

THE
JOURNAL
OF
THE KILVERT SOCIETY



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THE KILVERT SOCIETY

*Founded in 1948 to foster an interest in the Reverend Francis Kilvert,
his work, his Diary and the countryside he loved*

Registered Charity No. 1103815

www.thekilvertsociety.org.uk

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Forthcoming Events 2020

Events are subject to change should this be required by current health regulations. Please help us to keep in touch with you by making sure that we have your contact details up to date including, if you have it, an email address. Send your details to the Secretary: jeanbrimson@hotmail.com

Saturday 26 September

Visit to Aberedw *the famous rocky wooded gorge, the Edw and the Wye and the meeting of the sweet waters* (Vol 1, p60). Meet at 12 noon at the Erwood Craft Centre, situated just off the A470 between Bronllys and Builth Wells. Travel by car through Aberedw village to Rhulen; picnic lunch (bring your own). Walk along the river Edw and an optional extra walk to Llewellyn's cave. Tea provided (£4.50 per head: pay on the day).

Sunday 27 September

11am. Meet at St Michaels and All Angels at Clyro for the morning service followed by an organ recital by renowned organist Hilary Wetton and buffet lunch (all to be confirmed).

Friday 16 October

7pm. Our rearranged AGM at the Bishop's Palace, Hereford. Buffet supper and an audio-visual presentation of old favourites.

Saturday 17 October

Morning seminar 10.00 for 10.30am at the Pilgrim Hotel, Much Birch. Speaker: Patrick Furley presenting 'A Victorian Magic Lantern Show'.

Annual dinner 6.30 for 7pm at the same venue.

2021 dates for your diary: all details to be confirmed

Wednesday 10 March – visit

Friday 29 April – Saturday 30 April – AGM weekend

Saturday 26 June – visit

Saturday 25 September – visit

The Treasurer would like to thank all who responded to his appeal to change their standing orders to the new subscription rates. There are still a few members yet to make the change.

Contributions to the *Journal* should be sent to the Hon Editor by post or email. Address above
Deadlines: 1st January and 1st July

Front cover: *The Arrow Valley in Summer*, photographed by Richard Parker during the walk he describes in his article for this *Journal*.

Back cover: *View of the Gower Coast, where Kilvert spent three happy holidays.* Photo: Susan Keen

From the Editor

This *Journal* brings you a walk in the valley of the Arrow, and a holiday at Gower. These are an alternative in print to our spring and summer events and excursions, which had to be cancelled. I hope they will give you a sense of Kilvert country, which is there, even when we are regretfully absent.

In April, Jeff Marshall sent me a letter from the *Daily Telegraph* in which the writer noted 'this country has not been so quiet since Francis Kilvert wrote his diaries in the 1870s.' Awareness of birdsong has been frequently mentioned. There is an entry in Kilvert's *Diary* which is not as often quoted as it should be, because Plomer omitted it and it only appears in the April-June 1870 notebook. On 7 May, Kilvert was walking home after spending half the night nursing a sick horse. He heard cuckoos, owls and the cock crowing, then

At 3.15 the birds woke and burst into song, full chorus almost simultaneously. I never heard birds sing like that before. I did not know they could sing so. No one who has not heard the first marvellous rush of song when the birds awake and begin to sing on a fine warm May morning can have any conception what it is like, or how birds can sing. No idea can be formed from the singing of birds in the day time of what they can do in the early spring morning. It was wonderful, ravishing, passing anything that I could have imagined. Round Cae Mawr and in the great pear orchard behind the school, the whole air was a chorus of song and the air shook thick with rapture and melody. The air was so full of sound that there was scarcely room for another bird to get a note in. From every tree and bush the music poured and swelled and every bird was singing his loudest and sweetest... Truly, the time of the singing of birds is come.

Even in the midst of his anxiety and fatigue, Kilvert was able to observe the beauties of the natural world around him, and to write about it.

From the Secretary

Like of all us, the Society has been in lockdown, a state of hibernation since March. Personally, I took the opportunity to re-read the three-volume set of the *Diary* one after the other, something I had not done for some time. It always amazes me that after all these years of being a Kilvert devotee something pops up in the *Diary* that you were unaware of or puts a new slant on a situation.

Hibernation has meant the cancellation of our March & June events. As you are aware, the AGM weekend has been re-scheduled for the weekend Friday and Saturday 16/17th October. If you have not booked your place at the annual dinner it is not too late to do so: please contact me if you have lost the details, but I must know by 30 September at the very latest.

The Autumn Event will be at Aberedw on Saturday 26 September and will be led by our Chairman Rob Graves; it will finish with an al fresco tea! On Sunday 27 September hopefully, we can join the congregation at St. Michaels and All Angels, Clyro for the 11.00 am service followed by an organ recital, given by Hilary Wetton and then a buffet lunch in the village hall. As we go to print however, I await confirmation from Clyro that this will still take place.

Events for 2021 have yet to be decided and arrangements will be advised to you all as soon as possible. Proposed dates are in the Forthcoming Events column.

Some good news: since the New Year there has been a significant increase in new members, this follows, I believe, the Radio 4 excerpts from the diary during Christmas week and also the re-publication of the abridged Penguin-Random House paperback edition. Publicity is obviously the answer for recruitment!

I take this opportunity to welcome those new members and I hope they get many years of enjoyment and fellowship being members of The Kilvert Society.

Contents



Inside Front Cover

Officials of the Society
and dates for your diary

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

FEATURES

- 3 A Walk to the River Arrow
Retracing Kilvert's footsteps
by Richard Parker
- 11 A Souvenir from Gower
A gift of photos drew the editor's attention to one of Kilvert's less known expeditions
- 13 Kilvert: One Hundred and Fifty Years on
by David Gouldstone
- 17 Dr Colborne of Chippenham
by Margaret Collins
- 18 Unmarked graves
A footnote by Mary Steele
- 19 Edward Humphries of Hardenhuish
Teresa Williams tells us another life story from Wiltshire
- 21 Trevethin: Memories of an Exile and the Search for the Railway Tavern
by Jeff Marshall
- 23 How Solitary was the 'Solitary'?
by Mary Steele
- 25 Flooding in Kilvert Country
The floods early this year got the editor thinking about floods that are described in the Diary



27 BITS & PIECES

28 IN THE MEDIA

31 A TRIBUTE TO ANNE WHEELDON

32 OBITUARIES

Mr Jack Fryer, Mrs Sallie Morgan, Mrs Mary Ridger

Inside Back Cover

Society publications and other recommended books
about Francis Kilvert

From the Chairman

I hope that you are all as well as can be expected after what has been an extremely difficult period for everyone. We, the Kilvert Society, have had our own problems, having to postpone events, committee meetings and of course the AGM weekend, which will, all being well, now take place in October.

Earlier this year all our members will have received an invitation signed by Alan Brimson and myself to fill various posts on the committee. This was met with a disappointing response. In many ways this is understandable and is a problem shared with other societies which are all experiencing the inevitable problems arising from an ageing membership,

including a reluctance among members to assume any long-lasting commitments. However, I feel I must point out that the present committee, which under Alan's leadership, has done such sterling work for the Society, cannot be expected to carry on for ever and is always in need of new blood and new ideas. The current situation is that if volunteers are not forthcoming to replace retiring committee members our Society itself is at risk of folding. No society can function without a working committee. I would like to end with a plea to anyone still privately considering the possibility of contributing to the committee's work to put their thoughts into action and to contact either myself or Alan. Your contribution would be greatly appreciated. Please remember, to paraphrase the words of the famous poster: Your Society needs you!



As we have not been able to have any excursions so far this year, I thought I would include a reminder of the hugely successful Snodhill Picnic last June. How lucky we were, with the event and the weather.

Photo: Mike Rose

A Walk to the River Arrow

Retracing Kilvert's footsteps

By Richard Parker

The idea for this walk came in February 2019 after I had started re-reading the *Diary* and Kilvert's account of a *lovely warm morning* in the same month (26 February 1870) which chimed with the unusually mild weather lately experienced in the Home Counties. As that *Diary* entry contains an account of a long walk (to Colva) and I had not previously been to the Clyro district, I thought, why not start with something ambitious? Calculations indicated that Colva was perhaps a village too far, so I settled on reaching the River Arrow, which I estimated would involve a round trip of about 12 miles. So which route to take? The *Diary* entry already alluded to does not specify the route from Clyro to Court Evan Gwynne but it may be guessed and from thereon it is easy to decipher the journey. Kilvert made further journeys to the Arrow on 13 October 1871 when his destination was the Cloggau and on 8 June 1872 in miserably wet conditions for a fishing trip with his father.

I don't much enjoy walking on tarmac but to be true to Kilvert, I had little choice but to stick to public roads, on what would have been the rough tracks he tramped in his day and given the narrowness of some of these lanes, I didn't relish the prospect of meeting modern day traffic. My route would be via Clyro Pitch up Bird's Nest lane past Lower Wern y Pentre, then taking a detour towards Ty Pella to glimpse Clyro Hill before turning back past Pen y cae, Newgate and Dol- y- Cannau crossroads and then climbing up Green Lane and onto Newchurch Hill, thereafter descending by way of Fualt farmhouse to the River Arrow where Kilvert initially tried unsuccessfully to cross on 26 February 1870. Ideally I would prefer to illustrate with maps but to show in sufficient detail and size would demand excessive space. I therefore prevail upon those readers interested enough to refer to modern OS maps and more particularly old OS maps available online via www.old-maps.co.uk or www.maps.nls.uk - the former generally allows seamless viewing, for example,



River Arrow.

Photo: Richard Parker



Bird's Nest Lane.

Photo: Richard Parker

the 1888-9 1:2500 OS map allows such viewing in great detail all the way from Clyro to the Arrow.

My visit did not take place until well into June and from my accommodation in Hay on Wye, I drove to Clyro, parked up and to an aptly Kilvertian chorus of jackdaws *chacking* I started to don walking kit, only for it to start raining, not heavily, but an irritation after a sunny start. However, the drizzle soon petered out and with the time at 10.15am I started off from an elevation of c.330 ft, soon climbing up the disconcertingly steep rise of the Pitch and past the turning to Penlan Farm, eventually down into the dip by Court Evan Gwynne, noting a very faded footpath signpost on the right but pleased to see a clearly marked footpath opposite (to Great Gwernfythen). The lane then rises between trees and bushes with the pleasing gurgle of a brook sounding from a dingle on the right; towards the top of the lane, I noted the left hand bank attains some height, recalling the *Diary* entry of 13 September 1874 when Kilvert heard his name mentioned by some women walking on the field path above.

At an elevation of 600 ft. the start of Bird's Nest lane is reached. I was particularly keen to walk this lane, given the magical description in the *Diary* entry of 9 July 1870, special for Kilvert because of its association with Gipsy Lizzie. The *Diary* paints a picture of the lane almost as a green tunnel and I was well prepared to be bitterly disappointed but pleasant to record that, although no longer the *overbowed* thoroughfare of old, in one or two places are hints of its former self, as suggested, I hope, in my photograph. Most appropriately, small birds were flitting about but very soon another shower had me reaching for the rainwear again and then on up past the modern habitations of the cottages. At the top of the lane Little Wern y Pentre lies on the right and a turn to the right is taken heading almost due north and at the next dog leg right, the former abode *Tall Trees* has long

disappeared; Kilvert mentioned (16 March 1870) that the lane between these two dwellings was notorious for its deep mud and pools of water – gladly no such impediment for me now. Outside the knee of this bend, in Kilvert's time, a field path formed a hypotenuse to the right-angled triangle of the lanes and I'm sure Kilvert (and Gipsy Lizzie) would have used this short cut if going to or from the Clyro Hill direction (more of this later). I would have greatly welcomed the chance to shorten my journey and although this footpath is still shown on the modern OS map, it is not depicted as a public right of way and at the location I saw no indication of any access to it, so the long way round for me! The road forming the 'base' of the triangle was somewhat wider than hitherto experienced and fortunate also because for the first time I encountered some traffic, mainly four wheel drive types. Luckily being a good straight stretch I was given plenty of warning of their approach.

Vicar's Hill – Kilvert's name for part of Clyro Hill – figures quite prominently in the *Diary* so I determined to make a detour to see it and instead of taking the right hand lane at the next fork, took the left towards Tybella ('Ty-pellaf' on old maps). Now why did the Diarist use this term *Vicar's Hill*? (he also used *Clyro Hill* sometimes). The Tithe register of c.1840 mentions Vicar's Hill as specifically comprising fields 902 and 1344 on the accompanying map¹, being fields owned by the Church, the land use described as 'pasture'. These were two sizeable adjacent areas to the north of the lane at Tybella and east of the continuing northbound lane. The configuration of the lanes here explains, I believe, why Kilvert, more than once, used the expression *round the corner of Vicar's Hill*. On the modern OS map a public footpath is shown across Clyro Hill from the lane near Tybella but I saw no such access. A short stroll brought me back onto the main route and at 11.25, I arrived outside Pen y cae farm, elevation 1,138 ft.





Cwmila Bridge.

Photo: Richard Parker

From here I could enjoy the sunshine and level walking with swallows and house martins swooping overhead but, not far past Ty-nesa, I was less pleased by failing to find a right of way giving access to Clyro Hill, as marked on the modern map. A gradual descent took me on past Ty-mawr to a somewhat sharper

descent past Newgate down towards Dol-y-Cannau crossroads (the B4594 junction), just before which I was looking for a spot where Kilvert, on 13 October 1871, chose to have his bacon sandwich lunch. He records that he stopped by *the Milw bridge at the meeting of the three parishes* – as Green lane is nearby



Start of Green Lane.

Photo: Richard Parker

this could only be the bridge over the Cwmila Brook near the Dolbedwyn Motte (Castle Tump). The term ‘Milw’ does not appear on any map at my disposal and at first I thought it must be a mistranscription by Plomer’s staff but the word appears no less than four times in the *Diary* and once in the Sandford notebook² so I cannot fathom why Kilvert used this term. So what attracted Kilvert to have his lunch here? It is a pleasant but not now particularly picturesque spot; there is the tarmac road, modern brick and concrete bridge, telegraph wires, barbed wire fence, none of which would have been here in 1870 – one can speculate that there was then a track over a wooden bridge with more trees and hedges flanking the lane. His walk from Clyro school started at *about 12.20* and he arrived for his lunch *hungry as a hunter* – I am not surprised because it took me an hour and 50 minutes. Now, I am no slouch but no way can I claim to be a young man; furthermore, I was delayed by rainwear changes, map consultations and the taking of photos. Kilvert did stop for a chat on the way but even if we allow him a nippy one and a half hours, it meant he didn’t lunch until 1.50. My arrival here at 12.05 meant my lunch would have to wait.

The nearby tree covered Castle Tump – the Dolbedwyn medieval earthwork³ – surprisingly, is not mentioned in Plomer, other than a passing reference to *Dolbedwyn Mount* on 14 March 1873 which might well be the same feature. However, in the Harvey Notebook⁴, in the entry for 13 June 1870 on a return journey from the Glasnant, Kilvert and his brother Perch rest *opposite Dolbedwyn Mound*: confirmation indeed that Kilvert was aware of it. A little further on, the other side of the road, is a slightly smaller mound that looks for all the world like another earthwork; it was marked as such on the 1880 OS map but early in the twentieth century was rejected as a natural feature³. From an elevation of 850 ft. at the bridge it is uphill all the way to Newchurch Hill (highest point of my route at 1,360 ft.). No wonder Kilvert talks of *up the long Green Lane*. Right from the start I felt its steepness and further up, where it narrowed alarmingly, I prayed I’d not encounter any boy (or girl) racers as there was little or no room for escape. Above Llanoley Farm and Pentwyn, the last section of the lane becomes a narrow track flanked by high shrubs and trees, with here and there, remnants of tarmac showing but even so, for the



Dolbedwyn Mound.

Photo: Richard Parker



Gate to Newchurch Hill.

Photo: Richard Parker

first time, I got a sense of how things might have appeared in the 1870s. The lane terminates at a gate with the common land of Newchurch Hill beyond, the gate can be opened (with some effort) with the modern incarnation of Green Lane Cottage on the left. This is where on 26 February 1870, Kilvert called in to Mrs Jones (Ann Jones, a daughter of Morgan the old soldier), hoping to find ten year old Abiasula Price (whose home was nearby), who seems to have been a lassie in the Gipsy Lizzie mould but instead found twelve year old Price Price, Abiasula's brother. He volunteered to act as guide, firstly passing his own humble abode *the Fforest* but to Kilvert's great disappointment, Abiasula was not found.

Continuing onto the moor, I could now enjoy the luxury of grass underfoot, free from the worry of careless motorists. Pressing on to the high ground, I wanted to locate the site of *the Fforest* which had not been inhabited since old Mrs. Price's death in 1885 – no trace of it now remains. I knew it was originally situated in a field but some remote fields seemed too distant and low down: I should have consulted my map. At 12.45 I was hungry enough to stop for lunch, a lonely and exposed place but a row of bracken bales formed a perfect windbreak. After half an hour's rest and initial confusion as to which path to take, on checking map and compass, I could see that the fields spied earlier were indeed the right ones where *the Fforest* once stood. From here I took the low path skirting the moor and remembering it was around here that Kilvert heard a grouse crow, never having heard this before. The path swung left and descended past the old quarry, clearly hand tool excavated from its small size; the steep sided ridge of Yr Allt (Kilvert's *the Reallt*) clearly visible in the distance.

Next a view of the Arrow valley⁵ and *the Fualt* farm ('Veaultt' on modern maps); down to field level and a tall hedge bounded footpath leads towards the farmhouse, where to my surprise and dismay, it revealed itself as abandoned and ruinous, presenting a somewhat spooky appearance even in bright sunshine. I was momentarily startled to see slight movement at an upstairs window but this proved to be a reflection from a loose pane of glass stirred by the breeze. Kilvert mentions this farmhouse a few times but only in passing and is obviously not acquainted with its occupants. Coincidentally, he does describe the dwelling as *the old ruinous house* (13 October 1871), so it must have been restored or rebuilt later. In the farmyard area and clearly still in use for livestock, old iron railings presented a barrier and with no obvious means of opening, I had to climb over in somewhat precarious fashion before reaching the road which was taken a short distance in an easterly direction to reach the footpath leading to the River Arrow. This a rather rough affair made worse by the trampling of cattle (although I didn't see any) and lower down became more rutted, muddy and puddled. Enduring the squelching, I at last got to the river, the time 13.50. This was my destination and the place where Kilvert and Price Price had such trouble getting across after finding the waters too deep. There was no footbridge in their day and my reason for believing this was their intended first crossing point is that the path I followed existed then and led to a ford here; also it is the logical course to take for their onward journey for the footpath flanking Yr Allt. To cross the river, they diverted upstream above the confluence with the Glasnant, using a hurdle to bridge the latter and jumping the Arrow. I would have liked to find these places but private land intervened and anyway, I felt it was time to head back.



Site of the Fforest.

Photo: Richard Parker



The Fualt.

Photo: Richard Parker

All went well until I reached the near-summit of Newchurch Hill, where the profusion of paths led me astray. I soon realised I was heading in the wrong direction (I would certainly not use the term 'lost') and having spotted a small tarn, I found this on my 1:25000 OS map, which showed me the way to go. Obviously, this can be a confusing place and I imagine best avoided in misty conditions. Good progress was made back to Dol -y -Cannau crossroads, only to be taken by surprise near Castle Tump by the sharpest shower of the day but luckily fairly short lived.

I hate having to retrace my steps on a long walk so I had hoped to take a less hard road route for the last part of my return, specifically the field path below Ty Mawr that heads east of Pant-y-cae to Bettws Dingle and over to Bronydd but having looked in vain for the marked path I had to give up and return to the road. My spirits were lifted by the time I reached Clyro Hill from where floated the unmistakable piping of a curlew. Now on to the corner by Little Wern y Pentre opposite where I was amazed to see a stile at a marked footpath, which I had not noticed on my outward journey. Here, at the top of Bird's Nest lane, I pondered on the *Diary* entry for 9 July 1870 where the route most often taken to school by Gipsy Lizzie in fine weather is described as *Sunnybank* rather than *Bird's Nest* lane. I have often been puzzled by this: where is Sunnybank? On the Tithe map it refers to field 730 lying west of Tall Trees and surprisingly, the label 'Sunny Bank Wood' appears over the same area of rough pasture on detailed OS maps from 1925. The *Diary* implies Sunnybank is crossed before reaching the stile at Little Wern y Pentre: my interpretation is that Gipsy used the field path short cut I mentioned before down to Tall Trees, then along the lane as far as Little Wern y Pentre, where she crossed the stile opposite into the field and then, perhaps, the field footpath following closely Bird's Nest lane dingle to emerge onto the lane just below Cwmbyddog. She must have been under instruction not to use field paths in wet conditions. 'Sunny Bank' is also the name of a cottage between Cwm Cottages and New Barn, well to the west, which makes absolutely no sense as a way to school and may be discounted. Note that the two 'Sunny Banks' are not distinguished in Plomer's index.

I couldn't resist climbing the stile into the small field and over a trickle of a brook then up the other side to another stile into the

main meadow, where there was no clear indication of a footpath and fearing that I might have problems further on, I backtracked onto the road and resumed my familiar journey. Below Court Evan Gwynne and starting to make the descent towards Clyro, I was reminded that hitherto I had not seen a single pedestrian or cyclist but now panting up the hill towards me came a young couple pushing their bicycles. I was determined to make an, albeit, late detour, so further down the hill I struck off for the footpath by Penlan Farm; however, I'd mistaken the way and had to rely on a most helpful gentleman to put me on the right path for the Bron, the hill above the village. The footpath over the hill does not give the impression of a way much walked but I managed to find the exit in the bottom boundary that let me into the village and arrived back at the car, rather weary, at about 4.40pm; so a round trip of nearly six hours, ignoring the lunch stop.

Of course, the walk of 26 February 1870 did not end at the Arrow, the Diarist continued to Colva and returned by a different route taking in Newchurch (calling at the Vaughans at Gilfach-yr-heol) before heading for Llwyn Gwillim farm (west of Bettws Chapel) and I would guess via Little Mountain and after the farm going via Whitty's Mill back to Clyro. I have long admired Francis Kilvert's immense stamina for walking, a view only reinforced by my having completed just part of one of his longer treks.

REFERENCES

- ¹ Beware confusion between the Clyro Tithe & OS maps as (a) annoyingly on the former, if the map scripts are horizontal then North is not centre top but canted over to the "NE" as related to the OS map and (b) field numbers (where present on OS) differ between the two maps.
- ² The Sandford notebook: Kilvert's own journal as realised in 'The Diary of Francis Kilvert, April-June 1870' edited by Kathleen Hughes & Dafydd Ifans, published by the National Library of Wales.
- ³ www.gatehouse-gazetteer.info/Welshsites/868.html
- ⁴ The Harvey notebook: Kilvert's own journal as realised in 'The Diary of Francis Kilvert, June-July 1870' edited by Dafydd Ifans, published by the National Library of Wales.
- ⁵ See front cover.



A Souvenir from Gower

A gift of photos drew the editor's attention to one of Kilvert's less known expeditions

Last Spring, member Susan Keen kindly sent the *Journal* a folder of photos showing photos of a church on Gower peninsula, South Wales, mentioned in the *Diary*. Kilvert had a holiday there between 15 and 20 April, 1872 (Vol 2, p183-8). This trip is omitted from the one volume *Diary*, which may explain why it is not so well known as his Cornish holiday. This is a shame, because it includes some fine Kilvertian writing about people and the landscape.

This is the cleanest coast I ever saw – no seaweed, no pebbles, hardly a shell – not a speck for miles along the shining sand, and scarcely even any scent of the sea. But the rocks were covered with millions of barnacles, mussels, limpets, and sea snails, and there were sea anenomes in the little pools along the rocks... As we lay on the high cliff moor above Oxwich Bay sheltered by some gorse bushes there was no sound except the light surges of the sea beneath us and the sighing of the wind through the gorse and dry heather. 'They heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day'. The white gulls were flying about among the low black rocks.

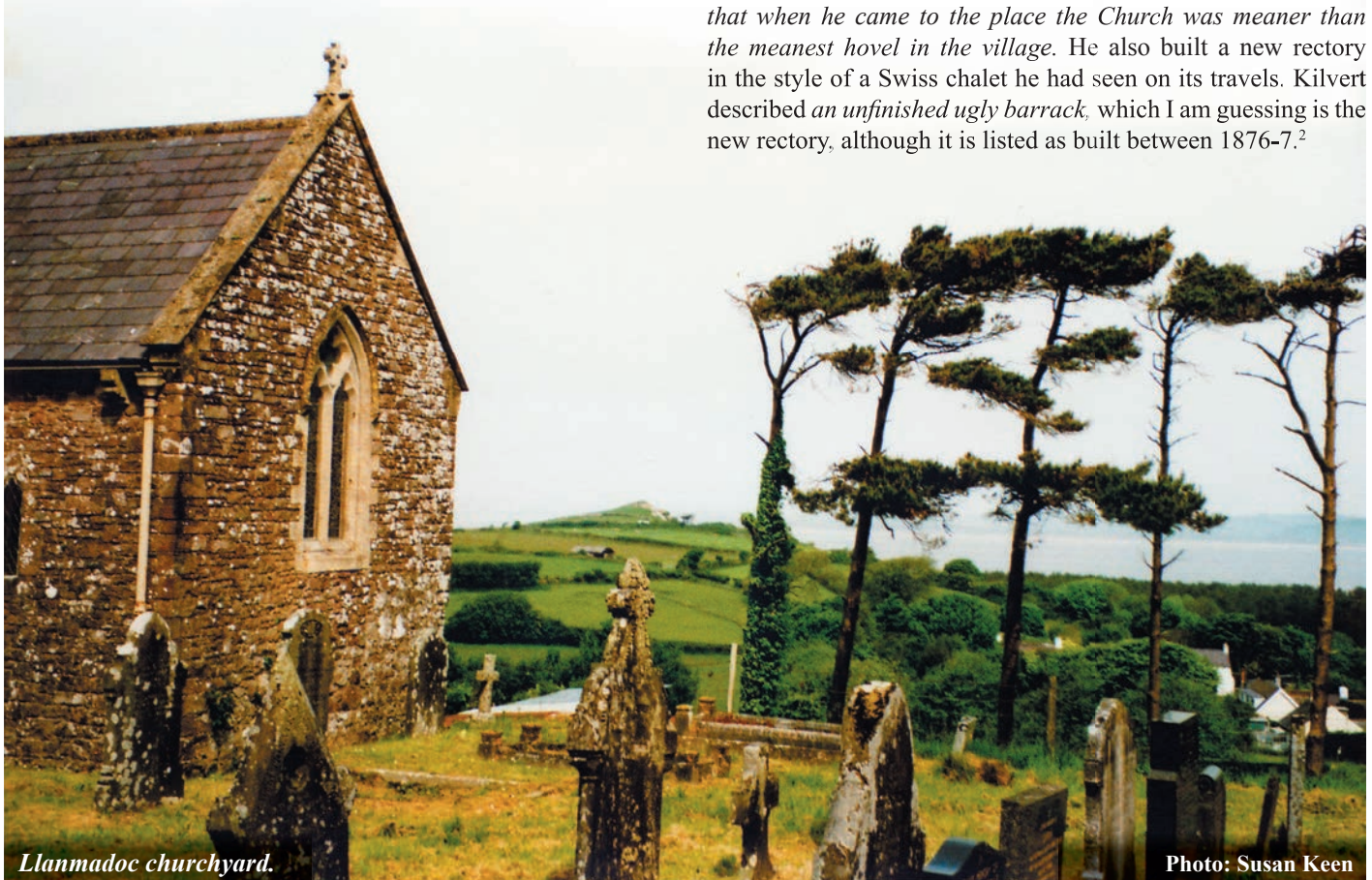
Kilvert was staying at Ilston Rectory as a guest of the Westthorps. He must have been introduced to them by Mr and Mrs Venables, as Mrs Westthorp was Mrs Venables' sister. The Westthorp's four year old daughter had died in January (Vol 2, p118), so their hospitality at this time was particularly kind. Ilston is in the centre of Gower peninsula and, on the first day of his holiday, he was taken on a circular tour to Llanmadoc in the north west then looping round to the south and east and visiting

the recently excavated Parc Cwm Long Cairn, also known as Parc be Breos burial chamber, which he called the *Graves of the Unknown* and *the graves of the children of the people*.

Susan Keen's photos were of Llanmadoc and its surroundings. She explains 'Llanmadoc is a very small village in the quiet unspoiled north-west corner of the Gower peninsula. The view over the salt marshes (National Trust) below the church and the tiny hamlet of Cwm Ivy cannot have changed much since Kilvert's visit, apart from the seawall being breached in the dreadful storms a few years ago. Kilvert would have seen the cast-iron lighthouse, built in 1854 and the only wave-washed lighthouse in Britain.'

The Explore Gower website gives details of the church. 'Llanmadoc Church is the smallest of the Gower churches and is dedicated, unsurprisingly, to St. Madoc. The building is of 13th century construction, although much of what is seen today of the building dates back to only 1865, when the church was renovated quite extensively. This work also involved reducing the height of its tower which can now appear quite stumpy in relation to the rest of the architecture.'¹

The incumbent was the Revd J D Davies, rector of Llanmadoc and Cheriton from 1860 -1911. Kilvert was introduced to him. *Presently they came out with the Vicar, Mr Davies, who looked like a Roman priest, close shaven and shorn, dressed in seedy black, a long coat and broad shovel hat.* He was responsible for the church renovation *which was beautifully finished and adorned but fitted up in the high ritualistic style. The Vicar said that when he came to the place the Church was meaner than the meanest hovel in the village.* He also built a new rectory in the style of a Swiss chalet he had seen on its travels. Kilvert described *an unfinished ugly barrack*, which I am guessing is the new rectory, although it is listed as built between 1876-7.²



Llanmadoc churchyard.

Photo: Susan Keen



Llanmadoc interior.

Photo: Susan Keen

A luncheon, the contents of our own picnic basket combined with the Vicar's very good pie, they were waited on by a tall clean old woman with a severe and full cap border who waits on Mr Davies and is so clean that she washes the kitchen four times a day. She used to wash her master's bedroom floor as often till he caught a cold which frightened her and she desisted. Rather oddly, we suggested that she might be of Flemish blood which would account for her cleanliness.



Llanmadoc tower.

Photo: Susan Keen

The Revd J D Davies is still famous locally for writing *A History of West Gower*, huge volumes of work depicting the local customs, history and legends of his parishes which have become known as The Gower Bible. Kilvert did not mention this, but commented on the quantity of pretty wood fretwork and carved wood...and miniature bookcases and cabinets for drawing room tables made by himself and sold for the benefit of Cheriton Church Restoration Fund. Kilvert ordered a little 10/- bookcase. (The published *Diary* does not record if he received it.) Mr Davies also carved the oak altar in the church. Kilvert, quick to sketch a character, concluded: *He is very clever and can turn his hand to anything. Besides which he seemed to me an uncommonly kind good fellow, a truly simple-minded, single-hearted man.*

During this holiday, Kilvert also visited Mumbles and drove through lovely Sketty where Welby was Vicar for 14 years. The Revd Montague Earle Welby had been curate of Sketty from 1851-65. He came into the *Diary* on May Day 1870 as a guest at Clyro vicarage, and later on, preaching at Hay church.

Kilvert kept up the acquaintance with the Westhorns and visited Ilston again, travelling from Bredwardine for a Whitsuntide holiday from 10 – 15 June, 1877. On this occasion, he took a 2-gallon stoneware jar to get it filled with sea water for Miss Newton's aquarium, a slightly unreasonable request, over which he got teased by Mr Westhorp (Vol 3, p 396.) It must have been awkward to carry on the train especially when full, on the return journey. We can hope that the fish appreciated their souvenir from Gower. He visited again in October 1878, the last of Kilvert's holidays recorded in the *Diary*.

REFERENCES

- ¹ www.explore-gower.co.uk
- ² www.britishlistedbuildings.co.uk

Kilvert: One Hundred and Fifty Years on

David Gouldstone began this article as an entry on his blog, for readers unfamiliar with the Diary. It is an excellent way to promote the Diary, if there are any other bloggers out there. New insights on Kilvert are valuable to us all, and, at the editor's request, David has expanded his blog into this article.

The Reverend Francis Kilvert began his diary on 1 January 1870, but the earliest surviving entry is for the 18th of that month and year. Let us celebrate this 150th anniversary.

Kilvert - or Frank, as I tend to think of him, since I feel I know him so well via his *Diary* - led an outwardly entirely ordinary life. He was a curate and vicar in rural Wiltshire and the Welsh Marches, born in 1840 and died in 1879; he performed no notable acts, wrote no books,¹ had no influence on the world at large, met no one famous,² was present at no historic events, wasn't an original thinker, didn't even leave any children to perpetuate his name. Were it not for his *Diary* his name would be utterly forgotten now, as is the future fate of almost all of us. But his *Diary*, although it records his very ordinary, mundane life, has made him immortal.

I've loved the diaries for thirty years or more. I first became aware of them in 1977 when a dramatised version was broadcast by the BBC; I didn't see the programme (not having a television at the time), but Penguin published a paperback of the abridgement to accompany the series. I was then working (I use the word loosely) on a student magazine; Penguin used to send many of their books to us for review. None of them ever received one, to the best of my knowledge, but they kept coming nevertheless and a constant supply of new books was a very welcome perk. The *Diary* fell into my hands; I didn't read it at the time (would I have appreciated it in my early twenties?), but it sat on my shelf and must have planted a seed. Some years later I picked up a secondhand copy of the hardback because it had a John Piper drawing on the title page (what a shame he never fully illustrated it), and, when I opened it, within the first few pages the seed had grown into a beautiful blossoming tree.

I think my attraction is a result of three main factors: Kilvert's personality, his skill as a writer, and his portrayal of an interesting transitional period in English and Welsh history.

He was undoubtedly a very loveable man. His parishioners held him in great respect and affection, and it's easy to see why; he was gentle, compassionate and devoted to them (many of whom lived in extreme poverty). He lacked self-importance, and was happy to be in the company of the poor and uneducated (we might say 'Well, that was part of his job', which is true, but he took this duty much more seriously than some other men of the cloth).

He had a sense of humour and was sometimes amusing (though rarely witty). For example, on 24 May 1876 he meets a stout elderly lady with fierce eyes and teeth (what a penetrating phrase!) who tells him of her late husband's last words to her. 'Anne,' he said, 'whatever you do be sure you always job your horses.' I've got no idea what 'jobbing' horses was, but it hardly matters; Kilvert comments *I was so much surprised at his selection of a topic upon which to spend his latest words and his last breath that I did not know which way to look, and some other members of the company were in the same condition.* This description of his trying not to laugh as the stout lady describes her husband's deathbed is very endearing.

He was curious about the world around him, including new developments. He liked to collect folklore and dialect words. The very first surviving entry in the *Diary*, 18 January 1870, records a visit to the Crystal Palace exhibition hall (in south-east London, where it had been moved from Hyde Park) which he praises enthusiastically.³ On 4 October 1870 he sent his first postcards, calling them *capital things, simple, useful and handy. A happy invention.* He frequently took an interest in archaeological excavations, and although he was an Evangelical Christian he seems to have been open-minded on one of the hottest topics of the day, evolution and the age of the Earth. (On 9 September 1873, he visited a cave in Cheddar Gorge and writes of the *countless ages* it has taken the stalactites to form.)

One of the most striking aspects of his personality is his tendency to be attracted to, and fall in love with, pretty younger women. (He also sometimes writes gushingly about the charms of young girls, and anyone who reads his *Diary* will find a handful of passages which will make them feel a bit, and occasionally more than a bit, uncomfortable.) On 8 September 1871 he writes *Today I fell in love with Fanny Thomas.* He was 30, while she was 19, the youngest of five daughters of a well-off local vicar with private means. (He gave her the nickname Daisy.) The etiquette of the day and their social class required that he initially couldn't make any declaration to her, though they saw quite a lot of each other and it does seem from Kilvert's description that she was fond of him. Five days later he writes of proposing for her (not proposing to her; he asks her father for permission to court her):

I was frightfully nervous. 'I-am-attached-to-one-of-your-daughters' I said. Just as I made this avowal we came suddenly round the corner upon a gardener cutting a hedge. I feared he had heard my confession, but I was much relieved by being assured he was deaf. Mr Thomas said I had done quite right in coming to him, though he seemed a good deal taken aback.

He said a great many complimentary things about my 'honourable high-minded conduct', and asked what my prospects were and shook his head over them. [At this stage of Kilvert's life, and for years after, he was simply a low paid curate.] He could not allow an engagement under the circumstances, he said, and I must not destroy his daughter's peace of mind by speaking to her or showing in any way that I was attached to her... I felt deeply humiliated, low in spirit and sick at heart. . . . I was comforted by remembering that when my father proposed for my mother he was ordered out of the house, and yet it all came right. . . .

Alas, it never did all come right, though he continued to moon over her. As late as 3 July 1874 he writes:

I think continually of Daisy. She is seldom out of my thoughts now. I remember her best and she comes to me most often as I saw her at home in March 1873 when I spent a night at her house. I see even now her beautiful white bosom heaving under the lace edging of her dress, and the loose open sleeve falling back from her round white arm as she leaned her flushed cheek upon her hand looking anxiously at me as I coughed. 'Does your cough hurt you?' I see her start up and fetch a lamp shade to keep the light from hurting my eyes. Sweet loving Daisy, sweet loving patient faithful Daisy.

Of course, it's impossible to tell whether he was misinterpreting her friendly concern as love. Either way, it all came to nothing. As a postscript, although we probably feel that Mr Thomas behaved correctly in this instance, given his daughter's youth and Kilvert's precipitate ardour, it is notable that none of his five daughters ever got married; we can only guess to what extent his normal fatherly protectiveness became controlling behaviour. It may well be apocryphal, but it's said that Daisy was asked in old age why she'd never married, and she replied 'No one asked me.' Did she know how close Kilvert had come to asking her?

On 11 August 1874 (a mere month after he'd last mooned over Daisy) he met Katharine Heanley at a wedding. He was 33, she ten years younger, the daughter of a well-to-do Lincolnshire farmer.

This may be one of the happiest and most important days of my life, for to-day I fell in love at first sight with sweet Kathleen Mavourneen [his fanciful name for her] . . . I fell in love and lost my heart to the sweetest noblest kindest bravest-hearted girl in England . . . How sweet she was, how simple, kind, unaffected and self-unconscious, how thoughtful for everyone but herself . . . She spoke of her favourite In Memoriam [i.e. Tennyson's poem, also a favourite of Kilvert's] and told me some of her difficulties and how deeply she regretted the enforced apparent idleness of her life, and I loved her a hundred times better for her sweet troubled thoughts and honest regretful words.

They kept up a friendly relationship, mostly by post. There's some suggestion that her mother raised objections to her writing to an unmarried man (though I'd have thought that her writing to a married man would be even more suspect). They probably became engaged in 1876 (we don't know for sure, for reasons I'll mention later), but eventually it all petered out and once again Kilvert's hopes of a wife and a happy family life came to nothing.

On 6 September 1875 Ettie Meredith Brown came into his life. She was the 26 year old daughter of a very well-off man who owned several houses, and who had been a vicar but had resigned his post, perhaps as a result of some kind of disagreement with the Church (the details are murky). Kilvert writes that she was:

. . . one of the most striking-looking and handsomest girls whom I have seen for a long time. She was admirably dressed in light grey with a close fitting crimson body which set off her exquisite figure and suited to perfection her black hair and eyes and her dark Spanish brunette complexion with its rich glow of health which gave her cheeks the dusky bloom and flush of a ripe pomegranate. . . And from beneath the shadow of the picturesque hat the beautiful dark face and the dark wild fine eyes looked with a true gipsy beauty.

Unfortunately, the section of the *Diary* dating from 9 September 1875 to 1 March 1876 was missing by the time the manuscript reached Plomer, so the progress of the affair is mysterious. However, it seems that they met, sometimes in secret, in Bournemouth, and their relationship was probably passionate, perhaps even sexual to some degree. In retrospect Kilvert writes of their *wild sad trysts*, and when, on 20 April 1876 he received a letter from Ettie's mother telling him to cease communicating with her he lamented *I have been, alas, very very wrong*.

It seems almost as if he was fated to be single, and I feel for him across the century and a half that separates us. He longed to have children. On 7 July 1875 he noticed some children playing on a beach. He writes:

Oh, as I watched them there came over me such a longing, such a hungry yearning to have one of those children for my own. Oh that I too had a child to love and to love me, a daughter with such fair limbs and blue eyes archly dancing, and bright clustering curls blown wild and golden in the sunshine and sea air. It came over me like a storm and I turned away hungry at heart and half envying the parents as they sat upon the sand watching their children at play.

Poor Frank.

He does accept rejection by his beloveds' parents rather easily, however. His sense of honour and propriety was evidently acute, but perhaps he should have fought his corner more persistently; after all, as he pointed out himself, his own father had overcome initial rejection. He did however eventually marry, which I'll come to a little later.

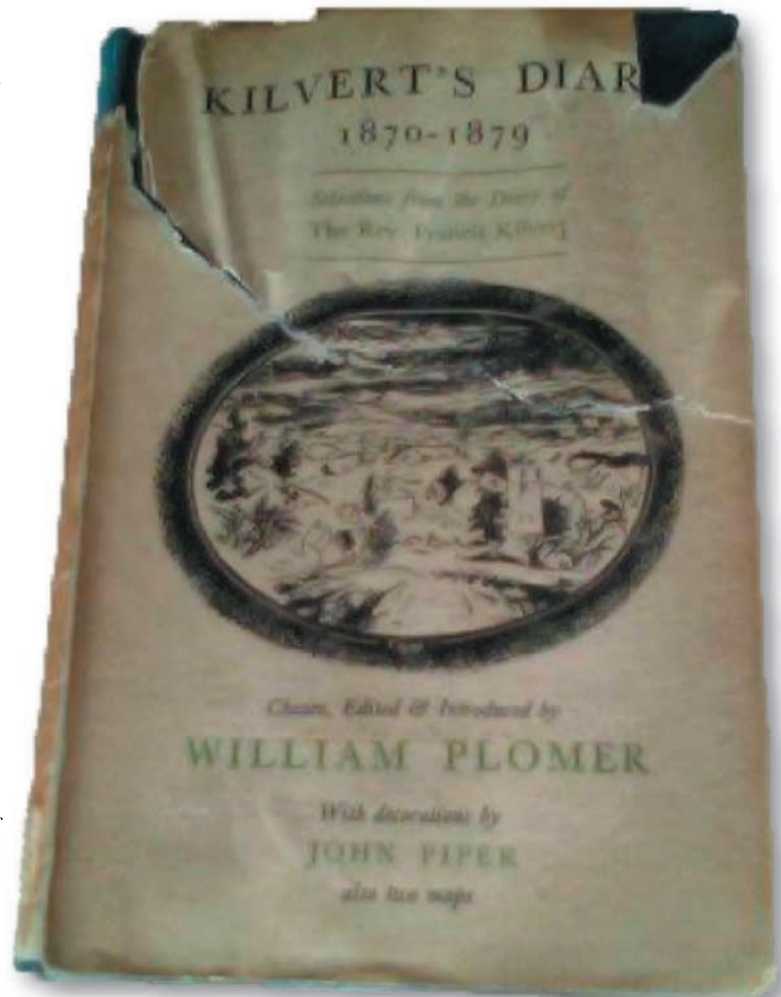


Photo: David Gouldstone

Quite apart from his dismal love life, there is a strain of melancholy running through the *Diary*. He records mysterious illnesses – *face ache* features quite often, for example – and has some terrifying dreams, which might be indicative of depression or worse. For example, on 14 October 1872 he records *a strange and horrible dream*, or more exactly a dream within a dream, in which the Reverend Venables (the vicar of Clyro and Kilvert's boss) tried to murder him, and he in return tried to murder Venables:

I lay in wait for him with a pickaxe on the Vicarage lawn at Clyro, hewed an immense and hideous hole through his head, and kicked his face till it was so horribly mutilated, crushed and disfigured as to be past recognition. . . . When I woke I was so persuaded of the reality of what I had seen and felt and done in my dreams that I felt for the handcuffs on my wrists . . . Nothing now seems to me so real and tangible as that dream was, and it seems to me as I might wake up at any moment and find everything shadowy, fleeting and unreal. I feel as if life is a dream from which at any moment I might awake.

This seems more than a common or garden nightmare, and the reader is perhaps inclined to fear for the balance of his mind. On 23 January 1875 he records laconically:

When I went to bed last night I fancied that something ran in at my bedroom door after me from the gallery. It seemed to be a skeleton. It ran with a dancing step and I thought it aimed a blow at me from behind. This was shortly before midnight.

On at least one occasion he seems on the verge of some sort of breakdown, or at least an early mid-life crisis. On 19 June 1872 (a few months before the dream) he was travelling to Liverpool; on the train he met *two merry saucy Irish hawking girls* (it's not at all clear how old these 'girls' are). He was very attracted to them (and especially the younger one) by their physical beauty and by their liveliness and sense of fun, and they struck up a conversation. They alighted from the train while Kilvert remained aboard, but continued to talk through the carriage window.

A porter and some other people were looking wonderingly on, so I thought it best to end the conversation. But there was an attractive power about this poor Irish girl that fascinated me strangely. I felt irresistibly drawn to her. The singular beauty of her eyes, a beauty of deep sadness, a wistful sorrowful imploring look, her swift rich humour, her sudden gravity and sadnesses, her brilliant laughter, a certain intensity and power and richness of life and the extraordinary sweetness, softness and beauty of her voice in singing and talking gave her a power over me which I could not understand or describe, but the power of a stronger over a weaker will and nature. She lingered about the carriage door. Her look grew more wistful, beautiful, imploring. Our

eyes met again and again. Her eyes grew more and more beautiful. My eyes were fixed and riveted on hers. A few minutes more and I know not what might have happened. A wild reckless feeling came over me. Shall I leave all and follow her? No – Yes – No. At that moment the train moved on. She was left behind. Goodbye, sweet Irish Mary. So we parted. Shall we meet again? No – Yes – No.

Kilvert, a 31 year old curate, was apparently on the verge of walking away from everything he'd known to follow a working-class 'girl' he'd known for less than an hour. How powerful his longings for a kind of life that was quite out of his reach must have been. He was evidently torn between these and his equally strong desire to be a good Christian and respectable gentleman. Perhaps this explains his writing, apropos of nothing immediately evident to the reader, on 6 May 1874 *Though I be tied and bound with the chain of my sin yet let the pitifulness of Thy Great mercy loose me.*

Possibly by dwelling on this aspect of his personality and life I've given an unbalanced portrait. He had dark moments, certainly, but many readers will be mostly attracted to the abundant passages of fun and high spirits, of dinners, picnics and croquet parties, and of his rapturous responses to nature.

He was far from being a plaster saint. He had his human foibles; on 5 April 1870 he visited Llanthony Abbey in the Black Mountains of Wales, and writes:

What was our horror on entering the enclosure to see two tourists with staves and shoulder belts all complete postured among the ruins in an attitude of admiration, one of them of course discoursing learnedly to his gaping companion and pointing out objects of interest with his stick. If there is one thing more hateful than another it is being told what to admire and having objects pointed out to one with a stick. Of all the most noxious animals too the most noxious is a tourist. And of all tourists the most vulgar, illbred, offensive and loathsome is the British tourist. No wonder dogs fly at them and consider them vermin to be exterminated.

So much for sympathy for his fellow man. I prefer to have historic sites to myself (and perhaps a friend) when possible, but

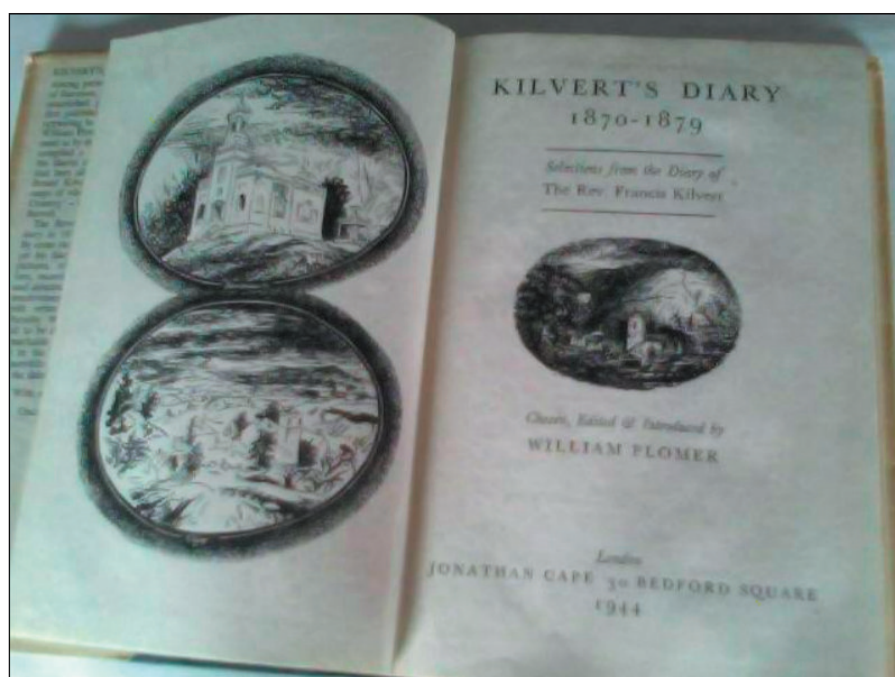


Photo: David Gouldstone

this attack on tourists, quite apart from overlooking the fact that Kilvert himself was a tourist on this occasion, is immoderate to an almost deranged degree. (As we've seen there are occasions in the *Diary* when the reader almost fears for his sanity.) The only crime the people he saw committed was that they were enjoying and talking about the ruins of the abbey, and yet they're castigated as 'noxious' and 'loathsome'.

The *Diary* entry goes on to say that *The most offensive part of their conduct however was that they had arrived before us and had already ordered their dinner, so we had to wait till they had done.* Unintentionally a bit irritating, perhaps, but 'offensive'? All this, I realise, makes it hard for me to sustain my claim that he was compassionate and lacked self-importance, especially as it's not an isolated incident. On 29 May 1871, for example, he records walking on the Black Mountains and imagines being *stunned by the prattle of the Woolhope Club* [an amateur archaeological society], *or be disgusted by the sight of a herd of holiday-makers and sight-seers cutting bad jokes and playing the fool or straddling and dancing upon the grave* [a recently excavated barrow].¹ He loved mankind when they were individuals, but, on the whole preferring his own company, had a blind spot when it came to people in groups. I acknowledge this as a fault in him (one I'm sometimes inclined to share), but to me this makes him more interesting and human.

In the *Diary* as a whole he writes with such precise observation. There are what we might think of as big set-piece passages, where he pulls out all the stops (and which are perhaps rather overwritten for some 21st century tastes), as on 20 April 20 1876 (the day his relationship with Ettie came to an end):

How beautiful is the descent into Bredwardine from Brobury. Especially as I saw it this afternoon, the lovely valley gleaming bright in the clear shining after rain, the thickly wooded hillsides veiled with tender blue delicate mists through which the brilliant evening sun struck out jewels of gold where he lit upon the upland slopes and hill meadows, while the poplar spires shot up like green and gold flames against the background of brown and purple woods and the river blazed below the grey bridge with a sparkle as of a million diamonds.

There are many dozens of rhapsodic passages like this, a delight for the reader. But just about every page contains wonderful little nuggets. Just now I opened Volume One at random and found this, from 19 April 1871: *All day long I heard the children's voices going to and fro and the ceaseless chipping of the chisels as the masons were working at the Swan and repairing the steps.* How wonderfully evocative this is.

It's easy enough to make a case for every decade being historically significant, but the 1870s probably have a stronger case than most. Kilvert's *Diary* is a valuable record of a country that was in some ways much as it had been for centuries, but was also undergoing far-reaching changes. For example, railways had made travel far easier than before, and Kilvert is forever taking trains. Communications were similarly accelerating in the form of the telegraph, effectively the Victorian version of email. I've already referred to evolution, which was beginning to revolutionise the way people viewed the world. The Elementary Education Act of 1870 had made school attendance more easily available (though not quite compulsory) for children aged between five and twelve; Kilvert was very involved in the village schools and writes about them frequently. The *Diary* gives us an unforgettable picture of life on the cusp between old and new.

I've already written at perhaps too great length about some of the unhappinesses in Kilvert's life, but I'm sorry to say that I can't give you a happy ending. There are indeed two desperately unhappy finales to this story.

The first concerns his eventual marriage. He met Elizabeth Rowland in 1876, but the relevant *Diary* entries are once again missing, so we know no details of the progress of their relationship. They married on 20 August 1879, when he was 38 and she six years younger. By this time he had at last obtained a good living in Bredwardine, Herefordshire. It must have seemed that finally he had found security and happiness. They returned to the parish on 13 September, to a grand welcome from the parishioners (including two 'triumphal arches'), testimony to the affection and respect in which he was held. On 23 September, he died of peritonitis. Five weeks of happiness was all that fate allotted him. This is very hard to bear.

When the *Diary* reached the editor William Plomer in the 1930s there were 22 manuscript volumes. Several volumes had already been destroyed, probably by Mrs Kilvert, who removed all references to herself. Possibly some had also been destroyed by Kilvert himself, for example one that recorded his affair with Ettie (as we've seen, he believed that he had been *very very wrong*, and it's plausible that he would have not wanted it to survive). So Plomer didn't have a complete text to work with, which is unfortunate.

It would have been commercially impossible to publish the complete diary in the late 30s. Plomer made a selection from the first 20 months, which sold well, and consequently two further selections were published. The typescripts were lost, perhaps destroyed in wartime bombing, but the 22 original diaries still existed, in the possession of Kilvert's niece, Mrs Essex Hope. In 1958 Plomer visited Hope. He was astounded to be told that she had destroyed 19 of the volumes. Later he said that he 'could have strangled her with my own hands'. Her motive for doing this are unclear; she claimed that she was concerned for the family's privacy, but it's also been suggested that she was jealous of Kilvert's belated literary success (she was herself the author of some moderately well-received light novels). The only consolation is that she had previously given away three volumes as presents (two to Plomer). These survive (in the libraries of the Universities of Wales and Durham) and have been published complete.

Consequently, only a little more than a third of the *Diary* as it existed into the 1950s survives. Almost two thirds has been lost forever, irretrievably, destroyed perhaps in a fit of pique. This too is very hard to bear; at least we have the consolation of the existence of what remains, one of the most enchanting, heart-breaking, loveable, intriguing, beautiful diaries ever written.

NOTES

- ¹ Apart from a small book of poetry, published after his death.
- ² This isn't absolutely true: he did spend a few hours in the company of William Barnes, the Dorset poet, but he probably hardly counts as 'famous' either then or now.
- ³ Incidentally, he mentions the *Christmas decorations*. We complain about Christmas starting early nowadays, but at least it no longer goes on until the third week of January (probably because the shops are already full of Easter eggs and hot cross buns).

Dr Colborne of Chippenham

Saturday, 15 April. Easter Eve 1876... I laid the primrose crosses upon the 4 graves, of my grandmother, my dear nurse Abodie, and the two little children...

In her article about the Kilvert children's nurse, (Journal 50), Margaret Collins included part of a letter from Kilvert researcher Teresa Williams offering a tentative identification of the 'two little children'. This piece continues the theme, with information about one of the families, friends of the Kilverts at Hardenhuish.

In a letter of 2010, having studied the burial records of St Nicholas Church Hardenhuish, Mrs Teresa Williams made a persuasive suggestion regarding the identity of *the two little children* mentioned by Kilvert. Maybe one could have been JESSIE HOMES SPENCER of Chippenham who died aged five weeks and was buried on 5 June 1856. She was the baby daughter of Francis Spencer, Esq. and according to a notice in the *The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette* of Thursday 1 May 1856, was born on 28 April 1856 at Chippenham. A burial is also listed for BEATRICE FRANCES COLBORNE of Chippenham, who died aged one month and was buried on 14 November 1857. She was the daughter of William Henry Colborne, M.D. The officiating minister at both funerals was the Reverend Alexander Headley of Hardenhuish.

Teresa's letter gave further details of her research in contemporary local newspapers:

'In Emily Wyndowe's 'Rambling Recollections' on pages 97 and 98, Emily speaks of the Kilvert family's doctors during their years at Hardenhuish. Firstly, Mr W Colborne, secondly, his elder son, William Colborne, M.D., and thirdly Mr Spencer who was listed as a Surgeon. William Colborne, senior died in March 1868 aged 82 years, and his son, William Henry, died just eighteen months later, aged 47 years. Unfortunately, Emily was less than complimentary about William Henry Colborne: "I remember we did not like him nearly as well as his good old father, Mama used to say he did not look clean! He had very weak eyes..."

The Colbornes were well known to the Kilverts, the father being a regular visitor at Harnish Parsonage, sending "splendid bundles of asparagus..." playing chess with Robert Kilvert and sending his manservant on horseback with hot cross buns on Good Friday. A Catherine cake was sent for St Catherine's Day on 26 November (not the Simnel cake Emily also mentions, which was traditional for Mothering Sunday) by the Misses Colborne. These ladies attended working parties at Harnish when needlework was done for missions abroad. On page 101 Emily describes "the great mahogany armchair covered with leather..." which converted into a couch. She remembered "seeing Mrs William (Henry) Colborne sitting in it shortly after her marriage..." This lady was, before her marriage in July 1852 at St Pancras Church, London, Miss Mary Ann Bailey the only daughter of William Bailey, an engineer of High Holborn.

An obituary for William Henry Colborne, M.D., [the son] appeared in *The Devizes & Wilts Gazette* of Thursday 30 September 1869.

"The death of Dr William Henry Colborne, took place at his residence on Monday night at the comparatively early age of 47 years. His death has been occasioned by a complication of disorders, brought on by overwork and those incessant calls day and night which a country surgeon experiences in the course of an extensive practice. A more kindly disposed and amiable man – a man full of anxiety for his patients – more charitable to the poor, both with purse and medicine – more ready to help them to the attainment of health and contentment by the warm interest he took in all that concerned them – never lived. His loss will be irreparable to many a poor family in the neighbourhood: while to his widow and seven children (the oldest of whom is but 16 years old) the unexpected blow has fallen with a force to which it would be difficult to give expression. Dr Colborne's family, have, we believe, been settled in Chippenham for several centuries, and have always occupied a high position among the inhabitants.

The late doctor took his M.D. Degree at the London University, where he was a very successful student and joined his father in the old established practice nearly 20 years ago. His father died last year at a very advanced age: and two generations have thus gone to the grave within about 18 months of each other.

Much might be said about the doctor's consistent course of public life, in which he gained the respect not only of those who agreed with him in opinion, but of those who took a different view. He was a member of the Town Council and the inhabitants were looking forward to his Mayoralty next November when in the very hey-day of life, as it were, he has been cut off in the full career of his usefulness."

The following week, (Thursday 7 October 1869) the same newspaper printed an appreciation which provided some more information.

"The late Dr William Henry Colborne of Chippenham: under a quiet, somewhat too diffident manner, there was a mind well stored and a taste pure and cultivated. He had a strong love for, and correct taste in, English Literature; also a love for antiquities, especially those connected with his own neighbourhood. His spare hours he loved to spend in his garden and greenhouse.

Although holding decided opinions, yet he was never known to speak ill of any man. To his bosom friends he had always a fund of conversation drawn from his own well remembered memory; but while he would talk of science, art or literature, he avoided and rightly, personal talk, which he often checked by a judicious word and a good-natured laugh.

Perhaps no man in Chippenham and its neighbourhood was more universally known than Dr Colborne. Driven day by day by his servant, through the streets, lanes and roads, too short-sighted to always recognise passers-by, and most always reading, for he carried with him a store of books and pamphlets on many and various subjects, everybody knew him.

In our estimate of Dr Colborne's character his love for, and endearing manner with little children must not be forgotten. His little patients, far from dreading their doctor's visit sought his knee and lavished upon him that genuine thing, child love.

Dr Colborne's friends and he had many, were grieved to see that during the last two years he had grown much older in appearance and was evidently very often an invalid; the breaking up of his health had so rapidly proceeded, that the fever only hastened an end from which another disease must soon have come.

On Friday last, Dr Colborne was buried in the picturesque churchyard of Hardenhuish in a spot twelve years since chosen by himself, and where one of his little ones had been laid before him. Dr Colborne was particularly interested in everything connected with Hardenhuish and only a few months since had gone down into the crypt of the Church to inspect the tombs of the Colborne family, who formerly

owned Hardenhuish Park and Manor, one of them having also built the Church at his sole expense.

The funeral was private although the Town Council and the Volunteers wanted to follow him to the grave but the family declined with gratitude. Dr Colborne leaves a widow and seven children nearly all too young to know the loss they have sustained in losing such a father."

The third doctor mentioned in Emily's 'Recollections,' "Frank Spencer" [Francis Spencer] was at the time of the 1871 Census, aged 53 years, thus being more or less a contemporary of the younger Colborne. He too, lived in Chippenham. After W H C's death in 1869 Francis Spencer became the Kilvert family's main medical adviser. Both William Henry Colborne and Francis Spencer were friends of the Kilvert family as well as being their medical attendants.'

REFERENCE

'The "Rambling Recollections" of the Diarist's sister Emily (Mrs. S. J Wyndowe) in *More Chapters from the Kilvert Saga*, (Kilvert Society, n.d.), p 114.

Unmarked graves

A footnote by Mary Steele

In her article for *Journal 50*, Margaret and Teresa also discussed how many poor people would be buried in graves unmarked by any memorial. I was reminded of this when I read the following paragraph from *Our Mutual Friend* by Charles Dickens (book 3, chapter 9).

The words were read above the ashes of Betty Higden, in a corner of a churchyard near the river; in a churchyard so obscure that there was nothing in it but grass-mounds, not so much as one single tombstone. It might not be to do an unreasonably great deal for the diggers and hewers, in a registering age, if we ticketed their graves at the common charge; so that a new generation might know which was which: so that the soldier, sailor, emigrant, coming home, should be able to identify the resting place of father, mother, playmate or betrothed. For, we turn up our eyes and say that we are all alike in death, and we might turn them down and work the saying out in this world, so far. It would be sentimental, perhaps? But how say ye, my lords and gentleman and honourable boards, shall we not find good standing-room left for a little sentiment, if we look into our crowds?

Betty Higden is one of Dickens's characterisations of the independent honest poor who is a victim of Victorian poor laws, and so determined to escape the shadow of the workhouse that she leaves her home and dies while wandering. Dickens is being sentimental in the description of her funeral, paid for with money she has saved and sewn into her dress, and is also



writing one of his passages of angry satire against unfeeling systems. Kilvert researchers have reasons to be grateful for the 'registering' tendencies of the Victorians, and often make use of registers of births, marriages and deaths, and of census information. By 'ticketing' the graves, Dickens seems to mean providing a tombstone, but we know, as he must have done, that grave monuments get lost and damaged. His reference to 'soldier, sailor, emigrant coming home' recall images in Victorian art: 'Home from the sea', also known as 'A Mother's Grave' by Arthur Hughes, depicts a sailor boy prostrate on the grass in a churchyard, with his sister, dressed in mourning, beside him. It must have depended on relatives, friends and local clergy to know the exact location of an unmarked grave, until memories faded.

As a Society, we regularly maintain and restore graves and monuments connected with the *Diary*. We are also conscious of those graves that cannot be found, such as that of Elizabeth Hatherell, perhaps Kilvert's *dear nurse Abodie*.

Edward Humphries of Hardenhuish

Teresa Williams tells us another life story from Wiltshire: the touching history of a man with just one Diary entry, who had a long and hard life.

One of the most satisfactory results of more than thirty years of research at the British Newspaper Library, Colindale before its closure, was the discovery of reported events concerning people mentioned in the published *Diary*. Much has been done by Society members to elicit and circulate biographical information of the families whom Kilvert knew well or met regularly in his everyday life but I am particularly interested in individuals who were briefly or intriguingly described in the edited *Diary*. In addition, several were the subject of press coverage during the 1876 and 1877 'Gaps' in Kilvert's manuscript.

Edward Humphries is an example, having one entry only in the Index for Vol 2, p 388-389. The extract dated Thursday 20 November 1873 reads, *This morning Teddy and I walked by Harnish over Northfield to Allington and called on our good kinsfolk, the Misses Mascall. We called at Francis Hall's on the way and found him better and downstairs, but much shaken after his accident. They told us about Edith Headley's wedding which was on Monday, November 10th.*

The bridegroom gave a cake and a bottle of wine to every cottage in Harnish. The Church was full of people. Edward Humphries, the old pensioner, was there, aged 96. He married a young woman when he was 83 and had a son within the year. 'Leastways his wife had,' said Mrs Hall with a cautious qualification of her former statement.

The old pensioner, about whom Kilvert writes, was, according to three Census Returns 'Born at Sea,' or 'Born on the Sea, Locality unknown.' He recorded his birth year as being 1782. Edward's birth took place on a 'Factory Ship' and his father, also named Edward, was a 'Factory Hand' working on board. In the 18th century Factory Ships fished in remote areas, processing catches on board. It is possible that the ship was a Whaler, fishing in the Southern Seas or off Greenland, producing Spermaceti Oil, which was at that time 'in such universal esteem that its consumption was immense.'¹

Contemporary newspapers contain descriptions of cargoes from successful expeditions being landed at English ports in London or the eastern coast of England at Hull, Grimsby, Whitby, Yarmouth, Lynn and Gravesend. In August 1783, the 'Lion' (Master, Thompson) from Greenland was reported arriving at Liverpool with '100 butts [a cask containing over 100 gallons] and 15 puncheons [a large cask] of Blubber, 3 tons of Whale fins, 200 Seal skins, etc,' the blubber being the produce from seven whales² The carcasses were not used but disposed of at sea.

Nothing is known of Edward's life before 9 February 1804 when, at the age of 22 years, he enlisted at Winchester in the 2nd Battalion of the 66th Regiment of Foot, for "Unlimited Service." His place of residence and occupation were given as 'Chippenham in the County of Wiltshire, a Weaver by Trade.' At the time of his enlistment the Napoleonic War had resumed after the short-lived period of peace enjoyed following the Treaty of Amiens. Hostilities finally ceased with the Battle of Waterloo and the exiling of Napoleon.

No information is available to show where Edward served, but his Discharge papers, signed by 'Jno. Wardell, Lieutenant Colonel, Commanding Officer' and dated 16 October 1817, listed Edward's term of service as '13 Years and 304 Days,' his Conduct being 'that of a good Soldier.' The reasons for discharge were given as 'General Debility' and 'Reduction in 2nd Battalion, 66th Regiment of Foot.' The advent of peace following the end of the War saw many regiments and militia reduced or disbanded with thousands of Marines discharged home to England. As a consequence there was great unemployment and a considerable rise in crime.

Edward signed the papers by making his Mark of an 'X'. His physical description was given, 'To prevent any improper use being made of this Discharge Certificate by it falling into other hands.' His details were: '5 Foot 4 Inches in Height, Dark Hair and Grey Eyes, Sallow Complexion, being about 35 Years



The Figure Court, Royal Hospital, Chelsea.



Modern Chelsea Pensioners. Edward Humphries, and John Morgan of Clyro, were 'out-pensioners'.

of Age' He was eventually released on 9 December 1817, the event confirmed by General Oliver Nicolls of His Majesty's 66th Regiment of Foot.

Any soldier discharged due to ill-health or injury and having served at least 12 years was entitled to a pension.³ Edward became an out-pensioner of The Royal Hospital, Chelsea in December 1817. He was granted a daily amount of One Shilling with an increase of an additional half-penny per day on the 4 July 1821 'for Service in Veteran Battalion of One Year, seven Months.'

On 30 April 1818 Edward Humphreys (sic) was married to Anne Smith at St Andrew's Church, Chippenham. There appears to have been no children of this marriage. The 1841 census return for Hardenhuish has not survived but in the 1851 document, Edward and Ann (sic) are living at Folly's Cottages, Hardenhuish. He is 68 and his wife, 'born at Chippenham' is 59 years of age. Ten years later in 1861 the next Census records Edward working as an Agricultural Labourer at the age of 79, Ann is now 70. They are still living at Folly's Cottages.

Ann Humphries died between 1861 and the year 1864 when Edward married for the second time. On October 7 1864 a marriage ceremony, after banns, took place in Hardenhuish Church between Edward Humphries and Sarah Dyer, a widow aged about 37. Both made a Mark 'X' for their signature. The officiating clergyman was the Reverend Alexander Headley, rector of the parish. Sarah evidently did not know her father's first name or his occupation, the reverend gentleman writing on the certificate, '1st name unknown – Watch.'

Just over a year later, on 21 October 1865 Sarah gave birth to a son at Hardenhuish. The child was baptised with the name of Edward at St Nicholas's Church, Hardenhuish by the Reverend Alexander Headley on 27 December 1865. Sarah had registered the birth on the 29 November, the birth certificate recording her previous names as 'Dyer, formerly Wattell.' Edward the father is shown as a 'Chelsea Pensioner.'

The last census return in which Edward appears is in 1871. He and Sarah aged 88 and 43 respectively, are residing at Folly Cottages, with their son Edward aged five years. Sarah is shown as having been born at 'Bristol, Gloucestershire,' and is now afflicted with deafness. In this census the enumerator records Edward as an "Army Pensioner of the 66th Foot."

Edward died on Sunday 25 February 1877 aged 95 years in Chippenham Workhouse. His death from 'Old Age' was registered by another inmate, Henry Weeks. Sadly, the rule of separating men and women in workhouses meant that Edward would not have had the comfort of his wife's attendance in his last illness. An original death report in the *Chippenham Chronicle* was widely reprinted during March 1877 in Wiltshire and South-Western regional newspapers, as follows:-

"An old man named Edward Humphries died at the Chippenham Workhouse on Sunday morning at the advanced age of 98 years. (sic) The deceased had served in the Army and was in receipt of a Pension of 7/- [shillings] weekly. He had been twice married, and the second wife, who is about half his age and almost blind and very deaf and a boy of 11 or 12 years, his son, are also inmates of the Workhouse.

It is deplorable to think that a man in such circumstances should end his days in a Workhouse."

Edward's funeral took place on Thursday 1 March 1877 at St Paul's Church, Chippenham, during the 'Long Gap' in the Diary, and we can only speculate whether Kilvert may have heard the news in a letter from home.

At present no more information has been found concerning Sarah Humphries mainly due to the disparity in the names recorded for her. I believe however, that the Reverend Alexander Headley helped young Edward leave the Workhouse by employing him at Hardenhuish Rectory. An entry in the 1881 Census for the rectory household records an 'Edward Humphries, Boy-Servant (Domestic), aged 15 years, born in Hardenhuish.' These details tally so I would hope the 'Boy-Servant' at the rectory was indeed the son of the *old pensioner* Edward Humphries, mentioned so briefly in Kilvert's *Diary*.

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- ¹ Saunder's Newsletter, July 1784.
- ² Newcastle Courant, 23 August 1783.
- ³ Rules of Admission, The Royal Hospital, Chelsea.

Trevethin: Memories of an Exile and the Search for the Railway Tavern

By Jeff Marshall

Memories indeed, awakened by Richard Parker's article on Gipsy Lizzie in the March 2020 *Journal*.

I had long known of the surprising connection between Gipsy Lizzie and my home town of Pontypool, but Richard Parker revealed further interesting and unexpected links.

The trigger, if you like, was the photograph on p 23 of Gipsy's baptismal certificate with its heading: Parish of Trevethin. Trevethin was once the parish church for Pontypool and it was where my parents were married and where my elder brother John, who died aged four, a victim, like Kilvert, of peritonitis, lies buried. The huge churchyard is now surrounded by a very large council estate and is very overgrown and neglected, despite the efforts of a small volunteer group to keep it under control; there is vandalism, too. The church, a noted local landmark, stands high on the mountain above the town, near the top of the ridge that marks the easternmost limit of the industrial Valleys. It is some distance from the modern town that lies in and along the valley and it would have been an uphill trek for worshippers. Until 1890, the services were conducted in Welsh. The derivation of the name of the parish is a matter of some conjecture and underwent several spelling changes, eventually settling on Trefeithen (Welsh: *tref*=town, *eithen*=gorse), rather appropriate given its once isolated mountain site.

The church is dedicated to St Cadoc and was originally a chapelry attached to Llanover, a parish between Pontypool and Abergavenny on the other side of the mountain, in pastoral Monmouthshire. In 1845, it became a separate parish and the first vicar, the Revd Thomas Davies, set about reconstructing and enlarging the building (it will seat over 800) and building the vicarage opposite, later a pub, the Masons' Arms.

The original church was medieval and the interior has interesting galleries and a private chapel with a vault beneath, the resting place of members of the Hanbury family. They were ironmasters and squires of Pontypool, responsible for its growth from a hamlet to a major industrial town, whence they derived their wealth.

In 1821, a new church, dedicated to St James, was built in the town centre, (in Hanbury Road) next to the Town Hall. Once a fashionable church, I had always supposed it to be a chapel of ease to spare members of the town's rapidly growing population the long climb to Trevethin. It may well have served that purpose but St James' was built, apparently, for the benefit of English speaking worshippers as people seeking work flocked to the town. Unfortunately, it is now closed, an eyesore in its central position.

As for Gipsy's residence in the town, Richard Parker gives her family home as the Railway Tavern, in the Trosnant area.



St Cadoc's Church, Trevethin.



The Clarence Hotel is in the foreground. The Railway Tavern must have been in one of the small houses nearby.

Photos: courtesy of Arthur Crane



A sketch of Trosnant as it looked in the eighteenth century; Wesley preaching in the street.

Trosnant Street was the original way into the town from the south, rather narrow and with a steep hill at either end. The construction of an avoiding road in 1820 meant that the street fell more and more into disuse. It eventually became a slum area, although a handy short cut into the town through which, as a young boy, I ventured alone at my peril. Odd to think that John Wesley once preached there! In the end the ruinous cottages were demolished and Trosnant Street is now a service road to the car park for the Leisure Centre and the Pontypool RFC ground in Pontypool Park. The Park, about 160 acres, was formerly the estate surrounding the Hanbury's handsome Georgian mansion, where the family lived until 1908. Subsequently, it became a convent and is now a Catholic comprehensive school.

The Hanbury family still retain the memorial chapel in Trevethin church and, indeed, as recently as 2017, Sir Richard Hanbury-Tenison, the former diplomat, (and brother of Robin, the explorer) was interred there. The family also has a continuing financial interest in and around the town. I remember that ground rent on my boyhood home was payable annually to the Pontypool Park Estate, which continues to administer the various Hanbury holdings from a local office. That boyhood home is about 200 yards from the southern (Pontymoel) entrance to the Park, through some very fine wrought-iron gates, a gift to the Hanburys in 1721 from their friend Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough; this was about the time when their mansion was under construction.

I have not yet been able to locate exactly the whereabouts of the Railway Tavern, despite the assortment of above connections, reference to histories of the town, old photographs and maps

and conversations with my cousin Arthur Crane, a distinguished local resident and historian. Consulting the 1861 census, he discovered four dwellings, almost certainly contiguous, which stretched along Clarence Street, running at right angles to Trosnant Street. This may provide a clue to what seems the likeliest location...so far.

These dwellings are: no 1 – three residents; no 2 – the Railway Tavern – seven residents, including Gipsy's family; no 3 – three residents; and no 4 – the Clarence Inn – eleven residents: the owners, plus railway workers and carriers. The Inn, which later became the town's principal hotel, is now converted into flats. We think that one of the other buildings is the present Hanbury Arms, (the Sun on a map of 1830), the only surviving licensed premises in the area, whereas at the end of the nineteenth century there were four others, none of which is the Railway Tavern, at least, not by that name! Evidently, the name was not that long-lived.

The Clarence Street area had its heyday in the first half of the twentieth century, when it was quite a lively part of the town; a sort of secondary town centre with good transport links, offices, cafes and numerous small locally owned useful shops, plus the aforementioned Clarence Hotel – no longer a hotel, as stated, and the shops are mostly closed: it's all rather sad.

I do hope that, in due course, further details of Gipsy's Pontypool life, and her subsequent wanderings, will emerge. Meanwhile, I am very grateful to Mr Parker for initiating this burst of nostalgia. It is a long, long time since I left Ponty – it now seems almost long enough ago for me to have enjoyed a pint ...at the Railway Tavern, if I could only find it!

How Solitary was the 'Solitary'?

As we all endured lockdown, our thoughts may have turned to one of Kilvert's most reclusive characters.

By Mary Steele

In *Journal 4*, under the headline 'The Solitary, not so solitary', Sidney Ball pointed out that Kilvert's 'Solitary', the Revd John Price, 'had a varied life before moving to Painscastle'... 'In 1834, John Price having been ordained Deacon, his first curacy was at Abthorpe (Northants) until 1839 when he went to Astley for five years (this Astley either in Lancashire or Warwickshire). Then came three years at Hutton Roof (Westmoreland) and two years at Epwell (Oxfordshire). From 1849 to 1856, the Revd John Price was Chaplain at Boxmoor Infirmary near Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire. His last curacy was at Gorton, Lancashire from 1856 to 1859.'

In an article written in 1907, reprinted in the *Oswin Prosser Memorial Booklet* and again in *Journal 32*, the Revd David Edmondson-Owen described these as 'important curacies' but gave no other details. Apart from mentioning that 'he never shone as a preacher', there is no indication as to how he was regarded in these posts, either professionally or personally. The only thing

to note is that they were widely separated geographically and it is possible to conclude that Mr Price was moving to places where he was not known because he had not successfully integrated into parishes. But this is pure speculation; it is more likely that these jobs were available at the time that Mr Price was looking for a move. He heard about the vacancy at Llanbedr Painscastle from his cousin, who was a vicar in Breconshire; it was a living rather than a curacy, it was near a relative and it was in Wales, which would appeal to Mr Price, who was born in Carmarthenshire. Unfortunately, there was no vicarage and hardly any parishioners, being largely dissenters or 'indifferent'. The church was virtually a ruin.

Perch was considerably astonished at the ruinous state of Bryngwyn Church, its crazy roof and walls and broken windows. I told him to wait until he got to Llanbedr Painscastle.¹

Restoration at Llanbedr did not take place until 1885.² It was funded by a local landowner.³

Mr Edmondson-Owen gave the date of John Price's arrival at Llanbedr Painscastle as 'forty-eight years ago' which, counting back from the article's date of 1907, brings us to 1859. He relates the stories of Mr Price finding a congregation among vagrants and homes in a cottage, small farmhouse and then three bathing machines and finally the old hen-house at Cwm Ceilo. At this point, we could label Mr Price 'eccentric', but not necessarily 'solitary'. The purchase of the bathing machines is explained as a solution to Mr Price's determination to live locally and not be an absentee vicar. It appears that there was nowhere in Llanbedr, or in Painscastle itself, where lodgings were available, though parishioners were persuaded to give him dinner and tea, for which he paid. He had a small private income, but this was depleted by his rewarding the tramps who attended his services, and so plain living became privation.



The grave of the 'Solitary', recently restored by the Kilvert Society. Photo: Richard Weston

Mr Edmondson-Owen did not give any dates for these events, so it is not clear from his article where Mr Price was living when Kilvert arrived in the area in 1865, or in 1870, when Kilvert first refers to him. This entry was left out of the published *Diary* by Plomer, surprisingly given the extended entry about the 1872 visit to the hovel at Cwm Ceilo. Luckily, it appears in one of the three surviving notebooks and so we can read the full entry for 31 May 1870 when Kilvert and clerical colleagues travelled to the Brecon Visitation.

When we got into Church morning prayer was nearly over and the prayer for all conditions of men being read. Thirwall called the names over. Many men were absent, but Price of Llanbedr Painscastle was there. I thought he might have walked, but he said he came by train. We shook hands after Church.⁴

There is a suggestion here that Mr Price's presence was unusual and that to shake hands with him was noteworthy. But he had come and had travelled to Brecon on the train, presumably from Hay, just like Kilvert. The Diarist made no comment about John Price's looks or clothes, and we can be confident that nothing has been edited out as we are reading from a surviving notebook. It is disconcerting, therefore, to turn to the entry for the visit to Cwm Ceilo (Vol 2, p225-31) and find Kilvert describing the appearance of 'the Solitary' as if he had never seen him before.

Then what was my relief when I knocked upon the door to hear a strange deep voice from within saying 'Ho! Ho!' There was a slight stir within and then the cabin door opened and a strange figure came out. The figure of a man rather below the middle height, about 60 years of age, his head covered with a luxuriant growth of light brown or chestnut hair and his face made remarkable by a mild thoughtful melancholy blue eye and red moustache and white beard.'

It is possible that John Price's physical condition had deteriorated dramatically over the two years between the encounters. We don't know if anyone else called him 'the Solitary' and this could well be one of Kilvert's frequent namings of individuals. The emphasis on 'strange' casts a shadow over the motivation of Kilvert and Tom Williams for making the visit.

Wednesday 3 July [1872] *Tom Williams of Llowes and I had long been talking of going up to Llanbedr Hill to pay a visit to the eccentric solitary, the Vicar...*

It smacks uncomfortably of going to a freak show. But we can forgive Kilvert because of his compassionate memorialising of John Price, which has made sure that 'the Solitary's' memory is respected by generations of readers of the *Diary*.

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- ¹ Kathleen Hughes and Dafydd Ifans, eds *The Diary of Francis Kilvert, June-July 1870*, p6.
- ² Chris Barber *Exploring Kilvert Country*, p139.
- ³ Edmondson-Owen, David, 'The tramp's chaplain' *Journal* 11, p17.
- ⁴ Kathleen Hughes and Dafydd Ifans, eds *The Diary of Francis Kilvert, April-June 1870*, p70. I am indebted to *Journal* contributor John Price for drawing my attention to this extract, which was included in the full entry he sent me as part of his article about Tom Williams for *Journal* 50.

Flooding in Kilvert Country

The floods early this year got the editor thinking about floods that are described in the Diary.

My first action when I'm thinking about a Kilvert related topic is to look in the index of the three volume *Diary*. Opening it at the entry for 'Floods', I was surprised to find two lines of page references.

Members who were affected in 2020 may read the following lines, written on 24 January 1872, rather bitterly:

Will the land ever be dry again? All the low-lying meadows are wastes of wan waters and dreary pools. The land is sodden with wet. (Vol 2, p 124-5)

What Kilvert called *waterspouts* of rain filled the brooks. *The Cwmbythog brook burst its banks and came through the Lower House, in at the back door and out at the front.* Houses were also flooded at Wern Fawr, Lower Bettws and Lower Cabalva. Typically, Kilvert found something poetic in the scene:

The great white mountains this afternoon loomed ghostly through the rain clouds and the thick dark mist.

A couple of days later, he talked about the weather with Edward Williams at the Swan, who recalled the Wye as a very *wild river* and all the valley frequently flooded from Hay to Llyswyn.

Again, to be read ruefully by those affected: *Of late years it had not flooded so heavily or so often. (Vol 2, p 126)*

A summer storm, on 7 July 1872, caused the brook that runs through Clyro to burst its banks and fill the lanes and meadows. *Now the water demon was in full power* wrote Kilvert. The next day, he reported the damage: loss of livestock, long term damage to pasture, crops and roads, and Lower Cabalva House flooded again, as well as the Rhydspence Inn. (Vol 2, p 232-4)

The following winter, on 3 January 1873, urban flooding was the issue:

We heard today that the excessive rain has caused the sewers of Landsdowne Hill to overflow and the sewerage has polluted the Bath Weston waters and reservoirs so that many people have been poisoned and have died from typhus fever, among the number Mr Pontifex, just appointed to the Vicarage of Yate. (Vol 2, p304).

A similar thing happened a few years ago in Gloucester, when flooding got into a water treatment plant, though mercifully without the contagion; I think Kilvert may have meant typhoid, which is a bacterium transmitted by water.



The River Wye floods in February 2020, downstream of Hay Bridge path.

Photo: John Price



The River Wye floods in February 2020. Cars seen in the distance were later washed away.

Photo: John Price

In Vol 3, p 161, under a page heading ‘Boating in the Chancel’, the Monnington churchwarden recalled the day the Wye, which lies next to the churchyard, entering the church in 1852. He and the then rector *had punted in a flat-bottomed boat across the Court garden, in at the Church door, up the Nave and into the Chancel.*

Summer storms and floods again in 1875 led Kilvert to write (from the relative comfort of a holiday on the Isle of Wight): *There has not been such a time for fifty years.* (Vol 3, p 211)

The Bredwardine flood of Sunday November 10, 1878 was reported in detail in Vol 3, p429-30, when, after ten days of bad weather, including snow, heavy rain and a thaw forced people to spend the day moving livestock to safety. *Church almost empty...So far the second greatest flood of the century.* Despite the efforts, animals were seen floating down the river. The bridge cottage of the Jenkins family was flooded and when Mr Stokes *kindly rode down from the Old Court to see if they were safe, the water was up to his horse’s girths.* Surprisingly, people flooded out at Letton and Staunton came towards the river and camped out on Bredwardine Bridge. The Whitney railway bridge was carried away and two miles of line damaged. *No trains can run for three months.* After the Spring 2020 floods, damage to bridges and roads was estimated at costing millions of pounds.

Here is Kilvert on spring weather – and rainbows, the symbol of hope during this pandemic.

Quinquagesima Sunday, 15 February [1874]

A brilliant lovely, spring morning, turning to an afternoon of rain. How like life.

How often a sunny morning ends in clouds and tears.

It was fitting weather for Rainbow Sunday.

I read prayers and preached from Genesis ix.16, on the Seven Jewels, with Fair Colours in the Rainbow Crown, the Seven Virtues which make the Crown of Love.

(Vol 2, p418)

Weighed down by a Crinoline

Members who attended the picnic at Snodhill Castle in June 2019 will remember that we were blessed with a beautiful day. Gentlemen, some of whom had gone to great trouble acquiring authentic Victorian style dress, found it rather too warm. "I have never before respected Victorian men for the clothes they wore" said one picnicker. Ladies, however, found a long cotton skirt and blouse and a straw hat quite comfortable for a summer day, although a little unusual for touring historic ruins. We had, without exception, left off crinolines. These were an optional extra for mid-Victorian women, but almost universally popular, leading to cartoons in the press, complaints from clergy that they did not fit into small churches, and most seriously, large numbers of accidents, including tragic deaths from domestic fires and from being trapped in unprotected factory machinery. Florence Nightingale estimated that nearly 140 deaths a year were caused by this 'absurd and hideous custom'. Crinolines did, however, keep off dangerous dogs and, in reports from Newquay in Cornwall, and the Bristol Suspension Bridge, act as a parachute when a lady fell or jumped. Kilvert records a similar rescue by *umbrella and her clothes* on the cliff edge at Ventnor (Vol 3, p 41). A crinoline did not go well with riding a horse, as Kilvert noticed with amusement at New Brighton in 1872 (Vol 2, p 212). *The ladies as a rule rode without riding habits and with crinolines. The effect was striking.* By the 1870s, crinolines were being replaced by

bustles, with all the fabric gathered at the back. Kilvert records that the *gay dresses of the ladies* were *an unwonted sight to the dwellers in the Golden Valley* at the original Snodhill picnic (Vol 1, p160-2), but the ladies may not have been in the height of bustle wearing fashion in the country in 1870.

Then there were the notorious corsets, causing drastic constriction of the internal organs and a string of diseases, according to contemporary medical opinion, which was largely ignored. Fainting was common; is this why Kilvert's sister Dora fainted at prayers in Bredwardine rectory? She admitted that *her dress was tight...and she caught her breath and could not get it again* (Vol 3, p 383).

A woman of the period could be wearing up to 14lbs in weight of underclothing. The Rational Dress Society, founded in 1881, proposed that underwear should weigh no more than 7lbs, with the dress on top being a maximum of 3lbs. It is not surprising that the ladies at the 1870 Snodhill picnic *gallantly sprawled and struggled up and slithered down again*. As Kilvert wrote in his *Diary* a few weeks earlier: *slaves to fashion must its gods adore* (Vol 1, p 124)

Carriage Racing

Our Snodhill picnic organisers included a traffic management plan and members were ferried to the site in a two car convoy. Perhaps it's just as well that we hadn't read this part of Kilvert's account, only available in the June-July 1870 Notebook, p 26

We had a sort of steeplechase drive home, Powell taking his waggonette and ponies with a large freight by another lane, but we in the Moor break beat him, cutting into the main road home to Dorstone just before his ponies rounded the corner at a quick trot.

No cutting in or racing for us!

Ref: Karen Bowman *Corsets and codpieces; a social history of outrageous fashion* (Pen & Sword, 2015) pp88-105.



The artificial cage crinoline appeared in June 1856... It was made of spring steel hoops, increasing in diameter towards the bottom, suspended on cotton tapes. This design was strong enough to support the skirts and create the desired bell-shaped effect. The fashion was so popular that *Punch* nicknamed the crinoline craze 'Crinolinemia'. (V & A website)

In Kilvert country, in different circumstances

Last year the *Guardian* featured, in its travel sections, several places that are mentioned in the *Diary*. In complete contrast, this Spring and early Summer, we were all in lockdown, with five mile travel limits and a ban on crossing the border from England into Wales.

Brecon became the subject of the *Guardian*'s 'Let's move to' column on 30 March 2019. Writer Tom Dyckhoff described the town as 'full of brightly painted Georgian streets, dotted with craft galleries and secondhand bookshops'. The 'case against' was 'the glowering countryside and (whenever I go at least) grey weather is not for everyone'. He should try coming to a KS event; our visit to Brecon was on the first day of the 2018 heatwave.

Undeterred by British weather of any kind, the same day's *Guardian* travel section featured 'Something to celebrate: 50 special places in the United Kingdom', chosen by different writers. Rob Penn, author of a book called 'The Man who made Things out of Trees' chose the church of St Mary the Virgin, **Capel – y- Ffin**, Black Mountains, writing 'The church dates from 1762 but the site, below the Gospel Pass at the head of Llanthony valley, has been a spiritual centre for centuries. It is said a vision of the Virgin Mary appeared here in Norman times...Walk the surrounding hills to experience a tranquillity that lured Francis Kilvert, Eric Ravilious, David Jones and Bruce Chatwin here'.

By May 2019, getting away from other people was the travel theme, in the wake of press photographs of the notorious and lethal tailbacks to reach the summit of Everest. Under the headline 'Moving Mountains' the *Guardian* travel section for 25 May recommended skipping Pen y Fan, the highest peak in south Wales, cursed with queues a quarter of a mile long on Good Friday and instead heading 'east, to the wonderfully overlooked **Black Mountains**. Hay Bluff, just south of Hay-on-Wye on the mountains main north-east facing escarpment, and nearby Twmpa (which also goes by the unfortunate monicker of Lord Hereford's Knob') provide a similar "top of the world" feeling, but with a fraction of the crowds.'

The October 2019 edition of *The Oldie* included an article by Mark Bostridge, entitled 'A vicar's guide to God's own country' and an abridged version of his introduction to the latest paperback edition of the *Diary*. He concludes 'When we read Kilvert today... I can think of no better literary antidote to the troubled, messed-up times we live in'.

That was before a virus pandemic messed up things a lot more. While we spent Easter 2020 in lockdown, Radio 3 gave us a virtual tour by repeating a sound walk by writer Horatio Clare that recorded him, in real time, walking from Capel-y-Ffin to Hay and commenting on his journey. There were two readings from the *Diary*, extracted from 20 and 22 Feb 1870; Kilvert's walk from Hay to Capel-y-Ffin on 4 April 1870 was not included. Horatio Clare had a couple of interesting comments to make about Radnorshire dialect, referring to the words 'pitch' and 'dingle', both used by Kilvert. He also

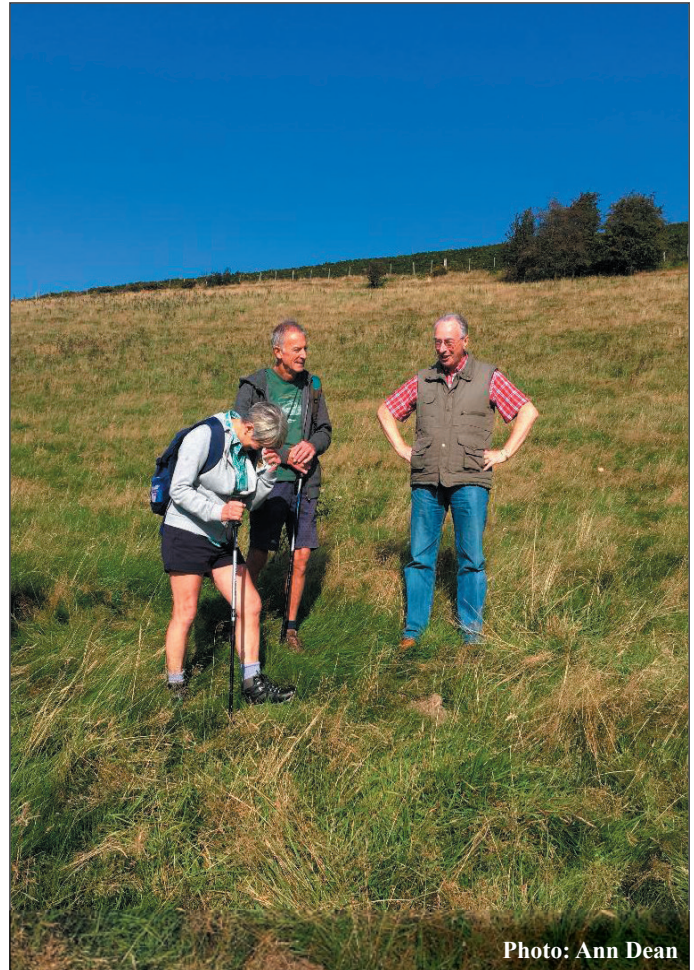


Photo: Ann Dean

mentioned that the crayfish Kilvert's brother Perch found (Vol 1, p 159) are now largely extinct in those parts, but were still there in his childhood. Mr Clare was brought up in the Black Mountains and said that people know their own valley, but outside this is strange land. Kilvert was a complete outsider, but able to use his privilege as a clergyman to visit people in the area, as well as his enthusiasm for long walks. Could the possibility of hill walks been an attraction of the job when he applied? We know from *Diary* references that he had visited Switzerland and Norway.

The photo shows Howard Dean (on right) during last September's Knighton Walking Festival which included what Ann Dean calls 'a jaunt from Colva to Clyro over the fields.' Ann was invited to speak to them about Kilvert so she read from the *Diary* the entry about his visit to Colva church. She says 'Mr and Mrs Basil Hobby of Colva Farm (Sun Inn in Kilvert's time) kindly allowed us use of their field AND Mr Hobby placed a stick in the correct position to hear the echo. This was such a help as I remember, years ago, prowling around the field with Howard and Marjorie and David Elvins looking for the elusive echo'.

A Real and Kindly Presence

The Church Times featured an article about Kilvert under this headline in July, written by Canon Rod Garner, reflecting on what Kilvert can teach about ministry today. The central section of the article is reprinted here.

The importance of the *Diary* lies not simply in its descriptive power, or its evocation of a particular time and place. In its pages we discover Kilvert himself, a conscientious and complex priest with a pastoral heart and a surging appetite for life. He inhabits two worlds: as a curate with a meagre stipend, serving struggling parishioners, he also dines with senior clergy or local gentry and enjoys good food, wine and conversation.

He is attracted to beautiful women and young girls, and longs for a relationship that will fulfil his emotional needs and bring him children of his own. Observing children at play on the beach, he later records how *it came over me like a storm and I turned away hungry at heart and half envying the parents as they sat upon the sand watching their children at play.*

His wish was not fulfilled. A deep and passionate love for Frances Thomas was ended by her father, a local vicar, who failed to see Kilvert as a sound financial prospect. The rejection proved devastating: an emotional eclipse that led him to record *the sun seemed to have gone out of the sky.* (It should be noted at this point that some modern readers have found his attitude to the opposite sex questionable or inappropriate. There is, however, nothing to suggest that Kilvert ever sullied his calling, and he almost certainly remained celibate until his marriage. If anything, it is the virtuous quality of his character which continues to draw praise.)

In her *Metaphysics as a Guide to Morals*, a study of the possibility of virtue, the philosopher and novelist Iris Murdoch describes Kilvert as a ‘religious good man of simple faith with a natural, kindly, selfless love of people and of nature’. She notes how he captures beautifully ‘life on the wing’: the white mist gathering in the valley, the winding course of the river, the dazzle of the poplars, and the distant voices of children at play. What she does not relate in any detail is the appalling squalor and disease that Kilvert faced as he visited the homes of his people, where consumption was rife and the death of children was common.

In caring for his parishioners, Kilvert – to borrow a phrase from the martyr Archbishop Oscar Romero- ‘injects himself’- into their lives, consecrating their births, marriages and deaths, sharing their suffering, and responding compassionately to suicides and drowning. He prays with his parishioners – individuals whom he has come to love; administers the sacrament; reads the scriptures; recites hymns; and commends the dying to the everlasting arms of the Father of all things. In the face of poverty or injustice, he secures food, blankets, and clothing and fights for – and obtains- pensions for ex-servicemen of the Napoleonic wars.

Staying close to the poor, he is never entirely comfortable with the privileged. An acerbic aside in the *Diary* records his disdain for their blood sports: *It’s a fine day – let’s go out and kill something.*

Deeply conscious of his own mortality, and recovering after a recurring lung infection, he acknowledges that a last illness will come from which there will be no respite, nor the opportunity to delight in the sights and sounds of the earthly Spring: *May I then be prepared to enter into the everlasting Spring and to walk among the birds and flowers of Paradise.*

Kilvert’s faith and humanity are infectious, and set down without artifice. He reads Shakespeare, Wordsworth and Tennyson, and enjoys croquet, and bathing in the nude. He is gently humorous, whether describing the valiant but rather unsuccessful attempts of bearers to carry a very heavy coffin with dignity, or his own laboured effort to chip away at the ice – *sharp as glass*- that has frozen in his bath on Christmas morning.

He dislikes tourists who come to ogle the Black Mountains before moving swiftly on, especially the British; *vulgar, ill-bred and offensive.* His sleep is occasionally interrupted by the drunks outside the Swan across from his lodgings, *lying by the road all night, cursing, vomiting and muttering.* The Swan is also, however, the meeting-place where agitated crowds gather after a dispiriting day at a local auction, trying to sell inferior cattle that no one will buy.

Kilvert is not unmoved. He knows that poor people need to sell their animals (however feeble their condition) to pay their rent. He notes that *If no one wants to buy them, where are the rents to come from?* It is a mortal question from a pastor who meets people as he walks to chapel each day, learning of their joys and sorrows, which form the heart of his prayers.

The white tombstone marking Kilvert’s burial place at Bredwardine bears the text “He being dead yet speaketh. Hebrews 11.4.” It is our good fortune that the passage of time has not stilled his voice. In a quite inimitable way, it reminds us of what we are prone to forget or choose to disregard. Rural idylls and a “quiet country living” remain what they always were: figments of the urban imagination.

In the same edition of the Clerical Times, the Revd Fergus Butler-Gallie researched the motives of clerical diarists in the past, as preparation for publishing his own, fictional Diary of an Urban Parson. Here is a different viewpoint of Kilvert, even of the same phrase from the Diary. The article, headlined A Mine of Clerical Confidences, was illustrated by a photograph of Hay Bluff.

Of course, clerical diarists may not have realised quite how important their observations had the power to become, however

minor they seemed at the time. This year marks the 150th anniversary of the date when the Revd Francis Kilvert picked up his pen and began a journal of observations of late 19th century clerical life.

Kilvert was a curate in the borderland between England and Wales, that mystic hinterland that seems like a natural place for priests and poets to reside. Accordingly, much of his writing is suitably florid. When a neighbouring vicar refused him permission to marry his daughter, he reacted by writing *It was like the sun had gone out of the sky*.

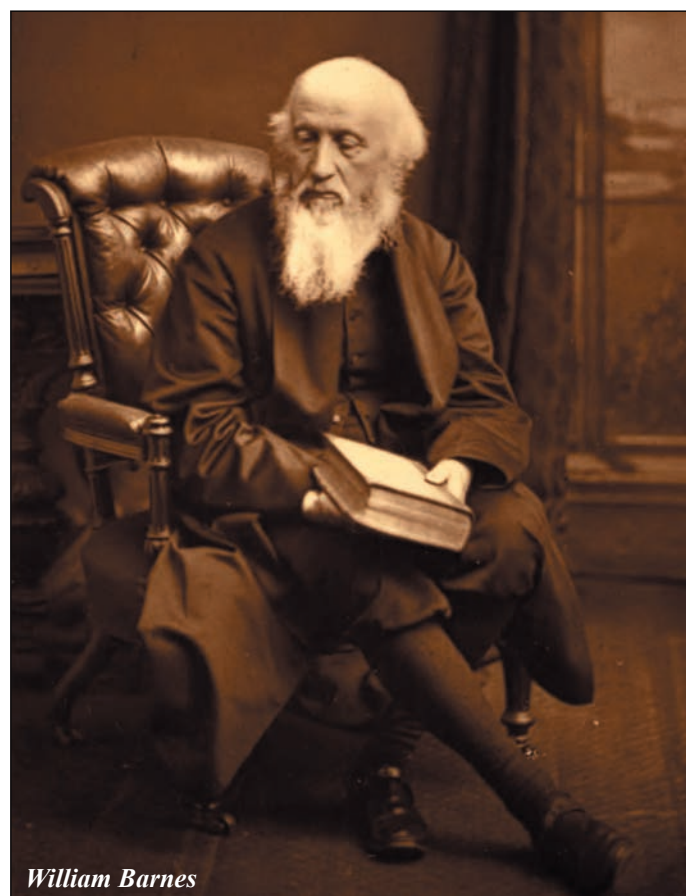
Despite a heavy-handed editorial process involving a bonfire (in fairness to the incendiary, his niece, it has to be pointed out that one of Kilvert's hobbies was nude bathing, and his writing about some of his parishioners would now undoubtedly fall foul of a diocesan safeguarding officer), the *Diary* that survives is a must-read for those wanting a snapshot of the era of Thomas Hardy.

These extracts are reprinted by kind permission of the Church Times. (for latest subscription information see www.churchtimes.co.uk) The Diary of an Urban Parson can be read at www.the-fence.com.

The Clewer Sisterhood – another connection

By Mary Steele

One of my lockdown reading books was a biography of William Barnes, the Dorset poet, visited by Kilvert on 30 April 1874 (Vol 2, p 437-42). My interest was stimulated by a conversation with *Journal* contributor David Gouldstone (see pages 13-16) about how famous Barnes was in his day and since. The answer seems to be 'not very', though admirers have included E M Forster, Gerard Manley Hopkins and Ronald Blythe.¹ The biography showed him to be a fascinating character, teacher, poet, clergyman, reader of over seventy languages and friend of Thomas Hardy.



William Barnes

Barnes's wife died in her forties and his eldest daughter, Laura, looked after him for the rest of his long life. She had to sacrifice her own aspirations as a musician or any hopes of having a home of her own; perhaps in frustration at her limited life, she at one point 'sent to learn the terms of entry to a "House of Mercy"', but, having received the information, she paused to consider and came to the conclusion that providence had appointed her to be her father's helpmate, to keep his home together, so she did not apply'.²

After her father died, in 1886, Laura had to leave their home at Winterbourne Came Rectory and the book states that she went for a time 'to Clewer, near Windsor'.³ I conclude from this that the House of Mercy she applied to was one of those belonging to the Community of St John Baptist, otherwise known as the Clewer Sisters. This is known to Kilvert Society members as the Anglican religious order that Kilvert's sister Fanny joined after both her parents had died and her task of caring for them was done.⁴ Fanny entered the order at the age of 46 in 1892, just under three years after her mother died in Bath. Laura Barnes was 56 when her father died, and was perhaps too old to join as a Sister, or decided, after a period in residence, that it was not for her. She spent the rest of her life living in various places, in London, Scotland, Weymouth and with her brother. She died in Dorchester, where she had spent much of her early life, and is buried next to her father in Winterbourne Came churchyard.

REFERENCES

- ¹ Ronald Blythe *At Helpston* (Black Dog Books, 2011) p 138.
- ² Alan Chedzoy *The People's Poet: William Barnes of Dorset*, (The History Press, 2010) p152.
- ³ Chedzoy, p 197.
- ⁴ Teresa Williams 'Frances Henrietta Kilvert – the later years – part 2' *Journal* 48, p22-5.

A TRIBUTE TO ANNE WHEELDON

The death of Anne Wheeldon was reported in the last Journal. She and her sister Elizabeth were distinguished members of the Kilvert Society, who both served on the committee. This is an extract from the eulogy spoken at her funeral by her niece, Sarah Wakeman.

Anne was born in 1929, a year after her sister Elizabeth. Her parents were Arthur (my grandfather's brother) and Dorothy who was part of the big farming family, the Raymonds.

Medical neglect at birth left Anne non-sighted but she always had great independence and determination to never let this stand in her way. SO successful was she in this that I grew up believing that all non-sighted people had an extra super power and I remember only two ground rules:

- Don't leave anything on the floor that she might trip over
- Leave furniture in the same place and then she would remember where everything was.

It was then business as usual – Auntie Anne even cut the grass!

Initially the family lived on a farm. Her Father Arthur fought at Passchendaele in 1917, later dying in 1931 due to the effects of what he endured in the trenches.

Auntie Dor, Liz and Anne moved to Penn Grove Road and this is the one constant address where I visited for over 50 years of my life before Auntie Liz and Auntie Anne had to move to Holmer Court Residential Home.

Everyone who visited the house must remember the hospitality, warmth, noise and chatter that always greeted you at Penn Grove Road. Not to mention the sherry and a love of good food.



My Mother, Grace, and her brother Frank grew up with Liz and Anne and shared many childhood memories. My Mother recalls often playing in a walled garden cycling around and around. Anne knew exactly how many turns of the pedal she had to make before she had to turn a corner as she whizzed around on her bike!

Anne went to Chorley Wood School for the blind and then trained at the RNIB Physiotherapy school in London. She was always independent, quite happily taking tubes around London.

She became a highly respected physiotherapist at Hereford hospital – County and General. There is a lovely story about Anne diving into the physiotherapy pool, after hearing bubbles, thinking that someone was in trouble in the water. She dragged the poor chap out of the water only to discover that it was someone cleaning the bottom of the pool with diving equipment on!

Anne was a Governor of New College Worcester, a school for blind children. It was here that she met Janet Stonehouse, who has been the most incredibly good and faithful friend, regularly visiting Anne right to the end. Janet was also a physiotherapist - they didn't train together but had an enduring friendship.

Anne loved walking and was a very active Rambler and also member of the Kilvert Society. She was also an active supporter of Hereford Cathedral. Both Liz and Anne were members of the Woolcote Society.

Thanks to Sarah Wakeman and Val Dixon for text and photos.



OBITUARIES

Mr Jack FRYER

Mr Jack Fryer joined with his wife as joint members in March 2019, but sadly, Mr Fryer died as the result of an accident shortly afterwards in May 2019, aged 90.



Mrs Sallie MORGAN

Mrs Sallie Morgan of Hereford died in January 2020. Our condolences to her husband Richard, who joined with her in January 2005.

Mrs Mary RIDGER

Mrs Mary Ridger died on 11 January 2020, aged 95. Although not a member, she donated a photograph album showing local scenes, dated 1888. It is now in the Radnorshire Museum. Her father, grandfather and great uncle were solicitors and land agents in Hay, involved with the Hay Guardians and Workhouse and meeting many of the clergy mentioned in the *Diary*. At her memorial service on 13 March at St Mary's church, Cusop, the prayer of thanksgiving was read by Cusop churchwarden and KS member Celia Cundale. A reading was given from the *Diary* for 14 March 1871, the description of the brilliant sunset.

NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to new members. We have had an encouraging rise in new membership this year, from a wide geographical area, with several via the website. Cancellation of events has meant that there has been no chance so far to meet any of you, but we hope to do so in the future: meanwhile, we greet you through the pages of the *Journal* (and welcome contributions).

Postscript: The Stones of Snodhill

The account of the Snodhill picnic of June 21, 1870 (Vol 1, pp 160-3) is famous for its entertaining account of the participants and events of that day. The entry is nearly complete but one paragraph, in the June-July 1870 notebook, shows that Kilvert was taking his usual interest in the scenery and writing about it using poetic prose.

The passage, from p 24 of the notebook, reads

The buildings round some of the farmyards were supported by low, round, hugely-massive pillars like the low, round, Norman pillars in old churches.

Could the pillars have come from the castle ruins, I wonder, and are they still identifiable? Local members might know. A description of the castle follows, the first sentence of which will be familiar.

At the foot of the castle hill we got out and everyone carried something up the steep, slippery, brown, bare, grass slopes. I carried the Haigh Allens' basket of crockery &c. Above us on a steep circular mound topping the hill tottered the grand, grey fragments of the ruined castle, half-bosomed in the tufted woods and solitary trees that grew about the slopes. There was more of the castle left than I had expected to see, for beside the lofty fragments of the keep other bits of ruin and old walls were scattered round here and there, grey and solitary among the woods and on the edges of the banks.



Snodhill Castle ruins

SPECIAL OFFER

Three-Volume Diary, packed in slip case, available to members at £60 plus £12.98 p&p (or can be collected post free)

Kilvert Society DVD

A film depicting the early days of the Society. £15 + £2 p&p.

East End: West End. Alone in London

by John Toman
The history of Victorian clergyman George Trousdale and his wife, Bee Smallcombe, who was known by Kilvert. (Vol III, pp184,186). Their lives are explored in comparison with the *Diary*. £15 inc p&p.

Who's Who in Kilvert's Diary

A fully comprehensive Who's Who with over 400 biographies and 22 family trees, compiled by the late Tony O'Brien. £13 including p&p.

More Chapters from the Kilvert Saga

(reprinted)
Contents: The Memoirs of the Rev Robert Kilvert (the Diarist's father) and Recollections of Emily Wyndowe (the Diarist's sister); also extracts from Augustus Hare's account of the school at Hardenhuish Rectory. £5.

Jubilee Praise. The Tom Palmer Memorial Booklet, compiled to celebrate the Society's Jubilee in June 1998. This new publication, edited by our former Chairman, Michael Sharp, is a selection from the Newsletters of the last thirty years. £5.50.

Francis Kilvert Priest & Diarist, by Frederick Grice. A reprint of the 1975 original. £5.50.

Collected Verse. Contains the 55 poems of Francis Kilvert printed privately in 1881. £4.50.

The Frederick Grice Memorial Booklet

Contents: The Missing Year – Kilvert & 'Kathleen Mavourneen' by Laurence Le Quesne; two hitherto unpublished articles on Kilvert by Frederick Grice; several articles, also by Frederick Grice, reprinted from various newsletters. £5.

Kilvert's 'Kathleen Mavourneen'

by Eva Farmery and R B Taylor.
The publication records the painstaking research, extending over some 35 years, into the Heanley family of Croft, Lincolnshire, and the related Cholmeley family, who were related by marriage to the Kilvert Family. Particularly interesting is the section dealing with Katharine Heanley ('Kathleen Mavourneen'), her relationship with the Diarist and her tragic death. £5.

Kilvert and the Wordsworth Circle

by R I Morgan
The author summarises his researches into the Wordsworth – Monkhouse – Dew connection, in which Kilvert was so interested. £4.50.

Looking Backwards

References to Kilvert's wife, their marriage and honeymoon; accounts of their home-coming to Bredwardine and of Kilvert's death and funeral; extracts from the diary of Hastings Smith (Kilvert's nephew) relating to his

enquiries into his uncle's year at St Harmon, etc. £4.50.

Miscellany Two: The Oswin Prosser Memorial Booklet. Contents: The Solitary of Llanbedr by the Rev D Edmondson-Owen; Radnorshire Legends and Superstitions by Mrs Essex Hope; Honeymoon Journal by Dora Pitcairn; The Venables Diaries by A L Le Quesne; Memories of the Monk by Ann Mallinson. £4.50.

Kilvert's Poetry: A Study, by Bernard Jones. £4.

The Other Francis Kilvert

Francis Kilvert of Claverton (1803-1863), by Teresa Williams and Frederick Grice. £2.

Index of Journal/ Newsletters

1956-2000, by the late Rev Dr Nigel Rowe. £2.

The Bevan-Dew Extracts

Entries from the original Diary relating to the Bevan and Dew families which were omitted from the published Diary. £2.

Vicar of this Parish, by John Betjeman. £2.

Children of the Rectory, by Essex Hope. £1.50.

Newsletter/Journals

Back numbers of some Newsletters and Journals. £2.50.

The following books can be purchased from booksellers or on the internet:

Francis Kilvert, by David Lockwood. Seren Books, 1990. ISBN 1-85411-033-0 paperback.

Kilvert The Victorian, by David Lockwood. Seren Books, 1992. ISBN 1-85411-077-2.

After Kilvert, by A L Le Quesne. OUP, 1978. ISBN 0-19-211748-3.

Francis Kilvert and His World, by Frederick Grice. Caliban Books, 1980. Hardback ISBN 0-904573-52-4; Paperback ISBN 0-904573-78-8.

Kilvert The Homeless Heart, by John Toman. Logaston Press, 2001. ISBN 1-873827-37-7.

Growing up in Kilvert Country, by Mona Morgan. Gomer, 1990. ISBN 0-86383-680-1.

Exploring Kilvert Country, by Chris Barber. Blorenge Books, 2003. ISBN 1-872730-24-8.

Moods of Kilvert Country, by Nick Jenkins and Kevin Thomas. Halsgrove, 2006. ISBN 1-84114-525-4 / 978-1-84114-525-9.

Kilvert's Diary and Landscape (978-071883-0953) and **Kilvert's World of Wonders – growing up in Victorian England** (978-071889-3019). Both by John Toman. Lutterworth Press.

A Deep Sense of the Uses of Money: Kilvert's forebears in Bath and India.
True Heirs to Israel: Kilvert's theology.
The Lost Photo Album (2nd edition). All available directly from John Toman johntoman@dymond.force9.co.uk

The three books below are copies of Kilvert's original Diaries and are complete – the only surviving examples of his work.

The Diary of Francis Kilvert, April-June 1870 edited by Kathleen Hughes and Dafydd Ifans. National Library of Wales, 1982. ISBN 0-9077158-02-1.

The Diary of Francis Kilvert, June-July 1870 edited by Dafydd Ifans. National Library of Wales, 1989. ISBN 0-907158-02-1.

Kilvert's Cornish Diary, edited by Richard Maber and Angela Tregoning. Alison Hodge (Cornwall), 1989. ISBN 0-906720-19-2.

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

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