

THE KILVERT SOCIETY

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FEBRUARY 1980.

Dear Member,

Many members unable to attend last September's Centenary weekend, wrote to me expressing hopes that an account of it would appear in the newsletter due for that month. Doing so - would have caused delay in publication, but it seemed right to the Committee something be done. I was not prepared for the correspondence I had in consequence - wanting to know why the newsletter had not been sent out. This led me to a very hasty editing of material, and I must apologise for several omissions: the name of Rev. N. Rowe, who gave the Act of Remembrance at the Clyro service, was unfortunately not included in the accounts: I failed to assure members that on September 22nd. wreaths were placed on the graves of Kilvert and Mrs. Kilvert - these were of magnolia leaves with a spray of scarlet carnations: (Mrs. Reekie, who was at Bredwardine on that day, has kindly sent a fine photograph of the diarist's grave): two articles appeared in Dutch newspapers by Rev. M.G.L. der Boer and Rev. J. Leeuwens - which were very kindly translated for me by Mrs. W. Lockwood, wife of our Vice-President, Rev. D.N. Lockwood: Mr. W. Palmer presented to the Society a copy of the Folio Society's "Journal of a Country Curate", and in recording our thanks to him for the gift I would add that he can obtain copies for members at £6. 95 plus 50p postage and packing: in addition to commemorative articles already recorded, "The South Wales Evening Post" recorded Kilvert's associations with the Gower - I have to thank our Swansea member, Mrs. J. Evans, for sending a copy, and a second tribute appeared in "The Birmingham Post".

Interest in the Society has not abated. I have to report that 26 new members have been added to our list since that weekend! Interest of another kind, though sadly brief, was roused by the news that in a Hereford antique shop was a portrait labelled, "may be the Rev. F. Kilvert". Alas, the colouring was quite wrong; the portrait had come from a Radnorshire vicarage and might have been of someone mentioned in the Diary.

A.G.M. This year it is on April 18th. at 7 p.m. at the Shire Hall, Hereford, with a lecture on "Kilvert and the Wye" by our Monmouth member, Mr. K. Kissack, author of "The River Wye". On the following day, April 19th. Mr. and Mrs. R.I. Morgan will again lead a walk. Those taking part are asked to appear, stoutly shod, at the Baskerville Arms, Clyro, at 11. 00 a.m.

Summer Service - by kind permission of Rev. F. Willford, at Eardisley, June 29th.

Autumn Service - by kind permission of the Vicar at Aberedw, September 21st.

(It is also intended to hold a Walk on the day preceding each of these two events).

There will be further information about these events in the June newsletter, and also about an event for the evening of September 20th. to take place at Hereford.

Outing - June 14th. Mr. Hugh Dearlove will once again organise our excursion. A coach will leave Hereford Town Hall at 9. 30 a.m. and will arrive at Malmesbury Abbey at 11. 30 a.m. Picnic lunch and then visit to Bowood. Coach fare from Hereford £2.20. There will also be the price of admission to Bowood and tea. I hope that members in Wilts., Glos., and Avon areas will be able to join us. For local (i.e. Welsh Border) members who are interested, if they care to phone me nearer the date I shall probably have more details.

Yours sincerely,

E.J.C. West.

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OBITUARY:

We regret to announce the death of Mr. S.B. Johns of Neath. He had been a member since 1972.

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REVIEWS:

The Busy World is Hushed. Colin Davis. B.B.C. £1. 50.

Members who have heard Colin Davis at K.S. meetings and listened with pleasure to his recitals from Kilvert will not need to be reminded of the qualities that grace this little book. It is an anthology of some of his well-known Sunday-night Epilogues in the form of an alphabet, in which the author draws upon prose and poetry to illustrate thoughts pertaining to each letter, linked with observations from his own experience of life and literature; and it exhibits the special range of his reading (we remember how last September he linked Kilvert in a wholly felicitous way with poets as diverse as Hardy, Housman and Tessimond); his love of language; and his own religious temperament. Members of the K.S. will be especially pleased with his tribute to the Diary, from which he makes several selections.

It is a pity that several glaring misprints should have gone uncorrected (there are two on page viii); but these are minor blemishes. The text fully justifies the publishers' claim that the book is 'a thought-provoking anthology which helps us to perceive the spiritual and reflective dimensions in our lives'.

The Priestly Life of Francis Kilvert, S.G.A. Luff. (The Clergy Review. Dec.1879. No. 12.)

Here are a few quotations from this article which will, I think, indicate what a revealing and stimulating essay it is.

Spirituality was for (Kilvert) intrinsic to the mere fact, and the mere act, of living. Prayer was the breath of life, if by prayer you mean sensing the holiness of God in all that is best in creation and especially in man, and in being prompted thereby to praise God.

His sympathy for things Catholic amounts to a nostalgia.

If spirituality means that limited capacity to see creation and life as God sees them, to weigh them by His values as far as we can, then Kilvert was a spiritual man. If it be Christian to have in heart and hold in mind the words of Jesus and to apply them readily to every situation, then he is profoundly Christian. If a deep concern for the Eucharist as the central sacrament of Christ's Dispensation be of great importance to stewards of the mysteries, then he was priestly. If the centrality of the Resurrection be a rediscovery of our time, then he was ahead of his time If a solicitude, seemingly unlimited, for others makes a good pastor, that is what he was.

Copies of The Clergy Review No. 12 are available (60p) from the Tablet Publishing Company Limited, 48, Great Peter Street, London, SW1P 2HB.

Father Luff is a member of the Kilvert Society.

F. Grice.

PUBLICATIONS NOTICES:

Price Increase. Jonathan Cape, the publishers of Kilvert's Diary, have substantially increased the price of the hardback (one-volume) abridged edition, and the new price to members will be £7. 05. post paid. The price of the three-volume remains unchanged, at least for the time being, at £21. 15. post paid.

New Publication. Members who attended the 1979 A.G.M. will recollect the fine and authoritative lecture on "Kilvert and the Visual Arts" by ROSALIND BILLINGHAM. This is now available in booklet form, 20 pages, cyclostyled typescript, price 60 pence, post free. Members who would like a copy should write, with remittance, to the Publications Department.

Kilvert's Diary - odd volumes. We have on hand a number of volumes one and volumes three of the 1971 (unillustrated) edition of Kilvert's Diary, new, in dust-wrappers, price £3. 00 each including postage.

R.I. Morgan, Publications Department, "Heulwen", Castle Gardens, Hay-on-Wye, via Hereford.

THE HILLS ARE ALIVE 100 YEARS AFTER KILVERT:

The following appeared in "The Sunday Telegraph" for September 23rd. last. Through the kindness of the editor of that paper and its writer, it is being reprinted

here, and I hope that members will enjoy its affectionate, if light-hearted, tribute to Kilvert.

"Today is the 100th anniversary of the death of Francis Kilvert. At least one fan has travelled from North America to attend this weekend's celebration in honour of the gentle, joyous clergyman who became one of our greatest diarists. Unlike the others, Pepys, Aubrey and Evelyn - Kilvert rarely brushed shoulders with the great. He lived and recorded a quiet, pleasant and useful existence in country places, the sort of life for which most English men inwardly hanker, but nowadays rarely achieve. By recording the peaceful happiness of his own days, he provided an escape for all succeeding generations who live in more troubled times. He recorded unhurried rural scenes very like the one unfolding in the Welsh Border country this weekend.

Yesterday members of the Kilvert Society walked in his beloved hills, after which Bredwardine Women's Institute provided a ploughman's lunch for 120 on the church green. Today, the rural dean, Prebendary John Davis, will preach a sermon on the diaries at Kilvert's Bredwardine Church, and afterwards a new oak gate, made by a local parishioner, will be dedicated in the churchyard to the diarist's memory. Kilvert would have noticed with relish not only the humour, beauty and vigour of the scene, but also the charms of the flirtatious young women (if there are any in the Kilvert Society).

But change touches even Bredwardine. Today there is no full-time incumbent at the church. It is one of seven that comes under the pastoral wing of Mr. Davis. "The parish", he says, "has only one third of the population it had in Kilvert's time. Since then the tractor has done to agriculture what the silicon chip promises to do to the office".

But Kilvert's world remains blissfully unchanged on the page. I read an entry most nights before turning out the light, partly because I find it soothing, and partly because I still try to work out how he does it. We are, you see, in the same line of business but only, of course, in the way that fine wine and hooch boiled in a barrel are. For a start, he is a much better writer than I am. I cannot describe countryside to save my life. A tree is a tree and a brook is a brook, but Kilvert can summon up a frog pond in a dozen words! "As I passed Cross Fordd, the frogs were croaking, snoring and bubbling in the pool under the full moon".

Somehow he managed to reach that balance which is the high watermark of the diarist's calling; he simultaneously gives a detailed objective account of the world and a full self-portrait without once appearing to obtrude. Furthermore, he has a more charming personality than most newspaper diarists who tend, myself included, to be a rather peculiar bunch. Kilvert was that rarity, a happy and compassionate man who knew that peace lives in the simplest thing.

I'm going back to the drawing board! "

"Mandrake"

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POOR GEORGIA SPENCER:

On 4 December 1874 Kilvert records the sad death of Captain Dudden who was lost with sixty of his crew when his ship, the telegraph-laying cable ship, La Plata, foundered in the Bay of Biscay.

It is very remarkable that Captain Dudden sailed on this fatal voyage with a strong and sad reluctance, weighed down by a dark and sorrowful presentiment that he would never return. He made his poor wife promise that she would not look at a newspaper till after her confinement, and he told Lloyd's agent if and when the ship went down to telegraph, not to his wife, but to his father-in-law at Chippenham. (Vol.3.119)

A few days later Kilvert again expresses his concern for Mrs. Dudden.

I met the doctor (Mr. Spencer) here this morning ... He said he was hourly expecting to hear of the confinement of his daughter Mrs. Dudden. The poor girl does not know yet that she has lost her husband, and they dare not tell her... (Vol.2.127).

Fortunately Mrs. Dudden gave birth to a boy very soon after this entry, and Georgina named him after his father, Frederick Homes Dudden.

The Duddens were living at 11 Charlton Villas, Charlton. Capt. Dudden was a Master Mariner, and it is obvious that he had a premonition that something disastrous would happen on one of his voyages, because on 4 May 1874 he made a will in which he bequeathed 'everything to my dear wife, Caroline Georgina and her heirs'. Mrs. Dudden, who was the sole executrix proved his will in London on 21 April 1875. She must have

survived the shock of hearing of her husband's death.

Teresa Williams.

Mrs. Williams, whose name appears at the foot of the previous article, has very kindly sent the following extracts from "The Chippenham Chronicle" and "The Hereford Times".

FROM 'THE CHIPPENHAM CHRONICLE' - Friday, August 1st. 1879.

"WEDDING AT LANGLEY BURRELL

Yesterday morning at St. Peter's Church, Langley Burrell, was celebrated the marriage of Mr. James Edward Pitcairn, son of the late Colonel Pitcairn, with Miss Dora Kilvert, daughter of the Rev. Robert Kilvert, rector of Langley Burrell. The ceremony took place at eleven o'clock in the presence of a large gathering of the parishioners, by whom the church had been profusely decorated. The bride, who was accompanied by five bridesmaids, was attired in a rich white silk dress, trimmed with lace. She also wore, over a wreath of orange blossoms, a tulle (sic) veil. The bridesmaids were Miss Pitcairn, Miss Wyndowe, Miss Florence Smith, Miss Annie Wyndowe and Miss Mary Wyndowe; the Misses Wyndowe are neices of the bride. They were elegantly dressed, their costumes being of cream cashmere, trimmed with pale blue silk. Their hats were cream plush ones, trimmed with blue feathers. The bridegroom was accompanied by his best man, Mr. C.D. Pitcairn. The following ladies and gentlemen were also present:- The Rev. R. and Mrs. Kilvert, Mrs. Pitcairn, the Rev. W.R. and Mrs. Smith, Mrs. Jardine Wyndowe, Miss Rowland, the Rev. W. Coleman, Mrs. Ashe, the Misses Ashe, Mr. Walter Coleman, Mr. William Coleman, Mr. and Mrs. E.N. Kilvert, Miss Kilvert and Mr. West Awdry. The officiating clergy were the Rev. R.F. Kilvert, of Bredwardine (brother of the bride), and Rev. W.R. Smith (brother-in-law of the bride). The ceremony concluded, the wedding party left the church, and were conveyed to the Rectory. When the happy couple passed from the church to their carriage, flowers were strewn before them by villagers. The wedding presents, among which were some valuable and most useful articles, numbered 118. Many of them were sent from Bredwardine, where the bride has been living for the past eighteen months, and is highly respected by the whole of the parishioners. The newly married couple left Chippenham at 2. 30 for the North. "

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FROM 'THE HEREFORD TIMES' - Saturday, August 3rd. 1867.

"MARRIAGES

VENABLES - PEARSON - On August 1st. at Mitcham, Surrey, by the Reverend Sir Gilbert Frankland Lewis, Bart., assisted by the Reverend Sterling Westhorpe, the Reverend Richard Lister Venables to Agnes Minna, youngest daughter of the late Henry Shepherd Pearson, Esq. "

FROM 'THE HEREFORD TIMES' - (First Sheet) - Saturday, Sept. 21st. 1867.

"Presentation - On Tuesday morning one of those agreeable incidents so common, we are happy to state, amongst us, that they seem to form part of our social life, took place at Clyro, in the county of Radnor. On that day, a committee, consisting of the following gentlemen viz, - Trumper, Esq., (sic) H. Proctor, Esq., J.E. Smith, Esq., Mr. Charles Griffiths, Mr. Horden, Mr. J.L. Davies, Mr. Stokoe, Mr. Rastall and Mr. Thomas Pritchard, presented the Rev. Richard Lister Venables with a handsome silver salver on the occasion of his marriage, which took place on the 1st. of August, last. The committee on the above day went to Clyro, and on being introduced to the Rev. gentleman and his bride, H. Proctor, Esq., being the oldest member, opened the subject by stating that they had called there in order simply to express their high sense of his character as a gentleman who devoted his life to the duties of his station, and to congratulate him on his recent marriage, and to give their heartiest welcome to his bride, for whom and for himself they all wished a long life of happiness. He also took that opportunity of expressing his thanks for the courteous treatment he had ever experienced during the many years of their intercourse. Mr. C. Griffiths then read the following address:-

'To the Rev. R. Lister Venables

The inhabitants of Hay desire to offer you their hearty congratulations on the auspicious event of your marriage, which they fervently trust will be conducive to your future happiness. In offering you the accompanying present, they beg you to accept it as a small token of their respect and esteem for yourself personally, and also as an acknowledgment of the various important services that you have so ably and impartially rendered to the

public during a long series of years. They heartily welcome amongst them the lady whom you have selected as your bride, and hope that many years of uninterrupted happiness may be in reserve for you both, and that you may have health and strength to continue your course of public usefulness in this neighbourhood'.

The Rev. R.L. Venables, who was deeply moved, in his reply repeatedly expressed his hearty thanks for the very handsome present and flattering address which they had brought him. He felt he had just cause to be proud that his past conduct had called forth from his neighbours in the town of Hay such an expression of their esteem. He had always endeavoured to make himself useful in his position, and ever recommended a useful course of life to the young in the parish, and that amongst all his anticipations of the pleasure he should experience on his return to Clyro, he had not anticipated so gratifying an honour as this. It was entirely unexpected, and therefore the more pleasing to him, and he was sure his wife would have the same feelings of gratification as himself on this occasion, and that she would be glad to become better acquainted with them, and the more they knew of her the more they would admire the excellent qualities she possessed, and esteem her for them. He admired exceedingly the salver which they had presented to him; it was quite to his taste, and would be useful as well as ornamental. He particularly admired the inscription which was very carefully and tastefully executed. - The members of the committee having been individually introduced to the lady, and having partaken of some light refreshment departed, highly pleased with their reception, and with the most favourable impressions of the bride. The present consisted of a silver salver, with a beautifully ornamented border, and bore the following inscription in the centre:-

'Presented to the Rev. R. Lister Venables, by the
inhabitants of Hay, August, 1867' "

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GLEANINGS FROM GLASCWM:

It would not be an exaggeration to say that the village of Clyro, over the past century, has changed more in the last ten years than in the previous ninety. Had Kilvert returned there in 1969 most of what he saw would have been familiar to him. Were he to return today he would have some difficulty in recognising it as the place he had known. A good deal of the surrounding countryside, too, has changed, and though not so dramatically as Clyro itself, it is changing nevertheless: roads are being widened, bridges rebuilt, hedges are gradually giving way to wire fences, more and more bungalows are replacing the old worn-out farmhouses, and caravan-sites begin to obtrude themselves.

Some of this work, especially that carried out by the local authorities, is being done in a heedless and brutal manner, as for instance at Newchurch, where the County Council, in widening (for no apparent reason) the old stone bridge over the River Arrow, has completely destroyed what was formerly a charming and picturesque corner of the village.

Further on into the Radnorshire hinterland there are fortunately places which have been relatively untouched, and one such of these is the tiny village of Glascwm, which lies some ten or eleven miles from Clyro and about five from Newchurch. Along the approach to Glascwm from Newchurch the road for the last few hundred yards is level and runs between high hedges, affording little intimation of what lies ahead. Suddenly the hedges end and the road plunges downwards. At the same time the view opens wide, and there, in its deep, broad valley, some half-mile ahead and nearly three hundred feet below, lies the village of Glascwm.

It is a tiny place; in fact, were it not for its church it could hardly be called a village at all. On the left, as you enter, is the old school, closed as such in 1945 and now a youth hostel. Just beyond is the old vicarage, where Kilvert's "Mr. Marsden" lived. To the right is the main group of cottages, hardly numbering more than half a dozen. Some distance further on, to the right, is the church, with its large circular grave-yard, while still further on, this time on the other side of the road, is the Yat, a dwelling of modest dimensions and of some considerable antiquity. The name Yat, or Yatt as it was also spelt in olden times, probably derives from the Welsh word "iet", which means "gate"; there is also an old English word, "yate", also signifying "gate". At all events the Yat stands appropriately at the western approach to the village.

Nearly all the buildings in the village are built of the local Silurian shale, most of the walls now being whitewashed. Probably in Kilvert's time the roofs would have been covered with stone tiles; now, less picturesquely, most are slated. There is now a recently erected house amongst the old cottages, which though of modern materials is so coloured as to fit in more sympathetically with its neighbours than

the only other modern building, the staring red-brick village hall, which was built just before the last war. The only real and painful blemish, however, architectural or otherwise, is a hideous erection on the tiny village green, where an old stone-built shed of some sort has been converted, with the aid of raw concrete blocks, into a pair of garages.

Apart from this miserable edifice, the new house and the village hall, the scene can have changed very little since Kilvert walked there from Clyro in May, 1871. A good many, even, of the sycamores he mentions as lining the roadway are still there. How enchanted he must have been, after striding down that long steep hill, to find himself in this tiny and remote village, some one thousand feet above sea-level, and yet dwarfed on all sides by the green swelling hills rising up another six or seven hundred feet above it. Even to him it must have seemed a timeless place; even more so does it seem to us today.

The etymology of Glascwm is uncertain, there being at least three suggestions for its derivation. One theory is that it means "green valley", from the two Welsh words "glas" (green) and "cwm" (valley). Jonathan Williams, in his "History of Radnorshire", dismisses this theory on the grounds that in the Welsh tongue nouns precede adjectives, so that the name would properly be Cwm Glas, overlooking the fact that there are exceptions to this rule in grammar, as exemplified in such place-names as Glasnant, Glaslyn, Glaspwll, etc. He states that the name derives from the Clas Brook, which flows past the village and falls into the River Edw, further west. Evidently it did not occur to him that even were this to be the real origin, the name would still have to be Cwm Glas, assuming, as he implies, the precedence of nouns over adjective to be invariable. A third and more probable theory is that the name derives from the Welsh word "clas" (or, in its mutated form, "glas"), meaning a monastic community, the church at Glascwm having been founded in the sixth century by Celtic monks. A further possibility, and one that Williams overlooks, is that the stream derived its name from the "clas" which stood upon its banks.

Glascwm was for many centuries a place of some importance, a fact belied by its present somnolence. In the fourteenth century a licence was granted to hold a market there. It was on an important drovers' road, and at various times there have been no fewer than four public houses there - there is none of course today, though there was one there when Kilvert made his visit and for some time afterwards. In 1625, of the fifty-five people in Radnorshire who each contributed ten pounds (a large sum in those days) as a loan to Charles I no fewer than four resided in the parish of "Glascomb". The population was also much higher. In 1847 the population of the parish (as distinct from the village itself) was 561. In comparison the population of Clyro parish, somewhat larger than Glascwm parish, was 948 at that time.

Kilvert's visit provides one of the best and longest passages in the Diary. Mr. Marsden, the vicar, whom he met that day, emerges from Kilvert's pen as a jolly, yet forceful character. He tells Kilvert about a supposedly Welsh-speaking assistant curate he once engaged, who translated from English into Welsh the passage "Why these two persons may not lawfully be joined together in Holy Matrimony" as "Why these two backsides may not lawfully be joined together in Holy Matrimony"; and so obvious is the relish with which Mr. Marsden relates and Kilvert records this anecdote that we might be forgiven for concluding that the conversation of mid-Victorian clergymen was a trifle more earthy than the novels of Anthony Trollope and his contemporaries had led us to believe. Mr. Marsden died in 1883, aged 79; a red granite cross in the churchyard marks his grave.

Kilvert mentions the Yat: "Squire Beavan's House, or as the Squire tries to call it, Glascwm Court". He also mentions a small cemetery, which lies across the road from the churchyard, not far from the entrance to the Yat: "...the Beavan family have a private burial ground, unconsecrated, where a number of them are buried". It so happens that there is some curious history attached to this place, connected with something else that Kilvert records: "There is no real dissent in the parish, no chapel, only an endowed fortnightly Baptist sermon and meeting in a farmhouse".

The following is an extract from "The History of the Baptists in Radnorshire", written by John Jones, Baptist Minister at Llandrindod Wells, and published in 1895:-

"There was a Mr. John Lewis living near the church at Glascwm; he opened his house, the Yat, for the Gospel. Mr. Lewis was a Baptist. Baptists in those days found it difficult to have places to bury their dead. In many instances they were not allowed to bury their dead in the parish burial-ground. A Baptist who died near Glascwm was refused interment in the parish burial-ground. This led Mr. John Lewis, who was a landed proprietor, to give a small piece of land for the purpose of burying the dead; there the person who was refused interment in the churchyard was buried. This burial-ground is still in existence; it is surrounded by a stone wall; the public road passes

between it and the churchyard. I visited this ancient burial-ground some years ago; I found several tombstones in it; the inscriptions on some of them were scarcely legible; they could be read if the stones were cleaned. Several generations of the Lewises lie buried in this hallowed graveyard, which is a memorial of the intolerance by which Nonconformists were subjected in the days of persecution.

"Mr. John Lewis, who set apart this ground for the burial of the dead, was buried in it himself; he died in 1709, aged sixty-one. This good man lived in the days of the persecution, and died about twenty years after the passing of the Toleration Act, which gave some liberty to Nonconformists".

Mr. Jones goes on to say that John Lewis had a son named Thomas, who joined the Baptist Church in Leominster, Herefordshire, and became a minister. He died in 1835 and was also buried in the burial-ground at Glascwm. A near-relative of his, a Miss Evans, who lived with him, left £100 "to secure property for the support of the cause at Glascwm and the vicinity". This sum was used to buy a piece of land at Stanner, near Old Radnor, and trustees appointed to administer the rental arising from it, £10 per annum, for the purpose of employing a Baptist preacher.

The last member of the Lewis family was another Thomas, whose estate passed to his daughter, and this is where "Squire Beavan" comes in, for he, Samuel Beavan, married this heiress, Maria, and so gained possession of the Glascwm estate. He also administered the trust alluded to above. About this, Mr. Jones says:-

"After Mr. Beavan's death in 1878 the trust-deed was found among his papers. It then became known that Mr. Beavan had for many years been keeping back part of the rent of the meadow from the Baptist cause at Glascwm. It became known also that Mr. Beavan had sold part of the meadow to the railway company for the sum of £210".

Not a very creditable act for some one who was a magistrate and who had served a term as High Sheriff in Radnorshire! Fortunately the £210 had been deposited separately in a bank, and the new trustees were able to get it back.

So much for the history of the "Baptist cause" at Glascwm and of the burial-ground, which to this day is known locally as "the Chapel graveyard", though there has never been a chapel building in the village, services having been conducted originally at the Yat and afterwards at local farmhouses.

Recently my wife and I made a study of the grave-stones in the burial-ground. These are of two kinds; the older ones, of the Lewis family and of the children of Samuel and Maria Beavan who died in infancy, are flat stones laid flush with the ground, and from these we had to remove a thick accumulation of leaf-mould and moss in order to read the inscriptions, some of which are now not too legible. The graves of Maria, who died in 1828, aged 44, and of her three children, all daughters, who survived infancy, are surmounted by the more pretentious altar-type tombs, the sides of one of which have collapsed.

Amongst the older, flat stones, we found memorials to the John Lewis mentioned by John Jones and to his relative, Catherine Evans, spinster, donor of the £100, who died in 1724. There are altogether eight of these stones, each commemorating two or more members of the Lewis family, the earliest decipherable interment being in 1708.

Of the three grown-up daughters of Samuel and Maria Beavan, all of whom predeceased their father, two were spinsters. The third is mentioned by Kilvert: Mrs. Elizabeth Herwin, who died in 1875, aged 60. Kilvert calls her "Mrs. Irwine" - no doubt that was how the local people pronounced her name - and he tells us that her father, the old Squire, would not allow her to return to his house after her husband's death, whereupon she made herself an unwelcome guest at several farmhouses in the vicinity of Newchurch.

Set apart from the graves of the Lewises and the Beavans, in a corner by itself, is another and unexpected grave, that of the last person to be buried there; and of this I will say more in a moment. Meanwhile, what of, to quote Kilvert, "the wicked old Squire Beavan of the Yat, Glascwm" ... "who had some £1,500 a year"? Where is he buried? Well, he certainly wasn't a Baptist like his wife and, evidently, their children, and to find his last resting place we have to go back to Newchurch: to the place, in fact, where his forebears had lived for some hundreds of years.

The Beavans had lived at Ty'n-y-cwm, a house a mile or so from Newchurch village, on the road to Rhos Goch. This historic house was, in the time of Kilvert (who mentioned it in the Diary) and until fairly recently, a farmhouse. It is now used as a store and workshop, the farmer who owns it having some years ago built himself a smaller and more convenient house nearby. Here the Beavans had lived from at least the late sixteenth century, owning a good deal of land in the neighbourhood.

The last Beavan to live at Ty'n-y-cwm was another of the numerous Samuels of that family, Major Samuel Beavan, who died in 1836 and was buried in Hereford Cathedral. At his death, so we are informed by a memorial plaque in Newchurch church, "Ty'n-y-cwm Passed to Strangers". This Samuel was born in 1783, whereas our "wicked old Squire" was born in 1790. Probably they were cousins, and the latter may have lived before his marriage at Kington, just over the Radnorshire-Herefordshire border, where there was a branch of the Ty'n-y-cwm Beavans. At all events he had himself buried in the churchyard at Newchurch, in the Beavans' private burial-ground, amongst a host of others of that ilk.

Behind the church at Newchurch is a large railed-in enclosure, within which, overgrown with brambles, briars and saplings, are buried generation after generation of Beavans. Clearly they were, in their time, the dominant family of Newchurch and its vicinity. As in the Baptists' cemetery at Glascwm the grave-stones in the Beavans' enclosure at Newchurch are of two kinds. The oldest graves are covered with flat stones at ground level and are now covered with such a thickness of leaf-mould and vegetation as to be invisible, so that the enclosure seems to be only half occupied, instead of being, as it is, entirely filled. With one exception the later graves (some of which go back to the late eighteenth century) are surmounted by altar-type tombs. The one exception is the most recent grave, that of Samuel Beavan of the Yat (or Glascwm Court, as he called it). The stone is in the form of a raised granite block with sloping sides, and it looks remarkably new.

Samuel died in 1878, aged 89. He was married three times, each time to an heiress, his third wife dying in 1872, so that he outlived them all. Also buried in the same grave as Samuel is Arthur Dixon Beavan. He was the last Beavan to live at the Yat and died in 1895. Not much is known about Arthur, who in all probability was a cousin of our Samuel, for Major Samuel Beavan's daughter had married a Dixon, and it is surmised that Arthur Beavan Dixon married our Samuel Beavan's daughter by his second wife and assumed the surname of Beavan in order to inherit the estate. This daughter, Arthur's wife, survived her husband by three years and is buried with him and her father at Newchurch. Samuel, incidentally, never had any sons, except one by his first wife, and he died in infancy.

The shade of Samuel Beavan still lingers over peaceful Glascwm. No one living there today, of course, ever knew him, but all are acquainted with his memory through stories and legends handed down by their parents and grand-parents. He was, by all accounts, a very much larger than life character. Evidently he was no stranger to the bottle, roistered in the village pub, and in later years suffered from the D.T.s., so much that he refused to be left alone in his bedroom at night. It is said that when a doctor called to see him on his death-bed he said: "Is that the doctor? Give him a drink!" He is also credited with a number of illegitimate children.

Finally, let us return to the little Baptist burial-ground, sequestered up on its bank among its grove of tall trees at Glascwm, and to the grave set apart from the rest. It is the last resting place of some one else who appears in the pages of Kilvert's Diary: John Beavan Vaughan, who died in 1916. He was the son of David Vaughan, Vicar of Newchurch, and in Kilvert's time farmed Llwyn Gwillim in Clyro parish. How did John Vaughan, son of an anglican clergyman, brother of Kilvert's Emmeline, come to be buried in the Baptist burial-ground of the Lewises and Beavans at Glascwm?

In the Society's newsletter for September, 1975, my wife, who was brought up at Pen Vaen, the farm adjacent to Ty'n-y-cwm in Newchurch parish, published some notes about the Vaughans of Gilfach-yr-reol, Newchurch, in which she relates that John Vaughan was obliged to give up farming on his own account and took service as bailiff on the Beavan estate at Glascwm, eventually inheriting the estate on the death of Squire Beavan's daughter, who had, for some reason not now known, bequeathed it to him; following which, we now are told, law suits were instigated by relatives of the Beavan family and the estate was broken up.

Why John Vaughan, or John Beavan Vaughan, to give him the name he assumed when he inherited the estate, should choose to be buried in the Baptist cemetery is a mystery. It is said that when he was buried the vicar who was conducting the funeral read the burial service from the churchyard on the other side of the road. John's wife, Lucretia (of the family of Dyke of Cabalva), is buried not with her husband but in the churchyard across the way, together with two of her daughters. She died in 1934, aged about 87. One of Kilvert's parishioners, Margaret Griffiths, told him, at the time when Lucretia was having her fourth child: "Mrs. Vaughan will have a good family soon. Her children come fast. But the harder the storm the sooner 'tis over. Every one will have her number". It is not known for certain what Lucretia's "number" turned out to be, but she had at least five children, two sons and three daughters, of whom one, Mrs. Armstrong, inherited the estate, or what was left of it, when Lucretia died. As related by my wife, one of Lucretia's sons, John Dyke Vaughan, acted as bailiff to

his sister, Mrs. Armstrong. John Dyke Vaughan also figures in Kilvert's Diary, being in fact christened by Kilvert on St. Valentine's Eve (13 February), 1870, at Bettws Chapel: "The baby was baptised in ice, which was broken and swimming about in the font".

John Dyke Vaughan lived on to a ripe old age at the Yat until he was taken ill and died in Talgarth Mental Hospital in 1959. Mrs. Armstrong, who lived at Winforton Court, Herefordshire, survived him by several years.

Thus ended a curious and interesting chapter in the quiet annals of Glaschw and the Yat.

R.I. Morgan, Hay-on-Wye.

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WILLIAM PEARE:

On page 404 of Volume II Kilvert records a visit to John Bryant "The old patriarch, full of tales of murder" who told him of a man named Peard (?) who committed a murder and was gibbeted near the foot of Derry Hill.

Our member, Mr. W.K. Griffiths, of Wootton-under-Edge, writes that he was fascinated by the stories of murders and executions that Kilvert records. A visit to the library of the Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Society at Devizes enabled him to inspect a copy of James Waylen's "The Highwaymen of Wiltshire" (1845) and also press cuttings which go back to the 18th. century; and to confirm that the name was "Peare" and not "Peard".

"William Peare was only 23 years old at the time of his death. The affair which brought him prominently into public notice was the robbery of the Chippenham mail on February 2nd. 1782. For this he was apprehended and lodged in Gloucester Castle, but effected his escape on April 19th. A series of impudent robberies soon after occurring in this county, appear from their uniformity of manner to have been all the work of one hand, and that hand was probably William Peare's. His usual practice was to fire into the carriage windows; and by thus daunting the enemy, to bring him at once to submission". (James Waylen: "The Highwaymen of Wiltshire").

"Recaptured at Cricklade in May 1783, he was arraigned at Salisbury and found guilty, to the entire satisfaction of a crowded court, and sentenced to be hanged. During the trial he shewed the most hardened and stubborn heart: so little was he affected, that when the Judge on pronouncing sentence endeavoured to excite sense of the dangerous situation of his soul, he turned away with a look of the most sullen and diabolical malignity. At his execution he was very well dressed, a white satin knot in his bosom, a nosegay in his hand. The cap was pulled over his face, the cart drew away, and he was launched into the unfathomable gulph of eternity".

"His body was then encompassed in a suit of chains and instantly conveyed to Chippenham and affixed to a gibbet erected near the spot where the robbery of February 2nd. 1782 had taken place". (From a Press Cutting).

We are much indebted to Mr. Griffiths for both the correction of the surname and the above account.

Mr. Griffiths has also sent the following letter, written in answer to one he had sent to "The Wiltshire Gazette and Herald" requesting readers' information on stories as related to Kilvert.

"Dear Sir,

I read your letter in the local paper and thought you might be interested to hear of happenings at Draycott House shortly after the Rev. Kilvert's time. My grandfather, William Sutton, came to Draycott House as stud groom in 1879, and my father was born in 1881 (he died last year aged 97 years). My father had a wonderful memory and as a child used to skate on the lake at Draycott, and remembered clearly the chinese lanterns and large bonfire. Also on the tower of the church someone cut round one of the Miss Awdry's shoes in the lead roof and marked her name on it. He remembered Capt. Wellesley well. For quite a long time they had their own gas-making plant at Draycott. My father remembered many of the people the Rev. Kilvert wrote of and enjoyed very much my reading to him selections from the Diary.

Yours faithfully,

(Miss) M. Sutton. "

KILVERT AS A CONFORMIST:

With an earlier contribution to these news-letters, I felt obliged to make a second attempt, on receiving some additional information on the subject. This time the position is slightly different. My article of last October, on Kilvert's response to Victorian social taboos and prescriptions, was written in the full knowledge that much more might have been said and that what I did state amounted to a crude simplification. If I was then prepared to offer that to members of the Society, I can only beg to be excused on the ground that I was very conscious of taking up quite a lot of space as it was. But now that more than half a year has gone by, I do not feel so guilty about righting the intellectual wrong, to some extent at least.

What bothered me most was the implication in my article that a writer like Trollope was proposing something altogether revolutionary in lending his support to the claims of a character such as Frank Tregear. Readers who have found this reference a shade obscure may be helped by being reminded that this young man figures in the last of the political Palliser novels which were dramatised for television some years ago and that his successful courtship together with the Duke's son's, reverses the situation at the beginning of the sequence when Lady Glencora, afterwards Duchess of Omnium, is compelled to bend to the yoke of an arranged marriage though approaching the brink of an elopement with the poor but seductive Burgo. This placing of 'The Duke's Children' in its rightful position underlines Trollope's wish to speak out for flexibility and integrity, but does not in itself set him up as a harbinger of social change, and I should like now to show briefly how far he was from being the first in the field.

I am not enough of a social or literary historian to trace the origins of the concept of a gentleman, with the rights and obligations attaching to the role. Some readers might wish to go back as far as Chaucer ('Compare and contrast Kilvert with the Poor Parson'), if not beyond him into the Arthurian world; but I incline to the notion that 'gentleman' smacks of Renaissance humanism; and certainly, if we turn up our Shakespeares, we quickly come across such creations as the spacious Bassanio. He, in a rare moment of humility, on learning of Antonio's danger, declares to Portia:

When I did first impart my love to you,
I freely told you all the wealth I had
Ran in my veins - I was a gentleman....

This does not appear a likely story since the original loan was surely intended to create an impression of wealth; but the really important point here is that Bassanio is not admitting to a misalliance on Portia's part - being a gentleman seals what his luck with the caskets has already won him. Other fortune-hunters in Shakespeare may be more like the brash Petruchio in 'The Taming of the Shrew' :

I come to wive it wealthily in Padua;
If wealthily, then happily in Padua.

He is not starting from nothing or less than nothing like Bassanio, but still he makes no bones about his pecuniary designs, although it does count for something with him that his recently deceased father and the shrew's knew each other in days gone by.

Arranged marriages are as numerous in Shakespeare as impoverished gentlemen, and almost always (see 'Romeo and Juliet', 'A Midsummer Night's Dream', 'All's Well that Ends Well', etc) the inference is that they are a Bad Thing - especially if they thwart an existing true love.

These two increasingly complementary ideas, that gentle birth (gentle manners received more and more stress from Shakespeare and his successors) was the essential ingredient in a man and that a forced marriage threatened disaster, may be observed in English literature from Elizabethan times right through to Trollope. I don't propose to show this now in detail, but anyone sufficiently interested might follow the trail from Jonson to Wycherley to Goldsmith to Dickens; other routes doubtless being possible. The only illustration I shall offer is provided by Jane Austen in 'Pride and Prejudice'. No one could claim the creator of Lydia Bennet as a forerunner of the permissive society; but neither is her treatment of the wooings of Mr. Collins any endorsement of the interference of older influential people. And Jane Austen represents, at its best, the conservative tradition among our moralists.

How does this 'new' material affect our view of Kilvert? We should note, I think, that, being taken wholly from literature, it tends to favour the happy ending, the victory of the young or the poor over adversity. Kilvert, on the other hand, treading the shingly substance of real life, should not be considered a flabby weakling merely because he failed so often.

I do not think that these fresh details call for a recantation of what I said last year about a general stirring of thought in Kilvert's lifetime; but perhaps it

should be emphasised that such movements are glacier-slow. Who would deny that even now, a hundred years on, upper middle-class parents still prefer their daughters to marry their social equals, if not their betters, or indeed that a majority of the daughters themselves share these views? The change has been in the strength of the opposition in the unusual event of filial resistance. In the circles in which Kilvert moved 'gentleman' was an ambiguous word; he qualified when it was a matter of taking a lady in to dinner; but his hosts were inclined to draw back if asked for the hand of a daughter. Not for them the simple egalitarianism of the American boxer, John L. Sullivan, who, when advising a rowdy to quieten down, softly affirmed, "It don't cost nothin' to be a gentleman". Not for Kilvert himself either, it has to be added.

Ivor Lewis

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NOTES FROM SOCIETY CORRESPONDENCE:

Mr. K.R. Clew writes that copies of his best-selling "Kilvert's Bredwardine" can still be obtained from Mr. H. Entwisle, Hill Cottage, Bredwardine, Hereford. These are 55p post free. Mr. Clew further points out that the Houseman referred to in the booklet is not the author of 'A Shropshire Lad' but a writer of hymns and religious verse; and that the photograph of Old Weston shows not a T.V. mast but a weather vane.

A letter of Mrs. C. Durka of Liverpool contains the information that the house where Kilvert stayed, 25, St. Domingo Road, is still standing; though with much modernisation and conversion taking place in the area, its future is uncertain.

Mrs. Dunn of Stourbridge recommends a book called "Sheep Bell and Ploughshare" by Dr. Marjorie Reeves. It tells the story of two families who lived in the Wiltshire village of Bratton for 300 years. There is a possible link with the diarist, as Dr. Reeves's ancestor, John Whitaker, married a Miss Mary Brinkworth in 1867, and in Volume 3 the Brinkworth family is mentioned twice.

Mr. D.R. Hughes of the Hay-on-Wye Branch of the National Westminster Bank, wrote to tell of a small Kilvert exhibition at his office. The Branch was opened in 1835, one of the oldest in Wales. Our member, Mrs. Cooper of Glasbury provided various paintings and pictures - and those of the Society present at the Llysven service in 1977 will remember the exhibition she held then at Treble Hill.

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THE OBITUARY NOTICE IN THE HEREFORD JOURNAL - 4 OCTOBER 1879

When William Plomer included in his introduction to Volume 3 of the Diary the obituary notice on Kilvert which appeared in the Hereford Journal, he omitted what he calls 'some more or less conventional remarks made by the parishioners to express their sorrow. Thanks to R.J.H. Hill, Reference Librarian of the Hereford Library I have now traced the missing comments, and list them below; and I am not sure that Mr. Plomer was right to dismiss them as merely 'conventional'. I do not see why we cannot accept them as sincere comments on a deeply missed pastor.

'It has broke the hearts of everybody'.

'That (the vicarage) be a sore house now - a poor house'.

'He was a good man - his preaching was good, his living was good, his heart was good, and he was all good - good to everybody'.

'Him have done heaps of good in the parish, him have, and would have done heaps more if he had lived'.

'Ah well, it's the Lord's will, and there's nothing for it but to submit, but, oh! it is hard'.

'I be sorry to my heart, that I be; he wanted everybody to be well done by, and to get us all to Heaven'.

'God Almighty bless him'.

'It was the soul - the poor soul that he looked after; he wanted every body to come to Jesus, and he was bringing them to Him'.

F. Grice

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REV. SAMUEL ALFORD AND DEAN HENRY ALFORD:

Just before reading "Samuel Alford, an unusual Parson" in the October 1979 Newsletter, I had been looking at a booklet (from the church) "Wyesmold Church and the Story of Dean Alford". Henry Alford (1810-71), who was Vicar of Wyesmold from 1835 to 1853 and Dean of Canterbury from 1857 to his death, had a huge literary output, running to some 48 volumes. He wrote poems and hymns and five of the latter appear in the English Hymnal - "Come, ye thankful people come" and "Forward! be our watchword" being probably the best-known.

Relating the Newsletter and the church booklet, I deduce that Henry Alford was the cousin and brother-in-law of the Samuel Alford that Kilvert knew. I quote from the booklet:-

"As his mother died at his (Henry Alford's) birth, he spent much time as a boy in the houses of his relations, particularly that of his uncle the Rev. Samuel Alford who lived at Teale House, Curry Rivell*, Devon, a place which had seen two previous generations of Alfords as its incumbents"

After moving to Wyesmold, "Having now established himself, he married his cousin Fanny, the daughter of his uncle Samuel. He had met Fanny as a child and spent much time in her company during his prolonged visits to Curry Rivell".

(* actually Curry Rivel, Somerset).

Presumably Samuel, though about seven years younger, was curate to his cousin at Wyesmold.

There is of course a lot one could say about Henry Alford in his own right, but I have concentrated on his connection with the Samuel Alfords.

(A few mis-spellings have crept into the Newsletter item, which I correct: Muchelney, Chideock, Wyesmold, Helmsley).

E.D. Glover.

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THE REV. HENRY KEARNEY BOLDERO is almost certainly the only person to be mentioned in Wisdens Cricketers Almanack and Kilvert's Diary. He was born in 1831 and after education at Harrow and Cambridge University became curate of Cirencester in 1855. The following year he became rector of Yatton Keynell, near Chippenham and in 1864 he became rector of nearby Grittleton where he stayed until his death in 1900.

He played in the Eton and Harrow match of 1850 and scored 14 and 12. This it must be remembered was comparatively early days in cricket's history as at that time W.G. Grace was two years old. On going to Cambridge the following year he met with limited success and there is no record of him getting double figures, but he got his Blue as a Freshman. In 1852 he was more successful and in the varsity match was "the man of the match". He scored 50 out of a total of 95, and 18 of these runs were extras. In 1853 his last year he made 12 and 27 against M.C.C. and 15 and 11 in the varsity match. These scores do not at first sight seem outstanding but it must be remembered that pitches were much rougher in those days and favoured the bowlers.

There is no record available as yet as to what cricket he played in Wiltshire but opportunities for more senior cricket would have been limited as he would have been 40 before the Gloucestershire County Club started and the Wiltshire Club was not founded until some years after that.

On the few occasions that Kilvert mentions him he seems impressed by him.

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LINCOLNSHIRE SUNSETS:

As a Lincolnshire member living close to "Kathleen Mavourneen's" old home, I am especially interested in any reference in the diary to that lady.

In the entry for 21st. August 1874 Kilvert quoted from a letter written by Katherine to Adelaide Cholmeley describing "one of our lovely Lincolnshire sunsets", with particular reference to Hymn 315. On turning to this particular hymn in my copy of 'Hymns Ancient & Modern', I was disappointed to find nothing apposite to the description contained in the letter. However, a little research soon established that owing to re-numbering in successive editions, Hymn 315 is now 210. On turning to that hymn, the relevance is clear.

R.B. Taylor.