THE JOURNAL OF

THE KILVERT SOCIETY

Number 22 *March 2007*

THE KILVERT SOCIETY

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

Registered Charity No. 1103815

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Cover: Croft Grange, Lincolnshire, home of Kilvert's 'Kathleen Mavourneen'
Photo by Ray Taylor

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From the Editor:

Sadly, I have to begin this editorial with the news of the death of two prominent Kilvertians, our former President, Lady Delia Venables-Llewelyn and our former Chairman, Ron Watts, who both died at the end of last year.

Lady Delia succeeded Wynford Vaughan-Thomas as president in 1987 and served for twelve years, until 1999, the year in which Ron became chairman. Ron joined the KS committee in May 1989 and became vice-chairman in 1998, the year before he began his three-year stint in the chair.

We honour their memory and are grateful for their service to the Society. Their obituaries appear on pages 19 and 20.

I have had an abundance of material submitted for this issue of the *Journal* (always a happy situation for an editor), such that a number of articles have had to be held over until June. My apologies, therefore, to disappointed contributors who may have been expecting to see the results of their labours in this edition. Nonetheless I would not want to suggest that an abundance means that I no longer need any more articles for the rest of this year, indeed not! So, please continue to send in your contributions, because, in the end, the content of your *Journal* depends on you!

I very much hope that you will be able to attend the AGM Weekend next month. There is important business to be transacted at the AGM on the Friday and the programme arranged for the following Saturday and Sunday is most attractive. It is centred on the seventeenth-century former coaching inn, the *Radnorshire Arms* in Presteigne.

Presteigne is a quiet, pleasant, small market town, only just inside Wales, yet it was once the county town of Radnorshire. It lies about 20 miles north-west of Hereford, so, no farther than Hay, where we have met for the past few years.

The hotel is very comfortable but has only nineteen bedrooms and can take no more than 55 for the dinner, early application for the meal and accommodation, if required, is therefore advised; booking sheets are enclosed.

On the Sunday an inclusive visit to the Judge's Lodging is available. The Judge's Lodging is part of an award-winning museum within the former Shire Hall – 'The most commodious and elegant apartments for a judge in all England and Wales', so said Lord Chief Justice Campbell in 1855. There are Kilvert and Venables connections.

There is morning service at the parish church of St Andrew's at 11.00 am for those who may wish to attend.

I look forward to seeing a very large gathering of Kilvertians on the 20, 21 and 22 April.

And, finally… don't forget… Gift Aid!

From the Secretary:

I would like to inform members that I am not seeking re-election as secretary or committee member at this year's AGM. I have served on the committee for five years and as secretary for four years. However, I am hoping to attend as many Society events in the future as possible. I wish the new secretary every success.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Events in 2007-08

AGM weekend

Friday 20 April	7.00 pm	AGM at the Bishop's Palace, Hereford. Interval with refreshments. Talk: 'The Diarist's Art' by our president Dr Ronald Blythe.
Saturday 21 April	10.30 am	Seminars at *The Radnorshire Arms*, Presteigne. Talk: 'The Quaker Influence on Kilvert' by John Toman. Video from the film *The Kilvert Society in 1947* introduced by Richard Weston. At the conclusion of the film Heulwen Hardman will answer questions. Mrs Hardman was born and

brought up near Clyro and members of her family were living in Ashbrook House (Kilvert's lodgings) at the time the film was made.

Afternoon — Free

Evening — 6.30 for 7.00 pm: Annual Dinner at *The Radnorshire Arms,* Presteigne, £16.50 per head. (Please note that for those members wishing to stay overnight at the hotel there will be a special rate. Details enclosed.)

The Radnorshire Arms, Presteigne

Sunday 22 April — Visit to the Judge's Lodging. Morning service at St Andrew's (11am), if desired.

June weekend

Saturday 23 June — 12 noon — Meet at Church Barn, Gladestry (home of Ann Dean).
Walk, four miles (hilly) to Colva. Suitable attire advised. Optional tea £4 per head, provided by ladies of Gladestry at Church Barn. (No sharp heeled shoes to be worn). **Please send cheque to the secretary.**

Sunday 24 June — 3.00 pm — Evensong at Colva Church. Optional tea provided by the Friends of Colva Church, no charge, but a generous donation to Church funds is suggested, on the day (see page 18).

This way, on 24 June!

September weekend

Saturday 22 September — 12 noon — Meet at Pen-y-Craig farm, OS map ref 108458. Walk, seven miles (hilly) to Llewelyn's Cave* and the grave of Twm Tobacco. **(Some members may prefer to walk to the grave only as this is about three miles)**. Suitable attire advised. The afternoon will conclude with a visit to Erwood Craft Centre where refreshments may be purchased.

Sunday 23 September — 3.00 pm — Evensong at Glascwm Church followed by optional tea at Erwood Craft Centre

Booking sheets for the events of the AGM weekend and the June and September weekends are included with this issue of the *Journal*. Please return the AGM sheet no later than 27 March and the June/September sheet by 12 April at the latest to the Hon Secretary, D J Elvins.

Winter Event 2008

Wednesday 20 February — Whole day visit to Chippenham. KS member the Revd John Day will lead the walk. Members will need to make their own arrangements for lunch. (Time and other details will be available later).

* See page 8 for some information on the Cave.

THE SEPTEMBER VISIT

By Elizabeth Wheeldon (Hereford)

About thirty of us met at St Peter's Church, Langley Burrell, on Saturday 23 September from 11am. Our Wiltshire committee members, Jim Hall and Sue Rose, were there to greet us and invite us to place our orders for lunch, later on, at the *Langley Tap*.

At 11.30 we went into St Peter's for Matins; the church had been beautifully decorated for the Harvest Festival service, which was to take place the next day.

Langley Lodge

Lunch was taken here…

The service was conducted by the Rector, the Revd Simon Tinsdale, and the organist, Sarah Cook, accompanied our singing of the hymns, all of which would have been familiar to RFK.

In his sermon the Rector told us that he had been given a copy of the abridged version of the *Diary* and he had much enjoyed reading it. We all felt that the service would have been very much to Kilvert's taste.

Then, it was off to the *Langley Tap* for our pre-ordered lunch and a chance to meet and talk with KS friends and acquaintances.

After lunch we walked to nearby Langley Lodge and were able to view the attractive gardens there before driving to Draycot Park. Here we were met by Reuben Cousins and his wife who showed us around St James' Church, which was, originally, the estate church for Draycot. It is now a redundant church, but is opened twice a year at the request of locals.

... and tea here.

Julia Yeardeye reads from the Diary.

Photos by Jim Hall and Val Dixon

Draycot Park House, as we know, has long since been demolished (c1955) but there remain some estate buildings close by. We also saw the lake where the skating parties, described by Kilvert, took place.

Reuben Cousins, who once farmed on the estate, led us on a walk around the farmland and Deer Park, all of which, of course, he knew very well. It was a most interesting tour and we are most grateful to him and his wife for their contribution to a splendid afternoon at Draycot.

The last part of the day's programme was the return to Langley Burrell for tea and cakes, prepared by Sue Rose, accompanied by appropriate *Diary* extracts, including the previously mentioned skating parties (see *Diary* entry Vol. 1 pp 287-291 December 1870).

Our thanks to Sue for the excellent refreshments and to her and Jim for arranging another most enjoyable Kilvert event – yet again blessed with beautiful weather.

THE REOPENING OF ST MARY'S CHURCHYARD, BATHWICK

By Basil Greenslade (Bath)

(See also page 16 of *Journal* No. 21 September 2006)

This event which took place on 23 September 2006 coincided with the Society's visit to Langley Burrell and with a huge turnout for Bath Rugby just around the corner! However, there was a very good gathering also for the formal opening of the St Mary's cemetery at 2.30 pm and throughout the afternoon a steady flow of visitors passed through the associated exhibition in the nearby Pulteney Arms. I arrived there, late morning, to find the display already set up and stalls all around the room, including the Kilvert table, put together very impressively by Alastair Cowan with help from Sheila Edwards of the Bathwick Local History Society.

On the Kilvert Society stand was a greatly enlarged version of the whole page of John Day's account in the *Journal* of the Society's visit to Bath in February 2004, with key sections highlighted – this was studied with great interest. Also there, was an enlarged Kilvert family tree, again appropriately highlighted plus enlarged extracts from Fred Grice's *Who's Who in Kilvert's Diary*. But perhaps most striking of all was a fine, beautifully mounted colour photograph (below) of the marble memorial to Dr John Kilvert, which is inside St Mary's Church. (His grave is No. 21 on the Churchyard Trail leaflet). This was taken by a friend of Alastair Cowan's and has been presented to the Society. Also available for visitors to take away were *Cleric's Trail* leaflets and details, provided by Sheila Edwards, of the Kilvert memorials inside the church.

Memorial to John Kilvert in St Mary's Church, Bathwick

The display as a whole was of great interest to the many visitors and in particular to the (older!) locals. The old maps, the copies of the registers, dating back to the early nineteenth century and information about the notables buried in the cemetery were all carefully studied.

The Kilvert Society is most grateful to Alastair Cowan for the gift of the mounted photograph and for his efforts in closely involving the Society in this exhibition. Also our thanks to Basil Greenslade for his help in promoting the Society during the exhibition and to John Toman, who was also, we are informed, 'very usefully there'!

* * * * *

MEMORIAL TABLETS IN ST MARY'S CHURCH

By Sheila Edwards (Bathwick Local History Research)

There are over 55 memorial tablets placed around the interior walls of St Mary's, most remembering past residents of Bathwick. Some of the inscriptions bear testimony to those who, in various roles, once faithfully served the parish, others record the names of people called to do God's work in different ways. On the southern wall are four memorials to members of the Kilvert family. (See below).

The Kilverts first came to Bath from Shropshire in 1782 and settled in Caroline Buildings, Widcombe. Although the reason for the move is unknown, by 1820 the Reverend Francis Kilvert and his younger brother John, surgeon and apothecary, were living in houses in Darlington Street. These were the uncles of the Reverend Francis Kilvert the Diarist.

John Kilvert's marble tablet tells us he had once been a Midshipman, also that he had resided in the parish for 37 years and was 'highly valued and respected for his professional skills and integrity: for his Christian benevolence, especially to the poor'. He died in 1861. Beside this tablet is one to his widow, Mary Anne Kilvert, who died in 1878.

In 1863 the Reverend Francis Kilvert (brother of John) died and his obituary states that he had preached regularly at St Mary's Bathwick. There is a tablet to him near the church door. Inlaid with black and red lettering, the inscription is entirely in Latin and a tribute to a fine scholar.

The Reverend Francis Kilvert and his family later moved to Darlington Court, next to what is now the Bath Spa Hotel, where he and his wife Eleanora established a young gentlemen's boarding school, later known as the Bath College. In about 1840 they moved again, this time to Claverton Lodge, where they continued to teach pupils aged 7-14. The fourth tablet is to Eleanora Adelaide Sophia Leopoldina Kilvert who died in 1870 and this can be found on the wall about halfway down the south side aisle.

The Reverend Francis Kilvert preached at St Mary's Church on many occasions, he also conducted several burials in the St Mary's churchyard in Henrietta Road.

Southern wall

KILVERT

M.S
John Kilvert Surgeon
resident in this parish 37 years
in early life Midshipman RN
ob April 28 1861
aetat 63
Highly valued and respected
for his Professional skills and
integrity: for his Christian
benevolence especially to the poor.
Deeply beloved and lamented

In Loving Memory of
Mary Anne Kilvert
widow of the late
John Kilvert Esq
of this Parish
Born September 2 1800
Died March 31st 1878

To the left of the south door

M.S
VIRI REVERENDI FRANCIS KILVERT AM
BATHONIAE NATI NUTRITI LITERIS INITIATI
OXONIAE BONAS ARTES EDOCTI
QUI
AB INEUNTE AETATE
CHRISTI PARVUTIS ERUDIENDIS IN URBE
PATRIA DIDITUS
CUM VITA TANTUM EXACTA
FERULAM ARTEMOUE
AD CRUSIE PEDUM DEPOSITE QUI DENIQUE
SI QUIS ALUIS ANTIQUA FIDE MORUM SANCTATE
VERBORUM DULCEDINE
CONSPICUUS
CONCIONATOR GRAVIS, SIMPLEX, PERSPICAX:
JUVENUM INFORMATOR PROBABILIS:
LITERUS ELEGANTORITUS
APPRIME ORNATUS SANCTAE
MATRIS ECCLESIAE ANGLICANTE
FILIUS AMANTISSIMUS
AMICIS OMNIBUS LUCTUM ET
SUIS DESIDERIUM RELINGUENS IN
PACE DECESSIT DIE XVI KAL OCTOBRIS
ANNO SALENTIS MDCCCLX111 AETATIS LXX

Halfway down on southern wall

In memory of Eleanora Adelaide Sophia Leopoldina,
Widow of the late Revd Francis Kilvert, who died at Bath
…….. 1870

KILVERT AND WALES

By Dafydd Ifans (National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth)

PART II

For Part I see ***Journal*** No 21, September 2006.

Kilvert and the Welsh Language

It has already been noted that Kilvert was observant and aware of the various Welsh features around him. It is not surprising, therefore, that he became interested in the Welsh language during his stay at Clyro and later at St Harmon, although the language had largely disappeared from the locality with the exception of the place-names, many of which had gradually become anglicised and corrupt.[33]

The disappearance of the language in Radnorshire was a gradual process, and is therefore difficult to date. It was commonly used in the county during the Middle Ages, and there is abundant evidence to show that it was widely spoken even in parts of Herefordshire until the sixteenth century, hence the profusion of Welsh place-names which remain in Ewias, Webtree and Archenfield (*Ewyas, Ergyng* and *Anergyng*). Welsh medieval poets such as Iolo Goch and Lewys Glyn Cothi visited the homes of the gentry and sang their praises, one such family being the Vaughans of Clyro, Glasbury and Hergest Court. There were also a number of native Welsh poets in Radnorshire at this time including Morgan Elfael, Owen Ieithon, Ieuan Rhaeadr and Hywel ap Syr Mathew.

It is difficult to say exactly why Radnorshire lost its Welsh to such an extent and so early on as compared with other counties. It has been said that the English language could be compared with the grey squirrel which crept into the county from the Eastern border. The language receded westwards during this eighteenth century and rapidly disappeared from the lips of the young as the century progressed. Upland inhabitants spoke Welsh but by the 1750s Welsh had been rejected as the language of worship in the market towns and villages on the eastern side of the country. Jonathan Williams, the first to compile a country history for Radnorshire, wrote of 'the growing disuse of Welsh.'[34] The language appears to fall into disuse in the churches of Radnorshire, according to Visitation records, from about 1730 onwards. The north-eastern corner was the first to suffer and then the boundary gradually moved westwards during the eighteenth century.

Benjamin Malkin writes in 1803 that the common language used was almost universally English, but he qualifies that by saying that the extreme western part of the county, Cwmteuddwr, was still monoglot Welsh-speaking, and that the south-eastern area of the county around Painscastle and Clyro and even beyond Offa's Dyke was bilingual. The reason for this may well be that the drovers of Cardiganshire and Carmarthenshire still drove their cattle from the Builth area over Clyro Hill to Rhydspence at this time, and so, when the railways took away the livelihood of the drovers in the nineteenth century, the Welsh language finally disappeared from the Clyro and Painscastle districts. The late Mr Ffransis Payne, formerly of the Welsh Folk Museum, notes in his lucid two-volume survey of the county, *Crwydro Sir Faesyfed*, that the language was still spoken about 1850 by a few natives in the upper part of Clyro parish around Llanshiver (*Llys Ifor*), and that there was a branch of a Welsh friendly society, the True Ivorites (*Y Gwir Iforiaid*) at Painscastle as late as 1847.[35] The process of anglicisation which began in the eighteenth century was, however, complete by Kilvert's time.

It is clear from various references in the diary that Kilvert had mastered enough Welsh to be able to analyse and interpret various Welsh place-names.

He tells us that 'Cross Foot' comes from the Welsh '*croesffordd*' meaning a crossroads,[36] and that Bryn-y-garth certainly belies its name being in a hollow rather than on a hillside.[37] He explains that Ty yr deol, or more correctly Tŷ'r dial, near Capel-y-ffin, meant 'the house of vengeance'.[38] He also understood that the place-name Rhayader referred to the waterfall of the river Wye in that town.[39] Sometimes these explanations are woven into the narrative, such as 'Pwlldwrgi, the Pool of the water dog or water beast, the Otter's Pool'[40]; or again, Kilvert's explanation of Tirmynach as 'the white monks' house' rather than the more probable 'Monk's land'.[41] We are given an elaborate explanation of the meaning of the name Cwm Ceilo where the Solitary of Llanbedr Painscastle had lived. The Solitary, we are told, was Welshman enough to know that there was no such word in Welsh as 'Cello', but in a dictionary which he took up one day in a farmhouse, he found that the word '*Ceilio*' meant a retreat, enclosure, shelter or pen for cattle.[42] Another explanation is given courtesy of David Price of Capel-y-ffin, who thought that Bwlch y Fingel meant not 'the Gospel Pass' (*Bwlch yr Efengyl*) as some would have it, but a narrow notch between two hills.[43]

Kilvert's knowledge of Welsh is not simply confined to place-names, indeed his diary entries contain a Welsh word here and there without further explanation. In the entry for 26 March 1872 we read 'I was in a transport of delight and enthusiasm. The "*awen*" [the muse] was upon me and I composed a poem on that "Dingle of the Cwm".'[44] Again in the realm of poetry, he calls himself 'Eos Gwynddwr', *eos* being the word for a nightingale and Gwynddwr the name of a local Clyro stream, together forming a bardic *nom de plume* in true Welsh fashion.[45] Kilvert shows familiarity with the Welsh names for certain plants and animals, e.g. stitchwort ('*tafod-yr-edn*'),[46] the wild cherry tree ('*y pren y crogodd y Diawl ei fam*'),[47] and he also uses the Welsh word for 'birch'.[48] At one juncture in the Sandford diary, he uses the term 'Glas Ynys' without further explanation when referring to the return of his sister and brother-in-law from India, expecting them to rediscover the British mainland 'as green as it should be'.[49]

One example of his use of a Welsh word which had survived in the Radnorshire dialect is that of '*heir loun*' or, as it should be written and spelt, '*hirlwm*', an example which has found its way into the *University of Wales Dictionary of the Welsh Language*. Margaret Griffith of Clyro village told Kilvert one day:

> .. that in the old-fashioned farm houses a steen of butter and something particularly good was always kept till March and not touched because March was reckoned a very severe trying month and people were thought to want some special support then. Old-fashioned folks called March 'heir-loun' or some such name.[50]

Hirlwm in Welsh does indeed mean the period of late winter and early spring when the supply of food and fodder is either diminishing or actually exhausted, 'the hungry gap', as it is sometimes called.

There is some evidence in the diary regarding the disappearance of the Welsh tongue in Radnorshire. The most interesting story probably is that concerning Mr Marsden, vicar of Glascwm, who told Kilvert about the death, about four years previously, of 'the last old woman [in Glascwm] who could speak her native Radnorshire Welsh ... which she had learnt as a child from her mother and grandmother never having lived out of her own parish. No one else in the parish could speak Welsh to her except Mr Marsden and her great delight was when he would read to her from a Welsh book.'[51]

Incidentally, Kilvert states that St Harmon was the only Welsh-speaking parish in Radnorshire in the 1870s.[52] Actually it was not, as the language survived later in Cwmteuddwr, west of Rhaeadr, especially in the farms bordering on Cardiganshire. Other references to the language include the one concerning Sir Francis Ford who tried to hunt March hares using harriers from Cathedine Court in Brecknockshire, who did not understand the orders which he gave them in English as they had always been used to hunt in Welsh;[53] we read of the 'Dingle Flower of fair Llandovery' whose 'English did not come readily.' But her 'Saesneg' [English] had much improved after a visit to Clyro school house.[54] Then there was the assistant curate of Talgarth, especially imported from Lampeter College because he was meant to be bilingual, who created great mirth when he mispronounced parts of the Welsh services until two sentences sounded like 'in the rattling of mice'; and 'two backsides joined in wedlock'.[55] Another reference to Brecknockshire and the demise of the Welsh language there is found in the Harvey diary, (Aberystwyth II, 33), where Kilvert mentions the language medium of the services held by John Bowen, curate, at Llangorse: 'There are English and Welsh services alternately but there are only a few cottagers about the hillsides who cannot understand English and they never [go] to church at all, not even to the Welsh service, so the Welsh service will probably soon be discontinued.' In spite of this comment, visitation records prove that a Welsh service was still being held at Llangorse Church until at least 1906, (see NLW Church in Wales Records SD/QA/252).

The diary contains references to some words from the English dialect of Radnorshire, e.g. *pitch* for hill (compare Clyro Pitch, Thomas the Cutter's Pitch, and also Joseph's Pitch in Builth Wells); *very simple* for someone not well (compare *symol* in Welsh); *unhackle* for undress; *mixen* for a dungheap; *mawn* from 'mawn' the Welsh word for peat which has survived in Radnorshire English and is found in place-names such as Mawn Pool on Rhulen Hill; *gambo* for a hay cart, and so forth. Kilvert had apparently compiled a list of some of these Radnorshire words which he gave to his friend, Anthony Lawson Mayhew. It was Mayhew who arranged for the list to be published in *Notes and Queries* and it was subsequently inaccurately reprinted in the *Hereford Journal*.[56] One of the most interesting words in this list is *pembolade* (meaning 'a tadpole') which obviously comes from the Welsh *penbwl* (sing.) *penbyliaid*(pl.).[57]

Reference has already been made to the fact that much of western Herefordshire was at one time Welsh-speaking, and that many of the place-names are of Welsh origin. When Kilvert became incumbent at Bredwardine (*Brodorddin*), he was able to use his knowledge of Welsh to explain the meanings of the place-names to his parishioners; he says at one point: 'Parry and his daughter were deeply interested by my translation of the Welsh names of the farms and fields about Bredwardine Hill.'[58] He attempts to explain the name Moccas by correcting an explanation which had been given by Lord Saye and Sele:

Moccas Church KS Archives

> When Moccas Church was restored and reopened Lord Saye and Sele preached in the afternoon and told the people that Moccas was so called from 'the badgers which came down to the river to eat the fish.' It is supposed he meant otters, and that he had in some strange confused way mixed up together otters, badgers and pigs, for Moccas is so called from the swine (Welsh *Moch*) which used to feed on the acorns in the great oak forest.[59]

According to Professor Melville Richards, the original form of Moccas was *Mochros* – the element *moch* being the plural Welsh noun meaning 'pigs' and the second element, *rhos* meaning 'moor, hill or peninsula.'[60]

Kilvert's references to Welsh history

The present border between England and Wales was created by the Act of Union of 1536. What had previously been a conglomeration of marcher lordships during the medieval period was swept away and divided into twelve counties or shires. Monmouthshire, however, became part of the Oxford Assizes Circuit, rather than being included in the system of Great Sessions, and was consequently considered to be an English county, and that is why Kilvert says in one place: '... we sat on the flat stone which bridges the little stream which divides England from Wales (Monmouthshire from Breconshire)...'[61] It became common practice during the following centuries to refer to 'Wales and Monmouthshire', but by now Monmouthshire, or as it was renamed Gwent for a while, is once more a respectable part of Wales. Radnorshire was formed from the area which previously corresponded to the principality of Rhwng Gwy a Hafren in the Dark Ages.

Kilvert is always aware of the national boundary between England and Wales. Each time he walked home from Whitney to Clyro

he seems to comment as he crosses the border at Rhydspence. For example on May Day 1872 he says: 'About midnight I passed over the Rhydspence border brook, and crossed the border from England into Wales. The English inn was still ablaze with light and noisy with the songs of revellers, but the Welsh inn was dark and still.'[62] Another anecdote on the same subject relates to a visit he paid to the Pant, a house which stood right on the Welsh/English border. During the conversation with Mrs Powell, who lived there, they began talking about parishes and boundaries:

> 'I'm sitting in Brilley (England and Herefordshire) now', said I, feeling for the boundary notch in the chimney. 'It's further this way', she said. 'I suppose,' she said, 'there have been some curious disputes about the boundary running through this house', 'Very odd indeed,' I said, remembering the extraordinary story which old Betty Williams of Crowther used to tell me about the birth of a child in this house (the Pant) and the care taken that this child should be born in England in the English corner of the cottage. 'Stand here, Betsey, in this corner,' said the midwife. And the girl was delivered of the child *standing*.[63]

Kilvert was also aware of a boundary between North Wales and South Wales. This is interesting because in Victorian times the tendency was to think of North and South Wales as separate entities, separate commercial directories were published for both regions, and maps were printed separately with Merionethshire and Montgomeryshire in North Wales, and Cardiganshire and Radnorshire in South Wales. We tend not to think of such a hard and fast boundary today, in fact by now it is far more usual to refer to a third region, Mid-Wales, stretching from Blaenau Ffestiniog in the North to Ystradgynlais in the South, an area delineated by the activities of the Mid-Wales Rural Development Board back in the 1960s. Kilvert talks a great deal about this boundary during his visit to St Harmon for the first time:

> It was the boundary brook between the North and South, between Radnorshire and Montgomeryshire and between the parishes of St Harmon's and Llandinam. I leapt across it easily and at one bound I was again in South Wales. ...I leapt once more across the boundary brook into North Wales and took a farewell glance ... [64]

Kilvert has several references to Llywelyn's cave near Aberedw.[65] These references are to Llywelyn ap Gruffydd, the last independent prince of Wales who was killed at Cilmeri near Builth Wells by an English soldier, Stephen de Frankton, in December 1282, as he tried to defend the bridge across the river Irfon. The prince is reputed to have sheltered in the cave near Aberedw on the night before his death. One such visit to Llywelyn's cave, dated 14 June 1870, is described in the Harvey diary:

> The wild roses stirred the hedges and we turned into the meadow on the left, along the broken bank of trees and wall-rampart of grey rock, to the little door which closes the mouth of Llewelyn's cave. Last season the people at the Pant kept a padlock on this door but don't seem to think it worthwhile, for they have not begun to lock it up yet this year. We crept into the cave, read the inscriptions on the walls and then leaving the dark cool damp chamber in the rocks, lay down among the rocks and fern under the trees upon the grass outside.[66]

It is on the same occasion that Kilvert and his brother visit the inn at Aberedw for refreshment and are waited on by 'a slight tidy fresh-looking, independent-spoken Llansaintffraid girl' who related to them the tale of Madog Goch Min Mawr, the traitor blacksmith of Aberedw:

> The Llansaintffraid girl told us that the forge next door to the inn stood on the site of the forge of Madoc Goch Min Mawr, the traitor blacksmith of Aberedw, who shod Llewelyn's horse backwards and then betrayed the Prince. Yet she was careful to tell us that this is not the original old forge of Big Red-headed, Wide-mouthed Madoc, but a newer building erected in the same place. Opposite, across the road, is the spot where the Welsh set up the gallows when they came down in wrath and hung the traitor blacksmith over against his own forge. And to this day the Aberedw folks are called Bradwrs, that is 'Traitors'.[67]

Another Welsh leader who is referred to quite often by Kilvert is Owain Glyndŵr. His interest in Glyndŵr stems from his visits to Monnington-on-Wye to stay with his sister and her husband. Alice, Glyndŵr's daughter, had married a member of the Scudamore family and had lived at Monnington according to Thomas Carte in his *General History of England* (1750), the details being used again by Thomas Pennant in his *Tours in Wales* (1778). Owain Glyndŵr is believed to have died at Monnington and to have been buried there. So when Kilvert visited Monnington he would think of Glyndŵr:

> Hard by the Church porch and on the western side of it I saw what I knew must be the grave of Owen Glendower. It is a flat stone of whitish grey shaped like a rude obelisk figure, sunk deep into the ground in the middle of an oblong patch of earth from which the turf has been pared away, and, alas, smashed into several fragments.[68]

As it happens, Kilvert may well have been more than a little misled, for the late Professor Sir John Edward Lloyd in his biography of Glyndŵr argues that his daughter lived at Monnington Straddel about a mile and a half east of Vowchurch in Herefordshire rather than at Monnington-on-Wye Court House which was held by the Arundel family.[69]

Mention of the Scudamore family serves as a reminder of a reference Kilvert has to Jack a Kent: 'David Price said Jack a Kent was a Clergyman. He was born in Cardiganshire and held the living of Kenchurch in Herefordshire. He was related to the Scudamore family of that place.[70] Now there may well be two Jack a Kents confused here. One was a mischievous trespasser in Herefordshire about 1482-3 whose exploits were immortalised in the play *John a Kent and John a Cumber* by Anthony Munday in the latter half of the sixteenth century. The other was the famous Welsh poet Siôn Cent who composed poetry between 1400 and 1430. He is renowned for his religious poetry, much of it concerning the uncertainty of life and the certainty of death and final judgement. This Siôn Cent is believed to have been patronised by the Scudamore family of Kentchurch.[71]

Among other historical topics touched upon in the diary is the murder of Sammy Prichard of Llandovery, who was the son of the famous Vicar Rhys Prichard noted for his religious poems;[72] and a reference in the Sandford diary to Sarah Jacob, the Welsh fasting-

girl of Llanfihangel-ar-Arth who had died the previous year, 1869.[73] Kilvert has one tale which contains an inaccuracy; he refers to the time

> when Matthew Richards was elected member for Merthyr the dissenting voters were brought down in cartloads and before they went to the poll they were driven like sheep to the chapels and preached to for half an hour. The burden of the addresses was always simply this, 'You'll all go to hell if you don't vote for Matthew Richards'. Talk of being priest-ridden,'tis nothing to being ridden by political dissenting preachers.[74]

This is another example of Kilvert's intolerance for nonconformity, for it was Henry Richard (not Matthew Richards), the famous 'Apostle of Peace' born in Tregaron, who was Member of Parliament for Merthyr Tydfil from 1868 until 1888.

To be continued...

References

[33] Dafydd Ifans, 'Kilvert a'r Gymraeg', *Y Casglwr*, rhif 50 (Awst 1993), 6-7.

[34] Geraint H. Jenkins (ed.), *The Welsh Language before the Industrial Revolution* (Cardiff, 1997), 58-9.

[35] F.G. Payne, *Crwydro Sir Faesyfed – Y Rhan Gyntaf* (Llandybïe, 1966), 99. For further discussion on the decline of the Welsh language in Radnorshire, see G.J. Lewis, The Geography of Cultural Transition: The Welsh Borderland 1750-1850', *The National Library of Wales Journal*, vol. XXI (1979-80), 131-44, which gives the background to the author's PhD thesis (University of Leicester, 1969) entitled 'A study of Socio-Geographic changes in the Central Welsh Borderland 1850-1960'.

[36] Plomer I, 55.

[37] Aberystwyth I, 85 and 106.

[38] Plomer I, 279-80.

[39] Plomer II, 104.

[40] Plomer II, 128.

[41] Aberystwyth I, 68 and 104.

[42] Plomer II, 227-8.

[43] Plomer I, 280. Other Welsh forms of place-names used by Kilvert are Aberllynwy or Aberllynfi being the original name for Three Cocks, and Llyn Syfaddan – the Welsh name for Llangorse Lake, see Aberystwyth II, 30.

[44] Plomer II, 161.

[45] *Hereford Times*, 20 March 1875, quoted in Plomer III, 459-61.

[46] Aberystwyth I, 90 and 106.

[47] Aberystwyth I, 36 and 100.

[48] Aberystwyth I, 7 and 97.

[49] Aberystwyth I, 14 and 99.

[50] Plomer I, 305.

[51] Plomer I, 347.

[52] Plomer I, 104.

[53] Plomer II, 335.

[54] Plomer I, 47.

[55] Plomer I, 346-7.

[56] *Notes and Queries*, 17 August 1878, and the *Hereford Journal*, 17 August 1878.

[57] Quoted in Frederick Grice, *op. cit.*, 159. One of the most interesting forms of a Welsh place-name which gives us an insight to the lost Radnorshire Welsh dialect is Penshaplwyd, the name of a farm in Llandeilo Graban parish. The original form was Pen-isaf-y-plwyf (lit. 'the lower end of the parish'). This became 'Pen-isha'r plwy' which was corrupted into 'Penshaplwyd', proving that the Radnorshire dialect was similar to the Welsh spoken in South Wales, in the way '*isaf*' became '*isha*'. This information was provided by the late Mr Ffransis Payne, the authority on the Welsh cultural heritage of Radnorshire.

[58] Plomer III, 355.

[59] Plomer III, 375.

[60] Melville Richards, *Welsh Administrative and Territorial Units* (Cardiff, 1969), 158, and *Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru*, 2468-9, and the references given there.

[61] Plomer II, 235. For another reference see Aberystwyth II, 41: 'I pointed out the boundary rill crossed by a flat stone for a bridge, the division between Wales and England.'

[62] Plomer II, 191. See also Aberystwyth II, 16: 'Above the Dole Dingle we stopped to see a herd of cattle fording the Wye from Herefordshire into Radnorshire, England into Wales, off Goodwin's farm on to Hamar's. As soon as the leading cattle had waded across, hoping I suppose to find some better grass in Wales than in England, the whole herd came galloping and trotting and lumbering heavily across the great flat pastures of Clifford and began wading slowly across the Wye.'

[63] Plomer I, 262.

[64] Plomer III, 293.

[65] Plomer I, 60; Plomer III, 169; Aberystwyth I, 11; Aberystwyth II, 12-13.

[66] Aberystwyth II, 12.

[67] Aberystwyth II, 13. For a full account see Theophilus Jones, *A History of the County of Brecknock* (Brecknock, 1898), 70-1. '*Bradwrs*' is made up of *bradwr*, the Welsh word for 'traitor' and the English plural suffix 's'; the correct Welsh plural form would be '*bradwyr*'. This suggests that Kilvert had heard the word used colloquially, which implies that a remnant of the Welsh language was still remembered in the area.

[68] Plomer III, 160.

[69] J.E. Lloyd, *Owen Glendower* (Oxford, 1931), 145.

[70] Plomer I, 302.

[71] *Dictionary of Welsh Biography*, 913.

[72] Plomer I, 305-6.

[73] Aberystwyth I, 65.

[74] Plomer II, 189. Another contemporary event recorded in the diary is the building of a monastery by Father Ignatius at Capel-y-ffin, see Aberystwyth II, 41, 89 and 97.

DISCOVERING KILVERT... and KATHLEEN MAVOURNEEN

By Ray Taylor (Skegness)

I first read *Kilvert's Diary*, in the abridged version, in 1978. I think it was a Book Club choice. When I read it I had no idea that there might be a local Lincolnshire connection; after all it recorded the day-to-day activities of a clergyman based alternately in Wiltshire and the border country around Hay and who had a brief ministry in mid-Wales. However, such was the quality and immediacy of the writing that I was eager to learn more about the places and characters so vividly described. I noticed that the dust jacket disclosed the existence of the Kilvert Society together with the address of the secretary. On impulse I wrote to enquire whether the Society could provide me with further information. I received a characteristically courteous reply from the then secretary, the late Edward West, who sent me a booklet entitled *Who's Who in Kilvert's Diary*, compiled by the late Frederick Grice. Under the entry *Heanley, Kathleen* (*sic*) I was vastly intrigued, as a resident of Skegness, to read: 'Kathleen Heanley, of whom unfortunately little is known, was the daughter of Marshall Heanley who had a farm near Skegness....' 'Kathleen' Heanley was, of course, Katharine Heanley, the 'Kathleen Mavourneen' of the *Diary*. This information really made me sit up, and I determined to discover what information I could concerning the Heanley family. The local telephone directory revealed no Heanleys currently in the area, but enquiries led me eventually to Mrs Eva Farmery, the retired head teacher of the former school in the village of Croft, which is situated about three miles from Skegness. Eva Farmery was a highly respected local historian who was acquainted with members of both the Heanley and Cholmeley families and was aware of the Kilvert connection. She was able to produce the Croft School logbook which contained an entry for 8 March 1877 recording a visit to the school by Kilvert accompanied by the then Vicar of Croft, the Revd Evelyn Monson, younger son of Lord Monson, and his wife. Even more interestingly, Mrs Farmery had discovered from a marginal note in a pamphlet about the Heanley family, written by a member of that family, that Katharine had been engaged to Kilvert, but that she 'broke it off'. These events took place during the gap in the published *Diary* between June 1876 and December 1877. I was particularly fascinated to discover from Mrs Farmery that Katharine's home was Croft Grange, which is situated about a mile across the fields from my own home! It should be borne in mind that in Kilvert's time Skegness was a small fishing village with around 350 inhabitants, far from being the busy seaside resort it is today. It seemed to me that the results of Eva Farmery's research would be of great interest to a wider public and to members of the Society in particular, and I suggested that she might consider writing a piece for possible publication by the Society. She was initially reluctant to do so; she was then in her late seventies and not in robust health and she was anxious not to give possible offence to members of the Heanley and Cholmeley families with whom she had established cordial relationships (in the event we received generous help from both families in the provision of photographs and information). However she agreed to write such a piece provided I would contribute some photographs and assist generally. Thus began a collaboration, which resulted in the publication in 1980 of the Society's booklet *Kilvert's Kathleen Mavourneen*, and led to a much-valued friendship which endured until Eva died in 1990.

Since the booklet was published, and thanks to diligent research by Mrs Teresa Williams, the late Ken Clew and others, more light has been shed on events during that gap in the published *Diary*. The discovery by Mrs Williams of the article in *The Chippenham Chronicle* giving an account of Kilvert's speech at the presentation in August 1876 (published in the Society's Newsletter of February 1983) confirms the fact of the engagement between Kilvert and Katharine. Mrs Farmery and I had thought that the most likely time for the engagement to have taken place was during Kilvert's visit to Croft in the spring of 1877, but it now appears to have taken place much earlier, during Kilvert's visit to Croft in the summer of 1876, a visit recorded in the Society's booklet *Looking Backwards*, and I very much agree with the chronology of events suggested in Mr Le Quesne's illuminating article *The Missing Year* contained in *The Frederick Grice Memorial Booklet*. It now seems to me that far from the March visit being the occasion when the engagement took place, that visit actually heralded the imminent breaking of the engagement. The letter written by Fanny Kilvert to Mrs Venables (published in the Newsletter of May 1982) laments the trauma suffered by Kilvert when the engagement was broken off, and she writes, tellingly, *I hope she will never know what she did...* which suggests to me that the engagement was broken off by letter after the March visit, had there been a face-to-face confrontation Katharine would surely have been only too well aware of Kilvert's distress.

Then we come to the letter published in the Newsletter of September 1987, written by Kilvert to Mr Venables and posted from the village called Venables in France, describing his journey there from Paris. There are two aspects of this letter which strike me as significant. Firstly the date of the letter, Whit Monday 21 May 1877. Is it not curious that the conscientious Kilvert, who, as far as we know, was in sole charge of his parish at St Harmon, should choose to absent himself during that important weekend in the Christian calendar, unless, of course, there was a compelling reason. Could that compelling reason be his mental state following his rejection by Katharine? Could the trip to the village of Venables, said to be the place of origin of the Venables family, in fact have been engineered and possibly even financed by Mr Venables, his former vicar, as a distraction? Mr Venables would be well placed to cover for Kilvert from his home at Llysdinam. It is also significant that, considering Kilvert's limited opportunities of seeing Katharine in faraway Lincolnshire, he should take time off to visit France, unless, of course, the engagement had already been terminated. There is no mention of Katharine in the letter, nor, indeed, of any travelling companions. I think it likely, therefore, that the engagement was ended between March and May 1877. According to Ken Clew who had access to the school logbook at St Harmon, Kilvert normally visited the school once or twice a week and there is no record of any such visits between 28 April and 27 May 1877.

Why did Katharine break off the engagement? I can think of three possible reasons:

1. Her mother's health was failing and she would shortly be the only unmarried daughter.
2. She was deterred by the remoteness and general unsuitability of the proposed matrimonial home at St Harmon. (I agree with Mr Le Quesne that the 'young lady' seen to be visiting St Harmon with Kilvert was very likely to have been Katharine).
3. It is known that there was a mutual attraction between Katharine and Monson, the Vicar of Croft, and that she appeared to have been devastated by his sudden and unexpected marriage in Scotland in 1872. On the face of it Monson, with his aristocratic connections, would seem to have been an attractive matrimonial prospect to any mother in that part of rural Lincolnshire, where eligible bachelors were not exactly thick on the ground, yet Katharine's mother had expressed disquiet about the vicar's attention to her daughters in a letter of 1870: 'He can *flirt* as well as ever, but it is rather a comfort to me it is carried on with the *two* now,

it will do less mischief than with the one…' and 'I am sometimes angry with him yet cannot check it'. There may or may not be a clue in Charlotte Heanley's novel *Bytoft Grange*, which was the subject of an article by Mrs Margaret Collins in the *Journal* for June 2006.

If Kilvert still harboured lingering hopes for a reconciliation they would surely have been dashed by the untimely death of his favourite cousin Addie, the bride at the Findon wedding where Kilvert and Katharine first met. She died of scarlet fever shortly after childbirth at Croft on 15 March 1879, just two days after the final entry in the published *Diary*, and she represented Kilvert's last family link with the village. Did he attend the funeral I wonder? If so he would certainly have encountered Katherine, no doubt for the last time.

ANOTHER VISIT TO THE OLD WESTON

By Joan Watts (Bridstow)

It was thought by most of those members who visited the Old Weston last June that this was the first visit by the Society to the home of Little Davie. This, however, was not so, as a paragraph in the KS Newsletter of June 1985 reveals. Moreover the visit was described in her diary by Joan Watts, wife of our former chairman, the late Ron Watts.

In the KS Newsletter of 4 May 1985 Edward West wrote:

The next stop (after Brobury) was at the Old Weston, Little Davie's home, where we were met by Mr and Mrs Barraclough in the most friendly and welcoming way. It was obvious that the exterior was more or less as Kilvert would have known it and the interior had changed but little. We were allowed to wander anywhere, inside and out, and we were all most appreciative of Mr and Mrs Barraclough's reception. The majority of the party then proceeded to the Burnt House, where Mr and Mrs Stutz laid on an excellent tea, and after this refreshment and very warm vote of thanks to Mr Bentley-Taylor, we went our several ways.

Joan wrote in her diary:

(After Brobury): Back to the cars, and we moved on to Old Weston. I have long wanted to see it, but it is so well hidden that it can't be seen from the road till one reaches to within a few yards of it.

It was like going back a century. There was a young bullock, tethered, and nearby a heifer, also tethered. Lots of children's toys around and cats and kittens scattered about. Some dogs in a shed, shut in for our benefit!

A very pleasant young couple greeted us, she looked as if she had stepped straight out of *Kilvert's Diary*, long dark hair and long floral dress.

We were invited inside, all 38 of us! What a place! It appeared hardly altered since Kilvert's days. One large room with fire blazing in the old hearth, flagged floors with huge old rugs over them, large kitchen area at the far end, all full of old utensils, copper pans etc, wine brewing, herbs drying, old lamps and corn dollies. Upstairs we went to tiny bedrooms and sloping ceilings. The room where little Davie died is now their bathroom and they have added another window as there was only one small light coming in there previously. The old floor timbers creaked and swayed as we walked on them.

A black and white cat sat on the stairs and never moved as we passed up and down. A little ginger and white kitten ran round us and loved it all, as did the couple's young children. Outside, the cottage has hardly changed and looks as it did in the old photographs.

It was an enchanting experience, like turning the clock back more than a hundred years.

We said our goodbyes, with many thanks to Mr and Mrs Barraclough, for allowing us to invade their little paradise.

LITTLE DAVIE'S FAMILY

By Beryl Claybrooke (Swansea)

I have my husband to thank for introducing me to the Kilvert Diaries many years ago, but it was not until March 2006 that we joined the Kilvert Society in time to attend the AGM in the April and were fortunate enough to be able to be at the June meeting when we visited Old Weston.

When we arrived at Old Weston, Ann Dean read the entry in the *Diary* for Christmas Day 1878, describing the funeral of little Davie who had died there on the day before Christmas Eve:

Very hard frost last night…. Last night is said to have been the coldest night for 100 years. The windows of the house and Church were so thick with frost rime that we could not see out. We could not look through the Church windows all day. Snow lay on the ground and the day was dark and gloomy with a murky sky… Immediately after dinner I had to go back to the church for the funeral of little Davie of the Old Weston…. The weather was dreadful, the snow driving in blinding clouds and the walking tiresome. Yet the funeral was only 20 minutes late. The Welcome Home as it chimed softly and slowly to greet the little pilgrim coming to his rest, sounded bleared and muffled through the thick snowy air…. The poor father, David Davies the shepherd, was crying bitterly for the loss of his little lamb.

How poignant to hear those words, standing right next to the place where the child had died. No one present appeared to know the cause of Little Davie's death.

However, I found the *Diary* entry for the previous day almost unbearable:

Tuesday, 24 December, Christmas Eve *After breakfast I went to the Old Weston to see the poor Davieses and comfort them concerning their child. On the road I met David Davies the father, the shepherd at the Weston on his way to the village to order the coffin and to the Churchyard to mark out the ground for the grave... The father seemed greatly distressed and indignant because he thought the child's life had been thrown away by some mistake of the doctor. I went on to the house of mourning. Margaret Davies seemed very glad to see me and her humble gratitude for my visit was most touching. She took me upstairs into the room where the dead child was lying on the bed..... I never saw death look so beautiful... I could hardly believe he was dead. Leaving the face still uncovered the poor mother knelt with me by the little bedside while I prayed for them all. She was deeply touched and most humbly grateful.*

Kilvert himself was moved by the child's death to such an extent that he wrote a poem, entitled *Little Davie*.

There are three more entries in the *Diary* concerning the Davies family, those for 3 and 9 January and 17 February 1879.

Deeply touched by our visit to Old Weston, on our return home I was determined to try to find out about little Davie's family. As an outsider, so to speak, it is not easy to trace one particular family with the name Davies. The first time I tapped into the computer, David Davies – *thousands* of records came up! The spelling Davis also had to be checked! There were certainly a very large number of families with the name Davies in the Herefordshire area in the 1800s.

But a little thing like that was not going to deter me. As information mounted up I started to become very attached to my 'adopted family' and wanted to find out as much as I could about them.

Little Davie's father, David Davies, was the youngest of seven children (Ann, Mary, John, Lydia, Emma, William and David himself). They were all baptised at Llyswen Church, but David did not know his mother, whose name was Margaret. She died at or shortly after his birth, aged 40 and was buried on 22 April 1834 at Llyswen Church. David Davies was baptised three weeks later, on 14 May 1834. His father's name was John. He was a labourer. Ten months later, David's older brother, William, was buried on 15 February 1835, aged 5.

Little Davie's mother, Margaret Havard, was born in the parish of Michaelchurch, Kington, on 22 April 1838. Her parents, who had married on 9 April 1830 at Huntington near Kington, were Thomas Havard, an agricultural labourer and Margaret, formerly Lloyd.

In 1841 Thomas Havard, his wife Margaret, Ruth (10), James (8) and Margaret herself (3), were living at Llanigon. In 1851 the family was still in the same area but only two children, who had been born subsequently, Thomas and Joseph, were living at home. James (18) and Margaret (13) were working as a farm servant and a house servant respectively on a small farm in Llanigon.

The 1861 Census shows David Davies, unmarried, employed as a carter, at Bodcott in Dorstone, a farm of 270 acres. The farmer, for whom David worked, was called Andrew Davies. He was not related to David. Kilvert was later to describe Bodcott farmhouse when he visited it in 1878.

David Davies and Margaret Havard were married on 12 July 1862 at Dorstone Parish Church. His occupation was described as 'labourer', residence Bodcott, and Margaret was a servant at the Bridge Inn, Bage (near Dorstone).

David was still working at Bodcott when their first child was born on 12 January 1865. He was given the name Andrew, and was baptised in Bredwardine Parish Church on 12 March 1865 by Samuel Clark, the Vicar at that time. Was Andrew named after David's employer?

It is difficult to pinpoint when David and his family moved from Bodcott, because a second child, Lilla, was born at Clifford on 1 October 1866. I have not been able to trace the baptism of Lilla, which might have given more details, but it seems likely that they had left Bodcott by that time. (Andrew Davies had also left Bodcott by 1871. He was living at 'The Court' when the Census took place that year). But it is interesting to note that there is a pond at the bottom of the lane leading to Bodcott Farm, called 'Lilla Pond'. This is shown on the Ordnance Survey map dated 1880 but I do not know if it existed in the 1860s. It is impossible to see Lilla Pond now as it is extremely overgrown with trees and other vegetation, and is marked 'Private Land'.

By 1871 Bodcott had increased to 273 acres and the Price family had taken over. William Price (40), his wife and three teenage daughters, plus his son William (8), and two farm servants all appeared on the Census form. Today Bodcott Farm is only about 50 acres.

On 9 January 1878, Kilvert records in his diary that he *...went on to the Bodcote* (sic) *after hearing that young Price's horse had fallen with him over Pentre Lane coming home from Hay last Thursday and had cut his head badly. I found him up for the first time and sitting before the kitchen fire with his head bandaged.* Presumably this was William, now aged 17. Kilvert continued: *The Bodcote is a fine large old picturesque timbered farmhouse in Dorstone Parish, but the Prices come to Bredwardine Church. The farmer and his wife seem nice simple kindly homely folk.*

Between 1866 and 1868 David Davies and his family had moved to New Farm, Bredwardine. Another daughter, Margaret, was born there on 15 October 1868, followed by 'Little Davie' on 13 December 1870.

The 1871 Census shows David, the head of the family, aged 36, agricultural labourer, with his wife Margaret aged 31 and four children – Andrew (6), Lilla (5), Margaret (2) and little David (3 months), living at New Farm, Bredwardine. New Farm is a large

stone-built isolated house high up on a hill with magnificent views across Herefordshire. The Davies' last child to be born was Ruth, also at New Farm, on 13 May 1873. Perhaps she was named after her mother's older sister.

Another family was also living at New Farm. On the Census form, David Davies' family is No. 78 on the House Schedule. Number 79, also listed at New Farm, is William Jenkins, head, aged 39, agricultural labourer, his wife Ann Jenkins, aged 38, Sarah Ann Nicholls and a child, recorded as his sister-in-law, aged 10, scholar. The present owners said that the right wing of the house seemed to be separated off originally although it is now incorporated within the main house. As can be seen from the photograph, it seems likely that this could be where the Jenkins lived.

Between 1873 and 1878 the Davies family moved again – this time to Old Weston, which was quite a large house at that time. The Tithe Apportionment Map for 1840 and the Ordnance Survey sheet for 1880 show Old Weston as being very much larger than it is now. At one time, during the 1700s, George Jarvis lived there, the benefactor whose substantial bequest from his will founded the Jarvis Charity (memorial plaque in Bredwardine Church).

New Farm Photo by Beryl Claybrooke

Little Davie died at Old Weston on 23 December 1878, ten days after his eighth birthday. The cause of his death was meningitis – certified by Dr Peter Giles Jnr. as 'Meningitis Cerebro – (Spinal) five days'. David Davies registered the death of his little lamb on Christmas Eve 1878.

On the 1881 Census, only Margaret (12) and Ruth (7) are living at home with their parents at Old Weston. Andrew (16) was working as a house boy/agricultural labourer in Cusop and Lilla (14) was working as a general servant for James Michael and his family (bootmakers) at 29 Castle Street, Hay.

Margaret Davies' widowed mother was also living in Hay in 1881. Her youngest son Joseph was listed with her. She died later that year. Margaret's brother, Thomas and his wife Mary also lived in Hay, and her eldest brother James lived in Cusop with his wife and family. It would be nice to think that Little Davie knew his uncles and maternal grandmother.

David Davies, the shepherd, who cried so bitterly for his little lamb, died at 'The Green', Bredwardine, on 31 May 1890. The cause of death was 'Dilation of Heart (four years), Cerebral Anaemia (One year)'. Peter Giles MRCS certified the death. David's 16-year-old daughter Ruth registered the death on 2 June 1890.

The 1891 Census shows Margaret Davies still living at 'The Green'. Her occupation was given as laundress. Andrew (26), a groom and Lilla (24), a general domestic servant (both unmarried), were listed with her. Old Weston was uninhabited at that time.

In 1901 Margaret Davies was living alone in the School Tenement in Bredwardine, working as a cleaner at the school. Although hearsay, there is a local story that Margaret Davies used to clean the church brasses, and when she became too incapacitated to go to the church, the brasses were taken to her home for her to clean.

Margaret died on 5 May 1933 age 95 at Little Pound, Oxenhall, Newent, the home of her daughter Margaret and son-in-law Reuben Preece. Reuben was with her at the time that her heart finally wore out (Myocardial Degeneration). She was buried three days later, united with her husband David, in a grave close to their Little Davie in Bredwardine churchyard.

Sources:
International Genealogical Index
Birth, Marriage and Death Certificates
Parish Registers
Census Returns 1841 – 1901
Tithe Apportionment and Map for Bredwardine/Dorstone area
Land Valuation 1910
Ordnance Survey Maps

THE LOST HAMLET OF CRAFTA WEBB

By Adrian Lambert*

The Rural Media Company and the communities of Bredwardine, Brobury, Staunton and Letton are embarking on a remarkable year-long community film project to uncover the mystery of the lost hamlet of Crafta Webb.

Crafta Webb owes its origins to the people who flocked to Bredwardine in the early 1800s to claim resident status, and so profit from the benefactions of the Jarvis Charity. By the middle of the nineteenth century the population of the village had risen to 400.

Home to dozens of families and craftspeople Crafta Webb sprang up overnight, when an erected chimney stack with smoke emerging, meant you could claim land rights. The settlement had its own grocer, tailor and shoemaker and Francis Kilvert reports in his diaries visiting it to hold cottage lectures. Nothing now remains on the hill and county records refer to a 'shrunken village' although the name still appears on Ordnance Survey maps today.

Working with the communities, and maybe even undiscovered descendants of the Crafta Webb settlement in Bredwardine, Staunton and Letton, the project will aim to shed light on this forgotten part of Herefordshire's heritage through the creation of two new films; a drama that tells the story of this incredible 'lost village' and a documentary that shows the background to the making of the project.

Residents will help devise, write, perform and produce the finished films with The Rural Media Company and there has been an amazing response to the project.

Crafta Webb will go into production this summer with the premiere of the two films planned for September next.

* *Article and photograph reproduced by courtesy of Adrian Lambert who is the producer-director of the Crafta Webb project for The Rural Media Company. For more information on the project contact him on 01432 344039 or email adrianl@ruralmedia.co.uk.*

The field on Bredwardine Hill where Crafta Webb once stood. The lumps in the ground mark the positions of the cottages of this once thriving settlement.

KILVERT LEFT OUT IN THE COLD

By John Hodkin (Barrow-in-Furness)

Anyone compiling an anthology of English life and letters would surely find Kilvert a rich source of material. With this expectation I recently read such a work, entitled *A Book of England* put together by Ivor Brown, a well-known writer of the last century, and first published in 1958. The book has an immensely varied selection of writers in its 500 pages, taking in such favourites as Pepys, Evelyn and many lesser-known ones, both in prose and poetry.

There is one glaring omission, however. Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon, but there is not a mention of Kilvert. To rub salt into the wound there is a selection from the diaries of Parson Woodforde, good racy stuff, but surely not in the same class as Kilvert when it comes to literary value. It cannot be that Ivor Brown (1891–1974) had not heard of Kilvert; he must just have thought that his writings were not of enough interest to be included. Brown's best-known work was probably the books he wrote on obsolete and quaint words. Kilvert was also interested in unusual words, as Fred Grice pointed out in the June 1976 Newsletter. For this reason alone I would have expected Brown to have included him.

I was saddened by this cavalier treatment of Kilvert, but soon perked up when I recently read another anthology, *The Oxford Book of Oxford* produced by that superb writer Jan Morris. She includes three generous extracts from Kilvert's account of two Oxford visits. We start with Thursday 21 May 1874. The whole of the first paragraph is given, that is from *Rose early* ... to ... *unwanted*. For the second extract we move to the second visit. The date is Monday 22 May 1876, and the extract starts *After dinner* ... down to ... *Corpus tomorrow*. Finally, on the following day an extract is taken from the paragraph starting, *In the afternoon* ... We join the scene at the Boat Race with: *The old scene passed before my eyes* ... down to ...*while the vanquished come humbly behind*. At the beginning of the anthology Jan Morris includes a selection of one-liners about Oxford, both laudatory and critical, from the great and the good. Heading the list is Kilvert with his: *There is nothing like Oxford* from Monday 22 May 1876.

So we can certainly say that Jan Morris has done Kilvert proud!

THE VENN CONNECTION WITH HEREFORD

By Jean O'Donnell (Hereford)

The Reverend John Venn, mentioned in John Toman's piece on Darlington Court (see p.10 of *Journal* No. 21, September 2006) was Rector of Holy Trinity Church, Clapham for twenty years until his death in 1813. His son, confusingly also John, was appointed to St Peter's Hereford in 1833...

Sophia de Chièvre, the daughter of Count Leopold of Moravia was very wealthy and brought up in Clapham in the home of a Quaker, Thomas Woodruffe Smith. She was married on 10 December 1822 to Francis Kilvert, uncle to the later Francis Kilvert. She was married from the home of Sir Robert Inglis at Holy Trinity Church on Clapham Common. Until his death in 1813 the vicar was the Revd John Venn, founder of the Church Missionary Society and a leading member of the Clapham Sect that also included William Wilberforce.

This close-knit community lived in their grand houses around Clapham Common. Battersea Rise was the home of the Thorntons who were friends of the Venns. When the Thorntons both died in 1815 the nine children were brought up in their own home by Sir Robert Inglis and his wife who were both young. Marianne Thornton was the eldest daughter and she continued her friendship with John Venn (Jnr) and his sister Emelia. When John Venn was appointed to the living of St Peter's, Hereford in 1833 she and her brother Watson were frequent visitors to their home, Beechwood, on Aylestone Hill. Watson Thornton was also a cleric and went to Llanwarne as

vicar. The Venns' connection with the Clapham Sect continued through their association with the Church Missionary Society, for their brother Henry was the national secretary and John went to read his annual report every year at the Exeter Hall in London.

In Hereford John and Emelia were respected and loved for their work with the poor. Their Clapham upbringing had prepared them for lives devoted to the physical as well as spiritual welfare of the working people. John founded a charitable organisation named the Hereford Society for Aiding the Industrious. He was an ingenious man who devised schemes that benefited the working classes. The most important was the creation of a steam cornmill to grind cheap flour. This became a considerable enterprise and provided funds for public baths, model cottages, an experimental garden and even a farm for a short period. All this work went on in his own parish where his sister helped him. When he died in 1890 his funeral was a memorable event as so many came to pay their respects to a man who devoted his life to the ideals of the Clapham Sect. His name is still revered and is commemorated by Venn's Lane where his house once stood and Venn's Close, a group of almshouses built as a memorial in 1938.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

ARCHDEACON HENRY HARPER

By Lyndall Hancock (Dunedin)

From the KS Newsletter of September 1994 *(See also From Recent Correspondence (i) in* Journal *No 21, September 2006.)*

In the past decade I have been surprised to find nearly a dozen links, large and small, between the *Diary* and faraway New Zealand. Most of these links have been pointed out by Edward West. So it was quite in keeping that after the June 1993 Commemoration service at Eglwys Oen Duw, he lost no time in writing to tell me of Canon Price's mention of yet another link.

The Canon spoke at the service of Miss Clara Thomas, the local 'great lady' whom Francis Kilvert met on 11 February 1870. (Vol. 1 p.33 and the Newsletter for September 1993). Apparently the Revd Henry William Harper wanted to marry her but she turned him down – and the New Zealand connection is that the same Henry later became (or already was?) a well-known Archdeacon in New Zealand.

The plain facts about Archdeacon Harper's life are not hard to find. He lived always in the public view, whether or not he chose it that way. But there is not a hint, naturally, of any long-remembered love. All we know is that he never married, Canon Price recounts. He was buried near Miss Clara's grave at Eglwys Oen Duw, the church of the Lamb of God.

Henry William Harper was born in 1833 at Eaton where his father, Henry John Chitty Harper was a clergyman. He was educated at Eton and at Merton College, Oxford and he graduated MA in 1856. In that same year he journeyed to New Zealand with his parents and their younger children, straight after his father had been ordained in the Lambeth Palace Chapel as the Bishop of Christchurch in the South Island of New Zealand. (It was Bishop Selwyn, the first Bishop of New Zealand and a close friend, who had done the persuading for this faraway appointment). Henry had been trained for ordination but was not yet ordained, and so for a year or so after their arrival in Christchurch he helped his father as a layman.

Christchurch, the main town in the province of Canterbury, had only been founded six years earlier. It was one of New Zealand's planned settlements and was intended to be a transplanted piece of England – although in 1856 only the social structures and some place names showed it. It was too early for today's carefully cultivated 'English' look.

After his ordination in 1858, Henry was given the arduous task of travelling on horseback around Canterbury province to collect guarantees of stipends and to organise this large area into parishes. About 1865 he returned to England to talk to clergymen and recruit some of them for all these new parishes, and then back in New Zealand again, he was anointed as Archdeacon to the large parish of Westland (the west coast of the South Island). From being a sparsely settled and rather inaccessible area, parts of Westland by 1866 had been transformed by recent gold rushes. The new Archdeacon, then aged 33, had his headquarters in the boom town, Hokitika, where the main street had 80 pubs, and he marvelled that at one of his preaching places there were 2500 miners working in the area where no white man had set foot until only two years earlier.

Westland was a well-organised parish when Henry left it nine years later. He was later appointed to St Mary's Church in Timaru, a port on the east coast of the South Island. There, as in Westland, there was plenty of scope for his talents as a good organiser and careful record-keeper. The little original St Mary's Church had already been enlarged but was still too small, so Henry persuaded his parishioners that a completely new church was needed – he carried them along with his enthusiasm and his up-to-date knowledge of church architecture and furnishing, and the result was a very beautiful church in the Early English Gothic style. It was built in stages, from the nave in 1888 to the completed church in 1909.

On a short visit to England in 1909, Henry chose the stained glass for the triple lancet east window – and found on his return that his parishioners had raised the cost of the glass and that they wanted the window to be a tribute to him. The glass is particularly fine, showing Christ with His hand upraised in benediction and 30 angels, saints and prophets in groups around Him.

St Mary's today has many reminders of its first Archdeacon. His head carved in stone looks down from the tower on to Church Street. His mother gave the lectern; and the first lectern Bible and the vicar's Book of Common Prayer were given by Henry in memory of his father, Bishop Harper. Originally both had belonged to the bishop and are inscribed: 'Presented to the Revd H J C Harper, MA, Vicar of Mortimer, by the cottagers and servants in the parish as a token of their gratitude and respect. August 1856'. (According to the St Mary's parish history, the lectern Bible has a missing page in Isaiah chapter 49 and pencilled instructions by the Archdeacon on where to find it. Once, in pre-instructions days a lay reader had read straight on and no one appeared any the wiser. Others had improvised a verse and hastily closed down).

The Archdeacon resigned from St Mary's in 1911, and thereafter lived in England. He died in London on 22 January 1922, aged 89, and was buried at Eglwys Oen Duw.

Obituaries described him as being tall and upright, a genial man with a keen mind and a great interest in education, astronomy and the arts. He was ever the optimist, as an often-quoted story tells. Once at a weekday evening service in Lent, his brother Walter preached for him. Afterwards Henry congratulated him: 'Splendid congregation, Walter, splendid congregation'. To which Walter replied, 'Exactly forty Henry, exactly forty'.

And so, now that we know the facts of Henry's life, what about the connection with Miss Clara Thomas? Where and when did he meet her, propose to her, and decide to be buried near her. Also, for the romantically inclined, I cannot provide any answers from the New Zealand end. Henry could have met her in 1856 or earlier, while he was an undergraduate at Oxford and she was still in her early teens. But would a proposal of marriage have been more likely later on, when he was well established? Perhaps when he returned to England in 1865-1866, he was aged 33 in that year, and she was 24 and by then an heiress. Henry's next visit was for a year in 1889, when he was also on the Continent and particularly in Italy. (Canon Price said that Miss Clara was in Italy every springtime for many years). After that Henry made only a brief visit to England in 1909 to choose the stained glass, before returning in 1912. Miss Clara died in London in 1914. Had they, perhaps, kept in touch through the years? We simply don't know. Any diaries, if extant, might have useful entries – or maybe not.

They are half a world apart, St Mary's Church in Timaru and the secluded little Eglwys Oen Duw. I spent my teenage years in Timaru, attending a school where Archdeacon Harper had been an early governor, and cycling every schoolday along Harper Street. And now, years later, I have found through the *Diary* and Canon Price and Edward West that there is a tenuous connection between the New Zealand city and the little Welsh church. Who would have thought that it might have been a long-held love and old memories that made Henry Harper want to be buried where he is at Eglwys Oen Duw?

FROM RECENT CORRESPONDENCE

i) From Willy Lockwood (Llowes)

I have been reading in the latest *Journal* (September 2006) about the various tombstones, such as those of Archdeacon Harper in Beulah and John Kilvert in St Mary's, Bathwick. Here is another one that might interest our members. It is made in heavy Cambrian slate and was carved by Reg Boulton, who has two other memorials in St Meilig's Church.

It is situated on the left of a row at the very end, entering the churchyard from the west. It faces east with its back to the wall and our house. I am very pleased with it.

The grave of our late President in the churchyard of St Meilig's, Llowes.

ii) From Canon Peter Atkinson (Chancellor and Canon Librarian of Chichester Cathedral)

I am soon to take up a new post as Dean of Worcester and will be moving into the Deanery, 10 College Green, Worcester. It seems to me from Kilvert's description that the house, which only became the Deanery in recent years, is that in which Maria Kilvert lived, and the scene of Kilvert's memorable visit there on the occasion of her funeral.* I think it is the only house in College Green that has a balcony running the full length of the back of the house (as described by Kilvert) with steep steps leading down to the garden. Other mentions of the house point to the same identification.

I have also been able to ascertain that the house was let by the Dean and Chapter until 1870 and was then enlarged and used as a canon's house, so that fits in with the notion that it was Maria who lived there until her death, which was in 1870.

I should be grateful if you or any of the members of the Society could point me to any further information about Maria Kilvert and her home.

If I am right in my identification, perhaps at some point members of the Society might like to visit the Deanery and retrace the events of that very vividly described day – but perhaps you have done that already.

**Canon Atkinson tells me that he has been able to confirm that his supposition is correct from his recent reading of Fred Grice's* Francis Kilvert and his World. (ed.)

He will take up his new post in April. The Society is very grateful to him for the invitation to visit the Deanery. We are pleased to accept but will allow him time to settle in first!

iii) From Val Dixon (Llandrindod Wells)

Archdeacon Harper (See from Recent Correspondence p 15 *Journal* No. 21, September 2006).

I am enclosing the photos of the grave at Beulah for Lyndall Hancock, they can be sent on to her if she would like to have an actual copy. (They have been sent. (ed.)) I'm afraid some of the letterings are missing, but I would imagine she knows the names and dates, which are there only in part. You can see Clara's grave (the one with the cross) clearly in the background and the one in the foreground belongs to the Archdeacon. See photos opposite

Below is the wording as it appears on the stone:

H NRY WILL AM HARPER
ARCHDEACO OF TIMARU AND ...ES..LA
....W ZEALAND, 1875 TO 191...
BORN MAY - 1833
DIED .... ANUARY 20 - 1922

iv) From Mrs Olive Knight (Bromsgrove)

I have recently renewed my membership of the Kilvert Society, after many, many years. The publications manager has kindly sent me *Journals* 19 and 20 together with Fred Grice's *Who's Who*, and Barry Smith, *Journal* number 21. I am overwhelmed! I wonder if your records would show just when I did join the Society? Regrettably *I did not* keep a diary!

I was introduced to William Plomer by my aunt (they were friends and contemporaries of Virginia and Leonard Woolf) and I met William when he came to Kilvert meetings whenever I could escape from my wifely duties and three children at our farm near Leominster. My last meeting with William was at Brecon Cathedral, where William joked, sympathetically, about the rain running down the inside of the north wall and we were more generous in our donations than we might have been! My aunt generously contributed to the memorial showcase, then in Hay-on-Wye, and even left him 'a little something' in her will but he pre-deceased her, September 1973. (Sadly, he had written to me on the eve of his death telling me of his coronary and regretting that he would be unable to get to the Clyro meeting and the unveiling of the plaque). I believe that was the last letter written by him, though his old friend Laurens van der Post claims the distinction!

Some time ago I purchased a copy of *Stepping Heavenward* which the Revd David Lockwood said was Kilvert's favourite book and written by Elizabeth Prentiss around 1869. My copy is inscribed thus: *To Mrs Edwards from J.B., with loving and best wishes 28 November 1876*. I have looked through the *Diary* for 1876 for a clue. The signature J.B. is not very distinct. (Any suggestions? (ed.)) At the age of 82 I don't think I am now able to join Society meetings, except maybe at Bredwardine, or local venue where no walking is involved!

v) From Evelyn Madigan (Dunedin)

Because of my failing eyesight I am now in residential care at the address enclosed and I am hoping that a volunteer will be able to help me with letters and reading in the coming year. I do want to keep in touch because I care and I am renewing my subscription.

A volunteer was indeed found and the letter came from Margaret Andrews. The Society is delighted that Evelyn has renewed her subscription and we send her our best wishes.

Two of our New Zealand members, Evelyn Madigan and Lyndall Hancock.

vi) **From Elizabeth Miller (Thornbury)**
I recently visited St Nicholas' Church, Hardenhuish where Kilvert's father was Rector 1830-1855 (conflicting information – 1857!) when he moved to Langley Burrell.

The Verger showed me the iron-slatted seat on the south side of the church where Kilvert used to sit and admire the view. 'The peaceful old lane' by the church has become a busy road. I took the accompanying photo of the church from the grounds of the old Rectory where Kilvert was born in 1840. The Rectory was sold off in the 1970s.

St Nicholas Church, Hardenhuish, from the garden of the old rectory where Kilvert was born.

NEWS FROM COLVA

By Vicky Bernays (Colva PCC)

January 2007

2006 has been a wonderful year for Colva. It was only just over a year ago, in December 2005, that, following the Quinquennial Inspection of the previous September, it was decided to go ahead with the necessary repairs and restoration work which had been recommended. A generous donation was offered by one of our members to pay the fees of Richard Lamb of Hook Mason for his initial estimate. On a cold winter afternoon early in 2006 Richard visited the church for these purposes and some of our faithful PCC members joined him in the church with thermos flasks of hot tea and home-made biscuits, for which he was truly grateful! After which he gave us a great deal of advice and tips on how to proceed with our fund-raising.

At the February PCC meeting it was agreed to form the Friends of Colva Church with the wonderful Barbara Airey as secretary. Duncan Noble, one of our churchwardens, agreed to undertake the application to the Heritage Lottery Fund and to oversee the proceedings. In addition, he agreed to approach a large number of charities who might be sympathetic to us.

As you may know we have held many fund-raising events in the last year, and not only have we had amazing results, but this has brought the people of Colva together and drawn in many friends, old and new, not only from our own New Radnor Group of Parishes, but from far and wide. Throughout the year we have been quite amazed also at the enthusiasm and generosity we have received from the Kilvert Society.

We are truly grateful for the notice and publicity you have given us in your *Journal*. We were particularly touched when you 'held the page' of your June issue in order that we could send you copy and pictures of the Winforton Wind concert held here on 13 May last.

Our great news now is that on 1 October last Duncan received a letter from the Heritage Lottery Fund promising just about all of the substantial grant, we had hoped for, for our repairs and restorations. Duncan and Vicky visited Richard Lamb in his office in Hereford just before Christmas, when we calculated that with his HLF grant and the money we have raised from other charities and our fund-raising events we are now ready to go to tender this spring.

Of course, we are not out of the wood yet – nor ever shall be. No work on a building like ours can really ever stand still. Not only do we anticipate further improvements, but there will always be routine maintenance, which must not be allowed to fall so sadly behind again.

Both Colva PCC and the Friends of Colva Church are delighted that the Kilvert Society is making our church the venue for its June weekend. Former KS chairman and committee member Ann Dean of Church Barn, Gladestry is, I know, entertaining you on Saturday 23 June. This is also the day of the Gladestry Church fête, which has been brought forward this year from its usual August date, and we feel sure that the two events will complement each other. Then, on Sunday 24 June, our PCC and the Friends of Colva Church are planning a substantial tea at the church for the Society following the special service at 3.00 pm. We all look forward very much to having you with us.

OBITUARIES

It is with great regret that we record the death of the following members:

THE LADY DELIA MARY DILLWYN-VENABLES-LLEWELYN (1910-2006)

It is with deep regret that we have to report the death on 29 November 2006 of our past President the Lady Delia Mary Dillwyn-Venables-Llewelyn at the grand age of 96. She accepted the position of president after the death of Wynford Vaughan-Thomas, who died in January 1987, and she served the Society for twelve years until April 1999.

Society members who have visited her home at Llysdinam will remember the welcome we always received. She always took an interest in the Kilvert Society and our meetings and was always ready to assist anyone who asked for information on her family and its connection with Kilvert.

Lady Delia was born in London on 2 August 1910 the daughter of Michael Hugh Hicks-Beach and his wife Marjorie Dent-Brocklehurst. Her grandfather was the first Earl St Aldwyn, Chancellor of the Exchequer 1885-1886 and 1895-1902. She spent her early life at Manor Farm House, Coln St Aldwyns, Gloucestershire.

Tragedy struck her at the tender age of five when she lost both her parents and her grandfather in a six-week period during March-April 1916. Her mother died of typhoid in Egypt, her father of wounds received at the battle of Katia in Sinai and a month later her grandfather of natural causes at the age of 79.

Her two grandmothers brought up Lady Delia so she had to spend six months at Sudeley Castle and six months at Coln St Aldwyns. She was never sent to school but was educated by a succession of governesses at home. She became a noteworthy horsewoman and rode in the hunt side-saddle with memorable panache. She had two children, Mary born 1936 and John born in 1938. When war came she moved her family to Llandrindod Wells. She used to cycle to visit her in-laws, Sir Charles and Katherine Minna Venables-Llewelyn. Katherine Minna was the daughter of Kilvert's Mr Venables (when the church bells rang all day in Clyro on 1 June 1870).

During the war Lady Delia became involved in many organisations. After the war the family lived near Presteigne before returning to Llysdinam on the death of her father-in-law. At this time Llysdinam was remodelled. The house had thirty bedrooms and a vast three-storey Victorian wing which had to be demolished. (Mr Venables had constructed the wing in the 1870s). She set about developing the garden, the most enduring of her interests and the present house and garden stand as a memorial to her taste, skill and hard work.

The latter part of her life was blighted by increasing physical frailty caused largely by a cracked vertebra in her neck sustained by falling off a horse forty years earlier. Even this did not defeat her. Unable any longer to walk around the garden and woods she bought herself a quad bike and, dressed in an old mac and a riding hat from the 1950s and preceded by a yapping terrier on a long lead, she terrorised the lanes and the drive around the house for several more years. Eventually she had to use an electric buggy, but even in this she tried to corner too fast and managed to tip it over.

She had a wonderful sense of humour and much as she would hate to admit it she was an extremely lovable person but it was courage, integrity, honesty and warmth that were the cornerstones of her character.

She was an example to all who knew her and her passing does leave us all significantly poorer.

Lady Delia was buried next to her husband on 9 December at All Saints' Church, Newbridge-on-Wye. May God bless her and ensure that she rests in peace.

The above was taken from the address which was given by her nephew, Earl St Aldwyn.

* * * * *

RONALD WATTS
(1921-2006)

Ron and Joan Watts at their home, Dial Cottage, in October 2006.

At the end of a long period of indifferent and latterly very poor health our past Chairman Ronald Watts died on 15 December 2006.

Ron was a very able chairman, encouraging committee members to give of their best, with a good grasp of the business in hand and a knack of keeping meetings to time – something I am learning only slowly! He did not suffer fools gladly, but had a ready wit and was always ready to encourage those who had a real contribution to make. He insisted on keeping to his original remit of three years as chairman and was in the chair from 1999 to 2002 having previously served as vice-chairman from 1998. Ron had been on the committee for some years when I joined it in 1994.

Ronald Overend Watts was born on 4 January 1921 in Gateshead-on-Tyne and the family moved to Birmingham in 1936. He became an apprentice engineer at Wilmot Breedon and many years later he was appointed Education and Training Officer for that firm. One of his trainee students was Maurice White whom he met again years later at a Kilvert Society meeting. Eventually they were fellow committee members!

After obtaining his BSc, he decided to go into technical teaching and worked at a Birmingham technical college for a few years, moving on promotion to Worthing Technical College.

He and Joan came to Herefordshire in 1960 on Ron's becoming Principal Lecturer at West Gloucestershire College. He retired in 1982 through ill health.

Ron enjoyed the outdoor life; in their young days he and Joan were keen cyclists including riding a tandem, but when Peter and Jane arrived he became a walker – I suspect he thought this would involve Joan and the children better than cycling! He loved nature and his garden and also literature and poetry; indeed he wrote verse, some of which was read at his funeral. He also contributed his own and other verse at Kilvert meetings, but best of all he liked to read extracts from the *Diary*. His literary interests were many and some quite 'non-conformist' – he enjoyed surprising us with things he thought might raise an eyebrow or make us smile.

In later life he belonged to many societies, needless to say, ending up on most committees. He joined the Kilvert Society in 1982 and this became his chief literary interest.

Ron and Joan continued as members of the Ross walking club, which they founded, enjoying the social side when Ron could no longer walk with them. His great love was the Forest of Dean and in recent years he became a convinced Humanist. These two factors brought us all on 4 January to the lovely setting of Yew Tree Brake near Cinderford to say goodbye to Ron at a sensitive and beautiful ceremony.

I am grateful to Joan for her generous help in compiling Ron's obituary.

Michael Sharp

* * * * *

Mr Alec Stewart of Llandrindod Wells died in June 2006. He was the husband of former Kilvert Society committee member Molly, who joined the Society in 1969.

We offer our sincere condolences to the family and friends of the deceased.

STATUETTE OF KILVERT

The Society wishes to acknowledge the kind bequest by the late Mr Fred Talbott (Llanfaredd, Builth Wells) of a bronze statuette of Kilvert. Mr Ted Folkard, a well-known local artist, sculpted the figure, which is approximately 20ins in height. This figure will now form part of the Kilvert Collection housed in the Radnorshire Museum in Llandrindod Wells, Powys. *See back cover*

ALLIANCE OF LITERARY SOCIETIES AGM 2007

The Alliance of Literary Societies will be holding its AGM weekend on 19 and 20 May 2007 in Oxford. The host this year is the Tolkien Society. Any KS member interested in attending is advised to contact the Alliance secretary, Rosemary Culley, 22 Belmont Grove, Havant, Hants. PO9 3PU, or e-mail honsec.als@ntlworld.com

KS members are *ipso facto* members of the ALS.

ABBEYCWMHIR MANOR

It is understood that the Manor, visited by Kilvert in April 1870, is now open to the public on a regular basis. It is apparently well worth a visit. The owners, Paul and Victoria Humpherston can be contacted on 01597 851727 (phumpherston@ukonline.co.uk).

WANTED

The Society would like to hear from any member with the appropriate expertise, who would be willing to look after the Society's website and/or act as its publicity officer; these are honorary positions. If you are interested please contact the secretary as soon as possible.

THE NEW CD OF KILVERT'S DIARY

The CD may be ordered from: Griffin & Co Ltd, 24 Church Lane, East Peckham, Tonbridge, Kent TN12 5JH.
Tel: 01622 812101. Their email is: sales@griffinrecords.co.uk.

NEWSLETTERS AND *JOURNALS*

Back numbers of the Society's Newsletters and *Journals* are available from the publications manager, priced at £2.50 each, including postage. Limited availability.

Members are reminded that ALL e-mail communications with the Society or its officers should be made via the dedicated website: www.communigate.co.uk/here/kilvertsociety.

Contributions for the June 2007 edition of the *Journal* should reach the editor **not later than 14 April 2007**. It would be helpful if contributors having access to a computer could put their article on disc (in Word for Windows) and send it to Val Dixon (same address as the publications manager on the inside cover) and at the same time send a paper copy direct to the editor, thank you. **It would also help if any photographs included could be placed in a separate file on the disc.**

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 or of the editor of the *Journal*.

The current ordinary subscription is £12.00 (Joint membership £15.00) and is due on 1 January of each year. Cheques, payable to The Kilvert Society, should be sent to: Mrs Sue Rose, 18 York Close, Chippenham, Wiltshire SN14 0QB.

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 information about the Society, to its members. If you object to this, please contact the Hon Secretary. It has been decided that if any member objected, that member would have to **provide stamped addressed** envelopes for the dispatch of their *Journals*.

Back cover: The Statuette bequeathed to the Society by the late Mr Fred Talbott – see above.
Photo by Val Dixon

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