvert's friend. But in 1879 both G.K. and D. Morrell are missing from the lists. Hopeton Morrell has apparently inherited the patronage of the living, and Mayhew has declined his offer. The new incumbent is the Rev. J.A. Cheese.

It is not surprising that Mr. Mayhew did not accept Morrell's offer. After two years as curate of St. Margaret's, Rochester, he had become Vicar of Bearley in Warwickshire and then in 1874 Chaplain of Wadham College, Oxford. Perhaps Morrell hoped that he would be able to take on Moultsford in addition to his chaplain's duties. He cannot have expected Mayhew to give up Wadham, because the Moultsford living was one of the least remunerative in the country, being worth only £60. p.a.

The Clergy Lists throw a little light on Hopeton Morrell, and the career of Anthony Lawson Mayhew. They also suggest an explanation for Kilvert's decision to leave St. Harmon after only one year there. St. Harmon was a poor living. In 1876 it was worth only £161. p.a. (raised to £177 by 1877); and there was no vicarage. After Kilvert's resignation the Bishop of St. David's, the patron, could find no one willing to take his place. For Kilvert, who was at this time contemplating marriage, the offer of Bredwardine must have been too tempting to refuse. In the first place he knew he would be among friends. The living was in the gift of the executors of the late Rev. N.D.H. Newton, the chief among whom was probably Miss Newton of the Cottage, Bredwardine, whom he had met at Clyro. He calculated that the gross and net value of the livings were £412 and £375 respectively (a great increase on St. Harmon); and there was a vicarage. The Clergy Lists, however, raise almost as many questions as they solve. They give the value of the Bredwardine living as no more than £300. The figure for 1870 is £370, but it drops to £300 in 1872 and stays there. Secondly, although the lists give details of foreign chaplaincies, there is no mention of the chaplaincy of Cannes, which Kilvert was offered on 20th. June, 1878. Was this a new chaplaincy, and would Kilvert have been the first holder of it? Perhaps some Kilvert Society member who has access to Crockford's Clerical Directory for those years (which I have not been able to consult) may be able to answer these queries.

F. Grice.

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THE SHEEP STEALERS:

After the death of Walter Sandys Thomas, the youngest brother of Daisy Thomas, his widow with her family made their home at Llanthomas. A frequent visitor was her cousin from Scotland, Mrs. Violet Jacob. This lady wrote novels and poetry. Robert Lynd's famous "Anthology of Modern Verse" includes two of her poems, and the "Oxford Book of Scottish Verse" contains two other poems. I believe her novels were largely set in Scotland, but one of them, her best-selling novel, owes its origin to a visit to Llanthomas. I

THE SHEEP STEALERS (Continued):

think I am right in saying that it was published in the early years of this century. Entitled "The Sheep Stealers" it tells of the Rebecca riots. It is strange that Kilvert, usually so alive to the past, makes only a brief reference to these disturbances. However, for Daisy and her sisters, knowledge of the riots may well have been first-hand. From what younger members of the Llanthomas family have told me, I feel sure that it was Daisy, with her wide and lively interests, who supplied Mrs. Jacob with the seeds of her novel. Unfortunately, I never met Mrs. Jacob after the publication of Kilvert's Diary, but I did meet her once after I had bought and read a second-hand copy of "The Sheep Stealers". It was a long time after the publication of her book, but she was able to tell me of certain settings in the novel - that she had used the fine old farmhouse of Penywyrld for her hero's boyhood home and that his final flight from justice was set on the Tumpa (Lord Hereford's Knob). She had been taken to various localities in the neighbourhood associated with the rioters, and the hero was based on a young man in the parish of Llanigon. The novel I imagine to be now quite dated. It has something of Hardy about it, in the failure of a young man to fulfil his promise, its moral tone is distinctly old-fashioned, but when I read it I thoroughly enjoyed it, partly because of its historical setting and partly because of its descriptions of an area I knew and loved. I must add that this was 40 years ago! My copy suffered a common fate. Loaned to somebody it was never returned, and I have not succeeded in tracking down another!

Edward J. West.

Mr. West (who lives near Ross-on-Wye) is a schoolmaster in Herefordshire and a long-standing and much valued member of the Society. He was at one time closely associated with Llanthomas, as this article indicates.

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LANHILL:

There is a most intriguing entry on p.113 of Vol. 2 (10th. January 1872). It reads: "After dinner I went to see old Jacob Smith who used to be head carter at Sheldon when I lived at Lanhill". It is the words underlined that are the ones that puzzle "When I lived at Lanhill". Many of us know where Lanhill is, for on a visit to Wiltshire years ago we stopped to look at it, and photograph it. Lanhill must be in an adjoining parish to Kington St. Michael. Can any of our Wiltshire members throw any light on when and why Kilvert lived at Lanhill? There are some eight other references to Lanhill in the Diary; that on p. 87 of Vol. 3 is very interesting - Kilvert had walked over to Kington St. Michael and "near the entrance to the village I fell in with a team of red oxen, harnessed, coming home from plough ... reminding me vividly of the time when I used to ride the oxen home from plough at Lanhill".

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THE ATHIEST OF BWLCH GWYNNE:

This is the title of a very interesting article by Ruth Bidgood which can be found in the Society's publication "Looking Backwards" - and Kilvert refers to him at least once in the Diary, his name was Joseph Foxton and he lies buried in the churchyard at St. Harmon. When the Kilvert Commemoration service was last at St. Harmon (October 1972) Foxton's tombstone had been cleaned and the grass around it cut, for it is an object of interest to readers of the Diary. I have recently made notes about a large Indenture (it is about 33 by 26 inches) kindly loaned me by the Rev. C.J. Colebrook of Nantmel (and St. Harmon). It is dated 9th. April, 1844, and concerns the sale of the land on which Bwlch Gwynne was built. The vendor is Edward Meredith of Baileynoyadd in the parish of Nantmel in the County of Radnor, Gentleman, and his wife Mary - and the buyer is the Rev. Joseph Foxton of Hennor in the parish of Leominster in the County of Hereford. Witnesses are Richard Banks of Kington and Evan Williams, and the purchase price is £200. This sum to include the rights and privileges of the adjoining common and hill AND THE FISHING IN THE RIVER WYE ... not to mention mineral and mining rights. It is interesting to note that there is a reference to deed of this land (dated 12th. September 1835) between John Meredith and Evan Thomas Esq. - (Who is he?). There is a considerable amount of land involved in this sale, in addition to what the house was to be built on ... all for two hundred pounds.

C.T.O. Prosser.

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