

THE
JOURNAL
OF
THE KILVERT SOCIETY



Number 47

September 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

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: Rob Graves

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

Hon Secretary: Alan Brimson

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

Vice-Chairman: Vacant

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*: Mary Steele

1 Saffron Rise, Eaton Bray, Dunstable LU6 2AY.
Tel: 01525 221797. Email: mary.steele1@btinternet.com

Website: 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 Editor by post or email. Address above
Deadlines: 1st January and 1st July

Forthcoming Events 2019

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

Wednesday 13 March

Visit to Bristol to see the new Brunel Museum alongside the SS Great Britain

Friday 26 April 7.00pm

AGM at the Bishop's Palace, Hereford

Speaker: to be announced

Saturday 27 April

10.00 for 10.30am seminar at the Pilgrim Hotel, Much Birch
6.30 for 7.00pm same venue. Kilvert Society annual dinner

Saturday 22 June

Visit to Snodhill Castle for a Kilvert Society picnic

Saturday 28 September

Visit to Langley Burrell and Draycot Park, followed by tea at Seend Park Farm

Commemorative Service in June or September, to be announced

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

Front cover: Brecon Cathedral

Back cover: Hartlebury Castle

From the Editor

The *Journal* now has a new Editor.* I am taking delivery of articles and preparing them for print, including planning the general content of the edition. For the time being, editor emeritus Jeff Marshall will continue to liaise with the printer and consult over the design. Articles and photographs from regular contributors feature in this issue.

We look forward to hearing from you. We welcome articles, academic and anecdotal, short pieces, sightings from the media, reviews, photos and correspondence. We are happiest if we have enough items in hand for a couple of editions so that we can keep pieces on file.

Articles can be sent to me, Mary Steele, online as an email attachment if you can (mary.steele1@btinternet.com), or on paper if you prefer – full details on the inside front cover. All contributions will be acknowledged, so if you don't hear within a reasonable time, please chase me up, so that nothing is lost.

The purpose of the *Journal* is that of the Society, which you will also find above the committee details on the inside front cover.

My first editorial act is to credit Maureen Bowran, our fine reader at the Peterchurch event last summer. I missed her name when I was writing up the day. If you attend an event and wish to write about it, please volunteer to Alan Brimson or myself.

*Phew! Thank you Mary for your past erudite contributions to the *Journal* and welcome to your new role. JM

From the Chairman

The Kilvert Society's new Chairman, Rob Graves, writes:

On the 11th November this year we shall be commemorating the centenary of the Armistice that ended the First World War. Anyone who has read poems such as 'Anthem for Doomed Youth' by Wilfred Owen or 'The General' by Siegfried Sassoon will know the unique fusion of anger and sadness that breathes from their every line. Anyone who has walked among the lines of neat white gravestones in the military cemeteries of Flanders and Northern France can feel the pity of it all, hardly a soldier lying there much older than 25.

The Great War was a watershed. It stands between the world that Kilvert reflects in his Diary, the high Victorian age of imperial power with its extremes of poverty and genteel social gatherings, and the modern age with which we are all familiar. The aftermath of the war saw the stirring of social changes that Kilvert could not have dreamed of: women's emancipation, the decline of the squirearchy and the great country house, the erosion of deference for one's 'betters'.

Kilvert of course knew of war. He records the old soldier's accounts of the Peninsular War and his brother-in-law Samuel Wyndowe's stories of the Indian Mutiny, he refers to the Franco-Prussian War of 1870 and the disaster of Isandlwana in January 1879. But for Kilvert, war was always something distant. It had no direct impact on his life except in terms of its potential or actual effects on the military officers of his acquaintance. The First World War would put an end to that. From now on war would strike at home as well as abroad. Our own age has learned to witness the horrors of war in its sitting rooms. We no longer glorify war or wrap it up in patriotic songs. From Wilfred Owen, himself a tragic casualty of the Great War, we have learned the real nature of 'the old lie: Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori.' In Kilvert's world that 'lie' was still held as a common truth. In that much at least we may have progressed more than in merely material terms.

Contents



Inside Front Cover

Officials of the Society and dates for your diary

- 1 From the Editor
- 1 From the Chairman
- 2 From the Secretary

EVENTS AND EXCURSIONS

- 3 The Spring Visit to Hartlebury Castle
is described by Diana Clutterbuck
- 6 The Kilvert Weekend 2018
Marjorie Elvins records the Society's AGM and Seminar Weekend which took place on 27 and 28 April
- 7 The Brecon Visit – a tale of two Bevens
The story of our June outing told by Charles Weston

FEATURES

- 9 The Kilvert family's move from Harnish to Langley Burrell in 1856
Written by Dora Pitcairn (née Kilvert)
- 12 Frances Henrietta Kilvert – the Later Years – Part 1
Teresa Williams investigates the life, after the Diarist's death, of Kilvert's sister, Fanny
- 16 From the *Diary* to the Great War
Rob Graves commemorates the centenary of the end of the First World War with a consideration of what happened in families known to Kilvert
- 21 Ray Taylor – In Remembrance
Margaret Collins remembers a Kilvertian pen-friendship
- 23 A Walk, a Meeting and a Photograph
Ann Dean recalls an encounter that was very much in Kilvert's spirit

FROM THE ARCHIVES

- 24 Kilvert Country and the Festival: a view from afar
Lyndall Hancock from Dunedin, sent this reminiscence to the Newsletter in 1989

BOOK REVIEWS

- 26 The Helmsley Chronicles
Charles Weston reviews a book by David Wilbourne
- 27 Blue Remembered Hills: A Radnorshire Journey
Edward Storey reviews a book by James Roose-Evans
- 28 Bits and Pieces

Inside Back Cover

Society publications and other recommended books about Francis Kilvert

From the Secretary

At the AGM held in April, it was agreed by the members present that from the 1 January 2019 the annual subscription to the Society would be increased. The single membership will go up to £18 and joint members at the same address, to £21. The need for this, amongst other things, is the increased cost associated with the *Journal*.

Please amend your standing order to your bank for 1 January 2019 payment.

Thanks are due to our member Charlie Bass who found and bought a photograph, a carte de visite, of E L Awdry of 1883. Could this be Edmund (Vol 1, p288) of the extensive family? Charlie has generously donated the image to the Society.

The committee continues its policy of maintaining the memorials and gravestone of those associated with Kilvert's *Diary*. The gravestone of the Rev John Price, 'The Solitary' at Llanbedr is our next project as it is badly in need of some TLC.

The programme of events for 2019 should be of great interest to you all. Our winter visit on 13 March will be to Bristol with the spotlight on the new Brunel Museum which sits alongside his magnificent SS Great Britain.

The AGM is on Friday 26 April 2019 at the Bishop's Palace,

Hereford and the seminar and annual dinner on the Saturday will be at the new venue of the Pilgrim Hotel at Much Birch, which is six miles south of Hereford on the A49 road between Hereford and Ross-on-Wye.

Our June event is, I think, the most fascinating. On 22 June we will hold the Kilvert Society picnic at Snodhill Castle: see Vol 1, pp160-3 for 21 June 1870. This really should be a memorable occasion.

On 28 September we visit Langley Burrell and Draycot Park, the site of the ice skating episode on 27-29 December 1870 9 (Vol 1, pp287-90); we will then retire to Seend Park Farm for tea in the medieval barn, located in an idyllic setting.

So there is plenty to look forward to.

We propose to arrange a commemorative service for either the June or September weekend.

Full details will follow in the March 2019 *Journal* but I would encourage you however to return the expression of interest form to me, then you will get the details earlier.

Please support Society events wherever possible. There are so many names I would love to put a face to.

At long last, there is an Editor for the *Journal*. Mary Steele has volunteered and this is her first edition. This is a crucial role for the Society and it is most important that Mary is supported by contributions for publication from you all.

Finally, thanks are more than due to Jeff Marshall, who was dragged most reluctantly from retirement and has kept the *Journal* alive and well over the last three years.

Retiring committee members receive well-earned gifts at the AGM



Marjorie and David Elvins



Michael and Sue Sharp

Photos: Ann Dean

EVENTS AND EXCURSIONS

The Spring Visit to Hartlebury Castle

is described by Diana Clutterbuck



In the Great Hall of Hartlebury Castle, surrounded by portraits of bishops

At long last, our visit to Hartlebury took place on Wednesday 4 April. Restoration work had extended past expected completion in 2017 for various structural reasons, which included additional damage when lead was stolen from the roof and a requirement to create a special home for rare horseshoe bats found during the work. The Kilvert Society was the first group to visit since the restoration and there was a fresh smell of new paintwork as it was so recently finished.

Formerly the seat of Bishops of Worcester, with its unique Georgian Library and priceless books at risk, a small group of concerned locals were determined to save the castle when the Church Commissioners decided to sell it. Hartlebury Castle Preservation Trust was formed, and in October 2014 the Trust was awarded £5 million from the Heritage Lottery Fund to purchase the Castle in March 2015. Extensive building works, the laying out of new car park areas and a new café have been augmented by the work of dedicated volunteers. Some of these volunteers continue to wield conservation dusters and vacuum cleaners and others set about clearing the completely overgrown garden and moat area. One wing of the Castle also houses the County Museum which has a varied and interesting collection.

Members will recall that Richard Hurd, Bishop of Worcester from 1781 to 1808, was a relative and friend of Prebendary Richard Kilvert, father of Maria whose funeral at Worcester

Cathedral in 1870 provided, for us, one of diarist Francis Kilvert's most entertaining accounts and, for him, an opportunity to spend a few days with his parents. Richard Kilvert was responsible for furthering the careers of his Bath nephews, Francis (in the Church) and his brother John (in the Navy prior to becoming a surgeon). These men were brothers of the diarist's father Robert. Francis of Bath later wrote a biography of Richard Hurd, which appears to have caused some family discord.

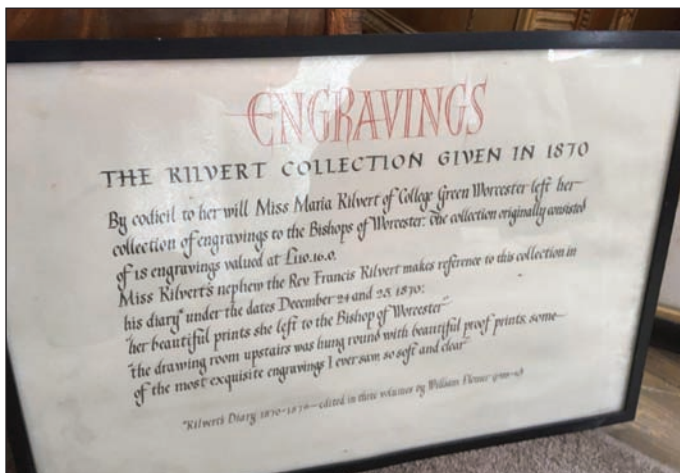
Hartlebury village has a compact centre which comprises castle, church, pub, primary school and several black and white cottages and period houses. Some early bird members visited St James' church, with Bishop Hurd's tomb just outside the main door, before lunch at the White Hart. It is also possible to glimpse the handsome 18th century rectory where Richard Kilvert and his family lived whilst Rector and Domestic Chaplain to Bishop Hurd and his successor Bishop Cornwall, and where Richard died in 1817.

Linking up with two more Kilvertians, we met our guides for the afternoon, Penny Greenwood (tours organiser), Maggie Herbert and Margaret Goodrich who led the tour. Margaret's husband Philip was Bishop of Worcester from 1982 to 1996, and they lived in the Castle with their family which gives her a unique insight into the Castle and its past.

Originally a small manor in the southern part of the huge



In Richard Hurd's day, a bishop wore a ceremonial wig



'Her beautiful prints she left to the Bishop of Worcester' (Vol 1, p 266)



Some of the rare books laid out for our inspection

kingdom of Mercia, peopled by the Hwicce, lands in the area were given to Aelhun, Bishop of Worcester, by King Burthred in the 860s. In a fertile area, close to two crossing places on the River Severn, Hartlebury had a resident priest and possibly a small chapel at the time of the 1086 Domesday Survey. When not travelling about their large diocese, bishops lived at the Palace in Worcester. The first mention of an episcopal house at Hartlebury is in 1268 when Henry III gave Bishop Clifford a licence to crenellate an existing stone building with a moat. Most succeeding bishops left their mark on the Castle.

The oldest part of is the 15th century Great Hall, where there would have been a central fire and smoke would have been drawn up through the roof. The medieval oak timbers in cruck formation rest on stone corbels. Portraits (many collected by Bishop Hurd) of early bishops and of more recent ones line the walls, and Margaret drew our attention to a plaque above the fireplace recording the visit of George III and members of his family on 2 August 1788.

We moved on to the pretty Saloon – such a contrast with its elegant rococo white papier-mache scrolls and foliage decorations on a green background, which showcase large full-length portraits of George III and his queen, Charlotte, copies of Gainsborough originals given by the King to Bishop Hurd.

The Bishop's Entrance Hall leads to the Chapel, with its Gothic panelling, seating, and plaster fan-vaulting. An earlier chapel was badly damaged during the Civil War, as were other parts of the Castle, when it was held for the King but surrendered to Parliament. It sold the Castle to a local man who utilised some of the stone. In a near derelict state at the Restoration, it was returned to Bishop Morley who rebuilt and improved it and created the carriage circle.

A few fragments remain of a series of stained glass windows designed by physician Dr John Wall, who was co-founder of Worcester's first infirmary with his friend Bishop Isaac Maddox in 1745. Dr Wall was an accomplished artist who experimented with William Davis, the hospital apothecary, and produced a fine porcelain. In 1751 they opened the factory which was later to become Royal Worcester Porcelain, an accolade given to them by George III.

The more recent stained glass in the east window commemorates the Golden Jubilee of Bishop Perowne in 1898. Windows open into the chapel from an upstairs room where Bishop Philpott's invalid wife could listen to the service.

On the first floor, we saw the Prince Regent's room and state bed with Prince of Wales feathers embroidered on the canopy. The silk was originally green, but has faded to blue. Richard Hurd had been appointed Director of Studies to "Prinny" and his brother the Duke of York and the whole Royal Family were very fond of him. Indeed, Queen Charlotte hung Gainsborough's portrait of Hurd in her bedroom. Prince Charles slept in this bed when staying with Bishop Robin Woods and his family at Hartlebury in the 1970s.

Other royal visitors include Queen Elizabeth 1 and her large entourage (which left Bishop Bullingham strapped for cash) and our present Queen, who planted the beautiful magnolia in bloom outside the Great Hall.

On his arrival at Hartlebury, Richard Hurd was appalled to find no library and determined to provide one for his large collection, which included books from his friends Bishop Warburton of Gloucester, Ralph Allen of Bath and Alexander Pope, and a substantial gift from the library of George III.

In the Hurd Library, we were welcomed by Christine Penney,



One of Maria Kilvert's prints; 'some of the most exquisite engravings I ever saw' (Vol 1, p 270)



More bishops, Jacobean chests and a reflected view from the Great Hall

the Librarian, who showed us copies of drawings prepared for Bishop Hurd by the architect James Smith of Shropshire. The original plasterwork ceiling (by James Bromfield of Shrewsbury) had badly cracked, underlying timber and lath crumbling. Now it has been completely restored with traditional techniques and materials including horsehair. The elegant marbled columns are in fact wood, lime plastered and painted. Coverings were placed over the furniture, pictures and books in the Hurd Library on 4 July 2017 and only removed on 9 March prior to laying the new carpet, the first for over a century. Some 5,000 volumes on many varied subjects are held in the original bookcases designed for the room. The Library is open for tours and by appointment to students and scholars.

Christine had laid out various rare and interesting books for us to see on a circular table in the bow window. Some of the earliest visitors in 1788, George III, Queen Charlotte, the Duke of York and three of the Princesses, enjoyed at this table a late breakfast of fruit, jellies, tea, coffee and chocolate, waited on by the Bishop himself. Afterwards, Richard Kilvert's young bride Maria ran so fast from the rectory to see the royal party walking in the garden that the 10 year old diarist daughter of the rector of nearby Kidderminster, Martha Butt, could not keep up.

Richard Kilvert shared his patron's interest in books and there are at least twelve known to have been given by him to the Library. We were able to see two beautiful large volumes (printed 1777-98) of *Flora Londoniensis* by William Curtis, describing plants in the environs of London with full-page hand painted botanical drawings, annotated on the flyleaf in Richard Hurd's own hand 'This fine copy of *Flora Londoniensis* in 2 vols. folio was given to me by Rev Richard Kilvert M.A. Prebendary of Worcester August 24 1802. R.W. (Richard Worcester)'. Also on view was a book of early hand tinted county maps, open at Herefordshire and the Welsh border, so we were able to see how some of the places Francis Kilvert knew well had either diminished or increased in prominence since the time the map was published.

Christine Penney also showed us one of Maria Kilvert's engravings bequeathed to the Bishops of Worcester in perpetuity, which Francis Kilvert so admired when in the upstairs drawing room of her home in College Green on the day before her funeral.

The editor adds: Alan Brimson, in his closing remarks of thanks, assured our Hartlebury hosts that the visit had been well worth the wait. If you didn't join us, a visit to the Castle is recommended.



The Hurd Library

The Kilvert Weekend 2018

Marjorie Elvins records the Society's AGM and Seminar Weekend which took place on 27 and 28 April

The weekend started, as always, at the Bishop's Palace in Hereford. Michael Sharp left the Committee after many years as a member and after serving as both Secretary and Chairman. Michael will be greatly missed. He has a great knowledge of, and love for, both Kilvert and the countryside associated with him.

The Chairman, David Elvins, also resigned at this AGM. Like Michael, he has served as both Secretary and Chairman for many years. Like Michael, he will be a great loss to the Committee but will still be active in the Society.

The Committee was voted in and Rob Graves became the new Chairman. This was followed by the usual delicious refreshments supplied by Sue Rose and her husband.

Then followed a most interesting illustrated talk by Garry Crook, about the archaeological work and restoration taking place at Snodhill Castle. Many unusual features are attached to the Castle that raise more questions than answers but it seems obvious that the Castle was far older, bigger and more important than anyone realised. Snodhill was the place where Kilvert attended a great picnic and there are plans afoot to replicate this next year when the Castle will be open to the public. A wonderful job of restoration has taken place and it has been done with great skill and sympathy.

The AGM was then declared closed.



The annual dinner

We reconvened the next morning at Hedley Lodge, where many of us were staying. We watched a film about Kilvert but perhaps the most interesting part was the contribution from Gillian and Colin Clarke. Gillian's father, Fred Grice, had been involved with the making of the 1977/78 BBC series *The Diary of Francis Kilvert*. Mr Grice had kept a diary himself and Gillian and Colin read extracts about his growing distaste and concern about how Kilvert was being portrayed. Mr Grice eventually withdrew his support. We could all sympathise. Who hasn't been

dismayed or infuriated when a beloved work has been adapted for television? Nevertheless, it turned out that, whatever the shortcomings of the BBC series, it had been responsible for introducing many members of the Society then present to the Diary. Perhaps Mr Grice would have been reconciled to the BBC if he had realised what an influence it would have for good.

We all met up again at Hedley Lodge for the Annual Kilvert Dinner. It proved to be a most convivial and friendly occasion, as it usually is. The dinner was excellent and, after the loyal toast, the toast to the memory of Francis Kilvert and sincere thanks to Alan Brimson for organising the events, we all departed at the end of another Kilvert weekend.



Good conversation, and readings from the Diary

Editor's note: Marjorie Elvins retired as minutes secretary at the end of the AGM. Thanks to her for her contribution.

The Brecon Visit – a tale of two Bevans

The story of our June outing told by Charles Weston

Was it just a coincidence that the 29 June visit to Brecon took place at the very time that the country celebrated the 70th Birthday of the NHS? The connection between the two events lies of course in the name ‘Bevan’ – the one a politician and great social reformer – Aneurin (Nye) – who achieved status and renown by putting the NHS into practice; the other – of perhaps more interest to Kilvertians – Edward (Teddy) – who achieved status and renown by becoming the first Bishop of Swansea and Brecon in the newly disestablished Church of Wales in 1923. Both made their presence felt at the June gathering at Brecon Cathedral; for members the visit offered an opportunity to learn more about Teddy but the Nye link was nonetheless there in the background!

Members had been alerted beforehand as to complications regarding access to the Cathedral because of the holding of the 2018 Convivium Festival on the day of the planned visit. So it proved to be; the ambitious new initiative by the Cathedral – Conviviality – the concept of ‘living well together and being the kind of people who can live well together’ would no doubt have been fully endorsed by both Nye and Teddy. Certainly there were plenty of ‘NHS at 70’ lapel badges as well as health related display stalls in the Cathedral forecourt.

The party of 24 Kilvertians were soon outnumbered by the swelling band of Convivialists. Anxieties started to emerge about seating and feeding arrangements in the cramped surroundings of the Pilgrim Cafe. We need not have worried – a reserved seating plan emerged and the fare on offer proved to be nutritious and tasty – exactly what one would have hoped for!

Having been fed and watered the party wended its way into



The Harvard Chapel, regimental chapel of the 24th (South Wales Borderers) – see Diary entry for 11 February, 1879



Brecon Cathedral high altar and reredos, designed in 1937 by W.D. Caroe

the Cathedral to be addressed in hushed tones by Alan Brimson in one of the side chapels. A sotto voce speaking style is not one that is normally associated with Alan but it proved necessary on this occasion because of a competing amplified event – a Festival



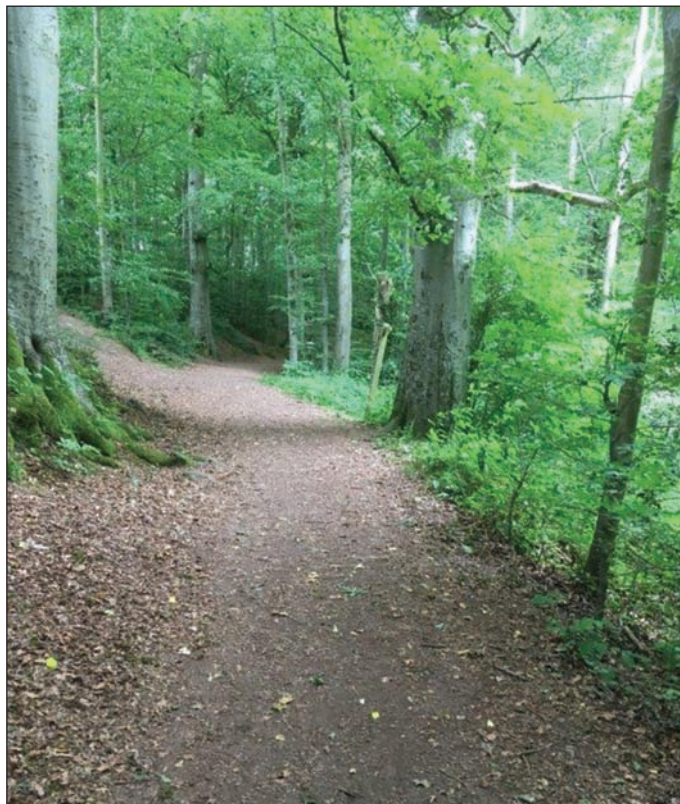
The organ from Hay Castle – see Diary entry for 7 May, 1872. The Society contributed towards its restoration in 1972.

talk being given by author Nick Hunt in the nave. Alan's comments on the Kilvert-Bevan connection were brief but illuminating. Kilvert's friendship with the Bevan family dated back to Clyro curacy days of 1870-72 and to his friendship with the Bevan family at Hay Castle. Young Teddy at age 10-11 obviously related well to Kilvert. The *Diary* entry of 7 July 1871 described Teddy's arrival at his lodgings with an invitation to dinner with the Bevans. Two officers of the 7th Fusiliers were to be present – an added attraction! Teddy ...*was enchanted with my cats and our happy family appearance...* the invitation went on to describe graphically... *the invasion of Hay by the Fusiliers and the consequent excitement and delight among the young ladies at The Castle...* Alan concluded his remarks by observing that Francis Kilvert could little have imagined that the young boy that he knew then would end up (having had a prestigious career in the Church) as the first Bishop of Swansea and Brecon in the disestablished Church of Wales in 1923.

Our meanderings around the Cathedral were on tiptoe, our observations whispered. Nick Hunt's PowerPoint presentation dominated but Bevan memorabilia was there to be found, dotted around; the family organ from Hay Castle; Teddy Bevan's tomb and effigy and a fine portrait of the great man completed soon after his ordination.

With perambulations completed within the interior of the Cathedral the task of leading the fit and active members of the party around the Priory grounds was delegated to Colin Dixon. He set off at a cracking pace through the woods. Alas, some members struggled somewhat and the peloton disintegrated. Colin was soon forced to call a halt and provide comradely

support to the backmarkers. I am pleased to report that all eventually returned safely to base! The walk itself proved delightful; a shady, undulating track overlooking the River Honddhu which led back eventually to the Cathedral. In our absence the Convivium gathering had moved into top gear with music and munchies on offer to those left with sufficient energy after the exertions of the walk.



Have the KS walkers faded away?



Colin Dixon and Alan Brimson bring up the rear on the lengthy walk through the Priory Woods Brecon. Photo: Charles Weston

FEATURES

The Kilvert Family's move from Harnish to Langley Burrell in 1856

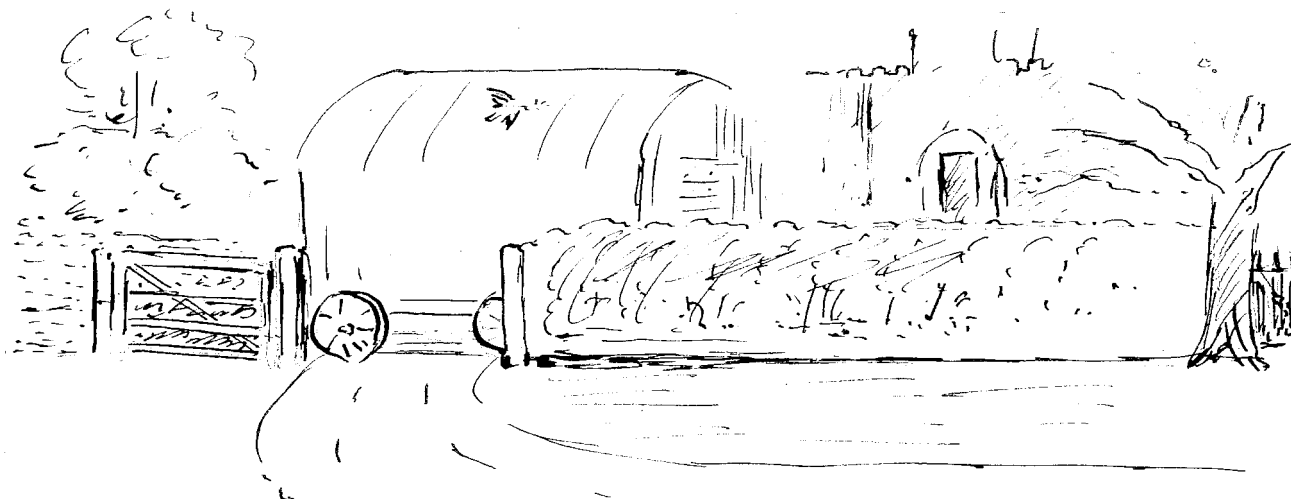
Written by Dora Pitcairn (née Kilvert)

Among the papers donated to the Society (along with Kilvert's desk) by Andy Pitcairn, was a description of the Kilvert family's move from Harnish to Langley Burrell, written by Sarah Dorothea Anne (Dora) Kilvert some years after the actual move when she was probably a Pitcairn.

At the time of the move the ages of the children were as follows:

Thurmuthis	17	born 1839
Frank (the diarist)	15	3 Dec 1840 (and at school with his uncle Francis in Bath)
Emily	13	8 Oct 1842
Frances	10	19 Feb 1846
Dora	7	28 July 1848
Edward	6	9 Nov 1849

Colin Dixon



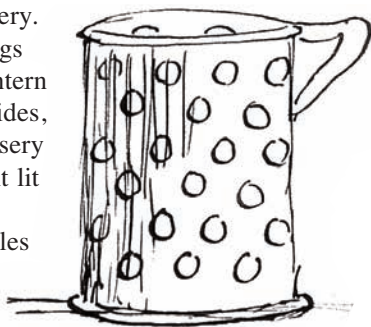
The sketch above is intended to represent the large furniture van which conveyed our belongings from Harnish to Langley on Lady Day [25 March] 1856. It was called The Noah's Ark and had a dove with an olive leaf painted in white on the black covering of the top. As far as I can remember after a picnic kind of early dinner in a room with only a table and some chairs, the elders went on with our father to Langley and Ted and I were to wait until Mary was ready to walk over with us. We were in a wild state of excitement, and probably because we were troublesome and got in the way of the men, we were told to stay in the nursery – out of which every article of furniture had been cleared – and amuse ourselves! Had the room only commanded a view of the things being carried out to the van, we should have enjoyed ourselves, but as it didn't, we had to search for

something to play with. Some pieces of a broken broom handle were lying on the floor, so we seized one each as bats, and a shorter piece was kept flying from one to the other. It was most exciting, till I suddenly felt an awful crash over the eyes and felt something warm running down my face, while Ted called for assistance. Of course the medicine cupboard was empty and the diachylon plasters packed, but some sticking plaster was found and in a sobered frame of mind I was seated in the drawing room for the remaining hour of our stay at Harnish and told to keep quiet. A white scar marked my forehead for a long time after this.

The general rubbish of the house was piled at last into the Ark, contents of cellar, garden sheds, etc. and various things which I don't think were ever used again after that day, and lived in dirt and cobwebs in an empty space above the large brewing

copper in the Langley scullery. I wish I had some of the things now, especially the large lantern with round holes in the sides, which was put on the nursery floor at night and a rush light lit in it.

The lights from the holes cast weird and alarming shadows on the ceiling, which danced about as the rush lights flickered in the draught. I can see too the shadow cast on the ceiling early on a winters morning as Mary knelt on the hearth lighting the fire, still in her frilled nightcap and the candle on the floor by her threw a vast shadow, going through great action with her arms as she blacklead the grate.



Another curious arrangement was a moveable fire grate which could be carried into a bedroom with a fire burning in it to warm the room quickly. The parish crutches and foot rest also resided in the same place and to get at this chamber of antiquities one had first to climb on the washing copper then to the brewing copper and pull oneself up on the grimy platform above by ones hands. The warming pan was not relegated to this chamber of ancient relics but hung on a nail in the kitchen and so did the fine old oak knife box. Both of these are in our house at *Sea View*, but the handle of the warming pan being worm-eaten through and through it has broken in the middle and it is to have a new one made exactly like the old one.

With the move to Langley Rectory a new era began for us younger ones of freedom and running wild about the premises, as no more pupils were taken, so we had the place all to ourselves. And the outdoors life we led made us much stronger. There were no longer the perpetual colds and coughs which necessitated visits from old Dr Colborew who would prescribe frequent doses of ipecacuanha followed at night by a James' or grey powder. The last were much hated, as was the rest of the course in the early morning, when Mary took down a blue jar of senna leaves and put some to infuse in an old teapot for the victims.

Beside the stable yard with coach house was a three-stalled stable one with a loft over it with a perpendicular ladder which it was our joy to climb about in amongst the hay and straw. There was a small yard with farm buildings at the back of the house with cow yard, calf house and pigsties. Next to the latter was the open shed where the yard boy chopped wood for lighting fires and sifted cinders on a large slanting domed receptacle with a grating on the top. The ash buckets were emptied on this and the contents raked about, stones picked out and the cinders went back to be consumed on the kitchen fire which cooking was over, or the furnace under the copper on washing day. That was a day we all hated as much as we loved baking day, for the scullery (our short way to the rabbits' houses on a wet day) was full of steam and Emma Halliday or later on Alice Couzens would be clattering about on pattens and got in our way as much as we did in theirs. The smell of washing also penetrated into the whole house through the kitchen, which on wet washing days was filled with lines and clothes horses covered with steaming garments. The cook was generally cross on these occasions, and snappish with us for bringing mud in on to the stone floor for her to scrub up, and dodging under lines and round clothes horses to baste the meat and attend to the oven was enough to try most peoples temper. Moreover on a damp day the chimney would smoke and soot fall down its gaping mouth into a saucepan where white

sauce was being stirred. The fire would be poked to make it draw, without pulling the big dripping pan away which was under the joints, by a careless person, and red hot coals would fall in amongst the dripping, of which probably she had left the hinged top open when last basting the meat, and then the smell of burning fat would penetrate into the dining room and one of us would be sent flying out to see what was happening.

But baking days were all joy, from the time the great red stoneware mixing pan was filled with enough flour to make loaves for a week for nine people and put on two chairs by the kitchen grate. A hole was made in the middle and the brewers' yeast mixed with warm water strained into the cavity, after being stirred well round with a burning stick taken out of the fire. This was supposed to take away any bitterness left in the yeast – or barm as it was called – from the hops. When the yeast had risen till it was level with the top of the flour, the mixing began, a can of warm water with a little salt in it being added little by little as the mixing went on. Great was my pride when about 14 I was allowed to mix the dough myself, but it was heavy work and my back ached more than I would allow by the time it was done. Making the butter on churning day was very nice work in summer, and much easier, excepting when the cream 'went to sleep' and nothing would make it 'come', sometimes for hours. Once the barrel churn was lifted into the dining room one cold winters day and we all had a turn at it – our father said he knew he could bring it, and after turning the handle for half an hour with no sound of the flop against the side of the churn I knew that there were lumps of butter inside, I remembered expressing enjoyment in the village and turned no more. But to return to the red pan, left half full of dough by the kitchen fire, with a blanket over it. In about an hour and a half it would have risen to the top and have begun to overflow, when it was then made up into loaves on the floured table and each big loaf was transferred on the peel to the oven, out of which the ashes had been raked and the floor of it dusted out with a damp cloth on a stick. Now was our time to beg for a lump of dough, brown sugar and carraways, and these being mixed in the teacup was cut in three strips and plaited into a 'twist' which was put into the mouth of the oven, and was the first to be extracted when all were baked, when it was a fine brown with melted sugar exuding here and there in a delicious way.

At the time of our move from Hardenhuish to Langley Burrell I was nine years old and Ted seven and in the exciting first year or two there – when our father was busy with parish visiting in what was quite a large scattered parish compared with Harnish and our Mother with the larger house and garden and dairy – our lessons were very sketchy affairs and we ran wild to our hearts content. There was a little Latin and Greek for Ted with my Father and Fanny and I were turned over to Thersie and Emmie for our lessons, as they had had the advantage of masters at Harnish and had now to impart their knowledge to us. So, after breakfast the rabbits having first been attended to and fed, we had our lessons in the schoolroom and I can see the pile of books now which I got out from the cupboard in the morning and put ready with slates and copy books. My greatest terror was the half hour of practising scales and Czerny's* exercises and it must have been equally trying to Emmie who had such an uninterested pupil to deal with. The drawing room was usually cold, the fire not being lit till midday, but there was a cheerful part to the half hour, when duets were allowed and 'Rousseau's Dream' and 'When the day with Rosy Light' seemed blissful after the scales. There were also tales from a blue story book and to this day the

words of ‘William Morley (?)’ and ‘Will you take a walk with me, Mistress Goose this charming weather’ always come to mind when I hear the airs played – the latter was really ‘While we gang to Inverness’ and when I heard this skirled out on the pipes at the Highland Sports at Inverness last year, still the Fox and the Goose came back to its strains.

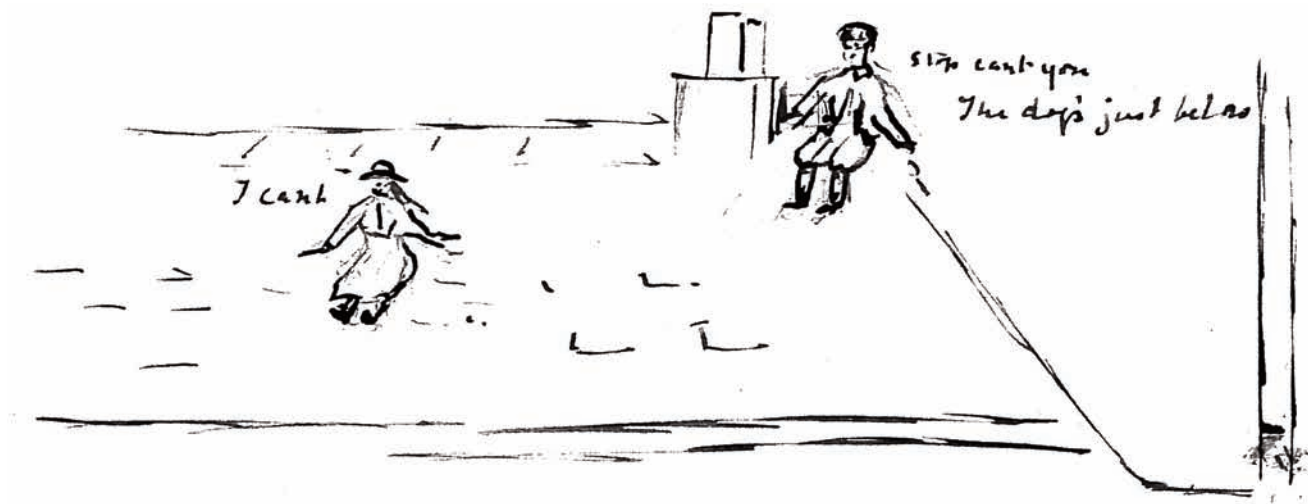
Thersie and Emmie continued these singing lessons at Langley with Miss Tanner, the daughter of the Harnish organist – Thersie’s greatest favourite among her songs, I think, was ‘Annie Laurie’ and Emmie sang her ‘Lark on a Willow Tree’ a good deal. They sang together ‘The Moravian Lenten Hymns’ and then we young ones outside the drawing room window, trampling down the yellow Iceland poppies in the gutter, would creep close (where the volume of sound from Miss Tanner and the others adjoined the soldier in ‘Take thy banner! May it wave proudly over the good and brave’) and join in, only our version was ‘Take thy banner, O Miss Tanner, May it wave oe’r thy grave’ after which we would stampede.

One of our greatest joys was a little trickling stream at the bottom of our orchard, where we made dams and had water wheels and usually came in in a disgraceful and muddy condition after a morning there. The next was the luggage trucks which were as good to us as bicycles, and there was also the parish

wheelchair which was used freely as a chariot, and once nearly caused Ted’s end when he was lame, and we let the chair go its own way from the top of Harnish Hill in the entrance of Greenway Lane. Never did I see Frank run at such speed as when he passed the flying chair, hoping to grab it before it reached a wagon, which a bend in the road had hidden from us – but meantime Ted had tried to avert destruction by steering for the side lane and when we arrived he and his footrest and a kitten, we were bringing from Betsy Strange, were all in the ditch and the chariot was on its side with the upper wheel still revolving furiously. I don’t think I ever felt so thankful when we found him roaring with laughter instead of something smashed up and unconscious as we expected.

He had a love for climbing on roofs, and one day tempted me to get out of Emmie’s window on to the brew house roof, which was rather steep. We were sidling along it when a tile began to slip under me and I shrieked. He, above me, with a firm hold on the brew house chimney only remarked ‘The dog’s just below’ but the tile ceased sliding at last and I did not fall into his jaws.

* Usual English spelling has no E ie Czerny



In the Media

An article on the Historic England Website ‘Heritage Online Debate’ no 6, is from Sarah Crosland, Church Tourism Manager for the National Churches Trust, headlined *Discover the wonder of the UK’s religious heritage*. It is illustrated with a picture of a mother and toddler reading together at St Peter, Peterchurch – scene of the KS visit in June 2017 and described in *Journal 45*. The pair are sitting on the floor, on a stone sill, though there are plenty of comfortable chairs and even sofas at Peterchurch. The church is an interesting example of the adaption of the building’s layout for a multi-use community space. The emphasis of the article is more on encouraging tourists and visitors to churches, something the KS also does in its way by publicising Kilvert churches and their surrounding landscapes.

[www.nationalchurchestrust.org; historicengland.org.uk/what's-new/debate]

NEW FROM THE KILVERT SOCIETY

DVD: *a film depicting the early days of the Society, available for you to purchase in our 70th anniversary year*

Price: £15 + £2 p+p from the Publications Manager – address on back cover

Frances Henrietta Kilvert – the Later Years – Part 1

Teresa Williams investigates the life, after the Diarist's death, of Kilvert's sister, Fanny



Among the fascinating family photographs received from Mr Norm Lawlor of Brisbane, Australia, and published in the March 2017 *KS Journal* 44, are two very dissimilar illustrations of Kilvert's sister, Frances Henrietta. One photograph portrays a plump faced, well dressed lady wearing a Victorian style of fashion typical in the 1880's, whilst the other shows an older lady in a religious order habit. Each depicts a different period in her life.

Frances Henrietta, known as Fanny to her family, friends and readers of the diary, was the third daughter and fifth child of the Reverend Robert Kilvert, rector of Hardenhuish, and his wife Thermuthis (née Coleman). Born on 19 February 1846 and baptised at Hardenhuish by her father on 22 March 1846, her birth followed two years after Mrs Kilvert suffered the tragic neonatal death of a son on Sunday 25 February 1844. No entry was made of the child in the parish registers, his only record being a notice in a few newspapers.

In the Kilvert Society booklet *More Chapters from the Kilvert Saga*, Emily related events from their childhood, describing Fanny as 'the general warming pan of our establishment, both then [at Hardenhuish] and later on when we moved to Langley. It was no small matter to keep so many beds aired, especially during the winter months, as any housekeeper knows' (p93).

There are nearly fifty references to Fanny in the Diary index and it is noticeable from many entries that she closely supported Kilvert in his parish work. Two contentious issues at Langley Burrell were the introduction of a harmonium into the church (Vol 111, pp100-102) and the eventual installation of an odourless Gill stove (Vol 111, p358). On the latter occasion, the Diarist said, *All the credit of the stove is due to Fanny who has been very brave, enterprising and persevering in the interests of the congregation*. Fanny appears to be amiable in her temperament

but also capable of acting with great determination when her beloved brother needed help.

At the time of Kilvert's death his father had already planned to resign the living of Langley Burrell at Michaelmas and on Thursday 2 October, when he received a letter of condolence from the Reverend R L Venables, he had already left Langley Burrell to stay at Beckenham. After thanking him for his "very kind letter", Robert Kilvert wrote

"I can only assure you that no earthly comfort could be greater or more allaying to our grief than the view you gave us of my dear Son's course since he had the advantage of making your acquaintance and enjoying your friendship. The feeling you express towards him he reciprocated most fully with the addition of sincerest respect and regard. Again and again through these years I have felt most grateful that when he went from us he should, in the Providence of God, have fallen into

such hands. And now that we have lost him, it is very precious to us to learn by many testimonies that the sketch you are so good as to give of his life and work is not only a friendly [one] but a true one.

I am sure you will forgive a short and very inadequate reply to your letter – for I cannot yet respond to the many kind letters I am receiving without a fresh outburst of sorrow.

With best and kindest regards to yourself and Mrs Venables,

Believe me

Sincerely yours,

Robert Kilvert."¹

The Diary contains some eleven entries demonstrating how Fanny acted as a partner to the diarist on visits away from home, e.g. to Bath (Vol 11, p99), Weymouth (vol 11, p275), Preston House, Faversham (Vol 111, p395), and as a companion at dinners and parties. It is, therefore, with little surprise we read in her letter written to Mrs Venables, dated 7 October 1879, of her utter devastation and grief at his death. Fanny pours out her feelings citing "his terrible sorrow" as a cause of the way in which "his health is quite broken up – it is very terrible to me to think of the sad cause of it all...My father is still away staying with Dora now – she poor child is nearly heartbroken..." Dora, who had married James Pitcairn in July 1879 had been away on her honeymoon and had missed being able to attend Kilvert's wedding. James and Dora's home after marriage was No 37 Nicoll Road, Harlesden, N-W London.

After leaving Langley Burrell, Fanny and her parents moved

to an apartment at No 9 Beaufort Buildings East, Bath, and this would be their permanent home for the next ten years. [No 9 was in a terrace of fifteen limestone ashlar terrace houses built circa 1790, the terrace now being a Grade II listed building. At the time of listing No 9 was inspected and a 'stone staircase with moulded treads, wrought iron balustrade and mahogany rail' were noted.] It was in their new home that Robert Kilvert was "waited on by Mr Jacob Knight, the churchwarden and Mr Frank Collett of Langley Burrell". The report in the *Wiltshire and Gloucestershire Standard* for Saturday 6 December 1879 continues "he was presented, on behalf of the inhabitants of the parish, with a very handsome illuminated address, the names of the sixty-four subscribers being appended, together with an elegant silver inkstand, pencil case and gold pen, as a token of respect on Mr Kilvert leaving the parish and for his devotion during twenty-four years of faithful ministry." The report concluded, "Mr Kilvert thanked the deputation for their kind and handsome present and has since forwarded a letter conveying his thanks and expressing an earnest desire for their future welfare and happiness."

The birth of a second daughter on 5 April 1880 to Thersie and the Reverend W R Smith, rector of Monnington-on-Wye, hopefully provided a family event for celebration. There, in the church on Sunday 9 May 1880 the Reverend Robert Kilvert baptised Frances Essex Theodora, his new granddaughter.

At the time of the Census on Sunday 3 April 1881, the Kilvert household in Bath consisted of Fanny and her parents together with two young servants, Eliza and Martha Cole, acting as cook and housemaid. Their neighbours listed at No 8 were a retired Madras Army surgeon, William Evans, aged 72 years, his wife Emma and two unmarried daughters of Fanny's age. Two female servants looked after the family. On the other side, at No 10, lived Francis Savage, J.P. for Bath, aged 67 years, his wife Caroline and one female servant.

Also listed in the 1881 Census for Bath was Emily Wyndowe's household at Batheaston Lodge. Emily was recorded as 'Head of Household' since Samuel was still away in India. Katherine, aged 14, Annie F E, 12, Mary, 9, and William T, 4 years, with four female domestic servants, comprise the Census entry. The following year of 1882 saw Samuel being given permission to retire from his arduous position in India and a notice in the *Homeward Mail* announced the birth on November 12 of another daughter for the Wyndowe family who was baptised Constance Theodora.

In 1881, the *Bath Chronicle* records Robert Kilvert twice preaching at The Kensington Episcopal Chapel. This chapel, now a listed building, was designed by John Palmer and after a collection by public subscription was built by John Jelly. It opened for service in 1795 as a nonconformist chapel but was transferred to Anglican use in the 1860s. The first occasion Robert Kilvert preached was on Sunday 24 April (the first Sunday after Easter) and the second time on Sunday 4 September 1881 (the twelfth Sunday after Trinity). The proposed music at these morning services was listed together with hymn numbers, the latter all coming from the Bristol Tune Book. After the morning service in September, the newspaper stated, "The Holy Communion will be administered."

On 7 July 1881, at the Bath Police Court, Fanny was called to give evidence in an alleged theft case. The report in the *Bath Chronicle* dated 14 July stated that two ten year old boys, James William Kerson and William Henry Lane, both of Guinea Lane, Bath, were charged with having "broken and entered Guinea Lane School on Sunday 5 July and stolen therefrom seven pictures and 57 number cards, to the value of Five Shillings, the property of Canon Bernard and others."

The report continued, "Miss Frances Kilvert, of 9 Beaufort Buildings E., engaged as a Sunday school teacher at the Guinea Lane School, stated, "She left the school at twenty minutes past four o'clock on Sunday afternoon. She closed the door and as it had a spring lock on it, it was locked also. Everything was left in perfect order – she did not know whether the prisoners were pupils of the school or not." Emma Watts, schoolmistress, gave evidence of identification of items as similar to those used in the school and confirmed the prisoners were not her pupils. "The boys each

incriminated each other " in evidence but both were found 'Guilty'. Their mothers "gave permission for the boys to be dealt with summarily" and they were sentenced to undergo corporal punishment.

On 22 May 1882, the Reverend Robert Kilvert died at Bath aged 78 from pneumonia and asthma, his death being registered by Edward Newton Kilvert. His funeral at Langley Burrell on 26 May saw a gathering of Kilvert family members and a large number of local clergymen and former parishioners to mourn him and pay their respects. The local Wiltshire and Somerset press reported: "The service in the church was conducted by the Reverend Edward C Awdry, vicar of Kington St Michael, and that at the graveside by the Reverend George W Newnham of Corsham.



Emily (Kilvert) Wyndowe

Mr Newnham was asked by the editor of the *Devizes & Wilts Gazette* to write a sketch of the life of Robert Kilvert. Published on June 1, Mr Newnham recalled that their first meeting was when they “sat together on the old Oxford coach behind ‘Old Dan’ and ‘Lee’ in 1826. Later circumstances separated us for many years”, he said “but in 1840 I found him serving the little church at Hardenhuish where the small population allowed of his taking pupils”...“In 1877 I renewed my acquaintance with him at Langley.” He described Robert’s address as “dry...but under it there was much warm and tender feeling as his pupils will remember...he felt deeply the loss of his good son and under the signs of infirmity withdrew from his parish to Bath where he peacefully entered into his rest.”

Fanny would have been deeply affected by her father’s death, but must have found solace in her involvement with the choir of Walcot Church and her work at the Guinea Lane School. A long account in the *Bath Chronicle* dated 8 February 1883 gave details of a “Vocal and Instrumental Concert” given in the Girls’ Schoolroom at Guinea Lane School in aid of the choir of Walcot Church and the School Band...it was in every way successful, the room being crowded to excess...” The proceedings were opened by the Reverend Canon Bernard “who took a few moments to explain the reason for the gathering and to pay a high compliment to Miss Kilvert for her indefatigable labour as directress and all the time she has devoted to the task in the past six months.”

Fanny took a significant part in the concert, acting as accompanist throughout, performing twice and also directing the choir. “The long programme” consisted of 13 items in Part 1 and 12 in Part 11. The sixth item in the first half was “the pretty duet, Pulaski’s Banner’ played by Miss Kilvert and Mr C Everitt, which was loudly applauded.”

[Casimir Pulaski, 1745-1779, Polish by birth, is called the ‘Father of American Cavalry’ and the ‘Banner’ was made and presented to him by Moravian Sister nuns in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania in 1778. The following year he was killed at the siege of Savannah. His exploits in the Revolutionary War were commemorated by the poet Longfellow. In 2009, President Barack Obama made Pulaski an American citizen and designated October 11 as his Memorial Day.]

Fanny performed the seventh item in Part 11, the newspaper account saying “Miss Kilvert sang a song entitled ‘Milly’s Faith’, after which the choir followed with ‘She that has a pleasant Face’ and ‘Lullaby’, all of which were warmly applauded. The concert terminated by the choir singing the first two verses of ‘God Save the Queen’, with Mr G Pratt taking the solo, and the School Band playing the last verse.”

No further references to Fanny helping at the Guinea Lane Schools have been found in the rather sparse newspaper coverage available online for that period, due to many West of England publications at the Newspaper Library, N-W London, suffering bomb damage during WWII. The Guinea Lane School buildings are now listed and have been converted into apartments.

Emily and Samuel Wyndowe with their five children continued to live at Batheaston until 1884, when an item in the *Bath Chronicle* for Thursday 10 April, published a “report of the Vestry meeting for that parish which took place at the Parish School on 3 April, with the Reverend T P Rogers in the chair. The vicar said that Dr Wyndowe had been obliged to decline being nominated churchwarden as he was about to leave the parish. A vote of thanks was given to Dr Wyndowe for the

excellent manner in which he had fulfilled the duties of churchwarden during the past two years. In returning thanks Dr Wyndowe said that had he been staying in the parish he would with pleasure have continued to hold the office.”

The Wyndowe family moved to Ladbroke Grove, later to Iverne Gardens, Kensington, in the 1890s, then lived some years at Speldhurst in Kent, before finally residing in Gloucestershire. In 1885, the year following their departure from Batheaston, the *Hampshire Telegraph* dated 2 May 1885 listed them as ‘Visitors’ to Southsea, staying at No 12 South Parade.

In December 1884, Fanny travelled to Langley Burrell to attend the funeral on Monday 21 December of Mrs Ashe. In announcing her death, at the early age of 53 years, “after an illness of a week’s duration”, the *Devizes & Wilts Gazette* said “The deceased lady was seized with a severe paralysis and although attended by Mr Spencer and a London physician their efforts were unavailing. With the festive season being so near, her loss will be severely felt, for Mrs Ashe was kindly and charitably disposed to the poor of the parish and especially to cases of sickness.”

A long account in the *Devizes & Wilts Gazette* for Thursday 25 December 1884 described the funeral ceremony and scene in great detail.

“Owing to the close proximity of the Church to Langley House, horses and carriages were not required. The funeral was fixed for three o’clock and shortly after this time the mournful *cortege* left the house, the coffin being borne by tenants and employees of the estate. The chief mourners were the Reverend R M Ashe, the Misses Ashe(3), Miss Daly (sister of the deceased), Miss Kilvert (formerly of the Rectory), Dr Fuller, (London) and Mr Spencer (medical attendants) and the servants of Langley House. The Reverend J J Daniell, rector of the parish conducted that part of the burial service which is used within the church and the Reverend A Headley, rector of Hardenhuish, officiated at the graveside where Hymn number 399, ‘When our heads are bowed with woe’ was sung by the choir and schoolchildren.”

The report continued, “There were a very great number of persons in attendance and the greatest sympathy and respect was shown to the bereaved family. The lady mourners carried on their left arm, wreaths of flowers and many were laid on the coffin. Others were contributed by Sir Gabriel, Lady Goldney, and an ‘Affectionate God-Child’ (Katherine Goldney) etc. The tenants who acted as bearers were Messrs Jacob Knight, George Bryant, Waite Bryant and Henry Fry. The pall was of violet silk with a white silk cross and white silk fringe. The bells of St Paul’s Church tolled from three o’clock to four o’clock in the afternoon. The simple inscription upon the polished oak coffin, read

LETITIA ASHE
17th December 1884”

Fanny must have been shocked to hear of the death on Sunday 18 January 1885 of the Reverend Robert Martyn Ashe just one month after his wife’s death. It was his 79th birthday. The report in the *Western Daily Press* for Monday 26 January described the funeral on the previous Saturday which in many details was identical to that held for Mrs Ashe. “The coffin, covered by a pall of violet velvet with white silk cross and fringe, was carried from Langley House to the Church by tenants of the deceased. Exquisite wreaths were laid on the coffin. The Reverend J J Daniell and Reverend A Headley conducted the service in the church and at the graveside, respectively. Many of the mourners attended Divine service at Langley Burrell Church on the Sunday

morning when the Reverend J J Daniell preached from the text, 28th chapter of Jeremiah, verse 16.” There is no mention of Fanny’s name among the list of mourners.

The next mention found of Fanny’s name in a newspaper report was at the happy event of the marriage of Miss Mary Augusta Strong, the only daughter of the Reverend Augustus Strong, rector of St Paul’s, Chippenham. The bridegroom was the Reverend Reginald Peacock, (who had been curate of St Andrew’s, Chippenham for the past three years), the second son of the Reverend Edward Peacock who officiated at the ceremony. The *Devizes and Wilts Gazette* for Thursday 6 May 1886 described the scene.

“The weather of late has been very dismal but today the sun shone forth in all its splendour. So great was the number of persons attending the church that extra seats had to be placed in the centre aisle. The building was beautifully decorated throughout with arum lilies, palms, ferns, white anenomes and marguerites. The bride was attired in a gown of cream Ottoman silk trimmed with lace. Her bouquet was Lilies of the Valley. Six bridesmaids attended her, the Misses Lucy, Augusta and Barbara Peacock (sisters of the bridegroom), Miss Rich and the Misses Frances and Florence Rooke. They all wore dresses of cream crape. Three dresses were trimmed with stripes of blue satin and three with ruby satin, with bonnets to match. They carried baskets of bridal daisies.

The pathway outside the church was strewn with cowslips by the children of St Paul’s School and spectators were lined three and four deep – not since the church was built some 30 years before have so many people assembled for a similar occasion.”

[St Paul’s Church, Chippenham was consecrated in April 1855, a ceremony which the Reverend Robert Kilvert and Mrs Kilvert attended together with their children.

On page 109 of *More Chapters from the Kilvert Saga* Emily records the occasion.]

The newspaper article continued, “The wedding breakfast, for about 60 guests, was held in a marquee erected on the Rectory lawn and later Mr Porter, photographer of Chippenham took a very good picture of the wedding party. About two o’clock the happy pair left the Rectory for London *en route* for North Wales. Following their departure many of the guests took the opportunity to view the splendid array of costly wedding presents. The bells of St Paul’s and those of the parish church rang merry peals at intervals during the day.”

Fanny was among the guests attending the reception, but her name did not appear among the many people recorded as sending wedding presents. The list was headed by Lady Neeld who gave the bride a gold bracelet, Sir John Neeld contributing a cheque for

£25. Miss Ashe sent a tea set, with the Misses Emily and Lucy Ashe giving a dinner set and opal glass goblets, jug and finger glasses, respectively. Some presents were duplicated with at least three separate gifts of “Brass Kettle set with Stand.”

A name from Fanny’s childhood days at Hardenhuish appeared in local papers in July 1886 when the country held its second General Election within two years. Richard Biddulph Martin, whom Emily mentioned on page 87 of *More Chapters*, was a Liberal-Unionist candidate for mid-Devon. In publishing biographical details he listed his education as “firstly under the Reverend Robert Kilvert at Hardenhuish Rectory, Chippenham, afterwards at Harrow, under the headmastership of Dr Vaughan (later the Very Reverend Dr Vaughan, Dean of Llandaff), Exeter College, Oxford, M.A. (Richard Biddulph Martin did not win the seat, being beaten by a ‘Separatist’ candidate).

On Friday 13 May 1887, the “Bristol and West of England Association for Women’s Suffrage held a drawing room meeting at Russell House, Russell Street, Bath, with the Countess of Portsmouth taking the chair. The Society sought to petition both Houses of Parliament for the right of women householders in Bath to vote on exactly the same terms as men now had, on the basis that they (the women householders) paid the same rates and taxes, but received no benefit.” The long list of ladies’ names included “Miss Kilvert.” Fanny was no doubt interested in the aims of the Society, since she and her mother were, following the death of Robert Kilvert, responsible as householders for rent, rates and taxes on No 9 Beaufort Buildings, East. According to information collected by the Society, in some areas of Bath, up to one-third of householders were women.

The *Weston & Somersetshire Herald* of Saturday 8 October 1887 listed under “Latest Arrivals” the names of “Mrs and Miss Kilvert (from Bath” staying at “No 3, Victoria Buildings.” On page 109 in ‘*More*

Chapters from the Kilvert Saga Emily recalls the “family exodus to the sea-side every year” and that “Weston-Super-Mare was the place generally chosen on account of its bracing air and splendid sands.” Fanny and her mother probably were fortunate with the weather during their stay at Weston, the year of 1887 being a phenomenally dry one according to the Rainfall Association tables regularly published in the *Bath Chronicle*.

No mention of Fanny has been found in any newspaper for 1888. Mrs Kilvert had celebrated her 80th birthday on 12 May and it is probable by now that she needed more care with everyday activities. The weather in 1888 was in complete contrast to the previous year, being much colder every month from January to October inclusive, with periods of heavy rain. There was some respite in November and December which saw temperatures averaging over 50 fahrenheit each day.

During the weekend of 9-10 March 1889, the country suffered



Thermuthis Mary (Kilvert) Smith

widespread flooding owing to continual heavy rain falling upon saturated ground. The city of Bath experienced its worst flooding since October 1882 “which [then] caused much suffering, injury and extensive damage throughout.” This time steps were taken to advise inhabitants to remove household possessions to a higher floor if possible. “Nearly every street in the city was flooded and many businesses had goods ruined with several feet of water in store-rooms and basements.”

The news of the death of Thersie’s husband, the Reverend William Robins Smith, in London on Palm Sunday, 14 April 1889 must have greatly saddened Mrs Kilvert and Fanny. Thersie, whose youngest child, Frances Essex Theodora, had just celebrated her ninth birthday, would be required now to move from her home in the Monnington-on-Wye rectory, adding to her grief.

Less than three months later, on July 4, Mrs Kilvert died at her home in Bath, aged 81 years, after suffering from cancer for two years. Her death certificate records that her daughter Emily, of Ladbroke Square, London W, who was “Present at Death”, notified the Registrar the following day. *The Devizes and Wilts Gazette* of Thursday 11 July reported details of the funeral.

“Langley Burrell: On Saturday afternoon last the remains of Thermuthis Kilvert, the Aunt of William Coleman Esq, of

Langley Fitzurse, and widow of the Reverend Robert Kilvert, who for many years was rector of Langley Burrell, were interred in the churchyard beside that of her late husband. The deceased was highly respected in Langley and neighbourhood and the large number of parishioners present at the funeral testified that the many good deeds performed by her during her connection with the parish had not been forgotten. The burial service, which was most impressive, was conducted by the Reverend C Awdry and the Reverend Mr Minchin of Castle Coombe.”

After her mother’s death, Fanny faced an uncertain future. She was aged 43 and unmarried. Sometime within the next two years she made the decision to join a religious Order. She became the lady shown in the second photograph.

REFERENCES

- ¹ This letter is numbered MS B786 in the Venables Collection at the National Library of Wales.

More Chapters from the Kilvert Saga, referred to by Teresa Williams, is available from the Publications Manager. See inside back cover for details.

From the *Diary* to the Great War

Chairman Rob Graves commemorates the centenary of the end of the First World War with a consideration of what happened in families known to Kilvert

From our present perspective, a hundred years from the dying months of the Great War, it seems appropriate to cast light on the effects of the war on the lives of some at least of the families mentioned in Kilvert’s *Diary*, and on the experiences of those family members who fought in it. Few of us can have paused to consider that Francis Kilvert himself, had he been granted a fuller lifespan, might at the age of seventy-three have witnessed the outbreak of the Great War in August 1914. Even fewer of us can have reflected that had he and his wife Elizabeth been able to produce a male child, then that child would have been of military age by 1914 and might in the worst of outcomes, unless like his father and grandfather he had entered the church, have numbered among the nearly one million British fatalities of the war.¹

This, of course, is mere speculation. As we are all aware, Kilvert died in September 1879 after only five weeks of marriage. There was no child. His brother Edward, however, the youngest of the Kilvert siblings, whose marriage to Eleanor Pitcairn is recorded in the *Diary* as taking place on 4 June 1878, did father both a son and a daughter. The daughter, Thermuthis, never married. The son, Robert Edgar (Edward, we note, gave his children his own parents’ first names) born on 20 March 1881, grew up to become a career officer in the Royal Marine Artillery, rising in rank from second lieutenant in 1898 to captain in 1907. His record shows him to have been an exemplary officer, zealous, hardworking, physically strong and efficient. In 1914 he became a gunnery officer aboard *HMS Neptune*, a twelve inch gun battleship and flagship of the Home Fleet. By

this time he had married Hilda Stephanie Maton, the ceremony having taken place on 13 December 1912 in Streatham. What Hilda thought of being wedded to a marine officer spending so much time away from home (home then being Eastney Barracks, Portsmouth) is not known. This marriage did, nonetheless, produce two children, Robert Wynne born in November 1913, who in the course of time would enter holy orders, and Muriel Leigh, born in February 1918.



HMS Neptune. The higher of the two gun turrets in the picture is ‘X’ turret, under the command of Robert Edgar Kilvert at Jutland.

In 1916 Captain Robert Edgar Kilvert was still serving aboard *HMS Neptune*. *Neptune*, by now replaced as flagship of the renamed Grand Fleet by *HMS Iron Duke*, was part of the First Battle Squadron at the Battle of Jutland on 31 May – 1 June of that year. Captain Kilvert was the marine officer in command of 'X' turret (the foremost of *Neptune's* two rear turrets), where his distinguished conduct during the battle led to a mention in despatches and promotion to the rank of major. His career was not entirely spent at sea. From 1 February to 14 December 1917 Major Kilvert was at the Western Front in command of a Royal Marine heavy siege train. In December 1917 he was again mentioned in despatches and in January 1918 he was awarded the D.S.O. After the war, in 1921, his name was brought to the attention of the Adjutant General Royal Marines for his good work commanding 10th Royal Marines Artillery Battalion during the national coal strike, an action that might well have endeared him to his late Uncle Frank whose views on the conduct of the Welsh miners during the coal strike of 1873 are anything but charitable.²

Robert Edgar survived the war. Although the Great War witnessed spectacular naval catastrophes, most notably the shattering destruction of no fewer than three battlecruisers at Jutland when their magazines exploded with almost total loss of life, fatalities among naval and marine personnel never matched the unprecedented scale of those suffered by the army. Sadly, however, Robert Edgar did not have long to live after the war. In March 1923, having been taken ill aboard the battleship *HMS Barham*, he was transferred to the military hospital at Gibraltar where, at 2.30 in the morning of March 28, he died. His death came only a few days after his forty-first birthday, making him only three years older than his Uncle Frank at the time of his own death in 1879. It is ironic that, having come through the war unscathed, Robert Edgar should have met his end so soon into the ensuing peace. His widow Hilda outlived him by forty-one years, dying in 1964 at the age of seventy-seven.

Continuing the naval theme, we can now switch from the Kilverts to the Thomas family, or at least that branch of the family which was to change its name to Evan-Thomas during the mid 1870s. These Thomases of Mitcham, as Kilvert knew them prior to their name change, already had long standing naval connexions through their links by marriage to the Lyons and Pearson families. By the time Kilvert became acquainted with them they could claim at least distant kinship with one naval captain and three admirals.³ These connexions would be further reinforced by the marriage of Mrs Cara Thomas' sister Emily to Captain Phipps Cowper Coles, who perished with the sinking of the turret ship *Captain* in September 1870, an event recorded with much feeling by Kilvert.⁴ The most prominent in later life of the children of Charles and Cara Thomas of Mitcham was Hugh, known to Kilvert as a child, who as Hugh Evan-Thomas would come to command the Fifth Battle Squadron at Jutland with the rank of Rear-Admiral. Like Robert Edgar Kilvert, Hugh was a career officer, following in the footsteps of his older brother Algernon who retired from the navy as a commander in October 1885. It is of interest to note that whilst late in the day of May 31 1916, during the initial phases of the Battle of Jutland, Robert Edgar Kilvert aboard *Neptune* was steaming south with Jellicoe's Grand Fleet, Hugh, commanding his own battle squadron aboard his flagship *Barham*, the very ship from which Robert Edgar would be transferred to hospital some seven years later, was speeding north towards him in company with Beatty's battlecruisers and with the entire German battle fleet hot on his

heels. I have already outlined the circumstances of the battle and the rancour which attended its aftermath long into the postwar years.⁵ Although Hugh finally attained the rank of full admiral the bitter controversy raging around both tactics on the day and the loss of ships and men would prove responsible in time for the undermining of his health and his death in May 1928. Hugh may not have died in battle, but he was certainly one of the war's victims. His wife, another Hilda, lived on for almost ten years more, dying in February 1938.

There was, incidentally, one other member of the Evan-Thomas family who was present at the Battle of Jutland. This was Hugh's nephew Charles Marmaduke, the son of his brother Algernon. Charles Marmaduke was then a midshipman on board Admiral Jellicoe's flagship *HMS Iron Duke*. He would have been at the centre of the action when the opposing fleets at last met for their relatively brief exchange of fire in the early evening of 31 May before the Germans turned away and made their escape. A second nephew, Charles Lindsay Evan-Thomas, the son of Hugh's brother Llewelyn, the latter also known to Kilvert as a child, was at the time stationed on a destroyer based at Portsmouth. Both nephews would see out the war in the navy, and both would be placed on the retired list in the 1920s.

Whereas the Evan-Thomases, as we have seen, tended to gravitate towards the navy, their cousins, the Thomases of Llanthomas, well known of course to Kilvert, were drawn by preference to the army. Of the six brothers of Fanny or 'Daisy' Thomas three became army officers. These were William, the eldest, together with Henry and John. All three died before the Great War. Henry, however, had a son, also named Henry though known familiarly as Harry, together with a daughter, Alice. Another of the Thomas brothers, Walter, the youngest of the six, had two sons, Walter and Charles Ifor, and a daughter, Eileen. Yet another brother, Lechmere, had a son who died at the age of fourteen in 1892. Henry's son, Harry, along with Walter's two sons, Walter and Charles Ifor, would all see combat in the Great War. Harry, whose surname would be changed from Thomas to Pateshall in 1911 for inheritance reasons, followed his father early not merely into the army but into his father's regiment, the East Yorkshire Regiment, and by 1909 had reached the rank of captain. He seems to have resigned from the East Yorkshires at or around the time of his father's death in 1912, most probably in order to take charge of the Allensmore Estate close to Hereford, which was inherited along with his new surname. He appears shortly afterwards to have joined the Herefordshire Regiment, this being a territorial or part-time force. In March 1914 he is listed in army records as major, 1st Battalion, Herefordshire Regiment. With the outbreak of war this regiment was mobilised and sent for training as part of the regular army. In July 1915 the first battalion embarked at Devonport for Port Said, Egypt. On August 9 the bulk of the battalion was landed at Suvla Bay, Gallipoli. Four officers and some two hundred men remained in Port Said to form a core on which to rebuild in case of heavy losses. Whether Harry was among these officers is not known, but it seems probable that he was not.

The story of the Gallipoli debacle is, sadly, a familiar one. The troops involved had not only to contend with the Turkish defences but also with inadequate military planning, the heat, rats, flies, dysentery and, later on, the cold. The battalion was eventually withdrawn on 12 December and sent back to Egypt. 1916 saw an attempted attack on the Suez Canal by a joint Turkish, German and Austrian force. In 1917 the Herefordshires, as part of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force, were fighting their

way to Jerusalem which was entered by British troops in December of that year. In June 1918 they were sent to the Western Front where they took part in the second battle of the Marne. By the time of the Armistice in November 1918 they were in the Ypres area of Belgium. Harry was one of the lucky ones. He survived the war. Returning to his Allensmore Estate with a D.S.O. to his name, he became Deputy Lieutenant and High Sheriff for Herefordshire in 1931 and was also Chairman of the County Territorial Association. He died in October 1948 leaving an estate worth £40,295-18s-6d net to his wife and the sum of £200 to his cook, Lilian Went, an extremely generous amount for those times.

Harry's cousins, Walter and Charles Ifor, were less fortunate. The elder of the two brothers, Walter Sandys-Thomas (his mother Violet had by now incorporated her late husband's middle name of Sandys into the family name) joined the South Wales Borderers as a second lieutenant in 1916. That year was to prove a particularly costly one for the British army, bringing with it all the horrors of the Somme campaign which lasted from July until November. Walter was not actually sent to the front until August. Having sustained a severe wound in his arm he was sent back to England to recover in hospital and did not return to France until 22 January 1917. He would only have two more weeks to live. An entry dated 4 February 1917 from the war diary of the Second Battalion South Wales Borderers, to which Walter was attached, runs as follows: 'During the day the enemy artillery shelled our positions vigorously; it was impossible to communicate with the men by day. By night sniping was prevalent and Captain Mundy was wounded and Lt. Sandys-Thomas killed, both by snipers, while supervising work on a new strong point.' Walter was twenty-four years old at his death. A memorial plaque in Llanigon church commemorates him and seven other men from the area who died in the war. The motto beneath their names, from Revelations, states simply: 'Faithful unto death'.

Walter's younger brother Charles Ifor did survive the war, but only by the skin of his teeth. In 1915 he joined the newly formed Royal Flying Corps, and on 21 July 1916 was, according to his somewhat slim service record, reported missing in France. This was later revised as 'prisoner of war, Germany', along with the additional and rather odd remark: 'transferred to unemployment list'. Charles Ifor was in many ways lucky, for in this age without parachutes and with dangerously combustible aircraft filled with high octane fuel, fatalities in the Royal Flying Corps were disproportionately great. He did not, however, emerge from the conflict unscathed, having sustained injuries at the time of his capture which were to remain with him in later life. After the war he returned home to take up life at Llanthomas, but in 1950 he and his wife Mary, together with John, the younger of his two sons, emigrated to Southern Rhodesia to take up farming in a climate more conducive to his health. His other son Michael had already preceded the family to Africa. Charles Ifor's sister Eileen and her husband Roger Garnons-Williams, himself a survivor of the war, were left to manage Llanthomas, but despite their efforts to maintain the house they were forced to sell it to a local farmer during the 1950s. The house was demolished shortly afterwards. Charles Ifor himself died in Salisbury, Southern Rhodesia, on 11 January 1958.

The news of Walter's death must naturally have come as a terrible blow to his surviving aunts, Charlotte, Edith and Fanny Thomas, still living at Llanthomas in 1917, and even more so, of course, to his mother Violet who had moved in to join the sisters at Llanthomas in 1915. Yet the war was to inflict a still more

grievous loss on the Baskerville family of Clyro Court in the death of Ralph Hopton Baskerville, the only son of Walter Thomas Mynors Baskerville. Kilvert knew Ralph's parents, Walter, who died in 1897, and his young wife Bertha, and there are frequent references to them in the Diary. In 1918 Ralph was attached to the 18th Battalion the Welsh Regiment. In the early morning of the 9 April, following an exchange of artillery fire, there began a large scale German attack on the line held by, among others, Ralph's battalion. The result was a confused *melée* during which the 18th Battalion together with the units fighting alongside them were repeatedly pushed back. It was at some point during this action that Ralph met his death. Like countless other soldiers he has no known grave, but he is commemorated at the Ploegsteert Memorial in the Hainaut province of Belgium as well as on the war memorial cross at the gate of Clyro church. Laurence le Quesne, describing the grand monument within the churchyard erected by the Baskervilles in confident expectation of a succession of future heads of the family, underlines the full and devastating tragedy of this loss. As he succinctly puts it: "No other male Baskerville ruled at the Court, and no other names were ever inscribed on the tomb which was meant to commemorate a dynasty."⁶ Ralph's death represented the end of a line which could be traced back to the Norman Conquest.

Ralph's two sisters both married. The younger of the two, Dorothy Nesta, had already undergone a separate tragedy of her own four years beforehand. In 1903 she married Bernard Alexander Pratt-Barlow, a career naval officer. By the outbreak of war he had attained the rank of commander. On October 15 1914, a little over two months after Britain's declaration of war, Bernard's ship, the light cruiser *HMS Hawke*, was struck and sunk off the coast of Aberdeen by a torpedo fired from the U-boat U9. Of the *Hawke's* crew 524 men, including Bernard, died. His story has a final, tragically heroic note. Having managed to reach a life raft after the sinking he chose to leave the raft because it was overcrowded, stating that he would swim to another one. He was never seen again. Some three weeks earlier the same U9 had been responsible for the sinking of three British armoured cruisers, nicknamed with ominous prescience 'the live bait squadron', patrolling off the Dutch coast. Regrettably, at this early stage in the war the Royal Navy, confident in the power of its surface fleet, had not yet taken seriously the threat posed by submarines, and precautions to avoid torpedo attacks had not been adequately absorbed throughout the service. Many men, including Dorothy's husband, paid for this failing with their lives.



This is the light cruiser HMS Hawke, sunk on October 15th 1914 with the loss of 524 men, including Commander Bernard Pratt-Barlow.

On the death of her brother in 1918 Dorothy changed her name back to Baskerville in order to take over the Clyro Court estate. She and Bernard had a son who died aged only two. Their daughter, Mary, lived on until 1948. In 1950 the estate was broken up and Clyro Court itself converted into a school. Dorothy died in 1954 at Cae Mawr, a house which in Kilvert's time had been the home of the Morrell family.



The Baskerville monument in Clyro churchyard, looking sadly neglected.
Photo: Rob Graves

Nor did the Great War spare the de Wintons of Maesllwch Castle. On 6 September 1914, just a month after the declaration of war, second lieutenant Walter de Winton of the Coldstream Guards, grandson of the Walter whose declining health was noted by Kilvert in September 1874⁷, was killed at the Battle of the Marne. He too seems to have been destined to become a career officer, joining the Third Battalion Coldstream Guards on 5 February 1913 after passing through the Royal Military College at Sandhurst. He went to the front with the British Expeditionary Force in 1914 and served through the retreat from Mons. Curiously, according to one account, he is said to have been buried in the garden of Monsieur Muraband at La Fortelle, now officially classified as a chateau or manor house in the Department of Seine et Marne. Walter de Winton was only twenty-one at the time of his death. His family, unlike the Baskervilles, did have the meagre compensation of a second male heir to take Walter's place. The Maesllwch Estate went to

his younger brother, Gerald Frederick de Winton, born in 1904, fortunately for him too late to take any part in the war.

Moving on to the Vaughan family and again going forward two generations we glimpse a telling element of the truly global scale of the war. Kilvert was well acquainted with the large family of David Vaughan, Rector of Newchurch, in great part owing to his fondness for the Vaughan daughters. We learn from the *Diary* of the tragic death of Emmeline at the age of thirteen, and Kilvert records his somewhat ill-advised contacts with a second daughter, Janet, during her time at the Clergy Daughters' school in Bristol, contacts which earned him a mild but firm rebuke from her mother.⁸ The fourth of David Vaughan's sons, William Henry, had eight children, three of whom emigrated to Canada. One of the latter, Reginald Alfred Vaughan, joined the Canadian army in 1916 and served as a private in D Company 10th Battalion Alberta Regiment. His medical certificate at the time of joining shows his apparent age as twenty years and one month. Reginald was killed in action on 9 August 1918, in fact aged twenty-three, and he is commemorated on the Canadian national memorial at Vimy, Pas de Calais, as one of the eleven thousand Canadian soldiers who fell in the Great War.

The war was no more sparing of the Dew family of Whitney Rectory, a family with a proud and extensive history of military service, as any visitor to Whitney church will discover. The



The Canadian National Monument to the war dead at Vimy, Pas de Calais. The monument is highly innovative in design, unlike any other.

youngest son of Henry Dew, Vicar of Whitney in Kilvert's day, was Walter Frederick Dew. Born in 1864, Walter was known to Kilvert as a boy, as is shown by several fleeting references to him in the *Diary*. Information available in Whitney church shows that he served as a captain in the 7th Battalion the Bedfordshire Regiment during the war. Age, however, seems to have been against him from the start, for at the time of his death in 1917 he was fifty-three years old, rather late, it might be supposed, for the harsh realities of active service.⁹ It appears that during his time with the army Walter never actually left Britain and that he probably died of ill health whilst training. Nonetheless his name appears as one of ten on the Roll of Honour on the outside wall of the church.

Returning finally to Clyro and the memorial cross at the church gate, the list of the war dead at its foot contains, apart from the name of Ralph Hopton Baskerville, one other surname which will be familiar to close readers of the *Diary*. This is Private Francis H. Anthony who served in the Royal Garrison Artillery and who died on 12 September 1917. Francis was a grandson of Henry and Alice Anthony, both known to Kilvert. Henry was a wheelwright, as was his son Richard, Francis' father. Francis' aunt, Gussena, was among the group of young girls invited by Kilvert to celebrate Boosie Evans' birthday on 12 February 1872,¹⁰ and on 28th August 1878, on one of his regular

return visits to Clyro, Kilvert describes the Anthony family as living "in the hideous huge staring new cottages which dwarf and spoil the village."¹¹ Francis had an elder brother, Richard, who also fought in the war, serving as a private in the 13th Battalion the Gloucestershire Regiment. He survived, and after the war returned to work at the Clyro Court Estate where, according to the 1911 census he had been employed as a mason. He was for many years agent for the estate and outlived his brother Francis by forty-seven years.

There will, of course be many other names which do not feature here, names connecting other individuals and families mentioned in the *Diary* to the Great War. This account is not intended as an exhaustive record of all those named in the *Diary* who were injured or who perished in that most terrible of conflicts. It is meant merely to serve as an indication of the fortunes and misfortunes of the war as these affected a few specific families. The war's reach was, after all, so extensive that there was hardly a household in the country which was not touched by it. In Hay and Clyro, as everywhere throughout the British Isles, the end of the war was met with a mixture of public celebration and private grief. When news of the Armistice reached Hay in November 1918 there were scenes of jubilation. A siren was sounded from the timber yard, a cannon belonging to a town resident was fired, flags appeared on houses and a service of thanksgiving was conducted at the church by the Reverend J.J. de Winton. In the evening a bonfire was lit and fireworks let off, fire balloons were released and the cannon again fired at intervals.¹² The Great War, optimistically dubbed 'the war to end wars' was over. Who amid that heady mix of hope, grief and exhilaration would then have guessed that in a mere two decades the flames of war would again be kindled or that the very treaty which set the terms of the peace would itself contain the seeds of future conflict? One fundamental truth, echoing through the ages, seems to emerge from all of this: that war, however costly in lives and however dreadful in execution, is never ended by war.

REFERENCES

- ¹ Figures for fatalities in the Great War vary considerably. The Central Statistical Office in the immediate postwar period gave the total number of British and Empire deaths as 956,703.
- ² *Diary* Vol. II pp316 & 320.
- ³ These were: Captain Sir Richard Pearson 1731-1806, his son Vice Admiral Richard Pearson 1769-1838, Vice Admiral Lord Edmund Lyons 1790-1858, and his son Admiral Sir Algernon Lyons 1833-1908.
- ⁴ *Diary* Vol. I p. 226.
- ⁵ See *Journals* No. 39 September 2014 & No. 40 March 2015.
- ⁶ A.L. le Quesne: *After Kilvert*, OUP, p157.
- ⁷ *Diary* Vol. III p8.
- ⁸ *Diary* Vol. III p157f.
- ⁹ This being said, it is somewhat alarming to note that the upper age limit for conscription was raised in 1918 to fifty-six!
- ¹⁰ *Diary* Vol. II p135.
- ¹¹ *Diary* Vol. III p413.
- ¹² Information provided by A.J. Nicholls: *Hay at War 1914-1918*, published 2015, p255f.



You'll doubtless recognise the War Memorial cross at the entrance to St Michael's church, Clyro.

Ray Taylor – In Remembrance

Margaret Collins remembers a Kilvertian pen-friendship

At the AGM in April, everyone stood for a minute's silence to honour the memory of Kilvert Society members who had passed away during the year. Sadly, this included Mr R B (Ray) Taylor. Ray lived in Skegness and together with Eva Farmery wrote the KS booklet *Kilvert's Kathleen Mavourneen*.

I joined the Kilvert Society in 2001 and, while I was still rather a 'newcomer', Jeff Marshall, editor of the *Journal* had published a couple of articles I had written and was most encouraging. In *KS Journal* 16, March 2005, I wrote about *Forgive and Forget*, one of Kilvert's poems in the *KS Collected Verse* booklet. It intrigued me as it was different in tone from the other more conventional verses, appearing to be a *cri de coeur* expressing guilt, remorse and regret for a failed love affair. Having read Mr Taylor's booklet, I suggested that perhaps it referred either to Ettie Meredith Brown or to Katharine Heanley of Kilvert's *Kathleen Mavourneen*.

A little later in March, I was taken aback to receive a letter from Jeff forwarding a very nice letter from Mr Taylor asking if I knew the date of the poem, because if it was written not earlier than 1877 it was possible that it could indeed relate to Katharine. Mr Taylor said that the poem was new to him and he had requested a copy of the *Collected Verse* from the KS. I was amazed that such an authority on the subject of *Kathleen Mavourneen* as Mr Taylor had contacted me, a fairly new member of the Society, to ask my opinion. However, I quickly came to realize that this was typical of Ray. He was a very modest man who wore his learning lightly. He was always pleased to share his considerable knowledge of the *Diary* and discuss matters related to Francis Kilvert.

In his covering letter, Jeff Marshall had written, 'Who knows where this "lead" will lead? I'm sure there will be another article here soon, either from Ray, from you or from both!' This was to prove true. I had only a limited knowledge of Kilvert when I joined the KS but was rapidly acquiring all the booklets which I read avidly. However, there were still gaps in my knowledge and I was delighted when Ray, quite unasked, lent me by post *Francis Kilvert and his World* by Frederick Grice. He also lent me his copy of the *Sandford Notebook* to enable me to read the Dawn Chorus entry about which I had only seen references. After a while, I received from Ray *Kilvert's Cornish Diary*. Later, I was pleased to be able to return the compliment and send Ray my copy of the *Harvey Notebook*.

Ray also sent me a cassette he had recorded of *Bytoft Grange*, a story from *The Toll of the Marshes* by Charlotte Heanley, an author who was a relative of the Heanley family. It has echoes of

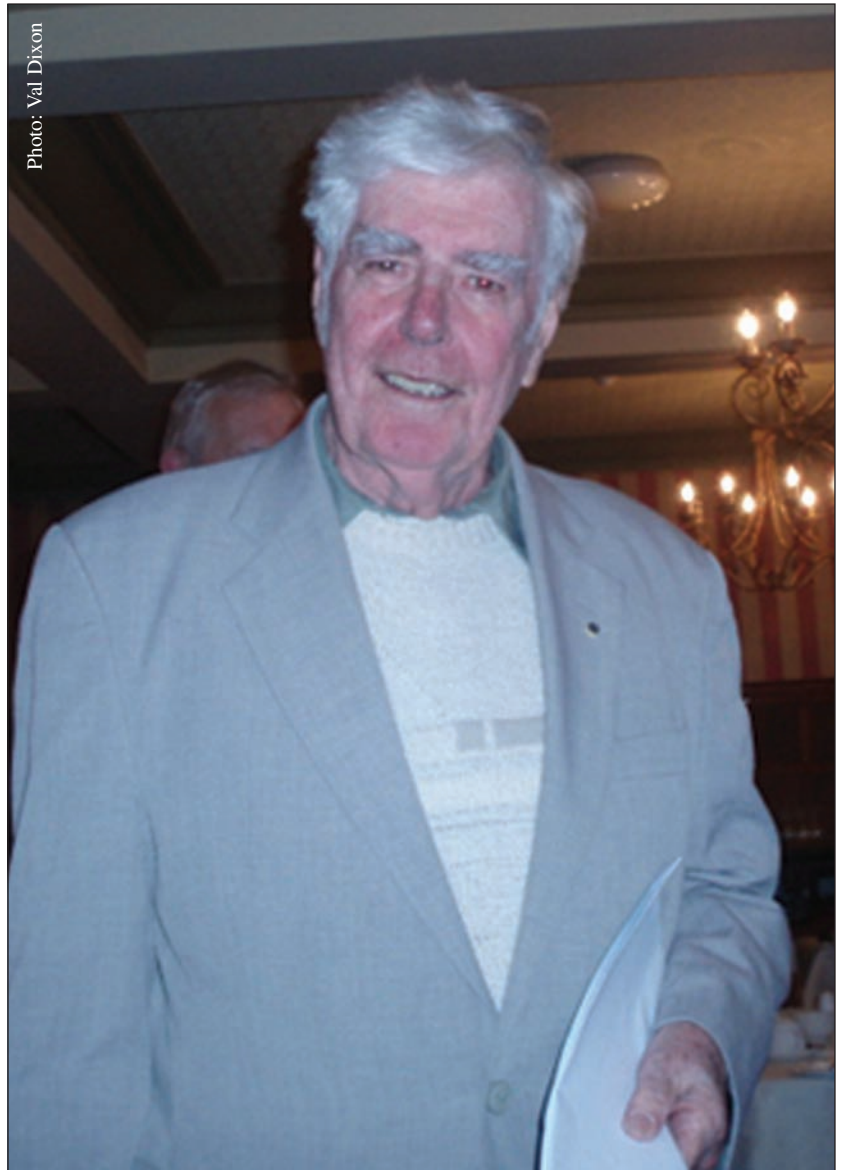


Photo: Val Dixon

Ray Taylor, photographed in May 2010 during the KS trip to Lincolnshire

the story of Katharine and I ventured to ask Ray if he would allow me to write an article about it. He agreed in principle but was naturally cautious and mindful that fact and fiction should remain very separate. I agreed to submit all drafts to him to add or alter as he saw fit. Thus, in *KS Journal* 20, June 2006, the article appeared and incorporated Ray's helpful guidance and comments. His remarks were always insightful, precise and to the point – after all, he was a solicitor!

I met Ray in 2005. My husband Geoff and I were visiting our son in Norwich and had stopped overnight as I wanted to see Croft Church and Katharine Heanley's grave. I mentioned this to Ray and said if he was free perhaps he could show us the church, but if he was busy then please not to worry. In the event he met us and took us around in his car, showing us the church and Katharine's grave and also Tennyson's boyhood home and the church at Somersby. We met Ray's wife Pat for a pub lunch and



Photo: Val Dixon



Photo: Jeff Marshall



Photo: Val Dixon

The Lincolnshire visit, jointly organised by Ray Taylor

had a very enjoyable day with our most knowledgeable local guide.

I was always pleased to see the familiar handwriting on the envelope when the postman called. A few years later, I sometimes received emails which were entitled 'Tidings from the East'. Ray was a most interesting correspondent and possessed a great sense of humour. We exchanged news and occasional photos of family events; Ray was quietly very proud of his family. He was also a keen amateur actor and, as Geoff and I had been members of an operatic society in our youth, we exchanged reminiscences. Ray also very kindly sent me what he called 'Snippets' from old KS newsletters, which I found absolutely engrossing. They included the full text of Fanny Kilvert's poignant letter to Mrs Venables following her brother's death. One day, on looking through old newsletters, Ray had noticed that the letter sent by Kilvert from the village of Venables, in France, to Mr Venables was dated Whit Monday 21 May 1877. [The letter was reprinted in *Journal* 46, March 2018]. Ray rang me up to tell me about this discovery as it was important in pinpointing the date of the breaking of Kilvert's engagement to Katharine Heanley; why was Kilvert away from St Harmon's on such an important weekend in the Church's calendar? Ray wrote about this and told of his involvement with Kilvert's *Diary* in his excellent article in *KS Journal* 22, March 2007, in the *Discovering Kilvert* series.

In May 2010, we had the crowning glory of Ray's research when the Society went to Skegness for a two day visit to see Croft Church and Katharine's grave, and also Somersby. Together with Alan Brimson, Ray had planned a wonderful itinerary. I was asked to write about the event for the *Journal*, which it was a privilege to do and a task I greatly enjoyed. (*KS Journal* 31, September 2010). As ever, I submitted a draft to Ray who politely pointed out just one minor 'gaffe' relating to Katharine's donation towards the tenor bell at Croft church – and I was grateful that he did! It was good to meet Ray and Pat once more and to enjoy a wonderful day in Lincolnshire on the Kilvert trail.

It was because of Ray's patient persistence in negotiating with the Church of England authorities that Katharine Heanley's monument in Croft churchyard was restored and cleaned. Ray, along with Alan Brimson, was also at the forefront in achieving the restoration of Adelaide Mary Cholmeley's grave, the bride of the Findon wedding. Her monument had become broken and dilapidated. The negotiations were again protracted but *KS Journal* 39, September 2014, shows the pristine result and Ray is standing second from the right in the group photograph. A proud moment indeed.

It was due to Ray, who put us in touch, that I have enjoyed

a rewarding correspondence with Teresa Williams over the last ten years or so. Teresa's research is quite remarkable in its breadth and depth. I cannot hope to match it but I am fascinated to read all about it. It was Teresa who provided me with a newspaper report of Miss Newton's funeral when I was writing about the Bredwardine years and for that I shall ever be grateful. Similarly, her work on Elizabeth Kilvert complemented my own interest.

Several years ago, Ray recorded some poems and sent us a cassette; he also recorded extracts from the *Diary*. More recently, his son put a selection of the poems on CD and Ray sent us a copy one Christmas. Ray read beautifully and my family, on hearing it, thought it was Radio 4. It is a lovely remembrance to have of a most enjoyable 'pen-friendship'. I am immensely grateful for the way in which Ray so readily shared his research with me and encouraged me as a new member of the Kilvert Society. Jeff's remark in his covering letter, 'Who knows where this "lead" will lead?' proved to be prophetic. A true gentleman, Ray's unique contribution to Kilvert studies is beyond measure.



Katharine Heanley's grave at Croft

A Walk, a Meeting and a Photograph

Ann Dean recalls an encounter that was very much in Kilvert's spirit

Francis Kilvert recorded in his *Diary* that on Wednesday 3 July, 1872, he and Tom Williams, Vicar of Llowes, set out to visit the Solitary of Llanbedr, Rev John Price, M.A. (Vol 11, pp223-32).

A well educated man, John Price, Vicar of St Peter's Llanbedr, had chosen to live in a little grey cabin, in a green cwm in the hills. Kilvert was shocked by the state of the Solitary's abode.

The squalor, the dirt, the foulness and wretchedness of the place were indescribable, almost inconceivable. And in this place lives the Solitary of Llanbedr, the Revd John Price, Master of Arts of Cambridge University and Vicar of Llanbedr and Painscastle.

Some years ago, Howard and I decided to go to Llanbedr to see if we could find the site of the Solitary's cabin; it must have been around Christmas time as we'd taken some mince pies for a snack. Parking at the church, a friendly sheep dog trotted out from the farm opposite and happily devoured most of them.

Following written directions, we climbed a steep hill with a large group of buildings in a hollow on the right.

A white cottage appeared in front of us at the top of the hill with the farmer and a friend outside injecting some noisy sheep in a pen. We enquired if we might cross his fields and he was very helpful and friendly.

'As long as you shut the gates.' We promised we would, and we trudged on with his final alarming words of advice ringing in our ears, 'Look out for the mawn pits.'

At the end of the quest, we thought that we may have found the old cabin site, but we were not absolutely sure.

Later that day, we met the farmer again. His name was Sidney and his nephew, Les, lived at Penlan Farm in the hollow. Sidney, on his quad bike, was checking his stock. He stopped for a chat and I asked if I might take a photograph of him with his dog and he agreed. He suddenly whipped off his glasses and produced a comb. A comb? He was a hill farmer and he carried a comb? Sidney finished his toilette and I took a photo. Howard and I delivered it a few weeks later but as the cottage was deserted, we left the print inside the porch. It didn't occur to me to leave a note, I just wanted Sidney to have the photograph.

A friend involved in the Kington Walking Festival recently enquired if someone from the Kilvert Society could give a short talk in the church about Llanbedr and the Society. (St Peter's was a rest point along the way on one of their walks). As we live quite near to Llanbedr it seemed logical to volunteer so I asked the Secretary, Alan, if he was willing to let me loose with the Society's reputation. He agreed (very brave man), and I thought I would research the Solitary's cabin again as someone would be bound to ask me where it was.

I duly went back to Llanbedr, alone this time, and parked outside the church of St Peter again, where yet another friendly dog awaited. Alas, there were no mince pies this time and I had trouble getting rid of my new friend who persisted in following me. Eventually, he turned back whilst I walked on along passing Penlan Farm on the right.

Sidney's cottage, Penbedw Farm, came into view; it was obvious from first sight that it was empty and deserted. I felt



Sidney of Penbedw Farm, and dog

apprehensive, as something must have happened. Walking on, I could see that the cottage was in process of being demolished, the back wall had been completely removed. Through the window of an empty bedroom, still intact, I could see a piece of paper leaning against the glass and wondered if that was the photo given to Sidney so long ago.

I poked around for ages looking for a possible site for the Solitary's cabin and took many photos but found nothing conclusive as to the exact spot, though from Kilvert's description it was certainly in that area.

Wandering back towards the church, still thinking about Sidney and feeling sad, a car suddenly appeared in the lane and a young woman leapt out, armed with a black rubbish bag which she deposited into a bin at the side of the road.

I called to her. Her name was Sarah and I asked her if she knew what had happened to the nice gentleman in the white cottage. She told me that 'uncle Sidney' had died a year last December following a short illness.

I told her how Howard and I had met her uncle and about the photograph and Sidney taking off his glasses and producing a comb. She chuckled and said, 'that was my uncle Sidney'. She told us that he had framed the photograph and that, after his death, it had passed to Sarah and her husband and is now on display in their home. I was so blessed to hear that the family had used the photo on the Order of Service for Sidney's funeral.

'We didn't know who had taken the photo, but it just captured uncle Sidney.'

I enquired after Les, Sidney's nephew of Penlan Farm but, sadly, he died five years previously and Sarah and her husband and three daughters now live there. Sidney's cottage is staying in the family; it's not being demolished but refurbished for a holiday let, so Penbedw Farm lives on!

With mutual good wishes we parted, but how lovely that Sarah appeared seemingly out of nowhere, just as I passed by.

Howard and I will never forget our encounter with Sidney, who had the great foresight, even in the wilds of the Llanbedr hills, to carry a comb... just in case.

Note

A cwm is a steep walled semi circular basin in a mountain which may contain a lake or stream. A mawn pit is a type of bog.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Kilvert Country and the Festival: a view from afar

Lyndall Hancock, from Dunedin, New Zealand, sent this reminiscence to the Newsletter in 1989

*We read fine things but never feel them to the full
until we have gone the same steps as the author*

John Keats (Letter, 3 May 1818)

One can read the *Diary*, follow it on large-scale maps, search out background books on the area, even check the meanings of Welsh place names – and yet what a difference there is in actually being there!

Last year, I was able to plan a trip to Britain to coincide with the Kilvert Festival in September [1988]. The Clyro area was new to me and a week there wasn't nearly long enough, but for a few days of that time I was fortunate in having a most knowledgeable guide in Edward West. I drove, he chose (mostly)



Photo: Jeff Marshall

Kilvert Festival 1988: The Rev Martin Reed, the organiser, in Victorian clerical garb, in front of the former vicarage

and much was accomplished in a short time. From Llanthony to Arthur's Stone, from Moccas to Llanigon to Painscastle and more, we followed in 'the same steps as the author' – but by rental car, the modern equivalent of Shanks' pony.

Many *Diary* places and scenes, even quite minor ones, are still relatively unchanged and came alive for me. I stopped at Horden's unmodernised stationery shop in Hay-on-Wye, as Kilvert did; I saw how quickly the River Wye can run high and discoloured as he described it; I found the tiny spring high in the woods of Mouse Castle (though there wasn't a sign of his *genii loci* on the now overgrown ramparts).



An early photo of Horden's in Hay, regularly patronised by Kilvert
Photo: KS Archive

But it was the churches of the *Diary* that particularly impressed me. All of them – even remote little Llanddewi Fach with its only access across the fields – were so very well cared for and so unexpectedly bright with flowers. At Clyro, Llowes and Bettws, much creative hard work had gone into beautiful harvest decorations with different themes as part of the Kilvert Festival.

I think of Bredwardine under a lowering sky, with its dark interior and the light coming through *the great south window*. Of Llanbedr, with fresh flowers lying on the Solitary's grave in the big circular churchyard. Of the *grey owl* of a church, tiny Capel y Ffin. And of Colva at twilight, where a young man and I tested the echo according to Kenneth Clew's instructions and raised not a whisper, alas. Damp stonework and an encroaching tree were likely reasons, I was told. But on a second visit I was partly compensated by trying out the acoustics inside the empty church

when I sang an old Maori hymn about peace and love, "Tama ngakau marie". The ancient walls had probably never heard the like.

Bettws Chapel, too, is a special memory. It didn't matter to me that it was completely rebuilt soon after Kilvert left Clyro, for the Chapel field and the long uphill walk and the views of the Black Mountains are still there, unchanged. I was hoping to find the grass billowing against the Chapel walls as on that summer Sunday in 1871 [9 July]. But the grass was short and dry and full of cowpats on my first visit, and the next time the rain fell before Harvest Evensong and cars churned the field into mud. Oh well, I can now better imagine the warm wind and grassy billows.

The Festival was a fitting end to my week. Guided walks around Clyro, church services using the 1870s liturgy, tea parties, a Penny Reading, and scenes from the *Diary* acted most creditably by the Rhos Goch schoolchildren. Flowers everywhere and many local people in Victorian dress. Exhibits of Clyro and Kilvert interest, too. (Concerning which, is it too late for all Kilvert memorabilia from both Clyro and Hay-on-Wye to be housed in one place? Perhaps Ashbrook House as suggested two years ago.)

By the time the Clyro ladies had served their last cup of tea in the village hall, the Reverend Martin Reed's marvellously clear voice was understandably starting to feel the strain. Then the Festival ended with a calm and lovely 'Kilvert by Lamplight' service and readings in Clyro church.

Much money was raised for the church roof repairs, much pleasure was given to all those who were present. Thank you,



Llanddewi Fach in the fields

everyone, for so many good stories. (P.S. I now know why, according to newsletters, every Kilvert Society outing ends with everyone heading for The Burnt House!)

Jeff Marshall, (who was present at the Festival, but did not know Lyndall at the time), says that he thinks The Burnt House was a popular meeting place for Kilvert teas. Members will know that the memorabilia did spend some years at Ashbrook House but are now conserved and displayed at the Radnorshire Museum, Llandrindod Wells.

An Appeal...

Where's the Cupola gone?

In days gone by, St Giles Church, Tytherton Kellaways was part of the parish of Llangley Burrell, the centre of Wiltshire Kilvert Country, and where the Reverend Francis Kilvert twice served as curate to his father. Today the church is part of the Draycot Benefice in the Diocese of Bristol.

If you were following in the footsteps of Kilvert, passing by Maud Heath's Causeway in Tytherton Kellaways, you might look up at St Giles Church and wonder why the cupola (the dome housing the bell) has disappeared? It had been there since the church was built in 1805 and is an integral part of the church's Grade 2 listing.

In 2015 emergency work was required on the roof. As part of this work the cupola was removed, and found to be in need of repair and restoration. A faculty has been granted by the Chancellor of the Bristol diocese and it is hoped that the work can commence in August 2018, provided the funds are in place.



St Giles Church in 2014 with cupola in place



St Giles Church, looking bare without its cupola

The PCC and congregation are now raising money to cover the estimated £13,000 required to repair & return the cupola to St Giles. The church community has raised £3000 to date. So far grants totalling £8550 have been awarded by Chippenham Civic Society, Wiltshire Historic Churches Trust, the Harris Trust, the Scobell Trust, the Jack Lane Charitable Trust and the Alan Evans Memorial Trust.

If you would like to support this project to restore the cupola, please contact church warden, Alica Davey on 01249 659884 to discuss ways in which you can make your donation, or send a cheque made out to the 'PCC of Kellaways Fabric Account' and send c/o Mrs Alica Davey, 15 Clift Avenue, Chippenham SN15 1DA. Your support would be very much appreciated.

Thank you.

BOOK REVIEWS

The Helmsley Chronicles

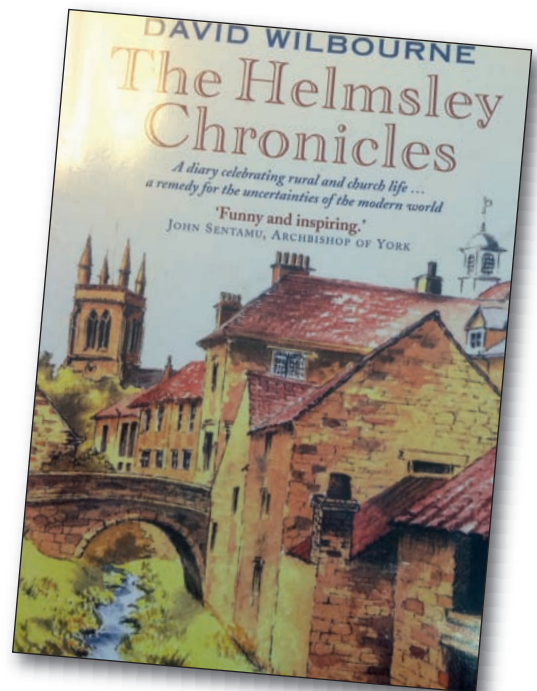
reviewed by Charles Weston

***The Helmsley Chronicles* by David Wilbourne**

*A diary celebrating rural and church life...
a remedy for the uncertainties of the modern world*

(Darton, Longman and Todd. £12.99. ISBN 978-02345-894-7)

David Wilbourne's account of part of a period of time that he spent as the Vicar of Helmsley – a remote rural parish on the edge of the North Yorkshire moors – could easily have been subtitled 'Cycling in Kilvert's footsteps.' It soon becomes obvious from its style and format that Kilvert has been a major influence on David Wilbourne. However, while Kilvert's forays into the countryside were made on foot, Wilbourne's have a distinctly twentieth century feel with bicycle clips and kagoule mentioned in his travels more often than cassock and cape.



David Wilbourne with bicycle

David Wilbourne is currently serving as an Honorary Assistant Bishop in the Diocese of York and was previously, until 2017, Assistant Bishop of Llandaff. He was working as the Archbishop of York's chaplain and director of ordinands in the 1990s when he was 'airlifted' into Helmsley in 1997 after 'some rum goings-on' in the parish. The vicar and his mistress had appeared

in flagrante delicto in the *News of the World*; Lord Feversham, patron of the parish church, was not amused and interviewed David Wilbourne from his hospital bed. Theological discourse between the two was brief and tetchy: the Book of Common Prayer; Remembrance Sunday services; 'bells and smells' and Catholic ritual... Wilbourne passed the test and was told to 'pedal back to Bishopsthorpe and tell the Archbishop you'll do!'

David Wilbourne stayed in Helmsley for the next twelve years, though the entries in the *Chronicles* only cover the period from August 1997 to July 1998. As a youngish vicar with two daughters of school age, he had a whale of a time there and entertained readers of the *Church Times* in his regular diary column with his quirky tales of ministry at Helmsley. The *Chronicles* are festooned with anecdotes, thoughts and feelings which make it a splendid and entertaining read. They convey and celebrate the feeling of rural and church life in the same way as Kilvert's *Diary* albeit 120 year later in a very different age.

The direct references to Kilvert come in the final entry from Thursday 23 July 1998 – three pages of snippets from Kilvert juxtaposed with modern-day thoughts on the human psyche. One reference he makes is to Kilvert's trouble with ice (... 'beard freezing to his moustache, baptising the baby in ice which was broken and swimming around in the font'...) and his own experiences with baptisms, included one that was needed urgently 'before the child outgrew its christening gown'... He concluded, 'I have never had to defrost the baby; having to defrost some congregations on the other hand...'

Another reference concerns dwindling Sunday congregations. Helmsley's congregation in 1998 'barely total a century'; the Easter Day service at Clyro in 1870 attracted 29 communicants. Not perhaps the fairest comparison – Clyro in 1870 to Helmsley (a small market town) in 1998.

Humour is David Wilbourne's forte and the book is both entertaining and insightful. He refers to weddings and relates the story of a big Helmsley wedding that he took when the bride

arrived twenty minutes late at the church only to turn around and retire to the local hotel which was hosting the reception to have her mother redo her hair. 'Kilvert cools my ire' he comments (only perhaps later on in this case). He continues the wedding theme by recalling the Kilvertian tale of the curate who mistranslated from English to Welsh the wedding banns joining together *two backsides* in holy matrimony rather than two persons!

Direct references aside, David Wilbourne captures the spirit of the prose of Kilvert. He enjoys the solitude of the high moors in the same way that Kilvert enjoyed the remote beauty of the Black Mountains. That combination of solitude, beauty and spiritual awareness is captured almost poetically in Wilbourne's final entry of 28 December 1998 in the account of his journey to hold a Holy Innocents' Day Eucharist service at a remote chapel five miles from town.

'I made the lonely journey by bicycle, with chalice and paten, wine and bread and all other necessary ingredients for a Communion packed into my rucksack. Usually, cycling up 1:3 hills dispels the cold, but not today; the chill bitterness of the journey was unrelenting. The stream which normally tumbled down the hillsides had become ice and crept across the road like mini glaciers. In the middle of the road lay a rabbit as stiff as a board... I stopped and moved her body to the verge, kicking the

cold soil from a rock-like molehill to cover her with earth: it seemed a more tender funeral than being mashed by the wheels of a passing car.

Not that there were any passing cars. I skated over the ford and arrived at the little church and set up for the service wondering if anyone else at all was going to come. One person did, explaining that she had watched me descend the slipperiest Cow House Bank before she decided it was safe to follow me in her four-by-four. Another family joined our celebration half way through...

Why didn't I cancel the service? Because I had promised a mother whose son had tragically died on that day two years earlier that I would pray for him out here and I could hardly let her down with a cheery "So sorry, it was a bit icy, so we called it off." I'm never too happy about letting God down either. "Thanks, God, for struggling to Bethlehem and Calvary and all stops in between, but it was a bit slippery underfoot today so Holy Communion was scrapped."

On the cycle ride home I huffed and puffed up Cow House Bank. A deer scrambled down the hill, followed closely by her fawn and crossed the road in front of me. It seemed almost as if they nodded to me before they disappeared once again into the dark forest, making it a morning for lost children and found children.'

Edward Storey reviews

Blue Remembered Hills: A Radnorshire Journey

by James Roose-Evans

(Port Meadow Books £9.99. ISBN 978-199983-799-0) Available via Amazon

Within minutes of starting this remarkable book, I was no longer reading but listening to the author talking about his Radnorshire journey and beyond. I am even tempted to say there were times when I thought it was Francis Kilvert sitting opposite me for these pages glow with similar perceptive observations, wisdom, compassion and humour.

These journal entries have such freshness. On Easter Sunday 1971, James and his partner gave a lift to a bent old woman carrying a basket on the road to Pen-y-Bont. His description could have come from the pages of a Thomas Hardy novel. Having delivered the woman to her cottage, she turns to thank them and wave farewell: 'As we leave, she stands at the door bidding us be careful. She is like a bird with one wing drooping, yet she survives, along with her two dozen cats.'

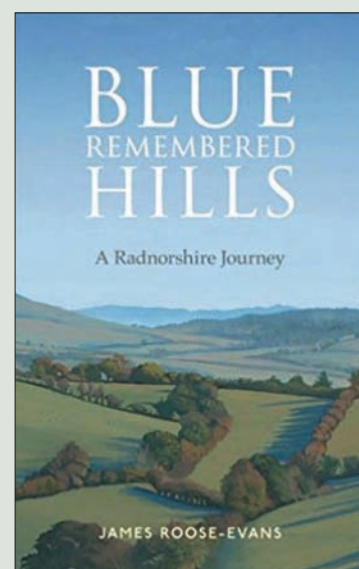
The author's ability to move so easily through his many different worlds is impressive. On the same page we can read that he has just come back from Athens, where he has been directing a cast of Greek actors in *Oedipus* by Sophocles, and suddenly we are in Mr and Mrs Bailey's simple kitchen a million miles from Ancient Greece. On another page he has just come back from Cambridge where he has been directing Samuel Beckett's play *Come and Go* and is busy organising Songs of Praise for Bleddfa church, all with the same calm confidence.

Many of his recollections of Radnorshire country life are memorable, whether they are about getting bees out of his mother's chimney or going to see Dai Evans soon after getting back from Michigan. 'I look across at Dai's worn and earth-stained face...it is the face of a mole emerging from below ground, its pale eyes blinking in the sunlight.' (Unforgettable).

Entertaining as all these anecdotes are, the main themes of the book are his love of the hamlet of Bleddfa, where he founded the Bleddfa Centre for the Creative Spirit in 1974 (and where he even enjoyed being Father Christmas for the local schoolchildren); the constant love for his mother, and his journey towards becoming an ordained priest. His restrained but lucid description of those hours of meditation spent at Grasshampton Monastery are told in such a way that one can share in his spiritual explorations.

Each page contains a gem and, as with Francis Kilvert, I shall be lured back again and again to this book of warm humanity, enrichment and hope.

James Roose-Evans is a well known friend of the Kilvert Society. Some readers will remember his performance of 'The Clyro Diaries of the Reverend Francis Kilvert' at St Mary's Church, Hay-on-Wye as the grand finale of the Society's Jubilee celebrations in October 2008.



Bits and Pieces

● The Marriage Act, 1835

When the media were gearing up for a royal wedding this Spring, the journal *History Today* was puzzling over a 19th century wedding conundrum.¹ Why, asked historian Karen Bourrier, did the Pre-Raphaelite painter William Holman Hunt have to go to Switzerland to get married? The answer lies in the Marriage Act of 1835, which prohibited a widower from marrying his wife's sister, on the basis of a passage in Leviticus which suggested such a relationship was incestuous.

The results of this Act feature in two *Diary* entries. The first was not included by Plomer in the published diary, and is in the complete *Cornish Diary*.

*[Thursday 21 July]...After breakfast the Curate came in from the Church where there had been a wedding, and just after the ceremony was over, the sextoness had informed him that the bride was the sister of the bridegroom's deceased wife.*²

The second was told to Kilvert at Bredwardine on Friday 22 February, 1878

They told me the story of a marriage with a deceased wife's sister in Bredwardine Church and the arrival of the Vicar and clerk during the wedding dinner to proclaim the marriage illegal and to take the ring off the woman's finger. The relationship of the two parties was disclosed to the Vicar's wife while the Vicar was in Church marrying them. The bridegroom however denied the Parson access or to sight of the bride, and all the clerk had to say was that he could not help it, 'twas no fault of his, and for his part he thought it was a pity they had not come to church long before, for, etc., etc.' Vol 111, p373.

The Act remained in force, despite several attempts to repeal it, until 1907. Campaigners for its abolition argued that a sister-in-law might well be called upon to bring up motherless children, and that marriage to the widower could be a possible and respectable outcome. They also argued that the law was unfairly harmful to the poor who were more likely to depend upon such family arrangements and could not afford to get married abroad, as did Holman Hunt. But, says Karen Bourrier 'they could, and did, go to London or a parish where their story was unknown and perjure themselves in order to be wed'.

They might have got away with it by joining in a 'penny' wedding. This was an occasion when a clergyman married several couples in one batch, which was a legal way of encouraging poor people to get married without charging them the full 'surplice fee'. The Reverend Arthur Jepson in Walworth married eight thousand couples, sometimes in groups of up to forty-five couples at a time, and the Reverend Joshua Brookes in Manchester once got the couples mixed up and advised them to 'sort yourselves out' afterwards.³

We don't know whether the couples in the cases Kilvert reported had travelled any distance from their homes – possibly not since they were unmasked so quickly. Kilvert makes no comment on the rights and wrongs of the situation, though he repeats the clerk's comment. He seems to be recording it as one of the hazards of a clergyman's life. He had seen Holman Hunt's work and was not impressed (Vol 111, p45, when he calls the 'Shadow of Death' *theatrical and detestable*), but he probably knew nothing about the artist's controversial wedding.

REFERENCES

- ¹ *If This Be Error* by Karen Bourrier. *History Today*, April 2018, pp14-16.
- ² Kilvert's *Cornish Diary* ed Richard Maber and Angela Tregoning. Illustrated edition, (Alison Hodge, 1989) p34.
- ³ *The Victorian Clergyman* by Trevor May. (Shire Library 2006) p35.

● Winter Chill

Jeff Marshall noticed a letter in the *Times* on 14 April 2018 headed 'Ice-cold Victorian':

'Sir, To the "ice-cold A-list" (*Times* 2 Apr 9 and letter Apr 11) might be added the Rev Francis Kilvert, curate of Clyro, Radnorshire, whose eye-watering diary entry for the intensely cold Christmas Day of 1870 reads: [diary entry follows]. Alas, not least for those who delight in the diary, Kilvert died nine years later of appendicitis at the age of 39'

Eugene Suggett, Dorking (Surrey)

The entry Mr Suggett was referring to is from Vol 1, p286, and reads, in part:

It was an intense frost. I sat down in my bath upon a sheet of thick ice which broke in the middle into large pieces whilst sharp points stuck all around the sides of the tub like chevaux de frise, not very comforting to the naked thighs and loins, for the keen ice cut like broken glass...The morning was most brilliant. Walked to the Sunday School with Gibbins and the road sparkled with millions of rainbows, the seven colours gleaming in every glittering point of hoar frost. The church very cold in spite of two roaring stove fires.

OBITUARIES

Graham Lovett

Formerly of Ross-on-Wye, but now of Cheltenham, died on 1 July 2018.

Graham was a long time member who always supported Society events and took an active interest in Society matters along with his wife Heather.

Our condolences go to Heather and family. Graham will be greatly missed.

Meic Stephens

The death has been announced, on 2 July 2018, of Professor Meic Stephens at the age of 79. He was a life member and, in 1983, edited, for Gwasg Gregynog, *The Curate of Clyro*, an edition of extracts from the *Diary* published in a limited edition and illustrated with wood engravings. Meic Stephens was a champion of Welsh culture, as author, poet, publisher, editor, campaigner and academic.

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.

PUBLICATIONS MANAGER
Colin Dixon
Tregothnan,
Pentrosfa Crescent,
Llandrindod Wells,
Powys LD1 5NW
(tel 01597 822062).

*Prices include UK
postage and packing,
unless noted. For overseas
orders, please see below.
If postage prices change,
the price list may have to
be amended.*

*Remittances for
publications
(kept separate from
subscriptions and donations
etc) should be made
payable to The Kilvert
Society and accompany
orders.*

*Overseas members kindly
note most items can be sent
by surface mail at printed
paper rate for an additional
charge of £6. For airmail
rates please enquire from
the Publications Manager.*

*Owing to the prohibitive
charge for converting
foreign currencies, only
drafts in sterling can be
accepted.*

Copyright The copyright of an article in the *Journal* rests with the contributor.

Opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of The Kilvert Society nor of the Editor of the *Journal*.

Data Protection Act 1998 The names and addresses of members are held on a computerised list exclusively for the distribution of the *Journal* and other mailings about the Society to its members. If you

would prefer not to have your details stored on computer, the Hon Secretary will ask you to provide stamped self-addressed envelopes for your mailings.

Subscriptions The ordinary subscription is £15 (Joint membership £18), due on 1 January.

Cheques, payable to The Kilvert Society, should be sent to: Mrs Sue Rose, Seend Park Farm, Semington, Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 6LH.

