



THE
JOURNAL
OF
THE KILVERT SOCIETY



Number 27

DIAMOND JUBILEE YEAR
1948–2008

September 2008

THE KILVERT SOCIETY

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

Registered Charity No. 1103815

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Cover: St Andrew's, Bredwardine. The Kilvert memorial seat with the inscription carved by Sid Wright (see back cover of Journal No 26) and the memorial gates, dedicated in 1979. The supports to the seat were vandalised some time ago and clumsily replaced by solid brickwork. Perhaps, to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee, the Society should consider restoring the seat to its former appearance. Photo: Editor

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From the Editor:

I had intended that this would be the last editorial I would write for the *KS Journal* because, for a little while now, I have wanted to relinquish the editorship which I took on in August 1999 when the *Journal* was still the Newsletter.

The Newsletter was published three times a year in spring, summer and autumn and I suppose that custom decreed that the *Journal* should continue to follow that pattern and I never really questioned it, at least not at first!

However, in recent years the Sisyphean task of the preparation, proofreading and production of the three issues has interfered more and more with the arrangements for family holidays, in particular, of course, in the weeks preceding the June and September editions.

No successor as editor has, as yet, appeared despite a plea for a volunteer at this year's AGM so, I am going to continue wearing the editorial eyeshade for one more year. However, in an attempt to remedy the holiday-hindering difficulties, for me next year, and for my replacement thereafter, it is proposed that from 2009 only two *Journals* will be published – in March and September, the summer gap will be filled by a *brief* newsletter, produced by the secretary. There should be no diminution in overall content however (always assuming of course that contributors continue to contribute) as the three present 20-page editions will become two of 30 pages. That is the plan then for 2009 during the course of which, it is hoped, a new editor will emerge.

The Diamond Jubilee celebrations at the end of June, were, I am pleased to say, a great success. The weekend, a few light, cooling showers apart, was blessed with 'Kilvert Weather' and the Herefordshire countryside was looking its leafy and bountiful best. It was warm (but not too warm for the Saturday walkers) and sunny so that tea and croquet could be very comfortably enjoyed on the terrace and lawns of Kinnersley Rectory. Alas, the promised archery did not take place, deemed too risky I am told; at least Kilvert and his circle were not beset by such considerations of 'elf 'n' safety'.

It was especially pleasing to welcome to the Dinner Miss Mary Rose Mumford, twin sister of the late Miss Rosemary Mumford. Miss Mumford, although not strictly a founder member, or so she tells me, nonetheless attended the first Commemoration Service at Bredwardine in 1948. She was there with her mother (who *was* a founder member), a granddaughter of Alice Bevan (of Hay Castle), mentioned several times in the *Diary*. Miss Mumford now lives at Canon Pyon having recently moved from the family home at Sugwas Court.

Charles Weston's account of the Jubilee Weekend begins on page three.

There are now just three months left of this notable year in the history of the Society – still plenty of time for you to arrange, if you have not already done so, the suggested sixtieth birthday gift to the Society – your Society needs members; just as your *Journal* needs articles and photographs... and a new editor!

From the Chairman:

An Urgent Communication concerning the Kilvert Society Collection

Members will be aware that the Society's collection of memorabilia, artefacts etc. is currently housed in the Radnorshire Museum at Llandrindod Wells.

This is the first time it has had a proper museum home where items can be displayed and stored in a suitable environment conducive to the wellbeing of the exhibits, i.e. where humidity, ultraviolet light and other factors are carefully controlled.

It is also the first opportunity for an exact audit of the condition of each item and what I have to tell you does not make happy reading.

At its meeting in July your committee was addressed by Heather Pegg, Curator of the museum. She informed us that some items are in a very poor condition and many will need specialist treatment. There is insect damage and debris, disintegrating glue and problems

caused by exposure to a damp atmosphere and ultraviolet light. The first stage is to engage the services of a paper conservator and this is already in hand.

In the long term there is likely to be a great deal of expensive conservation and restoration work to be done and paid for. This is the Society's heritage, much of it handled, used and even inscribed by the Revd Francis Kilvert or his family and to us it is priceless.

I write to you now to say that in due course an appeal for funds to pay for this conservation work will be launched and I hope that your sense of generosity will allow you to contribute handsomely when the time comes.

I know you will wish to help and will not disappoint us.

Michael Sharp



Colin Dixon admires some of the Kilvert memorabilia at the Radnorshire Museum.
Photo: Val Dixon

From the Secretary

Please find enclosed a booking form for both the James Roose Evans performance of 'The Clyro Diaries of the Revd Francis Kilvert' at Hay-on-Wye on 18 October and for the winter event at Worcester next March.

It is essential for the Hay performance to book by return as the audience size is limited to 120. To cover its costs the Society does need to sell out this event so until 30 September the tickets will be on sale to Society members only, after which they will go on general sale in Hay-on-Wye.

For the winter event the closing date is 31 January but it would do much for my peace of mind if bookings were sooner rather than later! For those indicating their attendance I will send them final details of the day during the first week of February 2009.

This year of our Diamond Jubilee has been very busy and I hope, for those of you who were able to attend the various events, found to be enjoyable. Next year, as you will see from the list of forthcoming events, we shall return to our usual programme, so please put those dates in your diary.

* * *

I have recently received an enquiry from Father Baddeley of Oxford. In a copy of *The Bee Book*, inherited from his father, were inscribed the following dedications:

To
E.A.S.L. Kilvert
A birthday present from her affectionate Husband
F.K.
August 5th 1843

To
Adelaide Maria Cholmeley
A birthday present from her affectionate Grand Mamma
E.A.S.L. Kilvert
July 31st 1862
Claverton

I think Father Baddeley was hopeful that F.K. was the Diarist. Our hon. archivist, Colin Dixon, produced a copy of the family tree that showed F.K. was in fact Uncle Francis Kilvert, the Antiquarian, of Claverton, Bath. E.A.S.L. was his wife, Eleanora Adelaide Sophia Leopoldina. The granddaughter was Adelaide (Addie) Cholmeley, née Kilvert, who also appears in the Diary. Francis Kilvert visited her at Clifton on numerous occasions.

Father Baddeley was most grateful for the information and made a generous donation to the Society but alas did not return a completed membership form!

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

2008: September Weekend

Saturday 27 September	10.30 a.m.	Visit to the Radnorshire Museum, Temple Street, Llandrindod Wells, home of the Kilvert Collection of memorabilia. Lunch (members to make their own arrangements).
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	2.00 p.m.	Visit to Abbey Cwm-Hir Hall and gardens (off the A483 turn left two miles north of Crossgates, the turn is signposted; if travelling from Hereford on the A44 turn right at Crossgates island and follow signs).
Sunday 28 September	1.00 p.m.	Visit to Llwynbarried Hall (this is an additional visit; note starting time). Meet at Nantmel School car park on the A44 halfway between Crossgates and Rhayader.
	3.00 p.m.	Eucharist at Ysfa Church (OS map ref SN991644) followed by tea at the Halt Café, Doldowlod – £5 per head, pay on the day.
Saturday 18 October	2.30 p.m.	St Mary's Parish Church Hay-on-Wye. To bring our Jubilee year to a close a performance by James Roose Evans 'The Clyro Diaries of the Revd Francis Kilvert'. See enclosed booking form. Admission by pre-booked ticket only.

2009 Dates for your Diary:

Winter Event

Wednesday 4 March

Whole day visit to Worcester, the Cathedral and Deanery
See enclosed booking form.

AGM Weekend

Friday 28 April

7.00 p.m.

AGM at the Bishop's Palace Hereford. Interval refreshments. Speaker.

Saturday 29 April

10.30 a.m.

Seminar

6.30 p.m. for 7

Annual Dinner } venues to be confirmed.

June Weekend

Saturday 27 June

Walk at Hardwick and Mouse Castle.

Sunday 28 June

Service, venue to be confirmed.

September

Saturday 26 September

Pub lunch at Langley Burrell and a walk led by Jim Hall.
If possible to be followed by a service.

Full details will follow in the March 2009 Journal.

THE DIAMOND JUBILEE WEEKEND

27-29 JUNE 2008

By Charles Weston (Thornton-le-Dale)

There was an excellent turnout by members for the action-packed weekend of events held to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee of the Society.

The proceedings commenced on the Friday evening with a dinner at the *Three Counties Hotel* in Hereford – a hotel whose only Kilvertian associations seemed to be that the editor of our *Journal* had once, long ago, addressed the local Rotary Club there on the subject of the *Diary*. The first address on this occasion was by the Society's chairman, Michael Sharp, who acknowledged Kilvert's success in his ambition to *amuse and interest some who come after me*. He went on to praise the two men who were instrumental in helping the *Diary* along the route to publication – Perceval Smith and William Plomer. What would Kilvert himself have made of the Jubilee Dinner? Quietly amused perhaps, according to Michael Sharp.

With the completion of the introductions members settled down to the best that the *Three Counties* could offer and the general opinion seemed most favourable. With coffee came our guest speaker for the evening, the Very Reverend Michael Tavinor, Dean of Hereford. He paid homage to one of his predecessors, Dean Hedley Burrows, a keen Kilvert enthusiast who had addressed Society members at the inaugural Commemoration Service in 1948. He took a rather unusual approach in his address – focusing on the themes of 'bequests' and 'sermons'; interspersing readings from the *Diary* with amusing recollections from his own career. For example, on admiring a rather valuable piano in the home of one of his aged parishioners, Michael Tavinor had been told very firmly that 'he could take his eyes off it because it was already spoken for'! He contrasted his embarrassment with Kilvert's frank and somewhat uncharitable views on the will left by Maria Kilvert – *£300 to the clock and bells of Worcester Cathedral ... a most iniquitous will ...* to illustrate how the trickle-down effect of wealth by bequest was of much less benefit to the Church today than it was in Victorian England. The sermon likewise had become a fringe issue in the life of the Church, the days of the Penny Readings, when the room in Clyro was *fuller than ever, crammed, people almost standing on each other's heads*, with many persons *clustering round the windows*, trying to get in *when [they] were opened for more air* made him appreciate how the structure of society and worship has changed over the past 140 years. The evening concluded with a musical presentation of songs given by the Dolau Mixtures – a range of songs from sentimental Victorian ballads to *The Rhythm of Life* sung with gusto and very well received by the dinner guests. Many thanks to the choir, the conductor Martin Howard, to the accompanist Chris Green and to committee member Michael Reynolds, who had organised their attendance.

The Saturday event featured a visit to the church of Saint James in Kinnersley and a gentle four-mile stroll through the surrounding fields and apple orchards. The *Diary* itself contains twenty-one references to Kinnersley station, a regular point of arrival and

departure for Kilvert during the period of his residence at Bredwardine, but no mention is made of any visit made to Saint James' – a pity, if this is the case, because Kilvert would undoubtedly have appreciated its Early English architecture complete with fine stencilled decorative patterning on the nave walls, decorated medieval chancel roof and two leper windows – a relic from earlier times when unclean worshippers could take part in the church services by standing on the outside of the chancel and looking through open shuttered windows adjacent to the altar. The walk, led by Michael Sharp, was interspersed with *Diary* readings; Kilvert's only non-rail excursion to Kinnersley was on 11 July 1878 and it was this reading that took prime position. He described briefly and succinctly his walk to a garden party at Kinnersley Rectory: ... *There was Aunt Sally and Badminton and lawn tennis and tea, coffee and fruit in the dining room* ... On to Logaston Common, Almeley and eight stiles and two gates later we returned to the Rectory. No Aunt Sally, badminton or lawn tennis, alas, but a very welcome spread of tea, sandwiches, pastries and lavish helpings of Eton Mess. The view from the verandah must have been much as it appeared to Kilvert; two enormous oak trees, at least 200 years old, flanked the driveway. The croquet lawn beckoned (located perhaps where tennis was once played). There are 34 references in the *Diary* to croquet, so mallets were taken up in memory of the great man and a fine game played. Your illustrious editor played well with partner and treasurer of the Society, Richard Weston, but the experience and skill of Charles Weston and Richard Vine won the day! Should croquet become an annual event at the June weekend in future years? Comments please to the editor!



A gentle four-mile stroll

Photo: Charles Weston

The Sunday Evensong service at Saint James' was conducted by the Reverend Marcus Small with accompaniment by the Eardisley choir. In his sermon Marcus Small spoke frankly of the changes in society since the 1870s. He chose one of the most brutal and disturbing events chronicled in the *Diary*, the ill-treatment of the Corfield sisters, to highlight the improvements in social welfare



The photo by Ann Dean which appeared in the Hereford Times (see page 5)

which have taken place since Kilvert's time: '... No person today would tolerate such abuse. Incidents of this type would be investigated by Social Services Departments and the children taken into care ...' stated Mr Small. (Two recent cases crossed my mind as this was said – those of the deaths by abuse of children Maria Coldwell and Victoria Climbié – perhaps indicating that unfortunately appropriate action is not always taken by the appropriate authorities). Marcus Small then moved into the area of changes in the pattern of worship and the lack of knowledge of many people even of the words of The Lord's Prayer. In Kilvert's time it was assumed by the clergy that the knowledge was there, whereas today no such assumption can be made. He quoted from the *Diary* – Kilvert's visit to the *old madwoman Mrs Watkins* to whom he repeated the words of the Lord's Prayer ... *until they seemed to come back to her by degrees till she could say it alone*. The church's all-embracing community role, so evident in Kilvert's time, was no longer as strong as in Victorian times. Whereas Kilvert walked, Marcus Small drove; whereas Kilvert had an intimate knowledge of his parishioners in one parish, Mr Small had to navigate the roads between his seven parishes and communication with his parishioners thus became much more restricted. He concluded with a plea that, wherever we lived, we should all adopt the principles adopted by Kilvert and care for those around us.



Tea at Kinnersley Rectory



Photos: John Wilks

The weekend came to a close with yet another beanfeast at the Rectory. Many thanks to Major James and Mrs Janet Greenfield for hosting the afternoon tea events. To Michael and Sue Sharp and to Alan and Jean Brimson for providing the spread and for organising the weekend so admirably. The only regret was the absence of the much-heralded archery sessions; our esteemed chairman (and Health and Safety officer?) felt it extremely unwise to allow archery to take place at the same time as croquet matches were proceeding, so this event will have to be postponed until a later occasion.

* * *

Our Jubilee Weekend received excellent coverage in the *Hereford Times* of 10 July. A full-page article entitled 'Diamond day for followers of Kilvert' by Paul Ferguson, described the events of the weekend and was accompanied by photographs. One of these, by Ann Dean, showed four distinguished Kilvertians – the Weston brothers, Richard and Charles (not Kenneth and George!), Alan Brimson and John Wilks playing croquet on the lawn of the Old Rectory at Kinnersley. They were treading where once RFK had trod and very elegant they looked too.

Another photograph showed Willy Lockwood signing copies of the David Lockwood memorial booklet, published that day by the Society, with, beside it, a photograph of David, our late president. At the head of the article was the familiar portrait of Kilvert – facing left!

The same issue also revealed the good news that the painting of the 'Madonna and Child' damaged in the vandalism at St Michael's, Clyro, on Easter Sunday last (see *Journal* No. 26) has now been regilded and fully repaired. The painting, one of several items damaged in the attack, had been stabbed with a crucifix and it has required three months of careful work to restore it to its original condition.

Editor

FROM THE ARCHIVES

A second extended section of KS Newsletter, *Journal* and Archive material and photographs to conclude the celebration of the Society's Diamond Jubilee year.



RFK (second right) as a schoolboy at Claverton Lodge.

KS Archives

1957

LARGE ATTENDANCE AT KILVERT SOCIETY'S ANNUAL MEETING

The Dean's tribute to President

There was a record attendance of about eighty members at the annual meeting of the Kilvert Society at Eignbrook Church Hall on Thursday last week when it was reported by the Secretary, Mr C.T.O. Prosser that many more members had been enrolled during the year.

An interesting feature of the gathering was the exhibition of three watercolours recently presented to Mr Prosser by Mrs Essex Hope, a niece of the Diarist, who lives at Worthing. They were executed in the first year of Kilvert's curacy at Clyro in 1865 by his sister, who afterwards became the wife of the Rector of Monnington, Hereford, and who was referred to as 'Thersie' in the Diary. Her married name was Mrs W.R. Smith. The paintings of Clyro Church, without, of course, its tower, which was added later, the interior of Bettws Church and Hay Castle, are autographed and dated.

The meeting was presided over by Mr H.W. Butcher who was supported by Mrs Sid Wright the President and widow of the late Mr Sid Wright, who founded the Society to perpetuate the Diarist's work and memory. Reports showed a balance of £12 in hand and that a donation of £33 had been given towards the repair of Bredwardine Church tower, following a special appeal to members.

Proposing that Mrs Wright be reappointed President for the year the Dean of Hereford, the Very Reverend H.R. Burrows paid tribute to her services and those of her late husband and said he had come especially from London that day in order to make the proposal. The nomination was accepted and Mrs Wright thanked the company.

In addition to the showing of the Kilvert film, an annual treat presented in technicolour by Mr Godfrey Davies, members saw the film of the Queen's visit to Hereford and gave the Dean a rousing cheer when he appeared with Her Majesty at the west door of the Cathedral.

In an address to the Society, the Dean spoke of added local colour to radio programmes and his recent work on the BBC committees which dealt with such matters. It was he thought of great importance to keep alive what Herefordshire could give to England – the Kilvert story, its agricultural life and other aspects of country life and people. The Society kept alive these things and was doing excellent work thereby.



Essex Hope, née Smith
KS Archives

From *The Hereford Times*, Friday 10 May 1957

1958

KILVERT SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP INCREASING YEARLY

The Kilvert Society, formed in Hereford soon after the War, under the Presidency of Mr Sid Wright held its Annual Meeting at Eignbrook Church Hall, Hereford on Thursday. Mr H.W. Butcher, presided over an attendance of about forty members and friends.

Among the company present, a special welcome was given to Mrs Sid Wright, who has been President of the Society since her husband's death; to the Dean of Hereford, the Very Reverend Hedley Burrows; and to a newcomer to these gatherings, the Reverend T. Wigley, Pastor of Eignbrook Church.

Mr J.D. Worsey, treasurer, presented the balance sheet showing £19. 6s. 4d in hand, which the meeting considered satisfactory; he added that £10 had been given to Clyro Church in response to an appeal from the vicar and churchwardens, as a contribution towards the £2,000 needed for repairs to the roof. Members had also been asked to give individually and up to date he had heard of some £15 coming from this source and there would be more to follow. Mrs Essex Hope, the owner of the original Diaries and the only surviving niece of the Diarist, had sent £10.

It was announced that if permission were granted by the vicar, the annual service next year would be at Llanigon near Hay, the home of Daisy Thomas who figured so prominently in the Kilvert story.

The Chairman, Mr H.W. Butcher gave a brief talk on Kilvert matters generally and referred to the passing of Mr Partridge of Ledbury, a ninety-year-old member who was christened by the Diarist, and of Captain J.E. Pitcairn.

Addressing the company, the Dean paid tribute to the Society's officers thanking them for their enthusiasm and hard work. He hoped that the Annual Service of Commemoration at Clyro on Sunday 6 July would be largely attended and said that he himself would be preaching there for the Harvest Festival later in the summer. The genius in the Society he went on was what Kilvert gave them; a picture of themselves and their world so marvellously unspoiled. In the midst of a fast-moving world, readers of the Diary felt much release in its pages, if every county had someone who could so describe their own world, how much more fortunate they would be. To have the Kilvert story around them as they had, and to share with Kilvert, the joy of the countryside and the people in it was a great gift. 'Yes,' concluded the Dean, 'we are enthusiasts, and we have something to be enthusiastic about.'

From *The Brecon and Radnor Express*, Thursday 1 May 1958

1958

RADNORSHIRE DIARIST COMMEMORATED AT CLYRO

I walked to Clyro ... and when I looked down upon the dear old village nestling round the Church ... all my heart went out in love to the beloved place and people among whom I had lived so long and happily, wrote the Reverend Francis Kilvert, curate in Clyro from 1865 to 1872 on one of his return visits on 24 March 1874.

On Sunday afternoon the church of St Michael and All Angels at Clyro was filled to capacity with members of the Kilvert Society, and with pilgrims from many parts of the Border counties and further afield, for Divine Service conducted by the Vicar, the Reverend T.J. Lewis. Lessons were read by Alderman Tudor Watkins MP for Brecon and Radnor, and the Reverend D.J. Lane Griffiths, Vicar of Llowes. Mr Stuart Batts and his son, John, were at the organ. A peal of bells by the church ringers under Mr C. Edwards welcomed the worshippers. A distinguished member of the congregation was Mr William Plomer, editor of the Diaries, who came up from Suffolk. The Society's last visit to Clyro was in 1949. An Act of Remembrance for the Diarist was included in the service.

An address was given by the Right Reverend N.W. Newnham Davis of Leamington, assistant (*sic*) Bishop of Coventry who took for his text a quotation from the Book of Hebrews which forms the epitaph on the Diarist's grave at Bredwardine; 'He being dead, yet speaketh.' He said the text had undoubtedly been used by others, but it was so completely apt that he made no excuse for the repetition. The writings were so vivid that it seemed the writer was present among us. They were all together for the Annual Commemoration Service to thank God for the life and work of a man who was first and foremost a priest and then a diarist; to thank him for a ministry which brought so much comfort, happiness and spiritual help to all his flock; he was the good shepherd and to him it meant so much to serve God and His people.



CTO Prosser (right) and Sid Wright (centre) at Clyro KS Archives

Mr Plomer was given a very hearty welcome before addressing the company and giving an account of how the writings came to light and the almost insurmountable difficulty of obtaining a reprint, the first edition of the three volumes having long since sold out. He was, he said, delighted that the result of his labours as editor had borne so much success and thanked the Society for perpetuating the work. The energy of Mr Prosser of Hereford, the secretary, was almost alarming, he thought. The fame of the Diaries, Mr Plomer concluded, was well established all over the world and he hoped some young members could be brought into the Society to carry on the good work first supported by the late Mr Sid Wright and his followers.

From *The Brecon and Radnor Express*, Thursday 17 July 1958.

I am grateful to Teresa Williams of Harrow who unearthed the above three pieces from the Newspaper Library at Colindale, London (ed.).

1963

POETRY MEDALLIST

The Queen has approved the award of her gold medal for poetry for 1963 to William Charles Plomer, who wrote the libretto for Benjamin Britten's Coronation opera 'Gloriana.' The award, instituted by King George V in 1933 is for a book of verse published by a British subject in the English language.

From *The Daily Telegraph*, 24 July 1963.

1967

The Special Autumn Service in Worcester Cathedral (on October 15th) is only a few months ahead. For it was the account – one of the best of the many splendid descriptions of events and scenes in Kilvert's Diary – of the funeral of Miss Maria Kilvert that gave the Very Revd Hedley Burrows the idea of such a service. The arrangements for this service are well advanced, and I have a feeling that we shall see a very large congregation there when that October Sunday afternoon comes round.

This October visit to Worcester Cathedral will be of especial and nostalgic interest to our committee member, Mr F.W. Stokoe of Hay-on-Wye (he is a founder member, too) who when a boy spent four years in the choir of this lovely and historic building. He was a boarder at the Cathedral Choir School in College Green under Precentor and Minor Canon Herbert Hall Woodward (headmaster), Mr (later Sir) Ivor Atkins (organist and master of choristers) and Mr C.B. Shuttleworth and sang in several Three Choirs Festivals.

Canon Woodward, a musician whose anthems and services are well known in churches throughout the country, lies buried in the cloisters a few feet away from the Kilvert grave and his effigy in stone in the wall of the Old Choir House stands as a memorial. His school, which held only twenty boys who formed the choir, was absorbed some years ago into the adjacent King's School in College Green from which establishment the Cathedral now draws its choir.

From KS Newsletter, June 1967

It is interesting to note Mr Stokoe's connection with Kilvert's Diary in the following way ... in several places in the Diary we read of Kilvert calling at Hadley's shop in Hay (it was there that he first heard of the misfortune that befell the Curate of Cusop at the Whitney-on-Wye confirmation) ... now the full name of that shop was HADLEY and STOKOE, for our Mr Stokoe's father was Hadley's partner (and took over the business on Hadley's death). Nowhere in the Diary as we know it is the name STOKOE mentioned; but I have seen one of the 22 original notebooks and in it read of Kilvert going to Stokoe's shop and getting a cheque changed.* Mr Stokoe remembers old Mr Southgate, the druggist that Kilvert mentions in the Diary, for he later became an assistant to Mr Stokoe's father and his memory is of a venerable old figure with a long white beard. It is of interest that on page 352 of Volume 1 – the entry for June 12th 1871 – Kilvert writes 'last Friday evening Southgate, the druggist at Hay, was in Birmingham and saw snow fall for an hour. That was the 9th of June.'

*See entry for 11 May 1870, page 40 in the Sandford Notebook, where Stokes is no doubt a misreading by Plomer of Stokoe (ed.).



RFK (far right) at the wedding of the Revd Andrew Pope, 9 August 1874



Castle Street, Hay in 1860.

KS Archives

WORCESTER Sunday 15th October 1967

This was a most memorable day in the Society's history. A Kilvert Service in a Cathedral, and the pleasure of once more having our dear friend and Vice-President – Dean Hedley Burrows – to address us. It was back in 1961 that we bade farewell to him, just before he went from Hereford; he then preached at the June service at Bryngwyn – up in the Radnorshire hills – and was afterwards given an album of coloured photographs of the Kilvert Country, by Mrs Wright on behalf of the Society. The suggestion for this service had come from Dean Burrows, for the Diarist's great-uncle, the Revd Richard Kilvert, was a Canon of Worcester and he and his wife and their daughter Maria are all buried in the Cloister Garth. We all know Kilvert's graphic description of the scenes at the funeral of Miss Maria Kilvert in 1870. For our service there was a large congregation – about 200 – and the whole central part of the nave seemed to be really full. Two motor-coaches came over from Hereford and members came from far and near. It is known that folk were there from London, Birmingham, Buckinghamshire, Suffolk, Wiltshire, Somerset, Devon, South Wales as well as the many from Worcestershire and from its surrounding counties. A warm welcome to the Cathedral was given by the Vice-Dean (Canon C.B. Armstrong) as Dr Milburn (the Dean) was abroad at the time. The lessons were read by two Worcestershire clergy-members: Canon J.S. Leatherbarrow of Martley and the Revd D.N. Lockwood of Hanley Swan. The Act of Commemoration, composed and specially adapted for the Worcester scene by the Revd D.J. Lane Griffiths of Hereford – President of the Society – was read by him. The Precentor (The Revd Colin Beswick) conducted the service. Dean Burrows, speaking from the Cathedral pulpit, took as his text 'Live like men who are at home in daylight'. His address dealt with the Kilvert family's connections with Worcester, the parts of the Diary relevant to Worcester and in particular the funeral of Miss Kilvert; Kilvert's standing as a Diarist and also as a lover and shepherd of his people. The singing was led by the Voluntary Choir, with the cathedral organist, Mr Christopher Robinson, at the organ. Altogether a splendid service.

Afterwards, many were seen inspecting the Cathedral; the Cloister Garth, where the Kilvert tombstone had been well cleaned up by some of the staff; and the Cloisters, along which came that funeral procession of 1870. A number took advantage of the kind offer of Canon and Mrs W. Purcell – who now live in what was once the home of Miss Kilvert – and visited it to see what was her room, and the views across the Severn to the Malvern Hills which so impressed Francis Kilvert.* Tea followed, in the fine setting of the Old Palace, adjoining the Cathedral precincts. Here Dean Hedley Burrows revealed that it was his 80th birthday that very day, and the large company greeted it with 'Happy Birthday to you'. He had not come direct from his home near Winchester to preach at Worcester, for on the previous day he had officiated at a wedding in Dorset, back where he was vicar many years ago. This brief account will give some idea of the happy and successful day at Worcester. From it has come quite a crop of new members.

At every Kilvert Service there are a number among the congregation that are either the descendants of Kilvert's family, his friends, or of those folk that figure in the Diary. Last October at Worcester Cathedral, this seemed to be particularly noticeable, and it will perhaps be of interest to set down some of them. Here is a list which does not claim to be complete:

A granddaughter of two great-granddaughters of the Revd R.L. and Mrs Bevan of Hay.
 A granddaughter of the Revd David Vaughan of Gilfach-yr-Heol, Newchurch, Radnorshire.
 A great-niece of Miss Frances Thomas (Daisy) of Llanthomas.
 A son of Kilvert's friend the Revd Andrew Pope.
 A member who before marriage was a Miss Money-Kyrle.
 One of the descendants of the Lewis family of Dolbedwyn, Newchurch, Radnorshire.
 Two descendants of the Hyde family of Bredwardine.
 Several with connections linked with Hay and with St Harmon.

* It is hoped to repeat this visit next March.



Before and After: the Jarvis tomb in Bredwardine churchyard which was destroyed by a falling tree in the Seventies. Mrs Kilvert's grave, far right with the cross.

Photo: KS Archives

Photo: Editor

1970

A BOOK REVIEW FROM THE KS NEWSLETTER

MORE CHAPTERS FROM THE KILVERT SAGA*

This is the title of the Society's latest booklet (it almost deserves to be called a book - for it has 128 pages, and there are 9 illustrations too). It is in three parts, first, the "MEMOIRS" of the Rev. Robert Kilvert (the diarist's father) something long awaited and much looked-forward-to by many members. Then extracts from Augustus Hare's "Story of my Life" his letters home whilst a pupil at Mr Kilvert's school at Hardenhuish Rectory. Finally, the whole of the "RAMBLING RECOLLECTIONS" of Emily Kilvert (Mrs. Wyndowe); here we are given many peeps into the life of the Kilvert family at Hardenhuish Rectory, particularly during the 1840's and 1850's - the childhood days of Francis Kilvert and his brothers and sisters. The photographs are of Bath, and of Hardenhuish; and family photographs of Mrs. Wyndowe, of Col. "Sam" Wyndowe, their baby daughter Annie (the "Monk") - with a frontispiece photograph of the fine likeness of the Rev. Robert Kilvert which was done in 1840 by his talented brother Edward; this is something we never thought to see, we are extremely fortunate to have it - a gift from some of his great grandchildren. There will be many members who would buy this booklet for that picture alone, even if there was not the feast of reading otherwise in it. Dr Plomer says - in his Introduction to the booklet - that "it enriches our knowledge of the diarist's background" and that "it will fascinate Kilvertians". All the editing was done by our valued Kington Langley member, Mrs Heather Tanner and it is very good value indeed for the modest price of 50p (10/-) with 5p (1/-) extra for P and P. Already it is selling well and the query now is "did we have enough printed?" It may well be that they will quickly sell out and we shall have to have a further batch printed. This can soon be done, for the "plates" are being carefully stored by the printers - BUT THE PRICE WILL BE CONSIDERABLY MORE THAN AT PRESENT!!!

Members are reminded that they can also buy copies of previous booklets:-

"COLLECTED VERSE" at 42½p (8/6) plus 2½p (6d) by post.

"THE SOLITARY OF LLANBEDR" with "RADNORSHIRE LEGENDS -etc" at 25p (5/-) plus 2½p (6d) by post.

"LOOKING BACKWARDS" at 37½p (7/6) plus 2½p (6d) by post.

- and of course, the very popular "KILVERT AND THE WORDSWORTH CIRCLE" at 30p (6/-)

Then there is "THE CORNISH REVIEW" (noted elsewhere in this newsletter) at 25p (5/-) plus 2½p (6d) by post.

Leaflets are available with fuller details of the above booklets...here and there one will be enclosed with this newsletter. PLEASE DO NOT BE CRITICAL that prices quoted are not in decimal currency - for these leaflets were duplicated well before Christmas, and then the "Saga" booklet was held up in printing and was not out until just before "D-Day"...so the leaflets have been held up too!!

*Still obtainable price £3.50 inc. p&p

C.T.O. Prosser

1975

A MATTER OF URGENCY

When I began to compile this newsletter I quite thought that the new postal rates were not coming into force until the end of March; suddenly it was announced that 17th March was to be the day. It is, therefore, all being rather rushed, for I am determined to post them before the 17th March and so save the Society more than £20 on this occasion. So if there are errors, and if contributions from members are left out where I really intended that they should be IN ... please blame the Post Office for not announcing this rise in rates much sooner. What a rise it is too!!! 5½p for a second-class letter; and parcel post rates to be raised by at least 50% ... and this isn't the end of it, we are promised further rises before very long!!!*

C.T.O. Prosser

*Hmm! (Ed.).

2002

TRANSCRIBING KILVERT'S DIARIES

by Hilda Holt (née Taylor)

I was born in 1917 and in the late 1930s I was working for Jonathan Cape, the publisher, at 30 Bedford Square, London WC1. This was a handsome building approached by lovely wide front doorsteps. Our large office was just inside the front door on the right-hand side of the entrance hall and I was the receptionist and general 'dogsbody'. Looking back I now realise that I had some fascinating experiences, writers such as Arthur Ransome, Beverley Nichols, Douglas Reed, Veronica Wedgwood and T.E. Lawrence all came through our office. I eventually acquired a first edition of *The Seven Pillars of Wisdom* and now wish I had kept it a little longer.

Jonathan Cape had decided to publish selections from Kilvert's diaries but I wasn't involved of course in any of the discussions. The process was managed by one of the two 'readers', a man named William Plomer who brought the manuscript diaries into the office to be typed. I remember Plomer as a 'Pickwickian' character – a pleasant, fatherly, middle-aged man. The other reader was a man named Guy Chapman, a brusque individual, who would often discard manuscripts by just writing 'NBG' on the covers and I don't think I need to explain this abbreviation. I don't recall that any urgency was given to the typing of the diaries, we were just instructed to fit it in amongst all our other work. The five girls involved with this task were as follows:

Phyllis Neale – Jonathan Cape's secretary
Eileen Neale – sister of Phyllis Neale, Ruth Atkinson's secretary
Molly Taylor – Rupert Hart-Davis' secretary
Faith Sheldrake – G. Wren Howard's secretary
Hilda Taylor – myself – the receptionist

I was the slowest typist of the five, all the others could touch-type and probably completed more of the work than I did. We all worked together in the one large office and we picked this task up and put it down amongst all our other duties. As I recall (although I may be in error), Ruth Atkinson was the advertising manageress, Rupert Hart-Davis was a junior director and G. Wren Howard provided the financial brains in the firm.

I have no recollection of how many diary volumes were involved but I feel sure that we typed the whole diary; William Plomer would then take away the typescript together with the manuscript diary and make whatever selections would then go forward for publication. In typing the material I feel sure we would also have made a carbon copy, as everything was typed in those days in that way. If we had difficulty in deciphering some words we would all get our heads together to come to a conclusion; but Plomer of course would later be able to compare our typescript with the manuscript.

I recall that the diaries were about the size of what we would now call A4 (the two I have had the privilege of examining at the National Library of Wales Aberystwyth were approximately A5 – ed.) and about half an inch thick. They were bound volumes which had supple black covers, probably made of some kind of leather. Each page had narrowly spaced lines like an exercise book. The writing was in black ink I think, small spidery writing, with every page filled. Some parts were a nightmare to read. I do not recall that my part of the diary contained any sketches or diagrams but there would be written additions and corrections to the text inserted here and there.

I have no idea what eventually became of our transcript (or of the carbon copies). I only remember that we girls were all given copies of the three volumes of the first editions (published in 1938, 1939 and 1940). They were signed by William Plomer with a note of his thanks; I still have my copies. I left Jonathan Cape's firm in 1940 when I was married; I had worked there for about four years.

From *Journal* No. 8 June 2002

It is with regret that I learned that Mrs Holt died on 30 May this year, aged 91 (ed.).

REMEMBERING PLOMER

by David Machin (Bath)

Most issues of the *Journal*, and not least the latest, contain references to William Plomer. In 1966 I wrote to him about various matters concerning his edition of the *Diary*. His reply, in his usual immaculate hand, is dated September 4, and I thought members might be interested in some of what he wrote. For instance: 'I was not nearly such a meticulous editor as I should have wished to be, but the last part of *Kilvert's Diary* had to be edited at a difficult time, 1939-40, when I had a good many complications in my own life on the top of the public ones, and directly I had finished Vol. 3 I was swallowed up by the Naval Intelligence Division.'

Much of the rest of the letter is taken up with a panegyric of the Kilvert Society and its then Hon. Secretary Mr Oswin Prosser. William urged me to join, which I duly did. He also asked if he could pass my letter to Mr Prosser. I hope I agreed, so perhaps it is still knocking around somewhere in the Society's files.

At that time I was working as a literary agent. In his letter William said: 'Since Noah went into the Ark I have been reading for Cape, so if, as a literary agent, you come across anything to interest them, and it is seen by me, I will pay special attention to it'. Little did he or I know when we first corresponded that only four years later I was to be invited to join Jonathan Cape as an editorial director and thus become his colleague until his death in 1973. (I left Cape in 1978 to become General Secretary of the Society of Authors). It was of course a great pleasure to get to know the Editor of the *Diary* and to be there during the planning and publication of the 1977 edition. It was such a pity that he was not still with us then.

William would come into the office once a week to write his reports on the manuscripts he had been reading and to attend our editorial meeting. We thought of him as the literary conscience of the firm, but the discoverer of James Bond could not be classed purely as an egghead, and his reading and tastes were wide-ranging. He was the most courteous and kindly of men, but with a quietly wicked sense of humour at times. For some reason I particularly remember his concern for me when I put my back out, and his getting up from his desk to demonstrate how to bend the knees when lifting a load!

One other unconnected thought prompted by C J Williams's interesting contribution to the current *Journal* and mention of the Dews of Letton Court: for a few years in the early 1990s my wife and I rented a small black-and-white cottage on the Moccas Estate (similar in size to the Old Weston by the look of the photograph). The previous occupants had been an elderly couple called Dew who I think had worked for the Estate all their lives. I am not sure how common a name it is in Herefordshire. At any rate it is a very attractive one.

I am pleased to see the Society is visiting Moccas again this year. I am sorry we cannot be there. I remember an earlier visit and service not so long after I became a member.

From *Journal* No. 11 June 2003

FRANCIS KILVERT AND HIS DAY

By Heather Pegg

(Curator of the Radnorshire Museum, Llandrindod Wells)

Part I of a lecture given at Presteigne on 24 April 2008

during the Society's AGM weekend.

Like William Vaughan, on 8 June 1870, acting as messenger for his father, David, I paused long, 'whilst cogitating what would be the proper thing to say for so distinguished an occasion'.

I remember that Plomer, in his introduction to the Diaries, says Kilvert's qualities were: 'good nature, good manners, vitality, love of children, practical sympathy with the unfortunate' and 'one gets to know him as a friend'.

It is Plomer who can truly be said to have discovered Kilvert, though, the role played by his nephew, T Perceval Smith, who had the sense to take the diaries to Jonathan Cape, cannot be ignored.

William Plomer (1903-1973) CBE, D.Litt., FRSL, Queen's Medal for poetry (1963), novelist, poet, biographer, librettist for Benjamin Britten, sensitive editor, BBC broadcaster and, from 1948 President of this Society. A description of Plomer when Benjamin Britten first knew him is provided by the writer James Stern: 'With his clipped moustache, dark hair brushed straight back, the thick-lensed horn-rimmed spectacles, the considerate, enquiring, courteous manner, he struck me as a cross between a doctor and an army chaplain with a sense, a surprising sense, of humour'.

Plomer and John Betjeman met through the Society of Authors and their mutual friend, Gerald Berners, now best remembered for being an eccentric, for dying white fantail doves in pastel shades and for inviting his horse, Muti, to tea. During the war Plomer worked in Naval Intelligence, as did Ian Fleming, whilst he was editing the abridged edition of the Diaries, published in 1944.

William Plomer has two entries in the *Oxford Dictionary of Quotations*: The first makes an amusing play on Dean Burgon's (1813-1888) memorable description of Petra as 'A rose red city half as old as time'. In his Newdigate-winning poem the couplet reads: 'Match me such marvel in Eastern Clime/A rose red city half as old as time'; Plomer wrote: 'A rose-red sissy half as old as time.' One wonders of whom did he speak? Was it, perhaps, of himself, or of the sometime diplomat, multi-talented Lord Berners? The second entry is: 'The Silent Sunday'. What else do we know about the Dean? Little, except that he had an academic hood named after him and the happy coincidence that he was a Fellow of Oriel with the Revd Robert Kilvert, father of the Diarist.

A quotation for which Plomer is better known and which was, regrettably not included by Margaret Drabble: 'Creativity is the power to connect the seemingly unconnected' at which Plomer was an expert. E.M. Forster's better known quotation 'Only Connect' seems to paraphrase it to unclarity. Benjamin Britten had experienced a rough ride with E.M. Forster as a librettist and was attracted by Plomer's 'muted personality'.

I like to think of Plomer 'finding' Kilvert at Cape's. One imagines, no doubt erroneously, manuscripts hugger-mugger with words from the very different pen of that friend of Noel Coward, Ian Fleming, whose early 007 was later but, nonetheless delightfully, on Plomer's desk too. James Bond and Francis Kilvert! Finders deserve our gratitude and one remembers other notable finders of delights: David Cecil, bringing Barbara Pym back to our attention. (Plomer was to find her *Some Tame Gazelle* 'very amusing') and Kenneth Clarke making us look at *Piero de la Francesca* again, though it is sad that James Pope Hennessy, coined the term the 'Piero de la Francesca Trail' and John Mortimer making the road to Urbino, a chattering classes 'must' in *Summer's Lease*, ('Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May/And summer's lease hath all too short a date'). Words all too applicable to Kilvert, I am sorry to say.

Kilvert's particular voice was well established by 1870 and we are hearing the mature man. He mentions his reason for writing a diary, *...the record may amuse and interest some who come after me*. Was he thinking of his descendants or of a wider audience? The one, so sadly not to be, and the other so immensely grateful.

Was that the only reason Kilvert wrote? Was it for the therapy? For publication? Certainly it was not for money, although Dr Johnson would have thought him a fool not to write for monetary recompense. It was a fashionable occupation of the period, from the Queen, who presumably knew her diaries and letters would be read by future generations, to those, like Kilvert, who described their lives as *humble*. Hazlitt, the great essayist, wrote to exorcise the torturing spirit of his landlady's awful, but to him divine, daughter, Sarah. Lamb, occasionally used the form to rid himself of shaming memories. (For insufficiently appreciating the kindness of his humble aunt). In poetry, Tennyson's *In Memoriam*, loved and quoted by Kilvert, was also a favourite with Kathleen Mavourneen too. In Paul Johnson's octogenarian view, exorcism is evident in both Ruskin's and Carlyle's writings. An American girl called Kate Field, a protégée of Walter Savage Landor, who taught her Latin, pops in and out of Trollope, the only indicator of this repressed affection.

Do we think Kilvert wrote to exorcise a restless spirit, or for the innocent and simple reason he himself gave? He did not know it would be published but he intended it to be read.

It may be helpful to leave the Diaries for a moment to remind ourselves of the period in which Kilvert was writing. He was, already five years into his curacy with the Revd Richard Venables, when the diaries began.

1870-1879

Monarch:	Thirty-three years into her reign – Victoria, a widow since 1861 had kept a diary since her fourteenth year. Kilvert was born in the third year of her reign.
Prime Minister:	William Gladstone, who was to have a diatribe written against him by the Archdeacon of Taunton, George Anthony Denison, who FK heard speak in the new wooden congress hall, Bath in October 1874
Archbishop of Canterbury:	Archibald Campbell Tait (1868-82) b 1811. He too died in office.
Income Tax:	Reduced to 4d in 1866 and then reduced to 2d by Northcote in 1875, threshold (1854-1875) £100. London coal cost £2.11.0 per ton and to be married in Kensington cost £3.3.0 (guineas) 'the fees were enormous'. Mrs Price, the Bredwardine vicarage housekeeper appointed by Kilvert was to start at £14.0.0 p.a., an increase of £2.0.0 above her previous wage.

Great Britain spent the early years of Victoria's reign in dread of Revolution; Europe was far from peaceful and by 20 March 1871 FK notes *Paris is in revolt*. In September 1873 John Couzens was foretelling a revolution in English society, *I know it's coming, as sure as this prong is in my hand*. The same John who was to describe his suicidal thoughts and later to say that he was fond of sun dried bread, left on a swathe 'from bait to bait'.

By the years of the Kilvert diaries which evaded the ministrations of the two ladies who destroyed the other volumes (I allow A.L. Rowse to express my censure, and probably yours when I quote from a letter he wrote to your editor: 'What an ignorant fool his niece was to destroy those wonderful diaries'. More recently your editor refers to Brian Jones' article when the destruction, by Essex Hope, is described as 'destroyed by the old, lonely woman to whom they passed ... A literary tragedy'. The muted Plomer was roused enough to say 'he could have strangled her with his own hands'), England was regarded by other nations, very much as America

came to be regarded in the 1920s. The census of 1851 had shown more urban than rural households. The years of 1869-73 were those of the third credit boom of the century and were unique for rapidity and magnitude of economic expansion. The finding of gold deposits in Australia and California resulted in the Bank of England holding the largest ever bullion reserves, relaxing its credit policy and fostering speculation in both commodities and securities.

In 1871 the Adderley Commission wrote: 'Local self-Government is essential and the essence of the nation's vigour. All, that can be done, should be done by the local authority and public expenditure should be chiefly controlled by those who contribute.' This led to the establishment of many Boards, amongst them Burial, Highway, Sewerage, Drainage, local Boards of Health and, eventually in 1871, School Boards. Kilvert mentions, on 14 April 1871, a Board of Guardians which had been asked to provide Old Tom Gore with a pair of boots. We learn later that there was local competition, between church and chapel, to be the Parish representative on this particular Board and that *the dissenters were behaving badly*.

Cholera had almost disappeared, Kilvert notes on 8 October 1870: *In the night the wind had gone around from the cursed East to the blessed West. All evil things have always come from the East – plague, cholera, and man.* Charles Dickens' Mr Jarndyce too 'was always conscious of an uncomfortable sensation now and then, when the wind is blowing in the East'. In the following year on 18 February, Kilvert visited Claremont and saw Dr Sir William Jenner's room. Jenner was the Royal Physician besides having time for his microscopic investigations into the differences between typhoid and typhus, that killer and near-killer of Royal Princes. On 27 February FK wrote: *15 people summoned for failing to have children vaccinated at Clyro Petty Sessions.* It was another and earlier Jenner, Dr Edward, of Gloucestershire (1749-1823) who was probably in Kilvert's mind, as the man most responsible for the vaccines.

Cleaner water and milk, the removal of 'nuisances' and all the concerns of Sanitary Boards, helped improve health but typhus and smallpox were never deadlier than during a pandemic in 1871-72; and there remained scarlet fever and diphtheria which was to kill Princess Alice of England (Grand Duchess of Hesse Darmstadt) whose death so moved Kilvert in December 1878 and who would have had the bell tolled for her had he known.

In rural areas the population was in decline, fewer workers were needed. Economic and social motives combined to reduce the quantity of cottages available; until the Union Chargeability Act of 1865 it was almost certain that the fewer houses within the parish, the lower would be the poor rate.

We know from the Diaries that the Jarvis Charity* prevented this in Bredwardine, Letton and Staunton as the £3,000 per annum distributed to 580 people deemed needy in a population of 1,120 encouraged people to remain, or even arrive to live in those parishes. Mr C.J. Williams whose father was Rector at Letton, Willersley and Staunton, writes that 'the effects of the Charity were to be felt until the 1950s.'

The New Cottage Act was not to come in until 1928 and this was to provide modest grants for the improvement of rural slums and that term is not too strong. The condition of the farm worker was a disgrace. 'On a bare living wage, as an indispensable wheel in another man's money-making machine' (Lord Ernle's graphic phrase) he was condemned to low ceilings, small windows and damp walls. Thanks to Baxter's 1867 classifications of incomes we know that postmen and railway workers earned 23/- per week, farm labourers 14/-, engine drivers 35/-. Kilvert tells us that railway porters *had 3 days holiday a year*. Interestingly, Baxter notes that whilst these were men's wages, the cost of hire for a woman, a boy and a girl, when added together, equalled that of the man's hire. Kilvert adds to this by writing on 19 April 1871: *9d a day pension had been awarded to War Veteran, John Morgan.* Morgan is mentioned again when he had *another epileptic fit* and later when he gave *all his quince apple crop* to Kilvert.

It was far from surprising that Kilvert saw a washerwoman on his visit to Llanthony in April 1870, since at that time there were over 251,000 in Britain on a weekly wage of 5/-. There were climbing boys aplenty too – we must not forget that Charles Kingley's *Water Babies* was a book of the 1860s. When he died Kilvert wrote: *We could ill spare him.* It was not until the time of the Diaries that the hitherto unprotected child workers of these Islands began to be insulated from the consequences of their parents' necessitousness, or cupidity, and in 1870 Parliament enforced full-time school for children under the age of ten. You will no doubt remember that Karl Showler, in *Journal 18*, reminds us that as a trustee of the Jarvis Charity, Kilvert took the side of the farmers and the poor, who were opposed to education, fearing loss of free labour and being forced, by poverty into the Poor House at Hay, whilst Bishop Atlay (Hereford) and the Revd Sir George Cornwall (Moccas) favoured change. FK did not change his mind, as we read later, that boys were obliged to remain at school until aged twelve and Kilvert thought it *unjust and hard on parents*.

In the cleverest religious satire in our language, the catholic convert, writer of detective novels, tutor to Harold Macmillan and apologist, Monsignor Ronald Knox (1888-1957) one of the extraordinary four Knox brothers, was to liken English Christianity to 'Israel's Ancient Creed which took root so widely that it ran to seed'. (The Bishop of Manchester, Edmund, Ronald's estranged father, who was to disinherit him, was nicknamed 'Hard Knox'.) Edmund appears as the Master of Arts beating the bounds when he was vicar of Merton, on Holy Thursday, 25 May.

At what period was Christianity at its peak? Of our period something of Knox's line seems to have been true, with retrenchment and even some decline. Was the nineteenth century meet to be called 'An Age of Faith' when well-bred atheists were expressing technically blasphemous meanings in poetry, like Swinburne or, like John Stuart Mill in intellectual prose? I mention John Stuart Mill especially as there is a sad connection between him and Mrs Kilvert and Mrs Hope, in as much as they were all the cause of works of the pen being destroyed. In Mill's case by the lighting of a fire with the first volume of Thomas Carlyle's three-part *The French Revolution: A History*. I think of Kilvert taking tea with Mrs Venables on 20 November 1870 and speaking of *the prevailing scepticism of the day* and that *if he had children they would be taught all the dear old Bible stories*.

*See photos page 9

I like to think that he would have been pleased to know that Edward Ardizzone who illustrated de la Mare's *Old Testament Stories for Children* also illustrated the happily named, Elizabeth Divine's abridgement of the *Kilvert Diaries for Children*. It is on the dust cover of this delightful book that the moment of Kilvert meeting the Solitary is captured. We learn much about the Revd John Price, Master of Arts of Cambridge University and Vicar of Llanbedr Painscastle. In her inimitable way Jan Morris captures the essence of both these Radnorshire Priests when, in *The Matter of Wales* she tells of the Solitary dying in 1895 aged 85, the inventor of two shorthand systems and profoundly respected by his parishioners. Many years before a colleague from a neighbouring parish had described John Price as 'a very holy man'. That colleague was Kilvert, described as 'rector' of Clyro, but the next quotation is no error, as Morris goes on to describe Kilvert as: 'the happiest exemplar of them all', and continuing 'almost the only one whose name is remembered in the wider world.' Jan Morris again: 'Kilvert describes, with tender tolerance, the life of a country parson in Wales in late Victorian times, high Anglican times, when rural deans progressed grandly about in first-class railway compartments, when squires entertained suitable curates to dinner, or took them for rides with young ladies in jaunting-traps.'

We learn on 19 February 1873 that curates, or anyway Kilvert, travelled third class to London, with a foot warmer, on his way to the Venables at Eaton Square.

As Janeites will know she said the requirements for a good story are 'Love and Finance' with an 'Unfairness' first to draw you in.

The third particular seems to be lacking entirely from Kilvert's young life. His childhood appears delightful, one of six children living a comfortable vicarage life in a beautiful part of England. Close, happy relationships with both parents and siblings: the Fifth Commandment would not have been onerous for him to keep. Privately educated in establishments run by his father and his uncle and then Wadham College. Oxford and Cambridge mattered in the early nineteenth century, to men anxious to raise their sons to indisputable social heights, more than the so-called 'public schools' which anyway were not numerous until the 1880s.

You will recall the Revd Richard Venables saying with approval that his curate was 'a University Man', but not that he was not an Etonian or a Wykhamist. By the 1850s the attitude to 'one's school' was changing and by the 1870s it changed so fast, and to such effect that by the 1880s it was public school (with preparatory school before it) that mattered more, among the wealthy, the respectable and those aspiring to be either. Geoffrey Best in *Mid-Victorian Britain* writes that 'Education became THE trump-card in class competition.' 'The quantity and intellectual character of it were coming to be thought increasingly important from a political and economic point of view, the social tone of it was coming to be thought all-important from a social viewpoint.'

I mention all this because I cannot understand why Kilvert thought about his 'prospects' in the way that he did, unless it was as a result of his being on the cusp of this change in attitude. Admittedly, as a curate he was always short of money. He writes that he had but a *guinea to his name and that owed* when he was contemplating marriage to Daisy Thomas. He was sufficiently worldly to speak to his father, when he learned that his expectations were to be £2,700. His social standing was secure, his popularity evident, he was firm in his faith and not tortured by thoughts of Rome. Indeed with his usual wry humour he says he *does not see why a Protestant should not pray in a Catholic Cathedral and be none the worse*. Kilvert had every expectation of his own living but was clear sighted enough not to wish to take on the costs of maintaining the Clyro Rectory when Mr Venables suggested this: *I should refuse it. 'Then you would be mad', replied Venables. But I don't want the living of Clyro, I don't want to be vicar of Clyro.*

Kilvert was undoubtedly a 'Gentleman' and was treated as such. Lady Amelia de Courcy – a stickler for the proprieties – conceded that 'Clergymen – particularly the rectors and vicars of country parishes – do become privileged above other professional men.' Relative poverty in itself was no bar. Remember Mr Crawley, poor, with three children, a ladylike wife and both academic distinction and 'connections' dating from his Oxford days. Josiah Crawley was emphatically a gentleman despite his 'dirty broken boots' and shabby garments, his cussedness and eccentricities.

And so too was the Revd Francis Kilvert and we do not think for a moment that he was unkempt or cussed, so was he perhaps considered by fond fathers to be a little eccentric? David Lockwood thought that Daisy's father may have been a possessive Papa since none of his four daughters married.

Part II will follow in the March 2009 edition of the *Journal*.



The grave of the Solitary at Llanbedr. According to John Wilks the lettering is in urgent need of restoration.

Photo: Editor

CLIFTON COLLEGE REGISTER 1862-1912

By Colin Dixon (Llandrindod Wells)



While browsing through the bookshop at Kington I came across the above-titled book. A quick glance through the index convinced me that I should study it more closely. I therefore bought the book and later, when I had time to look in detail, I was struck by the number of familiar names which appeared. Here are some from *Kilvert's Diary* with which members will be familiar.

Cowper Bickerton Cowper-Coles

Son of Mrs Cowper-Coles of Clifton. He attended the College from May 1871 until May 1872. You will recall he was the son of Captain Cowper-Coles of the turret ship HMS *Captain* which sank with most of the crew, including Captain Cowper-Coles. (Vol. 1 13 September 1870.) None of Bickerton's brothers attended Clifton College. I think Mrs Cowper-Coles later moved to the Isle of Wight.

William Hastings Smith son of W.R. Smith, Hereford. He attended the College from January 1888 until July 1888. W.R. Smith was married to Kilvert's oldest sister Thersie. He probably had to leave College because of his father's illness. His father died in 1889.

There are many entries in the *Diary* for the Smith family. It is Hastings' brother Perceval that we have to thank for putting the manuscripts of *Kilvert's Diary* into the hands of William Plomer.

A.A. Mayhew son of the Revd A.L. Mayhew of Oxford. He left the College in July 1892 to go to Trinity College Oxford. He then became Vicar of Waterford, Hertfordshire (1910) and later Vicar of Redcar, Yorkshire. His father was Kilvert's friend at Oxford, Anthony Lawson Mayhew. Many entries in the *Diary*.

C. Prescott-Decie son of Col. R. Prescott-Decie. He attended the College from 1880 to 1883. He was a keen rugby player and athlete. He became a Lt. Col. in the Royal Field Artillery and was involved in the relief of Ladysmith in the South African War. You will see in Vol. II 24 October 1871 that Kilvert visited Bockleton Court where he met the father of the above, the then Captain Decie who had married a Miss Prescott, heiress of Bockleton Court and so became Prescott-Decie.



Hastings Smith KS Archives

S.G. Rivett-Carnac son of C.F. Rivett-Carnac of Clifton. He left the College in July 1885 and became a major in the Royal Engineers.

G.F. Rivett-Carnac son of C.F. Rivett-Carnac of Clifton and brother of S.G. Rivett-Carnac. He left College in 1883 and later died at Mogok, Burma in 1898. A relative of the Rivett-Carnacs was the curate of Foxham in Wiltshire, north-east of Langley Burrell. See Vol. III 9 June 1875.

R. De Winton son of R.H. De Winton of Hereford. He left the College in July 1869.

W.E. De Winton son of R.H. De Winton of Hereford. He left the College in July 1869, became a JP, FLS, FZS and was the author of *Anderson's Fauna of Egypt*. His address was Graftonbury, Hereford. The De Winton family are mentioned many times in the *Diary*.

Other names of note include:

W.G. Grace son of Dr W.G. Grace of Bristol. He attended the College from September 1887 to July 1893. The son of the famous cricketer he also excelled at the sport. Captain of the College XI 1892-1893 he played for Pembroke College Cambridge XI, Glos. XI, Northants and East Midlands rugby XV. He became assistant master at the Royal Naval College, Osborne. He died young in March 1905 ten years before his famous father.

Douglas Haig son of J. Haig, Cameron Bridge, Fife. He left the College in April 1879. Attended the Royal Military College Sandhurst (passed out first). He received two commendations for his South African Campaign from General French and Lord Kitchener. Was ADC to King George V. Awarded KCVO in 1909 and KCIE 1911. C-in-C Aldershot 1912. British Commander in WWI. Blamed for the disaster of the Somme and Ypres campaigns 1916-17. Hampered by Lloyd George he was denied effective command until 1918 when he displayed far greater generalship. He died in 1928.

P.G. Wodehouse (1881-1975) son of the Revd P.J. Wodehouse, Bratton Fleming, North Devon, English humorist and creator of Jeeves in the Bertie Wooster stories. He left in December 1898. Britannia Cadetship. Lieutenant in the Royal Navy. He was knighted in 1975. He became an American citizen in 1955.

Here are some additional facts about Clifton College. The College opened on Tuesday 30 September 1862 at 11 a.m. with sixty boys. By 1888 there were 673 boys. The first man appointed headmaster was the Revd C. Evans, who was then fifth-form master at Rugby. However, shortly before the main school was opened Mr Evans was elected to the headmastership of King Edward's Grammar School, Birmingham, where he had himself been educated under Dr Prince Lee. His letter of resignation was received by the Council on 4 September 1862.

This was deemed a catastrophe at the time but another man was found to fill the post. This was the Revd Dr John Percival MA, fellow of Queen's College Oxford. He had previously been a master at Rugby School for two years. He was headmaster at Clifton for sixteen years. In 1878 he was appointed headmaster of Rugby School and was made Bishop of Hereford in 1895.

The College received its Royal Charter on 16 March 1877. The following are the opening words of a sermon given by the Headmaster which show with what hopes and aims the College was opened:

'There is a heavy responsibility laid on every one, whether master or pupil, who enters a place like this, which has no tradition, no history to guide us. Whatever the future of this College may be, that future will be modified for good or evil, nay, in a great measure it will be determined and acquire its character by the conduct of those who are at this moment beginning their life in it. If you desire to belong to a place of which you may be justly proud; if you wish to hear this College spoken of as one that bears a high name as a place where truth and uprightness and purity and all Christian virtues are held in honour; as a place where all that is base or unworthy is hated and despised, – then remember that it rests with you to give it that name.

Would that this was instilled in all children now!

Footnote: A Dr Black sold the school a piece of land of just over two acres in 1862. In the Deed of Conveyance it stated that '*no noisome or offensive trade of business (except that of a school for boys or girls) may be carried on therein.*'

FORDINGTON REVISITED

By John Hodkin (Cumbria)

One of the most amusing sections of *Kilvert's Diary* is when the Revd Henry Moule, Vicar of Fordington from 1829 until his death in 1880, tells Kilvert of the eccentric actions of some of his parishioners when taking the communion cup in his early days in the parish.

The events Moule speaks of are not only amusing but also provide excellent material for theologians and social historians.

My wife Joan and I realised this when we recently attended a teaching day in the Deanery of Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria, given by the Bishop of Penrith, the Rt Revd James Newcome.

In the course of his address the Bishop, speaking of the problems the church faces today, said 'Before we get too depressed it is important to remember that the "golden age" was not always golden', and illustrated his point by telling of what went on at Fordington, including the sixteen women communicants, most of whom went away when Moule refused to pay them for coming.

I recently came across another reference to Fordington church practices when reading *Religion and the Decline of Magic* by Sir Keith Thomas, the well-known historian, a long and fascinating study of the development of religious thought in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It was first published in 1971.

Sir Keith states that the impact of organised religion upon the industrial towns in the nineteenth century was often negligible.

'But it was not the pressure of industrialisation which created the problem; it had always been there'.

Sir Keith goes on to quote the episode at the church in the Fordington area when a male communicant touched his forehead when the communion cup was offered to him and said: 'Here's your good health, sir,' and another who said: 'Here's the good health of our Lord Jesus Christ.'

Sir Keith also quotes the man at Chippenham who took the chalice from the vicar and wished him a Happy New Year.

All this interesting information comes from the only appearance of Moule in the *Diary*.

Kilvert's reason for visiting Fordington was to meet the 'great idyllic poet of England' William Barnes. Moule picked Kilvert up at Dorchester station on 30 April 1874 and took him to see Barnes who recited some of his verse to them.

Kilvert must have felt he had had a memorable day what with that and hearing Moule's racy stories.

KILVERT AND LIVINGSTONE

By Dr Andrew Larnar (Liverpool)

Although both were clergymen, the differences between Francis Kilvert and David Livingstone (1813-1873) were profound. Livingstone's origins were in a Scottish mill town, Blantyre, outside Glasgow, where he was a child labourer, reading books as he worked, whereas Kilvert emerged from a relatively affluent clergy home and enjoyed an education appropriate to his origins, including time at Oxford University. Livingstone trained in medicine as well as theology with the intent of becoming a medical missionary, whereas Kilvert was always destined for the Church. Whilst Kilvert's life was lived in obscurity, Livingstone was lionized as a national hero, drawing large crowds to his lectures, publishing best-selling accounts of his travels,¹⁻³ and enjoying the patronage of the great and the good. Nonetheless, there is a link between the two men: Livingstone is mentioned twice in Kilvert's published *Diary*, both instances occurring in the winter of 1874.

Following the great explorer's death at Chitamba's village, in the Ilala district of modern Zambia, on 1 May 1873, his faithful servants Chuma and Susi secretly carried his embalmed and eviscerated body across more than one thousand miles of the African interior, a journey of some nine months, to the coast, whence it was repatriated for a state funeral at Westminster Abbey on 18 April 1874. The event was perceived to be of national significance and hence drew widespread coverage.

Kilvert chose to give one of his evening lectures on the subject of Livingstone's funeral, presumably based on what he had learned from reading the newspapers. Subsequently, on the evening of 14 December 1874, Kilvert took twenty-one Langley Burrell schoolchildren into Chippenham to the Temperance Hall to see a *Panorama of the African travels of Dr Livingstone*, of which *One of the most favourite [sic] pictures with the children was the Funeral of Dr Livingstone in Westminster Abbey*. Kilvert commented: *What pleasure these few pence have given to twenty-one young hearts.*⁴

John Toman has pointed out that 'Dr Livingstone had a profound appeal for Kilvert as he had for most mid-Victorians.'⁵ Although it is not clear whether Kilvert had read Livingstone's books, nonetheless it may be that perhaps one reason for his enthusiasm was Livingstone's explicit assertion that everything he undertook was in order to serve Christ and for the promulgation of the Gospel, including undergoing surgery on his throat in the hope that this would enable him to preach more easily.⁶ Livingstone's assertion, though, must be tempered by the observation, made by both some contemporaries and by posterity,⁷ that he was unsuited to and largely unsuccessful in his missionary work: some claim that he made only one convert during all his years in Africa. Paradoxically, it may be that Kilvert's quiet pastoral care of his parishioners did more to promote the goals espoused by Livingstone than all of the explorer's heroic labours.

¹ Livingstone D. (1857) *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa; including a sketch of sixteen years' residence in the interior of Africa, etc.* London: John Murray.

² Livingstone D., Livingstone C. (1865) *Narrative of an Expedition to the Zambesi and its tributaries: and the Discovery of the Lakes Shirwa and Nyassa 1858-1864*. London: John Murray.

³ Waller H. (ed) (1874) *The Last Journals of David Livingstone in Central Africa, from 1865 to his death. Continued by a narrative of his last moments and sufferings obtained from his faithful servants Chuma and Susi*. London: John Murray.

⁴ Plomer W. (1940) *Kilvert's Diary Volume III: 14 May 1874 – 13 March 1879. Selections from the Diary of the Revd Francis Kilvert* pp 107 and 121-122. London: Jonathan Cape.

⁵ Toman J. (2001) *Kilvert: The Homeless Heart* pp 207-208 and 239 Almeley: Logaston Press.

⁶ Larnar A.J. (2006) David Livingstone's uvulectomy. *Journal of Medical Biography* 14: 104-108.

⁷ Beard J.A.S. (2008) What motivated Dr David Livingstone in his work in Africa? *Journal of Medical Biography* 16: in press.

THEN AND NOW

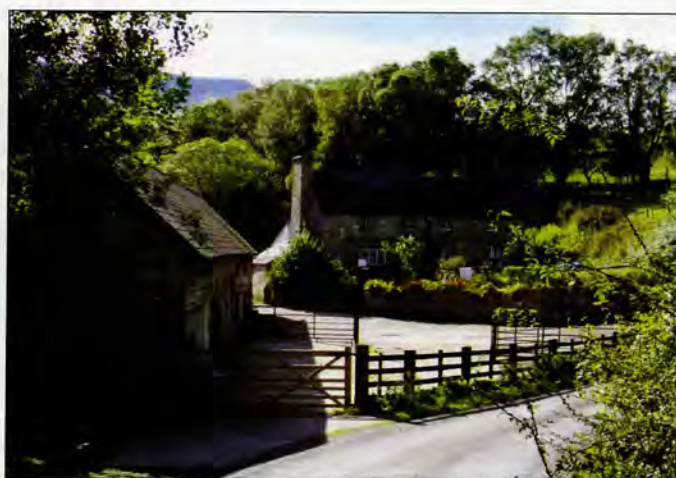
From an idea by John Wilks (Cusop)

First in an occasional series



A BLACK MOUNTAINS FARM, NEAR HAY-ON-WYE

From a Kilvert Society Christmas Card



The Birches, Craswall

Photo: John Wilks

VENABLES PORTRAITS AT PRESTEIGNE

By the Editor

Visitors to the award-winning Judge's Lodging museum at Presteigne are now able to view, among many other interesting artefacts, eight portraits of nineteenth-century local worthies. These have recently been cleaned and restored and now adorn the walls of various rooms in the museum, the former Shire Hall.

Two of the portraits are of particular interest to Kilvertians. In the dining room there is a portrait of Archdeacon Richard Venables (who has a memorial tablet in Clyro Church), father of Richard Lister Venables of the *Diary*. He too was vicar of Clyro and it was he who bought a number of properties in Llanyre parish which became the Llysdinam estate; a farmhouse on the estate, Penybanc, was to be enlarged to become the present Llysdinam Hall, the family home.



Llysdinam Hall

Photo: Editor

Richard Venables was chairman of Radnorshire Quarter Sessions for 25 years until 1851.

In the drawing room hangs a portrait of Richard Lister Venables, Kilvert's vicar, who was ordained by the Bishop of St David's in 1833. Early in his career he was curate to his father at Nantmel and Llanyre and had a later curacy at Whitney-on-Wye. His first wife was Mary Augusta Dalrymple Adam, a widow, who had previously been married to Mr F.J. Adam. Their son, Captain William Adam, is mentioned in the *Diary*. Mary was the daughter of General Poltoratzky, the head of a government iron foundry in St Petersburg. The Venables travelled extensively in Russia, Bohemia and Germany, sailing from London on 14 June 1837 in the *Countess of Lonsdale* and leaving Russia in June 1838. Their visit is recorded in Venables' *Domestic Scenes in Russia* (Murray, 1839) (See also Newsletter No. 12 June 1970).

As we know, after the death of his first wife, which occurred shortly after Kilvert's arrival in Clyro in 1865, Venables married his second wife, Agnes Minna Pearson, at Mitcham, Surrey in 1867.

Like his father before him RLV presided over the Radnorshire magistrates throughout his time at Clyro.

NEW BOOKS

Clifford Dunkley (Leicester) reviews:

David Nicholas Lockwood, President of the Kilvert Society 1999-2005, by Wilhelmina Mom Lockwood

This slim volume (48pp paperback), published under the imprint of the Kilvert Society, is an affectionate tribute to a greatly-admired luminary in the recent history of the Society, compiled by his widow. In addition to celebrating his works and his public persona, it sheds light on the inner man and the wellspring of his creativity. As Michael Sharp says in his Introduction, David 'loved God's creation and he loved exploring it on foot and writing about it, especially in poetry. Apart from his family and his love for God, Kilvert was certainly the passion of his life.'

David's early years were dogged by family misfortunes – abandonment, death, bankruptcy – and not particularly happy schooldays where he first developed the habit of contemplative walking. However, with friendly encouragement, he succeeded in obtaining a place to read English at St David's College, Lampeter. Life continued to improve, especially after meeting Willeke, his wife-to-be, while on holiday in Heidelberg on the way to see the Oberammergau Passion Play. After theological training at Queen's College Birmingham, David was ordained in 1953 and married in 1954. During his first two curacies Willeke worked hard for reciprocal registration of her Dutch medical qualifications, enabling her to become a GP.

It was during David's first incumbency at Great Witley that Fred Grice of Worcester introduced him to Kilvert's Diaries, which struck an immediate chord. Involvement with the Kilvert Society followed naturally, and William Plomer became a firm friend. After a happy move to Hanley Swan, tragedy struck when daughter Helena was killed, aged 11, in a road accident.

A visit to Scotland in 1977 awakened David's interest in Thomas Carlyle, leading to his registration as a research student at Birmingham University, resulting in a successful MA thesis on Carlyle in 1981. It was around this time that David was able to retire from full-time pastoral ministry and to devote himself to a writing career in the house at Llowes in the heart of Kilvert Country which the Lockwoods had bought a few years earlier and refurbished.

David's main collections of poems were *Winter Wheat* (1986), *Marked Paper* (1995) and the *Coming of Age* (2004). One of his poet friends characterises his work thus: 'One senses the priest, the loving husband and father, the cultivated and travelled man the nature-lover and appreciative walker. His poetry is accessible, usually conversational, though he was well able at times to use a more structured form.' This tribute contains several examples of his poems – *Modern Death in an Old Room*, *The Katyn Epitaph*, *The Fox*, *Ink* as well as numerous short quotations. A sample of David's preaching is given by his 2003 Harvest Festival sermon at Hardwick, which ends with a quotation from Mother Julian of Norwich:

Love is not changed by death
And nothing is lost
And all
In the end
Is Harvest.

These moving words were fittingly inscribed on David's tombstone in Llowes churchyard.

This memorial volume fulfils its intention of giving a rounded picture of David Lockwood's life and work, but this reviewer would have appreciated more of a taste of David's writings about Kilvert and an exploration of his literary relationship with William Plomer, so as to place him more firmly in the context of an illustrious President of the Kilvert Society. A selection of Lockwood's Kilvertiana could perhaps be a future project for a KS member who feels like volunteering!

The booklet is available from the Publications Manager, price £5.50 incl. p&p.

Elizabeth Rowe reviews two new books which may interest KS members:

***The Wrong Kind of Snow: The Complete Daily Companion to the British Weather* by Anthony Woodward and Robert Penn.**

If any of you heard the authors of *The Wrong Kind of Snow* at the winter or this summer's Hay Literary Festival you might well have bought this fascinating book already. They were two of the most entertaining speakers there and their book will delight lovers of Kilvert and of diarists generally.

Arranged in diary form, it is an anthology of diary entries, quotations from literature, statistics, lists, anecdotes and nuggets of information all about our weather and is an absolute joy, the very thing to give as a present to anyone we love or to buy for the sheer pleasure of dipping into it every day ourselves.

Of course Kilvert has many entries. Amongst other gems this one for 9 February, (minimum temperature recorded 1.3 C, maximum 6.7 C), is Kilvert's: *The first snowdrops appeared in the churchyard*, from his Clyro diary. The last of his entries is the one for Christmas Day, 1870, his account of breaking the thick sheet of ice on his bath and sitting with sharp points and jagged edges of ice all around him.

Other quotations come from Sidney Smith, Oscar Wilde, Gilbert White, Dylan Thomas, Arthur Ransome, P.G. Wodehouse, Philip Larkin, Ian McEwan's *Atonement*, and countless other authors which Kilvert Society members are likely to enjoy. At the back are listed 'Key Historical Events Affected By The Weather'. Amongst other lists is 'How Not to Die from a Lightning Strike.' Both the authors live in the Black Mountains and it does seem to include much that is relevant to this part of the world. It is a lovely book.

The Wrong Kind of Snow by Anthony Woodward and Robert Penn. Published by Hodder & Stoughton, £14.99.

***Patrick Brontë: Father of Genius* by Dudley Green**

Dudley Green is a long-term member of the Kilvert Society, a past chairman of the Brontë Society and the president of the Irish branch of the Brontë Society and is vicarage born and bred.

Dudley's fine biography contradicts Mrs Gaskell's unsympathetic portrait of Patrick Brontë and is the first major biography of him for more than forty years. The Archbishop of Canterbury has written the Foreword and how could I improve on what Rowan Williams said: 'It is a study full of detail, energy and insight and it is a delight to be able to commend it to the reader.'

Patrick Brontë: Father of Genius by Dudley Green. Published by Nonsuch, £20.00.

FORTHCOMING NEW BOOK

Our member John Toman has just completed his new book *Kilvert's Diary and Landscape* which will be published by the Lutterworth Press in December: 400 pages approx., illustrated.

In the introduction the author writes: 'It is hoped that the study of Kilvert and landscape, which may be regarded as the second part of a revaluation of the Diarist that began with *Kilvert: The Homeless Heart* (2001), contributes to our appreciation of his complexity'.

Reviews of the new book will appear in the March 2009 *Journal*.

John is working, at the moment, on a paper for the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Association Journal entitled: 'A Grand City': *Kilvert and Bristol*.

More about that next year.



EUREKA! **By the Editor**

For a long time now I have been searching in second-hand bookshops hoping to come across *Kilvert's Diary* in an edition whose existence may be unknown to some members. This is an edition published by the Folio Society in 1977 under the title: *Francis Kilvert – Journal of a Country Curate*. I have now found a copy and it has pride of place on my Kilvert shelf because, as you would expect, this is a very fine edition and like all Folio publications it is produced to a very high standard. It comes in a slipcase and its 338 pages are set in 11 point Baskerville (how appropriate!) type ledged 1 point and printed on fineblade cartridge paper. It has 29 photographs, some loaned by the Society, others specially prepared for this edition by photographer Tim Stephens. Sometimes old and new have been combined on one plate 'to evoke the changes between Kilvert's time and today, particularly having regard to the disappearance or decay of buildings he mentions frequently.'

The book's external appearance is very handsome too, the binding is of Ruskin cloth with paper sides and there is a picture of St Michael's Clyro on the front cover and of the gate and pathway (including the Kilvert memorial seat) to St Andrew's, Bredwardine, on the back, much the same view as on the cover of this *Journal*.

The endpaper maps are of the Radnorshire-Herefordshire Kilvert Country only, for this is an abridged version of Plomer's abridgement, in that the *Diary* entries deal entirely with Kilvert's life in the Wye Country; copious entries, of course, until he left Clyro in 1872 and thinning out thereafter. This abridgement has, however, 'meant sacrificing some splendid passages,' admits Peter Wait, the editor, in his introduction, which has a telling first paragraph:

'The case of Kilvert is strange. Eminent critics have hailed his diary as a classic, ranking with Pepys, comparable with but more vivid and more human than Dorothy Wordsworth. Yet many people who would regard as an insult the suggestion that they are not acquainted with Pepys, have never even heard of Kilvert. On the other hand he has a passionately addicted following and a flourishing Society devoted to the study of his life and writing.'

This is a very elegant book and I am glad to have found it at last – albeit, dare I admit it, the easy way, via Amazon!

PS. By the way, the frontispiece has the familiar portrait of RFK facing ... left!

Francis Kilvert – Journal of a Country Curate – Selections from the Diary of Francis Kilvert 1870-1879. Selected with an introduction by Peter Wait. Photographic re-creations by Tim Stephens. The Folio Society, London 1977

INTERVIEW WITH OUR PRESIDENT

Ronald Blythe was interviewed recently at his home in Suffolk for an article which appeared in the June edition of *The Countryman*.

In an interesting piece entitled *The Definitive Countryman* the author, Helen Harrison, seeks the answer to her own question: 'What is a countryman?' In the course of her interview she concludes that Ronald Blythe is a classic example of the breed, 'acknowledged

by many as the epitome of a “countryman” and who ‘since leaving his post as a librarian in 1955 has been a consistent exponent of the countryside its values and its value’.

In a reference to his religious belief the author continues: ‘The countryside and nature are incontrovertibly bound for him to his Anglican religion (he has been a Reader in the Church of England since 1984 and a Lay Canon of St Edmundsbury Cathedral since 2003). In this, he continues the traditions of such rural Poet-Divines as George Herbert and Francis Kilvert.’

Ronald Blythe has lived since 1977 at Bottengoms Farmhouse which lies in the Stour Valley. The house was once the centre of a seventy-acre holding and when he first came to know it, over fifty years ago, it was the home of the artist John Nash.

The house and garden are briefly described in the article and are obviously cherished by this real countryman ‘who writes on behalf of the countryside itself as one of its people from his own knowledge and observations [and] acts as a conduit to his predecessors, people like John Clare, William Cobbett and John Constable, those other champions of the countryside who have made up our artistic heritage.’

Francis Kilvert belongs very well in such company.

Editor

I am grateful to the editor of The Countryman, Paul Jackson, for permission to quote from Helen Harrison’s article.

FROM RECENT CORRESPONDENCE

i) From Muriel Kilvert (Woodbridge)

Yes, I agree with you, I think that my great-uncle should be looking to the right.

Miss Kilvert particularly enjoyed the extracts from Peter Alexander’s biography of Plomer in the June Journal and was able to add to some of the captions:

For further reference: Miss T.M. Kilvert of East Preston, Sussex is sixth left in the back row of the photograph [on page 7], she was uncle Frank’s niece and her brother was Major R.E. Kilvert of the Royal Marine Artillery, husband of my mother, his widow Mrs H.S. Kilvert of Salisbury. She is shown eighth left in the photograph and her son, my brother, is (later) Canon R.W. Kilvert, correctly shown as fourth left in the front row.

By the way the photograph on page 4 is of me, flanked by my cousin Henry Kilvert and his wife Jill at the splendid talk given by Heather Pegg.

ii) From Thomas Lloyd (Weobley)

My grandmother Ethel Lloyd (née Whittall) was a member of the Kilvert Society, so was my father Pryse Lloyd and so was I in the 1960s and early 70s. Owing to business and many other commitments my membership lapsed until rejoining quite recently. I remember attending a number of Kilvert functions in the Fifties and Sixties at Clyro (where I was born), Bredwardine and Llanbedr where, incidentally, my mother played the organ for many years and where my parents were married.

My grandmother was born at Upper Lundy in 1881 and they attended the Baptist Chapel in Painscastle but her parents were always concerned about the Solitary. As a young girl she remembers being sent by her mother with the maid living in the house to take food to the Solitary on numerous occasions in the winter when the weather was bad. She used to recount how on one occasion they walked in deep snow and struggled to get there carrying a large basket of food and would describe going into ‘the hovel’ as she called it. Apparently her mother used to say she did not know how he survived the winters as his living conditions were extremely primitive.

Recently I have tried to find exactly where ‘the hut’ was located, also Pencommon where the Solitary stabled his horse and Pen Cwm where he also lived. He apparently also lived in ‘three bathing machines’ or was that ‘the hut’? The hut was in Cwm Ceilo but I cannot find any reference to it on the OS map.

If anyone can provide details of these locations, preferably by grid reference I would like to find them.

I too am intrigued by Twm Tobacco and why he was buried there. I have heard various suggestions as to who he may have been as reported in the *March Journal* but hope someone can shed more light on this.

Our archivist has been in touch with Mr Lloyd and has given him all the information about the Solitary known to the Society.

iii) **From Christopher Williams (Wrexham)**

What makes you think that the well-known photograph of Kilvert on the cover is the wrong way round? I don't believe that it is. Firstly, the buttons on the front of his jacket are on the left-hand side when facing him, and the button-holes on the right. This is always the case with men's clothes now, but looking at various books of old photographs that I have to hand, it seems to have been so in Victorian times also. (Women's clothes always button on the other side.)

Secondly, the first edition of the first volume of the *Diary* published in 1938, has as its frontispiece a head and shoulders portrait of Kilvert, facing the same way (see copy enclosed). This is a slightly different pose from that in the one mentioned above, but to judge from the jacket, tie and hairstyle, it was taken at the same sitting.



The Frontispiece

Published copies of the larger portrait always seem to be undated. Indeed, Le Quesne, in his *After Kilvert* (pp 9-10), where he states that this is the only known portrait of Kilvert, says that 'It must date from the period of the *Diary*, for Kilvert can hardly be less than thirty'. Yet, as you see, the first edition version is dated to January 1875, when the diarist was aged 34. Since he was at Langley Burrell at that time, it was probably taken at a town nearby.

ST MARY'S NEWCHURCH

As will be seen from the accompanying photograph Powys County Council has recently placed a new warning road sign immediately beside the entrance to the churchyard at St Mary's close to the church noticeboard and the grave of Emmeline Vaughan.



This was, apparently, installed without any consultation with the church or village representatives.

The Reverend Tim Williams (Rector of the Painscastle and Erwood parishes), the Reverend Dr Humphrey Fisher (NSM at Newchurch), the churchwardens at St Mary's and the secretary of the PCC have written to the County Council to protest at such a crass and insensitive siting, together with suggestions for an alternative placing. Copies of the letter have been sent to the Community Council, the Rural Dean, the CPRE, the local MP and the Welsh Assembly member. At the time of writing the only response has been a message left on an answering machine and a curt note (to the same effect) stating that '[the sign] is located at the most appropriate location and cannot be relocated.' (*sic*)

If members wish to write about this matter, communications should be addressed to: Mr A. Caine, Head of Highways at Powys County Council, County Hall, Llandrindod Wells, Powys LD1 5LG.

OBITUARIES

As reported in the June edition of the *Journal* Mr Tony O'Brien of Newchurch died on 6 May. The following is the text of the eulogy delivered at his funeral in St Mary's, Newchurch on 19 May, by the Reverend Dr Humphrey Fisher:

It is an honour to be asked to stand here today and to speak to you all about Tony. I thank you, Geraldine, for that honour – and also, for the pleasure of being here. Such invitations sometimes come on sad occasions. But, today, it is a pleasure to be here. For we are giving thanks for a long life, a good life, a full, *very* full life. And, for a good death too. Last Sunday but one, Tony was here, with us at St Mary's for the first-Sunday-in-the-month service. Sitting at the back there, under the window (with its challenging question – Jesus' own words, 'Friend, why have you come?'), Tony was there, muttering about the service, or the temperature, or the length of the (often *my* sermon (another relevant question, Jesus' own words again, in this window beneath the pulpit, 'Friend, could you not watch one hour with me?')) Usually I could not hear what he was saying, of course, being up here at the front – whether taking the service, or well forward in the congregation. But I *would* hear, later, as Helga (having sat next to Tony, or at least within earshot) would report to me. After the service, Tony, still in excellent form, came with other churchgoers to Rose Cottage for coffee. Next, on the way home, he stopped at the farm next door to chat with the children, then visited a neighbour across the road who like Tony himself, has family in London. Finally, on this recent, so recent Sunday, Tony at home was typically busy in the garden or at some maintenance task. Then, into the cottage, and in the doorway, God took him, instantly – an aortic aneurism, the doctors say he would have been dead before he hit the floor. What a way to go. No

debilitating illness, no decay of the natural faculties, no protracted pain, no burden to friends and relations, no expense, no interruption to the peaceful pattern of his normal life, church, neighbourliness, house and garden. Just, gone.

Suddenly, everyone had some story about Tony. Let me share one of our favourites with you – and with visual aids. I have a set of four volumes, three beautifully and professionally leather bound, the fourth still in a hard cardboard cover. Tony offered to bind this last volume. No charge (though I might pay for the quality Moroccan goatskin leather). He did a really beautiful job. I have the volume here. It will go on display on the table by the organ, do have a look at it before you leave.

What does this incident tell us about Tony? Well, his generosity and kindness, to me as a friend and neighbour. Also, the very painstaking, meticulous nature of his work. This was clear in his professional career, as a structural engineer, and finally District Surveyor for Camden Council. But also in the wide variety of his other interests. Another friend was astonished at the ‘depth of personality’ to which he was introduced – not only the bookbinding, but also photography, calligraphy, picture framing, local history (especially Cwm Gwillam school, and also Emmeline’s story – indeed Tony had made an inventory of all the gravestones here at St Mary’s), the creation of a library of books about London, and very detailed study (including an index of personal names) of the three-volume *Journal of Francis Kilvert*. Some of this material surely merits publication.* And he built his own home, *Llwyn Onn*, up the pitch, starting with only a garage to live in (and providing Geraldine with some vivid recollections of early childhood – my word! It could be cold). There is a lovely passage in the Bible, which describes craftsmen of all kinds, such people, the passage concludes (Ecclesiasticus 38.34 – I use the New English Bible, and there only a footnote), such people ‘maintain the fabric of this world, and their daily work is their prayer’. Tony was one of ‘such people’. Bookbinding, among so many other gifts of his, illustrates the Biblical standard: work done to the highest possible quality, with such love and carefulness, that it becomes like prayer.

But there is one further detail, important, rather subtle in a way, which my leatherbound book demonstrates. This is something done entirely at Tony’s own initiative (as was *The Who’s Who* – ed.). I do not think that he even so much as mentioned it to me before he did it. But *after*, he explained: the book was for me, but it did not seem right to him not to offer something also to Helga. So, he took the original, now discarded cover, and prepared it to look like a book. But it is not a book: it is a box, with, inside the original outer dust-cover on one side, and the inner flap, with information about book and author on the other. Helga got her reward as I mine: what admirable sensitivity lurking behind a mask of sometimes rather rough speech and manner.

As I worked on this talk last night it occurred to me that, perhaps, another feature of Tony peeps through: an unwillingness to let anything go to waste. There is an example, in the early oral tradition of the family of this sort of thing. Overseeing the demolition of a ‘retired’ London church, St Patrick’s, and hearing that a rather nice stained-glass window was to be destroyed, Tony extracted it. With permission? Maybe. It went to his workshop. It was to be made into a door. Did that recycling ever actually happen? Oral tradition is uncertain about the exact details, but the imaginative, prospective door did not, alas, survive the move to the Welsh borders. It would have been a striking feature of the new home here. Almost a guidebook detail.

There are other tokens, round about the village, of Tony’s goodwill: he made the noticeboard for the Chapel, and for the Church. I think the Chapel has sent a letter of condolence, recalling their gratitude for the board. When the Council, without any prior consultation or warning, put up the *awful* ‘weak bridge sign’, [see page 22] immediately beside the church gateway (you see it before you see Emmeline’s grave), Tony was the first to ring the Council and to object. We are still trying to get the sign moved: we *must* succeed, as a memorial to Tony. The picnic table outside the Church door here is a gift from Tony in Joyce’s memory: there is a plaque on the table and on the porch noticeboard a copy of the service sheet dedicating the table. Joyce was Queen of the garden at the bungalow here. After she died Tony worked hard to keep it trim and tidy, shipshape and Bristol-fashion, though it was not really his sphere: the family allege – surely somewhat scandalously – that he would have been in some difficulty distinguishing between a turnip and a tulip. No, that is my imagination, it was between a weed and a flower.

Dear Tony, you are now among (in the words of R.S. Thomas):

The friends that we loved well, / [and Tony, we love you still] / though they vanished far from our sight, / in a new country were found / beyond this veil of night; / O blest are they, without pain or fretting / in the sun’s light that knows no setting.

I can just see you – we can all see you – there in the back row, muttering, complaining, ‘Come on, you never-setting sun, give us a break’.

Good night, Dear Heart, good night. Amen.

** This mammoth Who’s Who in Kilvert’s Diary is presently being prepared for publication, and it is indeed a mammoth work. It contains 454 entries, each averaging about 12 lines, together with several family trees. It is difficult to imagine how long it must have taken Tony to research and prepare this index yet the Society knew nothing about it until it was complete and offered, rather diffidently it must be said, to us as ‘possibly being useful and of some interest for the archives’. Such modesty was characteristic of the man as was the quiet and generous offer of the cash donations to assist with the cost of publication when it was revealed to him that such a valuable work of reference would be published by the Society.*

This Who’s Who will be a most fitting memorial to Tony and to his twenty-year membership of the Society.

It is with great regret that we also have to record the death of the following members. We offer our sympathy to their family and friends.

The Reverend Dr Gordon Edwards of Sherston, Malmesbury, Wiltshire, died recently. He was a life member of the Society which he and his wife joined in 1999. At the time of writing no further details are available.

Mrs Marguerite Kilvert formerly of Petersfield died on 30 July 2008 at the age of 82. She had been a member of the Society since 1970. She was the widow of the late Revd Canon R.W. Kilvert to whom there are references in the *June Journal*. Her son, John Kilvert and daughter Susan Fraenzel write: 'She was a loving and devoted wife, mother and grandmother and will be greatly missed by all who knew and loved her.'

Mrs Mary Renner of Shepton Mallet died on 7 February 2007. She had joined the Society in 1982 and been a life member since May 1991.

Mrs Audrey Smith of Kingston-upon-Thames died in June. She had been a member since 1971 and a life member since 1981.

Mr H.A.J. Brayne of Chester died on 1 February 2008. He had been a member since 1986.

The Society gratefully acknowledges a generous donation from his estate.

Dr J.H. Jones of Leominster died on 8 July 2008.

Judson was born in Blackfoot, Idaho, the sixth of seven children and brought up in a strict Baptist home, although he never accepted his parents' religion. When he was seven the family moved to Portland, Oregon, where between 1949 and 1953 he attended the Grant High School. A natural athlete, he won, in 1953, an athletics scholarship to Willamette University. Although not particularly assiduous in his studies he obtained high grades but left Willamette to volunteer for the US Airforce, where he worked in airborne radar maintenance. After two years' service he asked to be transferred abroad and was posted to Okinawa and then Japan. A year at Oregon State University followed, where, initially he studied physics and chemistry but changed to history, his true interest. In 1961, keen to continue travelling, he accepted a post with TEA (Teachers in East Africa) and was sent to a remote tribal school in Kenya. Here, he taught a variety of subjects including sport and eventually became headmaster. Two years later after returning briefly to America he went back to East Africa, to Old Kampala, the largest Asian school in the Ugandan capital where he met and married Rose, a fellow TEA teacher from Cambridge. The marriage was to prove a strong and lasting relationship. Judson and Rose returned to America and further study followed leading in 1976 to Judson's appointment at the University of Southern Illinois to teach political science and statistics. Later, in 1983, he worked in Chicago with an investment company and then in the Netherlands for a statistical software firm. Judson and Rose remained in Holland for thirteen years. In 2000 he and Rose retired and moved to Leominster.



Our memories of Judson are of his formidable intellect, incisive mind, his larger than life personality, his outrageous sense of humour and the huge range of his knowledge and interests [including the Kilvert Society which he and Rose joined in 2003]. Judson often remarked that he had lived a fulfilling life and we feel that this quotation from Petronius is an appropriate way to end:

'I have lived; nor shall maligner fortune ever take from me what an earlier hour once gave'

From the funeral address given by Judson's sister-in-law Elizabeth Blamires.

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

FOR SALE

A set of the three-volume, hard-backed William Plomer 1938-40 edition of *Kilvert's Diary*, reprinted in 1973 with illustrations. The volumes have lightly marked green cloth spines, with a thin bright gilt border, light marbled boards, with bright gilt lettering and logos on the spine and boards. Maps on the endpapers. Text unmarked. The books are in good condition. Sturdy slipcase, slightly stained by water drops. £80, postage extra if collection cannot be arranged. Contact Charles Boase, Vauxhall House, Monmouth NP25 3AX (Tel: 01600 715076; email charles.boase@gmail.com).

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 March 2009 edition of the *Journal* should reach the editor **not later than 10 January 2009**. 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.**

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 6LH.

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*.

