

# THE KILVERT SOCIETY

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

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**The Lady Delia Venables-Llewelyn**

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62994 *All good wishes!*

## JUNE 1992

Dear Member,

The A.G.M. held on May 1st must claim first place in this letter. Apologies have been received from Mr. and Mrs. S. Ball (Swindon), Mrs. Burchett (Kent), Mr. B. Butcher (Hereford), Mr. & Mrs. Finney (W. Mids), Mrs. G. Grice (Worcester), Mr. & Mrs. F. Harper (Sussex), Mr. & Mrs. J. Marshall (Leamington Spa), Canon D.T.W. Price (Dyfed), Mrs. R. Payne (Wilts), Mrs. C. Smith (Truro), Miss A. Thomas (Llandrindod), Mrs. P. Talbot (Eastbourne), Mr. M. West (Hereford) and Mrs. T. Williams (North Wembley): also Mrs. Goodsir, Miss L. Hancock and Miss Madigan, all of New Zealand.

The Chairman welcomed the company and asked for a tribute to Canon S. Luff, news of whose death had come that very day.

The minutes of the last A.G.M. were approved and adopted. Further information was forthcoming regarding the seat and the Kilvert graves at Bredwardine, as well as the Wordsworth grave at Brindsop.

Reviewing the year's events, the Chairman expressed his pleasure that members of the Society had contributed nearly £1000 towards the restoration of Capel-y-ffyn church. He announced the resignations of Mr. Hugh Dearlove (Subscriptions Treasurer for nearly 10 years), Miss I. Rees and Mr. J. Friar (Committee members). Miss Reece had been a member of the Committee for more than 17 years, and pressure of work had necessitated the resignation of Mr. Friar. All three had made an excellent contribution to the well-being of the Society.

The Hon. Treasurer presented the financial report; he apologised for an error in the brief summary published in the last newsletter, amended in the full statement presented at the meeting. There were non-recurring items in the expenditure, the repairing of the graves and the plaque erected in Wadham College Chapel. Mr. Watts proposed and Mr. Dearlove seconded the adoption of the report. The motion was carried unanimously. The Hon. Treasurer and the Hon. Auditor were warmly thanked for their work.

The election of officials was carried out en bloc, save for the appointment of Mr. Lawrence Jackson as Subscriptions Treasurer, and Mr. Michael Reynolds to serve on the Committee.

Any other business:

(i) Mr. Friar spoke of the imminent retirement of the Revd. P. Ralph-Bowman, priest-in-charge of Bryngwyn and Llanbedr, whose love of Kilvert and "The Solitary" was to be seen in these churches. It was agreed unanimously that a letter of thanks and best wishes be sent to him.

(ii) Mr. Clew drew attention to the Walk in Salisbury area on May 16th, and hoped St. Harmon would be used for a service in 1993.

(iii) In future a coach would be laid on for services held well outside the county.

(iv) Mr. Dearlove outlined the walk planned for the following day. Mr. R. Watts had kindly agreed to be the leader.

The Chairman concluded the business part of the evening by reading extracts concerning Monnington, where those walking would meet the following day.

Following the excellent refreshments of the Cafe Ascari and Mr. Jackson's "initiation" as collector of subscriptions, the Revd. D. Tipper entertained the company with an illustrated talk on some characters associated with the Black Mountains. Chief of these were the notorious John Macnamara and his widow. Macnamara of Llangoed Castle owned much of the Black Mountains, is credited with the building of the Hermitage – the ruins of which still stand, while his widow erected a series of boundary stones, also still standing, bearing her name. The lands eventually passed to Sir Joseph Bailey, who purchased both Hay Castle and the advowson of the living there and installed his nephew, Revd William Bevan as vicar. Mr. Tipper's lively talk was much appreciated, and he was thanked by the Chairman on behalf of those present.

If attendance at the A.G.M. was somewhat disappointing, that at the Walk was very pleasing, 45 members assembling at Monnington on a day of sunshine much tempered by a westerly wind. The great majority took the longer walk over to Brobury where Mr. and the Hon. Mrs. Phillips very kindly allowed them to view their residence, the former Brobury church. The whole party reassembled at Monnington Court, for a conducted tour of the house and light refreshment. We are grateful to Mr. and Mrs. Bulmer and their housekeeper, and also to Mr. Dearlove and Mr. Watts for their organisation.

I have been asked about the proposed edited and annotated edition of the Diary, but regret that I have no information. The sad fact remains that after 42 years the 3 volume edition published by Jonathon Cape is no longer available.

Dates for the Diary:

Friday July 3rd to Monday July 6th Kilvert Festival at Clyro. At 3.0p.m. on July 5th a Commemoration service at the church, where the preacher will be the Very Revd. M. Mayne, Dean of Westminster Abbey. (There will be no Society Walk on the 4th July)

Sunday, Sept 27th. The Autumn Service at Langley Burrell at 3.0 p.m. by kind permission of the Revd. J.A. Smith. A coach will be laid on from Hereford, and further details in the next issue.

Yours sincerely,  
E.J.C. West (Hon. Sec.)

### OBITUARY

Mrs. M. Cobbe (Shrewsbury). Life member since 1974

Mrs. V. Cooper (Glasbury-on-Wye). Member since 1978. A talented artist, she illustrated Mr. Kenneth Clew's excellent guides to Radnorshire churches.

Mr. W. Palmer (Kent) Member since 1978.

Mrs. E. Bonhall (California). Member since 1986, whom I had the pleasure of meeting on at least 3 occasions.

Canon S.G.A. Luff. Life member since 1979, he had taken part in various services and was a regular contributor to the Newsletter. His last article, dispatched less than a fortnight before his death, appears in this issue, as does the review of his booklet on the monastery at Capel-y-ffyn.

### BOOK REVIEW

"The Monastery at Capel-y-ffyn" by S.G.A. Luff. (£1.20 post free from The Hon. Secretary, Father Ignatius Memorial Trust, Park House, 67, Park Street, Abergavenny, Gwent NP7 5YD)

I have always thought the Vale of Ewias in the Black Mountains to be unusually rich in church buildings. At its foot is Llanvihangel Crucorney, further up, well off the spine road at the "eccentric" Cwmyoy and the superb small Partrishow. These are all mediaeval, as is of course the justly famous Llanthony Abbey. 18th c. Baptist chapels make for a continuity, carried on by the Monastery founded by Father Ignatius in 1870.

Canon Luff's booklet gives a history of the Monastery and more importantly a very fair opinion of Ignatius's work and character. He relates that it was a visit to Llanthony Abbey that inspired Ignatius, and how, unable to acquire the ruins, he built his monastery above Capel-y-ffyn. The subsequent decay following his death, the occupation of the cloister building by Eric Gill, the efforts of the Father Ignatius Memorial Trust and the Annual Pilgrimage (this year Saturday, Aug 29th leaving Capel-y-ffyn church at 2.30 p.m.) are all dealt with, illustrated by a series of interesting photographs and contemporary accounts – these latter, of course, including Kilvert's Diary.

"Historical link to renowned Victorian diarist" is the title of an article sent to me by our member Mrs. Judy Smith of Hamilton, Ontario. Written by Mr. Paul Wilson, evidently a regular contributor to the Hamilton newspaper, it tells of "The Moorings", the summer home on Bench Boulevard, built 101 years ago by mayor Francis Edwin Kilvert. (See Diary entry for December 21st 1878). The house, termed as a "cedar shingle palace" has been carefully restored by Mr. Don Dowie, and the article is accompanied by a fine photograph of the building. Mr. Wilson records that he had known nothing of Kilvert but took steps to remedy the omission. I have written to Mrs. Smith to thank her for sending the article.

E.J.C.W.

## THE CORNISH ITINERARIES OF FRANCIS KILVERT AND DINAH MULOCK CRAIK IN 1870 AND 1881

by Canon S. Luff (Dyfed)

'**Kilvert's Cornish Diary**', edited by Richard Maber and Angela Tregoning and published in 1989 by Alton Hodge, Penzance (price £7.95), is the complete record of Kilvert's holiday with his friends the Hockins from July 19th to August 6th 1870. It is taken from the fourth notebook which deals exclusively with this holiday. The Diaries as edited by Plomer contain only extracts from the notebook. Kilvert's hosts were William and Emma Hockin, friends he had come to know when they rented a house at Langley Burrell. In 1869 William Hockin inherited a quite distinguished house called 'Tullimaar' in Perranarworthal near Truro. Kilvert was invited to join them for a 'driving tour' while his sister Dora was their guest. How splendid the published Diaries would be were they all edited with the copious notes and illustrations of this Cornish Diary.

A few years later took place Mrs Craik's journey, in 1881; her account of it was published in 1884 by Macmillan, with illustrations by C Napier Hemy, under the title '**An Unsentimental Journey through Cornwall**' by the author of '**John Halifax, Gentleman**'. It became a rarity, but has been recently reprinted (1988) by the Jamieson Library, Penzance, which describes itself as 'a private collection of books (etc) on the subject of women.' It is a beautiful volume, priced £14.95.

From the moment they crossed the county boundary the routes of Francis Kilvert and Diana Craik were largely identical. Kilvert, however left the main line at Truro for Perranwell, on the connecting line to Falmouth. From Perranwell he was taken by carriage to his friends at Tullimar. Mrs Craik and her two nieces went on to Falmouth to stay at the old 'Green Bank' which, though it lacked green banks, did have views of the bay and the sea and was 'full of comfort and homely peace'.

Kilvert was visiting friends and had a base, while Mrs Craik and the girls had to find lodgings, but both parties made roughly for the same objectives – the Lizard peninsula, the land of serpentine, with Mullion and Kynance Coves, Mount St Michael and Land's End; both made calls on the north Cornish coast and a longer and final journey to romantic Tintagel. Mrs Craik had wanted to explore Cornwall since she was five and had learned about Jack the Giant Killer (did you know he was Cornish?), and still more when, at fifteen she 'fell in love with my life's one hero, King Arthur.' Arthurian romance is used so liberally to season her pages that one wonders why she calls her book 'An Unsentimental Journey'. Perhaps that was dictated by the regime she prescribed for her two young companions, her 'chicks', as she styles them, one in early teens, the other in her twenties. 'In the first place, my children,' she lays down, 'you must obey orders implicitly. I shall collect opinions, but in travelling only one must decide, the others coincide. It will save a world of trouble.' She pursued the metaphor to adopt for herself the title of 'old hen', settling comfortably on a cliff top to keep the wandering chicks within view, and when they hauled her to her feet one wonders whether they instinctively looked for eggs.

It was the 31st of August 1881 when Mrs Craik and her companions met at Exeter. Whereas Kilvert, travelling down from Chippenham by the mail, had only viewed the Cathedral from the train, they found time to explore that great church in the 'flood of evening sunshine' and to wander round the town by 'lovely twilight'. Kilvert's impressions on the 19th July, 1870, were unsentimental, for the Cathedral reminded him of a long barn. It calls to mind Augustus Hare, who was taught by Kilvert's father in the Rectory school at Hardenhuish, describing St Paul's – outside – the – Walls at Rome as a railway station.

Both entered Cornwall by the great Saltash Royal Albert Bridge over the Tamar. Mrs Craik was reminded of the collapse, which occurred only months previous (December 1879) not long after she crossed it. Kilvert shows some interest in the wooden railway viaducts.

If you look at a map of Cornwall you will see that beyond Truro in the south and Hayle in the north the main peninsular divides into two minor peninsulars, one ending in Lizard Point and the other in Land's End. The Craik party spent a week at a cottage in the Lizard peninsular, on the recommendation of a friend in Falmouth. The lodgings were booked by telegram. Under the impression that the Lizard was perhaps the Ultima Thule of civilisation, they laid in unnecessary stocks of provisions and hired a carriage, and also a paragon of male virtue and teetotality judged by Mrs Craik to be perfectly safe with the girls, whom she calls Charles. Charles was 'full of the respectful kindness that servants can always show and masters should always appreciate.' The pomposity is dated but, I feel, innocent; a real friendship ensued.

They were soon fascinated by the beautiful serpentine rock, both in its natural state, colouring the cliffs and rock formations, and carved into ornaments for visitors. As Mrs Craik observes, there are two kinds, 'reddish' and 'greenish'. The stone was made into studs and brooches, candlesticks and vases, and even into larger items such as mantel-pieces and tombstones. Mrs Craik managed to recognise some of the designs as 'quite Pompeian' and thought they might be a survival of ancient cultural influences. Kilvert rhapsodises about serpentine: 'We wandered among the huge serpentine cliffs. I never saw anything like the wonderful colour of the serpentine rocks, rich, deep, warm, variegated, mottled and streaked and veined with red, green and white, marble on every side, an enchanted cove, a place for Nereids.' Hockin knocked a fragment straight off the cliff for him to take



home, but Kilvert also bought souvenirs from local women at Kynance Cove. He especially admired the candlesticks. Mrs Craik fancied what she called a 'chimney piece' at the Poltesco serpentine works.

At Mullion both parties pay homage to the famous Mary Mundy of the Old Inn. To Kilvert maybe she was unexpected, and indeed he takes her quite calmly; perhaps she was a bit too old for him. Mrs Craik was prepared not only by a guide-book she had consulted, she also claimed the acquaintance of the 'enthusiastic Scottish professor' who was largely responsible for Mary's fame. Oddly enough, Mrs Craik does not name him; he was John Stuart Blackie, professor of Greek at Edinburgh. Blackie's popularising entries in the Old Inn Visitors' Book (still extant) only begin in October 1870, two months after Kilvert's visit.

Mrs Craik did not at first find Mary at home – she had 'gone marketing to Helstone.' They met her brother instead. Charles the driver said, 'It's only her brother.' Mrs Craik sympathetically calls him 'the honest man who had gone through life as 'Mary's brother', 'When Mary did turn up Mrs Craik describes her just as she is sketched both in pen-and-ink and in words in the Notebooks of Herbert Reginald Vaughan, another called at the Old Inn already mentioned in this Newsletter: 'a bright brown-faced little woman with the reddest of cheeks and blackest of eyes.' Their refectioin in the back-parlour consisted of hot strong tea, toast from a gigantic home-baked loaf, rich yellow butter, thick cream, clotted cream, jam and marmalade.

At Mullion Cove Mrs Craik was more than usually daring. She actually ventured into a long dark cave that went right through the rock, where, in the darkness, she was suddenly 'cheered by the apparition of the faithful Charles.' She persevered and came into an 'exquisite little nook' with 'walls of serpentine.' Her fancy was close to Kilvert's; where he saw a 'palace for Nereids' she calls it a charming dressing-room for mermaids – where they came to comb their hair.

Kilvert and Mrs Craik seem to have encountered different tides at Mullion Cove, for he was unable to get into anything in the cave line. By the time he reached Kynance Cove they were able to wander through the Dining Room and the Drawing Room Caves. Mrs Craik called the Drawing Room 'the loveliest of lovely caves.' But she had not yet been to Tintagel.

Special to the Lizard countryside and noted by both Kilvert and Craik were the 'hedges' or, as Mrs Craik also ventures, 'edges' – she never quite knew which. She explains, 'In the Lizard district the divisions of lands are made not by fences but by walls built in a peculiar fashion, half stones, half earth, varying from six to ten feet high and about two feet broad. On the top of these narrow giddy paths you are expected.' Charles recommended them as a short cut. Mrs Craik did three quarters of a mile along the hedge (perhaps it felt more like an 'edge' to her). Charles went in front and another retainer, John Curgenvin, behind. She may have been emboldened in this effort by the proximity of John Curgenvin, for they had decided that, if King Arthur, her first love, had lived longer, he would have looked just like him. John was about sixty, his face weather-beaten, sharp-lined and wrinkled, but with a 'sweetness, absolute beauty', and kindly eyes as blue as a child's. Mrs Craik found the hedges again at Land's End, so they were not peculiar to the Lizard. Kilvert also mentions the hedges twice, first at Hayle where they walked on one (and Hayle is not in the Lizard district) and then in the same context as the Craik party, on a visit to the Lizard lighthouses. He calls them simply 'turf-topped walls with walks along the top.' Kilvert's party, being short of time, did not go in the twin lighthouses, but Mrs Craik and the girls made a special point of it, though the 'courteous explanations of the most intelligent young man' who was their guide were 'entirely thrown away.'

They all went to St Michael's Mount. Kilvert came after lunch at Phillack Rectory with a 'nice pair of brown horses'; the Craik party was driven by Charles through a waste-land of deserted tin mines. They agreed about Marazion, Kilvert calling it 'ugly and barren-looking' and Mrs Craik 'the most commonplace little town imaginable.' With more time to spare the Craik group scored over the Hockins by being rowed round the rock by moonlight, during which their thoughts went wildly Arthurian etc. Kilvert went up into the castle-residence of the St Aubyns, was shown the dungeon under the chapel discovered a few years previous, complete with skeleton, and climbed the battlements to sit precariously in St Michael's Chair (a relative of the Blarney Stone) which he correctly understood to have been the cresset for supporting the beacon. He quotes one line of Macaulay's **'The Armada'**: 'High on St Michael's Mount it shone..'. In the castle their guide was a 'pretty, delicate, gentle, melancholy girl.' Of course the Craik party saw the same things except for the battlements and the tempting Chair. Their guide in the chapel was a footman in livery, but elsewhere a 'young St Aubyn, with simple grace and sweet courtesy, worthy of one of the fair ladies worshipped by King Arthur's knights.' Mrs Craik mentions that two years later one of the daughters of the house fell over the battlements onto the rocks below but fortunately was not injured. Were the three young ladies all the same person?

Mrs Craik elected to fulfil the 'wish of a lifetime' (Kilvert called it his dream) on a Sunday, not without 'conscience smiting'. Thus she was spared pestiferous tourists. How Kilvert and Craik distinguished themselves from tourists I cannot tell. Kilvert was not spared them and his reactions were as bad as usual. The objective was Land's End. Like Kilvert, Mrs Craik passed through St Buryan's and came to the Logan Stone. Like him she recounts the vandalism of Lieutenant Goldsmith in 1824 who, with his boat's crew, dislodged the famous rocking-stone and was made to put it back. It has never rocked so well since. As Kilvert approached he saw a guide waiting, who shot up the face of the rock so nimbly

that Kilvert 'looked to see whether he had a tail.' The ubiquitous Charles prompted Mrs Craik to hire a 'solemn-looking youth' who stalked ahead along the 'hedges'. She got as far as an observation post – 'a little rock nest', and the girls called to her to watch them rock the stone, but she 'could not see it stir a single inch.' Kilvert followed his guide up the rock but declined to be helped to the summit.

Captain Parker who, with his wife and a Miss Lewis, had joined the Hockins on this trip, said there were at least half a dozen other stones that could be 'logged', i.e. rocked – hence the name, Logan Stone. The Captain was a real expert on Land's End. He took Kilvert and Miss Lewis to 'a little triangular point of rock' that he assured them was literally the end of the land.

Mrs Craik's first impression of Land's End was disappointment (personally I think Cape Cornwall better satisfies one's expectations; the **Shell Book of the British Coast** recommends Gwennap Head). After beef and cheese in the First and Last Inn things began to improve. The agent of improvement was another male attendant, not a potential King Arthur like John Curgenvin, but very satisfying in his way – 'a very man-o'-war's man he looked', who undertook to lead them 'as far as anyone was accustomed to go.' However, eyeing Mrs Craik, he warned her that she was 'pretty well on in years, ma'am.' He offered a 'rugged brown hand, firm and steady as a mast', and led them to the place where General Armstrong's horse slipped over, the general having slipped off just in time, and where a bullock had fallen into the boiling waves until he was 'fished' out. This nautical guide was good at thrilling his clients; he said the air at Land's End was so strong it killed some folks right off. Though he lacked the Arthur touch he did resemble, thought Mrs Craik, 'one of the old Vikings.' In return for a tip he gave her a stone weighing two pounds.

All our travellers seem to have thought of Tintagel as the climax of their adventures. Kilvert's party set out with 'a game bay horse and a slug of a chestnut mare.' Both Kilvert and Craik call the village at Tintagel Trevena (pronounced Treveena). Books of reference both before and after them and all the maps I have seen just call it Tintagel. I understand that Tintagel is the parish containing five 'hamlets' of which the one commonly called Tintagel (and signposted accordingly) is really Trevena. The approach to the twin castles is misleading; it is possible to veer off to the left and to miss the correct route to the older and more interesting island fortress. Kilvert had borrowed a guide book from the inn and found the guide's cottage. this 'old man with a red face' led them to the seaward castle. On the way Kilvert's mind averted to Gustave Dore's picture of Merlin finding the infant Arthur.

Kilvert's description of the remains, apart from a couple of discreet quotes from Tennyson, is factual and rather dull; more like a Ministry guide. He becomes himself in time to pick up a gull's grey feather from the highest point as a remembrance.

The Craik party took the train to Bodmin, where awaited a carriage – 'a huge vehicle of ancient build, with horses to match.' As they drove along they thought of Queen Guinevere 'going a-maying.' They spent four days at Tintagel – 'all Arthurian days.' With more time than Kilvert they were able, as at Marazion, to take a boat trip round the castle rock, though not by moonlight. The boatman – not an Arthur, nor a Viking – took them into a terrifying sea-cave. the unsentimental old hen reveals her true self: 'This was terrible – yet with its terror was mingled an awful delight.' Gothick Mrs Craik!

On their last day they explored the seaward castle, in Kilvert's steps – neither party bothered with the landward one. Their guide was not the red-faced old man, nor his daughter who, we are informed by a note in **Kilvert's Cornish Diary**, rejoiced in the name of Florence Nightingale Richards, but by a rheumatic old woman. Mrs Craik makes a profound observation: 'Tintagel is a great mystery, out of which the imaginative mind may evolve almost anything it likes.' Which is what she did.

Kilvert had three more days in Cornwall, quiet ones. Mrs Craik's odyssey ends at Tintagel, with a thought that I think can refer only to Prince Albert. If only King Arthur could return 'perhaps in the person of one of the descendants of a prince who was not unlike him, who lived and died among us in this very nineteenth century – **'Wearing the white flower of a blameless life.'** **'That was Tennyson of Arthur. The 'Builder'**, in 1863, writing of the Memorial at Kensington, called Albert 'our Blameless Prince.'

S G A Luff



Mary Mundy



The Old Inn

The Old Inn at Mullion and its landlady Mary Mundy are described in both Mrs Craik's 'Unsentimental Journey' and 'Kilvert's Cornish Diary'. They are given even more generous treatment in the Sketchbook of Herbert Stanley Vaughan (in the possession of Canon Stanley Luff). One of Professor Blackie's entries in the Visitors' Book has just come to hand. It reads:

Laudes Hospitii Veteris at Dominae Mariae Mundae

Full many bright things on this earth there be,  
Which a pious man may enjoy with glee  
On Saturday or Sunday;  
But the brightest thing that chanced to me  
In Cornish land, was when I did see  
The 'Old Inn' by Mary Mundy

Quotations of this verse make the brightest thing to be 'the face of Miss Mary Mundy', which is better.

### KILVERT AT WORTHING by Mr. M. Harris (Worthing)

There are two rather curious connections between the Rev. Francis Kilvert and the Sussex coastal resort of Worthing. The first and most important as far as his life was concerned was as the venue for his first amatory encounter with Katherine Heanley. The second concerns the fate of the diary itself.

According to his diary, Francis Kilvert spent a couple of days here in August 1874 whilst attending the wedding of his second cousin, Adelaide Cholmeley, at the little parish church of St John the Baptist in the village of Findon, just north of Worthing. It was during this visit that he first encountered Katherine Heanley ('Kathleen Mavourneen') who it has been convincingly argued was to become his fiancée and subsequently break off the engagement, which event in turn may have propelled him into marriage with Elizabeth Rowland. In the hope of uncovering a photograph of the Findon wedding (and consequently a picture of the elusive Katherine) I have had the pleasure of digging around in the County Records Office and Worthing Library and Museum, and whilst no photograph of the wedding has so far turned up, I have unearthed some interesting background information on the Worthing connection, and the diary references.

### REV. ROBERT CHOLMELEY

Why a wedding in Findon for this couple from Lincolnshire? With Addie's father having died earlier in the year there must have been a temptation to postpone. The reverse may indeed have been true, with the need for reorganising family responsibilities. Whatever the circumstances, it was decided to proceed with the wedding, in this pretty Sussex village.

Addie's father, Mountague, was the sixth of ultimately twelve children, and of his brothers the only



one to follow his father into the Church was Robert, two years Mountague's senior. Educated at Magdalen College, Oxford, Robert took up the position of Rector of the parish church of St. John the Baptist, Findon, a village at the foot of the South Downs, in 1859 at the age of forty-one.

The Church, which still retains much of its original charm, was built in the 11th Century of traditional flint. It stands within its own churchyard, next to the local manor house – Findon Place – and some distance from the village. The living was in the gift of Magdalen College, Oxford, and Robert Cholmeley, a bachelor at that time, seems to have entered into the job with enthusiasm, raising money for the much needed restoration work on the church which began with its re-seating in 1865. A plaque on the wall still celebrates the fact that in that year "the Incorporated Society of Building and Churches" gave £20 towards increasing the seating capacity to 390 people.

Robert appears to have been generous and, probably as a consequence, hard up. In the Bishop of Chichester's Visitation Document of 1865 – a questionnaire on the living – Robert ruefully replies to a question whether or not he has a Curate "I cannot afford one." At the same time he writes to a local wealthy lady for help in raising money for the Church restoration, apologising for the begging nature of the letter and saying that although "it will take £2,500 to place it in a proper state we are far short of that sum – in fact I have as yet promised only £1000 of which £200 is from myself and family." At the time it is suggested that his income amounted to just £430 per year.

On January 9, 1866, at St Mary's Church, Marylebone, Robert Cholmeley D.D., then aged 47, classified in the Register as 'Clerk in Holy Orders', married the 24 year old Constance Mary Thompson, only daughter of Theophilus Thompson, a Marylebone physician who had died some time earlier. The couple returned to Findon to struggle on with returning the Church to its 'original primitive condition'. From the available correspondence it seems there were many problems on the way, but the work was finally completed in 1867.

Constance settled into the role of vicar's wife, and, according to a W.I. history of Findon written in the 1950's, became a popular figure. Each year, when Mrs Cholmeley's birthday came round, the schoolmistress, Miss Bull, made her pupils write her a birthday letter. "One year Mrs Cholmeley gave a present to the whole school, the boys had ties and each girl an umbrella. She bought eighty." A new school was built in 1872, on adjacent land donated by Mr Hall of Findon Place. At this time the average attendance had risen to about 100.

Doctor Cholmeley continued to improve his Church during the following years – sixteen new brass candlesticks in 1869, and, perhaps more important to our story, an organ to replace the old harmonium in 1874. In Whitsun that year the Vicar received a letter from the man charged with choosing the new instrument, Mr Harry Williams. He writes at length about his proposal and closes "If Miss Adele will put off her wedding till the end of August she may hope to have a choral wedding." Possibly the family were more optimistic, as the wedding remained set for August 11. Perhaps it was just as well. Minutes of the Vestry Meeting of August 7 show that, at this late stage, it was agreed that the Vicar should sell the old harmonium "for the best price he can get and give the proceeds towards the cost of an organ." However, the fact that Uncle Robert could boast a pretty refurbished Church, with possibly a new organ (if it could be installed in time) may have been the incentive for the family to hold the ceremony in Findon.

In any case, Adelaide Cholmeley must have moved into the area sometime in July as, on July 17, August 2 and August 9 the Banns were read for "Charles Heanley, Batchelor of the Parish of Croft, Lincolnshire, and Adelaide Maria Cholmeley, Spinister of this Parish".

### **KILVERT ARRIVES AT WORTHING**

Francis Kilvert describes his railway journey along "the fair Sussex shore" in his diary entry for August 10. He alighted at Worthing station which he found "pretty, light and elegant, with its vandyked glass roofs over the platforms." A photograph of the station, taken 1882, shows a simple station with an 'up' line and a 'down' line. A small part of the station still survives from this period, although the coloured glass has gone.

His lodgings still exist, however; 11 Church Terrace, (now 31, Grafton Road), has been 'modernised' but remains a modest two storeyed terraced house, in a street tucked slightly to the west of the town. In the Worthing Directory for 1874 the town's popularity as a resort is indicated by the number of guest houses listed. However, as No.11 Church Terrace is not amongst their number, Mrs Smallwood may have been a friend of the Cholmeley's, who, as a widow, had a little room to spare. It certainly would have been rather crowded for the gentleman guests. It is only a short walk down to the seafront where the fishing boats still decorate the shore, although the bathing machines are long gone. That evening Kilvert walks down to the sea and then westward to the end of the esplanade, a long cold walk in the wind. In his diary he berates himself for not going eastwards, to 'Vaynona', a large house in the centre of town where, unknown to him at the time, Katherine Heanley was staying.

### **"VAYNONA"**

'Vaynona' (actually "Vainona") was on the site of what is now a multi-storey car park – No 29 High Street. At some point between 1866 and 1871 the house was rented, for £27.16.00 a year, (£12 extra for the stables) from a Mr. Patching, by two of Robert Cholmeley's sisters, Katherine, and Sarah. This

may have been as a result of their brother moving to the area, although it seems unlikely that they became members of his congregation. Katherine, aged 54 in 1871, was the senior householder, and there were two servants, a housemaid and a cook. In 1894 the town undertook major improvements to its sewage system, and fortunately for us there is a photograph of the work which includes the surrounding houses. 'Vainona' is there in the background, set back from the road by a tiny forecourt and railings. It has a large frontage and is three storeys high – plenty of room for visitors in the event of holidays or major social gatherings such as a family wedding.

## **THE WEDDING**

Kilvert's description of the day of the wedding vividly comes to life as you try and retrace his footsteps today. The modern dual carriageway to Horsham roughly follows the route the carriage would have taken in 1874, and although this new road bisects it there seems to have been little alteration to the treelined drive up to the church since that time. If you stand in the wooden porch as he did you can easily visualise Katherine Heanley coming up the path towards him between the rows of little girls from Miss Bull's school (clearly Constance had persuaded the schoolmistress to release them from lessons for the occasion).

The inside of the church remains little changed, and in Chichester, in the County Records Office, the Church Register still exists showing the signatures of the bride and groom, and the witnesses, Lewin and Humphrey Cholmeley, and Kilvert himself. Kilvert mentions that Mountague Cholmeley, Addie's young brother, on crutches on the great day, gave his sister away. If he did, he was only sixteen at the time.

(It is interesting to note from the Register that this was the first wedding in the church since April, and to conjecture at the importance of the occasion for the Rector and his church. Whatever that may have been there is no mention of the wedding in the diaries of Lieutenant Colonel William Margesson, who was living at Findon Place at the time. He spent August 11th on business in Shoreham. The next day, however, he attended the Baptism of his daughter in the church, officiated by Dr Cholmeley. It was a busy week for the Rector of Findon.)

Earlier this century the Rectory moved to a more modern dwelling at the north of the village, but the original still remains, now an excellent hotel. The path that the gentlemen of the wedding party took across the field is now a public footpath. It brings you into the High Street at the front of the hotel, which at that time was the rear of the Rectory. A small wing on one end of the house is the only addition since that time, although the strange access across the roof to Doctor Cholmeley's 'sanctum' has gone. At the time the Rectory had nine rooms, and the size of the rooms downstairs, with the low 16th century beams in the dining room, imply a crowded house; as Kilvert indicates, easy for conversations to be overheard!

## **CHANCTONBURY**

If you drive north up the High Street out of the village and join the dual carriageway you will be following the route that the Wedding party took in the afternoon to visit Chanctonbury Ring.

The site of an Iron Age earthworks, and later a Roman-British temple, Chanctonbury is situated on a high point of the South Downs, overlooking the Weald to the north. In 1760 Charles Goring, the young heir to the Wiston estate, decided to plant a circular clump of beech trees there and the story goes that he had to carry the water up the hill by hand to nurture the young saplings.

From maps of the period it would seem clear that the Wedding party would have followed the road north towards Horsham, and then turned off right, up what is now the South Downs Way. If you walk it today it is easy to see the likely place where the group would have left their carriages. Thereafter the path ascends steeply through a chalky cutting, covered throughout the summer with a profusion of wild flowers (although I have never seen heather growing on Chanctonbury today). It then twists out onto a slow incline, cresting the ridge leading to the Ring and allowing marvelous views southward back across the hills towards Findon, Worthing and the sea beyond, and northward across the plain.

It can certainly be windy up there, and Katherine would have been grateful for Kilvert's coat. Today the Ring has been tansured by the Great Storm of October 1987, and its centre is being re-planted. A small ash wood on the northern slopes now partially obscures the view across the flat, agricultural land dotted with windmills which must have reminded Katherine of her Lincolnshire home. (I find it hard to believe, however, that she did indeed see the 'new' white Grand Stand at Epsom – built in 1830 – since it appears that both Leith and Box Hills in Surrey intervene – certainly it cannot be seen now, even with a telescope!). On the way back to their carriages they may have passed a dewpond, dug out of the chalk and lined with clay, to water the sheep that graze those downland slopes – a fine example remains, fenced off and always full.

## **THE CHOLMELEYS AND WORTHING**

After the Wedding some of the Cholmeley family remained in Sussex. Robert and Constance worked on in Findon until Robert's death, and Katherine continued to live at Vainona with Sarah. Following the death of Mountague Cholmeley Snr earlier in the same year, Addie's wedding may have had the



useful effect, possibly even deliberate, of bringing together disparate strands of the Cholmeley family. In March of 1875, just a few months after the wedding, Robert includes his nephew Mountague in his will:

"I bequeeth to my Nephew, Mountague Francis Cholmeley, at 24 years, £500 free from legacy duty."

By comparison he leaves another, older nephew, James Cholmeley Russell of Lincoln's Inn, who also acted as Executor of the will, just £50. (The will is witnessed by Horace George Monro, Clerk in Holy Orders)

Seemingly Mountague had reason to ask his uncle for an advance on his inheritance as, a few months before he died, Robert added a codicil to his will, in which he makes several changes:

"Seeing that the legacy of £500 to my nephew Mountague Francis Cholmeley has been reduced by the several sums of £50 each paid August 24, 1877, September 23, 1878 and July 26, 1879 for his advancement in life – I direct that the sum of £350 be set apart for the said Mountague Francis Cholmeley instead of the £500 named in the will."

At the same time he reduces James Cholmeley Russell's £50 to £25 "for reasons he will readily understand with grateful thanks for his trouble." It may have been that during those years Mountague had taken up residence in Worthing, apprenticed to a solicitor. In the Census return for 1881 he is residing with his Aunts at 'Vainona', where he is described as a 'solicitor's articled clerk'.

On Monday August 30, 1880, Robert Cholmeley died. The funeral took place on the following Friday at 5.30pm. According to Colonel Margesson's diary, there was a large gathering at the church, although he notes that "there were few labourers present". Since the Rectory would have been 'tied', Constance had to move out, possibly back to her relations in London. When she left Findon the school children presented her with a hymn book, and a prayer book decorated with a silver cross, and the villagers clubbed together to buy her a large framed portrait of Dr Cholmeley.

By 1881 Sarah Cholmeley was no longer living at 'Vainona', and Penelope had moved in with Katherine, now aged 64, along with Mountague. Ten years later, on October 28, 1891, Katherine died, and Penelope was joined by a companion, a Mrs Saunders. However, by 1893 Penelope is alone again, and on February 11, 1894, she too died, aged 65. Katherine and Penelope are buried side by side in a Worthing cemetery. Their headstone, a large cross, has sadly fallen over, and the grave is unkempt.

The story of 'Vainona' and the Cholmeleys from Lincolnshire does not quite end there. According to the Worthing Directory of 1895 a 'Miss M Cholmeley' has moved into the house, possibly the youngest sister, Mary Jane, then aged 60. However, the following year there is no name beside the house, and the name of Cholmeley does not re-appear there.

Mountague Cholmeley jnr qualified as a solicitor in 1884, and began practising in 1889 in Staines. He continued there, at a firm called Fenton and Cholmeley, (later Frere Cholmeley) until 1942, and died in 1944. Constance lived to be 82, and when she died in 1924 her body was brought back to Findon, to be laid to rest beside her husband. The graves are marked by a sundial by the wall, shaded by trees, at the western end of the cemetery of this small parish church, where in 1874, Kilvert fell in love.

## POSTSCRIPT

The diary of Francis Kilvert may have returned to Worthing. Certainly part of its strange history does. Mrs Essex Hope the widow of Percival, Kilvert's nephew and friend of William Plomer, moved there in 1951. It was whilst she was living in the town that she broke the news to Plomer that she had destroyed the diaries. At the time she was living in a square detached house, set back from the road in a neat garden on the western side of the town.

And why the name "Kathleen Mavourneen"? Possibly from a poem of the same name, printed in the Metropolitan Magazine in 1835, by Julia Crawford (1800-1885):

**Kathleen Mavourneen! The grey dawn is breaking  
The horn of the hunter is heard on the hill;  
The lark from her light wing the bright dew is shaking.  
Kathleen Mavourneen! What, slumbering still?  
Oh, hast thou forgotten how soon we must part?  
It may be for years, and it may be for ever.  
Oh, why art thou silent, thou voice of my heart?**

Considering the events of the Wedding Day, and the connotations with Chanctonbury, the poem may have seemed particularly apt for the romantically inclined Kilvert.

1817	Katherine Cholmeley born.		Aug 12: Baptism of daughter of Col. William Margesson by Robert Cholmeley at Findon Parish Church.
1818	Robert Cholmeley born.		
1824	Penelope Cholmeley born.		
1831	Sarah Cholmeley born.	1875	Robert Cholmeley writes his will leaving £500 to Mountague Cholmeley.
1835	Mary Jane Cholmeley born.		
	"Kathleen Mavourneen" appears in The Metropolitan Magazine, London.	1876	Rate book shows Katherine Cholmeley at 'Vainona'.
1840	Francis Kilvert born.	1877/8/9	Mountague Cholmeley paid £50 each year for his 'advancement in life' by Robert Cholmeley.
1842	Constance Mary Thompson born.		
1858	Mountague Cholmeley jnr born.	1879	Francis Kilvert dies.
1859	Robert Cholmeley becomes Rector of St. John the Baptist Parish Church, Findon, Sussex.	1880	June 24: Robert Cholmeley reduces Mountague's inheritance to £350.  August 30: Robert Cholmeley dies, aged 62.  September 3: Funeral of Robert Cholmeley at Findon.
1861	No record of Cholmeley's at 'Vainona' in census.		Constance Cholmeley leaves the village.
1865	Dec 17, 24 & 31: Banns read for Robert Cholmeley and Constance Mary Thompson of Mary le Bowe.		
	Bishop's Visitation to .	1881	Census shows Katherine Cholmeley, aged 64, Penelope, aged 52, and Mountague (solicitor's articled clerk), aged 23, living at 'Vainona'.
1866	Jan 9: Robert Cholmeley marries Constance Mary Thompson at St. Mary's Church, Bryanston Square, London.	1891	October 28: Katherine Cholmeley dies (W.S.G. Nov 5).
1865	Church re-seated.		Penelope still living at 'Vainona' according to the Worthing Directory.
1866/7	St. John the Baptist renovated at a cost of £2,500.	1892	Mrs Saunders joins her.
1869	16 brass candlesticks installed.	1893	Penelope alone at 'Vainona'.
1871	Census shows Katherine and Sarah Cholmeley and two servants living at 'Vainona'.	1894	February 11: Penelope dies (W.S.G. Feb 15).
1872	New Findon School opened – Headmistress, Miss Elizabeth Bell.	1895	'Miss M Cholmeley' living at 'Vainona' (Worthing Directory).
1874	July 27, Aug 2, Aug 9: Banns read for Adelaide Cholmeley and Charles Heanley.  Aug 11: Wedding of Adelaide Cholmeley and Charles Heanley at Findon Parish Church.	1896	Worthing Directory entry for 'Vainona' has no name beside it.
		1924	October 26: Constance Cholmeley dies.
		1951	Mrs Essex Hope moves to Worthing.
		1965	Mrs Essex Hope dies.

## **SOME KILVERTIAN PUZZLES SOLVED**

### **by Sidney Ball (Swindon)**

During the last ten years numerous puzzles in Kilvert's Diary have been solved by members. Here are a few more problems solved, also some delving into the mis-reading of Kilvert's hand-writing by Plomer and his typists.

#### **NOT LANGHANES!**

On 25th November 1878 Francis Kilvert wrote, according to our diary, "Went to stay at Rhayader Vicarage with the Longhames" (Vol 3 p434). These friends of Kilvert's were really the LAUGHARNES, the Revd. Thomas Laugharne and his wife Ellen Maria. Born in 1821, the Revd. Thomas was a son of another Thomas Laugharne, a Captain in the Royal Navy, of Walcot Bath and Laugharne Hall, Carmarthenshire. The Revd. Thomas and his family came to Rhayader in 1873. The family surname, pronounced Larne, derived from the town of Laugharne, probably an anglicised form of an earlier Welsh name Llacham. The town is now visited as the home of the late Dylan Thomas, who, on "Under Milk Wood" called it rather rudely "Llaregyb".

#### **WHO WAS MR WRIGHT?**

After his enforced break with Ettie Meredith Brown, Kilvert had news of her at Bredwardine on 19th January 1878 he heard that Ettie was to marry Mr Wright (Vol 3 p361). On 23rd September a "kind letter" from Ettie's sister told him that Ettie would soon sail for India to be married there (Vol 3 p423). Ettie's husband was at that time Professor of History, Philosophy etc. at Muir College, Allahabad. He was William Henry Wright, born in the same year as Kilvert, and a son of the Revd. Henry Wright, a Norfolk schoolmaster and clergyman. Ettie's husband was a graduate of Corpus Christi, Cambridge and taught at Ewell and Cheltenham before going to India as a Professor of Mathematics and English Literature at Benares College in 1867. He taught in four different colleges in India and lived later in England again. Mr Wright died at Southsea on September 2nd 1926 aged 86. Ettie had died 16 years earlier.

#### **FOR CARN READ CAMM**

When Kilvert worshipped at Monkton Wyld Church the service was conducted by Mr Carn (Vol 1 p386). Actually he was the Revd. J.B.M. CAMM who came to Monkton Wyld as perpetual curate in 1869. Kilvert liked the church if not the service.

#### **CLAVERING MORDAUNT LYNE**

Canon Luff gave us some interesting information about Clavering Lyne in the September 1987 Newsletter. This brother of Father Ignatius was studying for Anglican orders in 1878 and Canon Luff thought it would be interesting to learn something of Clavering Lyne's subsequent clerical career. Clavering studied at Gloucester College from 1877 to 1879 and in the latter year was ordained Deacon. In 1881 he was ordained priest by the Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol. I find that Clavering's first curacy was at Biddestone in Wiltshire with the Rector, the Revd. John Enita, whom Kilvert had known well (Vol 2 pages 239 and 328). When Mr Enita retired in 1881, aged 74, Clavering Lyne went to Leckhampton in Gloucester as curate for a year or so. Not long afterwards he seems to have had no work in the Church. Does any member know what happened to him?

#### **PERCH NOT JACK!**

When Francis was staying in London in February 1873 he went with Mr Venables to Somerset House. "Found Jack in his room in the Legacy Duty Office" (Vol 2 p327). On another visit to London that year "...I met Jack in Burlington House" (Vol 2 p350). The compiler of the Index is correct in listing these entries under "Kilvert, Edward Newton (Perch, Teddy)". But I think that Plomer or his typists got it wrong and that Kilvert wrote Perch and not Jack. Try writing Perch quickly and it can look like Jack! And Francis's brother had two pet names - Teddy and Perch - it is unlikely that he would have been given another.

#### **WHERE WAS THE POLYTECHNIC?**

In the February 1983 Newsletter the late Fred Grice wrote that among things Kilvert enjoyed in London were the spectacles in the Polytechnic. "Wherever that was" wrote Mr Grice.

The Polytechnic Institution was in Regent Street. Opened in 1836 to exhibit objects connected with the industrial arts, it had also a theatre. On 19th January 1870 Kilvert took three young friends (nephews of Mrs Venables) to see Dissolving Views (Vol 1 p22). These were shown by means of a huge magic lantern. Newton's who made telescopes, also made lanterns and slides, including "the celebrated phantasmagoria lanterns as supplied to the Government, 3 guineas". So Newton's probably made the lanterns for "Dissolving Views" so popular in Kilvert's time.

The Polytechnic was closed in 1881. The following year the lease was bought by Quintin Hogg, merchant and philanthropist, grandfather of the present Lord Hailsham. Quintin Hogg kept the name "Polytechnic" but greatly extended the aims and scope of the institution. Linking us with Francis Kilvert are the Polytechnics of today, institutions providing vocational instruction in a wide range of subjects.

#### **WHY DID KILVERT LEAVE ST HARMON?**

Some members have wondered why Kilvert left St Harmon after so short a time there. Various causes



have been suggested. But there was only **one over-riding reason** why Francis left St Harmon – he was offered the vacant living of Bredwardine and he accepted it! He would not only have been extremely foolish to refuse, but ungrateful to his great friend and mentor, the Revd. R.L. Venables. For Mr Venables was one of the three Newton Trustees responsible for finding a new parson for Bredwardine after the death of the Revd. John Houseman. Yes, it was Mr Venables who was largely responsible for Kilvert getting the attractive living of Bredwardine with Brobury. Just one more act of kindness from Mr Venables to his one-time curate!

### THE MUSE COLONY

This is the title of a book about the sojourn at Dymock in 1914 of Rupert Brooke, Edward Thomas, Robert Frost and friends – nothing to do with Kilvert but of interest to all lovers of English literature. Dymock is a village on the Herefordshire – Gloucestershire border. Written by Keith Clark, it is published by the Redcliffe Press Ltd., 49, Park Street, Bristol BS1 5NT, and costs £8.50 post free.

The village was the focal point for some of the finest young poets of their generation. It was a short-lived idyll, broken by the war in which Brooke and Thomas were to lose their lives, but nevertheless an important episode in the history of English literature, one which until now has never been covered in any depth.

Keith Clark explores the reasons for this flight to the country and how the poets and their families related to a wary village population which suspected them of being enemy spies. He also discusses the poetry which was inspired by their life in Dymock. Edward Thomas, encouraged by Frost, at last found his true vocation, after years as literary critic and essayist, and some of Brooke's best known work was first published in *New Numbers*, a quarterly magazine which the poets published from a local cottage.

The book's themes are illuminated by a generous selection of the poets' work, some of which is here brought back into print for the first time for many years.

Keith Clark is a professional journalist and, formerly, Chief Librarian to the National Book League. He has written extensively on literary and arts subjects, including a book on Beatrix Potter's Gloucestershire, for Frederick Warne.

### THE RIGHT MRS. RICHARDSON

In his article in the March 1992 newsletter, Mr. Lile identified the Mrs. Richardson referred to in the Diary as Eliza, wife of John Crow Richardson. He writes "I was so busy mentioning the mistakes of others that I confused Eliza with her daughter-in-law Teresa Eden Pearce Richardson, née Sewcoid of Rodborough Lodge, Glos. It was the latter who performed good works at Sketty, and must have been the Mrs. Richardson of the Diary. She nursed wounded soldiers in both the South African and Russo-Japanese wars. She was decorated by the Emperor, published an account of her experiences in 1905 and wrote novels largely based on her time in Japan. She was born in the 1840s and died in 1918."

### SUBSCRIPTIONS

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A review of membership records reveals that many are long overdue (some members owing more than a year's subscription).

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