

THE KILVERT SOCIETY

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

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June 1996

Dear Member,

"Have we been excommunicated?" I was asked at the AGM, held this year at Holy Trinity Church Hall, instead of the Great Hall of the Bishop's Palace. Our Hon. Sec. explained the circumstances - that the latter building had been booked for every Friday in April, and that after some tiresome negotiations it was possible to hold the meeting at the former building on the customary last Friday of the month. Attendance was down as shown by the long list of apologies from, Mr and Mrs S. Ball, Mr K. Clew, Mrs J. Farnhill, Mrs I. Goodsir, Miss K. Goodwin, Mrs G. Grice, Mr and Mrs J. Hockin, Miss L. Hancock, Mr and Mrs L.F. Jackson, Miss E. Madigan, Mr and Mrs R.I. Morgan, Miss R. Mumford, Miss V. Noakes, Mr T. Palmer, Miss I. Rees, Mrs S. Sharp, Mrs P. Talbot, Miss A. Thomas, Mr and Mrs J. Tottenham, Miss A. Wheeldon, Miss E. Wheeldon, and Mr M. West.

Welcoming members, the Chairman brought greetings and good wishes from the President. He reported that the Kilvert case in Hay library had been moved to a position out of direct sunlight - the memorabilia had suffered from the exposure. He expressed the Society's thanks to our committee member, Mr M. White, for new identification labels for the exhibits. He noted with approval that the Hon. Sec. had already booked the Bishop's Palace for the 1997 A.G.M., and announced that there would be a special service at Clyro on September 22nd next, combining Thanksgiving for the restoration with Harvest Festival. Our Commemoration Service is at Langley Burrell on September 29th.

The minutes of the last A.G.M were approved and adopted.

The Hon. Treasurer apologised for a typing error in the financial report. He was pleased to record that some longstanding life members continued to make donations to the Society. The financial situation of the society could be treated as satisfactory, though the planned jubilee of the Society in 1998 would make demands. He was thanked, as was Mr Gordon Rogers (Hon. Auditor) for the financial statement.

Officers were re-selected en bloc, save for Revd J. Day, who was resigning his membership of the Committee. (While in charge of a Wiltshire Parish, he had been an invaluable link with Kilvert activities in that county, but he was now resident in Dorset). It was agreed that the Committee should co-opt a member from Wiltshire.

Revd Day drew attention to the lack of Kilvert associations in Clyro Church, surely the most visited building for those interested in his Diary. It was agreed that the Committee should consider the matter. There was also some discussion regarding the 3 volume edition of the Diary, now out of print. Our chairman, congratulated on his chaplaincy to the High Sheriff of Radnorshire, concluded the first part of the programme with two readings, one of which (17th May 1875) was most apt, for spring had at last come to the Welsh Border!

After an interval for refreshments, members returned to their seats to hear the guest speaker, Ms Veronica Thackeray, author and member of the Society, who spoke about castles. From the mouth of the Dee to the junction of the Wye with the Severn, and on either side of the border, these ruined remains are a constant feature of the landscape. Originally, they consisted of a high mound encircled by a ditch. After the Norman conquest, the construction became more skilled; and natural escarpments and bends of rivers were used - as at Clun and Ludlow. In the reign of Edward the First,

castle-building reached its peak, to curb the Welsh invasions. All along the Border castles were more strongly fortified, but right up to the Civil War there was turbulence. Ms Thackeray's most accomplished talk received warm appreciation, as shown by members in endorsing the vote of thanks given by Mr R. Watts.

The Walk the following day was very well attended. Well over 40 members assembled at Kinnersley, to be greeted by our Hon. Sec. (our leader for the day), whose home is in that village. The picnic lunch was taken on the lawn of the Old Rectory, whose owner, Mrs Greenfield, had not only put out garden furniture, but also provided tea and coffee. (We are most grateful to her for such kindness). Our Hon. Sec. then took us to the church, with its fortress-like tower and unusual saddleback roof. In the narrow slits at least two families of Jackdaws were being fed by parents. The interior of the church was utterly different, with its delicately painted roofs and walls. Immediately behind the church is the castle, a very handsome late 16th century building, the exterior of which we were allowed to see. The walk that followed led to the site of Kinnersley station - much used by Kilvert - and by lanes the party made its way to the Old Forge, where Mrs Sharp had cups of tea and biscuits for the walkers. How very little was the scene different from the 1870's! The buildings we visited were there then, and as I looked out at the panoramic view and identified the wooded hills of Ladylift, Foxley, Credenhill, Garnons and Moccas Park - all mentioned in the Diary - I felt that the day had been truly Kilvertian! Warm thanks to Mr and Mrs Sharp were given by our Hon. Treasurer to the great approval of members.

Weekend of June 29-30

The Walk (June 29th) will start at Cefndyrys (in the Diary called Wellfield, where Revd Jones Thomas, Daisy's father, was born), Grid Ref. 50 038 529, by kind invitation of Mrs. LaBorde. Meet at midday at Cefndyrys. for picnic lunch. The entrance is 1½ miles from Builth Bridge on the A483 Llandrindod Wells road. Led by Mr Colin Dixon, members will walk down the old drive (Diary entry 15th April 1875) to the rocks on the river Wye (Diary entry 16th April 1875), along the riverside on what remains of the old Cambrian railway track (much used by Kilvert), past the western entrance to the Royal Welsh Showground back up to Cefndyrys. The walk is about 3 miles, rough in places by the river, and a steady climb to Cefndyrys. Stout footwear is recommended.

Mrs LaBorde has kindly offered to provide tea and scones on return, and a small charge will be made for charity. It would be helpful if members could advise Mr Dixon (Tel. 01597 822062) in advance if they intend to be present.

B & B accommodation is plentiful in Builth Wells and the Tourist Information Office can be contacted on 01982 553307. Pencerrig (Miss Clara Thomas's summer residence) is now a hotel, only half a mile from Cefndyrys on the A438 road (Tel. 01982 553226)

The Commemoration Service will be held at Builth Parish Church as part of a Flower Festival at 3.00 pm on June 30th, by kind permission of Canon N. Hall, who will not only conduct the service but also give the address. The large public car park must be used by those travelling by car. A coach will be laid on, leaving Hereford Shirehall at 12.30 pm, travelling via Kings Acre, Credenhill, Kinnersley, Clyro and Hay-on-Wye. Bookings to me please.

Yours sincerely,

E.J.C. West

FROM CORRESPONDENCE

The Father Ignatius Memorial Trust has issued an appeal for funds towards the repairs of the Abbey church at Capel-y-ffyn. The Welsh Historic Monuments Council has turned down an application for a grant - one reason being that the site was not of sufficiently outstanding architectural merit. That may be so, but the site is of special interest to the Society, and the Committee, in recognising this, has sent a donation. There must be many who have visited the remote site who would wish to send a contribution. The address is, The Hon. Secretary, The Fr. Ignatius Memorial Trust, The Vicarage, Llanfihangel Crucorney, Abergavenny, NP7 8DH.

The John Clare Society has sent out leaflets of information. (Kilvert refers to his poetry with approval). Members who would be interested in the Society should write to Mr A. Jurgis, 7, Royles Place, Greenbank, Northwich, Cheshire, CW8 4AH.

Rosewarne (Cornish Holiday). Mr Barry Smith has sent, for the Society archives, a copy of an article on the unfortunate heiress of that estate, Mary Hartley. Also donated to the archives by Mr Ian Pitcairn is a family tree showing the **Kilvert - Pitcairn connection**.

Accommodation - B & B is offered by our member, Mrs J. Winnall at The Old Post Office, Painscastle, Builth Wells, Powys LD2 3JL (Tel. 01497 851659).

Welcome - our latest member, Miss P. Eastgate of Sutton Coldfield, who is 98 years of age.

BOOK REVIEW

"The Winter is past" by Helen Weston (Triangle Books, S.P.C.K.)

(The Writer of this review wishes to thank the firm of S.P.C.K. for granting permission for passages of the book to be quoted.)

This book has nothing to do with Francis Kilvert and his wife, except in so far as the authoress displays an attitude precisely the opposite of that of Elizabeth Rowland, who removed from the diary all the passages relating to her courtship with Kilvert, no doubt because she was under the sway of the feeling so common in those days that there are certain aspects of individual life which it would not be seemly to bring out into the open.

The writer of the present book on the contrary could scarcely be more open and frank about the history of her courtship with her husband, even though she had till shortly beforehand been a novice in an Anglican Religious Community, and her husband David had been Abbot of Nashdom for seven years. They were married in 1984, he being 47 and she 35 years old, and they now have two sons. David Weston when he emerged from monastic life became first a curate in Lancashire, then the vicar of a parish in the Fylde peninsula, and is now a Residentiary Canon of Carlisle Cathedral.

Both husband and wife had eventually felt that the monastic life was preventing them from finding fulfilment (in the best sense) as persons, in so far as they were sacrificing certain elements in their nature which were entitled to find expression. Both of them bear testimony to this fact, in his farewell statement to his fellow monks, David (then Dom Wilfrid) said: "I now know that for me monastic life is inextricably confused with life-denying attitudes which I recognise as being not only negative, but destructive for myself and others" (p.162). Earlier he had written to his future wife: "I cling to that vision which you have revealed to me of that whole for which dividedness was made. Ultimately I cannot bolster a system and a situation which is so alien from my new perception of the truth" (p.64). His wife tells us that she was "hooked" into the life of the cloister by a friend who was herself a nun (p.24), and has said earlier that she felt that "she had no right to seek her own selfish happiness while other people were suffering" (p.2). But eventually she felt obliged to leave the community, because otherwise she would have done violence to her natural instincts (p.5).

One of the most exciting parts of the book is that in which Helen describes how her future husband at one time faltered in his resolve to quit monastic life (pp.110-142). Inevitably there was considerable tension between them as a result; but eventually he came round to the recognition that monastic life was not after all his true vocation. (One wonders whether it is anyone's true vocation, even though they may think it is?).

No doubt there will be some members of the Kilvert Society who will want to read this book for themselves. Interestingly, one member of the Kilvert family embraced the monastic life, ie. the diarist's sister Frances Henrietta (more commonly known as Fanny). She was born in 1846, six years after the diarist. She became a member of the Community of St. John the Baptist, Clewer, in 1892, and died in 1931. There are articles concerning her in the Newsletters of June and August 1991.

"YAVERLAND, MY OWN BEAUTIFUL YAVERLAND"

by John Hodkin, Cumbria

The two holidays that Kilvert spent in the Isle of Wight are described with his usual felicity and are all the more fascinating as they contain a mystery never satisfactorily explained. What was the "beautiful and touching story" of the old manor house at Yaverland which had haunted him for 25 years?

Last summer my wife and I spent a holiday at Sandown, which is extremely convenient for visiting both Yaverland and Shanklin, where Kilvert stayed on both visits. Knowing that Kilvertians of much more erudition than I possess remain baffled by the Yaverland enigma I did not expect to crack it, but I did come across one or two things which I thought may interest fellow members.

We walked to Yaverland one glorious afternoon and once we had passed the outlying suburbia of Sandown we gradually became enveloped by the peace that characterises villages which have escaped the onslaughts of the 20th century. Standing outside Yaverland church I was reminded of the lines of Swinburne:-

Here, where the world is quiet;
Here, where all trouble seems
Dead winds' and spent waves' riot
In doubtful dreams of dreams;
I watch the green field growing
For reaping folk and sowing,
For harvest-time and mowing,
A sleepy world of streams.

In his entry for Wednesday, June 17th, on his 1874 visit Kilvert writes of Yaverland church: "The porch was a superb Norman or Saxon arch, massive, simple, but richly carved, and the chancel arch was its twin sister, equally grand," but he then says all else in the church was wretched and squalid.

This must have been the general opinion because in 1889, ten years after Kilvert's death, the church was extensively restored when the north aisle, the vestries and some of the windows in the nave were added. Many other improvements were made and the Rector, Nelson Palmer, made a gift of the reredos of alabaster which features carved statuettes and mosaics of the Apostles.

We were fortunate enough both to find the church open and to buy a booklet entitled "A Little Gem of a Church" which contains contemporary reports of the reconsecration service on Tuesday, July 9th, 1889, by the Isle of Wight County Press. Mention is made of Churchwarden Mr. John H. White, who had held the position for 31 years, succeeding his father who was churchwarden at Yaverland and previously at Whippingham for more than half a century.

A large luncheon was held in a marquee to mark the occasion, and among those invited were a Mr. A. Harbottle Estcourt and Miss Estcourt. Could they have been related to the two Gloucestershire Miss Estcourts mentioned on Friday, September 8th, 1871? Also mentioned are Mr. Martin White - brother of John White - Miss White, Mr. James White, Mr. Thomas White and Mrs. White. There were open doors all day at the manor house, "Mr. Churchwarden White, Mr. Martin White and other members of the family being most kind in their welcome and unceasing attentions," said the report of the proceedings.

It will be remembered that on his first visit to Yaverland Kilvert got a glimpse inside the manor house where he met a deaf old lady called Mrs. White, in deep black and a widow's cap, obviously some relation to the churchwarden.

In the October 1977 newsletter the interesting suggestion was made that the book which inspired Kilvert to such a love of Yaverland could have been by the Revd. Leigh Richmond, who was curate of Brading with oversight of Yaverland from 1797 to 1804.

This book would almost certainly have been "Annals of the Poor", three tales of village life, which Leigh Richmond (1772-1827) collected from his knowledge of the Isle of Wight. One of these is about a girl "Little Jane", who is buried at Brading. The story is called "The Young Cottager".

A guide book to the Isle of Wight contains the following:-

"It will probably be asked: 'Who on earth was Little Jane'? Frankly we doubt whether one person in ten who reads her well-preserved epitaph has the remotest notion. No book that we have seen more than hints at the awful truth that Jane was really a most ordinary little girl, who had the good fortune to say her catechism to the satisfaction of a talented evangelical clergyman, who, while curate-in-charge at Brading and Yaverland formed a class for scriptural instruction.

"She appears to have shared the common fate of good people in being misunderstood and sneered at by her parents and companions. She was suddenly called away at the age of 15, and Richmond's tender and pathetic narrative of her conversion and early death conferred upon her a posthumous fame at which probably no one would be more surprised than herself."

This sounds just the kind of story that Kilvert would have been attracted by, with moving religious experiences and a strong plot. The only stumbling block is that the story Kilvert mentions is of the old manor house. I have not been able to get hold of the book, but if there is indeed a link between Little Jane and the house then this story could well be the solution to the Yaverland mystery.

Turning now to Shanklin we find that the Vicar of St. Saviour's on the Cliff, Christopher Isherwood Burland, is mentioned twice, the first time on June 17th, 1874, when Kilvert attended Evensong, Burland being the preacher, and again on the second holiday when Burland attended a dinner at Mrs. Anson's on July 13th, 1875.

Burland was the first Vicar of St. Saviour's which was consecrated in 1869. It was built to cope with the rapid growth of Shanklin. He stayed there until his death in 1898. He was born on Christmas Eve, 1830, at Brotherton, Yorkshire, and went to Lincoln College, Oxford, where he graduated BA in 1853 and MA in 1856. He was curate of Thorganby, near York, from 1854 to 1857 and at Houghton-le-Spring, Co. Durham, before he moved to Arreton, Isle of Wight, where he was curate-in charge from 1857 to 1868. In 1859 Burland married a Miss Mary Halson, of Stickworth, one of the big houses at Arreton, which is now divided into flats, having been an hotel before that. They had three sons and a daughter. One of the sons was a clergyman. Burland had private means and subscribed liberally towards extensions at St. Saviour's.

A striking feature of the first Isle of Wight holiday is the abrupt way it is introduced. The entry for Tuesday, June 9th, 1874, starts: "Went with my mother and Dora and Lettice Hazel (a maidservant) to the Isle of Wight by Salisbury and Stokes Bay."

It is obvious from the ensuing text that this was the first time Kilvert had been to the Island. He must have been excited for a long time about the holiday, but there is no previous mention of it, no details of planning or anything. Perhaps Plomer did some extensive cutting at this point.

Kilvert's great dedication to his calling is shown by the entry for Sunday, June 14th, 1874, the only Sunday that is described in either holiday. He attended no fewer than four services. At the eight o'clock he assisted the clergy of St. Saviour's at the early Celebration, "a nice quiet service" where he

read the Gospel. At the 11 o'clock he read the Commandments and preached on Jacob's dream. At the 3.30 service he preached to the children, young people and servants on Mizpah. This means "watchtower" and is the name of a number of different places in the Bible, the most important being a town a few miles north of Jerusalem where Samuel presented Saul to the Israelites as their king. (Kilvert preached another sermon on Mizpah on Sunday, May 7th, 1876).

And then at 6.30 he went to church with the girls quietly as a member of the congregation, and no doubt would have been glad to put his feet up afterwards!

Finally, there is a valedictory note about the end of Kilvert's second holiday on the Island, on Saturday, July 17th, 1875. "The weather was miserable. It rained all the way across in the boat to Stokes Bay, and the beautiful Island was wrapped in a cloud of mist of tears. I felt very melancholy and had a sad journey. Sweet Island, fare thee well."

It is always possible that Kilvert had a third holiday there, perhaps in the summer of 1877, a period for which we have no record, but somehow I doubt it. Those preceding words do sound like a farewell.

MORE PEOPLE WRITING MORE?

by Lyndall Hancock, Dunedin, New Zealand

I've been looking through newsletters of the past ten years or so, in search of a particular article, and on the way I checked out a general impression I had - that at present there are fewer people writing for the newsletter than formerly. There are always a number of regular contributors, and others who write occasionally. But are we leaving it all to them, I wondered? What about the rest of us?

Actually, when I totted up the contributors, I found my general impression was only partly correct. For in every year in the past decade at least one new name has appeared, and in some years as many as four or five members have written for the first time. This is greatly to be encouraged, naturally. For it's our Society, our Newsletter, our chance to ask questions. And to provide answers, too, for surely there must be dozens of non-contributing members who have some specialised knowledge or interest and who have made discoveries that would interest everyone. Can they be persuaded to put pen to paper? Would a Forum section in the newsletter cater for those who only want to write a modest paragraph or two? Overseas members should not exclude themselves, for the Diary has many references that go beyond Britain and which could be investigated by those who are geographically well-placed to do this.

In the Newsletter for Feb. 1983, Mrs C.E. Fleming wrote that as a comparative newcomer she had felt too diffident to put forward her ideas in a meeting, and so had written to Mr Grice - and look at the whole new line of research that she opened up! Few of us could match her perceptive new theories on Kilvert and Katharine Heanley, but there are surely members who could comment on (if not shed new light on) some of the hundreds of curious and interesting pieces in the Diary.

For example, can someone with an interest in victorian clothing tell the rest of us why Kilvert had never worn stockings? (3:239) The scraps which Kilvert wanted to buy (1:292) - were these sheets of coloured pictures to cut up and stick into albums? Or something else entirely? Are the Chippenham silk looms still there (2:351) and the dream-come-true Yaverland Manor (3:38)? Was the useless knife a new-fangled type, or merely newly bought? (1:179) Kilvert reported many hearsay events - such things as the tragedy in the New Forest (2:283), the man burned at Canterbury Cathedral (3:338) or the Llandovery murders (1:305). Were his facts basically correct? Could members who live locally investigate and report?

All members must have found at times that links with the Diary pop up in unexpected places. A name, a place, rings a bell and a connection can be established. I sing a hymn written by John Cennick and it reminds me of seeing the pear-wood chair in the Moravian church at East Tytherton, made from the pear tree under which Cennick preached in 1742. Kilvert's mother attended the Moravian School (3:146) which was later built there along with a church and manse. Or I see an "Under Surveillance" list of plants introduced to New Zealand and note that Kilvert's bogbean, *Menyanthes trifoliata* (2:203) is now a potentially noxious weed in this more advantageous climate. (How surprised Kilvert would have been!)

Sometimes an item in the Diary has caught my attention particularly, and I've checked other sources to find answers or at least some background information. The result seldom adds up to what would make an article, but is just a piece of new-found information that could be shared with others. So here - in hopes of persuading many more members to write something similar! - are a handful of small discoveries I've made recently in the Diary.

"I had Hymn 315 this afternoon in remembrance of 'prayers' on the evening of the 11th of August." (3:72)

Five days later Katharine Heanley chose the same hymn at home, perhaps for family prayers. Had it been special to her because Kilvert had been there on the 11th? Did she mention the hymn in her letter in the hope that the information would get back to him? All we can tell for sure is that it was the 1868 Appendix to 'Hymns Ancient and Modern' which had been used on both occasions, because the Appendix is numbered from 274 onwards. Hymn 315 was "Gracious Spirit, Holy Ghost" to the tune "Charity".

"Miss Thompson's famous picture, 'Calling the Roll after the battle of Inkerman'." (3:43)

This large and very moving painting by Elizabeth Thompson, Lady Butler, is actually entitled, "The roll call: calling the roll after an engagement, Crimea". It hangs out of public view in St James' Palace, London. I saw it a year or two ago in a travelling exhibition, "The Queen's Pictures: Old Masters from the Royal Collection", when it was in Wellington in New Zealand before going on to Canberra and Ottawa. The catalogue said that Lady Butler's sombre and unheroic battle scene was unusual for the time, and she had gone to great pains to get the details correct for the Grenadier Guards who stand wounded and exhausted in the snow. An industrialist, Charles Galloway, commissioned the painting and later presented it to Queen Victoria.

"Mrs F. Dew gave me some stramonium datura cigarettes for Dora." (3:428)

Presumably the cigarettes were very mild, for we don't read of any after-effects but it was unwise at the least and could have been downright dangerous. For *Datura stramonium* comes into the *Solanum* family, and all *Daturas* are attractive-looking but poisonous and hallucinogenic. In some New Zealand coastal areas one of them, *Datura sanguinea*, grows easily and has recently caused several deaths among young drug experimenters. Like many people, I've now cut out a bush from my garden (*Datura* is also called *Brugmansia*.)

Hannah Smith (Footnote, 2:194)

The author of "Jessica's First Prayer" was Sarah Smith, not Hannah as William Plomer wrote. John Hodkin (newsletter, June 1994) gives the details of Sarah's life and her choice of the pseudonym Hesba Stretton. The Library of Congress catalogue lists her under Hesba Stretton with the explanatory note that this pseudonym was used for everything but never legalised. And furthermore, says the L.C., there was confusion because Sarah Smith's years of birth and death were the same as those of Hannah (Whitall) Smith, another American writer. So no wonder Plomer got his ladies muddled.

"The beautiful strains went to and fro like the rolling and surging of the sea." (3:336)

Kilvert was singing the hymn, "Sweet Saviour, bless us ere we go", in St Paul's Cathedral in June 1876. This was the year after the 2nd edition of "Hymns Ancient and Modern" had been published, and in the 1st edition there had been two tunes set to this hymn - "Christchurch" by the Rev. Sir Fred A.G. Ouseley and "St Matthias" by W.H. Monk. (I haven't been able to see a copy of the 2nd edition, which may or may not have had a third tune, "In tenebris lumen", by J.B. Dykes.) An organist friend played all three tunes for me, and we both thought that "St Matthias" was more like a rolling and surging sea, especially in lines 5 and 6. But has anyone any other ideas?

So, these are some small Diary discoveries of my own. And I'm sure many other members who haven't yet put pen to paper could do something similar for the Newsletter. Possible duplication with someone else's earlier writings shouldn't be a worry, for twice told is always better than not at all. Your contribution, however brief, could enrich us all.

KILVERT COUNTRY

(I am grateful to Mr J. Friar for drawing my attention to this article in "The Great Outdoors" and more especially for permission to use it to the author, Mr J. Perrin.)

There are some groups of hills which turn in on your memory so that you never lose the sense of them. They have a distinctiveness about them. They needn't be high or grand, but somehow they root themselves so as to become a part of your whole sense of the outdoors, so as to call you back to them again and again. They are the places to which you return, in your mind and in body too, as a character in a romantic novel might turn at the story's end from obsession with beauty's drama to the plain and quiet charm of constancy. In my life, I always come back to The Begwns.

They are - or rather it is - a scarp of bracken slopes, steep to the north, rising gently from the south to an altitude of barely 1300 feet to swell out the rectangle of land enclosed south and west by the River Wye, to the north by its tributary the Bach Howey, and to the east by the border with England. It is an area which in itself you might pass a dozen times and disregard - just such another piece of high common pasture as you find throughout the middle parts of Wales, with the mountain ponies running there, the sheep and the ranging crows, scattered rowans and thorns and the buzzards tearing a scream across the stately arc of their flight overhead.

Its highest point, oddly named The Roundabout, has tremendous views across to the Black Mountains beyond the Wye, and out west to the Brecon Beacons, which present their finest profile against the sunset, and there's further sport to be had in identifying shape upon hill-shape as your eye traverses round from west to north - all the "blue remembered hills" this journey has crossed laid out along the horizon.

But it is not a question of views or surface texture in which the appeal of this small, particular landscape lies for me. It's much less tangible than that, more a matter of mood, a sort of ache in the memory after feelings you can never quite recapture or define. It is one of those evocative places - like a theatre from which the players have gone, but around which the sense of their words and actions still hovers. Time gone, the mood of the time stirs and surfaces uneasily from the subconscious at the

prompting of certain places. It's the feeling which Hardy comes closest, perhaps, to explaining in his poem, "Wessex Heights":

The Diary on which Kilvert's fame rests covers the years from 1870 to 1879 and by far the greater part of its published versions relates to his time in Clyro. He is a marvellously evocative descriptive writer. In 1871 he wrote as follows.

"In the afternoon I had the happiness to have all the poor people to myself. None of the grand people were at Church by reason of the snow. So of course I could speak much better and more freely. After service... I saw what I thought was a long dazzling white and golden cloud up in the sky. Suddenly I found that I had been gazing at the great slopes of the Black Mountain lit up by the setting sun and looking through the dark storm clouds...the long white rampart dazzling in its brilliancy and warmed by a golden tinge standing high up above the clear dark line of the nearer hills."

And the next morning, as I descended Cwmgwannon dingle a century later to Kilvert's Clyro with the names of the houses of his day - Llwyngwilliam, Wern Fawr, Wern Pentre, Upper Bettws - leaping at me from the map, I saw the snow-covered Black Mountain too, exactly thus.

TOM TOBACCO

(by the Editor)

Tom (or Twm) Tobacco, so Mr Gordon Rogers and Mr Kenneth Clew kindly informed me, has bobbed up again in the correspondence columns of "The Brecon and Radnor Express". I recalled that 31 years ago our then Hon. Secretary, Mr Oswin Prosser, wrote to that journal requesting information on Tom Tobacco. A reply stated that he was a sheepstealer, hanged for his crime and buried on the remote hillside. (I am indebted to Mr Clew for checking this), Mr Rogers gave me copies of the correspondence. The sheepstealer theory turned up again. Another letter referred to the word "Tobacco". It could be the corruption of the Welsh "ty bach" (Little house or hut). Or it could be the house of the shepherd's crook, for "bach" also means shepherd's crook. The same letter offers two other points; one that a Twm Bach was a ferryman on the Wye, the other that the name occurs in a document of 1578.

Another letter affords other theories - he was possibly a seller of contraband tobacco who avoided the excise men by using lonely paths, was eventually caught, was killed and buried on the spot. Or he could have been a pedlar, murdered not only for his commodities but also the money he would be carrying. Very near the grave is a large boundary stone, carved with the names of the two largest landowners and dated 1882. It could be that Tom was a shepherd, killed in conflict with another shepherd over the trespassing of a flock of sheep. Yet another suggestion is that he may have been a member of the "Daughters of Rebecca" shot by the soldiery and buried where he died.

The first location of the grave appears in the 1841 tithe map of the parish of Llanbedr. Eight years previously, the first one inch O.S map of Radnorshire had been published, but there is no mention of the grave. However, the second edition (1881) does indicate it. Could the grave be dated between 1833 and 1841? If so, why only thirty years later were the men Kilvert asked so reticent? A question I'll refer to later.

I feel that "the ferryman" and the "Daughters of Rebecca" can be dismissed. The latter secret society was not in existence in 1841, and the Christian name of Thomas is by no means uncommon. Further, many a man of that name has been short of stature (Bach), and the trade suggests a man of the river valley, and not of the lonely hills. (The writer had based his theory from observing at the "Boat Inn" an inscription of "Cafn Twm Bach" - Tom Bach's ferry.)

That he was a pedlar is more plausible. I know of two examples of the dangers of this trade, where pedlars were murdered by unknown assailants, and in her book reviewed in the last issue Veronica Thackeray reports of one victim so highly regarded that he was buried in the church and a stone erected to his memory at the spot where he was killed. Tom Tobacco's grave was kept identified by passers-by who would place stones to mark the site. Would this have been done for a criminal?

That he was a shepherd (Tom of the hut of the shepherd's crook) is also plausible. I think of Hardy's Gabriel Oak who had a hut on Norcombe Hill. Welsh place names are so often much more descriptive than English ones, and individuals too are often referred to by their trade or personal appearance.

Members may recall that a few years ago Mr Gordon Rogers led a walk to the site of Tom Tobacco's grave. Having both kin and friends in the area, he made enquiries and the great majority of answers indicated that Tom was a sheepstealer, hanged for his crime. Kilvert's own reference (3 July 1872) is that the Solitary and the Mayor of Painscastle "had both heard of Tom Tobacco's grave, but neither knew the mysterious story of the lonely grave on the open hill, and only the Mayor could tell me the place", Kilvert had previously met a carpenter who "shook his head. He did not know". There is no mention of a hanging. Time and again the diary records tales of the past which Kilvert learnt from his "parishioning". Surely the story of a man caught stealing a sheep, his sentence at a court of justice and the subsequent burial on the lonely hill would be memorable. That is, unless the sentence was carried out unlawfully, and there was a conspiracy of silence to ward off any enquiries!

FROM: THE HEREFORD TIMES, SATURDAY 11TH MAY 1878

PRESENTATION at NEWBRIDGE-ON-WYE.

(Contributed by Mrs Teresa Williams)

On the announcement that the Rev. W.E.T. MORGAN was about to resign the curacy of this place, a general desire was expressed to offer him some slight acknowledgment of his valued services during the last seven years.

After feeling the pulse of the parish, it was decided that the testimonial must take the form of a gold watch, and some with an eye to the coming Mrs. Morgan and a possible honeymoon suggested an opera glass in addition. An order was therefore introduced to Messrs. Ginberg and Reichman, the eminent Brighton firm, who provided a first class glass and a gold watch of the best description. On the back of the watch was a beautiful monogram:

Presented to the Reverend W.E.T. MORGAN
by a large body of his friends and parishioners on
his quitting the curacy of Llanyre,
in remembrance of his valued services
during seven years.
May 7, 1878.

On the evening of the presentation most of the ladies and gentlemen of the neighbourhood attended, and many of the humbler classes who could leave their occupation. The chair was taken by the Rev. J. NICHOLAS, who made a short speech expressing the usual sentiments. He was followed by the Rev. R. Lister VENABLES, who, in his usual happy way of expressing just what ought to be said remarked how he had watched the sterling qualities of Mr. MORGAN develop from the first day he saw him up to now. Mr. MORGAN had held out the hand of friendship to all, irrespective of creed or class; he had courted popularity from no-one, and the estimation in which he was now held was the outcome of an ever-present desire to do good. While not allowing his usual duties to fall behind; it is not too much to say that the flourishing state of the Foresters Club is entirely due to the energetic and persevering supervision of the Rev. W. E. T. MORGAN; while in the choir and the school his happy face and encouraging remarks will long be missed. The speech concluded by giving a little parting advice, viz:

"He that would keep his watch,
Two things must do;
He must pocket his watch,
And watch his pocket."

The Churchwarden, Mr. John PRICE made a few remarks on the sorrow of parting with Mr. MORGAN, and gave the presents into the hands of Mrs. Lister VENABLES who handed them to the fortunate recipient.

The Rev. W.E.T. MORGAN on rising thanked all for the feeling which had prompted such a magnificent token of esteem, and hoped that he should leave the scene of his labours in a better state than he had found it, and trusted that in his new sphere he should find friends who would be as good to him as those he was about to leave.

The proceedings were brought to a close after votes of thanks to the Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary and Committee which was set up to receive subscriptions for the testimonial."

He represented Hay Rural Council on the Brecon Education Committee. From 1918 from its inception he was an elected member of the Governing body of the Church in Wales. For 30 years he acted as Secretary to the Hay Deanery Book Club and the Brecon Archdeaconal Charity. In 1923 he became Chaplain to the Bishop of Swansea and Brecon and in 1930 Canon Emeritus of the Cathedral. Amongst his many sporting activities he played cricket for Hay until he was over 60 years of age; he was Secretary of the Wyese Bowmen, a body of archers domiciled in the Hay district, and he also played much tennis.

Antiquarian researches and local history also claimed his interest and as one of the oldest members he contributed much to the Woolhope Club's Library, also to those of the Archaeologia Cambrensis and Brecknock Society. Canon MORGAN was a bachelor. The funeral was arranged to take place at Llanigon church yesterday (Friday, 3rd January) at 2.30 p.m."?