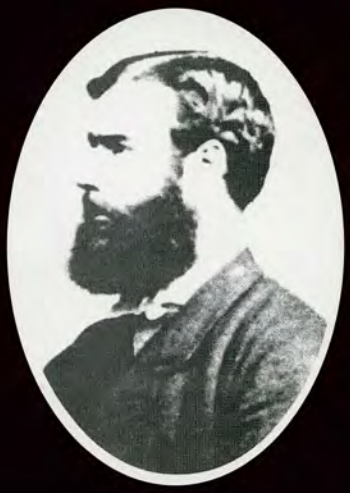


THE JOURNAL OF THE KILVERT SOCIETY

Number 25

DIAMOND JUBILEE YEAR
1948–2008

March 2008

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

President:
Dr Ronald Blythe FRSL

Chairman:	Mr M.G. Sharp, The Old Forge, Kinnersley, Herefordshire HR3 6QB Tel: Eardisley (01544) 327426
Vice-Chairman:	Vacant
Hon. Secretary:	Mr A. Brimson, 30 Bromley Heath Avenue, Downend, Bristol BS16 6JP Tel: (0117) 957 2030 or (07765) 226329
Hon. Treasurer:	Mr R. Weston, 35 Harold Street, Hereford HR1 2QU Tel: (01432) 378018
Hon. Membership Secretary:	Mrs S. Rose, Seend Park Farm, Semington, Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 7LH Tel: (01380) 871665
Hon. Publications Manager and Archivist:	Mr C.B. Dixon, Tregothnan, Pentrosfa Crescent, Llandrindod Wells, Powys LD1 5NW Tel: (01597) 822062

Editor:

C.J. MARSHALL
169 Upper Holly Walk
Leamington Spa
Warwickshire
CV32 4JY

Tel: 01926 420437

To whom all contributions for the *Journal* should be sent.

Cover: Springtime in the Radnorshire Kilvert Country. Photo: Editor

THE
JOURNAL
OF
THE KILVERT SOCIETY
Number 25 March 2008

From the Editor:

This is a notable year in the history of the Kilvert Society for 2008 marks the sixtieth anniversary of its inauguration which took place at a meeting in Hereford Town Hall on 17 July 1948. This Diamond Jubilee will be properly, and deservedly, celebrated at the summer weekend in June. The year also marks the seventieth anniversary of the publication of volume one of the published *Diary*.

We should be rightly proud, of course, that the Society has endured for sixty years and that its activities still flourish, but it has to be said that, in common with many other literary societies, the KS is suffering from, if not declining, then certainly static membership numbers. This has been of concern to your committee for some time now.

There is a number of ways you might be able to help here, in addition to the obvious one of publicising the *Diary* and the Society whenever you have the opportunity. Why not, for example, as I have suggested in the past, offer an interested relative or friend the gift of a year's subscription to the Society, or even better, what if each present member resolved to recruit one new member before, say, the end of the Jubilee year? In this way the Society could double its numbers, if not quite overnight, then certainly quickly enough to spare the committee any more sleepless ones! What is more that would be a most appropriate birthday present to the Society from its members…

Last September's editorial contained my plea that members should write something for the *Journal*. That plea, a few loyal contributors apart, fell largely upon deaf ears, so the request remains open. For the June issue I would welcome, in particular, any memories of the earlier years of the Society.

I have not mentioned Gift Aid for an edition (or two) but I do so now at the request of the treasurer. For some reason income from this source fell in 2007 from £1056 to £968. We would, of course, much prefer to see it rising, so, if you are a taxpayer and your subscription (or donation!) is still not gift-aided than please send for (or download) the necessary declaration form from our membership secretary… NOW!

There has been some difficulty with digital images submitted on disc for this issue of the *Journal*, some of which were not entirely suitable for reproduction. I have been asked, therefore, by the printer to pass on some helpful advice to those who wish to send their photos in this way; see inside the back cover.

Finally, I will not be at this year's AGM owing to a family wedding, which will also deprive the meeting of the treasurer, whose younger daughter it is who is getting married. We shall, however, try to think of you all at Hereford and Presteigne and he and I and the committee hope to see an enormous turnout for the celebration of the Diamond Jubilee of the Kilvert Society at the end of June. See you there, don't miss it!

From the Secretary:

Over the winter months a lot of effort has gone into the website and the Society is reaping the benefits. Numerous enquiries have been received, some very obscure! It proves that the website is generating interest and promoting the name, aims and activities of the Kilvert Society.

Our thanks to Ann Dean who did an excellent job in originating the website and to Carol Smith who has succeeded her and has continued to add to its content as our website editor.

Did you see the article in *The Guardian* on Saturday 19 January?* The full broadsheet article by Mark Bostridge again caused a lot of interest that resulted in e-mail enquiries from far and wide. These have been followed up with an e-flyer on the aims and activities of the Society, a list of forthcoming events and most important of all a membership form!

I do hope that you will be able to support and enjoy all the activities of your Society arranged for this momentous Jubilee year.

**See* page 9

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

2008:

AGM weekend		
Friday 25 April	7.00 p.m.	AGM at the Bishop's Palace, Hereford.
		Interval (Refreshments by committee member Sue Rose).
		Talk by John Toman: *Kilvert, Mesmerism and the Victorians*.
Saturday 26 April	10.30 a.m.	Seminars at the *Radnorshire Arms*, Presteigne:
		Talk by Heather Pegg of the Radnorshire Museum, Llandrindod.
		Talk (with slides) by John Wilks – *Cader Idris*.
	Afternoon	Free.
	Evening	Annual dinner at the *Radnorshire Arms*, Presteigne.
		(See booking form enclosed)
Sunday 27 April		Church services in Presteigne but no special Kilvert service.

The Radnorshire Arms
Photo: Editor

June Weekend		**The Kilvert Society Diamond Jubilee Weekend**
Friday 27 June	6.30 for 7.00	Dinner at the *Three Counties Hotel*, Hereford – £24.50 per head. (See booking form enclosed)
		Speaker: The Very Revd Michael Tavinor, Dean of Hereford.
		After the talk a musical presentation of Victorian songs will be given by the Dolau Mixtures.
Saturday 28 June	12.00 noon	Meet at Kinnersley for a walk led by Michael Sharp with tea (£4) to follow.
Sunday 29 June	3.00 p.m.	Evensong at Kinnersley Church, followed by tea (£4), archery and croquet on the lawn at the Rectory.
September Weekend		
Saturday 27 September	10.30 a.m.	Visit to the Radnorshire Museum, Llandrindod, home of the Kilvert memorabilia.
		Lunch (members to make their own arrangements)
	2.00 p.m.	Visit to Abbey Cwmhir Hall and Gardens.
Sunday 28 September	3.00 p.m.	Eucharist at Ysfa Church.
February 2009		It is hoped to visit Worcester Cathedral and Deanery.

THE SEPTEMBER WEEKEND

Visit to Twm Tobacco's grave, Llewelyn's Cave and Aberedw Rocks, Saturday 22 September 2007
By Peter Beddall (Dorstone)

Knowing how remote the hills and countryside are beyond Llanbedr I set out with more than a little concern as to whether I could find Pen-y-Craig farm. En route I recognised Richard Weston driving along, 'He'll know where he's going', I thought and apparently he thought the same about me but being determined Kilvertians we duly arrived on time.

We joined the other members (twenty-one in all) who had parked their cars and were eating their sandwiches in preparation for the walk.

We were soon on our way along the track and up on to the moorland. The weather was warm, however we experienced a shower or two. As I glanced at the dark clouds I could imagine how forbidding this place would be in winter. Soon on our right-hand side we could see the waters of Llanbwchllyn Lake, so often referred to by Kilvert. Colin gave a reading whilst we gazed at the shimmering light on the water. I know from experience that it is impossible to get close to the

Ready to set off Photo: Ann Dean

Colin Dixon reads from the Diary watched by John Wilks

Llanbwchllyn Lake

lake which is fenced off. Apparently it is being considered for a supply reservoir for Hay-on-Wye. (Indeed in 1966-67 it did form part of the Hay and Painscastle water supply scheme carried out by the Radnorshire and North Breconshire Water Board).

The tracks on the moorland criss-cross each other and it would be very easy to get lost, however Colin and Val Dixon had surveyed the area well beforehand and had even erected small sign posts for us. Now and again we had a regular count to check we had got everyone who had set out. Apparently the average wastage on the Kilvert walk is 2.5%, so we were determined to get that percentage down!

Colin and Val's great-granddaughter Kayla was enjoying herself spotting the wildlife. She found frogs, caterpillars and eventually two wild horses. At length we came upon a crossroad of the tracks and there was the grave of Twm Tobacco.* There is a timber sign and a gravestone, the inscriptions are very weather-beaten and difficult to read now. Next to the gravestone is a nineteenth-century stone plaque designating the boundary of the land owned by the De Winton and Baskerville families. We are not sure if this is the same Baskerville who lived in Clyro.

So who was Twm Tobacco? After an impromptu forum at the graveside it became obvious that no one knew. Among the more sensible theories were, a packhorse trader who died on the mountain, a criminal who was executed there or a highwayman. Harley Dance's theory was not suitable for a family journal and the suggestion that he was a Benson and Hedges sales rep for Radnorshire was discounted! Colin gave another reading, which confirmed that Kilvert did not know who Twm was either. It would be intriguing to find out who was this man who lies in this lonely and remote grave.

The party now divided itself between those who wanted a short leisurely walk back to the cars or a longer route onwards to Llewelyn's Cave. I joined the latter group and on we went along more remote paths with heather and bracken either side. Eventually the view over the Edw Vale became spectacular. On the way we passed a disused quarry and a deserted farmhouse ruin, 'My next project?' (Only joking Carol).

We were soon to approach Llewelyn's Cave. Llewelyn, the last independent Prince of Wales, used the cave as a well-concealed hideout. It was so well hidden that we could not find it at first! However, whilst searching we discovered a plaque on a tree marking the site of a plane crash in 1987. None of us was aware of this accident. Shortly afterwards we found the cave. In Kilvert's time it had had a padlocked door, but not now. Everyone went into the cave and read the various inscriptions, which were carved in the stone and saw the small tunnel used as a window. Whilst on the run Llewelyn had the local blacksmith shoe his horse back to front to confuse his pursuers! How smart!, I might try that when I go to my local, Carol will think I am coming back when I am actually going! There is a more detailed study of Llewelyn in the March 2007 *Journal* on page eight. After everyone had finished their inspection a decision was taken to make a slight detour and return via the Rocks of Aberedw (*See* Vol. III p.166).

Llewelyn's Cave

Colin Dixon inspects the inscriptions Photos by Ann Dean

**See* back cover

At last, the rocks of Aberedw came into view and many photographs were taken. The last stretch seemed a long slog and Alan and myself were pleased to receive a bottle of water from Ann, which was most welcome. After going up and down several hills it was a relief to spot the cars and reach Pen-y-Craig. From there we drove down via some hairpin bends to reach Erwood Craft Centre. This was built from an old railway station and carriage. Teas, coffee and cakes were very welcome as limbs began to ache. Alan rose to give thanks to Colin and Val for their efforts. It truly was a very interesting day out in beautiful rugged countryside and left us with the mystery of 'Who was Twm Tobacco?'

Evensong at Glascwm
By Ann Dean (Gladestry)

The tiny church of St David's, Glascwm was full for the Evensong and Commemoration service on the following day, Sunday, 23 September.

The Reverend John Billam, Priest-in-charge of Glascwm, led the service and also preached.

In his sermon John Billam spoke about the Kingdom of God and referred to the story of the mustard seed, which, though tiny when planted, grew big enough to shelter birds. He said that the Kingdom of God took time to grow, an alien concept in today's 'quick-fix' culture. Francis Kilvert had had compassion for the hardworking labourers on the land as well as concern for the wealthy landowners. He worked quietly amongst them and, in his own way, brought God's Kingdom into their situations.

Hymns included *Praise, O Praise our God and King, There is a Land of Pure Delight, Come Ye Thankful People Come* and *At the Name of Jesus*. The organist was Mrs Roslyn Tarrant.

The first lesson from *Leviticus* xix 1-14 was read by Michael Reynolds and the second from *Mark* iv 26-34 was read by Val Dixon, both Kilvert Society committee members.

Society member, Ann Dean, led prayers and the Act of Remembrance.

Following the service everyone gathered once again at Erwood Craft Centre for tea.

* * * * *

THE PARISH OF GLASCWM
An earlier visit

The Revd Francis Kilvert visited Glascwm and was the guest of the Vicar, Mr Marsden, on Monday 22 May 1871. He was greeted by the maid who had to ask Mr Marsden where the front door was, as everyone used the back door.

Mr Marsden declared himself 'Bishop' of the parish and invited Kilvert to 'Come and see the Cathedral.'

Kilvert describes his tour of the church with the vicar, including an account of the smashing of one of the church bells by a (presumably the worse-for-drink) wedding party and how the vicar had had the church roof renewed in anticipation of the abolition of the Church Rates.

Glascwm was also the home of the notorious Squire Beavan who refused his widowed daughter leave to return home as he had not approved of her marriage.

See also pages 303-304 and 345-347 of Volume 1 of the *Diary*, also page 13 of the June 2007 *Journal* for more!

FROM THE ARCHIVES

KILVERT SOCIETY RAMBLE
Over the hills to Aberedw
1957

A goodly number of members of the Kilvert Society, drawn mostly from the Hereford area, met at Painscastle on Saturday preparatory to a walk over the hills to Aberedw.

Describing the ramble, the hon. secretary, Mr CTO Prosser writes:

One reads in *Kilvert's Diary* of several of his walks over those same hills to 'Aberedw, beautiful Aberedw,' and this walk was something that many of the members have wanted to do for several years. Bad weather had caused several previous arrangements to fall through, but this time the day was just right.

And what a lovely walk it was, following the path upwards from the pretty Llanbwchllyn lake and then on for several miles across the hills on springy turf, with the purple heather rolling away on either side until we found ourselves on top of the famous Rocks of Aberedw looking down into the valley of the Wye as it comes down from Builth towards Erwood.

The day was perfect, sunshine and good visibility with just enough wind to be pleasant. Mountains everywhere – the Black Mountains behind us, the Brecon Beacons standing out against the sky on our left; nearer at hand the Eppynts across the Wye in Breconshire, and ahead the heights of central Wales and Plynlimon.

Rhulen Church Photo: Editor

Llewelyn's Cave

Then down through fern and heather to seek and find Llewelyn's Cave in the trees above the river Edw; a visit to Aberedw church, here to note its screen, roof timbers and belfry, and the musicians' instruments in their case on the wall – relics of the days before church organs. On to meet the cars that had come round from Painscastle with our teas; a picnic in a delightful spot on Edw's banks, and then a leisurely run homewards up the Edw valley, calling to see the primitive but lovely little church at Rhulen on our way.

Aberedw Rocks Photo: Ann Dean

A stop at Glascwm; again thinking of Kilvert and his long walk from Clyro over the hills to Glascwm to visit the vicar there.

From Glascwm down the valley of the infant Arrow to Newchurch and so on home over Brilley and to the Wye again at Whitney. It was another grand day in the 'Kilvert Country' of this Radnorshire-Herefordshire borderland.

Paths familiar to Kilvert

Many readers of the *Diary*, and lovers of the Kilvert Country, will be interested to learn that a short while ago a small party of members of the Society explored several corners in the Clyro area, and traversed paths familiar to Kilvert, mentioned in the *Diary*.

First up to the Little Mountain overlooking Newchurch; going up the lane near the Cayo, just as Kilvert did when on his way to visit his friends the Vaughans at Gilfach-yr-Heol.

On the hill the harebells were in flower, and the lapwings were whirling overhead, making the writings of 1870 just as true today.

From here the party went to Crossfoot, and, with the help of the good farmer there, walked across meadows and dingles to Cwmpelved (the green lane of Kilvert's day being completely overgrown and impassable). Here we found the house and dingle, just as described under date 22nd July, 1872 (1871 T.W.), and proceeded past the 'solitary barn' and 'over the lofty bridge across the brook and deep dingle' to Upper Bettws and the road again.

In *A Book of Wales*, by DM and EM Lloyd, one finds on page 45 an excellent bit of prose taken from *Kilvert's Diary*, and titled, 'Oh Aberedw, Aberedw.'

One of the party brought the book along, and read it to us while at tea on the banks of the Edw.

The above was taken from a newspaper report of the event. Despite the best efforts of Teresa Williams it has not been possible to trace either the newspaper or the date of the report. My thanks to her, even so, for searching so carefully in the files at the Newspaper Library in Colindale (and also for picking up the error in the date of the visit to Crossfoot!) (ed.)

THE THREE DAUGHTERS of 'SQUIRE' ASHE of LANGLEY BURRELL

By Teresa Williams (Harrow)

I am enclosing an article which gives the text of the newspaper reports published after each of the three Ashe daughters died: Emily in 1926, Thermuthis in 1935 and Lucy in 1949. The report of the memorial to Lucy in Langley Burrell church, which was unveiled nearly 60 years ago is also given. All the accounts have been obtained during family history research at the British Library, Newspapers, in Colindale, NW London.

Also enclosed are copies of the marriage certificate of Robert Ashe and Letitia Daly, (5 November 1852) and the death certificate for Robert Ashe aged 19 months (11 June 1855). The reason why the hopes rested on the boy was, of course, that his father was the last direct male descendant of the Ashe family.

I thought you might be interested to see the marriage certificate as the marriage was at the Parish Church in Leamington.

T.W.

The squire and his three daughters K.S. Archives

There are many references in the published *Diary* to the three daughters of the 'Squire' of Langley Burrell, the Reverend Robert Martyn Ashe. He had married Letitia Daly, youngest daughter of Arthur Daly of Dublin, a captain in the 53rd Regiment, at Leamington Parish Church, Warwickshire on 5 November 1852. Their first child, a son and heir, given the family name of Robert, was born on 26 October 1853. The Diarist's sister, Emily, says in her memoirs, *Rambling Recollections* that she could remember Mrs Ashe, having driven over from Langley with her first baby, 'the boy on whom so many hopes were fixed' with Palmer the nurse to visit the Kilvert family at Hardenhuish. Mrs Ashe 'looked the very picture of a proud happy young Mother, but alas! The boy died of convulsions one terrible night.' He died on 11 June 1855 aged 19 months and his death certificate says, 'Return of Hooping *(sic)* Cough, 6 days, Convulsions, 5 minutes.' No more sons were born to the Reverend Ashe and his wife, but eleven months after baby Robert's death, Thermuthis Mary, the first of their three daughters was born on 5 May 1856. Emily followed on 30 November 1857 and Lucy on 9 January 1859.

Thermuthis eventually inherited the estate of Langley Burrell in 1885 after the death of her father on his 78th birthday in January 1885. Her mother had died suddenly just one month earlier on 17 December 1884 at the early age of 52 years. A funeral sermon for Mrs Ashe was preached by the Reverend Alexander Headley: he took his text from the last chapter of Proverbs, verse 26, 'in her tongue is the law of kindness' and spoke of her unfailing gentleness and generosity.

Emily was the only daughter to marry, and her short funeral account is the first of the three newspaper reports given below, published after the deaths of Emily, Thermuthis and Lucy in 1926, 1935 and 1949 respectively.

From: *Tunbridge Wells Advertiser*, 26 February 1926

Death: SCOTT:

On 21 February, at Cryals, Matfield, Kent, Emily, devoted and beloved wife of Edward Lucas Scott and daughter of the late Reverend Robert Ashe, of Langley House, Chippenham, Wiltshire.

Death and Funeral of Mrs Scott

Mrs Scott of 'Cryals' died on Sunday afternoon following a long illness, patiently borne. The funeral took place at Brenchley Church yesterday (Thursday) afternoon and was attended by many relatives and friends. The service was fully choral, and was taken by the Vicar, the Reverend P. Whelan, assisted by the Reverend H. Sinclair Brooke.

The hymns were: 'Now the lab'rs task is o'er,' and 'My God my Father, whilst I stray,' Psalm 23, voluntaries, 'O rest in the Lord,' and 'The Dead March.'

The chief mourners were:

Mr Edward Scott (husband), Mr Arthur Scott and Miss Scott (son and daughter), the Misses Ashe, Mr A. Scott (brother-in-law), Mr and Mrs Horne, Mr Hopper; Mrs Sinclair Brooke, the Misses Storr, Mr C. Castle, Mr and Mrs Philpott, Mrs Simpson, Mr Edgecombe, the Misses Luck, Miss E. Wimshurst, Mr D'Alison and Mr Wimshurst.

The family and other floral tributes were many and beautiful.

From: *The Wiltshire Gazette*, Thursday 31 January 1935

Death of well-known Langley Lady

The death which occurred early on Thursday evening (24 January) at Langley House, Langley Burrell of Miss Thermuthis Mary Ashe at the age of 78 years, will be much regretted by a large circle of friends. Miss Ashe had been ill for only a short while and her demise is a great loss to the parish of which she was the lady of the manor. Her family came to Langley Burrell close on 300 years ago. In 1660 the Langley Estate was purchased by Samuel Ashe in whose family it has remained ever since. Miss Ashe's father (the Revd R.M. Ashe) was the last male descendant of an ancient Norman family which came over with the Conqueror and can trace their direct male descendants through 26 generations. He was born on the 18 January 1807 and was educated at Oxford. He became curate to his father (after taking his degree at Trinity College) the Reverend Robert Ashe, who was both Squire and Rector of the parish, but he himself never undertook the clerical charge of Langley Burrell. Mr Ashe married Miss Letitia Daly, the daughter of Captain Daly of Mantua, Dublin and had one son and three daughters. The son died in infancy; one of the daughters, Mrs Scott died some years ago and one daughter now survives. The Reverend R.M. Ashe died on his birthday, 18 January and was buried at Langley Burrell on January 24 1885, his wife having died only in the previous December. It was said that he died of a broken heart. It is a coincidence that Miss Ashe died on the same day of the same month as her father's funeral fifty years ago. That service was attended by Sir Frederick Goldney, who was present at the funeral on Monday.

Langley House Photo: Jim Hall

On the death of her father, Miss Ashe became the owner of Langley House. She took a considerable interest in the affairs of the parish and was very generous to the poor. To the church she was a great benefactor, and for many years she had been a warden, being one of the few lady wardens in the Bristol diocese. For a long time she served on the ruri-decanal conference, and she was a fairly regular representative to the diocesan conference: she was present at the conference held at Chippenham in October. The deceased was the head of the Women's Conservative Association in the parish, and took a very keen and active interest in the cause.

On several occasions the annual meetings of the Chippenham Divisional Women's Association have been held in the grounds of Langley House, and Miss Ashe has many times lent her grounds for church and other fêtes. She was a keen archer, and up to quite recently Miss Ashe was to be seen on her grounds at practice. Some years ago she was an active worker in connection with the North Wiltshire Needlework Guild, and she was a generous subscriber to the Chippenham Hospital.

Remains Laid To Rest – Vicar's Tribute

The funeral took place on Monday afternoon, the interment being in the family vault in the churchyard adjoining her residence. It was expected that either the Bishop of Bristol or the Bishop of Malmesbury would have conducted the service, but neither was able to be present, and the Rector (the Reverend E.V. Bridger) officiated. Miss Waters was at the organ and played appropriate music as the large congregation assembled. The opening hymn was 'O, God, our Help,' followed by the Psalm 90 and the hymn 'Brief Life is here our Portion.'

The Rector, in a few brief sentences, said it was difficult to resist the temptation to utter a few words, not so much on the personality of the one being laid to rest, but of the thoughts which were brought to mind by the event of one passing away. The burial of their sister meant a breaking with the past. This old time parish had something of the atmosphere of the past lingering longer here than in many other parishes, and this loss caused a definite break with the past – a past which many had appreciated and which many were sorry to see passing away, and which many would like to see return, but that was impossible. There was a feeling of real loss as the family had been living there for 270 years.

After the hymn, 'Abide with me' the coffin was borne from the church and deposited in a grave lined with beautiful flowers. The family mourners were Miss Lucy Ashe (sister), Miss Scott (niece), Mr Arthur Scott (nephew), Mr Arthur Scott (cousin), Mr and Mrs G.M. Saunders (cousins). The indoor staff were represented by the Misses Thompson, Hancock, Pickard, Bird, Clifford and Gray, and the outdoor staff by Messrs W. Couzens, H. and G. Gale, R. Romain and Hugh Jefferies.

From: *The Wiltshire Times*, Saturday 15 January 1949

Miss Lucy Ashe

The death took place on Sunday, 9 January, at Langley House, Chippenham, of Miss Lucy Ashe, aged 89* years, youngest daughter of the Reverend Robert Ashe. Miss Ashe spent most of her life in London where she did much social work. For many years she was a member of Southwark Borough Council and for time an Alderman. She was especially interested in Child Welfare and Tuberculosis Care committees. The funeral was at Langley Burrell on Wednesday.

*She was, in fact, 90 years old that day, her birthday. Her father had also died on his birthday.

From: *The South London Observer* Friday 14 January 1949

Obituary: Southwark Social Worker:

On Sunday at Chippenham in her 90th year, died the woman who was once known as 'the little old lady of Southwark.' Miss Lucy Ashe, who gave 50 years of her life to Southwark, is still remembered by thousands of people. In Peacock Street is the block of flats, which bears her name.

Miss Ashe came to London from her country home in Wiltshire before the First World War. She visited Southwark often, grew to love it and decided to concentrate on social work there. When war came she devoted herself to helping the families of Southwark men serving overseas. In 1919 she was made the first Chairman of the Child Welfare Committee. Miss Ashe was also on the first Pensions Committee and was also a member of Southwark Council.

A worthy woman she largely financed her own work. Hundreds of people flocked for advice and help to the little office she established in Steedman Street. She sold pictures she had painted and used this money to aid them. She continued with her work for the people of Southwark until she was nearly 80 years of age.

From: *The Wiltshire Times*, Saturday 8 October 1949

Langley Burrell: Memorial Unveiled

On Tuesday afternoon, [4 October] a memorial to the late Miss Lucy ASHE who died last January at the age of 89 years, which had been subscribed for by the villagers, was unveiled in St Peter's Church, Langley Burrell by the Reverend Robert J. Harvey, grandson of a former Rector.

Third daughter of the late 'Squire' Ashe, Miss Lucy Ashe was one of the pioneer women workers in the Borough of Southwark, where for many years she was an Alderman. She took a particular interest in the welfare of women and children and it was with difficulty that she was persuaded to leave London, although then over 80 years of age, when the enemy bombing commenced.

The memorial takes the form of a hymn and psalm board with this inscription:

'In Memory of LUCY ASHE,
Died January 9, 1949
From her friends in the village of Langley Burrell.'

The Rector, the Reverend E.V. Bridger took part in the service and the Reverend Robert Harvey paid a moving tribute to the life of Miss Ashe. Mrs W.C. Hurley was the organist. The collection was organised by Mr. A.H. Martin.

Members of the family present were: Major R.M. Scott Ashe, Miss G.J.L. Scott and Mr Arthur Scott, with Mrs Harvey.

KILVERT AND THE HILLS OF FIRE AND IRON

By Peter Morgan Jones (Tredegar)

At first glance it appears surprising that that keen observer Kilvert made hardly any reference to the huge industrial activity taking place but a relatively short distance from Clyro. Surely he must have noticed, even occasionally, furnace glare flickering on western night skies. Yes, the Black Mountains massif lay between Clyro and the coalfield, but had the village stood some miles farther west many of the Diarist's farming parishioners would have been taking their produce to market in iron and coal towns, or supplying

fodder for the 'Outcrop's' teeming draught animals. How strange it seems that such a sensitive writer who mourned the destruction of the trees at Cefn-y-Fedwas never commented upon how many Usk valley woodlands had been clear-felled to provide industrial timber. Were not most of the gentry homes he visited heated with Outcrop coal, once transported to border areas by the horse-drawn Hay Tramroad and later via the London, Midland and Scottish railway that followed much the same route? Agricultural and building lime came also from the uplands, and even in remote Clyro some family connections with the industrial areas probably existed at a time when agricultural workers were still quitting the farm to seek prosperity in coalpit, furnace and forge. Even so, the Diarist displays what appears to be a total lack of interest in the world's former iron-making centre, then fast becoming one of its major coal suppliers. Only once does Kilvert mention a blind furnaceman begging near Hardenhuish in 1873, and not until 1878 does he record the *pitiful distress* being suffered at Dowlais, just across the hills.

This indefatigable traveller, who so vividly described a Liverpool foundry, kept well away from the industrial region nearer home, perhaps for good reason. The coalfield was still a restless area where, shortly before Kilvert's birth, a British Revolution, better known as the Chartist Uprising, had erupted and failed. To country dwellers the Outcrop between Hirwaun and Blaenafon had been home of the 'Dynion Drywg' – 'Bad Men' – from its having provided sanctuary for those fleeing the law. These once-wild iron and coal towns had created such characters as 'The Emperor of China', a criminal office once held by 'Shoni Ysguborfawr', otherwise 'Johnny of the Big Barn', whose reputation as champion prize-fighter of all Wales would fade rapidly after he made the mistake of challenging Police Sergeant Evans one dark night in Merthyr High Street. Not for the gentle traveller had been those hard towns where public lighting was 'like angel visits – few and far between' and men died in agony from iron splashes or went blind through furnace glare, and possibly this reputation lingered.

When first I read of Kilvert's meeting the iron-worker who had lost his sight *because the fire was too strong for my eyes,* it seemed the man must have been from Dowlais, or Merthyr, or Hirwaun, or Rhymney, or Tredegar, or any other of the iron towns whose furnace fires still lit night skies and blackened them by day. But the place was Hardenhuish, not Clyro, and the old man probably victim of Ironbridge or some other Midlands town.

It would seem that the inhabitants of Clyro, St Harmon or Bredwardine were as remote from events in the nearby coalfield as we are from Iraqi explosion, tsunami or famine, displaying much the same, soon-to-fade, frisson of shock-horror. On 29 January 1878, Kilvert mentions learning of conditions at Dowlais where *the distress was terrible and pitiful, the people perishing of hunger, and the distress at Merthyr worse,* before adding that *a hare and a brace of pheasants* had arrived from Sir Henry Cotterell at Brobury.

Dowlais and Merthyr were obviously another world.

KILVERT IN *THE GUARDIAN*

On Saturday 19 January an excellent full-page article on Kilvert entitled *Life on the Wing,* written by Mark Bostridge, appeared in the Review section of *The Guardian*.

The article deals with the background to the *Diary*, its publication and its final fate, illustrated with quotations and references from the *Diary* and other sources, the description of Maria Kilvert's funeral for example, 'applauded by Virginia Woolf as comic perfection'.

Regrettably the wrong man is pictured in a large accompanying photograph, captioned 'very sleek and glossy and gentle' because there, seated in his armchair, in later years and looking anything but 'gentle, sleek and glossy' is Uncle Francis, the 'other' Francis Kilvert. (I understand that the error was corrected elsewhere in the paper the same day.)

Towards the end of the article the author notes the double anniversary that will fall this year; 70 years since the publication of Volume I of the Plomer edition and 60 years since the foundation of the Society. He writes: 'To celebrate the 70th anniversary Cape should consider authorising a critical edition of the diary, drawing on the surviving manuscripts, as well as on the background information amassed by the Kilvert Society in the years since its foundation in 1948'. The Kilvert Society would be delighted were this to happen as it has long been its ambition to see that come about.

Mark Bostridge laments the fact that both the abridged version of the *Diary* and the three-volume edition are out of print. In a reader's letter published the following week Sean O'Donoghue of Hay was quick to point out that this is [fortunately] not entirely so as he reprinted the three volumes in 2006. This boxed set is available from our publications manager.

By coincidence a week after this article appeared I received a copy of a previous *Guardian* article on Kilvert (published in 1977) from that indefatigable newspaper researcher, our member Teresa Williams of Harrow. She had come across this and other Kilvert pieces (from *The Hereford Times*, one of which appears below) while trying to trace, at my request, the origin of the account of the Aberedw visit on page four.

The 1977 article, a substantial piece, published on 3 February is entitled *Relative Disaster*, it is by Brian Jones and deals with the destruction, by Essex Hope, of the unpublished portions of the *Diary,* 'destroyed by the old, lonely woman to whom they had passed .... A literary tragedy.' That article is accompanied by three photographs: Mrs Hope, RFK in the pose we know so well and a larger picture of the Vicarage at Bredwardine.

Teresa Williams in her letter which accompanied *The Guardian* and *Hereford Times* pieces, adds a most interesting final paragraph:

> The newspapers in the 1950s are very interesting because even though it was over 70 years since Kilvert died, there were still plenty of people who were alive in FK's day. One example is an account in *The Hereford Times* of 3 January 1957 of the Rector of Dorstone, the Revd George H Powell (aged 79) celebrating his Golden Wedding anniversary; they were married at Clyro on 1 January 1907. His wife (aged 84 years) was the former Miss Kathleen Maud Crichton, second daughter of the Crichtons of Wye Cliff, Hay, who, according to the newspaper report, 'were great friends of the Diarist, Francis Kilvert when he was curate at Clyro.' Mrs Powell's sister, Mrs HA Christy (née Elinor Crichton) of Llangoed Castle lived until November 1972, dying at the age of 97. Among the mourners at her funeral were Sir Michael and Lady Delia Venables Llewelyn. In the short account was the remark that 'she was of the well-known Radnorshire family of Crichtons of Wye Cliff, frequently mentioned in the Reverend Francis Kilvert's Diary.'

Editor

'He made the Border Country more beautiful'

Tribute to famous Diarist at annual service

(From* The Hereford Times *Friday 19 July 1957)

On the 14th July 1871, Francis Kilvert the famous Radnorshire Diarist records, 'I got out at Whitney and went to the Rectory' On Sunday last, 86 years later to the day, members of the Kilvert Society and their friends attended the annual Commemoration Service of the Society in the Church of St Peter and St Paul, Whitney-on-Wye.

Every seat in the body of the church and gallery was filled for the service at which the Rector, the Reverend Basil Gadsden, officiated.

The lessons were read by the Vicar of Clyro, the Reverend T.J. Lewis and the Vicar of Bredwardine, the Reverend Crowther Smith – representatives of the Parishes where Kilvert ministered.

Among the congregation were Mrs Sid Wright of Hereford, President of the Society, Mr Partridge of Ledbury who was christened by the Diarist and Mr Tudor Watkins, MP for the Brecon and Radnor division.

The choir of boys and women with Mr R. Richards at the organ led the choral service which included an Act of Remembrance. The local ringers with Mr Reg Morris in charge welcomed the pilgrims.

The collection went to the fund for repairs to the church fabric, for which £300 is urgently needed with a further £1,200 at a later date for roof repairs.

AMBASSADOR'S HOPE

In an address of welcome the rector said the American Ambassador, Mr Whitney, had written apologising for his absence but expressing the hope that he would be able to visit the Parish of Whitney founded by his ancestors many years ago, in the autumn.

The Dean of Hereford, the Very Reverend H.R. Burrows expressed the Society's gratitude to the rector and all concerned at Whitney for their welcome that day. The Diarist's writings, he said, were of real importance to the country and the church. Kilvert's powerful imagination played up the scene with which they were all so familiar and made even more beautiful the Border country to travellers from all parts of the world, many of whom came especially to see 'The Kilvert Country.' The message was important to the church because the parson had made himself known to the people giving them a renewed confidence in themselves, a belief in their destiny and a feeling that they all really did count. He had become in history the famous curate of Clyro and Vicar of Bredwardine.

The Dean went on to refer to the spiritual side of the Diarist's life and message and spoke of his connection with Whitney – a parish he knew and loved. The Dew family at the Rectory, the Dean said, were for the Diarist some of his greatest friends. One of them, a Miss Helen Dew, who died in Hereford, was known to him (the Dean) in her later years.

Whitney Church – that's Edward West in the doorway! Photo: Editor

She represented the great Victorian generation and gave him many recollections of Kilvert, whose life was a spiritual pilgrimage – a man who never stayed put but was always on the move.

The Dean said he read the Diaries before he came to Hereford and saw the country through the Diarist's eyes. He described some of the passages and told the amusing tale of the service of Confirmation in Whitney Church when only one candidate attended.

Kilvert checked and rebuked members of his flock, as every good parson should, added the Dean. He lived, loved and worked and found the face of God.

After the service the congregation enjoyed tea provided by the ladies of the parish who were thanked by Mrs Wright and the Dean.

Visitors from Hereford who travelled in two coaches and private cars, returned home through Clyro and Llanigon where they visited the churchyard and the grave of Daisy Thomas of Llanthomas whose courtship with the Diarist is so vividly told in the third volume.

SOME THOUGHTS ON TRANSPLANTED FLOWERS

By Margaret Collins (London)

Last summer I read again *Kilvert's Cornish Diary, Journal No. 4 1870.* Its well-researched, detailed notes by editors Richard Maber and Angela Tregoning make it a fascinating read which is further enhanced by excellent illustrations.

The last day of Kilvert's holiday at *Tullimaar,* the home of his friends William and Emma Hockin, was Saturday, 6 August 1870 and the final sentence of the notebook reads: *The drooping of transplanted flowers and the withering of tendrils torn from their clasp* (p.103). This seems to be a literary allusion by Kilvert but the editors are unable to identify its source. They suggest (p.128) that it may relate to some lines from Wordsworth's *To a Distant Friend:*

> Why art thou silent? Is thy love a plant
> Of such weak fibre that the treacherous air
> Of absence withers what was once so fair?

They add ' – but the idea is given a very different application here' and refer to Kilvert's 'long nostalgic effusion' on the train journey home, where the phrase is repeated. Parting from Mrs Hockin and *Tullimaar* was clearly painful for him.

From the *Cornish Diary* we learn that the Hockins were keen horticulturalists. In the KS *Journal* of March 2005 John Hockin says that William became a very successful nurseryman. On this, the last day of his holiday, Kilvert missed the early train and returned to *Tullimaar* for a few hours and *Mrs H. was planting ferns, the Gurnard's Head Asplenium, in the potting house and I leaned on the window sill outside watching her and making her laugh with Cowper's 'Tithing Time'... / The second parting / And so endeth a very happy time / The drooping of transplanted flowers and the withering of tendrils torn from their clasp.* Could it be that this imagery was inspired by watching Mrs Hockin at work in the potting house?

On 29 July there had been an excursion to Gurnard's Head and while there: *A scramble up among the rocks to search for ferns for Mrs. H. Not very successful, and H. had got her some much finer ones, but she did not despise mine.* So it could have been Kilvert's ferns that she was planting on the day of his departure.

On a later visit to the Hockins in Taunton on 14 September 1872 he writes: *Hockin gave me a quantity of cuttings and a ginger plant and Mrs Hockin gave me what I valued extremely, one of the plants of Asplenium Marinum fern which I got for her at the Gurnard's Head two years ago and which she had kept ever since.* Far from despising his offering, it seems his ferns were rather special to Mrs Hockin.

I searched through many books of quotations and poetry in an attempt to pin down this reference to *transplanted flowers* but without success. Later, quite by chance, I came across sonnet XLIV of *Sonnets from the Portuguese* (published 1850) by Elizabeth Barrett Browning:

> Beloved, thou hast brought me many flowers
> Plucked in the garden, all the summer through
> And winter, and it seemed as if they grew
> In this close room, nor missed the sun and showers.
> So, in the like name of that love of ours,
> Take back these thoughts which here unfolded too,
> And which on warm and cold days I withdrew
> From my heart's ground. Indeed, those beds and bowers
> Be overgrown with bitter weeds and rue,

And wait thy weeding; yet here's eglantine,
Here's ivy! – take them as I used to do
Thy flowers, and keep them where they shall not pine.
Instruct thine eyes to keep their colours true,
And tell thy soul, their roots are left in mine.

The context and imagery here are closer to the *Diary* reference than the Wordsworth poem. It remains conjecture, but we know that Kilvert was familiar with Elizabeth Barrett Browning's poetry, as earlier that year on 3 March he writes: *Mary … lent me the best volume of Mrs. Barrett Browning's Poems*. He later quoted from her poem *The Mask* in a sermon on 18 April 1875.

This sonnet immediately follows the best known of the *Sonnets from the Portuguese, XLIII* 'How do I love thee? Let me count the ways'.

Kilvert was in a heightened state of romantic sensibility throughout this holiday due to the presence of Emma Hockin. Five years later in 1875 he still recalls Emma at that time: *How her face and voice and manner brought up the dear old memories of Cornwall and Tullimaar (3:251)* and *She looks so nice and fair and bright and young … and those bright blue eyes as quick and sly and merry as ever (3:255)*.

Emma clearly enjoyed Kilvert's company during his stay because on 1 August, *she took me with her* on an evening shopping trip to Truro. He leant on the bridge watching the boats on the river while she shopped and he records their meeting again as, *Tryst at the pastrycook's*. The editors' detailed notes (p. 121) make no reference to Kilvert's telling choice of the word *tryst*. One wonders whether Emma would have chosen the same word.

Perhaps it was the fact that they were at the pastrycook's which sparked off the *Shakespeare talk* on the journey home to *Tullimaar*, as they speak of *Hamlet* where Ophelia says (Act IV:5): *They say the owl was a baker's daughter.* The poem which follows is distinctly ribald and the editors make the comment 'one wonders how far Kilvert and Emma Hockin pursued their discussion, since Ophelia's own explanation for her remark … is anything but decorous'. There is a further quotation from *Hamlet* (Act I:3): *The friends thou hast, and their adoption tried/Grapple them to thy soul with hooks of steel* (the editors note that *hooks* should read *hoops*). Presumably this led Emma and Kilvert to chat about the nature of true friendship.

They discuss the *Merchant of Venice* and *Othello*. The editors comment that 'it would be interesting to know which part of *Othello* they discussed'. With its themes of jealousy, betrayal, innocence and a crime of passion, it certainly would.

We cannot know for sure what Kilvert had in mind when he made the reference to *transplanted flowers*. The fact that it was the last sentence of the *Cornish Diary* gives it added significance – a summing up of his thoughts about the holiday. We do know that he was pleased to obtain a copy of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's poems four months before the start of the *Cornish Diary* and it is just possible that sonnet XLIV, with its floral and plant imagery, found resonance with his feelings when a magical holiday came to an end.

HAVE YOU BEEN HERE?

CRAIG-PWLL-DU

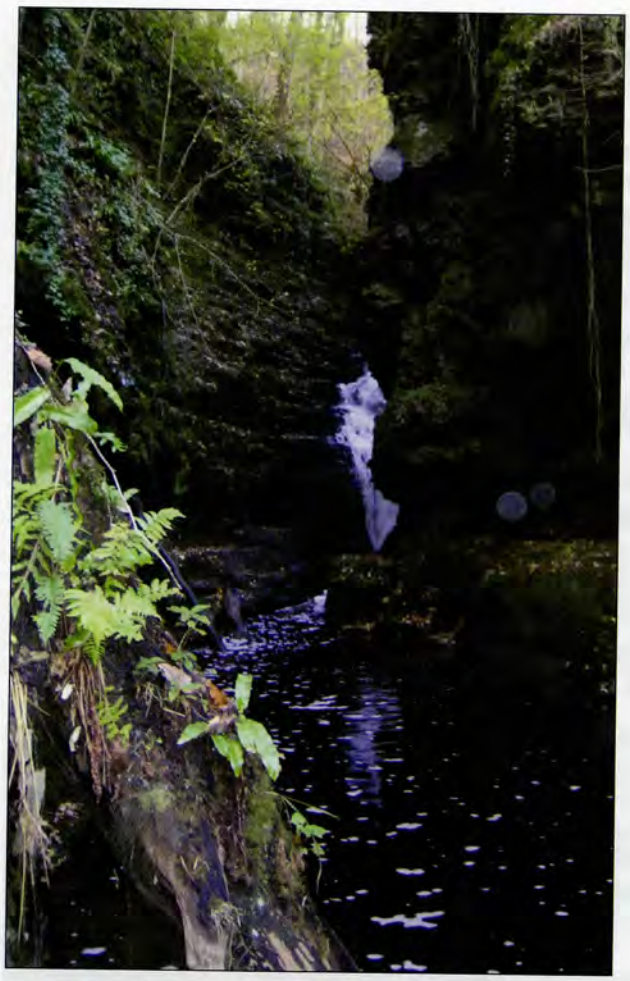
By John Wilks (Cusop)
Number three in an occasional series

There are three references to Craig-Pwll-Du (variously hyphenated and capitalised on OS maps and elsewhere) in the published *Diary*. One in the three-volume edition (16 February 1870, I p.36), one in the Sandford Notebook (2 May 1870, p. 15) and one in the Harvey Notebook (30 June 1870, p. 56).

Interestingly, the two Notebook entries mention similar difficulties of access to the Pool as those discovered by John …

Craig-Pwll-Du (English = Blackpool Rock?)

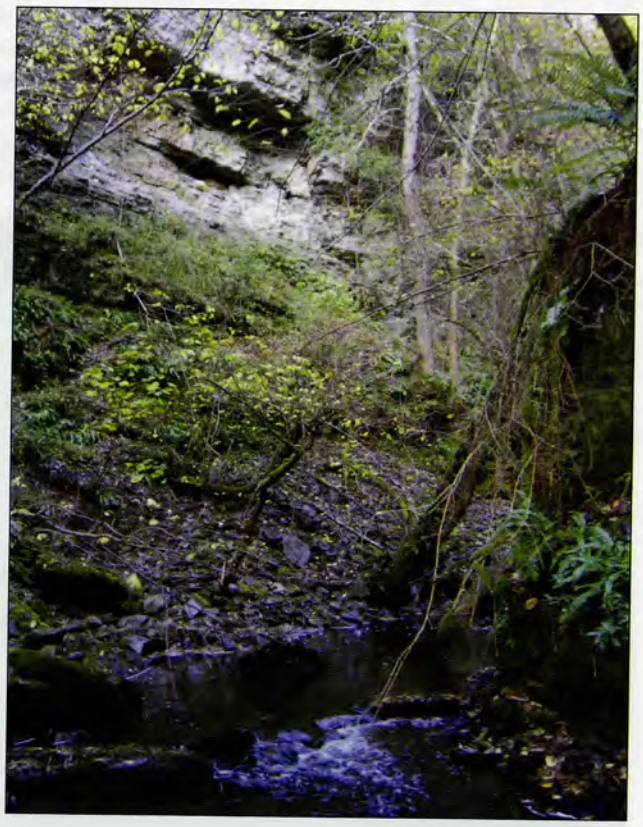
When I first joined the Society, Edward West told me of Craig-Pwll-Du and how it was the one place mentioned in the *Diary* that he had always wished to visit but had never succeeded in doing so. The opportunity to visit a Kilvert site that had never been visited by Edward was too much to resist and I set about searching the map for its location. The three-volume *Diary* itself provides little information, there is only one brief mention for 16 February 1870. I quote: *At Burnt House James Phillips at home, a long legged Radnorshire man who said he had never been drunk. Told me how Mr. Ffoulkes had dived to the bottom of Craig-pwll-du and very nearly getting entangled in roots and weeds at the bottom, had declared he would not take England to do it again*. Eventually I located it on the Bachawy (Bach Howey on older OS maps) a tributary of the Wye, between and above Erwood and Llanstephan (SO 121435) and, with the map showing public paths leading right to it, it looked an easy place to visit. This impression is entirely false, there is no trace of these paths on the ground and it was only by starting from Llanstephan Church and following forestry tracks that I did eventually get fairly easily to a position where the waterfall could be heard. It is the final 100 yards that are challenging,



The Waterfall

indeed dangerous, overgrown and extremely steep down to the rock, currently described on the map as 'earthwork' but on earlier maps described as 'Castle' and now the nesting place of peregrine falcons. To reach the Pool is even more hazardous as the slope approaches vertical and all the effort is of little reward unless you are prepared to wade up the stream between sheer rock faces into the Pool itself, only then can you see the waterfall. It is both a beautiful and a terrifying place and definitely not a pool I would wish to dive into, certainly not for England, though I might consider it for Wales!

I have visited the Pool three times since that first encounter, on my most recent visit in November last year, the conifer trees were being harvested above the deeply incised Bachawy, but the deciduous trees that occupy the steep slopes are out of reach and many will have survived since Kilvert's time. Whether the footpaths will be reinstated following these forestry operations is doubtful, but I will keep members informed if access to this fascinating site becomes a little easier as it must once have been according to my 1940 edition of Ward Lock's *Guide to the Wye Valley*. I quote 'It is but a short walk from the village (Erwood) to the stream called Bachwy or Bachowy, and the **Falls of Craig-pwll-du,** in English the 'Rock of the Black Pool.' The water falls some 40 feet among wild and romantic rocks, which makes the ravine intensely gloomy.'



The Pool

Photos by John Wilks

A CORNISH HOLIDAY

By Mary Steele (Dunstable)

As we know Kilvert's description of his holiday in Cornwall in 1870, 'the fulfilment of two years' dream', is one of the few sections of the *Diary* that have survived complete.

I have the 1978, revised 1984, stapled pamphlet printing the entries that were excluded by William Plomer from the three-volume *Diary*. When I first read it, I was particularly struck by Kilvert's description of his visit to Restormel Castle. It is a fine Kilvertian set piece which conjured up for me the magic of my discovery of this romantic ruin, hidden in the hills behind Lostwithiel. Its omission by Plomer and his dismissal of much of the Cornish Diary as 'A series of expeditions to Tintagel etc' or 'A walk is described', suggests that he gave priority to personalities over descriptive writing but these passages are delightful pieces of travel

writing and make me yearn for the survival of the whole Diary. I cannot agree with Plomer's assertion that he kept all the interesting parts of the *Diary* when he missed out writing of this quality. What else have we lost? I took my Cornish holiday journal and volume one of the *Diary* with me when I visited Cornwall in May.

Although he was staying at *Tullimaar*, near Truro, Kilvert travelled the length and breadth of the county in his three-week stay. The number of expeditions he made was impressive and was more than my fellow traveller and I achieved with a car. Kilvert was luckier than we were with the weather. Rain and tides prevented us from walking across to St Michael's Mount; rain and wind made it hazardous to cross to the island at Tintagel and even to stand up on the coast path. We did not have any problem with an *oppressive heat* of which he occasionally complains!

The trip to Restormel and Tintagel castles took place over two days, staying at the Royal Talbot in Lostwithiel. It is still there on the main road through the town with a large car park replacing the *stabling for 150 or 200 horses* of Kilvert's day. The road to Restormel, which he walked and we drove is not kept as neatly as when he saw it *kept like an approach to a gentleman's mansion*. The entrance to the castle is still found by turning off at the farm entrance as Kilvert and his companions found after an abortive attempt at a short cut.

He writes: *The castle is one of the most remarkable I ever saw, small, circular, built on a steep green mound within a deep and perfect moat, crossed at the entrance to the Castle gate not by a drawbridge but by a bridge of ancient masonry over a culvert. The walls are very low, enormously thick, crowned with immensely large, heavy, ivy-covered battlements, and pierced thickly everywhere, high and low with* holes *which we, after puzzling a long time over them, supposed to be arrow slits. The inner walls are pierced with these square holes as thickly as the outer walls. These* holes *"exercised" us all and H. especially very much and we kept on reverting to them thus, "But those* holes, *after all, those* holes. *What is the meaning of those* holes*? What can they be for &c, &c,"*

The castle is now in the care of English Heritage. Its guide to the castle shows an illustration of Restormel as Kilvert would have seen it, with the walls covered in ivy, which has since been cleaned off. The modern guidebook answers the question about those inscrutable *holes*. They were for scaffolding and are still there because, when the building was finished, the builders simply cut off the ends of the scaffolding and left the ends of wood in the stone; they have since rotted away.

Kilvert's trip to Tintagel was taken by waggonette and pair, presumably hired from the Royal Talbot, and they went over the steep hills (one feels sorry for the horses) and through a rainstorm to Tintagel via Camelford. The village is called Trevena by Kilvert; it changed its name to Tintagel in 1900 as an early piece of marketing made possible by the updating of the postal service.

Photos: Author

Restormel Castle

We were told to ask at the cottage in the valley for the Castle key and a guide. The said cottage was a little low house which was or had been a mill. It was built on the edge of the little stream beneath the cliffs, upon which we could see the Castle keep far above. The cottage was built in a sort of hole beneath the level of the ground or rather of the road. You went down steps to the front door and when within you went down steps again into the best room. The little garden in front was gay with nasturtiums and other flowers. An old man with a red face was hobbling round the gardens with a stick. He called to his daughter for the key and in honour of the young lady volunteered to be our guide, a great favour and mark of respect, as the old man usually sends his daughter to show the Castle to visitors.

We were unable to identify the cottage and it may not be there. The English Heritage guidebook to Tintagel confirms the existence of the mill but speaks of it in the past tense. The house, in its *sort of hole* must have been very damp. The book also gives a name to the old man, Mr Richards, and to his daughter, grandly named Florence Nightingale Richards. It is a pity that Kilvert did not find this out.

The book shows a photograph of her in later life, rather misleadingly captioned 'an eccentric self-appointed guide to Tintagel in the mid-nineteenth century'. The mid-nineteenth century must have been when she was born and named after the heroine of the Crimea and her role as guide seems to have been inherited. Kilvert crossed to the island fortress using the steps cut in the rock by the Revd Richard Kinsman, named by Kilvert as *Mr Kinsman, the clergyman of Tintagel* who had the steps carved and a new protective wall built and was appointed Constable of the Castle in recognition of his efforts to make the castle accessible to visitors and protect its fabric. The steps can be seen but many have crumbled away and they were replaced by a wooden bridge in the 1970s. Kilvert made a full and interested tour of the site; we diverted instead to the church on the next headland, which he mentions but did not visit.

And so endeth a very happy time, wrote Kilvert in his last Cornish entry. We know he kept in touch with his Tullimaar friends, but, as far as I know, he never had another chance to visit Cornwall in his short life.

CELEBRATIONS AT BREDWARDINE

On 7 October last the church bells of St Andrew's were rededicated by the Bishop of Hereford, the Right Reverend Anthony Priddis. The church was full for the occasion which was combined with the celebration of Harvest Festival.

After the Bishop had given thanks for the skill and craftsmanship of those involved in the restoration project and for the efforts of the local people who had contributed to the cost, the bells rang out to celebrate this most notable occasion in the life of the Parish.

This small local community had raised more than £140,000 over a period of ten years towards the twin projects of renewing the bells and making the tower and other parts of the church structurally sound.

The old oaken bell frame was removed from the tower and the bells taken to Nottingham for restoration and tuning. The tenor bell was recast and together with the historic Brobury Bell, dating from 1385, all the bells were rehung on a new frame.

The contractors were helped throughout by teams of local volunteers who provided valuable support, not least with refreshments!

The pictures, taken from the October 2007 edition of the parish magazine *The Link* show the tenor bell being propelled up the church path by Graham Powell and Paul Mason while Eric Loe (right) and Bill Mackenzie (left) offer advice, and in position in the tower.

PUBLICITY FOR THE SOCIETY

By John Wilks (Cusop)

In 2006 *The Baskerville Arms* at Clyro commissioned author and photographer Chris Barber to produce two framed and glazed displays depicting the life and times of Kilvert in the village.

At the same time the Society was considering ways to publicise its activities and the decision was made to obtain estimated costs for the production of similar displays for the most prominent Kilvert churches. Estimates were considered in October 2006 and it was decided to offer display boards similar to those in the *Baskerville Arms* to Clyro, Bredwardine, Llanbedr Painscastle, Newchurch, Langley Burrell and Hardenhuish churches.

Sadly, Clyro turned down the offer but Bredwardine, Llanbedr Painscastle and Newchurch accepted. Consultation with the Revd David Kilminster at Langley Burrell concluded that boards at Hardenhuish would be wasted as the church is normally locked and that St Peter's lacked suitable space. The village hall however was developing as a local history display centre and the hall committee would welcome a Kilvert display.

The boards for Bredwardine were produced in time for their Victorian Festival, and those for Newchurch and Llanbedr Painscastle in time for the Pilgrimage walk. Now finally the display boards for Langley Burrell are complete and should be in place in the village hall by the time this *Journal* reaches you.

One frame of each display is devoted to general information and publications and is similar at each location, the second frame covers Kilvert sites in the local areas.

The Committee would be interested in receiving comments on the content and location of these boards and whether members consider additional sites should be sought for similar displays.

Our thanks to John Wilks who set all this up with the help of Chris Barber.

The new boards for Hardenhuish and Langley Burrell Photo: Editor

---

COMPETITION RESULT

I was most disappointed that the first KS Journal *competition attracted so few entries; can it be that so many members did not receive the benefits of a Classical education? I find that hard to believe, so perhaps you were just bashful about your translation skills! Even so I am pleased that the competition was offered, it did generate some interest and all the entries contained some skilful and elegant renderings such that the judge, Robert Hudson, a friend, classical scholar and ex-colleague tells me that his task was most difficult.*

For the reasons given below he has declared Alan Barrett of Reading the winner. Congratulations Alan – your £20 book token is in the post!

Editor.

From Robert Hudson:

I have now completed the difficult task that your editor imposed upon me of judging the competition for a translation of Francis Kilvert's Latin epitaph. The rules required a version that was to be both 'the most accurate and elegant', and, of course, these two factors tend to militate against each other. Entries that were accurate were not always elegant, and some that were elegant were by no means accurate. On occasions, competitors solved the problem of the most difficult bits by recourse to the simple expedient of complete omission!

For what it is worth as a point of reference, my own version, erring I fear on the side of the excessively literal is:

This monument is sacred to the memory of Francis Kilvert, Master of Arts. He was born, nurtured and introduced to literary studies at Bath, and educated in the liberal arts at Oxford. In his native city he was devoted to the education of Christ's little ones from the first years of his maturity; only when his life was all but finished did he lay down at the foot of the cross his rod of discipline and his professional skill. In sum, he was outstanding (if ever anyone was) for his inveterate faith, the purity of his way of life, and the charm of his utterance. He was, moreover, an earnest, sincere and clear-sighted preacher, and an admirable instructor of youth. Especially adorned with literature of the more refined kind, he was a most loving son of his mother the Church of England. Leaving to all his friends both grief and the sense of their loss of him, he departed in peace on 16 September in the year of our salvation 1863 and in the seventieth year of his age.

Several submissions had their own special merits. David Hepworth's 'insightful' is a good translation of 'perspicax', and 'He was a proven formative influence on the young' has a felicitously modern air reflecting nevertheless an accurate understanding of the Latin. From Basil Greenslade I have shamelessly plagiarised 'the charm of his utterance' in my own version, and there is an elegant fluency about his 'He was especially accomplished in his knowledge of the finest literature'. Rosalind Bolton opted for a succinct economy that was punchily effective in her 'born, bred and schooled in Bath' and 'an eminently cultured scholar'. Clifford Dunkley found a nice compromise between the literal and the idiomatic in 'He laid down his magisterial cane' and 'Exceedingly distinguished for his fine scholarship'. Parts of the Latin found the most challenging included 'vita tantum exacta', 'si quis alius', and the correct computation of the date of death.

After difficult deliberation I decided that the winner should be Alan Barrett, who seemed to me to have given much careful thought to the precise meaning of the text while at the same time frequently achieving both clarity of expression and appropriately sonorous diction. His version is shown below.

Original

M.S.
VIRI REVERENDI FRANCISCI KILVERT A.M.
BATHONIAE NATI, NUTRITI, LITERIS INITIATI
OXONIAE BONAS ARTES EDOCTI
QUI
AB INEUNTE AETATE
CHRISTI PARVULIS ERUDIENDIS
IN URBE, PATRIA
DEDITUS.
CUM VITA TANTUM EXACTA
FERULAM ARTEMQUE
AD CRUCIS PEDEM
DEPOSUIT:
QUI DENIQUE
[SI QUIS ALIUS]
ANTIQUA FIDE, MORUM SANCTITATE
VERBORUM DULCEDINE
CONSPICUUS;
CONCIONATOR GRAVIS, SIMPLEX, PERSPICAX:
JUVENUM INFORMATOR PROBABILIS:
LITERIS ELEGANTIORIBUS APPRIME ORNATUS,
SANCTAE MATRIS ECCLESIAE ANGLICANAE
FILIUS AMANTISSIMUS
AMICIS OMNIBUS LUCTUM ET SUI DESIDERIUM
RELINQUENS
IN PACE DECESSIT DIE XVI KAL. OCTOBRIS
ANNO SALUTIS MDCCCLXIII
AETATIS LXX.

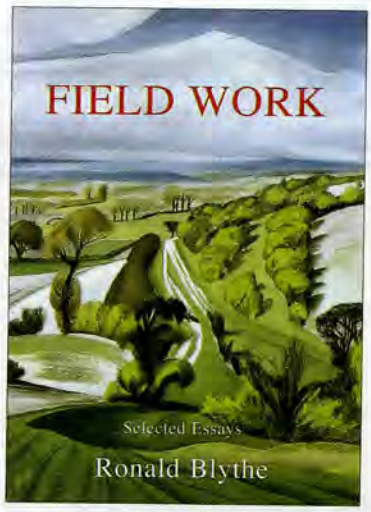
The Winning Translation

Sacred to the Memory
of
The Reverend Francis Kilvert, M.A.
born, nurtured, and given his first steps
in learning at Bath, and thoroughly
instructed in the fine arts at Oxford,
who, from his earliest years, devoted
himself to the instruction of Christ's
little children in his native city.
When his life was all but spent,
he laid down his rod and his skill
at the foot of the Cross.
He was, in sum, if anyone, outstanding
in his adherence to the ancient faith,
in the sanctity of his character and
in the charm of his speech; a weighty,
simple and acute preacher, an admirable
instructor of the young, superbly gifted
with elegance of style, and a most loving son
of our Mother Church of England.
He died peacefully, leaving to his friends
grief and a sense of loss,
on the sixteenth day of September
in the year of Salvation 1863,
and in the seventieth year of his age.

NEW BOOKS

Peter Bolton (Wellesbourne) reviews a new book by our President.

***Field Work, Selected Essays* by Ronald Blythe**



This is a collection of no fewer than 36 essays, the odds and ends of an author's output – newspaper articles, lectures, prefaces, contributions to journals of literary societies and such like. If you are afraid that this might be something of a rag bag do not be put off. These may be crumbs from beneath a writer's table but they are tasty morsels and it is impossible to read one of Ronald Blythe's pieces without coming away enlightened in some way by his insights. And what a range of interests our president has. They of course fall into some predictable general categories. He is a man of the countryside – not necessarily of the conventionally attractive but of the sometimes wild edges of things like the Orkneys, Cader Idris or Romney Marsh and each of these places finds a place in this collection. Of course he is primarily an East Anglian and it is the Suffolk coast and countryside that he is most at home with, especially its villages and labourers during that long and dire period of deep depression between 1872 and 1940. He introduces readers one by one to that group of writers – Mary Mann, Adrian Bell, Julian Tennyson and, perhaps surprisingly, Rider Haggard – who have chronicled that terrible time when, to satisfy the townsman's desire for cheap bread, successive governments watched the nation's villages sink into despair.

Writers are, naturally, the subjects of the majority of the pieces. The pictures of them – like the one he draws of Coleridge 'hurrying through Castle Street and Lime Street, Nether Stowey with his zig-zag gait, a thin dark-haired young man in his mid-twenties with clear grey eyes and wide mouth and bad teeth' – are, as we should expect, vivid. Ronald Blythe is fascinated by the conjunctions of writers – Alfred Tennyson working on *In Memoriam* while living next door to the asylum in Epping where poor John Clare was confined, or Coleridge and Wordsworth in the Quantock Hills, or, nearer to our hearts, Kilvert's meeting with William Barnes. The last is in a perceptive article which he first wrote for our Society's *Journal* in 1997. 'Although [Kilvert] wrote for himself alone … one senses an unconfessed hope that other eyes will read him.' The author is, as usual, correct, as those of us who had the good fortune to hear and be convinced by Richard Maber's important, though, alas, still unpublished, lecture which he gave in Hereford on this subject some years ago will know. The author's lateral insights abound. Writing of literary shrines he points out that everybody knows the house Keats inhabited so briefly [in Hampstead] but nobody has a picture of the flat which T.S. Eliot, whose 'work is among else much else, a brilliant evocation of London', occupied for decades, nor that of J.M. Barrie.

There are other themes – the Anglican writers of the seventeenth century especially George Herbert and Thomas Traherne, other clerical diarists like Gilbert White and Parson Woodforde as well as the great East Anglian artists Gainsborough and Constable. He was the long-time friend of the artist John Nash, whose house he came to occupy, and he has a penetrative chapter about him and his brother Paul. The 1950s may not be far off chronologically but Blythe's story of John Nash and his wife going round big houses and begging a Gainsborough here or a Romney there for an exhibition and casually loading them into a van comes as from another and gentler age.

To read this delightful collection is like finding oneself on a train journey falling into conversation with a fellow passenger and finding not only that you have many old friends in common but that your companion knows so much more about them than you do; he talks easily and, as you look out of the window, you discover that he also knows all about the countryside through which you are passing, too. Time in Ronald Blythe's company is well spent. *Field Work* is worth the price of a ticket.

***Field Work* is published by Black Dog Books, Norwich; price £16.99, x +310pp, hardback.**

* * *

***HILLESLEY*: *A Backward Glance* by David J.G. Chappell.**

Those of you who enjoy reading social history and accounts of pastoral village life will be interested in this recently republished book, written by the husband and father respectively of two of our members, Kathleen Chappell and Clara Webber.

The book was originally published in 1974 in typed format; it has now been professionally reprinted in paperback with 127 pages, illustrated with over 60 early photographs and postcards, loaned by local people.

David Chappell was born in 1903 and grew up believing that his world would never change. By the time he was eleven, however, the 'War to end Wars' had broken out and nothing would ever be the same again. By the time he wrote *Backward Glance* the village had changed almost beyond recognition, yet the author captures Hillesley as it was 'in those far-off days – a community of grooms, gardeners, farm labourers and small traders.'

He describes that world in affectionate details, his schooldays, Sunday School outings, the gardens, the pubs and his perception of village love.

A later chapter recounts how the young men from the village began to leave to join up, followed soon by their horses and even the farmers' hay: 'Our farmers began to dread the arrival of the hay procurement officer', writes David, 'and however farmers might talk of many hungry mouths they had to feed, a proportion of their best hay would be requisitioned.'

Looking back from the perspective of today, the evolution of Hillesley reflects the changes seen in hundreds of English villages during the last century.

This is a fascinating picture of rural life during those turbulent years of change.

***HILLESLEY*: *A Backward Glance* by David J.G. Chappell. 127 pages, illustrated, is available from Clara Webber 01249 760600 or** cwebber@clara.co.uk**, £8 + £1.50 p&p.**

HMS *CAPTAIN* – AGAIN

(*See* page 20, *Journal* No 23)

The Times feature entitled *On This Day* in the edition of 10 September 2007 reprinted a report which had first appeared in that newspaper on that date 137 year previously, the news of the sinking of HMS *Captain*.

On This Day 10 September 1870

> The news of a dreadful calamity reached London yesterday evening. HER MAJESTY'S ship Captain has foundered off Cape Finisterre. Nothing has been found of her but her boats and some spars. Her crew of 500 hands must all have perished, and among them are lost several invaluable lives. The ship was, of course, commanded by some of the finest officers in the Navy, but her able inventor, Captain COWPER COLES, was also on board, and has perished in the vessel which realized the long-delayed triumph of his genius. The report that Lord NORTHBROOK was on board is erroneous, but one of his sons and a son of Mr. CHILDERS are among the lost. The first feelings of the country will be of grief at the loss of all those gallant seamen and men of genius, and of deep sympathy with their relatives. They have perished in the public service as much as if they had been killed in battle, and their memory will be similarly honoured. If public sorrow can bring an alleviation to the grief of their friends, this consolation will be abundantly afforded.
>
> Few such terrible disasters have ever happened at sea. A greater number of lives may occasionally have been lost in a single wreck; but this wreck is that of one of the finest ships in the world, manned by one of the finest crews. The

disaster is so complete that no one appears to be left to tell how it happened, The Captain disappeared in the night, and no one either saw or heard her in distress.

This would have been the report that Kilvert read and to which he referred in his diary entry for that day (I p.226).

With acknowledgement to *The Times*

WEDDING

'Laura, Laura, give me your answer, do!'

Our member Laura Lockwood, younger daughter of our late President, David and Dr Willy Lockwood, was married, on 12 January last to Mr Keith Bolton, in a civil ceremony at County Hall, Swansea.

The bride rode from the ceremony to the reception in a specially adapted cycle, pedalled by her new husband. The cycle is owned by the Bikeability organisation which Laura set up in Swansea four years ago and which she still runs. Bikeability provides thirty specialist cycles for people with disabilities so that they can enjoy the sensation of cycling. In some cases it is the person on the rear seat who provides the power, as here with Laura and Keith.

The couple were followed to the reception by a friend, David Judd, also on a bike. David is the West Wales manager for Sustrans (the sustainable transport charity) which has recently built for Bikeability a new cycle track at Dunvant which provides the only opportunity for the local disabled to enjoy cycling. 'They can now take part in an activity which would otherwise be denied them; cycling down the seafront is great', said Laura.

Congratulations to Laura and Keith and best wishes for their future life together.

CONGRATULATIONS also to:

- Miss Muriel Kilvert who celebrated her ninetieth birthday on 4 October 2007. Members will know that she is the granddaughter of Kilvert's brother Perch and therefore Kilvert's great-niece. She is in good health and hopes to attend the AGM with Henry Kilvert, her cousin.

- Chris Barber of Abergavenny who was awarded the MBE in the New Year Honours. The award was for 'services to the community and to the tourist industry in South Wales'.

  Chris is the author of numerous books, many about the Welsh Marches and the Kilvert Country. Members will remember his recent illustrated book *Exploring Kilvert Country* which was published in 2005.

FROM RECENT CORRESPONDENCE

i) From Ken Fisher (Tenerife)

Further to my previous letter (See *Journal* No. 24) many of the connections I have found are centred around the friends and acquaintances of Kilvert and, as a relatively new member of the Society, I am unsure whether or not the following topics have ever been mentioned in the *Journal*.

1. The family that Kilvert is staying with at Cranmers, Mitcham at the very start of the *Diary* is the Evan-Thomases and Mrs Evan-Thomas is the sister of Mrs Venables. The sisters are both Pearsons. The youngest Evan-Thomas who plays football with Perch and Francis in the garden was Hugh who later became Admiral Sir Hugh Evan-Thomas who served at the Battle of Jutland. Then Kilvert travels on to London to stay with the Pearson family. This is the brother of the two sisters, Lieut-Col Richard Lyons Otway Pearson who, at the time of Kilvert's visit, had retired from the army but later, in 1881, he became Assistant Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police. The story of the Pearson family is most interesting.

2. The house where Kilvert stayed with the Hockin family, *Tullimaar*, became the final residence of Cornish born author Sir William Golding from 1985 until his death in 1993.

3. W.V. Awdry the author of the *Thomas the Tank Engine* books is the grandson of Sir John Awdry of Notton House where Kilvert, Fanny and Dora went to a jolly party on 7 January 1873.

Answers: 1. Yes. 2. Yes. 3. No. (Indexes to Newsletters and *Journals* are available from the publications manager (ed.)).

ii) From Michael Mott, Williamsburg, USA

I have greatly enjoyed the September 2007 issue of the *Journal*. It was especially good to be back with Kilvert in Cornwall. Most of the places mentioned were familiar to me, though the family ties are with north Cornwall. Long ago I visited A.L. Rowse with my brother Anthony, who republished many of his books in *The Cornish Library*, Anthony Mott Ltd. It was he who sent me a copy of *Kilvert's Cornish Diary*.

FORTHCOMING PUBLICATIONS

Two new publications are in preparation at the moment and it is hoped that both will be available at the Jubilee Weekend in June. KS chairman Michael Sharp is editing a booklet in memory of our late President, David Lockwood and John Toman is working on a special Jubilee book with the provisional title 'Kilvert and Teaching and Nature and Science'.

EXHIBITION OF PAINTINGS OF KILVERT CHURCHES

On page 16 of *Journal* No. 24 (September 2007) our member Frank Claybrooke revealed that he was working on a project to sketch and paint various Kilvert churches, to be followed, very soon he hoped, by an exhibition of the paintings, somewhere in the Kilvert Country.

With the co-operation of Heather Pegg, curator of the Radnorshire Museum at Llandrindod Wells, he has now been able to arrange for this exhibition to take place at the Museum during the weekend of 27-28 September, to coincide with the Society's visit to the Kilvert exhibition there.

He hopes too that a similar display can be mounted at the Bishop's Palace for our AGM on 28 April.

CRAFTA WEBB

The Crafta Webb film project (See *Journals* 20 and 22) has now been completed and the film received its premiere in a packed village hall at Moccas on 3 November last.

The final scenes were shot in the previous June, the culmination of a project which had occupied very many local people from the villages of Bredwardine, Staunton and Letton for more than a year. In addition to taking part in the film, wearing Victorian costume for the occasion, the locals were closely involved in carrying out historical and archaeological research for the project and writing the content. The result is a 40-minute drama with relevant documentaries on DVD.

Distinguished film-maker Ken Loach (winner of the Palme d'Or and director of *Kes*) has written the foreword for the 40-page booklet which accompanies the DVD.

The aim of this community film project was to compare the life of the incomers to this nineteenth-century settlement at the top of Bredwardine Hill with a similar situation today.

The DVD and booklet is available from the Rural Media Company, 72-80 Widemarsh Street, Hereford. For more information or to order telephone 01432 344039 or e-mail adrianl@ruralmedia.co.uk Price £10 including p&p.

OBITUARIES

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

Mrs Betty Showler of Hay-on-Wye died on 17 November 2007. Betty, with her husband Karl, had been a member since 1989, and a life member since 1998.

Mrs Pauline Luckhurst of Abbey Wood, London, died on 20 October 2007. She was a life member and had joined the Society in 1984.

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

WANTED

A copy of the Sandford Notebook (***The Diary of Francis Kilvert, April-June 1870*** **edited by Kathleen Hughes and Dafydd Ifans and published by The National Library of Wales).** Please contact John Wilks – Tel: 01497 821401.

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 2008 edition of the *Journal* should reach the editor **not later than 18 April 2008**. 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 front 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.**

Digital Images
Please note that digital images submitted for publication should be in JPEG or TIFF format and have a resolution of no less than 300dpi, with a minimum width of 15cm.

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, Seend Park Farm, Semington, Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 7LH.

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 Grave of Twm Tobacco. Photo by Ann Dean

Printed by:
Warwick Printing Company Limited
Caswell Road, Leamington Spa CV31 1QD.
Tel: (01926) 883355 Fax: (01926) 883575