

## THE KILVERT SOCIETY

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

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JUNE 1986.

Dear Member,

The Annual General Meeting, held on May 2nd. was attended by over 100 members. Apologies were received from Mr. & Mrs. S. Ball, Mr. & Mrs. J.R.G. Comyn, Mr. & Mrs. P.R. Cooper, Mrs. D. Cross, Mr. J. Dunabin, Mr. H. Gregg, Mrs. G. Grice, Mr. & Mrs. L. Johnson, the Misses Mumford, Mrs. M. Mathers, Mrs. M. Morgan, Mr. & Mrs. C. Ottaway, Mr. J. Strickson, Mrs. P. Talbot and Mr. L. Trott. Of those members present I know I was very pleased to see faces from Liverpool and Lincolnshire and from all the south coast counties from Cornwall to Kent. But of course the bulk of members were from the Midlands, the Welsh border and Powys. I was particularly pleased to meet again Mr. & Mrs. F. Hooper of Sussex, for Mrs. Hooper is the granddaughter of Hastings Smith, nephew of the diarist. She very kindly gave the Society two copies of the Isis Large Print edition of the diary and responded to my appeal in the last newsletter by loaning me her copy of her great-aunt Mrs. Essex Hope's novel "I Have Come Home" !

In welcoming members, the Chairman spoke of the great loss to the Society in the deaths of Mrs. E.G. Peters, Mrs. E.M. Victor and Rev. J.E. James. The company stood in tribute. He referred to the gift of letters from Miss Cholmeley, to the long, excellent article on Kilvert in the newly published "Oxford Companion to Welsh Literature" and to the efforts of the parishioners of Llowes and Kington St. Michael in welcoming Society members to their respective churches.

The Treasurer reported that finances were now very sound, and it was agreed that the subscription rate of £30 (life) and £3 (annual) should remain. Officers were re-elected en bloc. Mr. Godfrey Davies spoke of his work as an archivist and of the sinking of "H.M.S. Captain" (10th Sept. 1870).

Business over, the excellent catering of the Cafe 'Ascarri' was enjoyed, while subs. could be paid, Society publications purchased and reunions made. Then with Rev. Tipper blowing his whistle and waving the guard's green flag "we were off" ! His talk was entertaining, illuminating and vastly to the enjoyment of the company. (He has very kindly allowed some extracts to be included in this newsletter). He was warmly thanked by our Senior Vice-President, Rev. E.F. Jelfs. So ended what was generally termed one of the best A.G.M's ever.

A fine rain was falling the following day for the perambulation of Hay. Our leader, Mr. R.I. Morgan, pointed out various places of diary interest. The tour included a visit inside the Castle grounds, to the site of the station and of Chain Alley, Dr. Clouston's house, the almshouses where the diarist met Florence Hill, the church and churchyard. A picnic lunch was eaten in the lane outside Cusop church, and such was the number of cars that the parking space was crowded and some had to park further up the lane. A visit was made to the church, with its 5 magnificent yews and beautifully kept churchyard. Then practically all the party made the ascent of Mouse Castle. By now the sun was shining, it became quite warm and cuckoos quite vocal. During the day no fewer than 55 members had been present, a record number as far as I can recall. Again, great pleasure was expressed - as a new member said to me, the day combined both buildings "from the diary" and the countryside that Kilvert loved. The Society is most grateful to Mr. Morgan for organising so enjoyable a day. (Needless to say, many members found their way to the Burnt House to sample Mr. & Mrs. Stutz's excellent cream teas to complete a most enjoyable day).

JULY 5th. - 6th. WEEKEND: For the Walk on July 5th. our leader will be Mr. Bentley-Taylor. He would like to show where he thinks the Chapel of the 3 Yews was sited, but remains somewhat uncertain, now knowing yet how "populated" Hay Bluff will be. Those intending to participate are asked to meet at the carpark opposite the "Baskerville Arms", Clyro, at midday, with picnic lunch. (Should this walk have to be abandoned, Mr. Bentley-Taylor will arrange another north of Clyro).

The Service on July 6th. will be at Clifford Church (some 2½ miles east of Hay, best approached by the Hay-Dorstone-Hereford road south of the Wye, where the turn for the church is clearly indicated) by kind permission of Rev. Walter King. The preacher will be Rev. Basil Richards (Worcester) and the remembrancer Rev. B. Gillett (Rector of Kingstone, Herefs.). Both gentlemen are members of the Kilvert Society. A coach will leave Hereford Town Hall at 1.20 p.m. Bookings to me, please.

Notices will indicate parking areas, and the ladies of the parish will provide tea at £1 per head in the Parish Hall, about 100 yards from the church.

On Saturday, August 23rd. the annual Father Ignatius pilgrimage takes place. Members have often asked about this event, so I am pleased to give the programme for the day. 11. 30 a.m. Holy Eucharist at St. David's Church, Llanthony (adjacent to the ruins). 2. 30 p.m. Procession leaves Capel-y-ffyn Church for the Abbey Church at the Monastery for Evensong. (Car parking arrangements in the field at Chapel Farm).

Our next weekend will be Sept. 20-21, with a Walk on the Saturday, and a service the following day at Hay-on-Wye church - (by kind permission of Canon Ivor Davies). Full details will appear in our next newsletter, to be sent out late August - early September.

Yours sincerely,

E.J.C. West

Hon. Secretary.

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OBITUARY

We regret to record the death of the following members:-

Mrs. E.G. Peters (Hereford) who was one of the few surviving founder members of the Society. For nearly thirty years she was a member of the Committee, and became Subscriptions Treasurer when such a post was created in the early seventies, and retired owing to ill-health in 1981. She was made an Honorary Life Member of the Society. Friendly and quietly capable, she carried out her duties with the minimum of fuss and maximum of efficiency. Several Committee members attended the funeral at her beloved Eignbrook Chapel - where the Society had its origins in 1948.

Rev. J.E. James (Newport, Dyfed). He joined the Society on retiring from the living of Bladon with Woodstock, where he had conducted the funeral service of Sir Winston Churchill. With Mrs. James he attended all our Welsh border services, and was the preacher at Aberedw. With his love of nature and literature, he obviously had an affinity with Kilvert, and I cherish memories of conversations with him.

As the Chairman said at the A.G.M. we are poorer for their loss, but the richer for having known them.

A few days later the death of Mr. C.B. Ottaway (Sutton St. Nicholas, Herefs.) was announced. After a highly successful career in aircraft engineering he retired to Herefordshire in 1964 and with his wife, immediately joined the Society. For some years he resided at Pope's vicarage at Preston-on-Wye (a house Kilvert knew) and received members of the Society there. With Mrs. Ottaway he was a most loyal, regular member, attending services right up to last year, even though much handicapped physically.

We extend our sympathy to the bereaved.

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FROM CORRESPONDENCE:

Mrs. Ursula Cooper of Treble Hill, Glasbury-on-Wye tells me that this year her Art Exhibition ("Mountain Views of the Kilvert Country") will be held from Monday, July 28th. to Tuesday, August 26th. (10 a.m. - 5 p.m). All pictures will be for sale.

My old school friend, member of the Society and a contributor to this newsletter, has had published a history of the motor bus in Herefordshire from its beginnings in 1908 to the present day. The publishers are prepared to offer copies to Kilvert Society members at very favourable terms. Anyone interested should write to him, Mr. J.E. Dunabin at 2, Hinton Crescent, Appleton, Warrington, Cheshire, WA4 3DF, with a stamped addressed envelope.

E.J.C.W.

THE CLERK AND HIS CARRIAGE  
by Rev. D. Tipper (Linton-by-Ross)

Engineer I.K. Brunel's first recorded experience of rail travel was in December 1831 when he travelled from Manchester to Liverpool. In his Journal he refers to a "shaky ride" before adding "the time is not far off when we shall be able to take our coffee and write whilst going noiselessly and smoothly at 45 m.p.h. Let me try". Little did the railway world realise what was about to hit it. Within eighteen months Brunel had been appointed Engineer to the Bristol and London Railway, very soon to become the Great Western Company, a title believed to have emanated from the fertile mind of the young engineer - who was 26 at the time of his appointment.

The G.W.R. Act received Royal Assent on 31st. August 1835 and Brunel's broad gauge (7'0 $\frac{1}{2}$ " ) line from London to Bristol was opened throughout in June 1841. By this time the narrow gauge (4'8 $\frac{1}{2}$ " ) London and Birmingham Railway had established the superiority of rail travel over the fast Birmingham Mail coaches. These could average 12-14 m.p.h. compared with 18-20 m.p.h. on the L. & B. Rly., a triumph for the iron horse. What then of the impact to be made by the first straight wide gauge 'table top' level, and fully purpose built trunk railway?

Imagine you live on a ridge of hill country and knew nothing of low flying jet aircraft until the first plane shot overhead almost before you heard the roar. The sense of shock would be an abiding memory.

William Ferris was herdsman at Cocklebury Farm, near Chippenham and so sensational was the impact of the first broad gauge train he saw that for at least 35 years the event remained fixed in his mind. He said "I was foddering at the time and it was a hot day in May some 34 or 35 years ago when I heard a roaring in the air. I looked up and thought there was a storm coming down from Christian Malford but it was so fine. Well, the roaring came higher and higher, then the train shot along and the dust did flee up". Brunel's tornado had struck. Ferris was talking to a local clergyman by name of Francis Kilvert and the date was 12th January, 1875. Both men would have lived and died in total obscurity had not Kilvert written a diary which contains much informative comment on the mid-Victorian rail scene.

The diary indicates that among the professions it was probably the clergy who benefitted most from the coming of the modern railway. By train they travelled to school, University and Cathedral, to and from their parishes, to Conferences, Visitations, Confirmations and on vacations, where they met an ever widening circle of clerical relatives and friends. Many were of limited means and had to wait for preferment before they could afford to marry, a factor adding to the amount of rail travel they accomplished.

Today many clergy and members of clerical families have rail interests, probably due to a 'tribal hangover' from the day of their dependence on the train. The railway was an immense boon to the 19th. century parson, hence the attachment of the Clerk in Holy Orders to the railway.

1. The Kilverts, or Clerks in Contrast

The lives of Robert Kilvert and his son Francis emphasise the contrast between the pre-railway, immobilised father and his post-railway mobile offspring.

Robert was born at Bath in 1803 where he attended the local Grammar School before going to Oxford in 1822. His description of the journey is a classic example of road travel as it was, at the very brink of the rail revolution. He writes "I mounted outside the Oxford Mail at the door of the White Hart, Bath, a little before 11 o'clock in the morning. Our route was by way of Tetbury and Cirencester then through Fairford and Faringdon. At Cirencester there was a delay of two hours, the Mail always waiting at this time for the Duke of Beaufort's letters. It was a slow coach at the fastest and we did not get into Oxford until 10 at night". The average speed for the 70 mile journey was 6 or 7 m.p.h. On another occasion Robert travelled from Bath to Weymouth "broiling all day on the roof of the York House coach ..... but as evening came on so the end of our weary pilgrimage drew near". This was all too typical of the best the highway could offer, even in good weather and the less of it the traveller had to endure the better.

After Ordination Rev. Robert Kilvert served two Wiltshire curacies before being appointed to Hardenhuish ('Harnish') Rectory near Chippenham in 1835. His income



of £120 p.a. was supplemented by a day school at the Rectory which also took boarders. At 35 Robert married a prominent local woman and later he (or they!) obtained the wealthier living of nearby Langley Burrell where he remained until his death in 1882. The father spent the 54 years of his working life in Wiltshire and over 40 of them at adjacent parishes less than two miles from Chippenham Town.

Francis Kilvert, the son and diarist, was born at Harnish Rectory in December 1840 and grew up 'Great Western'. His first school was at home, under his father, and the place was indescribably dull and brutal. An unlucky boarder wrote "as the holidays approached I became ill - with excitement and joy", an experience which caused him to break out into a sickly poem about the merit of Chippenham Station. The date was 30th. August 1845:-

"O Chippenham Station thy music is sweet  
When Up and Down trains in thy neighbourhood meet.  
The Up train to London directeth our path  
And the Down train will land us quite safely in Bath".

The boy had at least mastered his (railway) Ups and Downs. The 'safe landing in Bath' refers to the fear of Box tunnel though that was nothing compared with the terrible school. Travel by train soon caught on and later Mrs. Kilvert was rash enough to go shopping at Bath on a race day - and had her pocket picked at Bath Station.

Francis followed his father to Oxford in 1858 by when the great orgy of rail planning, funding, legislating and building was past its peak. Never before had "England's pleasant pastures green" suffered such a fierce assault as that led by some 250,000 railway navvies armed only with picks, shovels and gunpowder. They blasted and burrowed their way all over the country working and living in violence and squalor. Injury and loss of life was horrendous. 4,000 men were employed at the Box tunnel works and over 100 stopped there - dead. The job required a ton of gunpowder and a ton of candles each week. When the dust settled, there, with many others, was the line from London to Bristol via Reading, Swindon, Chippenham and Bath - and what a transformation in travel! The journey from Bath to Oxford could now be made in two and a half hours (two from Chippenham) in comfort and at speed. The gownsman had several trains at his disposal each day and, should he wish, could travel Up from Chippenham at 8. 50 a.m., reach Oxford at 10. 50 a.m., spend over six hours in the "Fair City" before coming Down on the same day by the 5. 30 p.m. train which reached Chippenham at 7. 13 p.m. From Didcot the route was that of the Bristol and Exeter expresses, introduced in 1845, the first and fastest regular express trains in the world. Brunel's "Manchester Vision" became a reality long before his broad gauge railway became an economic embarrassment to the G.W.R.

In 1865 Francis was appointed assistant (curate) at Clyro in Radnorshire, a post which confronted him with a long and interesting rail journey via Swindon, Stroud, Gloucester, Ross and Hereford, where he had to cross the City to reach the newly opened Hereford, Hay and Brecon Railway. Hay Station was only 1½ miles from Clyro. His diary (1870-79) contains frequent references to these lines which were of strategic importance to the Railway Companies forming part of their "invasion of Wales". A brief account of their history is needed.

## 2. Historical Sketch

A railway from Cheltenham and Gloucester to the proposed Bristol and London line was advocated as early as 1833 but not authorised until 1836 and opened in May 1845. It became G.W.R. property and was broad gauge. In March 1836 the G.W.R. Director, G.H. Gibbs refers to "getting up a new line from Gloucester to Swansea". This was advanced thinking and the project had to wait until the broad gauge South Wales Railway was authorised in 1845 and opened to Swansea via Newport and Cardiff in 1852. The Gloucester and Dean Forest Railway was opened at the same time and both were worked by the G.W.R. Co. Further attempts were made to push the broad gauge lines into, and up, the Welsh Border by means of the Monmouth and Hereford, the Worcester, Hereford, Ross and Gloucester and other Companies. These plans failed but the outcome was a broad gauge single line from the G. & D.F. at Grange Court to Ross and Hereford, authorised as late as 1851 and opened in June 1855. Needless to say the Engineer for all these schemes (and many more) was Mr. I.K. Brunel in person. By the mid fifties two narrow gauge lines from Shrewsbury and Newport shook hands at Hereford where they effectively blocked Brunel's broad gauge advance from the Metropolis.

Finally the impecunious Hereford Hay and Brecon Co. managed to have their route

operative by September 1864, as a narrow gauge feeder to the Hereford Lines. As no-one else took the H. H. & B. seriously the Midland Railway Co. grabbed it in 1869 in order to organise their own "invasion of South Wales". So was the scene set for young Mr. Kilvert and his travels.

### 3. En route to Clyro. Spring 1865

Kilvert tells us he favoured "the beastly early train" from Chippenham which of course meant winter breakfasts at Langley in the dark. In fact it was 8. 55 a.m. when the train left Chippenham and by means of a good connection at Swindon he reached Gloucester by 11. 00 a.m. and Barrs Court Station, Hereford, at 12. 25 p.m. Here followed a quick ride through the town by 'Fly' for the H. H. & B. train, due out of Barton Station at 12. 45 p.m. and arriving at Hay by 1. 25 p.m., a cross country journey of 130 miles.

To breakfasts at Chippenham and lunch at Hay in 1865 was simply wonder work. Local folk in Radnorshire and Wiltshire were incredulous, supposing that their Clerk could not make the journey without "going over the sea". In fact F.K. went over the Severn at Gloucester and over the Wye five times between Ross and Hay - by bridges. Today the journey evokes nostalgic comment such as "of course we couldn't do it now" but how wrong can you be? In 1985 it would be necessary to catch "the very beastly early train" from Chippenham at 7. 19 a.m. and a South Wales H.S.T. from Swindon to Newport where there is an hour for breakfast. From Newport a Cardiff to Crewe express puts the traveller down at Hereford by 10. 40 a.m. in ample time for the 11. 10 a.m. bus which reaches Hay at 12. 05 p.m. An example of public transport rationalisation made in the teeth of Motorway competition.

Francis Kilvert had three Welsh Border posts interspersed with periods as assistant to his father at Langley, where he also helped out on holiday. He travelled very frequently on this route and much further afield in Wales. The Welsh journeys will be referred to later, the following extracts from the diary refer to Kilvert's experiences on the G.W.R.

### 4. Travel from Chippenham. Kilvert on the G.W.R. Main Line

18th May 1870 "Went down to the Bath Flower Show in Sydney College Gardens. Found the first train going down was an Excursion and took a ticket for it, but over-reached myself by taking a return, for I was obliged to return by an ordinary train and had to take a fresh ticket at Bath. The carriage was nearly full. In the Box tunnel as there was no lamp people began to strike foul brimstone matches and hand them to each other all down the carriage. All the time we were in the tunnel these lighted matches were travelling from hand to hand in the darkness. Each match lasted the length of the carriage and the red ember was thrown out of the opposite window, by which time another match was seen travelling down the carriage. The carriage was chock full of fumes ... and by the time we got out of the tunnel I was almost suffocated. Then a gentleman tore a lady's pocket handkerchief in two, seized one fragment and blew his nose with it and put the rag in his pocket. She seized his hat whilst another lady said the dogs of Wootton Bassett were more sociable than the people".

At the Flower Show Kilvert says the heat was excessive and enormous crowds were present "greater it is said than were ever seen before" which he chiefly attributes to the Excursion trains. "One saw everything - except flowers and the police kept saying 'Move on, move on'; I think it was a good show"!

Returning to Chippenham he writes "I had some trouble to collect my many parcels at the Bath Station and struggle to a carriage with my arms full of them through the crowd, one of the parcels being a hot greasy pigeon pie fresh from the oven without any basket. This I carried in both hands from Chippenham Station to Langley". There is much of interest in all this; the jargon, the heat, crowds, confusion, parcels and pigeon pie are vividly portrayed. Impedimenta was a characteristic of Victorian rail travel and presumably Kilvert left his "many parcels" at Chippenham parcels office to hurry home in the heat with his hot pie.

The early fear of Box tunnel was still a reality in 1870 and Kilvert has more to say about the short rail journey than about the Flower Show itself. When the line was opened some passengers would de-train at the station before the tunnel, post over the hill by chaise, to take a later train at the next station. Much was printed about the imagined "dangers of Box tunnel" and as late as 1852 a Guide to the G.W.R. advised the ladies to "screw up their nerves for a rush through the Box tunnel". We may smile at this today, as Brunel did at the time, but that great black hole below Box hill was

30 feet wide, 25 feet high and nearly two miles long. To be plunged into it at 40 or 50 m.p.h. would certainly test the nerve. Even in 1870 the tunnel could "do something" to those who did not often travel and the horse play witnessed by Kilvert was an expression of relief at getting through in safety. By then railway accidents had become a national hazard due to the volume of rail traffic and increased speeds, while brakes and signalling remained crude. Here is Kilvert on a local mishap -

7th. January 1872 "Hicks told me about the accident between Swindon and Wootton Bassett when the passenger train ran into a stationary goods train loaded with Portland stone. The guards of the goods train never ran back to stop the passenger trains. The engine leaped the hedge and fell on its side in the field. The driver was thrown on to the hedge, and the stoker was hung up in the ruins but neither was seriously hurt. The stoker stayed at home for three days but the driver was back on duty the next day. A sailor had his leg injured and an old gentleman asleep in a first class carriage was waked up and asked to get out. He grumbled furiously because there was no platform saying he had never got out before without a platform! The accident cost the G.W.R. Co. £5,000 and the guards were most properly discharged. Both of them were sober".

So writes Francis Kilvert but as the G.W.R. histories do not refer to this accident and there is no report of it in either the Board of Trade Accident Reports or in the Times index of Railway Accidents, the diary needs to be verified. The G.W.R. Minute Book for 1871 is available and this contains a short account of the mishap which not only substantiates the description given but seems to indicate that it came from a railway employee, presumably Mr. Hicks. The entry is as follows:- "15 November 1871. Circumstances investigated of a collision which occurred near Wootton Bassett on November 6th. when the 7. 00 p.m. express train from Bristol ran into the 6. 35 a.m. goods train from Weymouth. From the evidence given the Directors came to the conclusion that the accident was caused through the neglect of William Taylor, the head guard and F. Merrett the second guard of the goods train which had come to a standstill through the failure of the engine, in not acting upon the regulation laid down. Taylor and Merrett dismissed". (Kilvert vindicated!) The Minutes also state that in February 1873 "Mr. Gill, draper, Truro, was claiming £4,000 for injuries. Directors decline to entertain his claim". Granted that both the guards were sober they could have been on duty for some 14 hours and were possibly asleep, like the old gent in the first class carriage.

In September 1873 Kilvert talked to old Mrs. Matthews "about the great number of railway accidents that have happened lately". Said Alice Matthews "It is shocking to be ushered out of the world in that way". While travelling in the Isle of Wight Kilvert's carriage became derailed but it was "promptly lifted back on to the rails by this marvellous instrument - the screw jack". On another occasion his brother's train was badly derailed between Salisbury and Bishopstoke but "fortunately there was on board the train a breakdown gang with screw jacks and all other necessary appliances. The train proceeded after a two hour delay". No wonder screw jacks were once fitted to all G.W.R. locomotives.

The advent of the railway system served as a prelude to the impending change in social customs. The local Wiltshire folk seem to have been more conscious of this than their Welsh Border counterparts. At Langley the politically minded John Couzens sensed a big change and said to Kilvert "I know it is coming as sure as this prong is in my hand". More significant was the fact that after Church Sarah Hicks felt able to inform the curate "It's a comfort to know there's a time coming when ..... we shall be as good as those who are so high and proud over us now". The Curate's sentiments were "patience dear Sarah, patience, a little longer and then ..... " Kilvert understood that the old tyrannies could not last and that a time of reckoning was near.

On 24th. September 1873 Kilvert writes "I met Herriman the porter returning from his night work at the station (Chippenham). How differently we both spent last night and how much better he spent it than I did. He was doing extra night duty that a fellow porter might enjoy a holiday while I ..... ", (no details supplied!) Again, "Herriman has only three days holiday during the whole year while to me every day is a holiday, and for no dessert of mine". Surely there will be a compensation made for these things? This comparison between the lives of the porter and the parson shows considerable sensitivity on the part of the latter. Kilvert was by no means idle and not given to orgies. He is simply comparing his own varied life style, with its social night life too, with what he takes to be the hard and dull life of the porter. What Mr. Kilvert does not comprehend is Mr. Herriman's probable sense of fulfilment in being an employee of the Great Western Railway Company.



Nevertheless, the railway was a great "leveller". The rich and poor, the Squire and servant all met on the platform - to receive orders from 'Company's Servants'. They also travelled at the same speed on the same train. 'The cradle was beginning to rock'.

On 24th. April 1873 Kilvert caught the 12. 33 p.m. train from Chippenham to nearby Wootton Bassett. He was to drive and sleep with the De Quetteville family who then held Brinkworth Rectory. Travelling third class he found himself entrusted by a man with a beautiful three-year-old baby girl. At Wootton Bassett Kilvert reluctantly surrendered the child to board the waiting De Quetteville Carriage and Wagonette. "At dinner I perceived that the waiter was the gentleman who travelled with me and had given me the child". Conversation between the diners and the waiters was unheard of for the servants knew their places. Next morning Kilvert was driven to Dauntsey Station for the return journey to Chippenham and, "There was Palmer the waiter returning to Bath on the early train. ON THE PLATFORM WE MET FACE TO FACE", also as man to man for conversation. What was impossible still was one of Kilvert's "big mistakes".

On 5th. June 1876 he used the 9. 35 a.m. from Chippenham to Bath for a visit to the dentist. Returning later he asked the porter whether the next train was "right for Chippenham" and was told Yes. He settled down to read but noticed that the train "rushed through Bathampton, Box and Corlsham Stations and in another minute we had rushed through Chippenham like a thunderbolt". Seemingly Kilvert was on the Up Dutchman which left Bristol at 12. 9 p.m., calling only at Bath and Swindon. Kilvert continues "Oddly there was a signal check at Langley and I could easily and unperceived have jumped out and walked home in five minutes but deemed it wise to go on to Swindon and return lawfully". Had he known what awaited him he would most certainly have jumped for it.

Back at Chippenham "the ticket collector Ironsides refused to take my ticket." "You offer me an Up ticket arriving by a Down train. You should have got the ticket backed by the Station Master at Swindon". Whereupon Mr. Ironsides demanded the fare all the way from Paddington! Kilvert continues "Hornblower the Station Master tried to bring the man to reason but in vain. I was surprised that the authority of the Superintendent was not paramount". It should have been, but Ironsides stuck to his guns. Says Kilvert "I offered to pay the fare from Swindon but no, Ironsides said he must have the whole fare from London. Hornblower expostulated with him ....." "I KNOW it" said Ironsides, "I KNOW THE GENTLEMAN and I see his mistake but I cannot take the ticket". Hornblower finally made it possible for Kilvert to escape and he adds "Moral, not to get again into the Flying Dutchman by mistake". Moral or no moral had Jack ever spoken to his master before like this? The Kilverts had held two local Rectories for nearly forty years and Ironside's behaviour was revolutionary, the man was aptly named.

27th. May 1872 "Went up to London by the mid-day mail" being the 11. 45 a.m. from Bristol calling only at Bath, Chippenham and Swindon. Reading was served by a slip coach and Paddington reached at 2. 45 p.m. Kilvert returned on 29th May by the evening express from Paddington which "came trundling into Chippenham by the slip coach". Slip coach working was first used on the G.W.R. in 1858 though it is not certain how the carriage was detached. Apparently the guard pulled a rope to uncouple it! 'Slipping' was quite commonplace by 1870.

Trundling into the station by the slip coach was a practice preserved on the G.W.R. system for over a century. When the Didcot and Bicester slip coaches were taken off in 1960 they were the last in the world.

The sheer mobility provided by the railway was impressive and must have been more so to those familiar only with the horse and the turnpike road.

In May 1874 Kilvert records that he left his friend's house at Oxford at 2 p.m. and reached Langley Burrell in time for "the communicants meeting at 7 p.m." During the same month he spent a morning at the picture Academy in London, then came down on the 2 p.m. express which reached Chippenham at 4. 52 p.m. He went home to Langley and "by 7 p.m. I was visiting the sick people in the village".

In June 1874 the mixed gauge was laid down through Chippenham Station to nearby Thingley Junction so that narrow gauge trains could use the Wilts. and Somerset line. On 31st. March 1875 Francis went to Chippenham Station to see his brother off to London. "Teddy travelled on a broad gauge train riding in a first class smoker and a narrow gauge train followed almost at once. It was rather a sad evening". The combination of a 'smoker' so abhorrent to Francis, and a narrow train was too much.

Brunel's dream did come true but it was time to wake up.

There was, however, still 'a gleam in the gloom'. On 4th. March 1876 Kilvert used his favourite train, the 9. 35 a.m. from Chippenham to Bristol returning by the 7 p.m. broad gauge express which "rushed up in 39 minutes". Eighty years later the author made the same journey (narrow gauge!) when the trains 'rushed up' (?) in 40 minutes or more. Today the H.S.T. 125s "rush up" in 23 minutes, but Brunel would have anticipated that long before 1900.

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FRANCIS KILVERT AND NEW ZEALAND : TWO FURTHER LINKS  
by Lyndall Hancock (Dunedin, New Zealand)

Hon. Henry de Bohun Devereux - second son of Viscount Hereford

Mr. Sidney Ball's article on the Thatch Cottage School (Newsletter, Feb. '85) opens up a very interesting new line of research. I, too, am indebted to Mr. Edward West because he passed on to me the newly-found information that Kilvert's former pupil at the school had later gone to New Zealand.

Kilvert met de Bohun Devereux at Hay on November 6, 1871 (ii, 83), and soon afterwards the young man left for Australia. In 1872 when aged 24 he married Maud Philippa Salamon at Sydney, and for the next few years he managed the Peake Downs Station (i.e. very large farm) in Queensland.

He was first listed in a New Zealand directory in 1876 when he was living in Auckland, and thereafter he had various addresses in the general Auckland area. By 1892 he had moved to "Kundibar", his home in the fashionable inner suburb of Epsom. During these years he was employed by H.M. Customs, first as a clerk (at 10/6 per day in 1881) and later as a Customs Officer. He appears to have started in a fairly lowly way, but Hereford family money presumably made some difference, for according to a List of Freeholders in 1882 he was the owner of 2 acres valued at £800. That was an expensive piece of land for those times.

Presumably he preferred his first Christian name, for he was known to his descendants as Henry, not de Bohun as Kilvert knew him. (The family has retained the English pronunciation of his surname of "Deverooks", as against variations used by an Irish branch of the family in New Zealand).

He died from cancer in July 1909, and his obituary mentioned his long Customs connection and his interest in Epsom community and church affairs. "The deceased leaves a widow and three sons and three daughters, most of whom are married. One of his sons was killed in the South African War".

The Australasian edition of Debrett, 1980, lists all further descendants.

Algernon Bates

The letter written by Alfred Savournin in 1942 (Newsletter, Feb. '85) mentions school holidays spent on a Herefordshire farm that was run by a son of the Bredwardine schoolmaster. This son, Algy, "later went on to New Zealand farming".

An Algernon Bates first appeared in a New Zealand directory in 1894, and for the next thirty years in the whole of the country there was only one person of that name ever listed. From the death certificate details of this particular man, it is almost certain that this was the Algy Bates who had Bredwardine connections.

He was born in Herefordshire about 1858 and his parents were George (schoolmaster) and Elizabeth Bates. At age 21 he married Elizabeth Sarah (maiden name not given) and he had two sons before coming to New Zealand about 1889. At first the family lived at Lyttelton, the port for Christchurch, but by 1901 they had moved to Christchurch and by 1904 had gone north to Wellington. When he died there of cardiac disease in November 1923 he was survived by his widow, 2 sons and 2 daughters.

It is interesting that he isn't listed anywhere as being a farmer, as Mr. Savournin wrote - instead, he appears in directories as a clerk, and on his death certificate as a railway employee. But his address for most of his Wellington years was a still-rural valley on the outskirts of the city, and so it is quite possible that he had a smallholding there.

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CLIFFORD AND HAIGH ALLENS by Sidney Ball (Swindon)

Francis Kilvert knew Clifford well; he wrote often about the village and its people. When Vicar of Bredwardine Kilvert returned to Clifford on Friday, 27th. September, 1878; he preached in the church to a large congregation for the Harvest Festival. (Vol.3, p.424). In this church of St. Mary the Kilvert Society Summer Service will be held.

The most notable monument in Clifford church is a rare oaken effigy of a priest of about 1300. The only other parish church in Herefordshire having such a wooden effigy is Much Marcle, whose oaken man is of a slightly later date than Clifford's.

There are fine views from Clifford over the Wye to the Black Mountains. From the other side of the Wye there are also grand vistas. Wordsworth said that he had not seen a more beautiful scene than that from Whitney across the Wye to Clifford, (Vol. 2, p.430).

Who has not heard of Fair Rosamund? Most stories about this favourite mistress of Henry II are sheer fantasy, but she was real enough. She was Jane Clifford, daughter of Walter de Clifford and his wife Margaret of Clifford Castle. Francis Kilvert would have known Tennyson's poem "Dream of Fair Women" featuring Rosamund

" ..... turn and look on me,  
I am that Rosamund whom men call fair ..... "

Kilvert's love of folklore caused him to call Rosamund Knight of Langley "Fair Rosamund". Five times we read of her thus, as in Volume 3, page 28, "at the dairy... Fair Rosamund was making up the sweet rolls of rich golden butter".

At Clifford Kilvert's chief interest lay in the big house and its inmates, the Haigh Allen family. He thought Clifford Priory "one of the nicest most comfortable houses ..... ", (Vol. 1, p.171). Francis enjoyed himself there; he certainly enjoyed the strawberries, for he wrote of their excellence twice in a week, (Vol. 1, pages 171 and 175), and a feature of the fine food at the Snodhill picnic was "splendid strawberries from Clifford Priory brought by the Haigh Allens" (Vol. 1, p.162).

Not related to the Allens of Clifford were the Allens of Oakfield, the other side of Hay. Unfortunately in the Index to Volume 3 both families appear as Haigh Allens. It would take too much space to sort them out here. We must concentrate on the Haigh Allens of Clifford.

Benjamin Haigh Allen, JP, DL, came from a prominent family in the West Riding of Yorkshire. Born in 1821, he was elder son of Benjamin Haigh Allen of Greenhead, Huddersfield, and Sarah Whitacre, and grandson of Thomas Allen and Martha Haigh. The Allens inherited property from Martha's brother, Benjamin Haigh of Gledholt.

Mrs. Allen of Clifford was nee Mary Sophia Champneys, youngest daughter of the Rev. Henry William Champneys of Ostenhanger, Kent. She was a kinswoman of the Earl of Derby. She and Benjamin married in 1845. They had two children, the girls Lucy and Katie mentioned several times by Kilvert.

Mr. Haigh Allen lost an arm in an accident in March 1874. This was why Kilvert, on holiday from Langley soon afterwards, rode from Whitney "with Henry Dew, senior, to Clifford Priory to see how Haigh Allen was". (Vol. 2, p. 426). The accident did not prevent Mr. Allen continuing his official duties, for I have found that he was High Sherrieff of Herefordshire the next year. And we know from the Diary that Mr. Haigh Allen was a Trustee of the Jarvis Charity when Kilvert was Vicar of Bredwardine. Also Hugh Allen in the Diary is a misreading for Haigh Allen, (Vol.3, pages 351 and 356).

Francis Kilvert saw Mr. Allen's brother, Major Allen, and "Major Allen's two bewitching pretty little girls, Geraldine and Edith," (Vol.1, p. 170). The Major was John Whitacre Allen of Ecclesfield (near Sheffield). Born in 1823, he married in 1851 Eliza Whiteside, eldest daughter of the Rev. Dr. Whiteside, Vicar of Scarborough. This Mrs. Allen is not mentioned by Kilvert.

The Allens were much connected with the church. I have shown that Benjamin Haigh Allen and his brother married daughters of clergymen. The family was completed by two sisters, Catherine and Sarah - and they were the wives of clergymen. The Haigh Allens took a great interest in the parish church of Clifford. As Kenneth Clew points out in his Min-Guide of Clifford, the guiding light behind the restoration of 1888 was Benjamin Haigh Allen.

And what happened to Kilvert's friends, Lucy and Katie Allen? Although he does

not mention it (in our published diary), Francis would know that when he returned to Clifford, for the Harvest Festival in September 1878, Lucy was already married. In February that year she had become the wife of John Knowles, of Darnford Hall, Winsford, Cheshire.

Katie Allen married in 1887 the Rev. Gerald Leigh Spencer, M.A., who was Curate of Thruxton, Herefordshire, and, from 1887, Chaplain of H.M. Prison, Hereford. "Kilvert's Who's Who" states that Clifford Priory passed through several hands after the death of Benjamin Haigh Allen. This is not really so. When Mr. Haigh Allen died in 1902, Katie and her husband had Clifford Priory, and they lived there a long time. The Rev. Gerald Spencer gave up his post as Chaplain of Hereford Prison in 1902 to live with his wife Katie at Clifford Priory. This grand house is not there now, but St. Mary's Church still stands from centuries ago, and, as Sir N. Pevsner describes it, "in a veritable wood".

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FRANCIS KILVERT. A PERSONAL APPROACH  
by John Dunabin (Warrington).

It seems a long time ago - it was a long time ago in fact, possibly before the war of 1939-45 - when an old friend\* told me of the discovery and publication of the diary of the Rev. R.F. Kilvert, Church of England curate and later vicar in an area we both knew. The information was docketed, the name following in mind behind those of the famous diarists, Evelyn, Pepys, and even lesser luminaries such as Fanny Burney and Parson Woodforde.

Two decades perhaps had elapsed before I took the next modest step, purchase at Henry Roberts' bookshop in Kendal - the sort of shop one didn't want to leave without buying something - of the one volume edition, then priced at eighteen shillings. Years slipped by, and in pursuit of a very different interest I came to know and enjoy the company of Mr. C.T.O. Prosser, and Mrs. Prosser too. Only after two or three more years of growing friendship, by which time shared love of Herefordshire, apart from giving us both pleasure, had perhaps established my credentials, did Mr. Prosser say, quite casually, "Perhaps you would like to join the Kilvert Society". This was his way, never pushing its attractions. Reasons for not having sought to do so earlier are perhaps best left unexplored; now though there was no doubt in mind.

Having joined, reading, re-reading, then frequent dipping into the single volume, and even graduating to the three volume version, or, to be honest, two thirds of it, followed. But again, being honest, more frequent attendances at Kilvert Society gatherings, and fear of being trapped in a corner by some dedicated and erudite Kilvertian, then being exposed as an ignorant sham, took me back to homework days, or even more intensive study. Hurried skimming through the one volume edition, a standard item of luggage, each time I made the train journey to Hereford, enabled me to face the intelligentsia gathered there, at Clyro, Langley Burrell, or elsewhere, with some confidence.

All this however was rather superficial, like reading "Paradise Lost Book II" for the first time the night before an exam and then getting the context question, the last two lines, right. Slowly, something else emerged. Francis Kilvert lived and ministered in the Clyro/Hay/Bredwardine area for nearly ten years in the eighteen sixties and seventies. I lived for several years as a teenager in the early nineteen thirties some ten miles away from there on the eastern edge of the Black Mountains.

Then, Kilvert's world of sixty years earlier would have seemed unbelievably remote, barely credible, much as did Jane Austen's Bath, but the passage of years, when non-essentials fall out of focus, has intensified a feeling that if only I had been Francis Kilvert I could have seen what he saw all over again. Reading 'After Kilvert' - written much later in an age of television, vandalism, juggernauts charging through that lovely countryside, and general permissiveness, but noting how Clyro seen through fresh eyes was apparently unspoiled by these things, unchanged in essentials it seemed over a century - heightened my regret.

Having now, if not really set the scene, attempted a justification for writing at all, two courses are open to me. One is to summon up memories of local 'characters', and there were many of them, to try to indicate how half a century ago in south west Herefordshire generous living space (meaning fields, woods, trees,

and rivers, not mansions), together with absence of factory regimentation, allowed personality and individuality to develop, just as it did around Clyro a little over twice as long ago. This would require much hard thinking. My evenings alas were spent poring over problems of the differential calculus or the structure of the atom; I have no diary to assist me.

The alternative course, more congenial by far, is to re-read Kilvert, and let memory be prompted by him. Quite a few names there have familiar rings, some true, some of course false, like that of Tom Williams. My Tom was very different, son of Mordecai and therefore known as Tom Mordy; the unofficial surname was shared by his brother and all their children. Father Ignatius was still being talked of on an 'only yesterday' basis, a characteristic of rural communities; his memory was kept green. Even at Belmont Abbey, much more in touch with the outer world in many ways, the monks still in 1938 savoured a jest about this strange 'in between' cleric, neither Anglican nor Roman Catholic. I had close contact with them then, and they told me that when the living flame in his church at Llanthony went out he walked to Belmont, a mere twenty miles away, to ask what he should do. Father Abbot's advice was succinct: "Light it again", and Father Ignatius walked back to Llanthony. How one would have enjoyed Kilvert's comment on this episode.

Another name which caught my eye in the Diary was that of Henry Dew. Now Dew was not a unique name in the area - there are several, including at least six Miss Dews, in Kelly's Herefordshire Directory for 1929, and in Kingstone there is a Dew's Corner - but could I have spoken to a daughter or other near relative of Henry? Striving not to be unkind, although perhaps that motive is not far away, she had some of the imagined ways, manners, etc. of a daughter of the (late 19th century) clergy. We often chatted in friendly fashion at Vowchurch as I waited for the bus to school and she for a visit to the city.

One wet morning I stood there, feet slipping about in rich, red, very sloppy Herefordshire mud, clutching an overfilled strapless schoolbag under one arm and a large parcel under the other, as she arrived. "Good morning, Miss Dew". "Good morning". Silence ensued, then: "Young man, I shan't speak to you in future if you don't take off your cap when you speak to me". Making no attempt to explain the obvious, my reply was not rude, just not apologetic.

But apart from an obsession amongst a few female members of the ill-defined 'middle class' with forelock-touching, the manners of the rural Herefordians I met were gentle, even gracious, and there was no deterioration of course as one stepped over boundaries or border into Breconshire, Monmouthshire or Radnorshire. Many passages in the Diary, while not referring overtly to this, bring me reminders. Politeness did slip a little of course on occasions, as an entry for Monday, 11th. April 1870, with mention of Hay Fair and "an unusual number of men drunk" also reminds me. Politeness though did not slip very far. Despite having a very strong temperance background, I came across nothing in the way of offensive behaviour from any of them, drunk or sober, which would have fitted into the accepted mould of present day behaviour.

Returning to Hay, and modest post-market conviviality, I will explain that there was no electric light, no gas either, for miles around our home, but we had a pressure petrol vapour lamp - misuse, when it might easily have burned our whole family to death, led to hurried scrapping. One villager well known to us used to celebrate in Hay until well afterdark, and the walk home, eleven or twelve miles over the hill (any road was more roundabout) was navigated, for the last eight he claimed, by that light of ours.

Keeping an eye on the attempt, however imperfect, to link Kilvert's world to mine of sixty or seventy years later, while it must be true to say that their role was changing, and in its more secular aspects at least undoubtedly diminishing, the clergy continued in the nineteen thirties to play a dominant role in country affairs. Anglican clergy of course I should add. Nonconformism was very live and well in south west Herefordshire, but poor, and one Primitive Methodist minister served twenty two chapels. Baptists did better than this, but stipends for chapel clergy were low, and in the social order they ranked somewhere near schoolteachers, whereas their Anglican brethren were often by birth, but if not then by calling bracketed with the gentry. This seemed to make them in general tolerant, human, even apparently easygoing, certainly pleasant to meet, unlike some of the Baptist or 'Prim' men, for whom hellfire seemed a close reality.

Not all fitted the stereotype. Our vicar, the Rev. George John Tuck, bachelor, forty four years in the post, was a recluse, in or near his dotage, and the story



went that on one occasion he collapsed during Sunday morning service. His parishioners - there must have been at least two of them present - made him comfortable on the floor of the church, justifying this action when questioned by saying this was to ensure that he was present for evening service.

Education for the masses had of course changed a lot by 1932, even in remote areas around the Black Mountains, since Kilvert's time. Then, the formal catechising of schoolchildren was accepted by most and probably demanded by many parents in his day. Now though there was compulsory education for all, from five to fourteen, and county or borough councils had become important providers of schooling, religious as well as secular; denominational bias however was in their establishments specifically forbidden.

My mother, a staunch Methodist, would never have contemplated teaching in a Church school, but then, the church authorities would never have appointed her. The vicar of our parish, a school manager, limited his interference with day to day school matters to providing cardboard, and fitting it, to stop the holes in rusting school coal buckets. Mr. Brothers on the other hand, rector in the next parish and also one of the managers, announced that he would be coming into school to conduct a Scripture examination. A head-on collision was averted, but I have since wondered how it would have gone with a different cast.

Of course, it is a well known Diary passage, Kilvert - uncharacteristically? - shows a contempt for Nonconformists, something his adulators should surely find difficult to overlook. Ecumenism in its present form was yet to come to life from either side of any of the numerous divides. In an entry for 16th February 1874 Kilvert noted that he was greatly troubled by the licentiousness of the school-children, naming names, Wiltshire names I was relieved to find. What did he mean? Disregarding accepted rules, especially of grammar, or lascivious, libertine, or lewd (extremes embodied in my dictionary's definition)? Would ignorance of the Catechism have qualified as such?

A diary entry for 7th March 1873 stirred memory too, but of a very different sort. As one having a very strong aversion to foxhunting, otter hunting of course, cock-fighting and badger baiting too - the Trefecca Hunt met once outside our house, and the outrageous behaviour of hounds and humans re-inforced every prejudice - like Kilvert I knew about 'bag foxes'. Hunting to keep vermin down and protect the farmer's hens? Pshaw! Foxes caught live in our village were then taken to the Hay area, where they had become scarce, to provide sport.

Almost certainly Mr. Brothers, incumbent at Bacton from 1904 on, was 'Parson' in a piece of homespun Herefordshire philosophy conveyed to me one day in the thirties when out walking. With his highly polished brown boots, breeches, leggings, and pork pie hat, I had looked on this neat little man as a reasonably prosperous small farmer when we rode together on the market bus. Now he looked like a roadman, but it was probably his own hedge he was tending, with the gutter below. After an exchange of civilities the chosen topic emerged, and his vivid words, most of them, remain in mind. "Before war (1914-18) there was only one man in village knew anything; that were Parson, and what he said we had to believe. Then we went in the army, and in the trenches we found what Parson said didn't matter a b-----. We a'nt been to church since". Would Kilvert have done any better than those remote aloof clerics to bring the disturbed ones back?

They weren't all like that of course; I hope I have made the point quite clear. As always, an old order was changing, and the younger men were very different. Mr. Percy Loadman, in charge of Llanveynoe and Crasswall, a Liverpudlian with a typical Arthur Askey sense of humour, became a family friend, as did Mr. Tuck's successor, another immigrant from my native Lancashire. There was a recurrence of local hell raising just before and during our time in the area, the scenario, so I was told, involving father, most unfit looking, picking a pub quarrel and then, as his target rose to the bait with some fist swinging, son would appear and demonstrate his pugilistic prowess. When a new policeman arrived - this was in a neighbouring village; we had neither policeman nor pubs - father went so far as to knock his helmet off, but neither he nor son was aware that the new 'bobby' was a former army boxing champion (carefully chosen for the post). The vicar, yet another Lancastrian by the way, held the ring, the bully was defeated, and trouble ended.

Teasing ones imagination though to set Kilvert in these various circumstances and wondering, making maximum use of his own candidly revealed reactions, what he would have done, is not always very rewarding. Not all the local people I met were quite so articulate as his acquaintances - or is that a reflection of the diarist's method

of recording conversations? He may have 'refined' their speech, or perhaps they did this themselves in deference to his calling; exact parallels should not be expected. What I wonder would he have made of one of our local tragedies, or rather the report of it? "Yes, Bill Christy's had a terrible bad year. He's lost eight cows" (pause) "and his wife". This by the way was the year of a bumper acorn crop. Cattle eat too many of them and die. A favourite solution was to buy more pigs, who thrive on them, to clear the ground, but pigs became too dear for the poorer hill farmers.

Kilvert's capacity, sitting in his lodgings in Clyro, to recall in detail not only the beautiful countryside he lived in, whether he had been baked, frozen, or soaked to the skin that day, but the warmth of his many encounters, the harmless idiosyncracies of so many of his parishioners, reminding me of my own world of fifty years ago, brings me closer to the one he enjoyed.

Sadly though, memories of people do fade, and after half a century the sharply etched pictures are no more. New faces, new contacts, cannot match them. Scenery, and even weather, are different. "New every morning - ". Re-reading the very condensed report of 8th July 1872, less than two months before Kilvert left Clyro "for ever", with "pigs, sheep, calves swept away --- roads swept bare to the very rock ----. Four inches of mud in the Rhydspence Inn", etc., it could be a description of the terrible floods of 1931, while the laconic entry a few weeks later, "Left Langley and came to Clyro. Rain poured all day", brings vividly to mind many weekends spent staring at the invisible Black Mountains out of our windows, while the rain beat on them almost horizontally. Three days later however the diarist could write: "Seldom have I seen more lovely and beautiful hills and vales which I shall now see no more!"

All memory must, like those words, have an element of sadness in it, but without memory we would be nothing, less than members of the animal world. Francis Kilvert has helped me to preserve my own memories of Herefordshire, by describing so well his years spent just round the corner of Vagar Hill, in Radnorshire. Through him I can re-live the best of my times spent there long ago, not just once but again and again.

\* Now Honorary Secretary of the Kilvert Society.

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DEPUTY SURGEON-GENERAL SAMUEL JARDINE WYNDOWE  
By Mrs. Teresa Williams (North Wembley)

Kilvert's sister, Emily, wrote in her "Rambling Recollections" (see page 108 of the Society's publication, More Chapters from the Kilvert Saga), of her first meeting with her future husband. He died at Bancombe House in Uley, Gloucestershire, on 19th. March, 1919, aged 89, and was buried at Churchdown, Glos. on the 22nd. March. His obituary which has been extracted from THE TIMES of Saturday, 22nd. March, 1919, gives us some indication of his distinguished career.

"OBITUARY - DEPUTY SURGEON-GENERAL WYNDOWE"

Deputy Surgeon-General Samuel Jardine Wyndowe who died on March 19th was born in 1830 and received his early training at St. George's Hospital, London, where he was Dresser to Frank Buckland, the Naturalist.

He joined the Indian Medical Service in March 1854 and after being employed with different Regular Corps in the Madras Army was appointed to the permanent Medical charge of a Cavalry Regiment in the NAGPUR IRREGULAR FORCE in November 1855 and took part in an engagement with the rebels near SAMBULPORE in December 1857 when his horse was shot. For services during the Mutiny he received the Medal, the thanks of the Government in India, and of Her Majesty's Government.

On his return from leave in England in 1860, Dr. Wyndowe accepted employment in the Central Provinces and was afterwards Chemical Examiner and Professor of Chemistry in the Madras Medical College. In August 1867 he was appointed Residency Surgeon at HYDERABAD and Superintendent of the Hyderabad Medical School and several Dispensaries in the NIZAM'S Dominions from which post he retired in 1881 with the rank of Surgeon-General. A correspondent writes: 'Few men now living can have any personal knowledge of Dr. Wyndowe's services in his charges; but successive Residents from Sir Richard Temple downwards testified to their value; and he was held in the highest esteem by Sir SALAR JUNG and all ranks in the NIZAM'S service; not only for professional ability of a high order and unwearying devotion to duty but also, and in no mean degree, for his high-minded character and the charm of an unselfishness which never

failed. High and low recognised in him a gentleman who was an honour to his profession and country. No-one had a better title to be regarded as a friend of everyone and benefactor of the community, he served so long and so well.'

Dr. Wyndowe married in 1865, Emily, second daughter of the late Reverend Robert Kilvert, Rector of Langley Burrell, Wiltshire, and leaves one son, Major W.T.Wyndowe, serving with the Army of the Rhine, and three married daughters".

NOTE:

Emily survived until July 1931, also dying at the age of 89. At the time of Samuel's death, one of their four daughters had died: the baby christened Thermuthis Mary on 25th June 1871, and who called herself 'Mayndie' (Vol.3,p.178) died on "Sunday, 3rd May 1903, very suddenly from heart failure aged 32" (from THE DEVIZES & WILTS GAZETTE, Thursday 7th. May 1903). Mayndie had presumably entered a convent prior to her death, being known as 'Novice Miriam'.

More tragedy followed for Emily only four months after her husband's death, with the death of her only son, Major William Thomlinson Wyndowe at Boreatton Park, Baschurch, Shropshire, on the 30th. July.

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THE MEMOIRS OF THE REV. ROBERT KILVERT  
- FATHER OF THE DIARIST  
By Mrs. Teresa Williams (North Wembley)

In this year of 1986 which has seen the re-appearance of Halley's Comet, readers may be interested to learn more about the "vast comet" seen above the city of Bath in 1811 by the Diarist's father. On page 33 of the Society's publication, More Chapters from the Kilvert Saga the Reverend Robert Kilvert records his boyhood memories of the spectacle. The 1811 Comet was, not, of course, an appearance of Halley's Comet, this did not become visible until 1834, some two years after Robert Kilvert's breakdown in health following his appointment as Curate of Melksham. If Kilvert's father did continue his Memoirs after the year 1832, these have, unfortunately, not survived.

The newspapers of 1811 tell us that the Comet was first discovered on 25th March by M. de Flauquieres at Viviers, France, with other recorded sightings above Marseilles and Paris in April and May, by the French astronomer, M. Jean-Louis Pons. Monsieur Pons who had a life-long interest in comets, ironically missed the 1759 and 1834 appearances of Halley's Comet being born in 1761 and dying in 1831.

The BRISTOL MIRROR of Saturday, 14th. September 1811, published under the title 'Bath News', the following information on 'the cosmic visitor'. "The Comet was first seen in this country at 10 past 8 o'clock in the evening of Wednesday, 21st. August 1811. By last night the Comet had appeared greatly increased in size and brightness, the head being yellowish and well-defined; the breadth seems to be about one-quarter to one-fifth of the Moon's diameter.

The extreme heat of the weather at this season of the year is attributed by some to the approach of the Comet. If so, we lament that the eccentric stranger did not defer its visit until the winter months, as it must have operated to reduce the price of coals.

The pick-pockets are almost all turned Astronomers! They find the Comet a very profitable article; when they have collected a large crowd together in the streets of an evening they generally make the 'gapers' pay pretty well for the Exhibition."



"KILVERT'S DIARY 1870 - 1879"

An Illustrated Selection Edited and Introduced by William Plomer.

Century Publishing, London, 1986 - 288 Pages - £14. 95.

This is a handsome, hardbacked, "coffee-table" type book. It is in large print (helpful for the elderly) and with a key day, date and year at the top of each page - a most welcome feature.

It opens with the standard introduction of the one volume (Penguin) edition, followed by a useful two page, alphabetical, "cast of characters", giving two or three lines on twenty-five of the principal families whose names recur throughout the Diary. The usual maps of Clyro, Chippenham and their districts are well shown, on a large scale and in colour. The book closes with "illustration sources and acknowledgments", plus an index which is not, incidentally, identical to that in the one-volume Penguin edition.

The illustrations are of four different kinds - "theme" photographs and full-page paintings, "miniature topographical paintings" and "pressed flower arrangements" (photographed). The first of these items is in sepia (?), whilst the others are multi-coloured.

The thirty or so photographs are most commendable, attractive and interesting, showing historical scenes of Kilvertian note, such as Hay-on-Wye in bygone days. They are, however, unevenly distributed throughout the book, with practically none occurring in the second half. It is a pity that they are undated, since one does not know whether they are of Kilvert's time or not. There are over a dozen full-page paintings of rural people and places, by various artists. Their effect is highly pleasing, though they do not always appear directly related to the text, some having simply a pleasant bucolic theme.

An endearing feature of the volume is the "miniature topographical paintings", of which there are approaching eighty. These show scenes from Kilvert country, almost without exception of buildings and they relate excellently to their text. They will be of value, both to the Kilvertian novice who wishes to visualise localities not yet visited, while to the veteran, they will be a source of arm-chair reminiscence.

Pressed flower arrangements cascade across the pages. There are over one hundred and twenty of them, sometimes more than one to a page. They are the most ubiquitous, if distracting, feature of the book - ubiquitous in their profusion, distracting in their often tenuous relation to the text. The editors are at pains to list them alphabetically for the reader - but what is their real purpose? To a botanical ignoramus, like the reviewer, they appear inserted for cosmetic effect : but they are all mentioned, somewhere, by Kilvert? May be some botanising Kilvertian will probe this puzzle.

One aspect of this volume causes real concern and that relates to the text which the editors present to us. They are silent on this point, as well as on the *raison d'être* of the volume itself. From the frontispiece, one learns only of "This one volume selection first published by Jonathan Cape in 1944". The unsuspecting reader might be forgiven for thinking that he or she was perusing an illustrated version of the one-volume edition. The facts are otherwise.

Analysis shows that over ninety diary entries in the one-volume Penguin edition are absent from this one and, more disconcerting, in over twenty other entries, the text which does appear is trimmed in some fashion. This matter might be less troublesome if the editors drew attention to it or provided a rationale for their amputations.

The "missing" entries are most numerous in the first four years of the Diary. Nor do they all seem peripheral or unmemorable entries. The thirteen "lost" from the first six months of 1870 include the whole of the fishing trip to Llangorse (22/6/70): then out, too, go Emma Hockin with her pet toads and doves (23/7/70), the Old Soldier and the wolves of the Peninsula War (15/10/70) and the year's last entry on skating at Draycot (29/12/70).

The process continues in succeeding years. There is no dog flying through the door of Painscastle Chapel (21/5/71), no "murder" of Cwmgwanon Wood (4/3/72), no shivering Llanishfr (13/3/72), no visit to mad Aunt Emma at Brislington Asylum (2/11/74), no gander attacking Reverend Rivett-Carnac's "petticoats" (9/6/75) - and certainly no "rearing, crushing, grinding" of the frozen River Wye, as we lose the last one-volume entry in 1878. Sometimes the losses can occasion confusion. "The

diarist returns to Clyro", says this volume's entry, terminating the visit to Cader Idris (13/6/71), yet in the Penguin edition, Kilvert continues on a memorable trip to Llangollen (16/6/71), returning to Clyro only later.

More disconcerting, perhaps, is the loss of text from those diary entries which do appear, since the unwary may not discern their absence. Texts usually "disappear" by truncation, the first observed loss being that of the "Mordaunt Warwickshire Scandal case" at the start of the entry for 24/2/70. Amongst other truncations regretted are the loss of the end of the visit to the Solitary (3/7/72), the display of mesmerism (3/9/72), the favourite anecdote of the Dorset "baptism by spit" (27/4/74) and the piece on the Ricardo monument (31/8/74).

Irk some in the extreme is the occasional loss of text from within a passage - an excision, as it were. The sad tale of the drowning of curate Drury disappears from within the account of the visit to the British Church at Gwythian, Cornwall, (5/8/70); the Mayor's views on the "old broken borough" of Painscastle are gone from within the account of the visit to the Solitary (3/7/72). A loss may be trifling yet still irritating - the "e.g. from Llyswen to Llanthony" vanishes from the account of the walks of Dorothy Wordsworth (28/9/70).

One does not, of course, dispute the right of the editors to edit as they choose and engage in a little latter-day Plomerism, if they so desire. It is the lack of explicitness about the text presented which gives this reviewer pause.

This is, repeat, a handsome tome. Yet it retails at about £12 above the cost of the one-volume Penguin edition. The crux for the potential purchaser is whether the acquisition of profuse illustration outweighs the loss of interesting text. This is a volume the Kilvertian buff may rush to possess; the lukewarm or unwaged may hesitate!!

Barry Smith (Truro)

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#### HOLIDAY ACCOMMODATION

I am often asked about holiday accommodation in the Kilvert Country, and append here a list for members' consideration.

Mrs. and Mrs. P. Roberts of York House, Cusop, Hay-on-Wye, Hereford, HR3 5QX are members of the Society, and their B & B has been praised by fellow-members as far afield as Canada and New Zealand.

For self-catering our members Mr. and Mrs. Elliott let from 3rd. May - 4th. October a semi-detached house at Beulah for 4 persons. The house has a spacious lounge-cum-dining room, a well equipped kitchen, three good-sized bedrooms, garden at front and back and ample parking space for two cars. The cost is £80 per week, but this does not include electricity, for which there is a 50p slot meter. The country around is full of Kilvert associations - Llwynmadoc, Newbridge, Builth, Aberedw. Mr. and Mrs. Elliott's address is "Garth", 4, Bryn Lupus Road, Llanrhos, Llandudno, Gwynedd, LL30 1SW (phone Deganwy 81636).

Self-catering holidays with houses available in Clifford and Hay are offered by Penyard Cottage Holidays, Oldfield, Peterstow, Ross-on-Wye, Herefordshire, HR9 6LD (phone Ross-on-Wye 62811).

The Yat, Glaschw, (Squire Beavan's residence - see entries from February to June 1871) has been bought and restored by Hugh and Mary Macmillan, who have opened their doors as a Country Guest House. They pride themselves on their excellent food - including vegetarian - and comfortable bedrooms. For those wishing to know more, phone Hundred House (09824) 339 for a brochure.

E.J.C.W.

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