

## THE KILVERT SOCIETY

Formed (in 1948) to foster an interest in the Rev. Francis Kilvert,  
his work, his diary and the countryside he loved.

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The Lady Delia Venables-Llewelyn

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JUNE 1988

Dear Member,

The A.G.M., held at the end of April, was attended by some eighty members - the first time for many years that the number present was under one hundred. Apologies were received from Mr. & Mrs. Allen (Llanidloes), Mr. & Mrs. Ball (Swindon), Mr. B. Butcher (Hereford), Mr. & Mrs. Comya (London), Mrs. Cross (Leominster), Rev. & Mrs. J. Day (Pewsey), Mr. Roderick Dew (Eastbourne), Mrs. D. Davies (Hereford), Miss K. Goodwin (Bath), Mrs. Grice (Worcester), Mrs. Hale (Hereford), Mr. & Mrs. Hooper (Brighton), Ven. Owain Jones (Brecon), Mr. T. Lloyd (Hereford), Miss R. Mumford (Hereford), Mrs. Ottaway (Hereford), Mrs. W. Pugh (Clwyd), Rev. M. Reed (Clyro), Mr. J.R.G. Strickson (York), Mrs. N. Turner (Carmarthen) and Mrs. T. Williams (London).

Our Chairman, Rev. D.T.W. Price, drew attention to the fact that the Society had existed for 40 years without a constitution. It was agreed he should draft one, which would be published in a future newsletter and be discussed and ratified at the next A.G.M. He reported that Archdeacon Owain Jones had received a box of documents, etc. from our President, and read an amusing extract from a journal written by Mrs. Venables; that the Society archives would be deposited at Hereford Records Office; and that the second notebook (at the National Library of Wales) would be published next year.

He put before the meeting two ideas - one, that later in the year a Study Day be held at Hay, or in the neighbourhood, and, two, that in 1989 the Society should combine with the William Barnes Society in one of their events. These ideas were warmly received, and the Committee would make further investigations into the matters.

The company stood in respect for those members who had died during the year, and the Chairman concluded his remarks by reading the diary extracts for the date April 29th.

The Hon. Treasurer presented the financial accounts for the year, and reported on the healthy state. He was warmly thanked, as was also Mr. Gordon Rogers for his auditing, a function he had now performed for the 15th. time.

Election of Officers - all were re-elected en bloc. The Chairman referred to the valuable service done by Rev. G.W.E. Rooke and Mrs. N. Turner, both of whom had resigned. It was agreed that the vacancies would not be filled until the constitution had been ratified.

A.O.B. Mr. Clew requested a funding for events held in Wiltshire and also a reappraisal of the date and venue of the A.G.M. Mr. Hugh Dearlove appealed, on behalf of a member, for a copy of Volume III of the Diary, and Rev. E.F. Jelfs welcomed the Hon. Secretary back to health.

The company then adjourned to the Conference Room where, under the stern gaze of Bishop Atlay, they partook of the as always superb buffet provided by the Cafe Ascari, and renewed old friendships.

The second half of the evening was presented by Mr. Godfrey Davies, our archivist, aided by his son, Mr. Kenneth Davies. It was a show of much historical interest - of places and characters associated with Kilvert and the Society, and greatly enjoyed by those present. Myself, I was thrilled to see the view of the east end of Llanthomas, showing the dining room. (An article later in the newsletter will explain why). Mr. Davies said that the captions of the film were the work of

Mr. Ellis, the first Hon. Secretary of the Society, and it was a happy coincidence that Mr. Ellis's daughter, Mrs. Stratton, was present. I hope that Mr. Davies will not mind my divulging that he is much nearer 90 than 80 years old, for his commentary was excellent, and the applause which greeted Rev. Jelfe's vote of thanks testified to his admirable performance.

The WALK, on April 30th. was attended by 31 members, and Mr. R. Morgan echoed Kilvert's excursion on April 30th. 1870, to the Begwors (or "Beacons" as Kilvert called them). A day of sun and cloud and a south-easterly wind which made itself noticeable at times - it provided good walking weather. While the Brecon Beacons barely revealed themselves, there were impressive views south of the Black Mountains, Mouse Castle and Bredwardine Hill, and to the north-east of Llanbedr and Bryngwyn Hills. Bird-watchers were afforded sightings of buzzards, swifts and larks. At the summit Mr. Morgan read the relevant extract from the Diary, the only occasion where Kilvert is known to have ridden a horse - the Rev. Venables's old mare, Gypsy. The sentence, "I lost leather, coming home sore and raw", gave rise to much speculation, but I understand no firm conclusion was arrived at. However, a firm conclusion was reached in that nearly all those participating adjourned to the Burnt House for tea! The Society is grateful to Mr. Morgan for his arranging the Walk, and regrets that Mrs. Morgan was unable to accompany him on this occasion.

Future Events - Full reference to the Walk and Service on July 2nd. and 3rd. will be found later in this issue.

Yours sincerely,

E.J.C. West

Hon. Secretary.

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#### OBITUARY

I am sure that all members who know our popular and long serving Committee Member, Mr. Tom Lloyd, will be saddened to learn of the death of his wife. Until illness prevented her, she was a regular member of the coach party which conveyed members to the churches where the Society was holding a Service. We offer our deep sympathy to Mr. Lloyd.

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#### BOOK REVIEWS

"CLYRO" by Mr. Eugene Fisk. (£3. 50 at the Ashbrook Gallery, Clyro, Hereford). This is an account of the houses, farms and other sites in and around the village, and illustrated by very attractive drawings. It is a "must" for those who are interested in the Diary.

"NOS DAWCH" by Buddig Medi (£3. 75. from Gwasg Gas, Lon Swan, Dinbych, Denbigh, Clwyd). For Welsh readers, this is a selection of writings about the seasons, and features many extracts from the Welsh translation of the Diary.

(Both authors are members of the Kilvert Society)

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FLOWER FESTIVAL - Wootton by Woodstock Church, August 6th. and 7th. along with a Craft Festival in the Village Hall, in aid of the Church Bell Appeal. (This is, of course, the church where Kilvert was married to Elizabeth Rowland). Mrs. M. Campbell, West End Barn, Wootton, Woodstock, Oxon, OX7 1DL would welcome any donations, which should be earmarked for Wootton Church Bell Appeal.

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#### FOLLOWING IN KILVERT'S FOOTSTEPS

23rd. April 1988.

by John Hockin.

After the Langley meeting last July and a successful stroll round the City of Bath last September, another meeting in the Langley area has reinforced local interest in the Society. The Rev. John Day, Rector of Pewsey and Kenneth Clew all the way from Surrey, greeted nearly forty members and friends in St. Nicholas' Church, Hardenhuish. They were supported by Rev. Derek Copeland, Vicar of Langley Burrell, who brought along some of the relevant Parish Registers for examination.

Kenneth Clew outlined the history of the Bath stone church erected in 1799 on the site of an earlier building. There is a painting of the church in the nave as it was before repairs and improvements done in 1868. This was Rev. Robert Kilvert's first Rectorship, probably arising from his family's acquaintance with the Clutterbrook family of Hardenhuish Park. John Day read us the Diary entries for 15th. and 16th. April 1876. We found the grave of Francis' grandmother and the iron seat on the south side of the church still in position. The Ricardo Monument was inspected and we listened to the entry for 31st. August 1874. Kenneth explained that in spite of what Francis Hull claimed the carved figures are indeed very high quality marble that fully withstands the weather; the Monument is Portland stone not Granite and the suicide of Mr. Pitt was quite unconnected with his sculpturing of the Monument.

The original plan had been to walk through Bird's Marsh and Jackson's Lane but as this route was too muddy the party moved off instead to look at Langley Ridge in Kingston Langley, home of the Meredith Browns and Ettie. Just beyond the house is Poet's Gate over which Francis would lean to enjoy the distant view of Salisbury plain, the white horse and monument on Cherhill Down. All recorded on 18th. March 1876. The walk continued with a visit to the Church which was built in 1855. Previously the Parish Church had been at Kingston St. Micheal. Then we looked at the outside of the Great House at the East end of the village (now a Cheshire Home). The Coleman family built and lived in it for several generations and the Diarist's Great, Great Grandmother, Mrs. Sarah Coleman, was shot at through the window as described on 3rd. November 1874.

On then to the Langley Burrell village hall where Mrs. Renée Payns and her helpers supplied welcome tea and biscuits. Derek Copeland asked everyone to leave their names so that they could keep people advised of future outings. John Day said that he and Kenneth Clew were quite willing to continue to foster local interest in the Kilvert Society but would welcome help from volunteers living in the locality to assist with arrangements in the Langley area. He also asked for suggestions of local places with Kilvert connections that might form the subject of future outings.

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#### SOME POWYS CLERGYMEN IN 1877

by D.T.W. Price

I recently came across a copy of the St. David's Diocesan Calendar and Directory for 1877, and some of the details in it might be of interest to members of the Kilvert Society. If the work was published at the beginning of 1877 I presume that the details were correct in about October 1876, which must have been roughly when the copy would have been sent to the printer, William Spurrell of Carmarthen. (My own interest is somewhat deepened by the fact that since 1981 I have been Editor of the current St. David's Diocesan Year Book and Directory!) The 1877 Directory cost 1 shilling (5p) or 1s. 2d. (6p) by post; the 1988 edition costs £1 or £1. 50 by post.

The Diocese of St. Davids then contained 406 parishes, covering the whole of Pembrokeshire, Cardiganshire, Carmarthenshire, Breconshire, Gower in Glamorgan, and all Radnorshire except Discoed, Evancoed, Knighton, Michaelchurch on Arrow, New Radnor, Norton, Presteigne and Old Radnor. Far away in Pembrokeshire, at 'the end of the world where the Patron Saint of Wales sleeps by the western sea', lay the great Cathedral of the Diocese, visited by Kilvert on 17 October 1871, when the marvellous building was being restored by Sir Gilbert Scott.

The Bishop was the Right Reverend William Basil Jones, D.D., a very able scholar and administrator, consecrated on 25 August 1874, successor to the Right Reverend Connop Thirlwall. Bishop Jones, who lived in the Palace at Abergwili, near Carmarthen, appears in Kilvert's Diary in a vivid vignette. On 1 May 1878 Kilvert, then Vicar of Bredwardine, went, with the Revd. R.L. Venables, Mrs. Venables, and Mrs. Evan Thomas, to a Confirmation service at Rhayader. At Newbridge station they got into the Bishop's carriage on the train. 'It was fine when we left Newbridge and I took neither overcoat nor umbrella. When we reached Rhayader a thunderstorm had broken and it was pouring with rain. The train landed us on a shedless, shelterless platform and we had to run through the downpour across the line to the shelter. The Bishop picked up his legs and ran like a greyhound'. What a splendid picture of Bishop and Chairman of the County Quarter Sessions (Mr. Venables)!

The Dean of the Cathedral was the Very Reverend Llewelyn Lewellin, D.C.L.



(Oxon), who was also Principal of St. David's College in Lampeter. He is mentioned by Kilvert in the account of his meeting on 22 May 1871 with the Reverend Benjamin Marsden of Glaschw (of whom more later). Mr. Marsden had been Curate of Llangorse and when he needed a bilingual assistant clergyman he applied to the Principal of Lampeter for a suitable man. The Principal replied that he had the very man 'doctus utriusque linguae'. Kilvert was clearly very amused by the stories of the man's deficiencies in Welsh, revealed at the very first service, a funeral, which he had to take. Mr. Marsden thought that Dr. Lewellin had given up the post of Principal of Lampeter when he became Dean, but this was not so. Llewelyn Lewellin took up the Principalship of Lampeter at the opening of the College in 1827, he was instituted as Vicar of Lampeter in 1834, and Bishop Thirlwall appointed him the first Dean of St. Davids, under new statutes, in 1840. He held all three posts until his death in 1878. Dr. Lewellin was also Town Scavenger of Lampeter, responsible for refuse collection in the town.

There were four Archdeacons in the Diocese - of St. Davids, Brecon, Cardigan, and Carmarthen. All archidiaconal powers had been removed from them in 1665, after a great quarrel with the Bishop, but they were allowed to exercise their functions again from the middle of the nineteenth century. Among the Archdeacons was the Venerable Henry de Winton, M.A. (Cantab), member of a very distinguished county and clerical family, the chief of which lived at Maesllwch Castle in Glasbury parish. Archdeacon de Winton, who was also Rector of Boughrood, had been Archdeacon of Brecon since 1875. In 1881 he moved to the parish of Cefnlllys with Llandrindod, where he acquired notoriety by removing the roofs of Cefnlllys and Llandrindod parish churches in an effort to encourage the parishioners to attend the new church in the town. He died in 1865 and was buried at Boughrood. Kilvert called at Boughrood Rectory on Easter Monday 1871, when the Rector and future Archdeacon 'was in some distant field settling potatoes'. Mr. de Winton walked with his four pupils to Hay on 5 December 1871 to hear a lecture by Mr. George Stovin Venables. This began at 8 p.m. and lasted for 2½ hours, after which Mr. de Winton and his pupils walked home. On 3 May 1876 the Archdeacon missed his first train and was late for dinner at Llys dinam, where Kilvert was staying while he had a look at the vacant parish of St. Harmon. Doubtless Archdeacon and prospective incumbent had plenty of opportunity of discussing the state of the parish under Mr. Venables's hospitable roof.

One residentiary canon whom Kilvert met when he visited St. Davids was the Rev. William Beech Thomas, M.A., who had been Rector of Aberedw between 1842 and 1845. In 1877 the non-residentiary canons of St. David's Cathedral included the Rev. William Latham Bevan, M.A. (Oxon), Vicar of Hay from 1845 to 1901. In 1895 he succeeded Mr. de Winton as Archdeacon of Brecon. We will look at him again when we consider the parish of Hay.

The parish of Clyro with Betws Clyro lay in the Rural Deanery of Elwel (South). Other parishes in the Rural Deanery were Aberedw with Llanfared, Boughrood, Llanbadarn y Garreg with Cregrina (the latter parish being in the Rural Deanery of Elwel (North)), Llanbedr Painscastle, Llandeilo Graban with Llanstephan, Llanellwedd, and Llowes with Llanddewi Fach. (I have used modern spelling throughout this account).

The Rector of Aberedw with Llanfared was the Rev. William Russell, M.A. (Oxon), whose wife was portrayed for posterity by Kilvert on 20 May 1871: 'At Aber Edw the Vicar (sic) of Aber Edw, Mr. Russell, son of a former Head Master of the Charterhouse, got into our carriage...He had just parted from his young wife at the Station and she was on horseback, galloping her horse along the road below, racing the train and looking up to catch a glimpse of her husband at the window of the carriage'. Mr. Russell had been in his two parishes (total population 466, total acreage 5700, gross value £397) since 1846. He was to remain there until 1887. Archdeacon de Winton had been Rector of Boughrood (population 269, acreage 1633, gross value £257) since 1849, and he stayed there until 1881 when he moved to Llandrindod. At one time Boughrood Castle had been the home of the Clutterbuck family, and at that time, according to Mr. Clutterbuck's nephew, Mr. Crichton of Wye Cliff, 'Old Boughrood Church was a most miserable place. The Choir sat upon the altar and played a drum' (1 April 1872). The church was rebuilt in 1854, during Mr. de Winton's incumbency. Llanbadarn y Garreg with Cregrina (population 210, acreage 2223, gross value £190) had since 1838 been in the care of the Rev. Thomas Thomas, a native of Llangeler in Carmarthenshire and an early student at Lampeter, where he gained a first-class Certificate, in the years before the College awarded a degree. He was ordained in the College Chapel in August 1830. He continued as incumbent of the two small parishes until 1887, when he was aged 84.

The unforgettable 'Solitary', the Rev. John Price, M.A. (Cantab), had been at Llanbedr Painscastle (population 313, acreage 3877, gross value £85) since 1859, and Kilvert's account of his visit to this remarkable man on 3 July 1872 is one of the

highlights of the Diary. Kilvert had been in the neighbouring parish of Clyro since 1865, but his description of Mr. Price seems to indicate clearly that this was the first occasion on which he had seen or met him. Mr. Price stayed at Llanbedr until his death in 1895. Nearby the Rev. John Lloyd, B.A. (Oxon), had shepherded souls in Llandeilo Graban with Llanstephan (population 462, acreage 5466, gross value £300) since 1853, and he was to serve there for 30 years in all. Far to the north the Rev. George Brereton Sharpe, M.A. (Cantab), apparently a Tractarian, had been Vicar of Llanelwedd (population 179, acreage 2020, gross value £106) only since 1867. He held the living until about 1899.

The Rev. Thomas Williams, M.A. (Oxon), had been Vicar of Llowes with Llanddewi Fach (population 449, acreage 5616, gross value £298) since 1859. He had no Curate in 1877, although in 1870 the Rev. Llewellyn Lloyd, like his Vicar a good friend of Kilvert, had held the post. Llanddewi Fach became a separate parish in 1880, but Mr. Williams, who was of a distinguished Breconshire family and son of a Dean of Llandaff, remained at Llowes until 1914, when he retired so that his successor might benefit from the endowments of the benefice after the Disestablishment of the Welsh Church. The successor died before Disestablishment took effect in 1920; Mr. Williams died in 1915. As Patron of the parish of Brecon he appointed the Rev. Edward Lathan ('Teddy') Bevan, son of the Rev. W. L. Bevan, to that living in 1897. Mr. Bevan succeeded his father as Archdeacon of Brecon in 1907. In 1915 he was consecrated Suffragan Bishop of Swansea, within the Diocese of St. Davids, and in 1923 he was elected first Bishop of the new Diocese of Swansea and Brecon.

Clyro with Betws Clyro was the largest parish in the Rural Deanery of Elwel (South) with a population of 842 and 7225 acres. Its gross value was £389, higher than those of most parishes in the area because the Ven. Dr. Richard Drake Venables, father and predecessor as Vicar of the Rev. Richard Lister Venables, had exchanged tithes of every kind for a considerable acreage of mountain land, which increased in value year by year. The income of the benefice included £15 for the provision of a weekly Sunday service in Betws Chapel, which was rebuilt in 1877/78. In 1877, as earlier, the parish was served by a Vicar, the Rev. William Edward Prickard, M.A. (Cantab), and a Curate, the Rev. John Frederick Walwyn Trumper, B.A. (Cantab), who was of the clerical family of Clifford and had been ordained priest on 12 March 1876. Mr. Prickard had been Vicar of Rhayader between 1863 and 1873, when he followed Mr. Venables at Clyro. Kilvert notes that Mr. Prickard had been unwise in introducing changes suddenly in Clyro, 'so alienating and disturbing the people'. In 1878 Mr. Prickard had to leave the parish in the hands of a locum, the Rev. John Daniel Williams, M.A. (Cantab), formerly Headmaster of Christ College, Brecon, while he and his wife spent a year in Genoa on account of Mrs. Prickard's ill health. In 1880 Mr. Prickard exchanged livings with the Rev. Thomas Macfarlane of Diserth with Betws Diserth. According to Crockford Mr. Trumper left Clyro in 1876, presumably at the end of the year, for a curacy at Newton-le-Willows in Lancashire. He held a succession of curacies, including one at Clifford, until at least 1892, when he was at Tring. Between 1877 and 1880 the Rev. Edward James Hughes, of Lichfield Theological College, was Curate of Clyro.

All the parishes in the Rural Deanery of Elwel (South) were in the gift of the Bishop of St. Davids, except for Llanelwedd, Patron E.D. Thomas, and Llowes with Llanddewi Fach, Patron the Archdeacon of Brecon. The Rural Dean was the Rev. Canon Charles Griffith, M.A. (Oxon), who was Rector of the parish of Talachddu, outside his Deanery.

The parish of Hay was the chief place of the Rural Deanery of the same name, although its Rural Dean also lived outside its boundaries. He was the Rev. Hugh Bold, M.A. (Oxon), incumbent, since 1822 (!), of Llanfihangel Talylllyn with Llanywern in the remarkably named Rural Deanery of Brecon, Third Part (North) of which the Venerable Henry de Winton of Boughrood in the Rural Deanery of Elwel (South) was Rural Dean. Mr. Bold lived conveniently close to his own Rural Dean at Boughrood Castle. Kilvert records that 'Mrs. Venables said that one afternoon late she drove up to the door of Boughrood Castle to call and heard Mrs. Bold's voice from an upper window saying aloud, "I can't think what makes people come at this time of day"'. Mr. Bold, like several of his clerical brethen, was a magistrate. At the Clyro Petty Sessions on 27 February 1871 he 'came in late and in long leggings, very dirty, for he had ridden from Boughrood. He amused himself during a dull part of the proceedings by combing his grey hair with a pocket comb. Then he lay back in his chair with his hands clasped behind his head'.

Among the other magistrates in Breconshire, listed in the Directory, and

accorded here the titles given to them in the Directory, were Benjamin Haig Allen of Clifford Priory, W.B. Mynors Baskerville of Clyro Court, Tomkyns Dew of Whitney, Walter de Winton of Maesllwch Castle, Major W.J. Thomas of Llanthomas, William Jones Thomas of Llanigon, Francis Robert Trumper of Hay, and the Revd. R. Lister Venables of Llysddinam. Magistrates in Radnorshire included Mr. Baskerville of Clyro Court, Samuel Beavan of Glaschw Court, the Rev. Hugh Bold of Boughrood Castle, Tomkyns Dew of Whitney Court, Walter de Winton of Maesllwch Castle, Edward Middleton Evans of Llwynybarried, the Rev. Richard Benjamin Marsden of Glaschw, the Rev. Oliver Ormerod of Presteigne (heads over heels in debt in spite of having a living worth over £1,000 a year, who always forgot to redeem his pocket knife after placing it twice each Sunday on the offertory plate by way of alms - 1 December 1874), George Henry Phillips of Abbey Cwmhir, the Rev. William Jones Thomas of Llanthomas, Lieut-Col. William Jones Thomas of Llanthomas, Francis Robert Trumper of Brook House, Hay, the Rev. Hugh Vaughan of Llansantffraid in Elwel, George Stovin Venables, Q.C., of 2 Mitre Court Buildings, Temple, E.C., and the Rev. R. Lister Venables of Llysddinam (Chairman of Quarter Sessions).

Other parishes in the Deanery, divided by the River Wye from Elwel (South), were Bronllys and Llanellieu (with its superb screen), Crickadarn with Llandefalle, Glasbury, Gwenddwr, Llanellieu, Llanigon with Capel y Ffin, Llyswen, and Talachddu. Of these parishes the most interesting to readers of Kilvert are probably Hay, Glasbury, and Llanigon with Capel y Ffin. Hay (population 2011, acreage 3764, gross value £218), had been held since 1845 by the Rev. Canon W.L. Bevan, M.A. (Oxon), author and educationalist, said to have been the first resident incumbent for a century. Llanigon with Capel y Ffin (population 442, acreage 9256, gross value £262), had been held since 1859 by the Rev. William Jones Thomas, M.A. (Cantab), father of 'Daisy'. The incumbents of Llanigon and Gladestry had exchanged livings in 1859 when the Rev. George Dowell had moved to Gladestry. Capel y Ffin was a Perpetual Curacy within the parish of Llanigon. In 1877 it had no resident clergyman. Sometimes it was served by the incumbent of Llanthony or of Cwmyoy, from both of which places it was more accessible than from its parish church. The Directory makes no mention of Fr. Ignatius (the Rev. Joseph Leicester Lyne) in the list of 'Clergymen resident in, or officially connected with, the Diocese of St. David's', although he had been in Anglican deacon's orders since 1860 and he did reside within the Diocese.

Glasbury (population 1286, acreage 9216, gross value £478), had been held since 1871, after the death of the Rev. Charles Bradley, by the Rev. James Newman, M.A. (Dublin), with the Rev. Frederick Trefusis Wybrow, also M.A. (Dublin), as Curate. According to Kilvert Mr. Newman, who had suddenly left the parish in February 1872, was not a suitable incumbent; 'He ought never to have been appointed by the Bishop, and he ought never to have accepted the living', (19 February 1872). The Vicarage at Glasbury left much to be desired, according to several sources. It was to be, another five years, 1882, before the new parish of Glasbury All Saints was created to serve the Radnorshire part of the ancient parish. Mr. Wybrow was later incumbent of St. Margarets with Michaelchurch Escley.

Sir Joseph Russell Bailey, Bart., of Glanusk Park, Crickhowell, (Lord Lieutenant of Breconshire in 1877), was Patron of Hay, and uncle to the incumbent. The Lord Chancellor held the advowson of Llanigon, and also of Gladestry, which must have facilitated the exchange of livings in 1859, and the Bishop of St. Davids of Glasbury and Capel y Ffin. One can see why Mr. Jones Thomas would have been pleased if Kilvert had been appointed to the relatively rich parish of Glasbury in 1871. (13 September 1871). Even better would have been the benefice of Crickadarn with Llandefalle (population 992, acreage 12840) with a gross value of £686.

To the north of Clyro lay the hill parishes of the Rural Deanery of Elwel (North), whose Rural Dean did reside among his brethen, being the Rev. John Hughes, B.A. (Lampeter), a native of Llanddewi in Gower, Rector of Bryngwyn (population 284, acreage 4536, gross value £308) since 1870, and Rural Dean since 1875. He remained in his benefice until 1899. He is described in the Tutor's Register at Lampeter as 'simple and Teutonic in body and mind'. He was ordained in 1864. Mr. Hughes called to see Kilvert on 25 February 1871: 'He is a tall red-bearded man, stout and heavy upon his feet, and dressed in a very long black coat...He seemed a pleasant sensible man, anxious to do what is right and needful at Bryngwyn, but with a full sense of the difficulties and uphill work before him'. On 20 April 1872 Kilvert met Mr. Hughes at Killay station on the outskirts of Swansea after he had presumably been visiting his family in Gower: 'He was going to Hay so out of politeness I was obliged to go third class with him though I had paid for a second class ticket. I had much rather have gone alone for I hate talking while travelling by railway'. Mr. Hughes's work at Bryngwyn must have made a favourable impression on the diocesan authorities, since he was appointed Rural Dean, a rare honour at that



time for a Lampeter graduate.

The parishes of the Rural Deanery of Elwel (North) were all quite small - Bryngwyn, Cregina with Llanbadarn y Garreg (the latter in Elwel (South) Rural Deanery), Diserth with Betws Diserth, Gladestry, Glascwm with Colfa and Rhulen, Llansantffraid in Elwel, Llanfihangel Nant Melan, and Newchurch.

The parish of Diserth with Betws Diserth (total population 1059, acreage 8535, gross value £374) contained, in addition to its ancient parish church and the distant ancient chapelry of Betws, a licensed building for worship at Cwmbach, precursor of the beautiful church built in 1886. The first vicar of the new parish of Cwmbach Llechryd, formed on 12 July 1887, was the Rev. Montague Earle Welby, M.A. (Oxon), instituted on 26 August 1887. In 1877 Mr. Welby had been Vicar of the new parish of Eglwys Den Duw (The Church of the Lamb of God), near Llanwrtyd. His period as locum for Mr. Venables in Clyro in May 1870 is delightfully described by Kilvert. The Rev. Thomas Macfarlane, M.A. (Aberdeen), had been Rector of Diserth with Betws Diserth since 1872, after the death of old Mr. Thomas, whose remarkable sermons were narrated to Kilvert by the Rector of Whitney on 14 July 1871. The Rev. Daniel Williams was Curate, living at Cwmbach. Mr. Venables had been unsuccessful in trying to secure the living for Kilvert. In 1880, as we have noted earlier, Mr. Macfarlane and the Rev. W. E. Prickard of Clyro exchanged livings.

Gladestry (or 'Llanfair Llethow') had a population of 408, covered 4000 acres, and was worth £356. The Rev. George Dowell, M.A. (Oxon), had been Rector since 1859, having exchanged benefices with the Rev. W. Jones Thomas, now at Llanigon. He remained at Gladestry until 1881. Glascwm, Colfa, and Rhulen (total population 714, acreage 10035, gross value £420, including £120 for paying a curate) had been in the care of the Rev. Benjamin Marsden since 1851. Kilvert paid him a memorable visit on 22 May 1871. Mr. Marsden was assisted by the Rev. Thomas Nathan, made deacon on 19 September 1875. On 27 April 1876 Mr. Nathan 'electrified' Kilvert 'by acting over again some striking passages he had met with in a book of Welsh sermons by a Baptist minister'. (For a splendid account of the clergy of Glascwm between 1750 and 1900 see R.W.D. Fenn and J.B. Sinclair 'Continuity and Change: a Welsh Border Parish and its Clergy 1750-1900', in Transactions of the Radnorshire Society (1987), pp. 63-73). Mr. Marsden resigned his living in 1880 and he died at Torquay in 1883.

The Rev. Hugh Vaughan, M.A. (Oxon), had been Vicar of Llansantffraid in Elwel (population 322, acreage 4000, gross value £198) since 1838. He remained there until 1888, after which the church, which seems to have been almost ruinous, was rebuilt. The Rev. William Atterbury Thomas, B.A. (Lampeter), had been in Llanfihangel Nant Melan (population 298, acreage 6043, gross value £228) only since 1874. He was a native of Denbigh, and the Tutor's Register at Lampeter sums him up as 'well recommended - career not strenuous, tho' above par'. Later he was successively incumbent of Llanigon, Cregina, and Bleddfa. Finally, the Rev. David Vaughan, a native of Nantmel and trained at Lampeter, where he had been a Scholar, had been Rector of Newchurch (population 124, acreage 1788, gross value £226) since 1870, although he had served as Curate in Glascwm, Bryngwyn, and Newchurch at various times since his ordination in 1849. In 1870 he served at Betws Clyro to help Kilvert during Mr. Venables's absence from the parish. He remained at Newchurch until about 1899. He and his family are old friends to readers of the Diary.

The Bishop of St. Davids held the patronage of all these parishes except Gladestry and Llanfihangel Nant Melan, both Lord Chancellor's livings, and Newchurch, which was uniquely in the gift of the Vicars Choral of St. David's Cathedral, a curious advowson for what must have been just about the most distant parish in the diocese from the Cathedral.

In 1877 the three Rural Deaneries of Elwel (North), Elwel (South), and Hay were served by 29 clergymen, 23 incumbents and 6 curates. In 1988 the same parishes, together with seven others outside the confines of the original Rural Deaneries, are served by 10 clergymen, one of whom is exercising a post-retirement ministry as priest-in-charge of Bryngwyn, Llanddewi Fach, Llanbedr Painscastle, and Newchurch.

What of the Rev. Robert Francis Kilvert? He had been Vicar of St. Harmon (population 924, acreage 12000, gross value £161) since 1876, but he was to move to Bredwardine in Hereford Diocese in 1877. His predecessor at St. Harmon, the Rev. Jonah Bowen Evans, had died in April 1876, and Archdeacon de Winton had asked Kilvert to consider moving from his curacy at Langley Burrell to one of the most northerly parishes in Radnorshire. Kilvert inspected the parish on 4 and 6 May, and he decided to accept. He was appointed to the living by the Bishop of St. Davids as patron. St. Harmon was in the widely-spread Rural Deanery of Melineth Ultra Ithon, the Rural Dean of which was the Rev. Thomas James Thirwall, M.A. (Cantab), nephew of the previous Bishop, who had presented him to Nantmel in 1858.

A graphic account of the opening of the Mission Church at Ysfa in the parish of Nantmel on 21 April 1870 is to be found in Kilvert's Diary.

How curious that of all the dozens of names of dignitaries, gentry, and clergy, so many of them graduates of the ancient universities, listed in the Diocesan Calendar for 1877, only one should today be at all well-known, and he one of the least of the brethen at the time. And those others who are more than names to us come alive because of his descriptions of them!

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KILVERTIAN NEWS FROM WILTSHIRE  
by Sidney Ball (Swindon)

NOTTON LODGE is for sale for half a million pounds. This mansion is of great interest for members. Francis Kilvert and family were very friendly with the Henry Awdrys there. See Vol. Two, pages 402 and 410; Vol. Three, pages 183, 212, 251 and 253. (In Index misprinted NORTON). After a dance at Notton Lodge on 9th. Jan. 1874 Francis wrote "I never enjoyed anything more in my life".

At Kingston St. Michael the PRODGERS family home is now a residential home for the elderly, with the motto "Home is where your heart is".

Flight Sub Lieut. REX WARNEFORD gained the VC for bringing down a German Zeppelin in 1915. This VC has recently been sold to the Fleet Air Arm Museum at Yeovilton for £55,000. My researches show that Francis Kilvert and Rex Warneford had a common ancestry through the Warnefords of Sexenhampton, Wiltshire.

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BRIEFLY MENTIONED, BUT VERY INTERESTING  
by Sidney Ball (Swindon)

Members know so well the people Francis Kilvert wrote about frequently. But the host of people mentioned briefly in our published Diary are also full of interest.

LADY DELIA AND THE FULLERS

All Kilvertians will have noted with pride and pleasure that Lady Delia Venables-Llewelyn is now our President. Lady Delia has links with several Diary folk, among them the briefly mentioned Fuller family.

In Lyme Regis on 9th. August 1871, Kilvert saw Mr. George Fuller and party in "a four-in-hand ... in a cloud of dust ten miles an hour" (Vol.1. p 393). How interesting that the foremost lady in that party would have been our President's great-aunt Emily, the wife of Mr. George Fuller!

Mr. and Mrs. Fuller lived then at The Ridge, Corsham, Wilts. They had 5 sons and a daughter. Their eldest son became a baronet. Their third son, Henry Fuller links us elsewhere in Kilvert's Diary. In 1893 Henry married Gwenllian Nicholl, a daughter of Mrs. Nicholl, the sportswoman, whom Kilvert called "an uncommonly plucky woman" - (Vol.1. p 317).

LORD GREY de WILTON

At a Bath election, "a low Radical fellow", thinking he had to cross out the candidate he did not want, put his cross against the name of Lord Grey de Wilton. DD read this tale again as Kilvert tells it. (Vol.2. p 419).

This is the only diary mention of Lord Grey de Wilton, and he is not in the Index. But behind his title is the historic story of Wilton Castle, whose ivy covered ruins overlook the river outside Ross-on-Wye. "The Tory lord" was Arthur Egerton, Viscount Grey de Wilton; as son of an earl, his title was a courtesy one, hence he could sit in the House of Commons. His father was Earl Wilton of Wilton Castle. The Egertons were descended in the female line from the Grey family, Lords Grey de Wilton, who flourished from about 1300 to 1614, when the last Lord Grey of that line died without a male heir.

TWO MRS. PEARSONS

In Kilvert's Who's Who, in Newsletters, and in the Frederick Grice Memorial Booklet, it has been repeated that Col. and Mrs. Pearson at 3 Hobart Place, London, were the parents of Mrs. Venables. But Mrs. Venables's father had died long before the diary time; her mother lived at 35 Eaton Square (Vol.2. p 328). Col. and Mrs. Richard Pearson at 3 Hobart Place were Mrs. Venables's brother and sister-in-law.

Kilvert stayed at 3 Hobart Place in January 1870. Col. Pearson may not have



been there, but his wife was. "Mrs. Pearson and I went to a good concert at Exeter Hall....." (Vol.1. p 25). This Mrs. Pearson, Junior, has small mention in the diary, and has never previously been defined. She was née Laura Elizabeth Frederica Markham, eldest daughter of Col. William Markham of Becca Hall, Yorkshire, and his wife, Lucy Ann (Holbeck). Mrs. Pearson's grandfather was William Markham, private secretary to Warren Hastings; her great-grandfather another William Markham, Archbishop of York from 1776 to 1807.

I think that Col. Pearson met his wife through her brothers, three of them army officers. Laura's eldest brother, yet another William Markham, served in the Crimean War, as did Richard Pearson. When that was ended in 1856, Richard and Laura were married.

#### GEORGE CRITCHETT

Kilvert and his brother, in London on 29th. May 1872, went to Paddington to meet their mother "who came to consult George Critchett about her eye" (Vol.2. p 202). This is all we know of George Critchett from the diary, but his story is the history of the modern treatment of disorders of the eye. He had a world-wide reputation as an eye specialist, and in that same year that Mrs. Kilvert went to see him, George Critchett was President of the International Congress of Ophthalmology when they met in London.

I have found where Mrs. Kilvert would have gone to see Mr. Critchett in London - at 21 Harley Street. There he lived with his wife Martha (Brooker) from Bosham in Sussex. One of their sons followed his father as a famous eye specialist.

#### GEORGE WARLOW

In "Francis Kilvert and his World", page 179, Mr. Grice wrote that George Warlow was a Langley friend, and probably son of Mr. Warlow, the Chippenham auctioneer. There was no auctioneer of that name in Chippenham, and George Warlow came from Wales. The Kilverts knew him as a young tutor at Mr. Kilvert's school at Harnish Rectory.

After teaching, George Warlow went to St. John's College, Cambridge, graduated B.A. in 1860 and was ordained the same year. For three years he was a Curate at Lee in Kent (now part of Lewisham, London), then in 1863 became a chaplain at Secunderbad, Madras. When Kilvert went to spend a day at Clifton on Oct. 1st. 1874 a visitor came in - it was the Rev. George Warlow on leave from India. (Vol.3 p 88).

This is the only reference to George Warlow in the diary, but Kilvert's sister Emily in her "Recollections" said that she met him with his wife when he was Archdeacon of Madras.

#### WALTER and WILLIE COLEMAN

As the Kilverts and Colemans lived in neighbouring Wiltshire villages, Francis must have known his cousins quite well. But Walter and Willie Coleman have scant mention in our published diary. They are in the Index only once (Vol.2. p 242). However, they are mentioned again in Vol.3. p 214 when "Walter, Willie and I went over to the old Manor House". (This is now the Cheshire Home).

Walter and Willie, and their father, Kilvert's uncle, Walter Coleman, appear additionally in the unabridged April - June 1870 Diary (the 'Sandford Notebook'). But in the Index thereto these three Colemans are listed with the surname Ashe, and Mr. Morgan is indexed Tutor to Willy Ashe when it should be Willie Coleman.

Kilvert's sister Emily had a strange, double kinship with Walter and Willie. She was their cousin, and also their aunt, for she was married to their uncle 'Sam' Wyndowe. Emily was sister-in-law to her own Aunt Annie, the mother of Walter and Willie.

#### SIR WATKIN AND SISTER

Kilvert's guide up Cader Idris, named Pugh, came of a family of Welsh harpers. "His brother is harper to ( ) Sir Watkin's sister" (Vol.1.p 355). Three days later, after listening entranced to a Welsh harper in Llangollen, Francis was told by this man "Sir Watkin keeps no harper - his sister does" (Vol.1. p 361). "Sir Watkin" was Sir Watkin Williams-Wynn of Wynnstay. Married to his cousin Mary Emily Williams-Wynn, Sir Watkin was the largest landowner in Wales. It has been said that he owned 145,000 acres!

The name of Sir Watkin's sister is blank. Kilvert probably left a space, hoping to fill in the name later, but never did so. She was Henrietta Charlotte Williams-Wynn. When Kilvert wrote she was Lady Williams, wife of Sir Hugh Williams

of Flintshire. Sir Watkin and his sister link us with Kilvert in Surrey, for they were the great-grandchildren of Lord Clive, whom Kilvert mentioned at Claremont (Vol.1. pp 296 + 297).

#### THE CHOLMELEYS

What amazing folks, the Cholmeleys! The Rev. Robert and wife Maria had 15 children and reared them all to adulthood. I cannot recall a similar feat in any other big 19th century family. When Francis Kilvert went to Sussex for Addie's wedding, he met several of these Cholmeleys, who, briefly in the diary, are mostly in the Index collectively as "Cholmeley family, pages 61 to 68".

We do not know from Kilvert that the brothers Waldo, John and Humphrey Cholmeley were all clergymen. Waldo was Vicar of South Warsham, Norfolk; John, Rector of Waynflete, Lincs; Humphrey, Vicar of Dinton, Wilts. Sisters Katherine, Penelope, Clara and Sarah are also mentioned. These were all older than Kilvert, but their nephew Lewin was also at the wedding. He was then 19 and at Magdalen College, Oxford. He became a leading London solicitor.

Another young man at the wedding was "Montie", brother of the bride. "Montie gave his sweet sister away" (Vol.3. p 65). He was just 18 at the time, but performed this duty as his father had died but a few weeks before. "Montie" became a Solicitor and in 1892 married his cousin Mabel Cholmeley. We are fortunate in the Kilvert Society to have one of their daughters as a Vice-President.

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#### ROBERT KILVERT AND ALTON BARNES by Rev. J.C. Day (Pewsey)

During the May walk around Glasgwm, someone asked me if I knew where Robert Kilvert served his last curacy prior to becoming Rector of Hardenhuish.

Happily I was able to answer. Robert was at Alton Barnes, a tiny village of some 170 souls in the Vale of Pewsey, midway between the towns of Pewsey and Devizes. The church was in the gift of New College Oxford and during the regency period could boast that it had been served by two public orators at Oxford, William Crowe and Augustus Hare. This latter married Maria Hare mentioned by Kilvert in his entries of 16th November 1870 and 4th January 1877.

August Hare became Rector of Alton Barnes in 1829 and he and Maria immediately threw themselves into the life of this tiny parish, soon endearing themselves to the local people. The events of their life in Alton were later recorded by Maria's adopted son, Augustus J.C.Hare, in 'Memorials of a Quiet Life' a work also mentioned by Kilvert under 21st July 1874. Here is painted a vivid picture of everyday life in an early 19th century Wiltshire village, and the assiduous devotion of the Rector and his wife. In this isolated community they provided both educational and medical facilities, as well as spiritual comforts. They even set up a cut price shop in what was otherwise a shopless village.

November 1830 saw the arrival before the Hares' Parsonage of an itinerant mob who, incensed by the introduction of agricultural machinery and the effects of common land enclosure in the district, shot and wounded the Hares' neighbour, farmer Robert Pile, entailing the dispatch of Militia from Marlborough and Devizes to quell the rioters. The aforesaid Mr. Pile was in 1812 responsible for the cutting of the now famous White Horse on the Marlborough Downs which dominates the village from the north.

Such tales about the Hares' short term at Alton abound, but alas his years as beloved Rector in the village were not to be long. By the beginning of 1833 Augustus was showing the early signs of Tuberculosis. His Doctors were quick to advise the usual treatment for the well off, travel to the warmer climes of Southern Europe.

It is at this point that Robert Kilvert enters the story for we read in 'The Memorials of a Quiet Life' a letter written by Maria Hare dated Oct 14th 1833 which reads, "Our new curate Mr. Robert Kilvert, who seems from his great gentleness of disposition and his earnest desire of doing good, to be just fitted to teach our rustic people; and his sister to teach in the schools and look after the female part of the flock. We shall leave our parish in great comfort".

And so it was that Robert Kilvert, not yet married, became temporary curate at Alton. The Hares departed, never again to return and live in the Vale of Pewsey. Augustus and Maria travelled as far as Rome, where he died, his body lying close to that of Keats in a Rome Cemetery.

Augustus J.C. Hare a son of Rector Hare's brother was adopted by Maria in her widowhood, and presumably because of the respect she had for Kilvert's care of the parish and the sympathy he showed to her during her husband's last illness and in the early days following his death, decided to send the boy to the little school at Hardenhuish Rectory. The story of that episode is well recorded in the Society Publication, 'More Chapters from the Kilvert Saga'.

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FROM THE CHAIRMAN:

At the A.G.M. yesterday some ideas were canvassed on possible changes in the pattern of our activities. It would be most helpful to the Committee if as many members as possible could let us know their views on all, or any of, the matters listed below. The Committee is anxious to act in accordance with the wishes of the membership, but we need somehow to know what members think (especially those who were not at the A.G.M.). Do let us know; we cannot otherwise take note of your opinions.

1. Should the A.G.M. be held on the Friday of a Bank Holiday weekend? This date was chosen at the request of several members who value the opportunity of the additional free day of the long weekend to stay in or near Hereford. On the other hand it may be felt that the heavier traffic on some roads and the curtailment, or complete absence, of public transport, especially on the Monday, create difficulties.

2. Should the A.G.M. be held on the same weekend as one of the Commemoration Services? This would mean that the A.G.M. would seldom be held in Hereford, except when a Service was arranged for somewhere near that city. Problems might arise in finding a meeting place for the A.G.M. and perhaps in fixing up the catering, and if the A.G.M. and Service were on different days, with perhaps other events too, members would need accommodation, with implications for costs. (Friday/Saturday; Saturday/Sunday; or even Friday/Sunday). On the other hand longer time together would provide more opportunity to exchange views, and if accommodation were available members would have to make only one return journey to the A.G.M. and the Service instead of two.

3. If we keep to the present pattern of keeping the A.G.M. and the Service distinct, would you prefer the Service to be held in the morning rather than in the afternoon? This would allow distant members to return home in daylight, although a morning service might require some members to have to stay in the area overnight on Saturday rather than travelling on Sunday morning. There might be problems in asking the host church to prepare lunch rather than tea after the service, since many local helpers would have to provide Sunday lunch at home for their families.

4. Do you favour the concept of a residential annual weekend at a different place each year (perhaps from Friday evening to Sunday afternoon), to include the A.G.M. talks, walks, a Dinner, and a Service? Would you attend? This would require much organization (there would presumably have to be a local committee of 3 or 4 to arrange it), it might be expensive if we used a college or school (the most reasonable Oxford College charges about £86 for three days' full board), and many parts of the Kilvert Country are thinly populated, making accommodation all together difficult to arrange. On the other hand the idea of visiting a different area each year (Wye Valley, Wiltshire, Cornwall, Bristol, Bath, Oxford, Sussex, London, Isle of Wight, Lincolnshire, North Wales, etc) and exploring its Kilvert associations is extremely attractive, and of course a residential weekend would allow for much fellowship and exchange of views.

5. If three members of the Committee are to be elected in rotation each year, how should the mechanics of the election (nominations and voting) be conducted? Should this be at the A.G.M. or by post? What method of voting should be used? Costs and additional secretarial work should be remembered.

Many of these ideas spring from the perception that the membership of the Society is now much more scattered than was the case when the Society began in 1948. It is, of course, beyond the wit of man to devise a pattern of events and of voting which will suit every member's wishes, but we are anxious to accommodate the wishes of as many members as possible, and this is your opportunity to make your feelings known.

Those who wish to see changes are inevitably more likely to take the trouble to write, rather than those who find the present pattern of events congenial, but it is very important that we hear from members who do not wish to change. Our scheme of activities is not sacrosanct and we must be prepared to adapt to new situations. It would, however, be most unwise to abandon our tried and tested ways unless we were



sure that new ways would actually be well supported. Experiments may be the best way forward, keeping some of the old until we are sure of backing for the new. It seems to me that we must aim to please as many members as possible in what we do; it is clearly unlikely that we can please all members in everything.

Please send your comments to me as soon as possible. I am hoping for a wide response, and I must beg your indulgence if I do not reply immediately to each letter.

(Revd) D.T.W. Price, Chairman of the Kilvert Society, 65, Bridge Street, Lampeter, Dyfed. SA48 7AB.

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#### OBITUARY

We regret to announce the death on May 19th. of Mr. Robin Tanner, a Vice-President of the Society, at Kington Langley. Following is an appreciation of his life and work by Mrs. G. Grice, herself a Vice-President.

Robin Tanner, born in 1904 in his beloved Wiltshire, studied at Goldsmiths' College, where he met contemporaries like Graham Sutherland and Paul Drury. When reading, he began to study printmaking which he decided to adopt as his career. He was a life-long Socialist of the William Morris mould, a conservationist and a pacifist. He became one of His Majesty's Inspectors until his retirement, when he was able to concentrate on his drawings and etchings, now greatly valued and collected.

No-one can mention Robin without including Heather, whom he married in 1931, beginning a lifetime of ideal companionship and collaboration. On a piece of land in Kington Langley, they built their home, designed by Heather's uncle, in the style of Voysey. It was a rare delight to visit, with every detail chosen for its beauty and craftsmanship. The field - and consequently the house was called Old Chapel Field, and it was only when Kilvert's diary was published that they discovered the origin of the name. From the diary too, they learned that Kilvert had often stood by a gate admiring the view on the other side of the road, so they bought the field, put a plaque on the gate, let the land to a farmer and donated the rent of £20 per annum to the Kilvert Society.

Robin has often been called the Samuel Palmer of the present generation, and no-one seeing his etchings will disagree. Robin and Heather have published many outstanding books, such as "Wiltshire Village", "Woodland Plants", "The Etcher's Craft" and recently Robin's biography "Double Harness". Apart from his life as an artist, many will remember Robin and Heather and their adopted son Dietrich for their dedication to issues of peace and ecology.

It was through the Kilvert Society that my husband Fred and I first met Robin and Heather. To know them was to love them, and knowing them has been one of the great experiences of my life.

Robin will be sadly missed, and our hearts go out to Heather and Dietrich, but they will gain some consolation in knowing that, like Kilvert,  
"He being dead, yet speaketh".

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#### PROGRAMME FOR WEEKEND OF JULY 2nd. - 3rd.

THE WALK, JULY 2nd. - Meet at The Baskerville Arms, Clyro, at 12. 30 p.m. Picnic lunch. Mr. Gordon Rogers, our Hon. Auditor, will lead the party, and the Walk will be in the area where last September's Walk had to be curtailed.

THE SERVICE, JULY 3rd. - By kind permission of the Rev. P. Byllam-Barnes, at Bredwardine Church, at 3. 00 p.m. Our Chairman will be the preacher, and the Remembrancer and Readers members of the Committee. The ladies of the parish are organising teas for members and friends.

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CLYRO FESTIVAL - SEPTEMBER 23rd - 25th. The Society has been invited to set up a stall, advertising its publications, on the 24th. and 25th. in the Parish Room. Mr. Marshall, our Publications Manager, would appreciate some assistance in the manning of it. Would members willing to assist let me know, please?

While the programme for the weekend has not yet been finalised, the Society's commemoration service will be held at the Church on the 25th. at 3. 00 p.m.

I shall hope that our next newsletter will contain full details of the weekend's events.

ACCOMMODATION: Mr. J. and The Hon. Mrs. R. Phillips have sent additional information about the former Brobury Chancel where they now live. The extension of the Chancel is now complete and has rooms, each with en-suite shower, W.C. and basin, for accommodating visitors. Work on restoring the Chancel will be complete by mid-July. The owners are quite happy for Kilvert Society members, either individually or in groups, to view the property, and they can do so by writing to Magdalen, Brobury, Hereford. HR3 6DX, or telephoning Moccas 470.

Miss Dorothy Russell, of Pope Place, Preston-on-Wye, Hereford. HR2 9JX also offers accommodation for a maximum of 8 people (including ground floor double-room facilities for a disabled or elderly person). The house was built by Rev. Andrew Pope, and Kilvert and his sister Dora stayed there at the end of December 1878.

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LLANTHOMAS HOUSE  
by the Hon. Secretary

(With the death last summer of my old friend and fellow member of the Society, Mr. Melville Thomas, I do not know of anybody living who has recollections of Llanthomas. Hence this article).

In his history of the Thomases of mid-Wales, Mr. Richard Thomas records that the estate of Llanthomas was acquired about 1540 by one William Thomas, principal instructor and adviser to the boy King Edward VI, and beheaded in 1554 by Queen Mary. Three hundred and four years later, the estate was purchased by another William Thomas, the father of Daisy. This William, William Jones Thomas, was the third of the four sons of David Thomas of Welfield, near Builth (the house is now named Cefndyrys). The eldest son, Edward, was born in 1808, David a year later, William in 1811 and Evan in 1816. Edward duly inherited his father's estate, David acquired that of Henllys and Evan married the heiress of Allensmore Court near Hereford, changing his name to Pateshall. William was merely a vicar with a stipend of £100 per annum - it could have been a very shrewd move when he married an heiress! It is known that William was extremely interested in genealogy, and he would in all probability come to learn of his namesake at Llanthomas 300 years earlier. To acquire that property would bring him more in line with his brothers' fortunes, and in 1858 he paid £8,000 for it. Further, he was able to exchange parishes with the vicar of Llanigon. At this date his eldest child, William, was 19 years old, and Walter, the 11th. and youngest, 5 years old.

The well-known view of Llanthomas was taken from the south, and shows 3 different styles of building. At the left was a low single-storey building, the oldest part of the house, containing a very large kitchen, flagstoned, and roofed with blackened oak beams, with small store rooms adjacent to it. The central part of the house suggests a style of about 1800. The ground floor (as in the view) comprised two rooms, a small one known as the Bow Parlour (from its window), and a much larger one, the Lounge. Behind these rooms ran a flagstoned passage with 2 more rooms facing the courtyard at the back of the house, and a staircase known as the "Back Stairs". The pattern was more or less repeated on the 2 upper floors, each of which contained 5 bedrooms. The impression of this part of the house was one of unpretentious comfort.

This cannot be said of the remaining section of the house, the part built to the instructions of William Thomas. I imagine that the different levels (obvious from the view) stemmed from his desire for height and space. A classical portico led into a small wood-floored entrance hall, with doors left and right, and then to a larger hall, dominated by a huge staircase filling the whole wall of the building. On the ground floor, with an elegant bay window was the Drawing Room. Behind it, facing east, was the Dining Room. Both of these were spacious and lofty. At the back was a smaller room, the Cloakroom. The pattern was repeated on the first floor, and like the ground floor, bay windows were a feature, and in both cases there was a small canopied lead roof, done in the Indian style. On the top floor were 4 bedrooms. The walls of the staircase and dining room were hung with portraits of ancestors, and in the dining room was a small side-table in the bay window. (Until I knew the family better - I had gone there as an employee - I could only speculate as to whether the side-table was the setting for the "happening" on September 8th. 1871. But eventually I did ascertain it had been part of the original furniture of the Dining Room). The Dining Room was hardly ever used during the years I knew the house. It had the air of a museum piece. I recall a spinet, three elegant sofas, a china cupboard, many small tables covered with various knick-knacks; the walls were hung with many paintings by the sisters, the most able of whom was Edith (her work is referred to in the Diary); over the fireplace was a collection of miniatures.

The room had for me a feminine air, with its colourful silk cushions and embroidered covers. Though the house had passed to the eldest son, Colonel William, he, it seems, preferred life at Brecon where his regiment was stationed. Of the other five, Nicholas Charles, Edward Lechmere and Walter Sandys had all died young while John and Henry were heirs to the estates of Welfield and Allensmore respectively. So the five unmarried sisters were more or less free to run the house as they wished.

(I hope to write later about the grounds and the estate)

Postscript. Mr. Godfrey Davies's film at the A.G.M. showed both the rear and the east end of Llanthomas, and the latter afforded a clear view of the bay window in which Kilvert and Daisy sat on that September evening in 1871. I was delighted to think that the view had been preserved for posterity.

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KILVERT - THE RAILWAY TRAVELLER - BY JERRY FRIAR (GLOS)

Given that Kilvert spent a great deal of time travelling by train, the following extract from 'The Marches of Wales', by Charles Harper, published in 1894, may offer a rich harvest for the reader with a little imagination.

The unfortunate traveller who proposed to journey by train between Tintern and Raglan has an opportunity offered him of exercising his patience in the long wait he has to endure at Monmouth Troy station, either going or returning. An hour is wasted in this way on both journeys, and the only solace one gets is in a languid observation for one's fellow-martyrs, grouped despondingly upon the platforms, studying the week-old contents bills of the London daily papers, - a form of historical reading that soon palls - or else diligently tracing on the time-tables the routes and hours of trains they have no thought of travelling in. Some, bolder and more shameless than the rest, while away the time by turning over and reading, in pretence of purchasing, the books and magazines that Messrs. Smith and Son display so confidently upon their bookstalls : a debilitating form of reading disastrous at once to the moral fibres and the literary sense.

"Yes", said the bookstall clerk when we spoke to him, "some people, I should fancy, have an idea that we keep a free library here. They'll take up a book or a paper and read it till their train comes in, and then they'll put it down and go off without a thank you. P'raps they'll buy a penny paper to keep themselves in countenance; but, as for consciences, they haven't got any. Look here", he showed us a row of "yellow backs", soiled, and offered at half-price; "these, you can see by their titles, are good saleable books, but they have got so soiled and fingered by the old women and the clergymen that we can't offer them as new any longer".

"Old women and clergymen, you say, are the worst offenders?"

"Yes; old ladies and clergymen, I should have said, because the farmers' wives and others wouldn't have the cheek, as you might say. We can't very well tell 'em to put the books down; besides, it would be such an unpleasant thing to do, it would make me as uncomfortable as it ought to make them. Do I 'specially mean clergymen? Yes, I do, they've got less conscience than anybody; you believe me, there's a lot done under a white choker, and that's a fact".

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(Mr. Friar tells me that cassette tapes of Mr. Timothy Davies's readings from the Diary are still available. "He being dead yet speaketh" last for 100 mins. and costs £7. 50. post free. "More from Kilvert's Diary" lasts for 40 mins. and costs £3. 50. post free. Cheques to be made out to J. Friar. His address, Bradley Hill Farm, Blakeney, Glos. GL15 4AW. - E.J.C.W.)

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