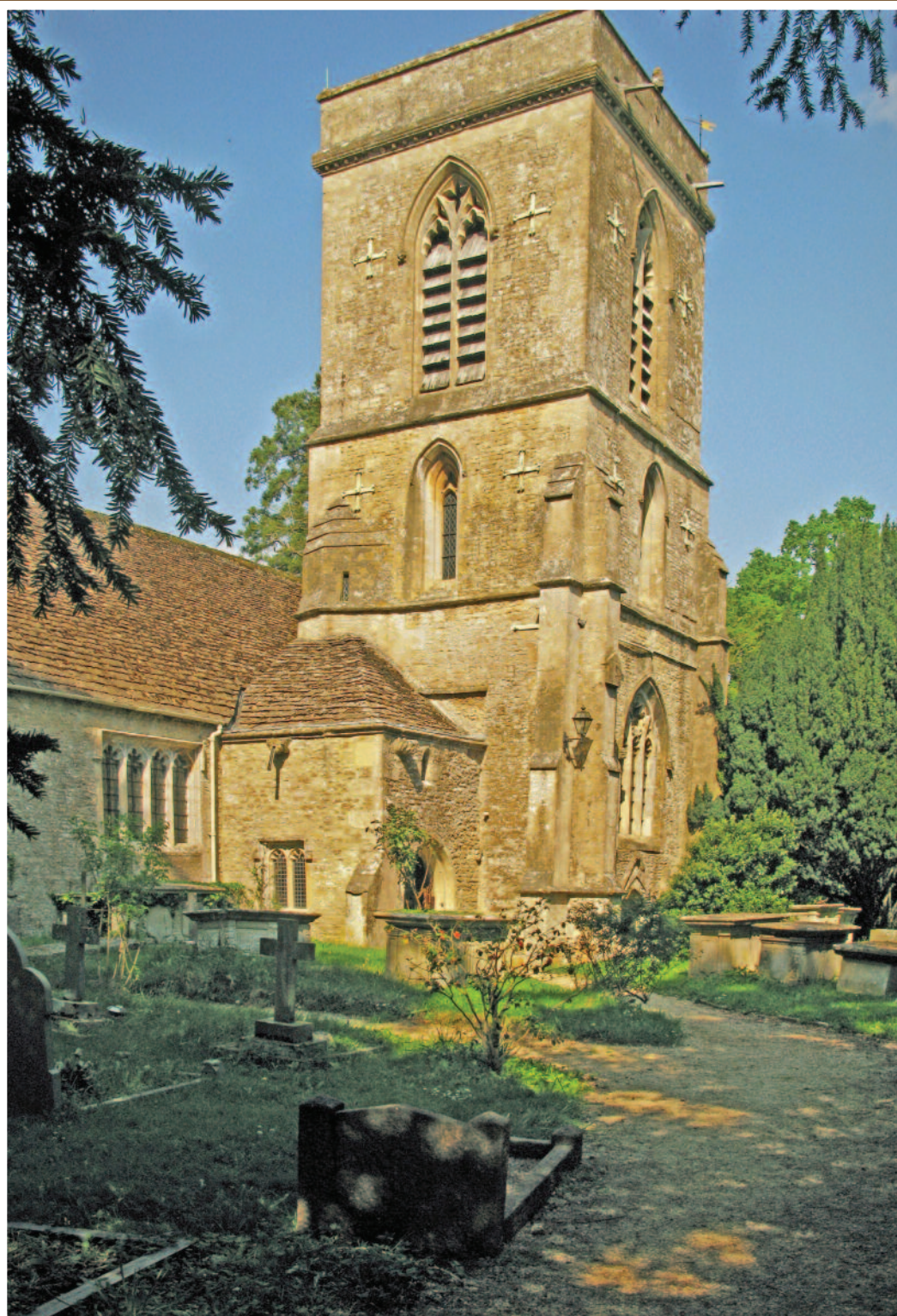


THE  
**JOURNAL**  
OF  
*THE KILVERT SOCIETY*



Number 46

March 2018



# THE KILVERT SOCIETY

*Founded in 1948 to foster an interest in the Reverend Francis Kilvert,  
his work, his Diary and the countryside he loved*

Registered Charity No. 1103815

**[www.thekilvertsociety.org.uk](http://www.thekilvertsociety.org.uk)**

## **President**

Ronald Blythe FRSL

## **Vice-Presidents**

Mrs S Hooper, Mr A L Le Quesne

## **Hon Life Members**

Mrs M M Hurlbutt, Mrs T Williams, Mr J Palmer, Mr J Hughes-Hallett

### **Chairman:** David Elvins

Sandalwood, North End Road, Steeple Claydon, Bucks  
MK18 2PG. Tel: 01296 730 498, mobile 07799 800990

### **Hon Secretary:** Alan Brimson

30 Bromley Heath Avenue, Downend, Bristol BS16 6JP.  
Tel: 0117 957 2030, mobile 07765 226329  
email: [jeanbrimson@hotmail.com](mailto:jeanbrimson@hotmail.com)

### **Vice-Chairman:** Rob Graves

Glan yr Afon Barns, Castle Road, Llangynidr, Powys  
NP8 1NG. Tel: 01874 730535

### **Hon Treasurer:** Richard Weston

35 Harold Street, Hereford HR1 2QU. Tel: 01432 378 018

### **Hon Membership Secretary:** Mrs Sue Rose

Seend Park Farm, Semington, Trowbridge, Wiltshire  
BA14 6LH. Tel: 01380 871 665

### **Hon Publications Manager and Archivist:** Colin Dixon

Tregothnan, Pentrosfa Crescent, Llandrindod Wells,  
Powys LD1 5NW. Tel: 01597 822 062

### **Hon Editor of the *Journal*:** Vacant

**Website:** [www.thekilvertsociety.org.uk](http://www.thekilvertsociety.org.uk)

The Treasurer would like to thank all who responded to his appeal to change their standing orders to the new subscription rates. There are still a few members yet to make the change.

Contributions to the *Journal* should be sent to the Hon Secretary by post or email. Address above  
Deadlines: 1st January and 1st July

## *Forthcoming Events 2018*

**All teas and pub lunches must be pre-booked with the Secretary by post or email ([jeanbrimson@hotmail.com](mailto:jeanbrimson@hotmail.com))**

### **Wednesday 4 April (subject to confirmation)**

Visit to Hartlebury Castle.

### **Friday 27 April 7.00 pm**

AGM at The Bishop's Palace, Hereford.

Speaker: Mr Garry Crook of the Snodhill Castle Trust.

### **Saturday 28 April**

10.00 for 10.30 seminar at Hedley Lodge.

6.30 for 7.00 pm same venue. Kilvert Society annual dinner.

### **Saturday 23 June**

Visit to Brecon and Brecon Cathedral.

Details to follow in the June Newsletter.

### **Saturday 29 September**

Visit to the Clyro area, venue to be confirmed.

### **Sunday 30 September**

Commemorative Service at Clyro at 11 am.

Followed by buffet lunch provided by the Parish.

If you are on email please help us to cut postage costs by sending your e-address to the Secretary at [jeanbrimson@hotmail.com](mailto:jeanbrimson@hotmail.com)

**Front cover:** *St Peter's Church, Langley Burrell.* Photo: Alan Brimson

**Back cover:** *The plaque on the viaduct which leads into Chippenham station.* Photo: David Elvins



## From the Chairman

When I was a child a Sunday School teacher suggested to my class that a novel way of reading the Bible was, just occasionally, to open a page at random. I tried this several times with some interesting results. Mostly the page revealed a list of family relationships (A begat B, B begat C etc) or some very complicated concepts in *Revelation* but, just occasionally, this random dipping yielded beautiful passages from the Psalms. Recently I tried this technique on the *Diary* and I read the results with increased interest and, indeed, with amusement.

### Septuagesima Sunday, 20 February 1870

*Drunk too much port after dinner at Cae Mawr last night and had a splitting headache all today in revenge. Eyes better but not much. Everything in a daze and dazzle and I could hardly see to read. Got through the service somehow....."*

Yes, we have all been there but not, perhaps, in a pulpit. There is also the following entry for Monday 21 February 1870.....but I suggest you read it for yourself. Discover the "improper" story and speculate!

In the *Journal* of September 2017 I suggested that you, as committed members of our Society, are our best method of recruitment. If every member persuaded one other person to join us before the 2018 AGM we would double our membership.

HAVE YOU DONE YOUR BIT?

## From the Secretary

As we do not have a designated editor at the moment, this present *Journal* is a collaborative effort. Our thanks, as always, to our contributors. What would we do without you?

The winter event to Hartlebury Castle has had to be postponed as the renovations have severely overrun. This visit is now provisionally booked for Wednesday 4 April. If we can go ahead then a loose-leaf booking form will be included in this copy of the *Journal*.

Some of you may have received correspondence in which the Committee has been severely criticised on the basis that it contains too many married couples and that two members are cousins! I am not sure what this is supposed to suggest.

Every member of the Committee has a designated task. They are dedicated to the Kilvert Society, travel long distances and give freely of their time to promote the aims and interests of the Society. The two cousins are our long-serving treasurer and the former editor of our *Journal*.

The couples include our publications manager and archivist (no one knows more about Kilvert) and his wife whose typing skills have supported chairman, secretary and editor over many years. She has also been the minutes secretary for just as long. Their home provides storage for Kilvert publications and they liaise with the Radnorshire Museum. The membership secretary, whose role is wider than the title suggests, is also our unofficial catering manager. Her husband is overseeing our compliance with the new Data Protection laws coming into force in May. Our chairman's wife is our current minutes secretary and I must make mention of my own wife without whose support I could not function as secretary. She fields all emails and enquiries that

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arrive via the website, and types up all correspondence. As we currently do not have an editor she also types up material for the printer that will go into the *Journal*. Relationships simply do not come into it. All on the committee are committed and dedicated to the benefit of the Society, to suggest otherwise is most insulting to all committee members and their integrity.

It has also been suggested that the Committee is too big. The current Committee numbers 14. The important point is that a third of the number, five, forms a quorum. They may make binding decisions. Our critic suggests that the Committee should be much reduced. Say it is reduced to nine, that would not only make it extremely difficult to cover all the work involved but would also mean that a viable quorum would be three. This means a very small number could put through binding decisions. This could prove extremely problematic, there would be no

opportunity for debate. In fact it would be very easy for a tiny minority to take over and dictate what the Society does or does not do. Perhaps this is exactly what our critic would like to see? He is certainly keen to promote his own ideas and “ownership” of the Society. Perhaps there is safety in numbers after all. It certainly prevents any tiny cabal overruling the wishes of the majority.

Can I also take the opportunity of refuting the claim that a certain member has not attended a committee meeting since 2010 as completely untrue?

On a positive note, this year marks the 70th anniversary of the founding of our Society in 1948. I do hope you will make every effort to attend our events, particularly our AGM and annual dinner on 27 and 28 April, see the enclosed booking form and return ASAP please.



*Belmont Abbey where accommodation at Hedley Lodge is available for the AGM Weekend. Contact 01432 374747. Please mention the Kilvert Society when booking.*

Photo: Val Dixon

# **The Annual General Meeting of the Kilvert Society will be held in the Great Hall of the Bishop's Palace, Hereford on Friday 27 April, 2018 at 7.00 pm**

## **Agenda**

1. Welcome to Members.
2. Secretary's Announcements.
3. Apologies.
4. Minutes of AGM of 21 April 2017.
5. Matters Arising.
6. Obituaries.
7. Chairman's Remarks.
8. Financial Report.
9. Election of Officers.

### **i) Officers offering themselves for re-election**

Chairman	(Mr D Elvins, retires at this AGM)
Hon Vice Chairman	Mr R Graves
Hon Treasurer	Mr R Weston
Hon Auditor	Mr J Wilks
Hon Membership Secretary	Mrs S Rose
Hon Publications Manager	Mr C Dixon
Hon Secretary	Mr A Brimson

### **The following are ex-officio Officers**

Hon Archivist	Mr C Dixon
Hon Editor of the Journal	Vacant
Hon Minutes Secretary	Vacant

### **ii) Existing Committee (in addition to the above Officers)**

- iii)** Mrs J Brimson, Mrs V J Dixon,  
Mr E J Hall, Mr C J Marshall, Mr M J Reynolds, Mr M Rose.  
The existing Committee offer themselves for re-election.

- iv)** Nominations for members of the Committee:  
Two or more members may nominate one or more members (with their consent) who are eligible, either as officers or ordinary Committee Members. Such nominations shall be delivered to the Hon Secretary not less than 30 days before the date of the AGM.

10. Any other business previously notified to the Secretary.

## **End of AGM**

## **INTERVAL**

Society publications on sale

Refreshments (at £4.50 per head payable on the night) will be provided by Sue and Mike Rose, members of the Committee.

A talk to be given by Mr Garry Crook from the Snodhill Castle Trust.

Vote of Thanks

Close of meeting

Alan Brimson  
Hon Secretary

## **FOR INFORMATION ONLY**

### **President**

Dr Ronald Blythe FRSL

### **Vice-Presidents**

Mrs S Hooper, Mr A L Le Quesne

### **Hon Life Members**

Mrs M M Hurlbutt, Mrs T Williams, Mr J Palmer, Mr J Hughes-Hallett

# THE KILVERT SOCIETY: Charity Registration No: 1103815

## Statement of Accounts for the Year ending 31st December 2017

<b><u>INCOME</u></b>	<b><u>2017</u></b>	<b><u>2016</u></b>
Subscriptions	£4,088.00	£4,019.53
Donations	£235.00	£343.00
Gift Aid	£795.25	£867.50
AGM Income	£198.50	£173.00
Publication Sales	£566.23	£515.80
Events	£1090.00	£585.00
Interest	£12.02	£25.48
Legacy		£100.00
	<b><u>£6,985.00</u></b>	<b><u>£6,629.31</u></b>

### **EXPENDITURE**

Grants & Subscriptions	£840.00	£915.00
Monuments & Collections	£36.00	£80.00
Postage, Stationery, Phone	£915.56	£449.89
Printing	£678.51	£27.75
Journal	£2,456.84	£2,837.82
Insurance	£160.00	£157.00
Events	£1,150.00	£600.00
AGM Expenses	£237.14	£845.83
Website	£211.68	£316.80
Committee Expenses	£68.00	£85.00
	<b><u>£6,753.73</u></b>	<b><u>£6,315.09</u></b>

### **ASSETS**

Balance Lloyds	£1,963.66	£1,744.41
Balance Lloyds Reserve Fund	£15.11	£15.11
Nationwide Building Society	<u>£12,018.77</u>	<u>£12,006.75</u>
		£13,766.27
Excess Income over Expenditure		£231.27
	<b><u>£13,997.54</u></b>	<b><u>£13,997.54</u></b>

**Richard Weston, Honorary Treasurer**

### **Auditor's Certificate**

I have examined the foregoing income and expenditure account with the relevant records and certify it to be correct and in accordance therewith.

**John Wilks, Honorary Auditor**



# MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE KILVERT SOCIETY

**HELD AT THE BISHOP'S PALACE, HEREFORD**  
**ON FRIDAY 21 APRIL 2017 AT 7.00 pm**

The Chairman, Mr David Elvins, tried to welcome members to the meeting but was shouted down by Mr C. Boase who was insistent upon advising those present that the meeting could not take place as it was illegal. The Chairman and members from the floor called for him to remain quiet or to leave.

The Chairman then explained that the letter sent by Mr Boase to all members calling for the Chairman and the Secretary to retire and for their removal from the Committee had required a full and detailed answer. The composition of this letter needed approval by the Committee and the amended agenda containing other proposals by Mr Boase would have had to be sent out. Contacting all 400 plus members is a considerable task (and costs over £350.00 a time) and time was short. Consequently, due to a clerical oversight, some non-active life members (who had opted 14 years ago not to receive the *Journal*) were informed some 12 days late so they were given only 18 days notice not the 30 days stipulated. That this had happened was never hidden or disputed and the Committee was aware that it had happened.

However, Mr Boase, having waited as long as possible, chose to question the validity of the AGM because of this mistake. There was no way that members attending the AGM could all be contacted in time and the Society would have lost an enormous amount of money in cancelled venues, speakers, catering for the annual Kilvert dinner etc. This was not counting the inconvenience to members who travel from all over the country often necessitating overnight accommodation. The Charity Commission was contacted immediately for advice but we received no answer. It was therefore decided that the Kilvert weekend should go ahead and members attending should be asked to vote on whether this should still be regarded as the official AGM or, should they reject this motion, then another AGM should be convened within 3 months. This motion was put before members.

The motion (that this be considered the official AGM) was proposed by Mrs A. Dean and seconded by Mr G. Collins.

Vote: 40 in favour, 3 against, 3 abstentions

THE CHAIRMAN DECLARED THE MEETING THE  
OFFICIAL ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE  
KILVERT SOCIETY 2017

(Mr Boase refused to vote as he still insisted that the AGM was invalid)

## APOLOGIES:

Apologies for absence were received from: Penny and Giles Harris-Evans, Eva Morgan, John Wesson, Margaret Entwistle, Sue and Michael Sharp, Richard and Heather Vine, Sheila Hooper, Sheila and Chris Borrows, Ray Taylor, David Machin, David Lerman, Sally Fury, Sarah Todd, Ted and Hilary Brown, Julia Yeardye and Dudley Green.

### SECRETARY'S ANNOUNCEMENTS:

The Secretary requested those present to sign the attendance book which would be circulated. He reminded members that the buffet provided by membership secretary Sue Rose and committee member Mike Rose, would be served after the meeting at a charge of £4.50 per head. He announced that the speaker for the evening would be Nancy Lavin-Albert from the Hay Castle Trust. The Seminar tomorrow would be held at Hedley Lodge, Hereford and would commence at 10 for 10.30 am. The talk would be given by John Toman, following which he (Alan) would be showing more of the photographs sent to the Society by descendants of Sarah Matilda Griffith (née Coleman) in Australia. The Annual Dinner was also to be held at Hedley Lodge, 6.30 for 7pm. He hoped that by having all the events in Hereford more members could be encouraged to attend the AGM weekend.

**MINUTES:**

The minutes of the AGM 22nd April 2016 which had been circulated in the March *Journal* were taken as read. Their acceptance was proposed by V. Dixon and seconded by J. Marshall. They were carried and signed by the Chairman as a true record. There were no matters arising.

## OBITUARIES:

Record of deaths notified since last AGM:

Mr Edmond Roland Heaton of Oswestry  
Member since Feb. 1993

Died March 2016

Mr Leslie William Thomas Powell of Cheltenham  
Member since July 1995

Died 2016

Dr Wilhelmina Lockwood. (See obituary in *Journal* 45)

Died April 20th 2016

The names of these members were read out and a minute's silence was observed in tribute. Particularly mentioned was Dr Wilhelmina Lockwood, the wife of past Chairman David Lockwood. The Secretary recalled, with a great deal of affection, that Wilhelmina had been responsible for his joining the Society (not taking no for an answer) at what he thought was a wedding at Clyro, but turned out to be a Kilvert service. Her funeral was to be held on 29 April at 2.00pm at Llowes Church.

## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

The Chairman went through the events held during the past year.

On 22 April 2016 There had been the usual seminar following the AGM. We were addressed by Oliver Balch on “Francis Kilvert: a Model of Modern Living” and also by David Harrison who spoke on the Zulu Wars. The weekend concluded with the Annual Dinner at the Radnorshire Arms in Presteigne.

On 25 June we walked to The Roundabout. The poor weather of the morning cleared and Kilvert weather gave us a lovely afternoon.

On 2 September there was a walk in Bredwardine to the home of the Newton sisters, the school and the church of St Andrew's. We paid our respects to the Kilvert graves and the grave of "little Davie".

In March of 2017 we visited Malmesbury, Wiltshire and had a guided tour of the Abbey.

The Chairman thanked the officers of the Committee for their hard work throughout the year in what had been a very trying time. He particularly mentioned Jeff Marshall for his sterling work on the *Journal* and Alan Brimson for his work as Secretary and his dedicated commitment to the Society.

The Chairman now said he wished to address the "elephant in the room." As everyone was aware the last few weeks had been the most UNNECESSARILY CONTENTIOUS, UPSETTING AND DIVISIVE PERIODS IN THE HISTORY OF THE SOCIETY. He hoped that, for those with the genuine interests of the Society at heart, these rifts could be healed and we could revert to the cheerful and harmonious organisation we have always been.

## FINANCIAL REPORT:

The balance sheet for the year was circulated. The Treasurer reported that it was a year in which we had to be extra careful. He detailed:

### Income

Subscriptions were down due to drop in membership and we needed new members. He urged everyone to recruit. Donations were up but gift aid appeared down as the 2016 figure represented two year's claims. There was slightly less income on savings but we had had a legacy of £100.00.

### Expenditure

A donation of £950.00 had been made to Langley Burrell Church for roof repairs and £80.00 had been given for the upkeep of the new gates at Bredwardine. Printing was less this year because last year's figures included the cost of the photo album. Savings had been made on the *Journal* thanks to the printer. AGM expenditure was up because equipment had to be hired and the speaker paid. The cost of the website was down.

There were no questions and the Chairman requested the adoption of the accounts. This was proposed by H. Dean and seconded by M. Tod and carried. The chairman thanked the treasure Richard Weston, and the honorary auditor John Wilks.

## PROPOSALS BY C. BOASE:

1. While thanking chairman David Elvins and secretary Alan Brimson for their long service, the Society calls on them to retire from office at this AGM and from the committee.
2. From the 1 Jan 2018 the Annual Membership shall be £10.00 entitling a member or joint member at one address to a digital copy of the *Journal* or £20.00 entitling a member or joint member at one address to a printed copy of the *Journal*.

3. All life members shall be entitled to receive the *Journal* free in either form.

Proposal 1: This was declared void for reasons given in the letter of 2 April 2017. No vote could be taken.

Proposal 2: It was explained that Proposal 2 had already been considered and rejected by the Committee on financial and administrative grounds. Various question were asked. Alan Brimson said this was a blatant attempt to bypass the decision of the Committee. Various questions were asked regarding the cost of the *Journal* and Geoff Collins suggested an increase in all fees to cover the cost of providing life members with a free copy. Mr Boase was asked if he wished to speak in favour of his motion. He declined, saying that as the meeting was invalid he did not intend to speak or vote.

This motion was proposed by A. Dean and seconded by J. Brimson and a vote taken:

### VOTE:

For: None. Against: Unanimous, the chairman abstained, motion not carried.

Proposal 3. All life members to receive the *Journal* free of charge.

Richard Weston said that he felt it only fair and Michael Reynolds said that life membership was a contract and he felt it unfair that life members should then be asked to pay for the *Journal*. Again Richard said he could see his point but that if life members received a free copy then revenue would be down and the Society could not afford this. The fees would have to rise. Moreover, those life members who DID pay for the *Journal* could hardly be expected to continue to do so if others were receiving it free. Again the revenues would be badly hit.

Geoff Collins suggested that those life members who did not pay should be contacted and it should be pointed out to them how much the *Journal* cost. They should be asked if they wished their membership to continue. That way we would know how many were involved. Alan agreed this needed to be done.

Tim Lewis said all these motions were a blatant attempt to circumvent the committee and were a disgrace.

Michael Tod proposed the motion to that effect. It was seconded by Michael Reynolds.

### VOTES:

25 for, 9 against, 3 abstentions. Motion carried.

All the previous committee was re-elected with the exception of Mr Charles Boase who still maintained that the AGM was invalid.

It should be noted that Mr David Elvins, as Chairman did not vote.

There being no other business the Chairman thanked all members for attending the meeting.

The meeting concluded at 7.59 pm.



# EXCURSIONS

## Chippenham, 24 September 2017

*The Society's Autumn visit to Wiltshire as described by Marjorie Elvins*

We gathered at the Railway Station in Chippenham at 11 am. Kilvert spent much time here and, according to the readings that Alan gave us much of it getting into or out of the wrong train and having to convince the powers that be that he did not have to buy another full-price ticket. The railway gauge may be different but I doubt that the station platforms themselves have changed much since then. We set out for our walk through Chippenham. The town itself was very busy and it took us some time to negotiate the crossings and major roads downhill to the town centre.



Chippenham Station

Photo: Alan Brimson

We passed under Isambard Kingdom Brunel's magnificent viaduct and then over the bridge spanning the River Avon. The weather, Kilvert weather surely, was just right. The rain kept away and it was warm and sunny with a slight breeze. Most of us were multi-layered, ready for Arctic conditions, but anoraks and jumpers were soon coming off.



The Market Place

Photo: David Elvins

We went through the market which looked busy and prosperous and with a wide variety of interesting stalls. The inhabitants were taking full advantage of the goods for sale and the opportunity to meet with friends, so Alan Brimson, our intrepid leader, postponed any readings until later in the day.

We stopped outside the Town Hall and the Yield House where election results were proclaimed and also outside the Angel Hotel which Kilvert mentions. It was undergoing restoration and we could not go in so we proceeded to lunch at the *Gladstone Arms* just around the corner. The food (and the company) was excellent and we were made very welcome. Then we were off to the Chippenham Museum and Heritage Centre. This is housed in an 18th Century town house and, although small, has a full and interesting exhibition demonstrating Chippenham's links to industry, river, road and rail. Jeff Marshall was relieved to see that a cardboard replica of Isambard Kingdom Brunel still retained its iconic cigar. Apparently this is now removed from images of Brunel because smoking is now frowned upon. Perhaps we should ban pictures of Victorian corsets on the grounds that they were unhealthy? Or Medieval swords on the grounds they might encourage knife crime?



*In the Yield House at the museum, Melissa Barnett (left) the Curator addresses the group.*

Photo: David Elvins



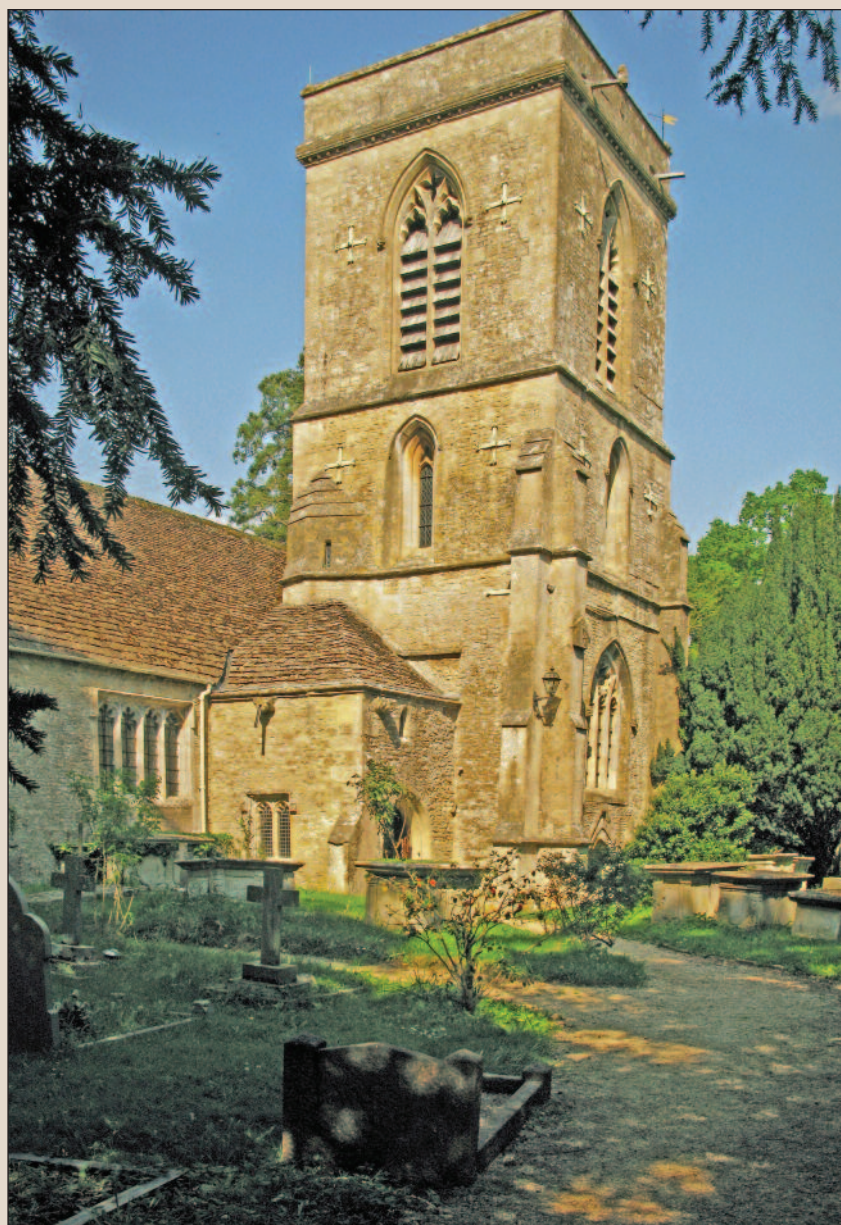
Perhaps we should return to Kilvert. We were welcomed by the Museum staff and were shown a short film of its work. We were taken over the road to the oldest building in Chippenham which happened to be the lock-up for the town. After that we saw a very elegant display about Kilvert. The Museum is keen to promote Kilvert's links with Chippenham. It does a lot of work with local schools and has some very interesting outreach programmes with talks and films. Altogether it seems a very forward-looking and vibrant Museum and will be useful in promoting interest in Kilvert and his family. It is well worth a visit.

We were given time to look around the Museum and then went upstairs to a room the Museum had put at our disposal where they provided us with tea which was accompanied by splendid cakes prepared by Sue Rose. Alan then gave us the promised readings from the *Diary*, including the famous election

when Handel Cossham put up as (according to Kilvert) the "Radical" candidate. He was defeated by 200+ votes and Kilvert wrote "three cheers". However, as Alan pointed out, Chippenham's loss was Bristol's gain. Cossham was a colliery owner, lay preacher and Liberal with a reputation for treating his workforce well. He became M.P. for Bristol East where he built schools and chapels and, eventually, a hospital which still exists and is still known as Cossham's Hospital. 30,000 people lined the streets at his funeral. Kilvert would have been appalled if he had been elected but Chippenham may have benefited if he had.

The Chairman thanked Alan and Jean for organising another excellent event and pointed out how much work goes into making sure these events run smoothly. After this we all parted to make our separate ways home after an interesting, enjoyable and informative day.

## Completing the Chippenham Day



Langley Burrell Church

Photo: Alan Brimson

*Mary Steele adds:*

A couple of car loads of us took the opportunity to visit Langley Burrell Church at the end of our Chippenham day. This was very kindly made possible by local resident Jim Hall. I had not been inside the church before, having previously got only as far as the porch, where I had been delighted to find two small Green Men (faces sprouting leaves) carved in the porch roof interior. Inside, there is more medieval stonework. It makes sense that Kilvert's father, coming from such an ancient and interesting church, should admire the Norman work at Bredwardine (2 Jan 1878). Kilvert himself pays more attention to the vogue for restoration – the younger generation? We were shown an inscription carved into a window and wondered at the changed memorial to a vicar who died defrocked. The numerous memorials to the Ashe family fill a chapel on the south side of the chancel. Kilvert calls it *the private Chapel* (5 June 1876). Kilvert's mother was an Ashe and he should have been proud of the family connection. But the contemporary Robert Ashe was a bully and Kilvert sadly describes his family's position as *the warm nest on the rotten bough* (11 June 1876). There was a rather Kilvertian archery match taking place in the grounds of the manor house next to the church. The church itself was attractively decorated for harvest festival, one of Kilvert's and the Victorians' favourite celebrations. It was the perfect ending to a lovely day.



# The Kilvert Pilgrimage

*Adrian Chambers, the organiser of the annual Kilvert Pilgrimage outlines the programme for this year and looks forward to its twentieth anniversary in 2019*



*St David's Llanddewi Fach, journey's end for the Kilvert Pilgrimage*

We had a good Pilgrimage this year, although I fear I was showing some signs of stress from the organisational overload (for which I have a low threshold). Bishop Michael Westall preached a cracking sermon setting Kilvert very much in his time.

The 20th Pilgrimage will be (as usual) on the Sunday following the Royal Welsh Show, 30 July 2018. However, we do not have the resources this year for the usual full programme and it will be a pared down affair:

- |       |  |
|-------|--|
| 10.30 | Newchurch. Welcome and refreshments.   |
| 11.00 | Laying of flowers at Emmeline's Grave. [Please bring a posy]   |
| 11.20 | Bell signalling the start of the walk to Bryngwyn.   |
| 12.30 | Some readings from the Diary, followed by BYO picnic lunch. Tea will be provided (and cold drinks if the weather is hot) |
| 13.15 | Start for Llanbedr.  |
| 15.30 | Laying of flowers at the grave of Aylmer Alexander, followed by tea provided.  |

- |       |   |
|-------|---|
| 16.30 | Start for Llanddewi Fach.                                   |
| 17.30 | Arrive at Llanddewi Fach, A hymn and a prayer and...        |
| 17.45 | Farewell. Transport back to Newchurch or points on the way. |

In other words we are walking the walk to ensure continuity, but there will be no Matins or Evensong, no musical recital at Bryngwyn and the route will not be signed or marked. Anyone who would nevertheless like to join us will be most welcome.

Next year – the 21st Pilgrimage and the 20th Anniversary Pilgrimage – we will be a back to a full-blown affair, hopefully with knobs on.

Adrian Chambers  
01497 821414  
New Penywrlodd  
Clyro HR3 6JX



# FEATURES

## Kilvert's Desk swapped for a table tennis table!

*Thanks to the generosity of the Pitcairn family the Society is now the proud owner of further unique Kilvert memorabilia. Val Dixon recounts the circumstances behind this recent coup*

Alan Brimson, our secretary, was surprised and delighted to receive an e-mail from member Andy Pitcairn asking if we could find a home for Kilvert's desk, which had been in the Pitcairn family since the Diarist's death. Alan contacted Val and Colin Dixon who visited Will Adams, the curator at the Radnorshire Museum, who was delighted at the idea of having the items in the Kilvert collection there.

Members will know that Dora Kilvert acted as housekeeper to her brother at Bredwardine until Kilvert's marriage to Elizabeth Ann Rowland.

While Kilvert and Elizabeth were on their honeymoon in Scotland Dora married James Pitcairn and later Edward Kilvert (Perch) married Nellie Pitcairn, so there is a close connection between the two families.

On Kilvert's death his wife of only five weeks decided to go back to her family at Wootton, near Oxford. She was not able to take any large pieces of furniture with her so the desk and other items went to Dora. We know that Kilvert only furnished one home and he tells us in his *Diary* on Thursday 24 January 1877 that *Shoolbreds sent in their bill, £230.9.6*. This must have been for the furniture.

The desk and chair have been in the Pitcairn family ever since. Andy Pitcairn tells us that he used to do his homework on it in his schooldays as it was in his bedroom.

Alan was only too glad to accept the offer so it was up to the committee to arrange transport. We considered asking a carrier in that area (Surrey) but realised this could prove very expensive. Colin Dixon then suggested that his son, David could hire a van



Photo: Val Dixon

to transport it to the Llandrindod Museum. This was duly arranged and David contacted Andy Pitcairn to arrange a time and date.

The reason Andy wanted to donate the desk was because they wanted to clear his father's house ready for sale. No one in his family had room for the desk as it was too big. Andy also decided that he would be willing to donate Kilvert's travelling desk (slope) and also insisted on donating £100 towards the cost of transportation. The travelling desk was a gift to Kilvert from Mr and Mrs Venables on his leaving Clyro (September 1872).

*Monday 5 August 1872*

*Left Langley and came to Clyro. Rain poured all day, I missed the mid-day train from Hereford to Hay as usual.*

*I dined at the Vicarage and received a present of a magnificent writing desk, which I am writing upon now, the most beautiful and perfect I ever saw, of coromandel wood bound with brass, fitted with polished mahogany and containing two most secret drawers.*

David delivered the two desks and chair on the 22 January and they were put in situ the very next day among the Kilvert archives with the travelling desk on top (see picture). It looks as though it really belongs there. Four family photographs have been put on the desk – Dora Pitcairn née Kilvert; Annie Wyndowe, the 'monk', as a small child; Thersie Smith née Kilvert and Emily Wyndowe née Kilvert.

Inside the desk we found a small card with a poem on the front and on the back it said: *To Uncle Frank with love from Katie* (Katie Wyndowe, the monk's sister).

The chair looked very good with the desk, but Will Adams suggested moving it as it could get damaged by enthusiastic children visiting the exhibition. It is quite fragile.

PS While he had a large van available to him David transported back to London from his parents' home, a table tennis table which he had long coveted.

*A hitherto undiscovered Diary extract*

## ROBERT KILVERT'S LIFE

Included with the desk, slope and chair Andy donated a book containing the life history of Robert Kilvert. The Society currently has one copy of the book but it is good to have this handwritten version by his daughter Emily Jardine Wyndowe. At the end of the book are two extracts from *Kilvert's Diary* which Emily added to the book from the *Diary* dated 16 April 1876. Copied from a paper written by S.D.A.P. (?)

The next entry 7 October 1873 is also copied from a paper written by S.D.A.P. on Easter Day 1920. **This item does not appear in the published *Diary*:**

*As I crossed the Pulteney Bridge with my Father, he pointed out to me the walk along the river-side by which he used to go to school when he was a boy, and he remembered how sweetly the Easter Hymn on the Abbey bells sounded across the river meads, at nine o'clock in the morning, but sweeter still as he was coming home from school by the same path at 5 o'clock in the evening.*

As these copies were taken in 1920, long before the *Diary* was published S.D.A.P. must have had sight of the original *Diary* while it was in the possession of Hastings and his brother Perceval, another mystery for the Society.

Yet another gift from Andy was a loose-leaf account of the Kilvert family's move from Hardenhuish to Langley. We are not, at this time, sure who gave this account, but it is very interesting and it is hoped to have it typed up ready to appear in the September edition of the *Journal*.

**The Society very gratefully acknowledges the extraordinary generosity of the Pitcairn family for the gift of the above Kilvert memorabilia and for the donation towards the cost of transport to Llandrindod.**

# Oswin Prosser, Frederick Grice and Kilvert's Books

*Professor Colin Clarke and his wife Gillian (daughter of our late Deputy-President Frederick Grice) write about another recent Society acquisition*

Oswin Prosser, at that time Secretary of the Kilvert Society, died on 7 September 1977. As a matter of urgency, Frederice Grice (Deputy-President) became custodian of the Kilvert Society Papers, and removed them for safekeeping to his home in Worcester. After his death in 1983, his wife, Gwen, deposited them at the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth. When Gwen died in 2009, Gillian Grice Clarke, as her literary executor, discovered two books of Francis Kilvert's still in her possession, plus three sketch books belonging to the Revd Edward Kilvert (1806-67). Francis Kilvert's uncle.

The two volumes from Francis Kilvert's library consist of *Memoirs of the Private and Public Life of William Penn* (1813) in two volumes, and *The Genuine Epistles of the Apostolic Fathers* by William, the Late Lord Archbishop of Canterbury (1817). Edward Kilvert's three sketch books, dated 1828, 1832 and 1841 onwards, consist of: 1) churches, landscapes, and copies of sculpture and painting; 2) notes on the circular arch and bound copies of watercolours; and 3) sketches of France and Belgium 1841 onwards, Dover, India 1849, and upside down at the back a collection of a dozen portraits on named people, plus drawings of a mitre, Bible and staff, and a font.

These five items have now been deposited by Gillian Clarke in the Kilvert Archive at the Public Library, Llandrindod Wells.

## Two books (three volumes) from the library of Francis Kilvert:

1. Clarkson, Thomas, *Memoirs of the Private and Public Life of William Penn*. London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme and Brown, Vol. 1 and Vol. 2, 1813. (Volume 1 has a plate from Wigan free public library)
2. William, Late Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, *The Genuine Epistles of the Apostolic Fathers*. London: Samuel Bagster, 1817. Handwritten page before frontispiece.

## Three sketch books:

3. Edward Kilvert (assumed) dated 1828, but with no name attached. Churches, landscape some labelled, copies of sculpture and painting.
4. Edward Kilvert, Sketch book dated 1832, with notes on the circular arch, plus a series of bound watercolours (with sketches verso), layouts for paintings numbering roughly 70 pages.
5. Edward Kilvert, 'Slight Sketches in France and Belgium', July 23rd 1841 onwards, mostly dated and labelled (26 plates); Dover 6 sketches; India 1849 (49 sketches); 16 additional landscape sketches, some named; upside down at the back: a collection of more than a dozen portraits of named people, plus drawings as stated above of a mitre, Bible and staff, and a font.

There is a handwritten note in one book:

EdwdKilvert

August 23rd 1832.

Sent to me by S.D(?) A Pitcairn 27thNovr 1919.

E.J. Wyndowe at 52 Pulteney St, Bath.

## Note:

*The books are currently in safe-keeping at the Llandrindod Wells Museum and the Museum is quite happy to hold them there for the time being.*

*The books are in poor condition and estimates have been obtained from paper conservators for their restoration. The costs are quite enormous so no decision has yet been taken concerning their repair.*



*The books on display in Llandrindod museum*



Photos: Val Dixon



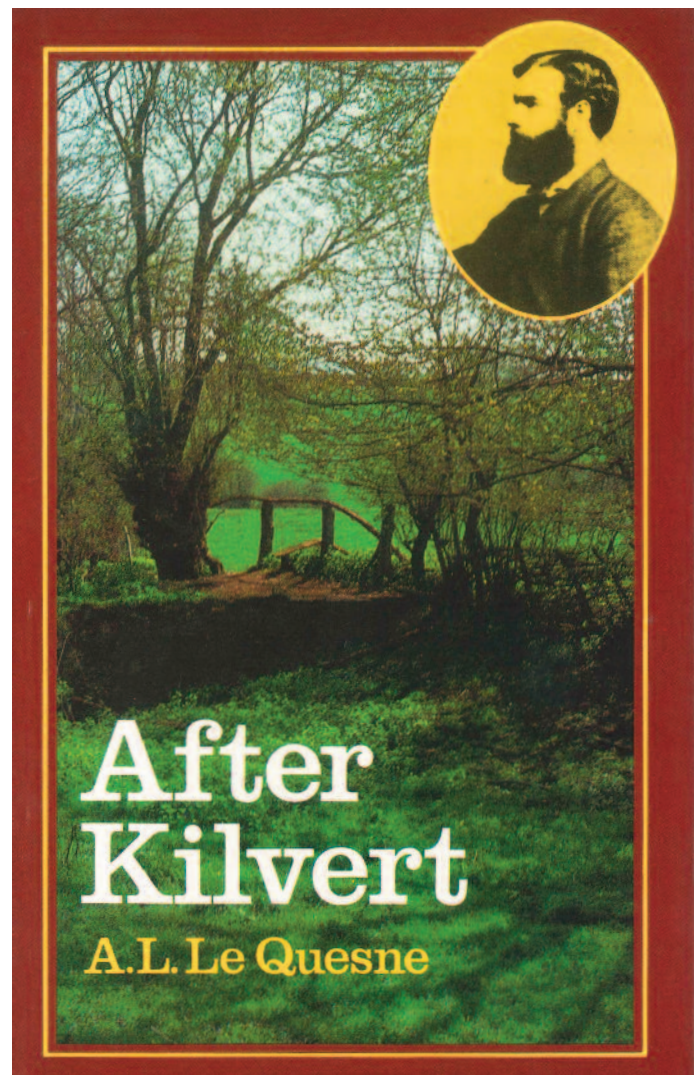
# Kilvert the Walker

by Laurence Le Quesne

I can claim no originality by making the claim that one of Kilvert's leading characteristics was that he was a great walker – all the commentators on him have noted the fact, reflected both in the extraordinary mileages of his daily outings about his parishes and in his occasional much longer excursions, to visit well-known local characters such as John Price, the 'Solitary' of Llandedr, whom he visited on 3 July, 1871, or Father Ignatius at Capel-y-ffyn, or sometimes purely for the pleasure of exploring such landscapes as the Marlborough Downs in April, 1874. But between 1969 and 1972 I did spend three happy years in Clyro writing a book\* about Kilvert's own three years there exactly a hundred years earlier, comparing the Clyro of his years with the Clyro of ours, and in the process spent a lot of time and energy tracing his routes round the village and across the fields of his parish. It was the work of many enjoyable afternoons, and it left me with a realisation that walking in Kilvert's day was in several interesting ways a different activity from its modern meaning, and I will try to explain what I mean by this.

Kilvert did far more walking than anyone does in the twenty-first century for one very simple reason, that he had no alternative – like the great majority of his contemporaries – for on most occasions there was no other means of transport available. The point is obvious enough when we stop to think about it, but that is something that we rarely do. For the millions of years since the emergence of homo sapiens as a species, man's only means of movement had been his feet. The obvious exception is the use of horses, and it is true that in the Neolithic Age, four or five thousand years before Christ, there is evidence for the training and the use of horses, though there is little if any evidence of their use for riding before Roman times. Roman armies did include cavalry, but they were shock troops kept for crises. The core of Roman armies were the legions, disciplined and armoured infantry who marched, not rode, to battle. The Romans were great road builders, and roads make us think of wheels. The legions marched on them but outside the towns, most Roman roads bear very few marks of wheeled traffic. The commonest finds in archaeological sites are pots, flints, and, in the last millennium BC, metals used chiefly for weapons but wheels of any sort were unknown. Boadicea's chariots must have had wooden wheels – but the evidence for them is literary, not archaeological, and no fragments of them have been found.

Kilvert was born in 1840 and society had changed a great deal since classical times in some respects but in some areas it had changed comparatively little, and among them was the technology of travel. The first really important change was the recovery of the technique of skilled and systematic road building, for the first time since the departure of the Romans, and with it the creation, in the second half of the eighteenth century of a remarkably extensive system of turnpike roads, by such engineers as Telford. For whose use were turnpike roads chiefly designed? It is important to note that the earliest properly engineered roads in Britain were the work of military engineers and designed for military use, chiefly in the wild highlands of Scotland. Even then,



they were designed chiefly for the use of marching infantry regiments but, unlike their Roman predecessors, also for the use of wheeled supply wagons. But the turnpike roads that followed them were a different matter, and were designed from the first for wheeled traffic – they mark an important turning point in the development of a national transport system and it is no coincidence that with them both milestones and signposts became familiar features of the English landscape. For the first time, travel on English roads became much quicker and also tolerably comfortable for travellers who could not afford their own horses and, also for the first time there were enough people who wanted such travel to make it worth the while of roadbuilders and coachmakers to provide it. It was the stagecoach above all that made the turnpike roads a paying concern for regular upholstered coaches, seating twenty or more passengers inside and on the roof, hauled at speeds averaging ten miles an hour by teams of four to six horses to coaching inns which were built along the turnpikes at intervals of ten or twenty miles to change the teams and to refresh the passengers – their effect was clearly demonstrated by the shortening of the journey from Shrewsbury to London from a three-day to a one-day journey.

In the year of Kilvert's birth the stagecoach was the standard means of travel for the propertied classes, to which he belonged, and there can be no doubt that he frequently experienced such coach travel in his youth. Yet he never mentions coach travel in his *Diary*, and there is no entry for it in the superb index of Plomer's edition, while I think there can be no doubt that if there were any such passages in the *Diary* William Plomer would have

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\**After Kilvert* (OUP 1978)





*Box Tunnel, West Portal*

included them in the selected edition which he prepared for publication. The reason why there were none is that by the time he began his *Diary* in 1870, stagecoaches had disappeared from the turnpike roads. They had been replaced the railways, which had established a virtual monopoly of all distance travel in England during the thirty years since his youth and which he regularly used for all his distance travel and which figure frequently in his *Diary*.

Before the coming of turnpike roads there was very little long-distance travel in Britain. Most people never travelled beyond a radius of five or ten miles from their homes. In the Jersey of my childhood before the War, many Jersey men and women had never travelled outside the island, which may serve as a rough parallel. My father was a prosperous barrister, and I regularly crossed the Channel (by sea) four times a year. Sea crossings in the 1930s, like most railway fares a hundred years earlier, were too expensive for working men, so the radius of their world, was fixed by the walking strength of their legs, since they could not afford most railway fares. But in 1844 – the time when railway construction was expanding most rapidly, William Gladstone, who was Home Secretary in Robert Peel's Conservative government, passed a most important Railways Act, which imposed a number of controls upon the new railway companies, among them a clause compelling all of them to run at least one passenger train every day over the whole of their system at fares of not more than a penny a mile. No such law had ever been passed for stagecoaches, which were reserved for the moneyed classes (which at that time meant the great majority of would-be travellers). But in Gladstone's time an increasing number of working men were for the first time wanting to travel for all-important purpose of seeking better paid work in the new industrial towns, and Gladstone's law enable them to do so. The railway companies accepted the law, and introduced new third-class passenger coaches for the purpose, but confined them to the working classes by making them little more than goods wagons with wooden benches to sit on, no roofs, and no glass window, to discourage wealthier travellers from buying penny-a-mile

tickets. Kilvert did, on one or two occasions travel third class, usually because he had failed to bring enough cash for his normal second-class ticket but he very much disliked travelling third class for reasons which stand out very clearly indeed, as is very clear from his account of his visit to Bath on 18 May 1870:

*In the Box tunnel there was no lamp, the people began to strike foul brimstone matches, and pass them to each other all down the carriage. The carriage was chock full of brimstone fumes, and by the time we got out of the tunnel I was almost suffocated. Then a gentleman tore a lady's pocket handkerchief in two, seized one fragment, blew his nose with it, and put the rag in his pocket. She then seized his hat from his head, while another lady said that the dogs of Wootton Bassett were much more sociable than the people.*

But before the coming of the railways most working-class men and women never ventured far outside a radius of four or five miles round their own homes. Within that radius they got about wholly on foot. Horses were expensive luxuries; poor men often worked with horses, but very rarely rode them and never owned them. It was gentlemen, and above all lords and ladies, who rode horses, or more often rode in horse-drawn vehicles.

Kilvert was unquestionably a gentleman – in fact, as an educated man, an Oxford graduate, and an Anglican clergyman, he passed the test three times over. But he never owned a horse in the period covered by the *Diary*. He would probably have owned a horse as vicar of Bredwardine, and possibly even a carriage – it is recorded that when he returned with his wife from their honeymoon in Scotland in 1879, the villagers of Bredwardine took the horses out of the carriage and drew them back to the vicarage themselves, though whether he was the owner of the coach is not recorded. He certainly never owned a horse during his long curacy at Clyro. The vicar, Mr Venables, was himself a country gentleman owning both horses and a carriage, and he did on one or two occasions lend Kilvert one of his horses when Kilvert was looking after the parish during the vicar's absence. He must therefore have been at home on a horse's back and it is interesting to note that when the vicar was absent in London for two whole months in the spring of 1870, he found another clergyman (a Mr Welby – was he an ancestor of the present archbishop of Canterbury?) to occupy the vicarage and take the services, but trusted Kilvert to supervise the care of his horses.

But it is clear that when Kilvert went anywhere in Clyro, he went on foot, and took it for granted that he should do so. There is too another point to be made in this connection. Both Kilvert and the vicar were products of the Evangelical revival, which so dramatically blew through the Church of England in the nineteenth century after it had slid so far in the direction of toleration and scepticism in the previous century, and one of the leading feature of Evangelicalism was its insistence on a much higher standard of discipline and dedication among the clergy,

and a much more active concern with pastoral work – in other words, a much more active concern with the lives, the conditions, and the morals of his parishioners. In most parishes this was a task too much, too exacting and time-demanding for the vicar to carry out by himself, and the consequence was that, whereas in the eighteenth century the vicar was usually the only clergyman in the parish, and his sphere of activity scarcely passed beyond the provision all the services required by the Prayer Book on Sundays, in the following century there was, in most parishes of any size, as well as the vicar, a deputy for him in his curate – an ordained clergyman like himself, but appointed by the vicar at his discretion, and paid for out of his pocket, to assist him and this especially in the pastoral work of the parish, and especially in the visiting of the parishioners in their homes, to take an interest in the health, the wellbeing, and the families of the workmen of the parish, their attendance at church and their acceptance of its authority.

Curates thus constituted an important element of the Victorian Church of England, especially because of the large part they played in maintaining the Church's contact and influence with the working classes. But their rank within the Church was peculiar. The curate was an ordained clergyman (in other words, a priest – but the word 'priest' was only just coming into use in the Church of England, and was generally reserved for the clergy of the Roman Catholic Church), and as such was qualified to fill the office of vicar in charge of a parish, and to preside over all church services. His social background was the same as that of his vicar, for ordination was virtually confined to sons of the gentry, and it was taken for granted that all clergymen were gentlemen. But curates were subject to their vicars, who appointed them, and paid for them out of their own pockets, at rates far below their own incomes – these varied from parish to parish, but in a good parish the vicar would receive £200 or £300, and might receive much more. Mr Venables, Kilvert's vicar, was himself a wealthy landed gentleman, and his landed income, taken together with his income as vicar of Clyro, will certainly have run into four figures. But he only paid Kilvert £100 a year and this was above the average of a curate's income.

Curates, therefore, were gentlemen, but generally young gentlemen, and often poor ones. They were vicars in the making, and all curates lived in expectation of one day being vicars themselves. But the chances of success were unpredictable. Kilvert was undoubtedly a good, and dedicated, curate, but it took him twelve years to obtain his first parish. During his years at Clyro, he was always a poor man – his annual salary of £100 was in fact commonly regarded as the minimum sum required to give its recipient middle-class status. Yet in all other respects he was one of the gentry – he dined with the vicar every week, and he was a frequent and welcome guest at the dinner parties of the local

landed gentry, and he regularly travelled second class by train – middle class.

But he never owned a horse during his years as a curate, and only very rarely rode one. His tireless rounds of the parish were all carried out on foot, as were the rounds of most of his fellow curates, and there was no shame in it, because it was the normal means of transport for all except the seriously rich. In fact, too, Kilvert was one of the fortunate minority, mostly the small category of the educated, for whom walking in the country was a delight. He was one of a new generation of walkers, who walked not merely because they had to, but because they loved it. He was a member of the Romantic generation who had learned from its great progenitor Wordsworth to recognise and to appreciate the beauty of the English countryside as it had never been recognised and appreciated before. It was in walking the network of footpaths, stiles, kissing gates, and footbridges that were the work of the multitude of working men and women who had used them for centuries and that farmers and landowners provided for them, that Kilvert got to know them as well as he knew the lines of his own hand, and not only to know them but to love them, and it was from this that he derived the sensibility that enable him to describe so vividly in his *Diary* the beauties of that landscape. He was a keen observer of nature, a collector of ferns and a lover of the wild flowers which flourished far more freely in Victorian times than they do in modern landscapes.

There was nothing exceptional in Kilvert's dependence on walking as almost his sole means of transport. Certainly he was a stronger walker than most – as the old Welshman who acted as Kilvert's guide in his ascent of Cader Idris in 1871 said, '*You're a splendid walker, sir*'. But it was the delight he took in his walking that distinguished him from most of the villagers he met on the footpaths of Clyro. He was one of a new generation of walkers who had discovered the magic of walking, a discovery that originated with Wordsworth, but also with the social changes that were taking place in Victorian Britain, of which Kilvert was only partly conscious, and to which he reacted uneasily.



*On the Begwns, KS members follow in Kilvert's footsteps*

Photo: Alan Brimson



# Two Wiltshire Lovers of Landscape

*Mary Steele examines the connections between Francis Kilvert and John Aubrey*

When the Kilvert Society visited Chippenham for its September 2017 excursion, (see the report by Marjorie Elvins) curator Melissa Barnett explained plans for a new exhibit. It will link Kilvert with others before and after him who wrote about nature and the landscape. She mentioned the 17th century biographer and antiquarian John Aubrey as Kilvert's neighbour across two hundred years. There are indeed strong connections between the two men.

John Aubrey was born on 12 March 1626, in his maternal grandfather's house at 'Easton Pierse, a hamlet in the parish of Kington St Michael, in the hundred of Malmesbury, in the county of Wiltshire.'<sup>1</sup>

Kington St Michael is about three miles from Hardenhuish, Kilvert's birthplace. It is a bit further, but an easy walk for Kilvert, from Langley Burrell.

*This afternoon (24 Sept, 1874) I walked over to Kington St Michael by Langley Burrell Church and Morrell Lane and the old Mausoleum and Langley Ridge and the Plough Inn.*

Kington St Michael was the parish of Squire Coleman, Kilvert's maternal grandfather. Kilvert visited the village often to visit the vicar, Edward Awdry, who was a friend, and sometimes to help with services. The most famous *Diary* anecdote about Kington St Michael is the entry about local lady Mrs Prodggers and the new east window in the church on the theme of 'Suffer little children to come unto me':

*Mrs Prodggers and her children actually sat for their likenesses and she is introduced as one of the mothers, in the most prominent position. The whole thing is the laughing stock of the village and the countryside.* (15 Feb 1875)

Aubrey, whose best known work is his gossipy collective biography of contemporaries known as *Brief Lives*, would have loved this tale. He would also have enjoyed hearing Mrs John Knight's story that, when the Kington church bells rang, she said,

*'The Kington people have found a hen's nest' or 'A hen has laid an egg at Kington', as an old joke against the Kington people who were apt formerly to ring their church bells on the slightest provocation or none at all.* (22 April 1875)



John Aubrey (1626-97)

Frederick Grice, in his biography of Kilvert, suggested that Kilvert lived in the village of Kington St Michael for a short time, perhaps to help out during an absence of Edward Awdry.<sup>2</sup> Kilvert refers to a stay in his entry for 23 Feb 1875.

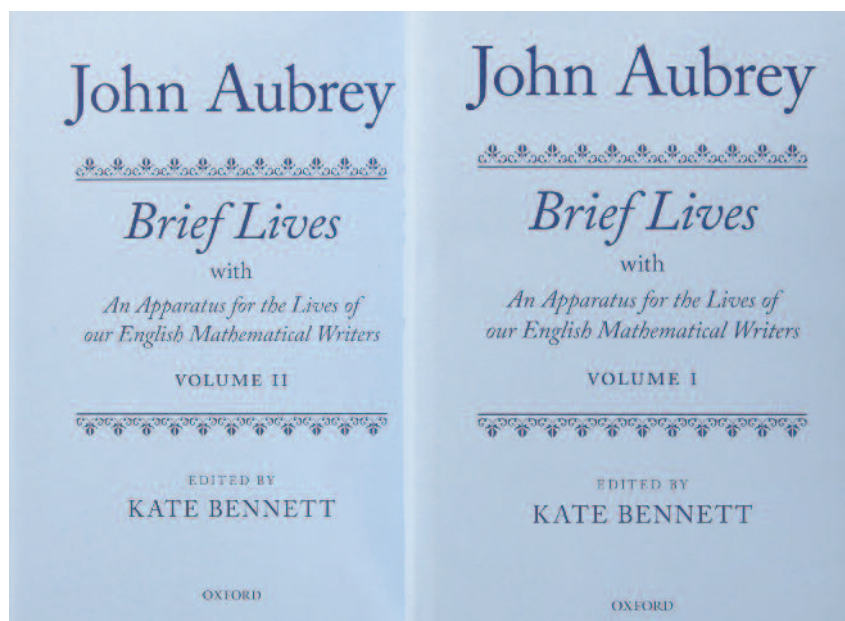
*At Kington St Michael the good vicar was busy in the village amongst his flock, so till he should come home I asked for the keys of his church and spent some time in the Church examining all the old monuments, and the new East Window, and musing and praying among the graves of my forefathers. Am I better or worse, have I gone further forward or backward than I was when I lived here at Kington St Michael ten years ago?*

These are Kilvert's Coleman forefathers; there is a memorial to his grandparents in the church. He would have mused over the graves of Aubrey's forbears too. Aubrey buried both his grandfather and his father in the chancel. But, having inherited the estate, debts meant that he had to sell his ancestral home. He himself is buried at Oxford, his exact grave unknown.

They were both Oxford men, Kilvert a graduate of Wadham College, and Aubrey at Trinity. Wadham has a peripheral role in Aubrey's story, as it became something of a scientific centre in his day. A new warden established a 'club for the pursuit of experimental philosophy ... I hope to follow their progress even though I am not in Oxford'<sup>3</sup>

Aubrey's studies had been interrupted by the English Civil War, when Oxford became the Royalist headquarters. He lamented over the destruction of old buildings, such as the demolition of St Mary's, Westport, Malmesbury, by Parliamentarians during the siege of 1643. He made drawings recording the details of buildings before they were lost, including the cracks in the steeple of Kington St Michael church, which he was afraid would collapse. (It did, but not until 1703).<sup>4</sup> Kilvert lived in an era of rebuilding, sometimes at the expense of antiquity. He was generally a fan of restoration, but he loved to wander around old churchyards, and admired Moccas Church, *the beautiful little Norman Church with its apse and stone altar.* (10 April, 1875)

Aubrey collected folklore, studied botany and geology and took a serious scholarly interest in Stonehenge. 'He was Britain's first



great archaeologist.<sup>5</sup> He made an accurate plan and discovered the circle of pits inside the earthwork, perhaps the remains of postholes, and now named the Aubrey Holes, in his honour. His detailed fieldwork, and correspondence with other enthusiasts, created a body of work about prehistoric monuments which continues to be valuable today, since, like his drawings of buildings, he provides clues to sites that have disappeared.

Kilvert recorded one visit to Stonehenge on 27 Aug 1875. He and his friend Arthur Morres walked eleven miles from Britford, near Salisbury, through the city, up the Devizes road and across the plain. His response to the stones was imaginative and romantic.

*They stood in the middle of a green plain, and the first impression they left on my mind was that of a group of people standing about and talking together. It seemed to me as if they were ancient giants who suddenly became silent and stiffened into stone directly anyone approached, but who might at any moment become alive again, and at certain seasons, as at midnight and Old Christmas and Midsummer Eve, might form a true 'Chorea Gigantum' and circle on the plain in a solemn and stately dance.*

Kilvert is interweaving the folklore that stone circles were once people frozen in time as a penalty for dancing with the observation, first made by William Stukely in 1740, that the entrances are related to the position of the sun at the solstice.

Kilvert goes on to say:

*It is a solemn, awful place. As I entered the charmed circle of the sombre Stones, I instinctively uncovered my head. It was like entering a great Cathedral Church. A great silent service was going on and the Stones inaudibly whispered to each other the grand secret. The Sun was present at the service in his Temple and the place was filled with his glory.*

Contemporary thinking in the 17th century was that Stonehenge had been built by the Romans, or even the Danes. Aubrey the researcher rejected these notions. He knew that stone circles predated the Romans because they appeared in parts of the country that Romans or Vikings never reached and so must be 'a work of a people settled in their country.'<sup>6</sup> He agreed that it was a place of worship: Druids, he wondered, a speculation that William Stukeley took up enthusiastically and that lingers to the present day. It was certainly around in Victorian times; Kilvert and Morres ate their lunch on the day of their walk at the Druid's Head Inn.

Aubrey travelled widely, planning to write a great book of *Monumenta Britannica*. A family lawsuit took him to Brecknockshire and Monmouthshire in 1656, during which trip he fitted in some site visits.

'As I rode from Brecknock to Radnor, on top of a mountain (I think not far from Payn's Castle) I saw a monument of stones like a sepulchre, but much bigger than at Holyhead. The stones are great and rudely placed. I think people call it Arthur's Chairs, or some such name.'<sup>7</sup> He is referring to the twin peaks of Pen-Y-Fan and Corn Du, once known as Cadair (Arthur's Seat), both of which have Bronze Age burial sites at the summits. In his entry for 28 March 1870, Kilvert retells a legend which must come from the same root. A giant at Painscastle captures a young woman and is pursued by her lover Arthur, the story ending in a great battle. The attribution of King Arthur to a prehistoric monument travelled to Herefordshire, where Arthur's Stone stands at Dorstone. Kilvert visited it twice in 1878, on 9 Feb and 26 June, the second time, coincidentally, with his Kington St Michael friend Edward Awdry.

Back in Wiltshire, Aubrey's great friend was Sir James Long of Draycot, an ancient Wiltshire family. Kilvert knew of the family, gossiping, Aubrey-like, about the chaotic coming-of-age party and disastrous marriage of the heiress Catherine Long to the *scamp Wellesley* (12 Dec 1873).

Aubrey never married, but his courtships might also have provoked neighbourly gossip. Mary Wiseman, who he fell in love with him 'at first sight',<sup>8</sup> married someone else, Katherine Ryves sadly died and Joan Sumner sued him in a row over the marriage settlement. Like Kilvert, he must have sighed *The course of true love never does run smooth* (13 Sept 1871).

Did Kilvert know of Aubrey? It's possible. John Britton, another Kington St Michael resident, wrote a memoir which was published in 1845. Canon John Edward Jackson, rector of nearby Leigh Delamere published *Wiltshire: the Topographical Collections of John Aubrey, FRS* which came out in 1862. But there is no reference in the *Diary*.

Unlucky in love, unfortunate in money matters, we can easily see similarities between John Aubrey and Francis Kilvert beyond their association with the same small village in Wiltshire. It goes deeper than this. Chippenham museum curator Melissa Barnet, who I mentioned at the top of this article, identified their mutual love of the local landscape. They were also attached to the people they met. Criticised for putting hearsay into his writing, Aubrey said:

'If I do not collect these minute details, they will be lost forever. I do not say that they are necessarily true, only that they have been believed true and have become part of local tradition.'<sup>9</sup> This recording of 'minute details' is something we treasure in Kilvert. Aubrey's biographer Ruth Scurr sums up her subject in a paragraph which we could head with Kilvert's name.

'Aubrey was a mild-mannered man who did not impose himself strongly upon his subjects. Instead, he captured them for posterity, without presuming to know what posterity would make of them. He was a listener.'<sup>10</sup>

## Reading Aubrey

John Aubrey's *Brief Lives* was commended by *The Guardian* on 13 Feb 2017 as one of the 100 best non-fiction books that has been written. It is available as a Penguin Vintage Classic or is downloadable as a free e-book via Project Gutenberg.

My main source of information on John Aubrey is Ruth Scurr's biography *John Aubrey: my own life*. Aubrey left a vast amount of paperwork, most of it unpublished in his lifetime, but he did not, as far as we know, keep a diary. Scurr has endeavoured to capture his humanity and immediacy by writing her biography in the form of a journal, using extracts from the writings. It is a format that KS members should be very comfortable with.

## REFERENCES

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- <sup>2</sup> Frederick Grice, *Francis Kilvert and his World* (Caliban, 1980), p 34
- <sup>3</sup> Scurr, p 81
- <sup>4</sup> Website of St Michael and all Angels, Kington St Michael
- <sup>5</sup> Aubrey Burl, *A brief history of Stonehenge*, (Robinson, 2006), p 38
- <sup>6</sup> Burl, p 38
- <sup>7</sup> Scurr, p 112
- <sup>8</sup> Scurr, p 90
- <sup>9</sup> Scurr, p 352
- <sup>10</sup> Scurr, p 10



# Boyhood Memories of Clyro by the Bishop of Swansea and Brecon

*as uncovered by Teresa Williams*

The following letter written by the Bishop of Swansea and Brecon, the Right Reverend Edward Latham Bevan appeared in *The Times* on 18th January 1934 in response to an obituary published the previous day for Colonel WB Capper CVO (1856-1934) formerly Director of Military Education in India and later Commandant of the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, who had settled in Clyro after his retirement in 1913. During his residence in Clyro, Colonel Capper apparently “took a great interest in local affairs and devoted much of his time to public service.”

From *The Times*, Thursday 18th January, 1934

“Dear Sir: it pains me to note in your memoir of Colonel Capper you have transferred our beautiful Parish of Clyro to a neighbouring county. [Herefordshire] It was certainly still in Radnorshire when I passed through it on Tuesday morning. We are jealous of this mis-handling of Clyro, for not only has it been (until recently) the home of the distinguished soldier to whose fine qualities you bear testimony, but Clyro had many claims to a distinguished history in the past. It was in Clyro Vicarage for example, that famous gatherings of the “*Saturday Reviewers*” used to take place. Richard Lister VENABLES was Vicar in my boyhood, and here George Stovin VENABLES, the LUSHINGTONS, Frederick Denison MAURICE and others were wont to foregather. A reference to the published volumes of F D MAURICE’s sermons will show how many of these were preached in Clyro Church.

I beg you therefore, to leave us in possession of this most charming village.

The Bishop of Swansea and Brecon”

Readers of the *Diary* will, of course, know Edward Bevan as ‘Teddy’ Bevan of Hay Castle, and references to Teddy riding over from Hay on his donkey to deliver a note to Kilvert, walking with the Diarist to Pont Vaen, visiting Wombwell’s Menagerie at Hay, etc can be found in Vol I 372-373 and Vol II 133 and 270. It is ironic that when Edward Bevan mentioned the fame of Clyro, he was not to know that, some four years after his death, the publication of Volume 1 of *Kilvert’s Diary* would make the village of Clyro far more famous than the “*Saturday Reviewers*” were ever able to do.

On Saturday, 3rd February, 1834, just three weeks after Edward Bevan’s letter. *The Times* had the sad task of publishing his obituary, as follows:

## **The First Bishop of Swansea and Brecon**

The Right Reverend Edward Latham BEVAN, DD died suddenly last night at his native town of Weymouth at the age of 72. He was spending a short holiday at Weymouth and was taken ill while sitting in his chair at the Royal Dorset Yacht Club of which he was a member, and died immediately. His first curacy was at Weymouth and for many years he had visited the town, staying in a fisherman’s cottage overlooking the harbour. He was



‘Teddy’ Bevan





*Brecon Cathedral*

the founder of the Gordon Boys' Home at Weymouth. He was described as "cheery, unaffected and direct in style." Three years ago in a letter to *The Times* he said he had grown accustomed to being addressed as "Bishop of Swansea etc.," but the office of a Chief Inspector of Taxes in London had introduced a delightful version by addressing him as "Messrs Swansea and Brecon." The Bishop, who was unmarried, leaves a brother and sister. The fourth son of Archdeacon WL BEVAN, he was born in Weymouth on 27th October 1861. He took his degree from Hertford College, Oxford in 1884 and after preparation at Wells was ordained to the curacy of Holy Trinity, Weymouth in 1886. IN 1891 he was appointed Chaplain to the Gordon Boys' Home and in 1897 became Vicar of Brecon, holding the benefice until 1921 and being also rural dean for some years. From 1907 to 1923 he was Archdeacon of Brecon and prebendary of Lanvaes in St David's Cathedral. In September 1915 he was consecrated Bishop Suffragan of Swansea in succession to the late Bishop Lloyd. When the new diocese of Swansea and Brecon was created in 1923 he was naturally elected its first Bishop, and was enthroned in the Priory Church on September 14th. He had the oversight of 140 beneficed clergy and 54 curates in the counties of Brecon and Radnorshire and a portion of Glamorgan.

The Bishop had long been interested in the Church of England Men's Association for which he did much valuable work, and had been its chairman since 1923. He was also deputy governor of the Church Lads' Brigade. More than once he pleaded in *The Times* for the abolition of football matches on Good Friday. It has been written of the Bishop that his subjects [of his sermons] appealed to the average man because they were human and not academic.

The funeral services at Holy Trinity Church, Weymouth and Brecon Cathedral on the 5th and 6th February were reported in *The Times* for Wednesday 7th February 1934, from which the following extract is taken:

"The first part of the funeral services for the Bishop of Swansea and Brecon took place at Holy Trinity Church, Weymouth on Monday and was taken by the Reverend C M Ricketts assisted by the Reverend E A Trasenter, the Reverend C H Fox Harvey and Mr A Simpson (local Superintendant [sic] of the Christian and Industrial Fellowship).

The coffin was taken by road to Brecon and lay in state in Brecon Cathedral on Monday night. The second part of the service was held at Brecon Cathedral yesterday and was taken by the Bishop of St David's assisted by Canon E A T Roberts and the Archdeacon of Gower. The committal sentences were said by the Archdeacon of Brecon and the Bishop of Bangor gave the Blessing.

The mourners included: the Reverend and Mrs Lewis Davies (brother-in-law and sister), Captain and Mrs Mumford, Hereford, the Reverend E N Dew, the Lord Lieutenant of Breconshire (Lord Glanusk), Major the Hon William Bailey, the Hon Mable and the Hon Gwladys Bailey, Mr A T Dew, Miss Ellen Dew, Miss Alice Dew and Mrs Lloyd Oswell. Among those present were the Bishop of Llandaff, the Dean of Monmouth, the Archdeacon of Camarthen, Lord and Lady Swansea, Sir Charles and Lady Dillwyn-Venables-Llewellyn, Captain E Aubrey Thomas etc."

# The Hare and Stanley Families in *Kilvert's Diary*

*John Toman returns to and examines in greater detail the relationship between the Kilvert, Hare and Stanley families, which he had first addressed in Journal 32, March 2011*

The links between the Hare family and the Kilvert family were deeper and more extensive than is initially apparent.

[J Toman, *Kilvert: The Homeless Heart*, p 40]

This article develops the one I wrote for *Kilvert Journal* no. 32, March 2011: 'Mrs Augustus Hare: godmother to the Kilvert children', which examined the large influence Maria Hare had on Robert Kilvert and his family. One of its main points was that he, in spite of his close relationship with her, made no mention of her in his *Memoirs*; it was a story he declined to tell. (I have noted elsewhere that members of the Kilvert family found, when writing of their experiences, that there were stories that could not be told.)<sup>1</sup> Stories were of great importance to the diarist, as is clear from his diary, which I have referred to as 'a compendium of stories'. References to the Hare and Stanley families keep on cropping up throughout the *Diary* and it is evident that there is a story to be told about the way the lives of those families were interwoven with that of the Kilverts.

Kilvert's references to those families show that he consistently took an interest in them. The *Diary* entry for 15

November 1870 tells us that Augustus Hare, Maria's adopted son, maintained contact with Kilvert's parents by letter; this particular letter was then passed on to the diarist, who was pleased to receive it.<sup>2</sup> They had been pupils together at Robert Kilvert's Hardenhuish (Harnish) school. Augustus first went there in 1843 and the diarist was six when the former left the school at Christmas 1846. The 15 November *Diary* entry gives a lengthy extract from Augustus's letter in which he reminisced about what Kilvert referred to as 'dear old



Augustus Hare

Harnish and Harnish days'. The extract deals exclusively with events and people at *Harnish school*, yet Kilvert declined to say that. He also declined to add, as one might have expected him to, either here or anywhere else in the *Diary*, his own reminiscences of the school.<sup>3</sup> The entries for 11 March, 15 April and 21 June 1876 are filled with ecstatic memories of his Harnish childhood yet none even touches on schooldays.

Particularly important to Kilvert was his sister Emily, whose account of family experiences is an invaluable source. One can imagine this brother and sister getting on easily because they were both highly emotional people, people who readily expressed

strong feelings. Kilvert harboured deep anxiety for this sister who had gone out to India with her children to be with her husband, a surgeon in the army. *The Lost Photo Album* emphasises the diarist's steady concern for her safety and the relief he obtained from her weekly letters to him.

Emily's emotionality is a key feature of her *Rambling Recollections*, the memoir she wrote at the age of seventy. In it, she recalls a great number of people and things with affection: servants, family doctors, books and pictures from the Kilvert nursery, pets, friends and neighbours, clothes. She had especially clear memories of what she called the 'boys', the pupils of her father's Harnish school, who boarded with the family. At first there were only eight or nine of them but extensions to the house paid for by Mr Clutterbuck, who owned the Harnish living, enabled twelve to be accommodated. References to the 'boys' occur all through Emily's narrative but it seems significant that the first reference comes very early (in the third paragraph), as though the need to recall them was powerful. The phrasing of this first reference is also significant: 'The "boys" were a never failing source of interest and pleasure to us children'. Explanation of this statement comes in another much later reference to the 'boys': 'As children we had very few child friends'. She then mentioned four girls who were seen only 'occasionally' but she immediately added 'but we never wanted for companions, for had we not the "boys"??'

That the Kilvert children had very few friends is another factor underlining their strict religious upbringing; the Kilvert parents ensured that juvenile influence on their offspring met with their approval. (Other examples of this strict upbringing noted by Emily were the few toys they had and the few edible 'treats'.) A striking aspect of her list of 'boys' she remembered, over thirty of them, is the emphasis placed on their social background. She made a point of noting either titles possessed by their parents or other elements indicative of wealth and status. Two brothers were 'sons of Lady Sophia Bond', two others were 'sons of Sir Walter and Lady Mary Farquar', two more were 'sons of a banker, the elder one became Sir Richard -', the mother of another 'afterwards married Sir Rutherford Alcock'. The homes of two boys (not brothers) were castles in Ireland. One was the son of a general.

Emily was proud of the fact that her father's pupils were out of the (almost) top drawer socially. Robert Kilvert would have been equally proud; it was important if one was running a private school at the time (the 1840s) that one was able to attract boys from eminent families. Robert could not guarantee that his pupils came to him from families in which piety was strong, but it was something if they came from 'respectable' families. He had always to bear in mind that these boys would be living with his own children. If the incomers lacked piety, it was his duty to inculcate it, or to deepen it where it already existed. He set out to do the latter with Augustus Hare and his two cousins, Marcus and Theodore, whose home was also a castle: Herstmonceux in Sussex.

Emily Kilvert mentioned the three Hares in her recollections of Harnish, noting that they were all nephews of Archdeacon



Julius Hare of Sussex. She also noted that Augustus had been adopted by her godmother, Mrs Augustus Hare, widow of the Rev Augustus Hare. The links between the Kilverts and the Hares were partly geographical, one of them being the county of Wiltshire. Robert Kilvert's first curacies were in Wiltshire locations: Keevil and Melksham. After his mental breakdown in the latter living in autumn 1832, he had a spell of recuperation. He then became curate in Alton Barnes, a hamlet ten miles east of Devizes, Wilts., the nearest town. Augustus Hare called the hamlet 'the most primitive place I have ever seen, isolated in the midst of the great Wiltshire corn-plain'.<sup>4</sup> Robert went there in October 1833 to replace its Rector, Augustus Hare, uncle of young Augustus; the Rector departed shortly afterwards for Rome for his health's sake. After his death there in February 1834, his widow and Robert corresponded regularly. The Wiltshire link was maintained when she sent her adopted son Augustus to Robert's school in Hardenhuish on the edge of Chippenham. The relationship between the two families began early therefore and, on the evidence of the *Diary*, contact between them continued certainly up to November 1870 when Augustus wrote to Mr and Mrs Kilvert.

There was considerable closeness between Robert Kilvert and Maria Hare from the outset because they both held extreme Evangelical views.<sup>5</sup> The latter showed her approval of the former by sending Augustus to his school on 28 July 1843. Emily Kilvert would have had dim memories of Augustus at Harnish school because she was only four when he left at Christmas 1846. Kilvert, aged six at this latter date, would have remembered more, which makes it even stranger that he made no mention of Augustus or any of the 'boys'.

The *Diary* again provides evidence that past occasions when Hares had mixed with Kilverts still had importance for the diarist's family. The date was 29 September 1873. Robert Kilvert had been recalling his stay at the home of Marcus Theodore Hare (1796-1845), at Corsley, near Westbury (another connection with the county of Wiltshire). He is referred to in the *Diary* entry as 'Captain Marcus Hare' because he served in the Royal Navy. He was the father of the two Hare boys, cousins of Augustus, who had also attended Robert's Harnish school. Presumably Robert

was staying at Corsley when he had charge of Marcus junior, who was born in 1836. Marcus senior died in 1845, so the date of Robert's visit to his home must have been just before then.<sup>6</sup>

The main point of the *Diary* entry recording this event seems to be that Robert had had to expound Scripture in the dominating presence of Julius Hare, Archdeacon of Sussex, a formidable scholar. 'Mrs Marcus Hare told my father not to mind "Julius" being there,' Kilvert wrote, 'to speak to him very plainly, not to flatter and court him ... and to give his exposition of Scripture as usual, just as if Julius Hare were not there'. The remainder of the entry shows the kind of person Julius was by reference to his 'contemptuous indifference' towards the fine pansies which were the pride and joy of his brother Marcus.<sup>7</sup>

A noticeable feature of this entry is that after 'Mrs Marcus Hare' Kilvert inserted '(The Honourable Miss Stanley)', as though, in the manner of his sister Emily, it mattered which of the Harnish pupils had aristocratic connections. Augustus Hare, who loved to mix with the highest aristocrats, carefully characterised the pupils at Robert Kilvert's school as of 'the rich middle class'.<sup>8</sup> 'The Honourable Miss Stanley' was Lucy Anne, the second daughter of the first Lord Stanley of Alderley, Cheshire. The manor of Over Alderley came into the possession of the Stanley family in the 1580s.<sup>9</sup>

From Augustus Hare's autobiography we learn this: 'Lucy Anne Stanley [was] the life-long friend of Maria Hare', and also that the former 'had long urged my mother to send me to school'.<sup>10</sup> Maria wrote to Lucy on 16 July 1834 praising Robert Kilvert's preaching,<sup>11</sup> and it seems that she also recommended his school as a suitable place for Lucy's sons. The closeness between the two women increased when Lucy's marriage to Marcus Hare made her sister-in-law to Maria, and aunt to Maria's adopted son Augustus. The two women loved to sit together and 'their conversation was almost entirely about the spiritual things in which their hearts, their mental powers, their whole being were absorbed,' wrote Augustus. 'They would talk of heaven just as worldly people would talk of the place they were going for a change of air'. We recall here that Augustus had emphasised that Robert Kilvert's 'ultra-evangelical divinity' was marked by 'no knowledge whatever of the world'. Lucy's firm belief in heaven



Archdeacon Julius Hare



Maria Josepha Stanley



Maria Hare

comes through in a letter she wrote on 5 August 1849 to Henrietta Maria (wife of the second Lord Stanley): 'We are so much too apt to think and talk as if *this* were our home [whereas] it is the journey to our home'.<sup>12</sup> Augustus remembered too that after her husband died in 1845 Lucy became 'very peculiar', insisting that her maid had meals with the family and 'be waited on as a lady'.<sup>13</sup> Lucy's religiosity is seen in other Stanley letters. When anxiety was being felt over the illness of a relative, Maria Josepha Stanley wrote to her daughter-in-law Henrietta Maria: 'Dear Lucy is of no use on such occasions but to soothe the invalid, and repeat Hymns and Texts'. Lucy's strict observance of the Sabbath is the point of the observation: 'Surely Lucy is not such a *Pharisee* she could not do an act of kindness on a Sunday.'

The March 2011 *Journal* article focused on the books which Maria Hare gave to Emily Kilvert when she was a child as evidence of her religiosity. It noted how much they dwelt upon the sinfulness of children, the virtues of obedience and self-denial, and God's presence in Nature. Maria also gave her a Bible and the Prayer-book 'bound in brown morocco'.<sup>14</sup>

A further indication of Kilvert's continuing concern with Augustus Hare occurs in this 21 July 1873 entry: 'sitting under the linden reading *Memorials of a Quiet Life*, Augustus Hare's book'. It had been published in 1872 in two volumes, and the diarist had wasted no time therefore in obtaining a copy. It was Augustus's memoir of his 'mother', Maria Hare.<sup>15</sup>

It was in Augustus's autobiography, which Kilvert had not read (it was not published until 1896), that we find the former's account of his Harnish experiences:

Mr Kilvert was a good scholar, but in the driest, hardest sense; of literature he knew nothing, and he was entirely without originality or cleverness, so that his knowledge was of the most untempting description.

He was deeply 'religious', but he was very hot-tempered, and slashed our hands with a ruler and our bodies with a cane most unmercifully for exceedingly slight offences. So intense, so abject was our terror of him, that we used to look forward as to an oasis to the one afternoon when he went to his parish duties. The greater part of each day was spent in lessons, and

oh! what trash we were wearisomely taught... The extreme and often unjust severity of Mr Kilvert, made the next half year a very miserable one. In the three years and a half which I had spent at Harnish, I had been taught next to nothing – all our time having been frittered in learning Psalms by heart, and the Articles of the Church of England (I could say the whole thirty-nine straight off when eleven years old), &c. Our history was what Arrowsmith's Atlas used to describe Central Africa to be – 'a barren country only productive of dates'. I could scarcely construe the easiest passages of Caesar.

It is hard to imagine a more complete, more damning criticism of a school than this. It has either been ignored or rejected outright by Kilvert commentators.<sup>16</sup> It appeared in the Kilvert Society booklet 'More Chapters from the Kilvert Saga', but no comment was made on it in William Plomer's introduction, nor in the 'Random Thoughts' of the then Society's Secretary C.T.O. Prosser. The Harnish account in that booklet is taken from Hare's *The Story of my Life*.

The passages from it quoted above are not the whole of it; there was also this:

The greater portion of Mr Kilvert's scholars – his 'little flock of lambs in Christ's fold' – were a set of little monsters. All infantine immoralities were highly popular, and – in such close quarters – it would have been difficult for the most pure and high-minded boy to escape from them. The first evening I was there, at nine years old, I was compelled to eat Eve's apple quite up – indeed, the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil was stripped absolutely bare: there was no fruit left to gather.

A host of questions raise themselves here. Was Hare telling the truth? I think there is no doubt that he was. He had no need and no motive for making it up. What had happened to him on that first evening? Was he raped? He tells us that 'several boys slept in a room together at Harnish', thus facilitating the 'infantine immoralities'. Presumably Kilvert didn't sleep in the boys' room yet would he not have almost certainly heard of what went on there? Emily Kilvert recorded that the 'boys' were the regular companions of the Kilvert children, providing them with much 'interest'. Kilvert remained among the 'boys' until he was eleven, ample time to be exposed to the school's immoralities. What effect did they have on him? Was one effect what H.S. Scarborough called 'peculiar features of Kilvert's writing, signs of a violently repressed character'? He meant the diarist's lust for little girls, his desire to whip them, his sensualism. Scarborough was echoing Plomer's observation in his introduction to volume three of the *Diary*: 'it seems possible that certain peculiarities of his character first germinated in the days when his father kept a school at Harnish'.

Grice wrote of a conflict in Kilvert between his 'passionate nature' and 'a Victorian sense of sin'.<sup>17</sup> Is this the conflict which we see in the 21 July 1873 *Diary* entry: 'As I sat there my mind went through a fierce struggle. Right or wrong? The right conquered, the sin was repented and put away'. This passage occurs in the entry recording his reading of *Memorials of a Quiet Life*, although more material perhaps separated the two passages. Nevertheless, it is possible that reading about the immorality at Harnish school aroused guilt connected with things and feelings he had experienced there.

We are only a few pages into *Kilvert's Diary* when the first mention is made of a member of the Stanley family. The diarist



had gone on 25 January 1870 with his Clyro friend Henry Crichton to Westminster Abbey to see the consecration of the Bishop of Oxford. Kilvert could not get a seat after the procession and 'was obliged to stand and sit alternatively on the altar steps just by the pulpit'. The Dean of Westminster at this time was Arthur Penrhyn Stanley (1815-1881) and he was present at the consecration ceremony. He had noticed Kilvert standing during the Litany and 'thought I meant to stand throughout', and so sent him a message 'that he would be very much obliged if I would kneel during the imposition of hands' (the moment when the new Bishop would receive spiritual blessing). Kilvert responded punctiliously to this request from a high churchman: 'I took care to do [it],' he recorded.

Having reviewed in this article the various contacts which Kilvert's family had over many years with the Stanley family, we are now in a position to assess this *Diary* entry with regard to the knowledge Kilvert had of Arthur Stanley and his knowledge of Kilvert. Kilvert would have known of Arthur because he was a prominent churchman, a hugely prolific author, and a famous preacher.<sup>18</sup> He would have known him by sight because he was Professor of Ecclesiastical History at Oxford during the years when the diarist was a student at Wadham College.<sup>19</sup> An intriguing question is whether Arthur knew Kilvert by sight and even by name. When the latter wrote 'The Dean having observed me standing ... sent me a message', there is a hint that he did. There must have been others like Kilvert who had failed to find seats and who the Dean wished to kneel 'during the imposition of hands'. It seems very unlikely that he would have sent messages to them all.

Arthur Stanley had become Dean of Westminster in 1863. His father was Edward Stanley (1779-1849), originally Rector of Alderley, later Bishop of Norwich, who had married Catherine Leycester, sister of Maria Leycester, godmother to the Kilvert children; he was first cousin to Lucy Stanley, wife of Marcus Hare. Arthur married Lady Augusta Bruce, lady-in-waiting to Queen Victoria. He was famous for his liberal views in both academic and religious spheres: 'He was considered to be advanced in thought'.<sup>20</sup>



Arthur Penrhyn Stanley

Arthur came into the life of Augustus Hare not long after he had left Harnish. He had had in the interim an unhappy year at

Harrow School during 1847. In August 1848 he was sent to a private (Evangelical) tutor at Lyncombe, near Bath, but found he was learning no more than he had at Harnish.<sup>21</sup> In April 1850, Arthur, having missed his train in Bath, called to see Augustus in Lyncombe. 'He was horrified at my ignorance,' wrote Augustus, and he persuaded Maria to take him away from his current tutor. When Arthur became a canon at Canterbury in 1851, Augustus used to spend winter holidays with him, and he became 'the most stimulating companion ... he talked on all subjects that interested him'. He chose a new tutor for Augustus in 1851, the Rev Charles Bradley whose father was a famous Evangelical preacher.<sup>22</sup> Charles Bradley's brother George (1821-1903) was Headmaster of Marlborough College when Kilvert's brother Edward was a pupil. Although they sometimes did not get on, the relationship between Charles and Augustus was a good one. 'I owe everything to Mr Bradley', the latter stated. 'He was the only person who ever taught me anything'.<sup>23</sup>



George Bradley

The result of Augustus's contact with Arthur Stanley and Charles Bradley was that by 1853 'I was just beginning at nineteen to feel something of the self-confidence which boys usually experience at thirteen'. He felt 'emancipated from the oppressors of my boyhood'. It was in this buoyant mood that he began at Balliol College, Oxford, on 16 March 1853 to take the Law and History course taken by Kilvert.<sup>24</sup> He didn't think much of education at Balliol: 'The College lectures were the merest rubbish'. He reflected that £4,000 had been spent on his education over fourteen years, 'wasted on my education of nothingness'. He greatly enjoyed, however, Arthur Stanley's lectures; they were 'subjects of the greatest interest to me'.<sup>25</sup> It is interesting to think of Kilvert, who went up to Oxford two years after Augustus left, finding similar pleasure in Arthur's lectures. His warm response to the Dean of Westminster in the Abbey on

25 June 1870 might have originated in such positive experiences; it is even possible that the Dean remembered him from those times. It is also probable that Kilvert heard of the close, seminal relationship which Augustus had with Arthur Stanley through letters which passed between his parents and both Augustus and Maria Hare.

The Stanley name figures in a *Diary* entry which may be seen as the most profound and significant in terms of understanding the mind of the author. The date was 24 April 1873 and Kilvert went from Chippenham by the 12.23 train to Wootton Bassett to stay for a few days with the Evangelical De Quetteville family. In his third-class carriage was 'a lady and a child'. He emphasised the child's captivating beauty: 'a singularly beautiful child, lovely as few children are lovely, with a fair and delicate complexion'. Just as her companion was 'a lady', so the child, a girl, had 'a distinguished manner and bearing'. She did not seem to belong to the lady with her. As Kilvert held the child in his arms, he experienced 'a sudden and great happiness... I had thought my heart was growing hard'. He was overwhelmed by 'the old delicious feeling of ... love'.

At this point he quoted words from St Paul's second *Epistle to the Corinthians*: 'I knew a man – such an one caught up to the third heaven, and saw and felt unspeakable things'. He explained her importance to him: 'she was no ordinary child' and her coming to him was no accident, no 'chance crossing of paths'; she was an 'angel child', and in her eyes was 'a message', because she was 'God's sweet unconscious messenger'. He was not, however, content simply to acknowledge her divine origin; he was keen to know her earthly one. In a hurry to leave the railway carriage, he had forgotten to ask her name, thus 'the only chance was lost of ever knowing the name of the child'. It pained him to think they would 'never meet again in this world'. All that evening he could think of nothing but her. At dinner at the De Quettevilles, he realised that the man waiting on them was the man who had spoken on the train to the lady in charge of the child. 'Again there was a chance of finding out the child's name'. Next morning, 25 April, the waiter was on the box of the carriage taking Kilvert to the station. He seized his opportunity and asked "Who was she?" "That," said the waiter, "was the only child of Lord Stanley of Alderley". The waiter then supplied several details explaining Lord Stanley's recent movements: he had been hunting near Sherborne, Dorset, and had left the child with her nurse to follow later.<sup>26</sup> The waiter stated that the nurse was 'an old friend' of his.

In a footnote to this *Diary* entry, Plomer rejected the story about Lord Stanley's daughter: 'The waiter seems either to have been misinformed or to have been pulling Kilvert's leg'. This unfortunately is an unhelpful, confusing comment on a strange story that is full of strange coincidences. If the waiter had really told Kilvert that he was 'an old friend' of the nurse, he could hardly have been 'misinformed'. Furthermore, why should he be 'pulling Kilvert's leg' and, even more unlikely, why should he tell deliberate untruths? In addition, Plomer's observation that the *youngest* of the daughters of the second Lord Stanley had married in 1864, nine years before the episode related in the *Diary* entry, is quite irrelevant. What might be relevant is whether *she* had a daughter aged around three at this time. The youngest daughter of the second Lord Stanley was Rosalind, born 1844, who married George Howard, Earl of Carlisle. One of their daughters, Cecilia Maude, could have been the angel child because she was born circa 1868, making her four/five in 1873, although Kilvert said she was 'not quite three'.<sup>27</sup>

It would be satisfying to have been able to identify the angel

child with certainty. However, the really important thing is to take account of Kilvert's near obsession to learn her name. Only slightly less obsessive was his desire to confirm that she was of the Stanley family. He listed all the pieces of information given him by the waiter in an effort to achieve this confirmation; it is as though he wanted more than anything to locate the angel child in the Stanley family. Her coming to him as God's messenger was of the greatest possible significance because she represented love as the principle of the universe.<sup>28</sup> What was more, she had been sent specially to him by God at a time when he thought he was losing the capacity to love.

It was an easy matter for Kilvert to recall St Paul's words from the second *Epistle to the Corinthians* to convey the ecstasy he experienced as he held the angel child in his arms. Evangelicals like him regarded the Apostle with particular reverence (he regularly recorded in his diary the date of his conversion – 25 January),<sup>29</sup> and the *Epistles* were a main source of their beliefs. Kilvert had made a special study of them as is indicated by the fact that he had his own copy of Frederick Robertson's *Lectures on Corinthians*.<sup>30</sup> Kilvert was a devoted follower of Robertson because 'his teaching was founded on human goodness inspired by divine love, and consisted in extending love ... to mankind in general'.<sup>31</sup> Kilvert was seeking to express that understanding when he wrote about the angel child experience: 'That has come true from the beginning of the world and will be true to its end, and as long as human nature shall last'. Arthur Stanley expressed the same vision when writing of the second *Epistle to the Corinthians*: 'this epistle becomes the most striking instance of all Paul's writings: a new philosophy of life poured forth through occasional bursts of human feeling'.

The fact that Arthur Stanley had written a book, *The Epistles of St Paul to the Corinthians*, reinforces the identification for Kilvert of the angel child episode with the Stanley family. Given Kilvert's passion for St Paul and the fact that he knew Robertson's book on these *Epistles*, it is very likely that he also knew Stanley's book. Kilvert's knowledge of the passage about a Christian man being taken up to 'the third heaven' was so good that when writing the 24 April entry he could remember it quite accurately.<sup>32</sup> The 'third heaven' is one of the several levels of heaven of Jewish tradition. Arthur Stanley explained 'third heaven' thus: 'it would be the invisible world in the presence of God, ... identical with paradise'.<sup>33</sup> Kilvert had had a brief foretaste of this paradise when he held the 'singularly beautiful girl' (whom he couldn't stop kissing!): 'meanwhile I was in heaven'. In other words, the 'man in Christ', who was Kilvert himself now, had experienced heaven briefly and he owed that blessing to a daughter of the house of Stanley. It is very important here to emphasise that he had accepted the waiter's view of who the angel child was; it is quite clear at the end of the *Diary* entry for 25 April 1873 that he was absolutely certain that she was a Stanley. And thus his admiration, almost reverence, for that family was enhanced further: his encounter with the angel child had confirmed the principle of love that was the bedrock of his Christian faith.

Earlier in this article Kilvert's prompt response to the request that he knelt during the consecration service for the Bishop of Oxford was characterised simply as the deference of a country curate towards the Dean of Westminster. However, it is now possible to interpret Kilvert's apparent familiarity, even intimacy, with Arthur Stanley, hinted at in the *Diary* account of that ceremony, as a kind of respect deriving from past knowledge of



him. That knowledge could have come first from hearing Stanley's sermons at Oxford, then from learning how he had transformed Augustus Hare from the unhappy dunce who had left Robert Kilvert's school in 1846 into a confident, successful author,<sup>34</sup> and finally from reading Stanley's commentary on the *Epistles* of St Paul.

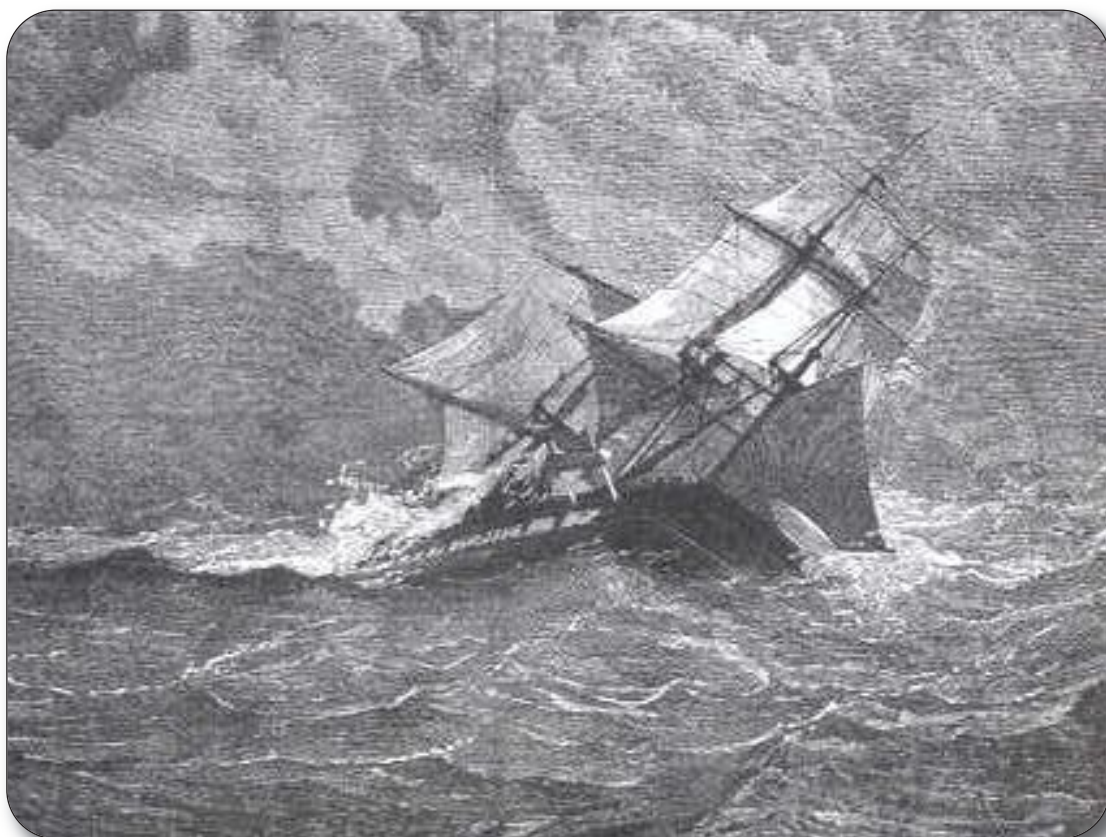
The first of two remaining *Diary* entries concerning the Hare family for consideration is that of 16 November 1870. The previous entry (15 November) told of Augustus's letter to Kilvert's parents in which he referred to his mother's illness. On the 16th, the diarist wrote: 'This morning I learnt from Mrs Venables of the death of Mrs Augustus Hare. She heard of it from Miss Higginson'.<sup>35</sup> This entry notes how much this event would have meant to Robert Kilvert: 'My Father I know will feel her death'. Kilvert added nothing to show his reaction to the death of his godmother. He did however include this: 'poor Augustus, what will he do without her? She has been the object of his life. It was a very beautiful attachment on both sides.' Kilvert was yet to read Hare's book *Memorials of a Quiet Life*, so his knowledge of their 'attachment' derived from other sources: from letters between the Hare family and his own and perhaps from Robert Kilvert's contact with Marcus Hare and his family. The way in which this entry pictures 'poor Augustus', bereft without his mother, shows a fondness on Kilvert's part for him, which again suggests closeness.

The other *Diary* entry needing some comment is that for 31 March 1878, in which Kilvert stated that at Bredwardine Church he 'spoke in the sermon on the loss of the *Eurydice* and Marcus Hare off Dunnose last Sunday afternoon while we were at Church'. Kilvert regularly used sea and railway disasters in sermons to point out the workings of God's will and he did the same here. He quoted in this sermon the remark of one aristocrat to another: 'It is better to trust in the Lord than to put any confidence in princes.' The *Eurydice*, a naval training ship, was on its return voyage from Bermuda to Portsmouth when it capsized in a snowstorm off the Isle of Wight.<sup>36</sup> Its captain, the Marcus Hare junior who had been a pupil at Harnish school, ordered the crew to abandon ship, and then went down with it, his hands clasped in prayer. Only two of its crew of 318 survived.

It is evident that the story connecting the Kilvert, Hare and Stanley families, which has been constructed here, touches on a number of issues of central importance in the larger Kilvert story:

religious belief, social position, the education of children, making one's way in the world, the position of women. The severe Evangelicalism prevalent in the early decades of the century was the initial bond between the families. It dominated Robert Kilvert's life and outlook; it was that which prompted his choice of Maria Hare as godmother to his children. It shaped the upbringing of those children. The harshness of it was fully described by Augustus Hare and was known to the Kilvert children, who declined to make reference to it in their recollections out of love and loyalty to their father.

It has been shown above that a relationship of some kind between the Kilverts and Hares lasted for several decades. It was always of interest to the former to know about the careers pursued by the Hare sons. The interest the Kilverts took in the Hares was increased by their intermarriage with the Stanley family. To have even a remote connection with such an illustrious family enhanced the Kilvert family's sense of their social importance. The Stanleys moved with the highest aristocrats in the land, held government positions. They were also known, even notorious, for their intellectual endeavours and liberal principles. Henrietta Maria Stanley, though highly conservative in some ways,



*HMS Eurydice*

championed the cause of women's education: she was one of the founders of Girton College for women at Cambridge, and had founded high schools for girls. Her daughter, Kate, campaigned for women's rights, and Kate's sister Maude ran clubs for working girls in London's East End.

The Kilverts' sense of being Wiltshire people was augmented by the fact that Hares and Stanleys had links to the county, as has been noted. Sussex was another county which figured prominently in the lives of Kilverts and Hares. The Hares' home was there, Aunt Sarah Kilvert and her husband settled in

Horsham, Sussex. Maria Hare and Augustus were living near St Leonards, Sussex, at around the time Kilvert taught there in 1859.<sup>37</sup>

Of supreme importance to Kilvert was, I believe, Arthur Stanley, who was another link to the Hare family. It seems that the diarist's transcendental experience on the Wootton Bassett train in 1873 gained enormously in significance because he was convinced that the angel child bearing God's message of love to him was a daughter of that eminent family. And Arthur Stanley had, in his study of Kilvert's beloved St Paul, helped Kilvert to understand the nature of that profound moment.

## REFERENCES

- <sup>1</sup> My article 'The Kilvert Quaker background: A story that could not be told' (Kilvert Society, *Journal* no. 24 September 2007) noted that, although the diarist admitted that the Ashe family were 'deeply averse' to the marriage of his grandmother to Walter Coleman, he declined to say why; the reason was, it seems, that Coleman was a Quaker. Robert Kilvert blocked out the real causes of the mental breakdowns he suffered both at Oriel College and in his curacy at Melksham. Kilvert said absolutely nothing of his time as a pupil of his father and of his uncle Francis.
- <sup>2</sup> Kilvert called it 'a nice letter'.
- <sup>3</sup> Such reminiscences might, of course, have appeared in the two thirds of the *Diary* we don't have. But would Plomer have omitted something so important and so revealing?
- <sup>4</sup> *The Years with Mother*, London, Century Publishing, 1984, p.45. The book is an abridgement of the first three volumes of Hare's *The Story of my Life* (1896).
- <sup>5</sup> See the article 'Mrs Augustus Hare: godmother to the Kilvert children' for details of these views.
- <sup>6</sup> If Marcus had first gone to Harnish school at the age of eight, the date would have been 1844, the year after Augustus started.
- <sup>7</sup> Marcus rose to be a commander of a naval vessel, but after the composition of the government changed in 1832 he obtained no further promotions, which left him embittered.
- <sup>8</sup> 'Countesses, Marchionesses and Duchesses were his favoured society' (Introduction to *The Years with Mother*, p.xii).
- <sup>9</sup> A new hall was built in 1818 but was in a dilapidated state when it was bought in 1950 by ICI Pharmaceuticals. Astra Zeneca then owned it as a base for its research department. In 2013 it was bought by another science group.
- <sup>10</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp.12 and 37.
- <sup>11</sup> Noted in the Kilvert *Journal* article on Maria Hare.
- <sup>12</sup> *The Ladies of Alderley, Letters between Maria Josepha, Lady Stanley of Alderley and her daughter-in-law, Henrietta Maria Stanley, during the years 1841-1850*, edited by Nancy Mitford, London, Hamish Hamilton, 1967 (Lucy's italics).
- <sup>13</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp.46-7.
- <sup>14</sup> Emily added at this point: 'Mrs Hare was most kind in her gift of books... In those days that seemed to me the only thing our sponsors were any good for!' (*op. cit.*, p.103).
- <sup>15</sup> It was extremely popular and nineteen editions of it appeared. The editor of *The Years with Mother*, the abridged edition of it, referred to its mass of 'tediously pious correspondence', its 'long extracts from her equally pious journals', and 'its picture of clerical life and thought in rural England in the middle of the nineteenth century'. It was 1,000 pages in length.
- <sup>16</sup> David Lockwood was unwilling to see any truth in its portrayal of Robert Kilvert, insisting that an 'amiable picture is the truer one' (*Francis Kilvert*, p.31).
- <sup>17</sup> Frederick Grice, *Francis Kilvert and his World*, p.226. The lecture given by H.S. Scarborough to the Kilvert Society is discussed here too.
- <sup>18</sup> He had written, *inter alia*, a popular biography of Dr Arnold, headmaster of Rugby.
- <sup>19</sup> Kilvert probably heard Arthur Stanley preach at Oxford too. He published *Sermons preached before the University of Oxford* in 1860. The fact that he also published *The Epistles of St Paul to the Corinthians* (London, John Murray, 1858) would have been important to Kilvert, who was devoted to St Paul.
- <sup>20</sup> *The Stanleys of Alderley. Their Letters between the years 1851-1865*, edited by Nancy Mitford, London, Hamish Hamilton, 1968, p.xv.
- <sup>21</sup> That he was still so ignorant after two years' further 'teaching' at Harrow and Lyncombe confirms how bad the 'teaching' at Robert Kilvert's school was.
- <sup>22</sup> He was appointed in 1825 to be Vicar of Glasbury near Clyro by the Evangelical Bishop of Gloucester, Henry Ryder, who was chairman of the Bath Church Missionary Society, of which Robert Kilvert and several of his friends were members in the 1820s (see J. Toman, *Kilvert's World of Wonders*, pp.222-3, on this Society). Robert was a contemporary at Oriel College with one of Ryder's sons.
- <sup>23</sup> *The Years with Mother*, pp.56, 75-6.
- <sup>24</sup> The course was a new, forward-looking one, a product of the Oxford reforms of 1850.
- <sup>25</sup> *The Years with Mother*, pp.109, 105.
- <sup>26</sup> The details of this itinerary are correct. The Somerset Central Railway opened in 1854 and connected with the Dorset Central Railway, opened in 1860. Bath and Bournemouth were thus linked. Kilvert knew this line, using it to Dorchester on 30 April 1874 to meet William Barnes.
- <sup>27</sup> Another Stanley descendant might have been the angel child. The Hon. Matilda Stanley married in 1828 Henry John Adeane (1789-1847) of Babraham, Cambs. Their grand-daughter Maude Alethea was born in March 1869, so she was just four in 1873.
- <sup>28</sup> For the full significance in Kilvert's life of the angel child episode see J. Toman, *Kilvert's Diary and Landscape*, pp.217-19.
- <sup>29</sup> E.g. in 1875 and 1878. On that date in 1872 the sermon he was writing was on this theme. He had intended to go to St Paul's, Knightsbridge on 25 January 1870 but went instead to Westminster Abbey.
- <sup>30</sup> On 9 February 1870 he noted 'Lent Miss Dew Robertson's Lectures on Corinthians'.
- <sup>31</sup> J. Toman, *Kilvert's World of Wonders*, p.137. Robertson's influence on Kilvert is examined throughout *Kilvert's Diary and Landscape*, but see especially pp.17-19.
- <sup>32</sup> He wrote 'I knew a man', the original has 'I knew a man in Christ'; he also wrote 'and saw and felt unspeakable things', whereas the original has 'heard unspeakable words'. *The New English Bible* renders this last phrase 'and heard words so secret that human lips may not repeat them'.
- <sup>33</sup> *The Epistles of St Paul to the Corinthians, with critical notes and discussions*, London, John Murray, 1882 (fifth edition), p.538. The quotation at the end of the previous paragraph is from p.349 of this source.
- <sup>34</sup> As an aspiring author himself, Kilvert may have found this part of the Hare/Stanley story particularly appealing. Hare wrote a large number of biographies and travel books.
- <sup>35</sup> Kilvert explained 'Mrs Augustus Hare was one of Lady Frances Higginson's oldest friends.'
- <sup>36</sup> It was thought that it capsized because of its shallow draught.
- <sup>37</sup> See 'Kilvert's Gap Year', Kilvert Society *Journal*, no.38, March 2014. The diarist may have paid visits to Maria's home when he was in St Leonards.



# Bits and Pieces

## ● A Kilvert Letter

*From the Archives*

At the Society's AGM of 1987 the chairman, the Rev DTW Price, referred to an 'interesting discovery', namely a letter written by Kilvert to the Rev Lister Venables from the Normandy village of Venables 'whence the Revd's surname derived and containing the typical qualities of the Diarist's style. 'It is hoped, he added, that permission may be granted for its contents to appear in our next Newsletter'.

Permission was indeed granted and the letter appeared in the Newsletter of September 1987.

### The Letter

(reproduced by kind permission of our President, The Lady Delia Venables-Llewelyn)

Venables,  
Near Gaillon 4.30 pm  
Whit Monday 21st May 1877

My Dear Mr Venables,

I trust you will like to have a letter from the cradle of your family. I have just walked over here from Gaillon, 4 miles. I came to Gaillon from Rouen by 12.42 train, having left Paris this morning at 8 o'clock by a train that did not stop at Gaillon. I got into Venables just as the church clock struck 4. Venables is a village on the top of a wooded hill very prettily situated with fine views of the Seine, the surrounding country and the great Château Gaillard on the opposite bank of the river. The church has a spire which can be seen a long way off. It is an old Norman church very curious, white washed, with open oak pews, a very old oaken eagle and oak stalls with quaint carvings and Miserere seats turning back, which the sexton says are of the 13th Century. The altars and statues of the Virgin are dressed for Whitsuntide with White lace and ribands and white and green rosettes. No tombs in the churchyard or monuments in the church. I am writing in the village restaurant with a group of peasants in blue blouses playing dominoes with a great deal of rattle and noise on mealtime (?) oaken tables. The walk from Gaillon is most lovely, part of the way by the banks of the Seine, partly through beautiful woods and orchards of pear and cherry, the banks sweet with may blossom. I cannot discover that there is anyone of the name of Venables living here now but if I understand my informant rightly a person of the name who was Professor of something died here 2 years ago.

The Curé lives in a comfortable red brick house close to the church. It is a lovely day and I have enjoyed my expedition and visit here extremely. I only wish I had more time here and I should like to come here again. The country is quite lovely. I am just sending a note by this post from this place to your brother and Mrs Henry Venables, I thought it might please them. Please excuse great haste and all mistakes. No time to read over. With kindest regards to Mrs Venables.

Yours very sincerely,

R.F. Kilvert.

I shall be at Rhayader next Saturday.

(For those interested in such matters, the envelope bears a 30 centimes Trade and Commerce stamp with the postmark 'Gaillon 22 Mai'; on the back a Shrewsbury date stamp May 24 and a Newbridge-on-Wye one of May 25 – it would seem a very efficient postal service!)

## ● Imagine my Surprise...!

*by Jeff Marshall*

Last autumn I visited for the first time a very large, very unusual second-hand bookshop of many rooms plus café situated in former farm buildings in the village of Astley, not far from Coventry.

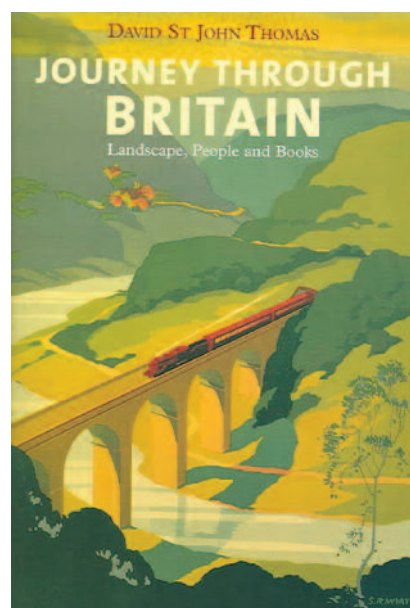
Among my numerous purchases that day was *Journey through Britain (Landscape, People and Books)* by David St John Thomas.\* The author is probably best known as one half of David and Charles, publishers of mainly travel books, once based at Newton Abbot railway station.

Here, in this book, St John Thomas takes the reader on an immense journey around Britain, from the Islands and Highlands to Scilly, from Ebbw Vale to Aldeburgh, from Ullapool to Hythe, from a visit to the Lost Gardens of Heligan to lunch at Geevor Mine and afternoon tea at the Savoy. There are meetings too with people, Patrick Moore, the master of the QE2, Rick Stein, Dave the Taxi, Jeremy Thorpe even, and another as we shall see...

Not unexpectedly therefore this is an enormous house-brick of a paperback and one can but marvel at the author's stamina, not only as an indefatigable traveller but also as a writer – there are 36 chapters spread over 700 pages plus a list of over 250 authors and texts quoted or mentioned!

It was on page 612 in chapter 33, entitled 'To the Land of my Fathers' that the surprise came – we have arrived in Herefordshire, at Weobley:

'Kate had planned lunch carefully with a couple of "characters" in a super little restaurant high in individuality. Julian leads the way, past the Weobley bookshop, whose window is full of local goodies. Already sitting at our table is Michael Sharp, secretary of the Kilvert Society which, with magazines, lectures and special events, celebrates the life and writings of the famous priest and diarist – 'Sipping a glass of wine, an animated Michael' explains the background to the publication of the *Diary*, praises the quality of the writing and describes the local links



with Clyro, the whole rounded off with the *Diary* entry for 17 September 1874, the account of the train journey up the Wye Valley to Llysdinam passing Aberedw.

Mike tells me that St John Thomas, originally a railway specialist, later turned to writing travel books and that his assistant (presumably Kate) ‘discovered my connection with the Kilvert Society... an invitation to a very jolly luncheon party at

Jules in Weobley resulted in being asked to contribute a piece about the KS for the book.’

Such are the perks of the secretaryship of our Society... Have you noticed any, Alan?

*\*Journey through Britain, Landscape, People and Books* by David St John Thomas (Frances Lincoln Ltd, London 2004).

## ● PLUS ÇA CHANGE...

The words ‘Replacement bus service...’ are guaranteed to fill the heart of even the most seasoned railway traveller with gloom, despair and, no doubt, fury.

But, as further proof also of the old adage that ‘there’s nothing new under the sun’ here is the *Diary* entry for Monday 11 November 1878 (Vol III, p 430), the account of *the second greatest flood of this century*, when *many people were flooded out of their houses at Letton and Staunton and spent the night on Bredwardine Bridge watching the flood.*

The entry concludes:

*Mr W Clarke of the Staunton Store room told me that the Whitney iron railway bridge was carried away last night by the flood and 2 miles of the line seriously damaged. No trains can run for 3 months during which time the gap will be filled by coaches...*



*The remains of Whitney railway bridge*

## OBITUARIES

### Mary Rose Mumford

Mary Rose Mumford of Canon Pyon died on 27 October 2017, aged 91.

She and her twin sister Rosemary Mumford, who died in 2009, were founder members of the Society in 1948.

Mary Rose was an honorary life member of the Society.



### Lawrence Jackson

Lawrence died on 2 November 2017. He and his wife Pam joined the Society in May 1990. For a time in the nineties Lawrie was the Society’s membership and subscriptions’ secretary – a role in which he excelled, affably and apparently effortlessly extracting subscriptions from late or reluctant payers.

We send our condolences to the family and friends of the deceased.



### **SPECIAL OFFER**

**Three-Volume Diary**, packed in slip case, available to members at £60 plus £12.98 p&p (or can be collected post free)

**The Lost Photo Album: A Kilvert Family Story**, by John Toman (SECOND EDITION, expanded). Copies from the Publications Manager (address below)

**Who's Who in Kilvert's Diary**  
A fully comprehensive Who's Who with over 400 biographies and 22 family trees, compiled by the late Tony O'Brien. £13 including p&p.

**More Chapters from the Kilvert Saga** (reprinted)  
Contents: The Memoirs of the Rev Robert Kilvert (the Diarist's father) and Recollections of Emily Wyndowe (the Diarist's sister); also extracts from Augustus Hare's account of the school at Hardenhuish Rectory. £5.

**Jubilee Praise**. The Tom Palmer Memorial Booklet, compiled to celebrate the Society's Jubilee in June 1998. This new publication, edited by our former Chairman, Michael Sharp, is a selection from the Newsletters of the last thirty years. £5.50.

**Francis Kilvert Priest & Diarist**, by Frederick Grice. A reprint of the 1975 original. £5.50.

**Collected Verse**. Contains the 55 poems of Francis Kilvert printed privately in 1881. £4.50.

**The Frederick Grice Memorial Booklet**  
Contents: The Missing Year – Kilvert & 'Kathleen Mavourneen' by Laurence

Le Quesne; two hitherto unpublished articles on Kilvert by Frederick Grice; several articles, also by Frederick Grice, reprinted from various newsletters. £5.

**Kilvert's 'Kathleen Mavourneen'**, by Eva Farmery and R B Taylor. The publication records the painstaking research, extending over some 35 years, into the Heanley family of Croft, Lincolnshire, and the related Cholmeley family, who were related by marriage to the Kilvert Family. Particularly interesting is the section dealing with Katharine Heanley ('Kathleen Mavourneen'), her relationship with the Diarist and her tragic death. £5.

**A Kilvert Symposium**  
Eight contributions from members who read papers at the Kilvert Conference held at Attingham Park in 1975. £4.50.

**Kilvert and the Wordsworth Circle**, by R I Morgan  
The author summarises his researches into the Wordsworth – Monkhouse – Dew connection, in which Kilvert was so interested. £4.50.

**Looking Backwards**  
References to Kilvert's wife, their marriage and honeymoon; accounts of their home-coming to Bredwardine and of Kilvert's death and funeral; extracts from the diary of Hastings Smith (Kilvert's nephew) relating to his enquiries into his uncle's year at St Harmon, etc. £4.50.

**Miscellany Two: The Oswin Prosser Memorial Booklet**. Contents: The Solitary of Llanbedr by the Rev D Edmondson-Owen; Radnorshire Legends and Superstitions by Mrs Essex Hope; Honeymoon Journal by Dora Pitcairn; The Venables Diaries by A L Le Quesne; Memories of the Monk by Ann Mallinson. £4.50.

**Kilvert's Poetry: A Study**, by Bernard Jones. £4.

**The Other Francis Kilvert**  
Francis Kilvert of Claverton (1803-1863), by Teresa Williams and Frederick Grice. The authors, after diligent research, have produced an extremely interesting account of the life and work of the Diarist's Uncle Francis. £2.

**The Books Kilvert Read**, by John Toman. £2.

**Index of Journal Newsletters 1956-2000**, by the late Rev Dr Nigel Rowe. £2.

**The Bevan-Dew Extracts**  
Entries from the original Diary relating to the Bevan and Dew families which were omitted from the published Diary. £2.

**Kilvert and the Visual Arts**, by Rosalind Billingham. A transcript of the authoritative lecture given by Miss Billingham at the 1979 Annual General Meeting. £1.50.

**Vicar of this Parish**, by John Betjeman. £2.

**Children of the Rectory**, by Essex Hope. £1.50.

**Newsletter/Journals**  
Back numbers of some Newsletters and Journals. £2.50.

The following books can be purchased from booksellers or on the internet:

**Francis Kilvert**, by David Lockwood. Seren Books, 1990. ISBN 1-85411-033-0 paperback.

**Kilvert The Victorian**, by David Lockwood. Seren Books, 1992. ISBN 1-85411-077-2.

**After Kilvert**, by A L Le Quesne. OUP, 1978. ISBN 0-19-211748-3.

**Francis Kilvert and His World**, by Frederick Grice. Caliban Books, 1980. Hardback ISBN 0-904573-52-4; Paperback ISBN 0-904573-78-8.

**Kilvert The Homeless Heart**, by John Toman. Logaston Press, 2001. ISBN 1-873827-37-7.

**Growing up in Kilvert Country**, by Mona Morgan. Gomer, 1990. ISBN 0-86383-680-1.

**Exploring Kilvert Country**, by Chris Barber. Blorenge Books, 2003. ISBN 1-872730-24-8.

**Moods of Kilvert Country**, by Nick Jenkins and Kevin Thomas. Halsgrove, 2006. ISBN 1-84114-525-4 / 978-1-84114-525-9.

John Toman's **Kilvert's Diary and Landscape**, £27.50, and **Kilvert's World of Wonders – Growing up in mid-Victorian England**, £25, both published by The Lutterworth Press, PO Box 60 Cambridge CB1 2NT. Tel: 01223 350865, email: publishing@lutterworth.com

The three books below are copies of Kilvert's original Diaries and are complete – the only surviving examples of his work.

**The Diary of Francis Kilvert**, April-June 1870 edited by Kathleen Hughes and Dafydd Ifans. National Library of Wales, 1982. ISBN 0-9077158-02-1.

**The Diary of Francis Kilvert**, June-July 1870 edited by Dafydd Ifans. National Library of Wales, 1989. ISBN 0-907158-02-1.

**Kilvert's Cornish Diary**, edited by Richard Maber and Angela Tregoning. Alison Hodge (Cornwall), 1989. ISBN 0-906720-19-2.

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