

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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AUGUST 1990.

Dear Member,

It is with the greatest regret that I report the resignation of Revd. D.T.W. Price, our Chairman for the last 8 years. He had intimated that this would happen in 1991, but with a much heavier work load and suffering from strain, he has made the decision now. I am deeply indebted to him for his devotion to the Society; nobody has worked more closely with him than I have, and if the Society has been seen to flourish during his chairmanship, then that is due in no small measure to him for all that he has done. It is to be hoped that he will undertake in time the editing of the proposed "Complete Kilvert". He has agreed to continue preparing our services, something he has done for more than 20 years. Our old and valued Vice-President, Revd. D.N. Lockwood, has consented to become his successor. (During the Sunday Times Festival of Literature at Hay-on-Wye there was a special Kilvert lunch, attended by 120 people, to celebrate Mr. Lockwood's new book on Kilvert - it has been very warmly acclaimed).

There are 2 Committee resignations as well, Revd. J.C. Day and Mr. R. Watts. The former gentleman now has a parish in East Dorset. We thank him very much for all he did for the Society while serving in Wiltshire. As for Mr. Watts, his continued loyalty will be very evident later on in this letter! In their place we welcome Mrs. M. Stewart (Hereford) and Revd. D. Copeland (Chippenhams).

Mr. Godfrey Davies, a founder member of the Society and our Hon. Archivist for many years has also resigned. Now over 90 years of age and born at Bredwardine, he has a vast store of knowledge regarding the Kilvert scene - as shown in his commentaries on his films at various A.G.M. evenings. The Society owes him deep gratitude. Our Hon. Treasurer now holds the slides, and Revd. B. Price the remainder of the archives, save those deposited at Hereford Record Office.

And now to the weekend of June 30th. - July 1st. Thirty members turned up for the Walk round Clyro. The car-parking was by kind permission of Mr. & Mrs. Hacker, new members of the Society, and Mr. Watts was our leader. Whitty's Mill, Bettws Chapel, Penrheol and Whitehall lay on the route, and Mr. Watts read relevant extracts from the Diary. There was a very heavy shower and also a vicious thunderstorm, but such is the Kilvertian spirit that all expressed great enjoyment! Mr. Watts was warmly thanked.

He was to be thanked again the following day for reading one of the Lessons at the service at Newbridge-on-Wye! Our President, the Lady Delia Venables-Llewelyn, was to have read the other, but had been taken to hospital following a fall. We wish her a speedy and complete recovery. Revd. D.N. Lockwood deputised for her. We are very grateful to the Revd. D.E. Thomas for conducting the service, to Mr. Vincent Hill, the organist, to the ladies of the parish for a splendid tea, to our Vice-President, the Ven. Owain Jones, for his interesting sermon - we hope parts of it will be included in this newsletter - and to Lady Delia for her invitation to members to visit the grounds and gardens of Llysdyman. An invitation accepted by practically all those present, and much enjoyed!

Weekend of Sept. 8th. - 9th. The Walk on the 8th. September will be led by our Hon. Auditor, Mr. Gordon Rogers. He proposes a walk "on the trail of Tom Tobacco" (July 3rd. 1872). Meet opposite the Baskerville Arms, Clyro at 12.15 p.m. Picnic lunch.

The service the following day will be held at 3 p.m. at Whitney-on-Wye by kind permission of Revd. K. Newbon. The church there celebrates its 250th anniversary this year - built to replace an earlier one swept away by floods on the Wye. It is hoped that our preacher will be Revd. C. Seaburg (Massachusetts), that the Remembrancer will be Revd. C. Edmonds (Surrey) and that the Readers will be Mrs. M. Morgan (Hay-on-Wye) and Mr. R. Whitney Wood (Perth, W. Australia). It was Mr. Wood who located the Kilvert Family Bible there and ensured its acquisition for the Society.

Wiltshire Walk - Saturday, 13th. October, led by Mr. Jim Hall. Meet at Tytherton Green at 2.00 pm. for approximately a 5 mile walk, taking in Maud Heath Memorial, and the site of Stanley Abbey. Finish 4.30 - 5.00 p.m. for tea at the Old Brewery, Langley Burrell by kind invitation of Mrs. R. Payne. Strong footwear advised, and a nominal fee for expenses. For further details telephone 0249 75 291.

There are 2 more events to refer to - The weekend at Hardwick to commemorate Revd. T. Webb, and the service at Hardenhuish to commemorate the 150th anniversary of Kilvert's birth, the former being Nov. 24th - 25th and the latter Dec. 2nd. Since this newsletter goes out in August, I can only give the latest information regarding these events as "Stop Press" at the end of this issue. A coach will be laid on for the service at Hardenhuish, and I shall ask at the Whitney service if similar transport is required for Hardwick (some 5 miles east of Hay-on-Wye).

Yours sincerely,

E.J.C. West

Hon. Secretary

OBITUARY

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

Mrs. C. Jenkins (Herefordshire) a Life Member since 1961.

Revd. D.R. King (New Jersey, U.S.A) a Life Member since 1979. At the Langley Burrell service that year he performed the Act of Remembrance.

FROM SOCIETY CORRESPONDENCE

Donations for the Family Bible from Mrs. Simmons and Miss Madigan are gratefully acknowledged. In this connection, apologies to Mr. J.E. Dunabin, whose name was omitted from the list published in the last newsletter.

I am sure members will be delighted to learn that our late Chairman is now Canon D.T.W. Price.

Our Committee member, Mr. Basil Butcher, writes of the most unusual churchyard gate at Whitney-on-Wye, the like of which he has never seen - "a kissing gate, the swinging portion of the gate is a full-sized five-barred gate, and at first glance one wonders how it can be opened for a hearse to pass through. On looking closely one sees that by pulling out a bolt, a small part of the curved section can be hinged back, allowing the gate to be fully opened".

I have been asked to draw the attention of members to a weekend course (28-30 Sept) sponsored by Buckingham County Council Education Service on "Diarists". The venue is Missenden Abbey and the telephone number for enquiries is 0494890296.

Mr. J.F. Nunn, 30, Victoria St. Cirencester, Glos. GL7 1ES is anxious to acquire tapes of the readings from the "Cornish Diary" broadcast in early April. Can anyone help?

The Kilvert Gallery, Clyro, is celebrating its third anniversary with a special exhibition from July 29th. to September 2nd.

Odd volumes of the full Plomer Selections are requested : Vol. 2 by Mr. Ivor Thomas, "Maesyfed", Pembrokeshire, Leominster, Herefordshire, and Vol. 3 by Mrs. A. Collins, "Maryvale", Hutton Henry, Hartlepool, Cleveland.

BOOK REVIEWS

David Lockwood, Francis Kilvert, 'Border Lines', Seren Books, Poetry Wales Press Ltd., Bridgend, 1990. With a Series Preface by John Powell Ward, and a Foreword by The Lady Delia Venables Llewelyn. 167 pp. + 22 illustrations, £5. 99. ISBN 1-85411-033-0.

This very welcome new biography of Kilvert is published in a series which defines its aim as to provide 'brief introductory studies of a single person's work'. It is David Lockwood's achievement to have fulfilled this brief, but also to have transcended it, in an important contribution to Kilvert studies.

Writing a biographical and literary study of any diarist presents some peculiarly awkward problems of method. We want to know more about the man behind the diary, and yet the biographical context in which to set the work is very largely provided by the work itself. This problem is perhaps even more acute in Kilvert's case than in any other of the great diarists: one has only to consider the extreme thinness of our knowledge, in spite of dedicated detective work by researchers, for those periods (such as his year at St. Harmon) when the Diary is missing. Up to 1870 it is undoubtedly best to give a fairly straightforward account of what is known of Kilvert's life. Once the Diary starts, however, the critic's difficulties begin. Kilvert's life and work are inextricably interwoven, and a chronological approach is not well suited to discussion of the Diary itself: we constantly want to look forwards or backwards, to linger and to digress. David Lockwood has been very successful in resolving this problem of method. He follows a broadly chronological pattern, but after reaching 1870 intersperses the biography with short chapters on more general aspects of Kilvert and important personalities in the Diary, including 'The Countryside and Wordsworth', 'The Churchman', 'The Venables', 'Aunt Maria', 'Love' and 'Kilvert and the Arts'.

This book is full of interest. As an introduction to Kilvert, it provides a clear and sympathetic account of the diarist's life, which of course makes a fascinating and moving story in itself, and it situates his life in the wider social and intellectual context. There is also much for the reader who needs no such introduction. A considerable amount of research on Kilvert, both biographical and literary, has been undertaken since Frederick Grice's pioneering work of 1983, and it is good to have it integrated into this new general study. Throughout, David Lockwood gently corrects earlier commentators and received opinions; more than this, he constantly adds comments and suggestions of his own. There are many acute and perceptive observations: for example, on Kilvert's education - on the crucial influence of the liberal methods of his uncle Francis Kilvert of Claverton Lodge, and the consequent differences between the diarist and his Marlborough-educated brother Edwards; or again, on the curious streak of passivity in Kilvert's personality, especially in relation to older male authority-figures.

Kilvert's relations with the opposite sex have always provided one of the greatest points of interest in the Diary, and here too this study shows a sureness of touch that has often been deplorably lacking. Neither prudish nor purient, it offers a convincing interpretation of Kilvert's all-too-vulnerable sexuality. We are mercifully spared comparisons to Lewis Carroll: the little girls are kept in proportion and, rightly, related to Kilvert's intense desire for children of his own. The many short-lived 'leaps of the heart' are sympathetically noted, and the courses of the four major loves are charted as fully as possible in our present state of limited information; most space is, inevitably, devoted to the pathos of the doomed relationship with Katharine Heanley.

As a commentator on Kilvert, David Lockwood has the invaluable advantage of first-hand experience of life in a country vicarage. One of the most refreshing aspects of his book is the sense that the author understands from the inside the unique constraints, opportunities and rewards of such a life: the pattern of the Church's year, the complex relationship between parson and parishioners at all points of the social scale, and the natural, often unconscious drawing on Bible and liturgy in the formulation of thoughts, almost as a kind of ideological shorthand. He is particularly shrewd in his appreciation of Kilvert's sense of humour, and, as it were, his tone of voice, that great stumbling-block for commentators. All too often, discussion of the Diary is vitiated by an apparent insensitivity to the note of humour and frequently self-mocking irony in the text. In this, as in many other respects, one has confidence in David Lockwood's judgement.

The immense advantage of the clerical insider's view was one which, despite his many other qualities, William Plomer inevitably lacked. Although an admiring friend

of Plomer's, David Lockwood does discreetly suggest how the edited version of the Diary subtly alters Kilvert in the direction of Plomer's own tastes. Many of the passages omitted as 'boring' seem very largely to have been 'the "churchy" bits' - that is to say, aspects of Kilvert's life which must have seemed of the very greatest importance to the diarist himself. Similarly, it is noted how Plomer's indifference to animals caused him generally to ignore Kilvert's deep affection for dogs and horses. This much (and more) can be established from the study of the three surviving note-books; although a point which the present book does not explore is the possibility that, in other respects, these notebooks might have been saved from destruction because they were untypical of the Diary as a whole, rather than the reverse.

A poet himself, David Lockwood brings to the discussion of the Diary an illuminating sensibility and breadth of literary reference. He gives full weight to the importance of Wordsworth for Kilvert (and could perhaps have made more of Tennyson as well), but also draws felicitous comparisons with writers as diverse as Chekhov, Gissing and Traherne. Indeed, one is often given pause for thought at the new insights offered. This leads, in fact, to the one serious cause for complaint about the book, which must be levelled not at the author but at the series: it is a rule of 'Border Lines' that there should be no footnotes or indexes, both of which would have been extremely welcome here. On the other hand, one must mention the excellent selection of photographs, several of which are published for the first time: as well as members of the family, they include a striking picture of the tragic Katharine Heanley, and a remarkable early photograph of Kilvert as a school-boy.

In a preface the series editor, John Powell Ward, comments that 'David Lockwood writes not as Kilvert's psychiatrist but as his friend'. The phrase implies not indulgence, but understanding; and it would serve as a fitting epigraph to this balanced and stimulating book.

RICHARD MABER, DURHAM:

Growing up in Kilvert Country (recollections of a Radnorshire childhood) by Mrs. M. Morgan. Gomer Press, Llandysul, Dyfed. £9. 75.

Readers of Mrs. Morgan's excellent "24 Walks in the Kilvert Country" will have noticed that at the end of Walk No. 16 she departs from the largely impersonal approach with a long paragraph on the changes in the village of Newchurch. This new book makes the reason apparent - it was the village she grew up in.

Her home was a hill farm, and, as she states in the introduction, Radnorshire was one of the remotest counties of England and Wales, and life there for her 60 years ago was lived as it had been for generations. Electricity, gas, piped water, telephone were yet to appear. For the parents, life must have been very demanding, both inside and outside the house; nevertheless the family life was a close and happy one. Mrs. Morgan and her sister found pleasure and delight in amusements largely of their own making. They learned to love the natural scenery around them, and to respond to the seasons. The rarity of outings in their childhood made them all the more appreciated, though following the advent of schooling their friendships enlarged their range of experience. (Visits to Rhosgoch Mill and Gilfach-yrrheol are recorded). Mrs. Morgan's observant eye records not only such events as the killing of the family pig and the preparation of poultry for the Christmas market, but also journeys by trap to Hay and the Sunday School Anniversaries and much, much more! She has, too, a sharp ear for the oddities of Radnor speech.

The book is a most enjoyable and affectionate record of what Mrs. Morgan terms "that simple, uncomplicated world and the homely folk who peopled it". And how apt her title! Not only the country that has been named after Kilvert, but also, I feel, because she has painted a picture of life such as he himself had observed when visiting the "warm, hospitable folk of Radnorshire"!

E.J.C.W.

MISS MARY MUNDY OF MULLION
by Canon S.G.A. Luff (Llandovery)

I was sent to be Parish Priest of the Catholic Church at Llandovery - a Welsh market town with two slight mentions in Kilvert's Diary - some fifteen years ago. At that time there was in the parish an elderly couple, Captain Herbert Reginald

Henry Vaughan, RN., and Irene his wife. Captain Vaughan died in 1978 and Irene Vaughan moved to Woodbridge in Suffolk. When I visited her there she showed me a large old chest full of loose water colours and a few sketch books. They were all by her father-in-law, Herbert Stanley Vaughan. The earliest painting was, I think of 1884, and the latest of 1934. They were mostly of the French Riviera, but there were town and landscapes of elsewhere in France and in Italy as well, a few even of Australia and Japan, and sketch books of Devon and Cornwall, Derbyshire and the Isle of Wight. None of Captain Vaughan's family had survived him to mourn at his funeral and all that was known about his artist father was that he had worked in some capacity for the Admiralty. Mrs. Vaughan gave me the contents of the chest, now nearly all disposed of for the benefit of the Church. Had I studied them carefully when they first came into my hands I could have compiled at least a threadbare account of H.S. Vaughan, roughly where he was at different times in his life.

There were also in the chest - and I still have them - half a dozen travel notebooks from Herbert Vaughan's younger years, illustrated with brilliant pen and ink drawings. The paintings tell us of his superb sense of colour and atmosphere, the black and white sketches and his narrative show how he was fascinated by people and their customs: the uniforms soldiers wore (how ubiquitous they seem to have been in those days!), the clogs, the tools, the transport, the wayside shrines and the architecture of church and home in the Low Countries fill two books dated 1884 and 1886. Earlier than that are books recording holidays around Sandwich in Kent and Eastbourne in Sussex. One of these is dated 1882, when he would appear to have been in his teens, so it may be assumed he was born in or near 1865. There is also a notebook of 1884 of an autumn tour in Devon and Cornwall; it sounds like a very wet autumn indeed. Cornwall is a slender county and his path crossed that of Francis Kilvert's visit of 1870 more than once, so plenty of interesting comparisons can be made. One, however, is intriguing because it expands an observation of Kilvert's which, though slight, is not superficial and is characteristic of his liking for a pretty face, namely that of 'the brightest thing on Cornish land, the face of Miss Mary Mundy'. That is a quote from Professor Blackie, whoever he was - Vaughan quotes him twice. What Kilvert says, giving her a full character-reading from one short encounter, is in this sentence: 'Drove through the village (Mullion) to the Old Inn kept by Mary Mundy, a genuine Cornish Celt, and a good specimen of one, impulsive, warm-hearted, excitable, demonstrative, imaginative, eloquent'.

Now Herbert Stanley Vaughan, writing fourteen years later, and finding the lively (Kilvert in fact says nothing about her looks) Mary Mundy still keeping the Old Inn, but apparently unmarried, tells us a lot more about her, her brother, and the Old Inn, and he embellished his account with pen and ink sketches.

It is worth knowing what the Old Inn was like. It was a thatched cottage with three chimney stacks. A board gives the name of the Inn but there is no inn sign. Over the door a notice advises that Mary Mundy is licensed to sell beer and cider. There is also a side door. There are two windows downstairs but the two upstairs have more character; they are arched with the arches in dormer gables and the mullions are in the pattern of early church tracery to give a Gothick effect. An upstairs room was occupied by Vaughan for his night's lodging and also by Kilvert's party to 'unpack their hamper', though it is not clear why, seeing that they ordered dinner to be ready in an hour's time.

I now transcribe the Vaughan account of the 'Old Inn', of Mary Mundy and her family and customers.

'Having reached Mullion, weary of the muddy lanes and thinking I had left the best of Cornwall behind, I walked straightway into 'The Old Inn', and at the door was met by Miss Mary Mundy, who welcomed me by picking out her best little bedroom under the great broad thatch, looking up onto the trees and the old grey church. And then (for alack, I had never yet heard of Miss Mundy - Mary Mundy of Cornwall!) then, I know I deeply disgusted that dear old soul, for I positively asked her the charge for that sweet little room, as if she had been a common inkeeper! Professor Blackie's Mary Mundy, of whom we have it that:-

'The brightest thing on Cornish land
Is the face of Miss Mary Mundy'.

'But nevertheless she treated me as she would have done the Professor himself; I must be shown everything I had time to see in 'Murlyon', but more especially I must know the 'pearple'. With this idea, after I had returned to the village after a quiet walk to the edge of the Cove in the twilight, with a little fisher boy, she carried me a chair into the 'kitchun' for she wanted me to 'hear ter pearple tark'.

That scene I can never forget, nor the man who composed it, nor the sounds that greeted my ear.

'In particular I remember three or four figures seated at a long wooden trestle against the wall. Nearest the door was Mary Mundy's brother, 'Jarn', a handsome fellow of thirtyfive or so and a true sailor as are all men in these parts (even the shepherds and field peasants tell you more of the sea and fishing than of the sheep and the plough). With flashing eyes and the abundant gesticulation of the Cornishman he held the room with some wild story of a winter's wreck, or argued with his neighbour a knotty question of sailing or of fish. For all the talk - rapid, excited, and totally unintelligible to a Londoner - was of the great pilchard shoal that had visited the coast, whereby every man, woman and child in the village was now occupied in chasing, catching, cleaning or cooking - fish; and every cottage had its basket of glittering, shining, fresh food, and everybody was thankful, happy, and tired out.

'Next of the four came a young fisherman, a very Apollo among these handsome men, a very Hercules among men noted for their stature - his great sealskin cap set off a profile and brilliant eyes that a prince might envy, his rough blue pilot coat covered a chest and arms of giant proportions. And his hands, like the big rough hands of every other man in the room and village, were wounded and sore with the desperate work of the last day and night, the hauling of the seine nets, the running of the ropes. The little roomful of brave men, lit by two bright candles, the great stone Cornish mugs on the trestle, and the figures of Miss Mary and 'Elaine' (her neice, I think) flitting about in the dark pantry at the back, made up a scene that Teniers would have gloried in. Once, I remember, one good man discovered a few specks of dirt at the bottom of his mug, and announced it - the room was horrified, and 'Jarn' in disgust called out for his sister - One of her mugs dirty! 'Don't yer tark no lies, Jarn, my mugs was neffer tirty!' Now for once here was one with a speck in it and the general grumbling was great. Fancy a London labourer being shocked because his pot was dirty! The little gathering broke up about nine o'clock or so when, behold, each man's wife appeared and walked him off on her arm to bed.

'But 'Jarn' and I sat talking by the little fire, of the sea, and of the men who live upon it.

'Truly, I could scarcely understand him, but by some attention I picked up a little of the dialect, and here it is. First of all you sound your 'a' like 'ear' or 'ere': thus 'face', 'take', etc. are turned into 'fearce', 'tearke'. Then you drop 'th' whenever you can, and stick in the syllable 'un' wherever you can. 'Un' stands indiscriminately for 'him, her, it' and a dozen other pronouns or words. The consequence of all which is (and of many more idioms beside) that when a huge Cornishman begins spouting a thousand words a minute at you, flinging up his arms, flashing his eyes and gesticulating violently, your first thought is to escape, till someone informs you he is merely talking about the weather, or the fish. But you will not find your ordinary Cornishman delivering himself thus to a stranger; wait till you catch him with his comrades.

'The last time I saw Miss Mary, her little restless body was framed by her old doorway, as she waved me adieu from Mullion. I had breakfasted (such a breakfast!) in her little drawing room with its photographs of the 'good Bishop' etc., and its view of blue sky above and brown cornlands - and then the good soul came to see me off at the door. An eager active little woman of fifty or so, slim, thin, and angular, with the brightest of twinkling black eyes, the jettiest of rippling black hair, and the rosiest of cheeks. Truly, as Blackie says:

'The brightest thing in Cornish land
Is the face of Miss Mary Mundy!'

There are sketches to illustrate the conversation of the menfolk in the 'kitchun', of 'Jarn' holding forth, and a 'last view of Miss Mundy' seeing off her guest.

As far as appreciation of the female is concerned, this time young Herbert Stanley Vaughan has bowled out Francis Kilvert. I forgot to mention that Kilvert was accompanied by two Miss Hockins.

A HUNDRED SWEET MEMORIES
by Sidney Ball (Swindon)

Francis Kilvert gave us three versions of the name of his birthplace - Hardenhuish, Harnish and Harden Ewyas. The third version was Kilvert's own invention, but the others have been used, in various spellings, for centuries. The pronunciation Harnish has been in frequent use since Tudor times; in a document of 1568 the manor was "Harden Hewysh alias Harnysh". In Kilvert's time his birth village was often pronounced and spelt Harnish.

The eminent historian, the late Sir Frank Stenton, said that Hardenhuish was important in pagon Saxon times, for near by was a boundary called Thuuresfeld. This referred to the god Thunor (Thor) from whom derived Thunresdaeg, our Thursday.

Although the Kilvert family left Harnish for Langley 15 years before Francis started his Diary, he tells us much about "My old home, mine own dear home" (Vol.2 p.445) where there were "A hundred sweet memories" (Vol.3 p.333). Kilvert often went to Harnish, savouring "all the dear old names" (Vol.2 p.115). In the last quote, Kilvert was thinking much of the family of Francis and Ann Hull; in the September 1987 Newsletter there is a most interesting account of this family by Miss C.E. Butcher of Trowbridge, a great grandchild of Francis and Ann.

From Saxon and Norman times the manor of Hardenhuish passed through several families until bought in 1707 by the Colbornes. Joseph Colborne had a new church built in 1779 by John Wood of Bath; the older church was lower down the hill. Colborne also had a new mansion built to the north of the old manor house. In 1822 the Clutterbucks bought the estate. This family is mentioned but briefly in our published Diary, yet is so important - in giving the living of Harnish to Mr. Kilvert the Clutterbucks determined the birthplace of the Kilvert children, including that of Francis Kilvert.

The Rectory where Kilvert was born is now a private house. A few years ago Sale Particulars stated that it was built of Bath stone with 6 Bedrooms plus child's room, 3 Reception rooms, entrance hall and rear hall, Study, Scullery and Kitchen. There was a coach-house, stabling and lawns. There Francis Kilvert had his first lessons at his father's school.

Much could be written about Mr. Kilvert's school and his many and varied pupils. I confine myself here to one pupil, Augustus Hare, who had given two such contrasting accounts. In November 1870 in a letter to Mr. Kilvert, sent on to Francis Kilvert, Hare gave "affectionate words to his reminiscences of dear old Harnish" (Vol.1 p.258). But 26 years later in his autobiography Hare wrote of a severe regime under a tyrannical Mr. Kilvert. "My recollection shrinks from the reign of terror under which we lived" wrote Hare of the school "where, in the time I spent at Harnish, I had been taught next to nothing". But those who have read Hare know that he was often biased!

On Saturday, April 15th. 1876, Kilvert walked over to Harnish and "laid the primrose crosses upon the 4 graves, of my grandmother, my dear nurse Abodie, and the two little children" (Vol.3 p.256). In a newsletter some time ago this was recorded a mystery, the deceased children not mentioned in the Harnish registers. Were they still-born?

In the Diary we read of 'Mr' Headley. This was the Revd. Alexander Headley, MA, the Rector of Harnish when the Kilverts were at Langley. Mr. and Mrs. Headley had children growing up, but Mrs. Headley died on 9th. February 1876 soon after the birth of another child. That year Kilvert and his father took services at Harnish when the bereaved Rector was away (Vol.3 p. 253 and p.259). And in June Francis christened Jacob Salmon's little girl at Harnish (Vol.3 p.333). There follows a fine piece of descriptive writing. Then Kilvert went to see the Rector's pretty daughter, sweet Gertrude Headley. In poetic prose Francis regrets that Gertrude has grown too old to be kissed! (Vol.3 p.334). On an earlier visit seeing Gertrude in the Rectory at Harnish with the sun shining upon her "fair beautiful head" our diarist wrote "I thought I had never seen a lovelier picture" (Vol.3 p.142).

Perhaps Kilvert was over-sentimental about his birth village where he spent his childhood. And Harnish has changed since his time. But the church and the old Rectory are still there. We hope members visiting will have "Sweet Memories".

BY CAB, CART, CHAIR AND CHARIOT
by John Dunabin (Warrington)

Not to mention the White Chapel, the Perth Cart, the Shandry Dan, and perhaps twenty other descriptions of carriage, each uniquely identifiable, at least to Francis Kilvert if not to us! Whitechapel, or whitechapel cart, was the name given to a two wheeled spring cart used for the carriage of goods, originally by London butchers, grocers, etc. The Venables family at Llysdinam owned one, the use of which was not restricted to goods. The Perth Cart, also named as coming from the Llysdinam stables, coloured yellow like the White Chapel, is still a mystery. Mr. Sidney Ball (Sept. 1988 Newsletter) believes the first word was a misreading of the manuscript diary, but what was it originally? Could it have been 'perch'? This apparently was the name given colloquially to a small seat on a vehicle, usually elevated, for the driver or an additional servant. 'Perch cart' does not appear in the Oxford English Dictionary, but a perch coach is defined there as a coach having a perch. To confuse the picture however, the word was also used, possibly more widely, to identify a heavy wooden beam joining the front and rear axle carriages of a four wheeled vehicle.

The strangely named Shandry Dan or shandrydan also presents a minor problem. Two authorities defined it unhelpfully at one time as a light two-wheeled cart, but one later altered this to 'a chaise with hood'. Both agreed that it could be used in a derogatory sense, to mean an old rickety vehicle. The name may have an Irish origin. A shandry dan, condition unspecified, drawn by two donkeys, was lent to the Kilverts at Langley Burrell by Hart Porter, a local tradesman while he was repairing and repainting their carriage.

One of the very obvious things about Kilvert, as evidenced by the Diary, was his great mobility. There were days when he did not venture out of doors - Plomer lets us know of a few when indisposition was the reason - but they cannot have been many. This of course does not make him unique or even unusual, at least by present day standards; a lot of us, curates and others, for much of our lives go out every day. What is fascinating is the scope of his journeys and the variety in his modes of travel.

It is obvious too that he was an excellent walker, little deterred by inclement weather, covering on occasions distances which would put most of us to shame. Less clear is his attitude to horse riding. He could ride, and did so sometimes for pleasure, but not for working journeys. On 4th. October 1871, offered the pony by Mr. Venables to get to and from Newchurch, a round trip of about ten miles, Kilvert preferred to walk. What about cycling? The only mention found appears in the account of a stage performance. Cycling clearly was unacceptable, perhaps infra dig for a man of the cloth in the eighteen seventies.

Acceptable, most acceptable, even essential to Kilvert's way of life, was the steam railway. One really cannot imagine him without this latest in transport, which only reached Hay from Hereford the year before he did, in July 1864, extending to Three Cocks and Brecon two months later. The change this meant to life in the little border town must have been immense, and continuing for some years; the 40 odd year old horse tramway it replaced could only offer very limited and spartan passenger facilities, almost certainly untimetabled.

The country areas however in which Kilvert lived for much of his time were not intensively served with railway lines or with trains. It says something about him that he was able to make so much of the limited facilities available.

But the train did not serve Bredwardine, nor Langley Burrell, not Clyro itself, although Hay of course with its station was not far away from the latter village, and apart from connecting journeys there were many local visits or excursions to be made where neither train riding, nor walking, nor a mixture of both, were practicable. Here is where horsedrawn transport came into its own for Kilvert.

Over the previous few decades, following inroads made at the heavy end by canals, railway proliferation, while opening up new possibilities for travel and catering for hitherto unsatisfied demands, had wreaked havoc with a highly developed and sophisticated system of road transport, stage coaches, mail coaches, goods waggons etc. What survived though from the age of horsedrawn dominance was very considerable, in size and scope. Omnibuses, new to England not long after the Stockton and Darlington railway opened, continued to run, their numbers even increasing; the streets of London and, to a lesser extent, those of smaller cities and towns, were thronged with wheeled traffic, cabs, coaches etc. as well as horse buses. Heavy slow-moving waggons still carried a great weight of traffic over the shorter distances, there was a great variety of carts employed in commercial duties, and the gentry (fairly sharply defined, if to some extent by ability to meet the cost) maintained their own carriages for social purposes. The total number of horses employed, it is said, did not decline at all but increased by several times.

Within Kilvert's world, meaning principally Clyro and its surroundings, where so much seemed to happen, the impression we receive is one of near continuous movement. Remember that we only know, generally speaking, of the journeys Kilvert himself made. Acceptable vehicles were readily available, even conjured up it seems, from among his friends. A curate without private means could not hope to possess his own carriage. While the initial cost could be as low as £20 to £25 (perhaps a quarter's salary) for a modest gig, the commonest type, or a dogcart, by comparison with prices ranging from £200 to £500 for larger and more showy vehicles, this was only a beginning. One learns in passing that whereas the wage of a housekeeper was £14 per year, to hire a horse cost nearly four times as much. Adding the extra cost of food and accommodation, then a coachman, needed to act as stableman if not for driving, the difference would be even greater. 'Jobbing' ('Always job your horses' was the advice, recalled in Kilvert's presence, given to Mrs. Stone by her husband on his deathbed) was no answer. It cost the lady £90 a year to hire a pair.

Kilvert did engage a housekeeper for Bredwardine Vicarage, but we read nothing of a private carriage even when he was no longer living on a curate's stipend. Matters may well have changed when he married, but this we do not know.

It would appear that all the people around Clyro with whom Kilvert mixed socially possessed their own wheeled transport, often having more than one type of vehicle, and we do get a hint of some competitiveness when the diarist comments on the irony of Mr. Venables with his mail phaeton and two servants overtaking the squire (Mr. Baskerville) with his brougham, much more modest, pulled by one horse. Did the Llanthomasases lose standing locally by buying a second hand carriage? Mr. Frederick Grice, in 'Who's Who in Kilvert's Diary', notes that Mr. Baskerville kept 8 servants, but Mr. Venables also had a very large private income. Perhaps befitting his status, Lord Hereford, living at Tregoyd, owned a 'travelling' carriage, with imperials. This was presumably suitable for longer journeys, and it seems to have made only rare appearances, as did its owner, locally. What exactly were imperials? In one place I find them defined as outside seats, and in another as trunks for luggage, adapted for the roof of a coach! Perhaps they were both.

If Kilvert had been invited to ride in the Tregoyd carriage, he might well have assumed servant status and chosen an imperial. On 7th. July 1870, visiting Clifford Priory, home of the Haigh Allens, his praise and enthusiasm were spread over some very diverse pleasures, bewitching pretty little girls, "a very nice pleasant dinner. No constraint, plenty of ice. Good champagne", conversation, charming surroundings indoors, outside beautiful flower beds. "The evening was exquisite".

Returning home could have detracted a little from the pleasures - he had walked the 4 miles there - but after invitations to Oakfield the following week from Mr. Allen and to croquet from Mrs. Haigh Allen (Mr. Ball, in the June 1986 Newsletter, makes clear that the two Allen families, socially acquainted, were unrelated) the former conveyed him back to Hay "in the rumble of his most antiquated most comfortable old yellow chariot on C springs, very large broad and heavy and able to carry 7 people". This was something out of the ordinary, with a form of suspension becoming obsolete for full sized vehicles, although remaining in use for perambulators into the nineteen thirties at least. Choice of the rumble, normally intended for servants, was clearly Kilvert's own. "We had 6 on board, Mrs. Allen, Thomas and Pope inside. I preferred the night air and the tramping of the fast mare". This was not just a passing fad. Weather permitting, he preferred riding outside; various Diary entries confirm the fact.

Not all vehicles on the roads were ideal or even suitable for all weathers. In truth, none, covered or not, were good in bitterly cold conditions, but there were degrees of comfort or discomfort in what they offered or what extras could be provided. Mrs. Venables of Llysdyman, before going out for a February drive, had carriage and cushions thoroughly aired and warmed with hot bottles and warming pans. On a bitterly cold day in April 1873 Kilvert noted that the De Quettvilles' carriage and covered waggonette (one vehicle: a hybrid?) was waiting at Wootton Bassett station. Three years later, again in Wiltshire, four days after "another glorious summer's day" came a wild snowstorm, so to spare Mrs. Hockin from the cold coming from the station to Langley Burrell a fly was substituted for an open carriage.

Snow and ice were not the only travelling hazards. Flooding could occur, horses could bolt, collisions could take place, wheels could come off, and carriages even "reduced to a heap of ruins" (27th August 1871). The lengthy Diary entry for New Years Day 1878, with shorter ones on the following two days, tell us not only what could go wrong but indicated what expectations were when things went right. There is even a passing reference to the ubiquitous carrier's cart, not as a means of

personal transport - its role there was confined in general to the lower orders - but as a parcel carrier. A more significant event that day was the journey of Kilvert's parents from Hereford to Bredwardine. Why they were not coming all the way from Wiltshire by train to Moorhampton or Kinnersley we do not know (the entry for 15th July 1878 - "driven by Barnes of Moorhampton in a waggonette" suggests an alternative, but perhaps a waggonette was felt to be unsuitable for winter journeys): their aim instead was to 'post' from Hereford, arriving at 5. 30 p.m. Clearly journey timing could be more precise then than now. Unfortunately something had gone wrong with the order at the Green Dragon, and they were an hour late leaving.

Then, at Byford, 4 miles short of their destination, disaster struck, when the hind axle broke. "---- they thought they would have to spend the night on the road, but the driver galloped back on one of the horses to Mr. Berkeley Stanhope's and borrowed his waggonette with which they came on, leaving the broken carriage in the ditch with its lamps burning". Road safety was obviously in people's minds even then.

The couple arrived safe and sound, and after a hurried tea Mr. Kilvert came into church to preach the sermon as arranged. But perhaps an open waggonette really was unsuitable for even a mild day in January. Having next day walked the 4 miles to Byford Rectory to thank Mr. Stanhope for his kindness in the matter - Kilvert noted on the day following that his mother had a touch of bronchitis, possibly as a result of the change from close carriage to open waggonette.

Francis Kilvert's own road travels were not confined to 'lifts' from his more affluent friend of course. We learn of many journeys, by 'fly' (a lightweight covered carriage) across Hereford, by waggonette, 'break', and in several places by omnibus. The word, 'for all', covered a variety of vehicles, but generally the omnibus, high built with a back door and steps, close sided, provided covered accommodation for 8 - 10 or sometimes more passengers facing each other on bench seats. The driver sat on top at the front, and there was normally room for one or two people 'on the box', again Kilvert's preferred place. Up to 4 horses were used for propulsion, depending on size, load, and nature of route. Later modifications made the whole of the roof available for passengers, thus increasing carrying capacity very considerably.

In London large omnibuses ran on fixed routes and either at known times or so frequently that a timetable was unnecessary. Many other cities and big towns were similarly served. There were regular services too, running less frequently, in rural areas, such as the bi-weekly bus observed by Kilvert (17th. October 1871) running from St. David's to Haverfordwest, when he was staying at the latter place. Suitable for an omnibus it may have been, but this route prompted a rare adverse comment on road conditions. With his father, he intended to go by dogcart to St. David's, but as it was raining and the roads were said to be bad they were persuaded by their landlady at the Castle Hotel to have a pair of horses and a carriage 'with head'. Kilvert described the drive, but Plomer alas did not think this account worthy of inclusion, so we only know that they 'rattled' into the 'village city'. The return journey must have been made after dark, a particularly hazardous undertaking, but we learn nothing of this either, the omission this time possibly being that of the Diarist.

The Hay omnibus was hardly like the St. David's bus or those of London in its operations, but it offered something more than a private service, just linking hotel and station, like so many in small towns. It was probably based at a local posting stables, where orders were received, but a Diary entry on 24th February 1872, "At Hay there was no omnibus so I walked over to Clyro", suggests that it usually met trains for casual business. It is unlikely that the omnibus plied for hire on a regular basis in the town, Hay being too small to generate sufficient custom. Instead, it seems to have been available, by prior request, for such journeys as Clyro to Hay, to connect with trains.

There was one local private omnibus. We learn of this when, after dancing with seven young ladies at the Clifford Priory ball ("52 people at the party"), Kilvert was prepared to walk home; he had ridden there with the Venables, but they had left 'early', meaning between 1 and 2 am! However, at the last moment it appeared that there was room to ride in Mr. Crichton's omnibus, with Mr. Crichton himself and three others. It is known that Mr. and Mrs. Crichton, of Wye Cliff, had quite a large family; perhaps this explains ownership of such a large vehicle.

Private carriages often prompted comments by Kilvert, usually complimentary, on colour, springing, and about the quality of horseflesh, but little about any incidents on the journeys. The reverse applied to riding by public conveyance. Here,

comments on quality hardly ever appear, but there are numerous accounts of companionable, even jolly, rides, and occasionally of train journeys rendered unpleasant by ill mannered travellers; to his notebooks, Kilvert was quite outspoken! Inhibitions were reduced, even on more exclusive social occasions, such as the visit to Snodhill, a trip through Bristol ("a merry laughing party"), and most memorably on the picnic at Gurnards Head in Cornwall, the first by 'break', the second by cab, and the last by omnibus.

(to be continued)

THE ELEPHANT AND THE CORNISH ARMS
by Barry Smith (Truro)

6th. September, 1870, Kilvert writes:- "...Rode the elephant to Llowes after school to ask Williams to drive me to the Three Cocks on my way to Llysdyham on Friday evening. Poor elephant, his best days are over, and his knees show the Cornish Coat of Arms from a recent fall, but he is a noble gallant old fellow.." (Vol. 1. p. 225)

The "elephant" and the "Cornish Coat of Arms" - just exactly what was Kilvert talking about?!

(i) The Elephant. The entry above, which seems to be the only appearance of the elephant in the three volume Diary, bears the slight footnote - "Nickname for a horse!" Laurence Le Quesne, in "After Kilvert", writes that "The 'elephant' was one of the vicar's horses". More circumspcctly, Dafydd Ifans (N.L.W. Journal No. 3) says that the elephant "would appear to be Kilvert's nickname for the Vicarage horse".

Interestingly, the elephant makes several appearances in the two journals published by the National Library of Wales. He is mentioned on short-haul journeys, such as the trip from Clyro to Hay station and usually driven by Charles Lacey, the vicarage coachman at Clyro. He is last recorded pulling his dogcart on 21st. June, 1870.

When Kilvert rides him on 6th. September, it appears to be the only mention of the elephant without his dogcart. Perhaps in the meantime, he has sustained injuries which, along with his age, make him no longer suitable for towing the dogcart?

(ii) The Cornish Coat of Arms. Laurence Le Quesne writes:- "...the Cornish Coat of Arms, I believe, consists of a number of scarlet roundels - a memory perhaps, of that nostalgic summer holiday in Cornwall". A memory, may be, but Kilvert's visit to Cornwall was very recent and had ended only one calendar month before. During it, Kilvert had, per David Lockwood, "been intensely alive to the sights and sounds of Celtic Cornwall" and could have seen the coat of arms in various places. But what would Kilvert have seen? I hazard that it would not have been "scarlet roundels".

We need to be clear that we are talking of The Arms of the Duchy of Cornwall. They nowadays are usually described as "Sable 15 bezants in pile" which is, to the layman, "Black with 15 gold discs in a triangle". Bezants were a gold coin of ancient Byzantium. As early as the thirteenth century, the shield of Richard, Earl of Cornwall (1209-1272) had a black border with gold coins. Down the centuries, the number and configuration of the bezants did change, though from the seventeenth century, the now familiar inverted triangle of the "fifteen bezants in pile" began to appear. Kilvertians crossing into Cornwall by road from Plymouth will see a striking version of the coat of arms on the upright of the Tamar Bridge. Gold and black are the "national" colours of Cornwall.

What has this to do, then, with the elephant and his injuries? One thing seems certain, and that is that Kilvert must have meant something very precise. On the one hand, Kilvert's powers of detailed observation are his most striking characteristic - "The ever observant Kilvert", as David Lockwood calls him. On the other hand, his deep interest in animals is also known.

In their introduction to "Kilvert's Cornish Diary", Richard Maber and Angela Tregoning write:- "Equally evident is his affection for animals, and his ability to immortalize them in sharp little vignettes - an attractive aspect of Kilvert's personality". They add:- "Particularly striking is Kilvert's eye for horses, which is evident in many other parts of the Diary". Readers of the first notebook edited by the National Library of Wales will, no doubt, also remember Kilvert's deep and detailed interest in "the cruel sufferings of Mr. Venables's mare 'Gypsy'".

In conjecturing - mistakenly, I would suggest - that "scarlet roundels" were part of the Cornish Coat of Arms, Laurence Le Quesne implies that Kilvert's meaning was that the elephant had bloodied his knees. I would rather infer that Kilvert had in mind that inverted triangles of Bezants, numerous on top but insubstantial below. One might guess that the "noble gallant old fellow", in crashing down, had mainly damaged his knees, with lesser abrasions down the shank. Of course, had stones or grit become embedded in the skin, these too could have triggered in Kilvert's mind a recollection of that familiar pattern he had seen on the Cornish Coat of Arms.

This little incident is one of several interesting echoes of Kilvert's holiday in Cornwall. It is also one of the sort, to use John Dunabin's words, where "many Diary readers have moved on without further thought, and many have paused, wondering...." I have paused at this passage, wondering, yet know little of horses and less of equine injuries. Perhaps there are equestrian members of the Kilvert Society who could throw light on the entry for 6th. September, 1870?! If so, I would be grateful.

Acknowledgements: I have been greatly assisted by the following two articles - "The Arms of the Duchy of Cornwall". Richard Jenkins. ("Cornish Studies for Schools") and "The Duchy Coat of Arms". D. Endean Ivall. ("Cornish Heraldry and Symbolism").

S T O P P R E S S

WEBB WEEKEND AT HARDWICK

Kilvert records at some length his visit to Hardwick vicarage on Thursday, 14th. July, 1870, on the occasion of the choir's annual dinner. He writes: "...went to the Observatory. Mr. Webb arranged the telescope and acted as showman..."

Thomas William Webb was vicar at Hardwick for nearly thirty years until his death in 1885. He was a keen and well known amateur astronomer and carried out many hundreds of observations at the vicarage.

Hardwick is celebrating his life and work during the weekend 24/25 November, 1990. A programme of talks, an exhibition and a Star party are planned. In addition the former Hardwick vicarage will be open. Although altered in the last hundred years, Mr. and Mrs. Webb would recognise the house and recall the times they entertained Mr. Kilvert. Not least of all they would remember the "earthquakes" which Mr. Webb noted so carefully in his notebooks.

The weekend will conclude with a service at which our Vice-President, David Lockwood, will be the preacher.

Members of the Society will be especially welcome, and full details will be available in September from (SAE please):

The Haven, Hardwick, Hay-on-Wye, Hereford. HR3 5TA.

SERVICE AT HARDENHUISH, SUNDAY, DECEMBER 2nd.

This will be held at St. Nicholas's Church at 2 p.m. by kind permission of the Vicar, Revd. D. Scrase. Tea at Langley Burrell Village Hall. A coach will leave Hereford Town Hall at 11.40 a.m.

The preceding day there will be a Walk in central Chippenham from 2.00 - 3.30 p.m. Meet at the Rotary Hall, Station Hill, and return there for tea.