

**THE
JOURNAL**



**OF THE
KILVERT SOCIETY**

Issue No. 3

September 2000

THE KILVERT SOCIETY

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

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From the Editor:

One of the benefits of my recent elevation to the editorship of the *Journal* is that my morning post is now much more interesting than it used to be. Of course I still receive the usual junk mail and the brown envelopes, which, I hasten to add, do not contain cash merely demands for same, but their doleful effect is now heavily outweighed by the informative and entertaining letters which I receive from members.

These days then, most mornings' mail brings something to do with the *Journal*: an article, solicited or unsolicited, (more of the latter please), a photograph perhaps or more general correspondence, often provoked by some item already published.

But there are disadvantages too and things can go wrong. I have, in fact, recently been 'rumbled' and I owe the Rev. Prebendary Frank Rumball, rector of Conover, an apology for misspelling his name in the June edition. In mitigation I should perhaps say that I received the Conover details aurally and had not even considered that there might be a spelling other than my ill-advised choice!

What is more I forgot (twice! February and June) to include the starting time of the service at Disserth. It was just as well that worshippers rightly assumed that the service would begin at the customary time of 3.00 p.m. I do know that nobody arrived late and if anyone came very early then there are worse places to while away a quiet half an hour or so than in this charming hollow of the Ithon valley.

'The church stands in a really lovely position', says Richard Haslam in his *Powys*, one of the *Buildings of Wales* series, 'but the idyll is disturbed by caravans.' Well, the caravans did not obtrude on this particular occasion even though the entrance to the site is just beside St. Cewydd's. All was still on that Sunday and the little group of buildings round about the whitewashed church slumbered peacefully in the glorious, hot, afternoon sunshine.

So, those of you who were unable to attend missed a rare treat – not to mention the tea at Llandrindod afterwards, which three correspondents did! (see below). Apparently David Lockwood was so moved by the whole occasion that he sat down straightaway on returning home to write his *Rumination*, diffidently asking me in his accompanying letter whether I thought it was worth publishing!..... Well, indeed I do, David's contributions always are anyway ... and, as if I would ever dare refuse the President anything, let alone space in the *Journal*.

Finally a gross grammatical blunder of mine in the June edition was gleefully pointed out to me by my kindly relative (a KS member ... for the time being) Richard Weston of Hereford. Richard is one of the sons of my late cousin Marjorie Weston, who for many years taught English at the Hereford Bluecoat School and who was a stickler for linguistic accuracy. Her son seems to have inherited the characteristic. Taking me to task, he said: 'Mother would have been horrified, Jeff, to think you could have made such an elementary mistake!' She would too and I think Edward West would have been as well. I apologise to their, no doubt, watchful shades. So you see, despite the improvement in the quality of my daily correspondence it can still be a hard life being an editor.

Jeff Marshall

IMPORTANT NOTICE REGARDING 2001 SUBSCRIPTIONS

Our new Subscriptions Treasurer from the 1st January 2001 is **Barry Smith** whose address is **25 Prospect Road, Abergavenny, Mon. NP7 5DU**. Would you please send your annual subscription (£6) to Barry after that date. Also, any other change affecting your membership, e.g. change of address, should also be sent to him.

Michael Sharp, Hon. Secretary

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Conover:

Sunday, 17th September. Meet at Conover Church for picnic lunch at 12 noon, following which there will be a guided tour of the village. The service will commence at 3 p.m. conducted by the Rector of Conover the Rev. Prebendary Frank Rumball, who will also preach. Tea will be served after the service, for which there will be a modest charge of £2.50. There are still 5 seats available on the coach. Anyone wishing to book a seat should contact Michael Sharp as soon as possible and send a cheque for £7.00 per seat. Conover is situated 4 miles south of the centre of Shrewsbury, one mile east of the A49 trunk road. The church is OS reference 495058.

AN IMPORTANT CONDOVER CONNECTION

By Sidney Ball (Swindon)

Members attending the Condover service on September 17th will see in the church the fine sculpture of the bearded, kneeling Sir Thomas Cholmondeley Owen who died in 1864. This statue was the first sculpture made by George Frederick Watts who has an important connection with the Kilvert family.

On February 20th 1864 G.F. Watts was married to 16-year-old Ellen Terry in the Kensington church of St. Barnabas, the ceremony conducted by a cousin of the Kilverts, Dr. Francis Hessey, vicar. The marriage of Watts and Ellen Terry only lasted a short time. A marriage in the church that *did* last was that of Teddy Kilvert to Nellie Pitcairn on June 4th 1878. Dr. Francis Hessey was still incumbent and entertained his Kilvert cousins.

AGM Weekend – 27th-29th April 2001

Members might wish to reserve these dates in their diaries for next year as it is hoped to arrange a full programme of events for the Saturday and Sunday following the AGM on the Friday evening. Full details will be circulated later towards the end of this year or early next year – but certainly before the next *Journal* appears in March 2001

THE JUNE WEEKEND

The Walk: by Colin Dixon (Llandrindod)

About twenty members turned up at the Baskerville Arms on Saturday 17th June for the walk to be led by our Hon. Secretary, Michael Sharp. The weather was very warm.

The walk this time was to be at Whitney-on-Wye, but before we left Clyro we all assembled in Kilvert's favourite lane by Ashbrook House and the Dulas brook where Michael read the poem *Clyro Water*. While he was reading we could hear in the background the tinkling and burbling of the brook.

We then went off to Whitney-on-Wye and, after parking near the Trout Inn, walked the two hundred or so yards to the church where we had our picnic lunch. Some sought the shade of the old lych gate while others found a spot on the north side of the church.

After lunch we went into the church to look around and listen to Michael read from the *Diary* about Pope's unfortunate and unwilling confirmation by Bishop Atlay.

We then set off on a circular walk of about three miles, although it seemed a lot longer in the heat of the early afternoon. We were to divert to see the Stowe, where blind Mr. Monkhouse lived, but it would have been a long diversion so we decided to leave that for another day.



In a Whitney Lane. Meg, Michael's dog leads the way
(Photo by Ann Dean.)

The walk continued through some woods where the shade was most welcome, it was muddy in places, but not too bad. Our chairman, Ron Watts, had decided to come along for part of the walk and then return to the church, because he was suffering from a painful knee, but then realised that he had passed the point of no return, so he gritted his teeth and completed the walk. He declared next day that his knee was much better!

We then came upon Whitney Court, built in the early 1900s to replace the original house which was near the river and whose foundations had been damaged by a flood.

Next, down to the station, this was very disappointing as nothing remained of the original buildings, the only evidence left was the track bed that ran through the site.

Then on through another stretch of woods above the old railway track where we saw some curious earthworks. It was thought they could have been made by the army during World War II. Finally, over the footbridge and back to the church and our very hot cars. Everyone declared it had been a most enjoyable walk, even one of our long-standing and more mature members from the Bristol area who had valiantly kept pace with the younger walkers, despite some rather challenging gradients.

The Service: by Peter Bolton, (Wellesbourne)

Disserth, home of the Society's service on 18th June (held by kind permission of the rector, who officiated) is not a place which would come readily to the minds of Kilvertians. There is, in fact, no direct evidence from the *Diaries* that Kilvert ever went there. Nevertheless, the Diarist's slender links with the living had two important consequences. We know from 14th October 1872 that Kilvert heard then that after the death of its dotty rector, Mr. Thomas, Mr. Venables decided to write strongly to the Bishop of St. David's, the patron of the living, urging him to appoint Kilvert as the new rector. Mr. Venables must have seemed an important channel of communication with the bishop since Mr. Thomas's son had also written, unsuccessfully, asking that he do the same for him. Kilvert was in two minds and saw the living's disadvantages. However, either Venables was less influential than he, and others, believed, or the bishop had a candidate up his sleeve already. In any case we hear no more of it in the published *Diaries*. Disserth would have made a very slightly better financial bet than St. Harmon's but not as good a catch as Bredwardine. If Kilvert had fallen for the parish, and it is clear that he had not ruled it out and despite his misgivings was giving it serious thought, many things for us, the readers, would have been different. We can only speculate, and with sorrow and the sort of nightmare-like alarm which the Diarist himself puts into the rest of the entry for that 14th October (was he a prey to anxieties about the decision?) about what might not have been and whether Disserth and its surroundings would have made as fertile a field for his pen as the parts we know so well.

The second consequence was for Disserth church. What a fortunate escape it probably had when Kilvert failed to get the living! It was an exciting church for the forty or so members who came to the service, so plain outside with its whitewashed chancel and straightforward windows and many walls out of vertical as well as horizontal. But, oh, the inside! Chock-a-block with its box pews and the congregation almost out of sight one from another with just a head above the woodwork here and there, even space for a pew jammed either side of the altar. When did life stop in Disserth? Perhaps when the proprietors painted their names on the pew doors including, surprisingly, James Watt, in 1805. The overall effect is miraculously simple, one of those churches, rare in England, a little less so on the Borders, which the Victorians forgot. Would Kilvert have let it all remain? Remember Christmas Day 1871 when he was at Langley Burrell, 'the church cold and damp. No fire and the gallery [that shocking sign of the unrestored church *still standing* (my italics).] So maybe, away with the pews, away with the village musicians, off with the plaster and the faded wall paintings, in with the heating. More likely away with this amiably rickety place altogether and up with one of those economical and all too often depressing new churches which do a poor job of salesmanship for the century's architecture on the Marches. Perhaps Disserth's great escape was also Kilvert's and was also ours.

So, after Cranmer's miraculous cadences for Prayer Book Evensong (to which Kilvert would most certainly have never contemplated change) and an address by Bronwyn Curnow, it was off to tea kindly provided for us at Holy Trinity, Llandrindod Wells, a modern, polished church dedicated just before Kilvert was not being offered the living of Disserth (see *Diary* for 28th July 1871). In the few miles between the two we have socially crossed into another Wales. Here among the big, new, bright red, glazed-brick villas of the bourgeoisie the simple folk to whom Kilvert ministered might well have considered Mammon somehow lurked. For us temptation did not reach much beyond another excellent, worldly jam and cream scone before it was off to the peace of Llysdyman where Lady Delia Venables-Llewelyn had so very kindly invited members to see her gardens and those glasshouses whose perfect maintenance is such a rarity and wonder, as well, of course, as to see a view of what seems like a considerable chunk of the land Kilvert would have loved.

We must not forget those whose organisation and kindness enabled us to steep ourselves for a few hours in the world, almost untouched, which Kilvert would have known. The only difference was perhaps the smoothness of organisation – something which so often eluded the ecclesiastical events that the Diarist attended. No chaos such as attended the dedication of Llandrindod Wells church and a preacher at Disserth, who, as she said, unlike poor Mr. Thomas, entered the pulpit knowing what she was going to say.



Disserth – the whitewashed church in the hollow.

Ruminations on a Day: by the President

The most recent Kilvert gathering, last Sunday 18th June, the hottest day for a quarter of a century, took place in Disserth, just outside Llandrindod Wells and very close to Newbridge-on-Wye where Llysdyham is situated.

If it was for me a very special day and, I think, it was for many. First of all we had to make a real effort because it was so very hot, but once moving it was a day of enchantment, the sun blazing, the shadows so black and thick and sharp that they seemed as solid as dark chocolate. The greens were still differing, they had not achieved that overall one tone of high summer. Suddenly high above the river Ithon one saw deep below the solid square-angled church, small but sturdily imposing of St. Cewydd in Disserth.

Going into the building was like stepping into another climate, much cooler, it was not only a climate it was another age. Already most of the congregation was assembled with others joining. The upright pews were built with vigilant worship and attention and not comfort in mind. The service began, we were welcomed by the Vicar of Llandrindod, who is also Rector of Disserth. Mrs. Bronwyn Curnow climbed up into the three-decker pulpit, the Rector below and I in a pew that faced the congregation. I had a very good view of kindly, friendly Kilvertian faces.

To me it was a truly moving delight to be able to sing the psalm and each pew had been provided with the music and pointing for it: a very thoughtful gesture and we made good use of it. We were excellently led by the organist – and what a charming and nostalgic sound the harmonium produces – and what hard work it is, not just playing but pedalling away.

I was in a reverie of memories and taken back to the favourite of all my churches, St. Andrew's in Button Oak at the heart of the Wyre Forest. There I had a most faithful and appreciative flock, foresters all. But sitting looking at the faded painting of the Hanoverian Royal coat of arms, the carving on a panel of 1681, a surely mediaeval fragment of a fresco to the right of the altar, I was led back and back and back in time. Then I listened to Michael Reynolds read Ezekiel and I was far back beyond Christ's lifetime, millenniums were shrivelling and I heard the prophet's vision which was repeated when St. John's later vision on the Isle of Patmos was read to us by Val Dixon. The prayers were a gentle jolt back to the present day when we remembered the sick and the plight of the farming community.

Mrs. Curnow caught up all our musings in her swift but very sure sermon showing that the same flashes of enlightenment that came to the prophet, the apostle and a priest like Kilvert still can come to the likes of us.

Happy, refreshed in spirit, we emerged through the porch into the thick hot air, after some inevitable photographs we were in Llandrindod Church, alas minus the Vicar who had services in a hospital. We were given a superb tea with such scones of butter, strawberry jam and cream we thought we were in Cornwall. Kilvert's Cornwall?

Our innovative chairman, (how good it is to have changes in leadership so that new ideas are given rein) read us not only the allusions to Disserth in the *Diary*, but to the fearsome account of Kilvert's dream when he thought he had killed Richard Lister Venables. A very strange and frenzied fantasy in which Kilvert turns against those he loves and respects. As Ron Watts read I was struck once more by the Diarist's repetition of *a change came over the spirit of the dream*. A

dim recollection told me that Kilvert was quoting. Quoting whom? When I got home I looked up Byron and there in a narrative poem, well worth reading, called *The Dream* Byron very tellingly uses the haunting refrain:

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream

Kilvert was deeply read in the poetry of the Romantics. Byron has some profound words on dreams:

*.... sleep hath its own world,
And a wide realm of wild reality,
And dreams in their development have breath,
And tears and tortures, and the touch of joy;
They leave a weight upon our waking thoughts,
They take a weight from off our waking toils,
They do divide our being:*

The day was not yet over, Lady Delia Venables-Llewelyn had invited us to see the garden at Llysdyham. The views from that magnificently placed house were then in a more mellowing light. Lady Delia led a squadron of us along the border, up the steps into a veritable valley of herbaceous plants, splendid thalictrum, to, on one side the greenhouse where Aberystwyth University house their willows and their toads – (an experiment testing global warming), on the other to the deep gully of the long Victorian lean-to hothouses, so richly redolent of what we must now call the century before the last. We saw the famous orange tree from Malta, the strelitzias, the eucomis, plumbago and the flourishing fig tree which one wag thought would provide sufficient clothing on that day for many of us!

So ended a perfect day of summer in the year 2000, a day which I must be brave and say, even though we were in Wales, seemed consummately English: we seemed to have wandered through so many centuries of culture, history, glancing at many literary men – and women – for the day had made me also think of Virginia Woolf. She knew how profoundly blessed are readers for their days are always cross referred with the reactions of so many writers.

But the phrase that sticks is:

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.



The President and Mrs. Lockwood at Llandrindod – after tea!

IN PRAISE OF KILVERT TEAS

By David Howells (St. Albans)

How lucky we were to choose our June weekend bathed in such glorious sunshine and after the Sunday Service held in the beautiful setting of St. Cewydd's church, Disserth, to enjoy another of those wonderful teas which have become so much part of Kilvert events.

Ann Dean in the last Journal refers to the AGM buffet as 'sumptuous', a word which Kilvert used to describe a luncheon given by Miss Newton on 30th April 1872; surely no better word can be applied to our Kilvert teas.

Kilvert obviously enjoyed describing meals of which he had partaken; in particular the succulent contents of picnic baskets.

At the Snodhill picnic on 21st June 1870 he refers to the *usual things for consumption*. *Cold chicken, ham and tongue, pies of different sorts, salads, jam and gooseberry tarts, bread and cheese, splendid strawberries, cups of various kinds went round, claret and hock, champagne cider and sherry.*

This description is so reminiscent of the delightful scene in *The Wind in the Willows*, when Ratty describes to Mole the contents of his luncheon basket when they are about to set out for a row on the river. Ratty's words merge into one another in his rapid description:

Cold tongue ham beef pickled gherkin salad french rolls scress sandwiches spotted meat giner beer lemonade soda water The list was so tempting to Mole that he stopped Ratty in full flight.

When Kilvert and his friend Morrell go on their expeditions, refreshments are taken. When they go fishing on 15th May 1871 Morrell produced from his luncheon basket *an admirable pie, rissoles, bread, cheese, beer and sherry*. On the 14th June 1876 when present at a Wiltshire picnic Kilvert is full of praise for his brother's skill. *Teddy built a fireplace cleverly with two upright sticks crossed by an iron crossbar from which the kettle was hung.*

There are of course descriptions of more substantial meals. The dinner at Clifford Priory on 7th July 1870 met with his approval. *It was a very nice pleasant dinner. Good champagne and the first salmon I have tasted this year, a nice curry and the Riflemen strawberries quite magnificent. Everyone in good spirits and tempers and full of talk.*

Of course sometimes Kilvert overindulged. On the 28th October 1870 he writes, *Hot coppers, too much wine last night and an ill temper this morning.*

On the 20th February 1870 he admits, *Drunk too much port after dinner at Cae Mawr last night and a splitting headache all day in revenge.*

But Kilvert's indulgence was nothing in comparison with that of his fellow diarist, Parson Woodforde, born exactly one hundred years before him.

Similar to the experience that Kilvert was to have, Parson Woodforde began his curacy in a church where his father was the Vicar. This was at Castle Cary, Somerset, some years before he was presented to the living at Weston Longeville, Norfolk.

He kept his diary for some forty-four years and it is bristling with descriptions of meals of gigantic proportions.

The dinner the Bishop of Norwich gave on 4th September 1873 is a very good example. *There were twenty of us at the table and a very elegant dinner the Bishop gave us. We had two courses of twenty dishes, Madeira, red and white wines. The first course amongst many other things was two dishes of prodigious fine stewed carp and tench and a fine haunch of venison. Amongst the second course a fine turkey, poult, partridges, pigeons and sweetmeats. Dessert – amongst other things, mulberries, melon, currents, peaches, nectarines and grapes.* One is reminded of the Tithe Dinner that Kilvert hosted at Bredwardine Vicarage on 5th February 1878 upon which our excellent Golden Jubilee Dinner was based.

On his Tithe Audit Day, 2nd December 1783, Parson Woodforde gave them for dinner *a leg of mutton boiled and capers, some salt fish, plenty of plum puddings and a couple of boiled rabbits with a huge sirloin of beef roasted. Plenty of wine, punch and strong beer after dinner till ten o'clock.*

There was obviously a time limit to Parson Woodforde's entertaining!

To prevent indigestion setting in it is high time to return to the more delicate fare served at Kilvert teas; to express our heartfelt thanks to the ladies of Holy Trinity, Llandrindod Wells and to all concerned in providing welcome refreshments for Kilvert Society events.

THE PILGRIMAGE

By Ann Dean (Hereford)

The third annual Kilvert Pilgrimage, organised by the Friends of Llandewi Fach church (between Painscastle and Clyro), took place recently when around 30 people visited several churches within the Painscastle group of parishes. Amongst the group were a student from Ethiopia and another from India.

The day began at St. Mary's church, Newchurch, with refreshments followed by morning service. Then a short time of prayers and readings at the grave of Emmeline Vaughan, 13-year-old daughter of the one time rector of Newchurch and friend of Kilvert.



Laying flowers at Emmeline's grave.
Photo: Ann Dean

After laying flowers, as Kilvert himself had done, (*Diary* 14th March 1873 – the old Radnorshire custom of 'flowering the grave'), the party moved on to St. Michael's church, Bryngwyn, for a short service of silence, readings and meditation. Twelve-year-old Felicity Jones of Huntington, near Kington, played her harp most beautifully during the times of quiet reflection.

After a picnic lunch in the village hall, the pilgrims walked on to St. Peter's church, Llanbedr for a splendid tea provided by ladies of the congregation. Then it was on down lanes and over fields to the tiny church of Llandewi Fach for Evensong where the Rev. Clive Edmunds, vicar of Westbury on Severn preached. He said 'The point of a pilgrimage is to feel the Lord's presence as we travel towards our goal.'

Note: Harvest Festival will be celebrated at Llandewi Fach on Sunday 24th September 2000 at 3 p.m. led by the Rev. Humphrey Fisher.

FROM RECENT CORRESPONDENCE

i) Lawrence Jackson has passed me a note which he received from Mr. R.B. Taylor (Skegness) author, with the late Eva Farmery, of the Society's booklet *Kathleen Mavourneen*. (Kilvert's name for Katherine Heanley). He reports that, sadly, All Saints' church, Croft, near Skegness, where Katherine Heanley is buried, has recently developed settlement cracks leading to its closure pending further investigations and repair. A descriptive leaflet of the church attached to his letter contains a reference to Kilvert's love for Katherine and also to his paraphrase of Psalm XXIII. (See *Diary* for 19th December 1878). The leaflet also draws attention to the plaque near the door leading to the belfry steps which records the installation of the new tenor bells to which Kilvert unwittingly contributed 10/-.

ii) Lyndall Hancock has written from Dunedin recalling the occasion when three quarters of our New Zealand membership gathered at her home to greet American members Bill and Jackie Cummings from San Diego, California. She attached the cutting below which shows (left to right) Evelyn Madigan (also Dunedin), Bill and Jackie, Lyndall, and Ivy Goodsir (Invercargill). (See also the Newsletter for September 1994).



iii) Jack Burrell writes from Bristol enclosing a number of very interesting pieces of Kilvertiana including cuttings from the *Hereford Times* describing a KS ramble to Aberedw (Summer 1957), the St. Harmon's service of the same time, details of some more Kilvert country train journeys of course, and the pieces below which recall his army days at Penybont and the death of Arthur Partridge.

The other items will appear in future editions of the *Journal*.

Ed.

Army Days at Penybont

Basil Butcher's note on the lovely ride from New Radnor to Penybont recalls my sojourn in 1942 when a whole brigade was camped at Penybont Common. It was very enjoyable with weekend visits to Llandrindod Wells. There was also an RA officer cadet unit in the town.

Link with the Diarist Severed – Death of Mr. Arthur F. Partridge*

One of the few remaining links with the famous Rev. Francis Kilvert was severed by the death on Sunday, at the age of 91 years, of Mr. Arthur F. Partridge, of Sirocco Cottage, near Ledbury, who was christened by the Diarist when he was curate at Clyro Church.

Mr. Partridge was a man of many parts and at the turn of the century was very well-known as a hop grower and breeder of Hereford cattle when he farmed at Wharton Court, Leominster.

Latterly, he was the agent for the Sirocco hop-drying plant, and was a familiar figure at all the local markets wearing his topee and nearly always with a flower in his buttonhole. Despite his great age, he was remarkably active and had a fund of stories and reminiscences to draw upon.

In his youth, Mr. Partridge was one of the first to travel with Hereford cattle to the Argentine for Mr. John Yeomans, of Stretton Court, and hop-growers knew him as an erector of wire work. He joined the Shropshire Yeomanry in 1884 and served until 1892. At the age of 50 years he served in the first world war.

After his wife died, Mr. Partridge lived by himself for 16 years at Sirocco Cot. He leaves two sons and three daughters.

Cremation took place at Hereford yesterday.

The Funeral

Family mourners were: Mr. A.L. Partridge, Mr. P.B. Partridge (Sons), Mrs. N.E. Mallison, Mrs. Z. Partridge (daughters), Mrs. A.L. Partridge (daughter-in-law), Mrs. F.M. Cowell.

Others present were: Mr. F.E. Allsop, Mr. H.S. Powell, Mr. C.D. Bingle, Mr. H. Jones (rep. Shropshire Yeomanry), Mr. C.T.O. Prosser and Mr. H.W. Butcher (rep. Kilvert Society), Mr. D.R. Wright (rep. Sid Wright Ltd.)

Tribute

Mr. C.T.O. Prosser, secretary of the Kilvert Society, writes pointing out that Mr. Partridge was regarded as the "grand old man" of the society. "Mr. Partridge delighted to tell of how he was privately baptised in the bedroom of Clyro Court Farm, presumably very soon after his birth as it was considered that he was a weakly baby who would probably not survive!" He adds, "he was a member of the Kilvert Society since its inception: attended practically every function: was present at the Kilvert Service at Whitney-on-Wye on 14th July. "The society has lost one more of its links with Kilvert, but he will long be remembered among us."

* Mr. Partridge would have been born in 1866.

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BOOK REVIEWS

The editor reviews:

***Moccas: an English deer park.* Edited by Paul T. Harding and Tom Wall. English Nature - £20.**

This amazingly comprehensive book is a hugely detailed study of the history, wildlife and management of Moccas Park, designated the first parkland National Nature Reserve. Its 352 A4 pages are handsomely enclosed in a full-colour cover showing an autumn scene in the park and in particular some of the mighty oaks so vividly described by Kilvert in an adjectivally-rich entry for the 22nd April 1876:

I fear those grey old men of Moccas, those grey gnarled, low-browed, knock-kneed, bowed, bent, huge, strange, long-armed, deformed, hunchbacked, misshapen oak men that stand waiting and watching century after century, biding God's time with both feet in the grave and yet tiring down and seeing out generation after generation They look as if they had been at the beginning of the world and they will probably see its end.

Indeed the first illustration in the book is an etching (after the watercolour by Thomas Hearne) of *the Moccas Oak* which Kilvert estimated to be 2000 years old and whose girth by *arm stretching* he reckoned to be 33 feet. Not a bad guess either for the Oak features again on page 81 under the heading 'The remarkable trees of Herefordshire' and here, at five feet from the ground the circumference is given as 36 feet! Unfortunately the old fellow has not survived to share in Kilvert's prophecy.

But this is just one item plucked from this fascinating and astonishingly meticulous piece of research, perhaps one of the most detailed of any site in Britain, covering, as it does, everything from the archaeology to the zoology of Moccas and all grouped around the central theme which is the management of the park past, present and future.

The book is dedicated to the memory of Richard Chester-Master (1927-1994) who made possible the establishment of Moccas Park as the first ever parkland nature reserve. In a foreword his widow Priscilla writes: 'When my late husband inherited the Moccas Estate 36 years ago, Moccas Park had slept undisturbed for over a century. The ancient trees so aptly described by Kilvert were engulfed in head-high bracken, there was sparse grass for the deer and the contours of the landscape were hidden from view. He set about the task of reclamation with great care, well aware that the Park was of very special interest to naturalists in many fields.'

She is justifiably proud of his achievements and what follows shows how his vision has been rewarded.

The introductory material devotes a page and a half to the Kilvert connection (seven *Diary* entries refer to the Park) and to the contribution of the Woolhope Club to research. As Kilvertians will know Moccas Park was, from 1771, the seat of the Cornwall family. In that year Sir George Aymand inherited from his father a considerable fortune which enabled him to marry the heiress of a well-established Herefordshire (from Berrington) family, Catherine Cornwall, on condition that he change his name to hers, which he did! His grandson is the Rev. Sir George Cornwall of the *Diary* and rector of Moccas from 1861 until his death in 1908 (numerous *Diary* entries, chiefly in Vol. III). Earlier residents at Moccas were the de Fresnes and the Vaughans. Kilvert fondly imagined that he was connected with the former (Fresne < Fraxinus = Ash – see *Diary* for New Years Day 1878) – so, was his contentment at Clyro and Bredwardine nothing other than the satisfaction of atavistic longings fulfilled?

In 1962 the Estate passed to a cousin of the two bachelor sons of Sir George, Sir Geoffrey (1869-1951) and Sir William Cornwall (1871-1962), the aforementioned Richard Chester-Master.

I could go on for a long time about the merits of this book, but even then it would be impossible adequately to do justice to the work of its two editors, its 23 distinguished authors, the 50 or so illustrators and photographers (among whom Alfred Watkins – he of the *Old Straight Track*) not to mention the 150 photographs, numerous tables, charts and maps nor the 130 years of research (much of it by the Woolhope Club) which it draws on. The 29 Chapters include the historical context, the landscape and its trees, the flora and fauna, the estate management and conservation plus eight appendices listing the species to be found in the Park.

There is something for everyone here; for the Kilvertian, for those who love Herefordshire and this part of the Wye Valley, for the naturalist, the historian and the conservationist. It is a work for the specialist certainly but one for the general reader too for it is a wonderful book to dip into and browse through – although it must be said, not very manageable for reading in bed, the weight of its 300-odd pages would make your arms ache! At £20 including p. & p. it is a bargain. Order via Telelink, PO Box 100, Fareham, Hants PO14 2SX (Tel. 01329-331300, Fax 01329-330030: E-mail: reception@telelink.co.uk) or through booksellers quoting reference ISBN 185716 511X

Footnote:

In his foreword to the book Dr. George Peterken, OBE (the Nature Conservancy's woodland geologist) writes of his first visit to Moccas Park in August 1972:

As it happens, that first visit ... stays in my memory as much for people as for trees and wildlife. At the end of one day Paul (Paul Harding, one of the two editors) and I decided to visit Bredwardine church where we were amazed to see a large crowd walking out of the churchyard. This turned out to be the annual gathering of The Kilvert Society. This led me to Kilvert's magical but sad Diary and the magnificently evocative description of Moccas Park as it was in 1876, now an obligatory quote for all self-respecting woodland ecologists. To read his description while standing on the steep slopes of Moccas Park ... is to feel the continuity of place and the passing of generations.

Amen to that (Ed.)

Barry Smith (Abergavenny) reviews two recently published works on Wales which contain references to Kilvert.

Given the widespread membership of the Kilvert Society, it is likely that few members see the *Western Mail* and, in particular, its Saturday colour supplement. This is to be regretted as the latter contains an excellent weekly literary column by Kilvert Society life member, Meic Stephens, himself a renowned literary figure in both Welsh and English language circles in Wales. It is gratifying that in recent months, when reviewing books, he has mentioned two which, however tangentially, have reference to Kilvert and his *Diary*. Members of the Society may like to know of these.

***Letters from Wales* by Joan Abse (Seren, £14.95)** was reviewed by Meic Stephens in the context of reporting the work of women editors, prose writers and poets. In her introduction, the author recounts that she began to gather material for this collection of letters from Wales some years ago and 'began to see a kind of history of Wales appearing through the vivid disclosure of the letters I had already discovered'.

With an admixture of entries from journals or diaries, the author's *tour de force* is to present a vivid history of Wales down the ages, dividing the book into centuries, ranging from the thirteenth to the twentieth.

The book is a veritable roll-call of famous writers, politicians and thinkers of all kinds. Kilvert might have felt gratified to find himself sandwiched between Gerard Manley Hopkins and William Morris! There are five well-known entries from his *Diary*, taken from the years 1870 and 1871. He baptizes a baby in ice at Bettws, he visits Llewellyn's Cave with Morrell, he takes an ice-bath on Christmas Day, he is dazzled by the sight of the Black Mountains in snow and he visits St. David's with his father. Incidentally, it is tantalizing to know why the author chose these particular extracts when giving a compendious view of Wales and its history.

As inevitable foci in the book are major conflicts and the grand tour through North Wales beloved by Victorian men of letters and others, it is not surprising that the Radnorshire Kilvert country features little in the book. Shelley writes twice from Rhayader, commenting that 'This county of Wales is excessively grand.' Wordsworth writes from Radnor. However, whatever the writer or the scene, themes familiar in Kilvert emerge. Nathaniel Hawthorne, writing from North Wales, regrets that tourists do 'vulgarize' the scene – but adds, sagely, 'I suppose we did so, just like the others.'

***Wales – Land of Mystery and Magic* by Donald Gregory. (Carreg Galwch, £4.75)** is a very different kettle of fish but another good read, nonetheless. I originally felt put off by its somewhat corny title but Meic Stephens had drawn attention to its chapter on *The Solitary*, the Rev. John Price, whom Kilvert memorably met in 1872.

It is difficult to characterize the book but it is a kind of light pot-pourri of various aspects of Welsh history, the author wishing to 'spotlight personalities and situations which have excited him.' The range is wide, encompassing chapters as diverse as ones on the Druids, shrines and pilgrimages, medieval sundials and eisteddfodau down the ages.

The short chapter on *The Solitary* is entitled *A Poor Parish Priest* and, perhaps appositely, follows on the tale of another Price, Dr. William Price of Llantrisant, whose role was so crucial in the legalising of cremation. In the case of the Rev. John Price, the informed Kilvertian will, perhaps, learn nothing new, but for the newcomer to Kilvert, these few pages provide a useful synthesis of the known facts of the life of the Solitary, of Kilvert's own account and of the intriguing facts recorded by The Rev. David Edmondson-Owen, which appeared in the Kilvert Society's *Miscellany Two*.

Query – Is Donald Gregory correct to say that the Solitary ‘held six Welsh curacies’? I have a note of six curacies held by him – but those not in Wales.

A COUNTRY STORE POET

Ronald Watts, who spoke on ‘Plomer in South Africa’ at the AGM this year, had the following article published in *The Natal Witness* of 19th September 1998. It is reproduced by kind permission of the editor.

Few South Africans seem to have heard of William Plomer who died 25 years ago this month on September 20 1973. On a recent visit to Eshowe in Zululand, I found that the Fort Nongqayi Museum had not heard of him. When I visited the Entumeni Store, where he wrote his book *Turbott Wolfe*, the owners had not heard of him either. At the time it was published in 1926 his novel rocked South Africa partly because it promoted miscegenation as ‘the only way for Africa to be secured to the Africans.’ Plomer met leaders such as Manilal Gandhi and John Dube and later said he was ‘in complete agreement with ANC aims in South Africa.’

The first reviews of *Turbott Wolfe* produced an ‘uproar’, ‘particularly in Natal’, according to Laurens van der Post who, along with Roy Campbell, was a close friend of Plomer. Van der Post was then working in Durban. One letter he found commented that the book was ‘not cricket’ and several papers had ‘angry editorials’. The new editor of *The Natal Witness*, Desmond Young, gave one of the very few favourable reviews. Letters from such readers as ‘Mother of Five’ and ‘Pro Bono Publico’ supported the angry editors, according to Van der Post.

William Plomer was born in Pietersburg in 1903, was educated at Rugby School in England and left South Africa for good at the age of 23. He is claimed by both South Africa and England as one of their ‘men of letters’. Dr. Stephen Gray, former Professor of English at the Rand Afrikaans University, states that he was ‘probably the finest South African lyric poet of the period between 1920 and 1945’. The Oxford University Press included him along with H.E. Bates, Graham Greene, Evelyn Waugh and Virginia Woolf in its *Modern English Short Stories*. In 1953 he was awarded the Queen’s Gold Medal for Poetry and immediately after his death, the Whitbread Literary Award.

One admirer of Plomer was Nadine Gordimer who described his Zululand ‘country store’ book, started when he was a teenager, as ‘the work of an angry young man’. Events have shown his voice to have been prophetic, echoing louder and louder from legislation to bloodshed, down the years.’ Although his first book wasn’t banned, she believes that some libraries ‘locked it up’ and for years it was out of print. In a poem Roy Campbell wrote:

*‘Plomer, ‘twas you, though a boy in age,
Awoke a sleepy continent to rage.’*

Since Plomer wrote his book on thin paper with a pencil, it is surprising that it got published at the first attempt. In between his writing career he acted as literary adviser to a major British publisher.

One of his claims to fame was that he discovered and saw the potential of Fleming’s first James Bond novel. He wrote several autobiography volumes. His claim to be considered South African is justified by Michael Chapman in *A Century of South African Poetry* because he, with Roy Campbell, ‘showed some evidence of a commitment to South African literature whether living in England, Portugal or Japan’

The story of how Van der Post and Plomer visited Japan in 1926 is remarkable. The invitation came from the crew of a ship who they had saved from an embarrassing situation in an exclusive, whites-only restaurant. The trip involved several weeks at sea and when the ship returned to Durban, only Van der Post came back. Plomer stayed for three years and then spent almost all the next 44 years in England.

The only return trip to South Africa Plomer made was in 1956 when he attended a conference. Norma Saunders, who grew up in the Plomer Store after it was bought by her father, Sonny Bishop, remembers his visit to Eshowe and their store in Entumeni. The store came with a small farm, like other ‘native trading stations’ throughout Zululand. Because they had been advised that William had something wrong with his eyes, his parents had bought the store and farm to provide a career. He was sent to Molteno in the Eastern Cape to learn farming. After the publication of his book, his parents wound up the store and returned to Britain.

Saunders remembers that the Plomers were noted for being stand-offish and a cut above the average trader. They had a particularly elaborate pit latrine which visitors made a point of using. Plomer himself admits that among local whites they

were 'derisively' known as 'the Royal Family', partly because they owned a car. During the Prince of Wales' visit in 1926 they were further isolated when it was found that the prince's secretary 'had married a cousin'. He claims the local Zulu people 'soon understood that we didn't intend to exploit or take any unfair advantage of them and that we liked them and enjoyed their company ... the place became almost like a club.'

The native trading stations were in effect sub stations of the colonial government in Natal when they were started. With 10 or 100 acres of land they were given out on 99-year leases which are about to come to an end. The lease at Entumeni is expiring in 2004 but it may be possible to extend it. Freehold was not available in the 1900s because it was unalienated land. The trading station often served as a local court and post office. This has been a subject of controversy at Entumeni since the post office was moved to the new sugar mill. After recent protests it has been moved back to the old store.

Professor Peter Alexander, Plomer's biographer, now lives in Sydney, Australia. He never met Plomer though he 'knew his companion Charles Erdman and many of his literary friends'. He never visited the store at Entumeni and is 'a little doubtful about declaring the store a national monument' because it's been considerably changed since the Plomers were there. The store is, in fact, now a children's day centre and the old trader's glass-lined office is occupied by the head-mistress. Stephen Gray reports that he found Plomer's notes, fragments and sketches on the farm in Molteno and these are now housed in the National English Documentation Centre in Grahamstown.

While the Eshowe Museum staff were unaware of Plomer and his Entumeni connection, until a recent visit by Gray, they have already been very active in the area. An old Lutheran Church at the Entumeni Mission is being restored using funds raised through the museum. The interactions between traders, farmers, missionaries and the local Zulu people feature prominently in *Turbott Wolfe*.

In his biography, Plomer described 'a stately old Lutheran mission, a Norwegian ... what used to be called 'a gentleman of the old school' who was helped 'by two or three Norwegian spinsters'. Mabel, a missionary who marries Zachary Msomi, an educated Zulu, provides the climax in *Turbott Wolfe* which so upset white South Africans in 1926.

Along with Roy Campbell and Laurens van der Post, William Plomer made an important impact on South Africa at a time when the country was moving inexorably towards apartheid.

Plomer was reprimanded by Gordimer for deserting the country of his birth. According to the *Dictionary of South African Biography*, which includes Campbell but excludes Plomer, the closure of their joint magazine, *Voorslag*, had much to do with their 'disgusted self-exile'. The owners of the magazine, which was published in Durban for only a few months, 'took offence at the advanced views expressed ... and the hostile remarks of some Natal journalists'. We can be reasonably certain that these young men could not have managed to halt the march to increasing segregation and racial division.

Plomer needs to be remembered for what he achieved in his short time in South Africa. His limited fame as a teenage author is an encouragement to other budding writers. Probably the best memorial is for people to read his books and students of English at several universities already study *Turbott Wolfe*.

Anthony Ackerman, who is a play and TV script writer based in Johannesburg, has written a play about Plomer and Campbell. He has also adapted *Turbott Wolfe* for an SABC 3 television production. But perhaps at least a plaque at the old store would help to remind people of a young man's remarkable achievement.

MIRA (?) De WINTON

By Rosalind Bolton (Wellesbourne)

Perhaps one day everyone who appears in the *Diary* will be fully identified. Here is a contribution towards that end.

Mr. Grice's *Who's Who in Kilvert's Diary* mentions a headstone at Llanigon to Walter Lechmere Thomas (1878-1892) 'presumably the son of Lechmere Thomas who married Mira (?) De Winton and died of cholera in Ceylon in 1878'.

I know a little more, all due to my grandmother, born Katharine Baker, who kept a family book where she carefully transcribed details of her relations. 'Mira' De Winton and her twelve brothers and sisters were third cousins, but the net stretched wide.

First of all, I am doubtful that she was called Mira. My grandmother records her as Annina Margaret. Did Plomer misread the entry for 3rd September 1878? 'Mina', or even more differently, 'Nina', would fit better as a short version of her very uncommon name. She was a daughter of the Revd. and later Ven. Henry De Winton of Boughrood and his wife (my grandmother's relation) Thomasina Septima Collinson (b.1827) from a clerical family in Gateshead. 'Septima' falls short of the truth: she was the tenth daughter, and fourteenth child.

Annina was born in 1859, and so married, and widowed, very young. Walter Lechmere Thomas, dying in his teens, was indeed her only child. My grandmother gives her a second husband, called Edward Thomas, perhaps yet another of the Thomas clan, even her brother-in-law.

Kilvert of course mentions her father frequently, and once her younger sister Isabel (b. 1863) and her older brother Fred (b. 1852), later to be Venerable in his turn as Archdeacon of Colombo.

There was a further De Winton/Collinson link. Thomasina's older sister Julia Cecilia (b. 1812) was the wife of Walter De Winton of Maesllwch Castle, known but not much liked by Kilvert. After his death in middle age, she remarried and wrote novels – the title *Margaret and her Bridesmaids*, is recorded, and perhaps somewhere in Hay it is waiting to be read.

IN THE STEPS OF FRANCIS KILVERT: OLD HAY REVISITED

By Karl Showler (Hay-on-Wye)

The Kilvert Walk I led during the Millennium Hay Literary Festival proved most popular with sufficient bookings for it to be repeated three times.

We went on a gentle walk in the footsteps of Francis Kilvert; he knew well the western side of the town of 'The Hay' as it was called locally. The Walk stopped at twelve places of interest. All except the Bevan Memorial must have been known to Kilvert even if they are not mentioned in the surviving text of the *Diary*.

The aim of the Walk was to explore a part of 'The Hay' which Francis Kilvert visited during his time at Clyro. Although based there he came regularly to 'The Hay' to assist the Rev. William Bevan's ministry team and to visit any of his own parishioners who were in Hay Union Poor Law Institution or the adjacent alms-houses. At that time 'The Hay' was an important local centre with its extensive railway station on the Brecon to Hereford line, the telegraph and post offices, bank and markets.

The Walk left the Festival Ground by the lane to Hay Common then turned in at the gate to the cemetery, which is one of the best kept open spaces in the area. Kilvert refers to its opening and dedication on the 20th July 1870 by the Right Reverend Charles Alford, Bishop of Victoria, Hong Kong.

From the cemetery entrance the Walk went up the Yew Avenue passing the graves of those German and Italian prisoners of the Second World War who died in the area as well as of one British soldier.

The final stop in the Avenue was by the fine Celtic Cross put up in 1908 dedicated to the Rev. William Latham Bevan who was a key figure in Victorian Hay and for over 50 years a reforming influence, a teetotaler, educator and also an author of books on geology and church history. The Bevan family leased Hay Castle from their cousins.

From the Cross the Walk returned to the Brecon Road to the set of Harley alms-houses built in 1836. Here Kilvert knew Mrs. Esther Price aged 69, a widow from the hamlet of Colva. Esther was the grandmother of 'slender' Marianne Price of Chain Alley, a slum terrace which in those days formed part of Newport Street. Here tightly-packed cottages ran from Wyeford Road to the Dulas Brook, they were soon to be pulled down to widen Newport Street. The remainder of the site called by Hay folk 'Cats' Park was then planted with trees.

Francis Kilvert saw Marianne Price regularly and he was pleased to note on a return visit to Hay in 1876 that the girl had become housemaid to Mrs. Page 'the lawyers'.

The walk crossed the Brecon Road to what is now the Masonic Lodge. It was in Kilvert's time the local National School of the Church of England, built in 1827 for 300 children.

Kilvert knew 26-year-old Mr. Alan Barrett, the headmaster, who had been appointed in 1864 with his wife Mary, aged 30, serving alongside him as mistress.

On 12th July 1870 the School was 'inspected' by the Rev. J.W.D. Hernaman of Malvern Link, who by the end of the century became the Chief Inspector of Schools for England and Wales. When the Barretts retired in 1891 they set up a private school in the town.

After leaving the Masonic Lodge the Walk turned the corner from the Brecon Road into St. Mary's Road where, opposite, was a very smart little house which had been the original Methodist chapel. During the Kilvert years the Methodists split into two churches. The Wesleyan, who were almost Anglicans and the Primitives who were staunch Independents. Both groups built new chapels in the Oxford Road reflecting their theological views. The Wesleyan building is now a shop opposite the main car park entrance; the Primitive chapel is further down Oxford Road continuing today as an evangelical congregation.

The next stop in St. Mary's Road was opposite the Gwynn Alms-houses, founded in 1699 and built in 1702 on land at the back of what became Chain Alley. As the years passed the original building fell into such gross disrepair that it was without any occupants before being sold and the alms-house rebuilt on the St. Mary's Road in 1878.

The Walk then turned left past some very old cottages and at the next corner turned again to arrive outside the Hay Union Poor Law Institution. It was built in 1837 as a modest stone classical building in the form of a Lorraine Cross.

As the school adjoined the Union Institution Mr. Bevan had a gateway made so that child inmates could attend without going through the streets. Bevan met opposition to the education of these children, and even Kilvert had reservations when he was vicar of Bredwardine over the educational work with the poor by the Jarvis Trust of which he was then an ex-officio member.

The Poor Law Institution provided very basic accommodation; the able-bodied being expected to work in the extensive grounds where the modern allotments are, adjoining 'Cartref' the Home for the elderly. The Welsh system of poor relief gave much more outrelief and therefore had fewer residents than in the English system.

In Kilvert's time Mr. Penrose was Master of the Institution but as, on 15th April 1870, Mr. Penrose was on holiday, Kilvert had his people to himself so he was able to explain to them the meaning of Easter.

In a typical aside Kilvert records the duping of Mr. Penrose by his friends with a fake coin they had made and then hidden in a burial mound excavation (see *Diary* for June Morrow 1871).

From the Union Institution the Walk turned back to St. Mary's Parish Church, rebuilt in 1834 in a well-proportioned Regency style. The total rebuild was part funded by the Rev. Humphrey Allen who was then in charge of the Parish. The gallery on the north and west of the nave allows everyone present to see and hear the preacher who stands in a fine marble pulpit that would have been used by Kilvert. The organ was added in 1854.

St. Mary's Church has changed little over the years so today we find this church very much as it was during Kilvert's ministry although it now contains memorial brasses dedicated to the Bevan family members and a small chapel in memory of those who died in the two World Wars.

On 15th July 1870 Francis Kilvert described one of the last burials in the churchyard, that of Elizabeth Banham; he noted how difficult it had been to find a space for her grave.

Leaving St. Mary's Church the Walk went down the path between the Login Brook and the churchyard wall where winter heliotrope plants were visible by the railway bridge. Winter heliotrope was cultivated in Kilvert's lifetime as a greenhouse plant noted for its perfumed flowers, it is still found in or near many local 19th-century parsonages.

In the distance over the river is the site of 'Wye Cliffe'. This was the home of Mr. and Mrs. Crichton where, Kilvert noted, their children performed elaborate charades and the local gentry took part in archery on the lawns. Kilvert also recorded fishing stories about the deep Steeple Pool below the church.

Turning back up the new path on the town side of the Login Brook the Walk passed below the Motte a large earthen mound on which would have stood a wooden castle. This feature is not mentioned in the surviving *Diary* but was one which would have excited Kilvert's archaeological interest.

Crossing Church Lane through an iron kissing gate the Walk continued down into the Swan Dingle to stop at the Swan Well. This spring is not mentioned in the *Diary*, but it was a source of drinking water for the Castle. Swan Well water is held in high esteem by local people who still tend the site.

The Walk's final stop was at the end of the dingle path where it comes out on the main road adjoining the first Harley houses built in 1832.

The Festival Walks were followed by one for children in the senior class of Hay Primary School and another for those attending a coffee morning in aid of the Hay and District Community Support and Volunteer Bureau, a cause that I feel would have had the strong support of our Diarist.*

* This walk was joined by Miss Lisa Kilvert from Sydney, who is a distant relative of R.F.K. via his grand-father.

THE ABSENT BEST MAN
by John Hodkin (Cumbria)

Church weddings these days are such meticulously organised events that it would throw things into disarray if the best man did not turn up.

Yet this is just what happened on Saturday, 15th August 1874, when Kilvert officiated at the wedding of his cousin, Frederick Kilvert (1839-1905) at Bath to a Miss Emily Mary Ellis, at 9.15 a.m., assisted by a Mr. Unwin.

The best man, Mr. Byrom, overslept himself and did not appear till the end of the ceremony, Kilvert writes. He rounds off his brief matter-of-fact account of the proceedings by saying that *the wedding was ostentatiously early and quiet and studiously as unlike a wedding as possible*.

Obviously someone hurriedly stood in for the absent Mr. Byrom and performed his duties very efficiently, though one wonders what happened about the ring. A best man's duties must have been infinitely less arduous than they are nowadays.

I recently looked at a book devoted entirely to the best man's functions. Anyone carrying these out to the letter would not only not oversleep the night before, but would find it very hard to sleep at all.

It is a pity that Mr. Byrom, whose only appearance in the *Diary* this is, did not follow the stirring advice given by his namesake, John Byrom, in his carol *Christians Awake*.

KILVERT AT THE DOME

The Lockwoods recently visited the Dome and were surprised and delighted when their daughter, Laura, spotted on the 'top shelf' of a display of what were, presumably, significant literary works of the Millennium, the representation of one of our favourite books.



Apparently this huge, ever-changing display in the Learning Zone was a structure about 40 feet high which became now a library, now a factory, now a forest. David estimates that the spine of each 'book' was about 6 feet tall.

It is reassuring to discover that the Dome's organisers do, at least, have some taste

Ed.

A KILVERTIAN, PRIVATE EYE AND THE OLDIE

I happened to be reading an article (Private Passions* by Humphrey Carpenter) in the *Sunday Times* of 9th July describing the genesis of the satirical magazine *Private Eye* when I was surprised to come across the name of Lawrence Le Quesne, very senior Kilvertian, a vice-president of the Society and author of the excellent *After Kilvert*.

It seems that Lawrence, as a young history master at Shrewsbury School, was instrumental in encouraging his pupil, later one of the *Eye's* founders, Richard Ingrams, into journalism. Spotting the Ingrams talent Lawrence made him editor of the school magazine *The Salopian*.

Ingrams 'intruding into its stuffy pages', responded by creating a Christmas 1954 issue that included a mock 16th-century spoof in which the term 'pseud' appears, a term of abuse which Ingrams believes to be his own invention.

'Although critical of the school', the article continues, 'Ingrams held or was elected to a number of senior positions there ... an indication that boys as well as masters approved of him.'

Richard Ingrams is now editor of *The Oldie*.

Ed.

* Private Passions was an extract from Humphrey Carpenter's recent book, *That was Satire that was*, and the above quotations are reproduced by kind permission of the publishers, Victor Gollancz.

OBITUARIES

We record with regret the deaths of :

Mr. H.C. Davis of Upper Hartfield, Sussex, a life member since 1971 and Mr. A.W. Moss of Painswick, Gloucester, a member since 1972. We offer our sincere condolences to their families and friends.

PUBLICATIONS NEWS

Members are reminded of the proposed publication of *Kilvert: The Hon. 'less Heart* by John Toman. I have now been advised that publication of this book will be going ahead. All those who have sent cheques will receive an acknowledgement in early September. Anyone who still wishes to place an early order can do so by sending a cheque for £12.00 (which covers postage and packing) to Logaston Press at the address given below. Please send a SAE for an acknowledgement. The full publication price will be £12.95.

The Logaston Press, Logaston, Woonton, Almeley, Herefordshire HR3 6QH Tel: 01544-327344

BOOKS FOR SALE

The following second-hand books are for sale (all paperback) please contact the publications manager.

The abridged version of the *Diary* (Cape 1964)

Penguin edition (1977) of same.

Francis Kilvert by David Lockwood (Seren Books 1990) pre-index edition.

Contributions for the March edition of the Journal should reach the editor no later than 14th January 2001.

DATA PROTECTION ACT 1984. 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.
