

THE
JOURNAL



OF THE
KILVERT SOCIETY

Number 7

March 2002

THE KILVERT SOCIETY

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

President:

The Reverend D.N. Lockwood M.A.

<i>Chairman:</i>	Mr. R. O. Watts, Dial Cottage, Bannut Tree Lane, Bridstow, Ross-on-Wye, Herefordshire HR9 6AJ.
<i>Vice-Chairman</i>	Miss D.A. Wheelton, 25 Penn Grove Road, Hereford, HR1 1BH
<i>Hon. Treasurer:</i>	Mr. J.H.C. Wilks, Woodlands, Cusop, Hay-on-Wye, HR3 5RQ
<i>Membership Secretary</i>	Mr. B. Smith, 25 Prospect Road, Abergavenny, Monmouthshire NP7 5DU Tel: (01873) 857520
<i>Publications Manager</i>	Mr. C.B. Dixon, Tregothnan, Pentrosfa Crescent, Llandrindod Wells, Powys LD1 5NW
<i>Hon. Archivist:</i>	Rev. Dr. J.N. Rowe, 12 Begwyns Bluff, Clyro, Herefordshire HR3 5SR
<i>Hon. Secretary:</i>	Mr. M.G. Sharp, The Old Forge, Kinnersley, Herefordshire HR3 6QB Tel: Eardisley (01544) 327426

Editor:

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

Tel: 01926- 420437

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

From the Editor:

Our beloved treasurer (see his letter to me, below) has, as he puts it, called my bluff, that is to say he has responded very encouragingly indeed to the opening paragraph of my remarks in last September's *Journal*. In fact, the remarks in question were not so much a bluff but more a hope So, now I will call *his* bluff or, rather, graciously accept his generous offer and if agreement can be reached with the printers about cost, I intend to insert a coloured double-page centre spread, once a year, in either the June or September edition. These pages will illustrate recent Society events and show some Kilvert Country scenes. I will be pleased to receive members' contributions for this new section, which will also go some way towards satisfying Lyndall Hancock's request (see p5 of *Journal* No 6), since the Society is unlikely to be able, ever, to afford the illustrated book she suggests.

In any case, as a start, there are two new photographic features beginning in this edition, one showing Kilvert locations in black and white and the other, more historic, using items taken from the Society's archives or elsewhere. Once again contributions will be gladly received.

The Winter Event, which I also mentioned in my September editorial did not take place. Apathy and indifference were rather less apparent on this occasion and I did receive about a dozen expressions of interest and support! However, the committee felt that this was insufficient and it has been decided to try again for early 2003, when longer notice will be given, via the *Journal*, as to what is proposed. Bath emerged as a popular choice of venue, so that will be borne in mind.

The extended AGM weekend of last year was much appreciated by members, the committee has therefore decided to continue the experiment and the plan for this year is revealed below. See you there!

Dear Jeff,

Now what's all this about me not allowing a bit of colour into your life? I refer of course to your editorial comment in *Journal* 6, and the (black and white) image of Scrooge as Society treasurer. I am happy to plead guilty to being careful with the Society's funds, but the real reason for my caution is that major improvements have to be paid for by only two thirds of members, that is to say those who pay an annual subscription. However, in the past year or so, subscribing and life members have been very generous with voluntary donations and this I believe is in no small part due to your introduction of the *Journal*.

I would therefore like to call your bluff and suggest, perhaps just once a year for a start, that a coloured section is included in the *Journal*. My own feelings are that this should be used to illustrate parts of the *Diary*, perhaps a span of dates or a topic, notice being given sufficiently far ahead for members to submit photographs for possible inclusion.

These thoughts still come from a careful treasurer but I believe that our members will continue to respond generously to developments in the *Journal*, (which for many is their only contact with the Society), and that the addition of colour may actually be self-financing.

Go on, give it a go and brighten up our lives in 2002!

Best wishes,

John

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

From the Membership Secretary

In the last *Journal* of 2001, readers were advised that, the committee had decided that those renewing membership annually would be sent a renewal form to complete with their cheque. It was hoped this would obviate the need for members to write personal letters, as well as serving as a reminder to those uncertain as to the amount and date involved in renewal.

Around 130 members were mailed in this way, about one month before subscriptions became due. The initial response was most encouraging and by the start of the new membership year on 1 January, some 45% had renewed their membership in this way. Their prompt response is much appreciated. However, at the end of January, some 30% of annual subscriptions were still outstanding and **those who have still not paid are urged to do so as rapidly as possible.** (Those who may have mislaid their forms will find membership requirements on the back page of the *Journal*).

As part of the mail-out, some 30 letters were sent out to those paying by standing orders who needed to increase these to take account of the new category of joint membership. Any members who may not have revised their standing orders are asked to look into this without delay.

By the end of January, existing members had opted for joint memberships in 15 or so cases (and, of course, some new members are choosing this option right from the start). In a surprising dozen or so cases, partners dropped out of membership with the Society, rather than becoming joint members. Whilst, in one sense, this is disappointing, it helps clarify the true membership position by eliminating those partners who may only have become 'token members' in the Society, at a time when no additional membership fee was required of them.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

AGM Weekend

Friday 26 April	7.00 p.m.	AGM at Bishop's Palace Hereford buffet £3.50 per head (please pay on the day). John Toman, author of <i>Kilvert: The Homeless Heart</i> will speak on Kilvert's choice of reading.
Saturday 27 April	11 a.m.	Seminar at the Swan Hotel, Hay-on-Wye Speaker: Adrian Harvey – The Webbs of Hardwick
	2.00 p.m.	Walk in the Hay area.
	6 p.m. for 7.00 p.m.	Dinner at the Swan Hotel, Hay-on-Wye A booking form for all these events is included with the <i>Journal</i> and further information will be found on page 20.

No Sunday Service

June Weekend

Saturday 29th	Walk, lunch and service at Langley Burrell, the day to begin at 10.30 a.m.
	The service will include Prayers of Thanksgiving for the Queen's Jubilee. Further information will be available at the AGM and a booking form will be included in the June <i>Journal</i> . If there is sufficient demand a coach will be organised to run from Hereford.

September Weekend

Saturday 28th	Walk in the Newchurch area.
Sunday 29th	Service at Newchurch

THE SEPTEMBER WEEKEND

A WALK IN THE ELAN VALLEY

By Val Dixon, (Llandrindod Wells)

Around twenty members of the Kilvert Society gathered at Caban Coch dam in the Elan Valley for their September walk, the final Kilvert weekend of the year. Some had travelled 250 miles for the event.

Even in Kilvert's time, plans were being discussed with regard to the building of the dams and he lived for about a year at nearby Rhayader when vicar of St Garmon's church in the village of St Harmon.

Society member, Colin Dixon, gave a brief history of the dams before the walkers set off. Various places of interest were pointed out along the way, including the site where Cwm Elan House had once stood. Shelley lived there with his uncle in 1812, after being sent down from Oxford. Members then walked on to Carreg Ddu, where they crossed over the dam to visit Nantgwyllt church. This had been built to replace the one destroyed when the valley was flooded.

At the end of the walk, tea was enjoyed at the visitors' centre.



Members viewing a 'point of interest' along the Elan Valley walk
Photo by Val Dixon

HARVEST FESTIVAL AT CLYRO

By Ann Dean (Hereford)

The day after the walk, members joined the congregation of St Michael's church, Clyro, for a harvest thanksgiving service. The Vicar of Clyro, the Revd Martin Reed, led the service; the preacher was Canon William Price and the Revd Dr Nigel Rowe, Society archivist, led prayers and the Act of Remembrance.

The Revd William Price recalled, in his sermon, harvest services in Kilvert's time, the church adorned with flowers and fruit. Although poor, the parishioners worked hard to display their produce and now, 130 years on, people still take time and effort to decorate the church.

At the entrance, a wheelbarrow containing vegetables had been propped casually against the church wall, whilst garlands of flowers decorated the arched doorway. Inside, a riot of colour and imaginative displays surrounded us as we gave thanks to God for the harvest. The flower and fruit arrangements were amazing, (the word 'ingenious' springs to mind), and it was not hard to imagine the Victorian parishioners arranging their offerings all those years ago.

Following the service, a wonderful tea (of course) was enjoyed in the village hall. Chairman, Mr. Ronald Watts, thanked everyone involved in the harvest thanksgiving and expressed the Society's appreciation to the ladies from the village who had prepared the refreshments.

After tea and our sad goodbyes, we dispersed into the autumn evening to find the village lying in a strange, misty light. A spiral of smoke curled lazily from a cottage chimney. No traffic could be heard from the nearby road, all was wonderfully peaceful and still and I wondered how many times Kilvert had seen his beloved Clyro in this strange glow, twixt day and night. How many times had he walked through the churchyard, on just such an autumn evening as this, to dine with his friends the Venables.

Reluctant to leave this moment, I hope that now and again it will 'flash upon that inward eye', as I recall yet another enjoyable Kilvert Society occasion. As we thanked God for the harvest, so we can thank Him for Francis Kilvert 'who, being dead, yet speaketh'.



Clyro church dressed for harvest
Photo by Ann Dean

FROM RECENT CORRESPONDENCE
TO THE EDITOR

- i) **Jack Burrell (Bristol)** wrote on 31 August last, poignantly just a few weeks before his death, with his reactions to the last *Journal*. It was a typical JB letter, entertaining and full of interesting snippets.

May I make one minor correction to the Parson of Brading (p 5 of issue 6), it was Legh not Leigh.

I have sent the American gentleman (Thomas Payne, p 6), some details of the Morrell family.

I was most interested in the *Kilvert at School* article (p 10) over the reply to 'who made the world?' 'Squire Ashe.' Sixty years later I had an aunt who was a lady's companion at Horton Manor near Malmesbury, on the fringe of Kilvert Country. My aunt's lady sometimes asked local children to the manor and tried to improve their education. The answer to 'who was the Good Shepherd?' was: 'Bill Miles's father'. The lady also asked them where Paris was. Some replied 'Germany'. My mother suggested they might know how to calve a cow but my aunt said in that context (ie as country children) they did not even know the names of the birds. (I do not expect you will publish any of this as it may offend some of our Wiltshire members).

I think it was the 1992 service at Clyro where local children produced a pageant. They really entered into it and I said so to my Susan. More so, probably than the Wiltshire children who may have said of Kilvert: 'some old buffer wot died 'undreds of years ago'. I think K. was happier among Welsh children than Wiltshire ones. (Jack seems to have really had it in for Wiltshire! – ed.)

Will be thinking of you at the Clyro Service on the 23rd. (I hope he was, Jack died, after a very short illness, on the 26th. – ed.)

- ii) **Angela Bowler (Chesterfield)** writes:

I was delighted to see that the web site is up and running, I think this development will be useful in attracting – dare I say it – younger members to the Society. (Hmm! – ed).

- iii) **Dick Best writes from Ickenham (Middlesex)**

It might be of interest to members to know that Kilvert's bookshop in Hay (Horden's in the *Diary* and then HR Grant & Son) is now a boutique by the name of 'Elenbach'. The frontage remains the same but has been repainted traditionally.

Sadly, both John Grant and his wife Anne died over a year ago, as you may know. They were wonderful people and are very much missed. Hay has as many interesting characters to write about now as there were in Kilvert's day!

- iv) **Maud Hobbs writes from Folkestone**

I read with interest the Conan Doyle connection with Clyro Court and the *Hound of the Baskervilles*.

Last summer my son and I stayed at the Baskerville Hall hotel. During our stay we were told the story of Conan Doyle being a guest there and that he chose the house as the setting for the novel and that the hound came from the local legend of a Norman overlord who changed into a terrifying hound at night. The people whose house it was asked Doyle to change the location of his story as they were afraid of the publicity bringing tourists to their home and destroying their privacy. For friendship's sake he did so.

On the other hand

- v) **Philip Weller, Chairman of the Baskerville Hound Society writes from Fareham (see his article on page 7)**

The item (The Baskerville Bitzer – see Sept *Journal*) is only a minimalist coverage of the subject. I have refuted Sir Christopher Frayling's suggestion about Clyro having provided the inspiration for the hound legend of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, both in my book celebrating the centenary of Arthur Conan Doyle's most famous book, *The Hound of the Baskervilles – Hunting the Dartmoor Legend*, and in a recent Carlton TV documentary, where we carried out some filming at Clyro and at Kington, as well as in Cromer and on Dartmoor. I am about to complete a lengthy refutation of the supposed Welsh border connection in a technical manner for Doylean specialists in the next issue of my own journal, but suffice to say that Sir Arthur recorded that the inspiration came from a Dartmoor hound legend which he first heard whilst he was staying in Cromer in 1901, and there is a far better source legend about a fiery hound in Cromer than there is anywhere around Clyro. My own society has visited Clyro on several occasions, and I stayed at Clyro Court (now renamed the Baskerville Hall Hotel!), whilst

making part of the TV programme there this autumn. No-one, by the way, has ever produced any documentary evidence to support the suggestion that Sir Arthur stayed at the house, but his first wife did once own property adjoining the Baskerville Mynors' estate.

Georgina Doyle writes from Goodworth Clatford (Hants) to add her Baskerville contribution

As regards your piece entitled Baskerville Bitzer (*Journal*, Sept. 2001) members may be interested in the following:

Arthur Conan Doyle's first wife was Louise Hawkins, youngest daughter of Jeremiah Hawkins. A conveyance (dated 16 January 1856) amongst the papers of Walter Thomas Mynor Baskerville related to the sale of Bettws and White Hall farms in the parish of Clyro from Mr Silvanus Whitcombe to Mr Jeremiah Hawkins. Arthur obtained rent from these farms for many years on account of his wife, Louise. They were sold in 1907 to Mr RH Baskerville after Louise's death and with the consent of her surviving sister, Emily. Arthur almost certainly visited the Clyro area because of this Hawkins land holding.

The Baskervilles intermarried with the Vaughans and it is also interesting to note a Sir Roger Vaughan (knighted at Agincourt) son of Sir Walter Vaughan of Bredwardine Old Court.

Could Mr Silvanus Whitcombe possibly be the 'old Whitcombe' of the Bronith who is mentioned in the *Diary* as saying the Lord's Prayer and the Creed (Mon. 16 January 1872)?

Mrs Doyle's late husband was Brigadier John Doyle who was a nephew of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. She has recently written a book about Sir Arthur's first family and the Hawkins connection. The book is shortly to be published in Canada.

vii) **Basil Butcher (Hereford) writes:**

Someone said to me one day 'you cannot read anything these days without finding some connection with Kilvert'.

A friend has recently returned to me an old scrapbook made up of cuttings from local papers. There is a small section on Herefordshire cricket. A report on one game between Hereford and Wyese Wanderers, played on Widemarsh Common (Sept 1873), caught my eye. And what do you know? Playing for Wyese Wanderers were HB Crichton and HB Morrell (they both scored a duck!). I wonder if they discussed the match afterwards with Kilvert? I doubt it!

I wonder too how the team got into Hereford, maybe by wagonette, going round and picking up at their homes including Cae Mawr and Wyecliffe, the whole thing taking the day.

viii) **Mrs. Marguerite Kilvert writes from Petersfield:**

I do not know if you think the enclosed contribution for the *Journal* is worthy of publication (Indeed it is – see p11 – ed.). I have based it on the number of times my husband was asked if he was related to the Diarist Since meeting me my vicar has joined the Society and has researched his ancestors. He is 99% sure that the farmer Francis Evans living in the Bredwardine parish at the time of Uncle Frank's wedding is his ancestor.

RESEARCHING 'THE HOMELESS HEART'

By John Toman (Bristol)

I wanted to write a book about Kilvert because I loved the world of his *Diary*, the countryside in which it is set, the story of his life, which the *Diary* in part tells, and the language of its telling. I was also deeply intrigued by the personality one can glimpse in his writing.

Initially, I set out to write quite a different book, the provisional title of which was: *Kilvert: the Man and his Society*. It was to be a picture of the Diarist against a cross-sectional view of all the social groups to be found in the various parishes in which he worked. Key events in the development of those societies from the beginning of the 19th century onwards were to be explored. I soon discovered that such a scheme would produce a book neither coherent nor publishable. Only a book focused directly on Kilvert would have public appeal. I was happy to accept this because my objective from the start was to write a biography of him, provided I could find the means.

So many commentators have testified to the fascination of Kilvert. Grice spoke of 'the unexplained and possibly inexplicable puzzle of his character'¹ as one of the *Diary's* main attractions. Rowse wrote of 'something mysterious and elusive about him ... something about the inner man that escapes us ...'² I, too, sensed this mystery, and longed to penetrate it. However, I experienced apprehension partly because Kilvert has, since the publication of the *Diary*, become

something of an institution, an icon. A thorough-going exploration of his personality would be bound to offend someone. He is now part of an English heritage whose magic power depends to an extent upon its being undisturbed. The power of that heritage has been underlined by a number of writers. Le Quesne referred to the world of the *Diary* as 'the mythic pre-1914 England that to a middle-class sensibility so easily wears the look of Eden.'³ To Rowse, it was 'the quintessence of England.'⁴ Brereton said it 'conjured up visions of an ordered and peaceful way of rural life now almost forgotten.'⁵ Jeremy Paxman pointed out that for English people Kilvert was one of those Anglicans who represented many qualities apart from their spirituality.⁶

Needless to say, I had come across no undiscovered family papers, or letters, or volumes of the *Diary*. The means of opening up Kilvert's mystery was therefore going to depend upon opening up his society and his time. To understand his perceptions and reactions meant that I had to experience, as far as was possible, their genesis. The way forward was suggested to me by some statements made by Laurence Le Quesne at a Kilvert Society conference in 1975. He said that surprisingly little research had been done into Kilvert's background, life, and writing. More needed to be known about his childhood, early education, family environment, his likely interests and activities and the influences that he came under at Oxford. There was also a need, he said, for close investigation of Victorian rural society and manners because one of the chief sources of interest in the *Diary* lay in its importance as a social document. Local studies and local newspapers would obviously help in this endeavour. Since my focus was on the man in his period, I did not intend to concern myself with his merits as a writer: so many tributes have been paid to them that it seemed superfluous to add another.

Le Quesne also raised the possibility that Kilvert's 'psychology' could be laid bare from a close analysis of the *Diary*. It certainly seemed to me that many of his beliefs and attitudes could be made clear by analysing and connecting *Diary* passages. My aim was to look below the surface of the *Diary*, which I came to regard as an iceberg, the greater part of which is hidden. Another strategy was to read the books and articles that Kilvert read and to explore the responses he made to them, as well as to important local and national events, in the context of the period.

The issue of the readership of my book was problematic. It proved difficult to write for the general reader who had an interest in the period but who did not also know the *Diary*. There was always the danger of writing mainly for the Kilvert enthusiast keen to have the *Diary*'s social background filled in. For the general reader, the analysis I have provided of that background might seem limited in scope and depth compared with the many general histories available. To provide a fuller account of the period than I have would raise the question of whether Kilvert is important enough to merit that attention. Then there was the problem that readers who did not know the *Diary* may have no interest in a biography of its author. The hope is that those who know the *Diary* will find their knowledge of it enhanced by reading my book, and that those who don't will be led on from *The Homeless Heart* to read the *Diary*.

The structure of the book is thematic rather than chronological, though an attempt has been made to indicate Kilvert's career and the main phases of his life while at the same time pursuing unity and coherence via the common elements occurring in partly overlapping themes. Dates and places appear only to indicate main phases. Apart from information supplied by the *Diary*, we know very little of what Kilvert was doing or where he was at any one time. Obviously, there would be little purpose in rewriting the *Diary*. My concern was rather to explore his attitudes and reactions to important things - hence the chapter divisions. In order to keep the book to a manageable size, all data of a chronological or social background nature was kept to a minimum.

Of course it remains for the reader to say whether the approach adopted has thrown fresh light upon the elusive and enigmatic figure of Kilvert. I certainly felt as the book developed that placing key experiences and relationships of his life in the ethos of the time did enable me to understand *Diary* passages whose meaning that hitherto had been incomplete or ambiguous. In addition, the picture provided of his upbringing and education is more detailed than any we have had to date and this has made it possible to be more precise about the meaning of such passages. Thus the likely sources of important attitudes that Kilvert had have been revealed in several striking instances, for example, the Freeman/ Trollope newspaper debate on field sports, the De Winton v. Vaughan court case, and the Thomas Hearne drawing that reflected Kilvert's interest in the picturesque.

In the research process, I made a number of other discoveries about Kilvert. The impact of Evangelicalism on his family was greater than I had imagined. It was very powerful in the last twenty-five years of his grandparents' generation and reached its peak in 1820 when his father was near adulthood. Its influence in Kilvert's home was strong and he was more marked by it than I initially thought. It became clear that his opposition to field sports and other aspects of gentry behaviour were attributable to it. Resentment of gentry arrogance, idleness, and luxury was embedded both in his religious outlook and in his artistic sensibility. The sermons he preached during Venables' absences also showed a brand of Evangelical piety the severity of which came as a surprise. As priest and as writer he was committed to telling the truth about human experience and he despised self-deception and empty show.

From casual acknowledgement that the *Diary* provided odd instances which signified that he did not stand shoulder to shoulder with the gentry on every issue, I moved to the point where I recognised a steady and quite serious resistance on his part. Those instances no longer appeared trivial and isolated. He was too insecure to express his resistance openly and too isolated. The country houses he frequented were not like Mme Olympe's in *A Week in a French Country House*. He was also bound to follow the gentlemanly code that demanded the honouring of obligations to friends and patrons as well

as reserve and avoidance of 'excesses' of feeling and attitude. His dilemma in gentry society can best be seen in these words of J. S. Mill: 'In our times, everyone lives under the eyes of a hostile and dreaded censorship ... The individual does not ask himself what do I prefer? or what would suit my character and disposition? or what would allow the best and highest in me to have fair play and enable it to grow and thrive? He asks himself, what is suitable to my position? what is usually done by persons of my station? or (worse still) what is usually done by persons of a station ... superior to mine?'⁷ Kilvert had to channel his strongest feelings, his indignation at social ills, into his *Diary*; that was his safety valve. It also suited him that way because he had a gentleness, a forbearance, a refusal to cause pain to others by confronting them with their moral shortcomings. The chosen means of any help he could give was the sermon and the pastoral visit. The more I recognised this integrity, the more I recognised this resistance, the more I liked and respected him; he begins to seem an altogether bigger figure - a moralist who was also something of a rebel.

An extension of the discovery concerned the nature of his reading. It has been customary to belittle it, to dismiss it as totally 'random'. The seventy-three works mentioned in the *Diary* (listed by F. Grice⁸) certainly seem at first sight to be a heterogeneous collection. However, on examination they fall into distinct major groups. Nineteen are general novels, mainly contemporary ones with a few 18th century classics; eighteen are devotional/ evangelical works (some of which are also novels); nineteen are collections of poems; six are biographies or autobiographies; four are travel books; six are miscellaneous, and there are Shakespeare's plays. This is not the place to survey his choice of books in detail but it will form the subject of my talk at the Society's AGM in April 2002. Suffice it to say that they continually inform and underpin most of the main concerns of his life, and in this way they are a true reflection of the personality glimpsed in the *Diary* and analysed in *The Homeless Heart*. They also display quite clear inter-connections, with both content and themes reinforcing each other. Though some of Kilvert's choices seem ephemeral now, they were often books which made a profound impact on the reading public, and the total range was typical of the average, cultivated (if not highly intellectual) man of the time. Instead of being incoherent and haphazard, they reveal a steady intention on his part to deepen his understanding of particular areas of experience.

Whilst I hope that I have in *The Homeless Heart* sharpened up the outline of Kilvert and have added something significant to our knowledge of him, I do not believe that I have changed substantially the picture of him that most *Diary* readers already possess. From an examination of the writings of twenty commentators on Kilvert, I made a list of the epithets most frequently used to describe his personality. In first place, came terms like 'sympathetic' and 'warm-hearted'; second place was shared between 'gentle'/'tender' and 'friendly'; third place was divided between 'innocent' and 'pious'; fourth place went to 'authoritarian'; fifth place was shared among 'unintellectual', 'energetic', 'sentimental,' and 'lonely'; in sixth place we find 'shy'/'unselfconfident', 'passive' and 'repressed'. Everyone has their own individual conception of Kilvert, in which one or two of these epithets have greater prominence than the rest, but most people would, I am sure, endorse most of them, as I do in my book.

The footnotes for this article appear on page 20.

Kilvert: The Homeless Heart by John Toman, published in 2001 by Logaston Press (ISBN 1-873827-37-7), is available from good bookshops priced £12.95 or from the Society's publications department at £15.50 (inc. p&p)

As stated above John Toman will be talking about Kilvert's choice of reading, after the AGM on Friday 26 April 2002 – ed.

The following article appeared in the 2001 edition of *The Dartmore Visitor*, an information newspaper published by the Dartmoor National Park Authority. It is reproduced here by kind permission of the author and the editors. It provides an interesting and challenging counterpoint to the Baskerville Bitzer (see *Journal* for September 2001).

THE BASKERVILLE HOUND CENTENARY

By Philip Weller*

August 2001 sees the centenary of the start of the serial publication of the most famous book ever written about Dartmoor, *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, by Arthur Conan Doyle.

That book, and its 20 film versions, has probably had a greater influence on the world's impression of the Moor than any other source.

The book's descriptions are superbly evocative, incorporating legends, local customs, the Devil, Dartmoor ponies, an escaped convict, swirling mists and rain, antiquities, the tors and mires. It may also reflect the influence of other Dartmoor writers, such as Sabine Baring-Gould.

The story was inspired by Conan Doyle's friend, Bertram Fletcher Robinson, who told him a phantom hound legend, although the initially planned story did not include Sherlock Holmes and Robinson dropped out of the project soon after Holmes was included.

Robinson did, however, first help Conan Doyle gather local colour and the pair were driven around the Moor by one Henry Baskerville. Conan Doyle and Robinson stayed at Rowe's Duchy Hotel in Princetown, now the High Moorland Visitor Centre, and from there Conan Doyle wrote to his mother:

'Here I am in the highest town in England. Robinson and I are exploring the Moor over our Sherlock Holmes book. I think it will work out splendidly – indeed I have already done nearly half of it. Holmes is at his very best, and it is a highly dramatic idea – which I owe to Robinson.

'We did 14 miles over the Moor today and we are now pleasantly weary. It is a great place, very sad and wild, dotted with the dwellings of prehistoric man, strange monoliths and huts and graves.'

They had walked around Fox Tor Mires and then travelled on to sit in the remains of a Bronze Age stone hut circle at Grimspound. The combination of the features of Fox Tor Mires and the local pronunciation of Grimspound as Grimspun, almost certainly led to the naming of the most famous mire in the world – the great Grimpen Mire!

Many real locations are mentioned in the book, including Bellever Tor, Vixen Tor, and the Prison, but many of the other locations are disguised to some extent.

The book's Coombe Tracey does not exist but the original manuscript shows that Conan Doyle initially wrote (and misspelled) Newton Abbot.

Cleft Tor plays an important part, but there is no such tor, although there is a Cleft Rock at Holne Chase. Surprisingly, there is no mention of either of the Moor's two Hound Tors, and although a Black Tor is mentioned in the story, there are at least four Black Tors on the Moor.

Part of the fascination of the book for those who love the Moor is in attempting to trace which locations provided the inspiration for the invented sites.

This summer, a group of 55 Holmes enthusiasts from all over the world will be attending a week-long convention on the Moor arranged by The Baskerville Hounds, the Dartmoor Sherlock Holmes Study Group. Each participant will be wearing the costume of a Holmesian character, and they will explore all of the locations associated with *The Hound*.

The occasion will also see the formal launch at the Dartmoor National Park Authority's High Moorland Visitor Centre, Princetown, of the most extensive study yet published of the literary, historical and geographical background of *The Hound*.

A lavishly-illustrated book entitled *The Hunt for the Dartmoor Legend* is available from Devon Books (Details on www.halsgrove.com – or call 01884-234242).

Further details of the Society, which meets regularly on the Moor, can be obtained by sending an SAE to: The Baskerville Hounds, 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hampshire, PO14 3RU.

* Philip Weller is a military historian, a specialist in the works of Conan Doyle and Chairman of the *Baskerville Hounds*.



A famous illustration from *The Hound of the Baskervilles*
drawn by Sidney Paget.

PHOTOGRAPHIC FEATURE

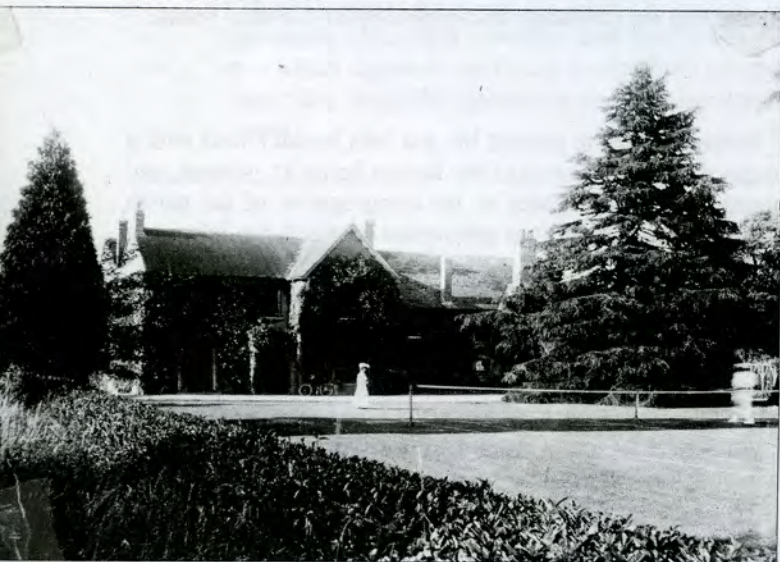
1. LOCATIONS

Bredwardine bridge which dates from 1769 when it replaced two ferries. It is a handsome red-brick structure, considered one of the finest such bridges in the country. This view was taken from the right bank of the Wye downstream of the bridge, just below Kilvert's vicarage.



St Mary's church Wootton by Woodstock where Kilvert was married to Elizabeth Anne Rowland on 20 August 1879.

2. FROM THE ARCHIVES



Monnington rectory. Kilvert's sister, Thersie, was the wife of the Revd WR Smith, the rector here during Kilvert's years at nearby Bredwardine - less than three miles separate the two parsonages. The rectory is now a private residence. This view was taken about 1908



Hardenhuish church - this was taken presumably on the occasion of a Society visit. When? Recognise anyone?

SOME DIARY ENTRIES EXPLAINED

By Teresa Williams (North Wembley)

The published three-volume *Diary* is full of remarks concerning people and places, which are intriguing because the background or reason for the entry is not fully explained. It is unfortunate that we shall never know whether it is because Kilvert did not expand on the subject, or whether the entry was edited by Dr Plomer. However, research in contemporary newspapers sometimes provides some more information as is shown by the following newspaper extracts.

Volume 2, page 77 – Monday 30 October 1871

The only entry for this day, in the published *Diary* reads: *Clyro Petty Sessions, and the Magistrates abolished the New Inn, a happy thing for the village.*

From: *Brecon County Times*, Saturday 4 November 1871

Clyro Petty Sessions: Before Revd RL Venables, WTM Baskerville, Esq., and Revd W Jones Thomas

An Application in support of a Certificate for a Beer-house License (*sic*) was made by Mrs Elizabeth Morgan. A certificate was granted last Session but subsequently it was found that the house was not rated separately at a sum of £8 in order to enable Mrs Morgan to keep a Beer-house there. Mrs Morgan had previously been charged and fined for selling beer without a License and the Certificate, after complaints had been made, and representations on behalf of some Clyro residents by Mr Games (who appeared for them), was agreed to be withdrawn

Volume 2, page 94 – Wednesday 6 December 1871

The *Diary* tells us that Kilvert, who had been suffering for several days from face ache and disturbed sleep, probably made worse by uncertainty over his hoped for courtship of Daisy Thomas and *the heat of the room and the vile gas* experienced the previous evening at a lecture in Hay Schoolroom, *Crawled to Hay in the morning Looked in at Jane Davies and found her still very ill and suffering much from her two broken arms.*

From: *The Hereford Times*, Saturday 25 November 1871

Hay News - Clyro: Shocking Accident

A sad accident happened one day last week to a Mrs Jane Davies, a monthly Nurse at a house in this village where she was attending. It appears that Mrs Davies was coming downstairs with some things in her hand when she slipped and fell down the whole flight and on being picked up it was found that she had fractured both her arms above the wrist. We hear she is now progressing satisfactorily, but very slowly, towards recovery.

Volume 2, page 97 – Tuesday 12 December 1871

In this *Diary* entry, Kilvert mentions that: *After school I went to Cae Mawr to see Mrs Morrell and stayed to luncheon. I am sorry to find she does not cordially approve of our testimonial to the schoolmaster.* It is possible that Mrs Morrell felt that as the Evanses were not then leaving Clyro, there was no need for a testimonial at that time. There is no *Diary* entry on 17 December 1871 concerning the presentation of the testimonial, but the following newspaper report has been found.

From: *The Brecon County Times*, Saturday 30 December 1871

Testimonial at Clyro

A public meeting was held at Clyro schoolroom on Sunday 17th instant in order to present Mr and Mrs Josiah Evans with a handsome and most elegant silver teapot and silver cream jug respectively. The value of the former being 12 guineas, and the latter £3 5s 0d. These costly and useful articles of domestic utility were given by the congregation of the parish church and the parents of the children attending the school as declared on a document of parchment of which the following is a copy:

‘A subscription having been entered late for the purchase of a testimonial to Mr Josiah Evans as a small acknowledgement of his valuable and gratuitous services during the last five years in training and leading the choir during the last five years in Clyro Church. Mr Evans is requested by his friends, the Subscribers, to accept from them a silver teapot on which a suitable inscription has been engraved.

Mrs Evans is requested by the children educated at Clyro School to accept from them a silver cream jug inscribed in remembrance of her constant and kind assistance in the work of instruction during the last five years.’

The Reverend R Lister Venables used some appropriate remarks in making the presentation. Mr Wall, the Chapel, then in suitable terms presented Mrs Evans with the cream jug for which Mr Evans afterwards rose to return thanks.

Volume 2, page 118 – Tuesday 16 January 1872

On this day Kilvert called on Lewis the policeman and his wife who had lately been suffering from a serious throat infection. The *Diary* entry tells us that: *They told me their version of the fearful faction fight between Clyro and Hay on*

the day after Christmas. The general impression seems to be that the Hay people were as much, or more, in fault than the Clyro people but got off scot-free.

From: The Hereford Times, Saturday 6 January 1872

William Phillips of Penlan Farm, Henry Anthony the younger, wheelwright of Clyro; John James, labourer, Clyro; William Watkins, labourer of Clyro; and Charles Powell of Clyro, were each charged by Thomas H Lilwall of Hay that they did unlawfully assault and beat him on the night of Tuesday 26th December 1871. There had been a Coursing Meeting at Clyro Court and a dinner in the later afternoon at the Baskerville Arms. Late in the same evening the accused met Thomas Lilwall in the hall of the Inn and they allegedly knocked off his hat without cause, punched him to the ground and kicked him unconscious.

They were convicted on the evidence and sentenced as follows:

William PHILLIPS	21 days' Hard Labour, without the Option of paying a Fine.
Henry ANTHONY	Fined 10/- plus £1 8s 0d costs, or 14 days' Hard Labour.
John JAMES	Fined £1 with £1 8s 0d costs, or 14 days' Hard Labour.
William WATKINS	Fined 5/- with costs of £1 5s 0d, or 10 days' Hard Labour.
Charles POWELL	Fined 5/- with costs of £1 5s 0d, or 10 days' Hard Labour.

The fines were paid.

Volume 2, pages 425/8 – Monday 23 March 1874

On page 426 of this long *Diary* entry Kilvert remarks, *I rode with Henry Dew senr to Clifford Priory to see how Haigh Allen was* Mr Allen had suffered a dreadful accident which was fully detailed in the following newspaper extract.

From: The Kingston Gazette, Tuesday 17 March 1874

Shocking Accident to B Haigh Allen, Esq.

On Saturday week, (the 7th instant), a frightful and unfortunate accident happened to B Haigh Allen, Esq., of The Priory, Clifford, near Hay. Mr Allen was watching at his Home Farm and standing near the hopper of the machine which was pulping turnips and driven by horse power, when seeing a rather large turnip which would not catch the blades, he pushed it. As he was doing so he put his hand in too far: the back of it was caught by the rollers, and both the hand and part of the arm were drawn through the pulper before the horse could be stopped. With great presence of mind Mr. Allen called for bandages and with help bound up the injury. Dr Giles and Dr Cloriston (*sic*) were immediately sent for, and on their arrival, and finding that amputation was necessary, at once performed the operation very successfully. Mr Allen refused to go under Chloroform during the operation and he also requested those about him, after the operation was performed, to take the diamond ring off one of the fingers of the amputated hand. Great sympathy has been evinced in the neighbourhood for Mr Allen and his family in consequence of the untoward accident, they being held in high esteem by all classes.

We understand that Mr Allen is progressing as favourably as possible under the painful circumstances. Strange to say that the accident to Mr Allen is one that he has invariably cautioned his men against incurring.

The Hay Board of Guardians, of which Mr Allen is Vice-Chairman, at their meeting held on Thursday last (March 12th), passed a resolution on the motion of the Revd Thomas Powell, to the following effect:

‘That this Board unanimously desires to express, both to Mr Haigh Allen and Mrs Allen and to his family, their deep sympathy that they feel at the sad calamity which has befallen upon them, and which deprives the Board for the time being of Mr Allen’s valuable services. The Board trusts that, under the blessing of God, he may soon be able to resume his active and useful public duties.’

A DAY OF TWO CHURCHES

By the Revd Pamela Lee Cranston, (Oakland, CA)

Our four and a half days in Hay and at the Kilvert Annual Meeting in 2001 were so wonderful and jam-packed, it is impossible for me to recount them all. My husband Edward and I were extremely grateful for the warm welcome given to us by everyone in the Kilvert Society, Bishop John Oliver of Hereford and his wife Meriel, and by our dear friends: David and Willie Lockwood, Laurie and Pamela Jackson and Graham and Wendy Middleton. Below are some snapshots of our stay.

Sunday, April 29 2001, Hay-on-Wye, Herefordshire

We woke to cold, clear blue skies. Lacy patterns of frost shimmered on the window panes of our B&B at York House in Hay-on-Wye. I dressed warmly, ate breakfast early and drove over to Llowes to attend the 10am morning Holy Communion service at St Meilig’s Church, celebrated by the Revd Martin Reed. We began in the ancient stone chapel which has been worshipped in since the 1300s but then went tramping about the four corners of the churchyard, in a true Rogational procession.

A five-foot, three-and-a-half ton Celtic stone cross stands in the back of this church, which dates from before the seventh century. One of the marvellous things about the Wye Valley is that it was Christianized by Celtic monks from northern England. These were: St Cynider from the royal family of Brycheiniog who settled in what is now Ffynnon Gynydd Common; St Meilig who travelled from Clydeside in Scotland and settled in Llowes Common and St Llywes (for whom Llowes is named), who settled in Clyro Common. These monks built huts and established small hermitages here, after the style of the great Celtic missionaries St Columba, St Aidan and St Cuthbert, who they may even have known. These first missionaries of the Wye Valley were even mentioned in seventh century works such as the *Mabinogion*, the Book of *Llan Dav* and in *Giraldus*

St Meilig's cross was erected in the seventh century to memorialize these men – if not St Meilig himself, and was set up on the mountainside at a spot still called Croesfeilig. It was moved to the valley in the twelfth century as the community (and the graveyard) shifted down hill. Then in 1956, the cross was moved inside St Meilig's Church to protect it from being eroded by the weather.

The Revd Martin Reed began the service by announcing that the local parishes had long planned a joint rogation service for today but now, due to the Foot and Mouth crisis, it was held in honour of all the farmers and livestock who were suffering. Normally, he told us, the congregation would have walked up the hill to bless one or two of the farms, but FMD prevented us from doing this. So we blessed the four corners of the churchyard instead. Good thing too – because it was nearly freezing outside, despite the sunny blue sky. So all 32 of us men, women, children, the Lockwoods and I, high stepped it through the stiff tall grass in the sloping churchyard, led by this Welsh priest in cassock and surplice, sandals and socks, marking the four directions with our prayers and psalms. We passed gravestones with familiar names like Price and Higgins, which I remembered, from Kilvert's *Journal*. Then inside, we had the Eucharist, low church style, very simple, no chasuble (unlike most Episcopal churches in the USA), three lessons with commentary and no sermon.

But it was freezing. It was so cold last night that it snowed upon the Black Hill and the Gospel Pass. As we intoned our psalms aloud outside, I looked east and saw how the Gospel Pass was blanketed all in white, edged with the beautiful brown buff colour of bracken. When it snowed here on Palm Sunday of March 1872, Kilvert saw much the same view but from higher up at Meredith's house in the Bird's Nest. He wrote: *It was a sublime spectacle, the long white rampart dazzling in its brilliancy ...* I felt much the same way.

In the afternoon, my husband Ed and I paid a visit to Graham and Wendy Middleton and Andrew Pierce, up at Crafta Webb, where I had stayed for a week in 1994. They greeted us warmly and gave us tea. Graham said that all the farms around them had tragically been infected with FMD. Up the hill by Arthur's Stone, a large pyre of cattle was still burning. The air was filled with smoke and the smell of roast beef.

On the way back, we stopped at Kilvert's last church, St. Andrew's at Bredwardine, so Ed could see the place. I showed him Kilvert's tombstone and the Norman nave. Then we stood on the old brick Bredwardine Bridge, and caught a glimpse of Kilvert's rectory, a large white manor house, in the distance. We watched as the black Wye glided smoothly underneath the bridge. When I was last here, I saw fishermen casting their lines into the water as wild white swans floated regally downstream.

Seeing all this again brought back a flood of memories from my last visit to Hay and Bredwardine. The first time I ever visited St Andrew's, Bredwardine, was October 12 1994* It was a sunny autumn day. Harvest time. There is a big apple orchard by Kilvert's Church and I watched as farmers drove wagons full of green apples in and out to the main road – but there was no apple picking today. Just the cold clear skies and a strange barrenness to the green hillsides.

- An account of this visit will appear in the June *Journal*. (ed.)

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

By Marguerite Kilvert, (Petersfield)

Not a lot, when my husband and I married in 1948, we mixed with the Smiths and the Jones but unlike the Smiths and the Jones we were the only Kilvert in the telephone directory.

The *Kilvert Diaries* were published in 1938, 1939 and 1940 and my husband bought the first edition three-volumes which he read during the war when a curate in Portsmouth.

When the Kilvert Society was in its first year in 1949 he was invited to unveil the plaque to Francis Kilvert in Clyro church, he being the great-nephew of the Diarist and also called Robert.

Not much was known of the *Diaries* in Paulsgrove, a new council housing estate built on the slopes of Portsdown Hill on the outskirts of Portsmouth. Paulsgrove was known as a conventional district and my husband as the Priest-in-charge. There were some older houses either side of the main A27 road from Cosham to Portchester, facing Portchester Harbour.

A lady living in one had a copy of *Country Life* magazine (Sept 1957) in which an article appeared about Kilvert. She asked if Mr Kilvert was related in any way and was delighted to learn that he was and borrowed the *Diaries* to read.

When a speaker let me down on the morning of the Mothers' Union meeting, my husband helped me out with a talk and readings from the *Diaries* and after that many a sermon began with a text from the Bible followed by an entry from the *Diary*. Thus the congregation got to know quite a lot about the Kilvert country and the way of life in those times.

We moved into the newly-built vicarage in 1954 with John our four-year-old son and Susan our two-month-old daughter. The permanent church St Michael and All Angels was built in 1957 and the conventional district became a parish. After ten years of being the priest-in-charge, my husband could now be called the vicar.

In 1962 we were asked by the Lord Bishop to move to two country parishes, Catherington and Clanfield, nine miles from Paulsgrove. Our dear friends at St Michael's were so sad to see us leave after fifteen years and I could empathise with Kilvert when he left Clyro

2 September 1872 Left Clyro for ever, a chapter of life closed and a leaf in the book of life turned over.

We had our work cut out every day to get out and about to meet our country neighbours, but not on foot like Uncle Frank when he went 'villaging'. Catherington was a parish but not a village and all very different from Paulsgrove.

There were two organisations, the Women's Institute with about 25 members and the Mothers' Union with six, which at first met in a small room at the pub. Many new organisations were formed and the vicar was a regular speaker each year with stories from the *Diaries*.

Kilvert was well known by now after the television series and the programme by John Betjeman on BBC2 (29 July 1976). The main object of his talks was to inform his audience that some of the episodes on the television were not from the *Diaries*. 'Fictitious rubbish' he called them, which did not portray Uncle Frank in the way that the family and the Society knew him. The committee of the Society wrote a letter to each member informing them that they had read the scripts and were very sad to find a lot of silly and untrue things in them. Mr Grice tried his best to get the BBC to alter them but with very little success.

My husband was once asked if he kept a diary to which he replied 'only for engagements, but my wife keeps a scrap book which is far more interesting than any diary that I could write.'

In 1972 we moved into the new vicarage, which was built in the middle of a field next to the church.

There is a reference in the *Diary* that Clyro had a churchwarden but I find no reference about PCC meetings. When did they start I wonder? Mr Grice writes in *Kilvert and his World*, that Kilvert did not enjoy going to ruraldeaconal visitations and conferences unlike his great-nephew who absolutely adored them! He served a term as proctor in convocation, he was secretary to the Diocesan Conference (later to become Synod) and Bishop's council, editor of the Diocesan newsletter and he sat on 26 committees in the two parishes, deanery and diocese! He found the clergy were very interested in the *Diaries*. Due to the publication of a paperback edition of the *Diary*, the most popular and talked about entry was the story of the curate being confirmed with his candidate. (Thursday April Eve 1870).

Yes my husband was very happy in his work with no thought of ever retiring, but unfortunately cataracts growing in both eyes forced him to retire in 1984 at the age of seventy and we chose to live in Petersfield.



Canon Robert Wyn Kilvert, great-nephew of the Diarist

Once again the question 'are you related to the Diarist?' followed by requests to speak at the Mothers' Union, Townswomen's Guild, over 60s club. There were invitations to preach and take some services. All this he was very happy to do now that he could see again. During the last five years of his life, while fighting cancer, he had a hip replacement so he did not enjoy the good health in retirement which he had had all through his working life. No surgeon's knife for poor Uncle Frank to remove his appendix and prolong his life to father children and love and adore them. But then if he had, we might never have had his *Diaries* to read and enjoy. My dear husband died in 1993, 26 days before his eightieth birthday. I continue to make new friends and to be asked by them if Kilvert of the *Diaries* was a relation of Canon Kilvert.

In December 1999, a new incumbent, the Revd Giles Harris-Evans, came to Petersfield and on meeting him I told him my name to which he replied 'Kilvert's Diaries'. He said he was a great reader of them and was interested to hear that my late husband was the Diarist's great-nephew. One day he brought his wife to meet me and we had a lovely Kilvert afternoon with all my memorabilia and books written about Kilvert. One Sunday at Evensong he preached about Francis Kilvert and gave me a tape recording of it, which is so nice to listen to at times. He said his ancestors had farmed in the Kilvert country for many years. I found an entry for the 4 February 1879 – *At 7 p.m. the farmers came to dine at the vicarage. I had ten guests Haywood, Evans, Stokes, Preece, Price, Parry, Bates, James Griffiths, James and Tom Davies, the dinner was very nice.* And he goes on to tell us what they ate! I would like to think that farmer Evans entertained by Uncle Frank is related to Giles.

Now what of the future? Some of my friends give me print-outs about Kilvert which they have found on the website and I am sure my son and two grandsons will make friends with Kilvert readers, not in person like myself, but on the Internet!

A WELSH PARADISE

By Noreen and Dick Best (Ickenham)

It all started with a postcard.

Regular visits to Hay, mostly twice a year, plus odd days, and once a few days at Christmas to see the Christmas lights being switched on. Above all though, meeting some very friendly people from this lovely little town.

The postcard was seen in the window of a shop in Church Street, Hereford. The picture on it showed a small village centre with little girls in the foreground wearing smock dresses. The village was Clyro. The back of the card gave particulars of the Kilvert Society. Who was he, we wondered? Curiosity led to our receiving information from the Society, then to joining and then to reading the *Diary*.

That was it! The area had to be explored. Kilvert's footsteps had to be followed and locations mentioned in the *Diary* had to be found.

Where to stay? A Welsh accommodation brochure mentioned a self-catering flat in Llanigon – what luck, a Kilvert location, the church where 'Daisy' is buried and the site of Llanthomas House It was 1989.

The flat, 'High Darren' was *very* high above Llanigon. It was attached to a bungalow owned by Jack and Maureen Clark. We were given directions from the village and honestly thought the journey would never end! Finally, we arrived to a very warm welcome from Maureen and Jack, and taken up a wooden staircase to the first floor flat. One glance from all of the windows and the friendliness of our hosts, and we returned there twice a year, until the dreadful time when Jack suddenly died in about 1996. Since then however, we have been very lucky to find more excellent accommodation, first with Rob and Margaret Flack at Cusop (to whom we now wish 'happy retirement') and secondly, with Zena and Steve Davies in their lovely flat at Radnor's End. The views from here, both north and south, are spectacular – especially the night view of Hay with a string of golden lights from one end to the other.

These have been truly magical years, not yet over we hope! In the course of which we discovered Kilvert sites from Clyro to the rocks of Aberedw, to Capel-y-Ffyn and Llanthony Abbey, and places scattered everywhere in between.

The flat at 'High Darren' was always a great pleasure to return to every day as the scenes from the window were breathtaking. With hardly any neck-craning one could see from Hay Bluff to Llowes Church and the Begwns beyond. The views were hypnotic! There were always plenty of sheep on one side of the house too, and often horses grazing on the other side, above which we were sure was Gwenalt.

Travelling the lane down to Llanigon village was an adventure in itself. Could one ever have a clear run? Very rarely! Backing up to the nearest gate or gap became second nature – or nearly. Noreen had all this aggro, as she now does all of the driving. One memorable day we had to wait for 70 cows, and a bull to pass. Many times a lesser herd. We became quite well known to the cowhands.

Our search for Kilvert sites led us to areas of outstanding beauty – the Begwns, which at their highest point have a 360 degree view of the Black Mountains, Brecon Beacons and the Radnor Hills – and Hay Bluff with its view across the Wye Valley and up to the Radnor Hills and also the Black Mountains marching towards the Brecon Beacons, also the secret Edw Valley from Aberedw. The sudden vistas of mountains were sometimes sunlit, but more often than not covered in a mist, like a Chinese painting.

Then there were the various churches associated with Kilvert, strung out like a necklace across the hills; from Bettws Chapel in the east to St Harmon's in the west and St Eigon's in the south. Each one is well worth a visit, along with a little delving into their history.

At Llanbedr Church it took us about twenty minutes to encourage a little bird to leave. It had been flying around the east end of the building. Noreen took off her jacket and with much flapping of it managed to persuade the bird to fly out of the south door.

Other fascinating places were revealed in the course of time. The Elan Valley dams, a wonder of engineering if ever there was one, but the original terrain must have been a paradise – so much for progress.

The church at Disserth where time has stood still for centuries. Those wonderful box pews! Imagination fills them with bygone parishioners.

If one has read and absorbed the *Diary*, then one is constantly aware of Kilvert, his philosophy, travels and above all the people he met and described so vividly and with such great understanding.

For us, also, a great pleasure has been in meeting so many friendly and interesting people, to name them would be invidious but maybe some will read this piece and know who they are! However, two names must be remembered with great affection – John and Annie Grant. To enter 'HR Grant & Son' was an entertainment in itself. We shall not forget John's old clock with the sign 'no tick' nor his fund of local anecdotes and his encyclopaedic knowledge of the history of Hay. We shall remember them both always.

We have managed not to mention books! However, we have spent many pleasant hours browsing in every bookshop – and spent a mint! Hay-on-Wye is the entry point to a whole unknown area of Wales which is friendly, beautiful and unspoilt. Long may it remain so.



The card that started it all.

BOOK REVIEWS

1. Pamela Lee Cranston (Oakland, California) reviews:

***Out of The Valley: Another Year at Wormingford* by Ronald Blythe.**
London: Viking Press, 2000. 304pp £16.99 (www.penguin.co.uk)

Ronald Blythe, simply and a bit modestly, calls his latest book, *Out of The Valley: Another Year at Wormingford*, a 'country journal'. It is a series of sketches of rural Suffolk life written for the *Church Times* during three years from 1996-1999. 'They reflect,' he says, 'the pattern which literature, liturgy, the seasons and solitude has made much of my existence.' (p1, introduction.) They also reflect a great deal more.

Mr Blythe author of *Akenfield: Portrait of An English Village*, and *Word from Wormingford* is perhaps one of the most gifted authors writing about English country life today. He is also a devoted Anglican lay reader and preacher. We see him as he faithfully makes his rounds to the remote parishes of Wormingford, Mount Bures and Little Horesley. In this book, he records his daily outings, his thoughts and reflections from the Book of Common Prayer, Scripture (the Psalms, Jeremiah and Luke are favourites), church history and his reading of George Herbert, Traherne, Bonhoeffer, poets John Clare, James Turner and Richard Rolle.

Mr Blythe has lived his whole life in Suffolk and is well versed in the homely and sometimes harsh ways of country life. Though a writer, he is never far from nature, whether he is watching a flock of starlings swoop and swerve with the same awe as Coleridge, or enjoying Max, his 'free-thinking' cat. He observes the annual round of sowers and barley harvesters, goes stubble-walking, and contemplates how the modern combine has forever changed life for rural farmers. He chops wood, mows his own field, goes knee-deep into mud to clean sluices in his own pond, prunes back elder trees and picks pears.

All this is caught with a historian's knack for interesting detail along with humour and a love of language. For instance, he tells us that his village of Wormingford derived its name from people's inability to pronounce 'Widermund ford' and that the word 'worm' once meant dragon. He also tells us that in the north aisle of the parish church there is a George V window showing a dragon at dinner with two pretty legs dangling from its jaws just as St George rides in (p 224). When he described the dragon's diet of virgins to Lee, the friend thought 'the poor creature would go hungry these days.' (p 101).

Some readers may fear that Mr Blythe's prose is overly nostalgic and mannered. Very rarely do I find this so. Mr Blythe's keen knowledge of history cuts through any tendency he might have to romanticize rural life. When reading his prose, I found his metaphors apt and his words robust, making his phrases sound more like good poetry than anything else. Repeatedly, I marvelled at his ability to grapple with this wild horse of the English language. His diction, hewn from good Saxon stock, is rich and sturdy, with lines reminiscent of Gerard Manley Hopkins and vivid as my own beloved Francis Kilvert. This classic book deserves to be kept, savoured and re-read many times.

This article was first published in the *Anglican Theological Review*, spring 2001, Vol 83, No 2, pp 345-6

The Revd John Day (Mere, Wiltshire) reviews:

***Hand of Fate: The History of the Longs, Wellesleys and The Draycot Estate in Wiltshire* by Tim Couzens. ELSP, Bradford on Avon 2001. 199 pp £7.99 (ISBN 1 903341 72 6).**

Members may recall a delightful summer afternoon in 1989, the setting for the summer Kilvert commemoration was Draycot Cerne in Wiltshire. The ancient church is set in what remains of the park, and the lake, which delighted the Diarist on those winter days in 1870 – 1871 when with brother Perch and local friends he skated on the frozen surface.



South Front of Draycot House, Chippenham

Kilvert in his entry for 27 December 1870 through to New Year's day 1871 mentions such names as the Awdrys, Lord Cowley and the mysterious Mr Calcroft. Later on in the entry for 12 December 1874 he tells of the disastrous marriage of the heir to the Draycot estate Catherine Tilney Long to William Wellesley Pole (a nephew of the great Duke of Wellington and later to become Lord Mornington).

This and much more is pieced together in Tim Couzens' book, a mine of information for any Kilvert student who wishes to understand the background of the Diarist's comments concerning these fascinating families.

Mr Couzens traces the history of the Draycot estate from its Saxon beginnings through the ownership of the Cernes, the Longs and the Cowley families. Kilvert's interest of course was mostly concerned with the period of the disastrous marriage. The young lady in question 'Catherine' could, we are told, have married the Duke of Clarence, third son of George III and later to ascend the throne as William IV. Had she married William, Catherine might have become Queen Catherine, instead she became infatuated with and finally married a 'Scamp' as Kilvert describes him. William Wellesley Pole went through most of Catherine's money to pay off his debts and for his excesses. When the purse was empty he was forced to flee with her and their three children to the Continent to avoid the long arm of the law. Poor Catherine died young after only thirteen years of an unhappy marriage. Her husband somehow managed to remain an MP for several years and finally inherited his father's title.

But read the book and you will discover that Kilvert's description of William Wellesley Pole as a scamp was very much the understatement.

Sadly the old house at Draycot is no more, it was bought and pulled down by a local builder fifty years ago, much of the stone going to fill in an old brick quarry, the site of which was to become the yard and offices of the building firm.

Fanny Kilvert and the Diarist had a conducted tour of the house towards the end of its heyday, see the entry for 15 December 1873. Luckily the lake, church and part of the park remain much as it was in Kilvert's day.

An immense amount of research has gone into this volume, which grew, originally out of a brief history of Draycot which Mr Couzens wrote in the mid-80s for a school local history competition. The book is lavishly illustrated with many photographs of great historical interest and the whole is accompanied by maps and genealogical tables.

Relive the glory of Draycot and its sad decline in *Hand of Fate*. Draycot was much loved by Kilvert, his friends Charles Awdry, (known as 'Christian' Charles who was the vicar,) and 'Pagan' Charles Awdry, vicar of nearby Seagry.

Robin and Heather Tanner, once residents of Kingston Langley, used part of the Draycot Estate as a model for their book *Wiltshire Village* and there are a couple of excerpts quoted in the text. What is more, Mr Couzens has dedicated his book to their memory. (ed.)

MORE ON FATHER IGNATIUS

By Basil Butcher (Hereford)

There seems to be interest in Father Ignatius; there are three books about him, which I have. *The Monk of Llanthony* by The Baroness of Bentouch (Methuen & Co 1904), the preface being by Father Ignatius of Jesus OSB, monk. It is some 600 pages and very pro Ignatius.

A more balanced book is much later, published by Faber & Faber in 1962: *The Enthusiast. The Life of Father Ignatius* by Arthur Calder-Marshall. There are also bits about Ignatius and Capel-y-Ffin in Eric Gill's autobiography (Cape 1940). He, of course, bought the never-finished Abbey.

I also have a little booklet *Manual of Devotions and Directions for Members of the Church of England*. It has a preface by Ignatius OSB, monk at Llanthony Abbey (July 1897). It has 52 pages. If anyone is interested in the Manual they are welcome to borrow it. (Tel. 01432 273535).

OBITUARIES



JACK BURRELL (1921 – 2001)

Gerald Nichols, President of the Bristol Railway Circle and a lifelong friend of Jack writes:

Jack Burrell died on 28 September 2001 a few weeks before his 80th birthday. He lived in Bristol all his life, attending the Cathedral School from the age of eleven for five years. One of the staff there, realising that his interest in and understanding of cricket exceeded his playing skill, directed him towards umpiring, starting one of his lifelong interests.

Jack's father was an inspector for a local brewery and a club cricketer for Totterdown. This also started the love of cricket that would be with Jack for the rest of his life. For many years Jack stood as umpire for the Clifton Cricket Club 2nd XI and edited its history published in 1983. In the chapter on the men of the club, he described himself as: 'long-standing umpire, also keen on disused railways, cricket history, cheese rolls and batsmen who pad up'.

Jack's interests were many and varied: railways, the Kilvert Society, the William Barnes Society, the paranormal, minor league football and cricket. Jack was always interested in looking for the human angle and finding it, not in the famous or successful, but with the journeyman professionals of the county and league sides or the obscure country curate, Francis Kilvert, visiting his parishioners or the ordinary railwayman moving from station to station for promotion. He was a great organiser of information and was a prolific correspondent which spoke of his generosity in sharing his knowledge and interests. Advancing years saw Jack increasingly crippled by arthritis and a blood disorder. It was unfortunate that the treatment of these conditions was incompatible, leaving Jack to suffer considerable pain.

Jack had a remarkable memory and great self-sufficiency. In the way events turned out, he was able to retain his mental powers and his independence up to the last week of his life.

Susan Uncles, another old friend of Jack wrote to our president:

Dear Mr. Lockwood,

I am writing to you because Jack Burrell, a long-standing member of the Kilvert Society, and I came to a number of the Kilvert services during the 1990s together, and I kept a link with the Society through him.

Jack was very fond of the Welsh border country and used to travel in the area extensively. He joined the Kilvert Society in 1949 having come across both it and the *Diaries* during his travels. He made a good collection of books, pamphlets and the newsletters over the years and made contributions to the latter in recent years, which helped him keep in touch.

Due to arthritis Jack became very lame in his later years and it was harder for him to get to the services. We did manage to get to one most years in the 1990s, the most memorable being the joint one at Fordington in June 1994 and that at Presteigne in September 1997 which you took. The last service we went to was close to Bristol, at Langley Burrell in May 1999. Jack enjoyed them all.

I was asked by Jack's sister to read a passage from *Kilvert's Diary* at his funeral and felt the passage you highlighted in your biography for 14 March 1871, describing the appearance of the snow covered Black Mountains, was the most appropriate. It reminded me of a similar experience Jack and I had on Easter Monday 1999 when I drove him into Wales to see the mountains under snow. In our case it was the Brecon Beacons that appeared and looked very beautiful.

I do miss Jack's friendship and his cheerfulness in spite of his infirmities and hope that some of what I have written could be included in any appreciation published in the Kilvert Society *Journal*.

Although I never met Jack I felt I knew him quite well through our telephone conversations. He was also an indefatigable correspondent and Kilvert researcher. I shall very much miss his original and often quirky letters and contributions to the *Journal*. (ed.)

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

Mrs Marie Goldup, Ash, Kent, a member since 1970 who died on 11 July 2001 at the age of 76. Her son Conrad writes:

My mother joined the Kilvert Society in 1970 and enjoyed a keen correspondence with your Honorary Secretary at the time, Oswin Prosser, until his death in 1977. Indeed, Mr Prosser and his wife visited my parents at our home in Ash, near Canterbury in 1971.

My mother loved books, literature and poetry, as well as history and gardening, and she was also a member of the Jane Austen Society and an enthusiastic and active member of the Kent branch.

I shall treasure my mother's volumes of *Kilvert's Diary* and I hope that the Kilvert Society flourishes in the twenty-first century. I send you and the Society my best wishes for 2002.*

Mrs TG Crewe, Necton, Norfolk, a member since 1973 who died on 11 June 2001

Mr TH Godfrey, Croft-on-Tees, Darlington, a member since 1994 who died on 25 March 2001. He was also a member and contributor to the *George Borrow Bulletin*.

We offer our sympathy to the families and friends of all those mentioned above.

* **Mr. Conrad Goldup has made a generous donation to the Society in memory of his mother, which we very gratefully acknowledge.**

NOTICE

Alliance of Literary Societies 2002 AGM and weekend event: The event hosted by the Dymock Poets Society last year was a great success and the 2002 event should be even better. Hosted by the Arnold Bennett Society, in Burslem, Staffordshire on 27 and 28 April, the Saturday programme will take place in the George Hotel with the ALS' AGM, illustrated talk and readings, and two films in the evening: the 1951 *The Card* and the 1943 *Holy Matromony*). On Sunday there will be organised coach trips to the Gladstone Pottery Museum Royal Doulton Visitor Centre, and the Potteries Museum and Art Gallery at Hanley where there will be a celebrity lecture (the celebrity being Roy Hattersley). This event is open to all (with special discounts for Clare Society members on the Sunday activities). Further information will appear in due course on the website at: <http://Vzone.virgin.net/linda.curry/jclaresociety.htm> or contact Linda Curry direct.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND MEMBERS OF COMMITTEE 2002 AGM

With the exception of our chairman, Ron Watts, and committee member, Harley Dance, officers and members of the retiring committee are willing to offer themselves for re-election at the AGM. The committee proposes that Ann Dean, currently a member of the committee, is elected to the post of chairman and that David Elvins is elected to serve on the committee.

Members are reminded that under article nine of our Constitution any two or more members may nominate one or more members (with their consent) as officers or ordinary members of committee. Nominations, in writing, must be received by the secretary on or before 28 March 2002.

AGM WEEKEND – INFORMATION

Full details of the events of the weekend will be found on page 2.

General

The Swan Hotel is, of course, of considerable significance to Kilvertians, as there are a number of references in the *Diaries*, not least the references to the Lyne family, the family of Father Ignatius of Capel-y-Ffinn.

Accommodation

The Swan at Hay is offering Bed and Breakfast at the rate of £37.50 per shared room per person per night, provided that two nights are booked – either Friday/Saturday or Saturday/Sunday. On the same basis, single rooms are available at £52.50 per night. Dinner will be free of charge to members staying a third night.

Guests arriving to stay the night may book in to their rooms for 2 p.m. The hotel courtyard car park will be available only to residents. The main town car park is in Oxford Road (proceeding from the Swan, fork right at the Blue Boar public house - immediately after the Tourist Office, on the right

All enquiries regarding accommodation at the Swan should be made direct to the hotel. Telephone number 01497 821188. Please mention the Kilvert Society.

There are numerous other hotels/guest houses both in Hay and district and in Hereford. The telephone number of the Hay Tourist Office is 01497 820144. They are open from 11 a.m. – 1 p.m. and 2 p.m. – 4 p.m.

FOR SALE

3-Volume set of *Kilvert's Diary* - £50.

Please contact Rev T Wirgley, 16 Rowland Close, Hereford HR1 1XF. Telephone 01432 267203.

Two 3-Volume sets of *Kilvert's Diary* from Mr A Bull, 3A Hereford Terrace, Leominster, Herefordshire HR6 8JR. Please contact Mr Bull for details – Tel: 01568 615390

Contributions for the June edition of the *Journal* should reach the editor no later than 15 April 2002

Because of pressure of space a number of articles in this issue have had to be abridged, others have had to be held over until the June edition. My apologies to any disappointed (and/or angry!) contributors. (ed.)

The current ordinary subscription is £6.00 (Joint membership £9.00 w.e.f. 1.1.02) and is due on the 1 January of each year. Cheques payable to The Kilvert Society should be sent to:- Barry Smith, Membership Secretary, 25 Prospect Road, Abergavenny, Monmouthshire, NP7 5DU.

DATA PROTECTION ACT 1984. The names and addresses of members are held on a computerised list exclusively for the distribution of the *Journal* and other information about the Society, to its members. If you object to this, please contact the Hon. Secretary. It has been decided that if any member objected, that member would have to provide **stamped addressed envelopes** for the dispatch of their *Journals*.

Footnotes:

¹ F. Grice. "Francis Kilvert and his World." p. 231.

² A. L. Rowse. "The English Spirit." pp. 237-8.

³ L. Le Quesne. "After Kilvert." p. 118.

⁴ A. L. Rowse. op. cit. p. 236.

⁵ J. M. Brereton. "The Curate of Clyro." *Blackwood's Magazine*. September 1977. p. 234.

⁶ J. Paxman. "The English. Portrait of a People." p. 106.

⁷ J S Mill. "On Liberty." (1859). The situation he described was to get worse in the 1860s.

⁸ F Grice. "Kilvert's Library - A List Of Books Mentioned In The Diary". Frederick Grice Memorial Booklet. pp. 25-6.

