

# 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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**JUNE, 1999**

## EDWARD JOHN CHARLES WEST R.I.P.

It is with the deepest sorrow that I have to inform members that our beloved Editor and former Secretary, Edward West, died in Hereford General Hospital on Friday June 4th 1999, after falling at home earlier in the week. Edward became Honorary Secretary of the Society in 1977 upon the death of Oswin Prosser. After he retired in 1995, he continued as Editor of the Newsletter, and in fact had prepared most of this issue.

Michael Sharp, Secretary

## **REMEMBRANCES OF EDWARD WEST**

*By: The Hon. Chairman*

With the death of Edward on 4<sup>th</sup> June 1999 the Kilvert Society is the poorer because, since he accepted the position of Hon. Secretary so many years ago, he has been a wonderful ambassador and has guided The Society through all the good, and sometimes not so good, times.

Edward was a gentle man and a gentleman as our members who knew him will confirm. He was the central figure to whom all communications were directed and from whom all responses emanated. He was always prepared to meet and entertain our overseas members and never failed to find willing drivers to ferry them to all the places with Kilvert associations in this area.

His passing marks the end of an era of exciting changes which, for Edward, culminated with the Jubilee Celebrations and his magnificently organised Penny Reading on the last evening. I like to think that was his 'swan song' and by which he will be particularly remembered, especially by our 'distant' and 'newer' members. Another important change has been the bringing together of the Wiltshire members and the Herefordshire members, both of whom have a special interest in Kilvert's life; Edward was delighted with the reunion which he declared must become a regular event.

At one time he carried out all the duties of Secretary, Minute Secretary and Newsletter Editor but, just four years ago he decided that it would be advisable to hand over the reins to someone younger, retaining only the newsletter.

I like to think that he is now in the company of his favourite diarist and telling him what an impact his private writings have made all over the world in a technological age that he could never have envisaged.

Dear Members,

The Annual General Meeting held at the Bishop's Palace, Hereford on April 23<sup>rd</sup> was attended by some sixty members. Apologies were received from Mrs. M. Burchett (Tunbridge Wells), Mr. Basil Butcher (Hereford), Mr. K.R. Clew (Tadworth), Mr. & Mrs. J.R.G. Comyn, (Vowchurch), Revd. & Mrs. J.C. Day (Sturminster Newton), Mr. H.G. Dearlove (Monmouth), Mr. J.E. Dunabin (Warrington), Mr. & Mrs. K.P. Finney (Kidderminster), Mrs. U. Fitzgerald (Moorhampton), Wing Commander & Mrs. J.B.A. Fleming (Broadway), Revd. & Mrs. B.E. Richards (Great Malvern), Mr. E.J.C. West (Ross-on-Wye), and Mr. & Mrs. M.W. White (Birmingham).

The names of members who had died during the previous year were read to the meeting and members stood in silence.

Revd. David Lockwood, referring to his retirement as Chairman, thanked all those who had supported him during his term, particularly Edward West. He said that Edward had always been the epitome of courtesy and kindness, and had had his finger on the pulse of the Society throughout his Secretaryship. The thriving membership in the USA was largely due to him. David Lockwood also thanked Harley Dance and Michael Sharp and welcomed Ron Watts as the new Chairman and John Wilks as Treasurer.

He also paid tribute to Lady Delia Venables-Llewelyn and said how fortunate both he and the Society had been to have her as President.

Mr. Harley Dance outlined the accounts and then thanked all those who had supported him as Treasurer, the Auditor, Subscriptions Treasurer, Publications Manager, and the Secretary. His last year as Treasurer had been a particularly busy one, due mainly to the Golden Jubilee, but it had been a happy year as had all his period in office.

The elections included Edward West elected a Vice President, The Revd. D.N. Lockwood as President, Mr. R.O. Watts as Chairman, Miss D.A. Wheeldon as Vice Chairman, Mr. J.H.C. Wilks as Treasurer, and the following new Hon. Life Members, Mr. K.R. Clew (for many years dedicated to the cause of Francis Kilvert), Mr. J. Palmer (for his great generosity in underwriting the cost of the Jubilee Book), Mr. H. Dance (in recognition of his many years as Treasurer of the Society) and Mr. Basil Butcher (who was a Founder member).

The Secretary presented David Lockwood with a cheque to mark his retirement as Chairman and Mrs. Sharp presented Mrs. Lockwood with a bouquet of flowers. Mr. Watts congratulated the Revd. David Lockwood on becoming the new President.

Following the usual sumptuous refreshments provided by Ascari Caterers the assembled company returned to the Great Hall for a "Musical Journey through the Diary", presented by our Publications Manager, Mr. C.J. Marshall

His entertaining and informed talk included numerous excerpts from music mentioned in the Diary and what Mr. Marshall called "intelligent guesses". The combination of delightful music and humorous and well researched comments gave us a most enjoyable evening as was evident from the long and hearty applause.

### **The "Langley Burrell Day", May 15<sup>th</sup>**

44 Members had booked for the "Langley Burrell Day" on Saturday May 15<sup>th</sup> and besides a coach party from Herefordshire and Radnorshire, others had motored from Buckinghamshire, Hampshire, Glamorgan, Warwickshire, Hertfordshire and other places near and far. While waiting for the coach from Hereford to arrive, those already gathered found much to interest them in the Church, including the Registers from Kilvert's time and the recently compiled NADFAS Church Report. Those travelling by coach were greeted on a fine but overcast morning at S Peter's Church, Langley Burrell by Jim Hall and the Revd. Dr. Gordon Edwards, Curate of Langley Burrell.

Orders for lunch were taken before the walk commenced and were to be enjoyed at a later time at The Brewery Arms, known locally as 'Langley Tap'.

Commencing the walk the site of the original Rectory was viewed, as was Kilvert's parents' grave. We then walked on through the grounds of Langley House and the meadows to Manor Farm where a pause was made for a reading from the Diary. Onward to Langley Lodge and its grounds, before arriving at Langley Tap for lunch. The landlord was most helpful with good food and excellent value.

After lunch we called at Common Farm and spoke to its owners and members heard another reading. On across what was once part of the common to the Rectory, now known as Kilvert's Parsonage, where we received a warm welcome and were shown around the garden by the owners. The walk unfortunately had to be curtailed at this point due to lack of time.

Now to S. Peter's Church for Evensong, conducted by our host, the Revd. Dr. Gordon Edwards, who is Kilvert's successor as Curate of Langley Burrell. Over 70 parishioners, members and friends took their places in church and, to the excellent organ accompaniment of Mr. Charlie Smith, filled the place with the singing of hymns, psalms and canticles that would

have been familiar to a congregation of 1874. The lessons were read by our Chairman and Secretary and the sermon was preached by the Revd. John Day, Vicar of Sturminster Newton and a member and former Committee member of the Society. With a family background closely associated with the Chippenham area, John is no stranger to Langley Burrell, and with his father's great enthusiasm for Kilvert, he became interested at an early age. By another strange twist, it was in a hamlet in one of John's present parishes, King's Stag, where Kilvert's nephew Percival Smith was living when he decided to submit the Diaries for publication.

In a wholly remarkable and wonderfully evocative sermon, and having quoted from Thomas Hardy "... a man who notices ...," John regaled us with both his own delightful prose and delicious chunks of the Diary. The congregation was transfixed, and the proverbial pin could easily have been heard hitting the floor! We were taken back to an age when life for most was a very local affair and where caring for one's neighbour came so naturally to priest and people. Tales of farm and cottage, squire and church – even to Kilvert helping his father fix the candlesticks at which we were looking – held us spellbound.

On to the Village Hall for a sumptuous tea, lively chatter, the cementing of new friendships, and the reminiscing of age-old friends. Mrs. Eileen Davies rapidly sold quite a few copies of her new book, and most generously gave the proceeds to the Society. The Chairman treated us to a number of amusing Diary extracts, bringing the happy and relaxed hour to a close.

After tea we were invited to travel the short distance through the town to Hardenhuish where the Revd. Wendy Sanders, another of the group Clergy team, was waiting to show us S. Nicholas's Church, where Kilvert's father was Rector. Again, this was a most evocative experience, a Georgian church built in 1779 by John Wood with the Rectory across the road where Kilvert was born to delight us as well.

The whole day was one we will all long remember, and we are so very grateful to Dr. Gordon Edwards, Jim Hall, (who also provided the above notes on the walk) and all who contributed to such a wonderful day (not least those who provided the tea). Thank-you very much.

*(Dr. Gordon Edwards has kindly provided Michael Sharp with the negative of the group photograph taken on the steps of S. Nicholas's Church. Anyone wanting a copy of this photograph should contact Michael before the 30<sup>th</sup> July. The cost will be 50p per copy.)*

## **IMPORTANT NOTICE TO MEMBERS**

### **Public Liability Indemnity Insurance**

Following concern by the Committee at the cost of the Society's Public Liability Insurance, a new policy has been negotiated with Event Insurance Limited of Brockenhurst. The cover is for £1m. (as was the previous cover) and is underwritten by the Ecclesiastical Insurance Group. The premium is considerably lower than that previously paid and the Company was recommended by the Alliance of Literary Societies, of which the Society is a member.

### **Remainder of 1999 events**

As announced in the March Newsletter, there will not be an event at the end of June, due to the Committee's wish not to detract from attendance at the 'Langley Burrell Day' on May 15<sup>th</sup>.

Arrangements are well in hand for the September weekend (18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup>) which it is hoped will be based at Llanigon. Further details will appear in the September Newsletter.

### **"The Revd. Francis Kilvert" by Eileen Elias**

Our Member, Mrs. Eileen Davies (Eileen Elias) from Cambridge has written a delightful book on the life of Francis Kilvert, and this is available from Mrs. Davies at 47 Priory Road, Cambridge CB5 8HT. There has not been time to review the book. Suffice it to say that at Langley Burrell, 8 copies sold in 4 minutes! The price is £4.50 including postage.

### **Newsletter Editor**

Our Publications Manager, Mr. C.J. Marshall, has kindly consented to become Editor of the Newsletter. Contributions for the September issue should be sent to him at 169 Upper Holly Walk, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire CV32 4JY, not later than July 15<sup>th</sup>.

Yours sincerely,  
E.J.C. West  
(& Michael Sharp)

## OBITUARIES

Mrs. M. Ottaway of Hampton Park, Hereford, died on 26<sup>th</sup> March. She had been a member since 1965 with her late husband.

Mr. L.A.J. (Laurie) Newman of Chippenham, a member since 1978, died on 20<sup>th</sup> March. He was responsible for the upkeep over many years of the churchyard at Langley Burrell, which he loved and maintained with such devotion.

Revd. E.W. (Edwin) Waddleton of Chippenham, died on 25<sup>th</sup> April. A Vice President of the Society, he had been a member since 1971. He was Vicar of Langley Burrell before his retirement.

### PERCH, JACK and TEDDY

*(By the late E.J.C. West, Ross-on-Wye)*

These are the pet names used by Kilvert when referring to his only brother, Edward Newton Kilvert, 9 years his junior. As far as I am aware, our newsletters have never contained an article on him. What follows is an attempt to rectify that omission.

The earliest references I have found are in his sister Emily's "Rambling Recollections", when he was a small boy, but being of typical childish behaviour they are of no value. The next is from Mr. A.L. LeQuesne's article on the diaries of Revd. Venables, which records that Teddy holidayed at Clyro in both 1867 and 1868 and that on each visit he was invited to dine at the Vicarage. These visits were most probably made during holidays from Marlborough, where he was educated. In earlier holidays, with only 4 older sisters at home he must have accompanied his father on his fishing expeditions, thus acquiring a true love of that sport, as well as a nickname!

In January 1870 he was working in London in the Inland Revenue department of the Civil Service. Francis was at Mitcham (Surrey) coaching the young Evan Thomas boys, nephews of Mrs. Venables. Teddy was invited "to dine and sleep". There were "great romps" with the boys, and the following morning "a good game of football". This was following the evening where the 2 brothers "sat up in my room before the fire till after midnight talking over various grave matters". (The first indication of the close bond between the brothers, which was maintained throughout the Diary!). They returned to London together, Francis going to stay with Mrs. Pearson (mother of Mrs. Venables) and they arranged to meet the next day (Sunday) to attend morning service at the Temple.

From mid-May to mid-June that year Teddy is on holiday, the first fortnight being spent at home. Emily returns after 5 years in India, and fails to recognise the young man of 21 whom she had last seen as a 16 year old schoolboy. Francis goes home to complete the family reunion and there are gentler "romps" with their new niece Katie. The 2 brothers enjoy each other's company; they go for walks, and while Teddy fishes, Francis sits on the bank reading.

He stays at Clyro from June 11<sup>th</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup>, and for this fortnight the June-July notebook offers many glimpses of his interests. He identifies a beetle as *Necrophorus sepulchri*, points out to his brother "the curious nest of a ground bee", brings back a crayfish from the Clyro brook and "groped for trout and eels in the Bach Wye". Hearing the call of a grouse, he "ranges over the heather to try to start one". The past interests him too – Llewellyn's cave, the ruinous churches of Bryngwyn and Llanbedr. At Bryngwyn he discovers "the broken shaft of the old cross and the carving thereupon" and proceeds to make a sketch of it. At Llanbedr he makes a similar discovery.

While at Clyro, he accompanies Francis on the latter's parishioning, sometimes sleeping in the sun, but at the Harbour boiling the eggs for tea; and while Francis is baptising a sick baby at Penrheol he wanders round a nearby field and finds "a rusty old piece of iron which may have been a fragment of an ancient British weapon, but was probably a piece of a window bar". He spends 2 Sundays at Clyro, on each occasion taking the Sunday School class. Twice he goes to cricket practice with Morrell. (The last 4 strenuous days were referred to in "The Pocket Book" in the March newsletter).

Never again are there as many references to him. The brothers will meet at Christmas and when their holidays coincide. Otherwise reports come to Clyro from his letters home, as does the news that "Teddy gives a good account of his own position in the Inland Revenue which he now considers to be safe, and he thinks he will shortly have an increase of salary", (29<sup>th</sup> November 1870). Another report shows the interest in natural history maintained:

"One day he skinned an owl and from midnight till 1 o'clock he roamed about the streets seeking where he might bestow the body of the owl, fearing that the carcass might be found and described in the papers as the body of a fine fullgrown male child. Eventually he whirled the corpse over a garden wall".

He is still an active young man. He plays cricket in summer, skates in winter and goes to dances. And attractive to the ladies? Francis is taken by Dora into the shrubbery on a visit to Langley Burrell, and shown "the carved initials of Teddy's early lovers". (8<sup>th</sup> May 1871). In this connection is it significant that Mary Bevan's brief diary entry for the Snodhill picnic includes "Mr. E. Kilvert"?

Francis, having returned to Langley Burrell, sometimes travels up to London. He always arranges to meet Teddy, to dine, to visit an exhibition or the theatre. In May 1875 he goes to London to spend a few days with Teddy "who is not in good



health". His condition deteriorates and 4 months pass before he returns to London. (All that Plomer records is that "hot 40 minute baths" are prescribed). Francis calls on Mrs. Pitcairn and her daughters – the beginning of Teddy's attachment to Eleanor Pitcairn? In June 1878 the family meet at Paddington for the wedding, and Francis is his brother's groomsman. (15 months later Teddy is at Bredwardine for his brother's funeral). The married couple settle at Harlesden and raise a family. He becomes Head Clerk at Somerset House, and dies in 1913.

His sister Dora was to marry Eleanor's brother James. A photograph of the wedding group still exists. The 2 brothers are standing on either side of what is thought to be Uncle Walter. Francis black-haired, heavily bearded, seems to be expressionless; Teddy, shorter, clean-shaven and fair-complexioned, stands confidently for the photographer. He was to have a highly successful career, Francis had only months to live.

### **SAMUEL HOOD COWPER-COLES 1865 - 1932**

*By Mr. Colin Dixon (Llandrindod Wells)*

Samuel Hood Cowper-Coles was born at Madeira Villa in Ventnor on the Isle of Wight on the 18th May 1865. The third son and seventh child of Capt. Cowper Phipps Coles R.N. and his wife Emily née Pearson who was, as you know, the sister of the second Mrs. Venables.

Sam has only seven entries in Kilvert's Diary. He could of course have been mentioned again in the section that Mrs. Kilvert destroyed, but we will probably never know. However, since he was first mentioned in the Diary on 27th November 1878 I wondered why he was not around when Kilvert spent two holidays at Newstead (Mrs. Cowper-Coles' home on the Isle of Wight) - the first in June 1874, the second in June 1875. Kilvert names several of the children on both occasions but not all of them. The oldest boy, Cowper Bickerton, would have been 18 years old in 1874 so he was probably at college or working, but Sam was only 9 years old then so he should have been around. He may, of course, have been away staying with relatives, but my guess is that he was another casualty of William Plomer's blue pencil.

At Kilvert's death Sam must have been at a loose end, a boy alone in a house in mourning, Mrs. Kilvert too distraught to bother with him. The ideal short term solution would be to send him either to his Aunt Agnes (Mrs. Venables) at Llysddinam or to Kilvert's elder sister Thursie, only two miles away at Monington on Wye.

I have checked Mr. Venables' diary for the date of Kilvert's death, but there is no mention of Sam at that time nor indeed at the time that he was taken on as Kilvert's pupil eight months before. My guess is that he went to Monnington until something could be sorted out for his future education.

There is some evidence to support this theory in the K.S. newsletter for September 1986, where Frederick Grice quotes from Hasting Smith's Diary about a holiday that Sam spent at Monington Rectory teaching Hastings, then a boy of six, to fish. This may have been the period immediately after Kilvert's death as Hastings said that Sam was about 14 years old. Incidentally Hastings' first name was William according to the 1881 Census. The children of the Smith family all tended to use their middle name, as did Kilvert when he referred to them. Percival's first name was Thomas. Only Florence was referred to by her first name. Mrs. Smith is listed as Theodora Mary, although her name was Thermuthis.

Sam must have attended school of some sort after that as Mr. O'Brian of Newchurch found evidence that he was a pupil at The Navy College, New Cross, at some period. However, I found Sam on the 1881 Census living at home, Newstead, Shanklin, I.O.W.

The entry read:	Elizabeth Deason	Head	age 48	Governess
	Samuel H. Cowper-Coles	Chrg.	age 15	Scholar
	Minna Cowper-Coles	Chrg.	age 13	Scholar
	Fanny A. Walker	Visitor	age 22	

Fanny A. Walker was Sam's elder sister, Frances Augusta, who was married to Baldwyn Wake Walker, R.N., who was later to give away Minna Cowper-Coles at her wedding to Walter Vernon Anson, R.N., at Newbridge-on-Wye, on the 30<sup>th</sup> November 1892. I have photographs of this happy occasion.

(Elizabeth Deason was at Newstead in 1875). So Sam was taught privately for a while at home.

Some time afterwards Sam decided that he would like to go into estate management and become a Land Agent. I think family influence probably pushed him in that direction. I don't think that he went to a special college for his training, but took on an apprenticeship on an estate, probably a relative or friend of the family. I have an address for this period, it is East Garston, Lambourn, Berkshire. He must have paid attention to his lessons and training as he later became a Fellow of the Land Agents Institute, and was the South Wales Representative at General Meetings for many years.

When next we hear of Sam he is employed as Agent to Lord Glanusk of Glanusk Park, Breconshire. This is sometime in 1891, but as I could not find him on the Census for that year he must have arrived in the summer. Sam obviously took to his new job like a duck to water and fitted in well with the area and also the family; so much so that less than a year later

he married Lord Glanusk's second daughter, Edith Bailey at Llangattock Church on 20th April 1892. The marriage service was conducted by his Uncle, Rev. R.L. Venables, and was attended by all the local and distant gentry. The wedding certificate was signed by Agnes Minna Venables and Joseph Henry Russell Bailey (Edith's Father), also by one of Sam's sisters, I think Minna. The report in the Brecon and Radnor newspaper on the 22nd April is 39 column inches long, 29" of which is a list of wedding presents, including one from the Duke of Norfolk who was related by marriage. The rest of the list is like an index to Kilvert's Diary, the names are all so familiar. Sam was at this time living at Penmyarth, Cwmdru, which is a large house on the Glanusk Estate and was only about three hundred yards from the mansion. The mansion was demolished in the 1950's and the present owners of the estate now live in Penmyarth.

At the end of what must have been a wonderful day the happy couple left for their honeymoon, stopping the first night at Malvern and then going on to Shanklin. Did they stay at Newstead? I don't think they still owned the house in 1892:

Because of Sam's ambition to get on and gain influence or perhaps at the instigation of his employer, Sam put himself up for election to the County Council in 1892 and in a non contested election was duly elected for Cwmdru, his own local area. He attended his first meeting on the 11th March 1892 and was selected to serve on the Finance Committee. Then, while on his honeymoon about six weeks later, he was appointed to the Committee for The Royal Commission for Labour. I assume he agreed to this before he went away to the I.O.W. Sam was not without influence on the Council - his Uncle Charles Evan-Thomas was Chairman from the Council's inception until his resignation in 1900, after which Sam's father-in-law became Chairman.

This time must have been the most satisfying and pleasant period in Sam's life. From 1891 until 1911 he occupied himself with his duties, not only with the Glanusk Estate but also for many of the local gentry including Mr. Venables of Llysdyman, Clara Thomas of Llwyn Madoc, Mr. Thomas of Welfield and The Duke of Beaufort. He was also engaged in the sale of Edward Middleton-Evans' estate in and around Llandrindod Wells in 1902.

On the occasion of Birmingham Corporation purchasing the land for building The Elan Valley Dams, Sam was in correspondence with S.W. Williams, the local Agent for Birmingham Water Works (and also the Architect of the new extension at Llysdyman in 1870). The subject of Sam's letters was shooting and fishing rights on the watershed. Unfortunately Sam's letters do not survive, only copies of S.W. Williams' answers to them. Sam took his responsibilities seriously, not only his work, but also his County Council duties. He was on numerous Committees and also represented his father-in-law on many occasions. In 1902 he attended Council meetings 22 times out of a possible 27.

In 1894 Sam went into partnership with two of his brothers, William Burgoyne and Cowper Bickerton. They formed a Company called The Cowper-Coles Galvanizing Syndicate. Another brother, Sherard Osborn, was the inventor of a process of preventing rust called Sheradizing - but that is another story. All went well for some time, but on 12th March 1912 a petition was filed in court against the Company and its Directors. An examination was held on 5th June 1912 the result of which led to Bankruptcy for the three brothers. I can imagine how Sam must have felt. Married into a large land-owning family, working for many titled people and a County Councillor, it must have been devastating. They managed to keep the news out of the local papers, but as the case was published in The London Gazette, Sam knew that sooner or later the secret would be out. The 1880 Local Government Act prohibited bankrupts from holding office. So, in October he wrote his letter of resignation to the County Council and he and Edith left Breconshire for Badminton, the Duke of Beaufort's Estate.

I don't know what happened to Cowper Bickerton at this time but William Burgoyne and his wife and family took a ship to Argentina where they settled in Buenos Aires. Sam, of course, was left to face the music on his own. William Burgoyne had a son who was named Sherard William. Sherard enlisted in the Royal Flying Corps in World War One, but was unfortunately killed in action in October 1918.

Sam applied to be discharged from Bankruptcy on 16th October 1912, but his discharge was suspended for two years, two months and eight days. The grounds for refusing absolute discharge were that his assets were not of a value equal to 10s. in the pound on the amounts of his unsecured liabilities and that he had brought on or contributed to his Bankruptcy by rash and hazardous speculations.

Shortly after their arrival at Badminton Sam was asked to take on a student and teach him the business of running an Estate. The student's name was John Mills, a young man who had been intent on a career in the Army until the sudden death of his father. He found himself responsible for an estate of 4,500 acres and with little knowledge of how to manage it. Sam Cowper-Coles and John Mills got along fine and the young man quickly picked up the necessary skills. But then another problem arose for Sam. Perhaps The Duke of Beaufort got to hear of Sam's troubles, I don't know, but the outcome was that John Mills offered Sam the job of Agent on his Estate at Bisterne, thus enabling him to carry on with his own career. This was in 1913. Incidentally John Mills was eventually promoted to Major and later became an M.P., receiving a Knighthood in the late 1930's.

In the meantime, Sam and Edith settled into life on the Bisterne Estate which is near Ringwood. They lived in the farmhouse called Lower Bisterne, a nice house close to the road with a good garden. I have had correspondence with the present owner of the Estate who is the son of Major Mills, and he remembers Sam very well. They used to call him C.C.

He was very friendly to the two brothers, but rather formal with the Estate workers. When John Mills married in 1918 his new wife didn't like the idea of Sam poking his nose into the affairs of the Mansion, but after a meeting about expenses etc., she was gradually persuaded that Sam knew what he was doing. After that she let Sam have his way and he ran the Estate with some success, it is after all still there.

The present owner of Bisterne is also a John Mills and he tells me that Sam was rather deaf and that he spoke in a very loud voice and that Edith was a very charming Lady and used to lend the two boys "Sapper" books to read. Sam was also involved with the Estate cricket team. I don't think he played for them, but he was Treasurer for many years. I have a photograph of the team taken outside their pavilion which had a thatched roof. Sam is standing on the left. I think the photograph was taken about 1930.

In 1932 Edith's health was not very good and it came as quite a surprise to the family when Sam died suddenly on 20th December. Edith lived on at Lower Bisterne, but for only two months as she died on 22nd February 1933. They are buried in Bisterne churchyard.

Out of curiosity I obtained a copy of Sam's will. There is no mention in his will of any members of the Cowper-Coles family, not even his favourite sister Minna. He left everything to his wife as you would expect, but had she not survived him, it was to go to his wife's family. His furniture and effects to his wife's brother and sisters. The remainder to his wife's Godchild, her niece. In his will he also mentions the Cowper-Coles' pictures which, I understand, are family portraits. I believe that these pictures are now in the possession of the Cowper-Coles family. He also mentions a bust of Prince Albert, given to either his father, Captain Cowper-Coles, or to his mother, by Queen Victoria. This is also in the possession of his family. There was a sale of effects after Edith's death.

Edith's Will is a more complicated affair. She also leaves her effects to her brother and sisters. She also mentions a marriage settlement of £2,000 which was invested. She and Sam used the interest, but the capital was still intact and was willed by Edith to her cousin, the then Lord Glanusk.

His wife stood by him through his troubles and, as we have seen, he appeared to remain on good terms with his wife's family; his brother-in-law was Executor to his Will

My thanks to Sherard Cowper-Coles, a member of the Kilvert Society and great nephew of Sam, for his help with the family tree etc; Mr. John Mills of Bisterne, for his recollections of Sam, and our Past President, Lady Delia, for her kindness and for giving me the photographs of Minna Cowper-Coles' wedding at Newbridge.

### FOR AESOP OF LLOWES

*(By Dr. Willy Lockwood)*

It is so sad  
To watch an old dog die  
To see the life seep out of him  
To hear him ask why:  
Why he has to sleep so much,  
Why has his world grown dim,  
What are all these changes for,  
And do I still love him?

It is so sad  
With his hearing gone  
He cannot hear me call.  
His teeth do hurt  
And feeding is a pain.  
But still the smells are all around  
That used to stir his blood;  
And I do love him still.

"Come on" I say "let us away  
Up on the Begwyns we will walk  
Around our lake, our silvery lake,  
That gives you pleasure still".  
He looked at me and wondered  
"What is in store for me?"  
At least he saw the winter through  
But now, what will I do?



## ON A MUSICAL NOTE

(By John Hodkin, Cumbria)

The history of 19<sup>th</sup> century music is littered with examples of operas which became very popular at the time but are now remembered, if at all, only for their overtures.

One of these is Masaniello which Kilvert records Mary and Alice Bevan playing at Hay Castle on Monday, 26<sup>th</sup> April, 1870. Kilvert describes it as "my favourite Masaniello". This comes in "Supplementary Extracts Relating to the Dew and Bevan Families".

There are in fact two operas called Masaniello. The first was by an Italian composer, Michele Enrico Carafa, 1787-1872, and was first seen in Paris in December 1827.

Unluckily for Carafa another opera with the same title by a much superior composer, Daniel Francois Esprit Auber, 1782-1871, was produced, also in Paris, two months later and soon superseded Carafa's work. Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians says of Carafa: "His chief limitation lay in his melody, which varies from the agreeably fluent to the devastatingly banal. For this as much as for any other reason he was fated to see his most popular pieces superseded by others on the same subjects."

Auber's Masaniello soon attained immense popularity with its many catchy tunes and the fine libretto by Scribe. It has the alternative title *The Dumb Girl of Portici* and deals with the rising of the Neapolitan people against their Spanish rulers in 1647. The heroine was portrayed as dumb, though not deaf, and the part was taken not by a singer but a star of the ballet. The Brussels premiere in 1830 is said to have sparked off the rising of the Belgians against their Dutch rulers which led to their independence.

I had never heard any music from Masaniello until last summer when my wife and I on holiday at Scarborough heard the New Spa Orchestra open a concert with the overture. It is certainly a fine work and one can understand why Kilvert was so taken with the melodies.

## FRANCIS KILVERT AND THE ANCIENT ORDER OF FORESTERS (Continued)

(By Karl Showler, Hay-on-Wye)

### The Horden Poster of 1869 (contd.)

When the old printroom of 'George Horden', Castle Street, Hay, now G.R. Grant's, was converted into flats in 1996 various posters were found stuck to the walls advertising events in the town, including the Hay Foresters' Anniversary. I was lucky in being given a photograph of the poster before it was destroyed.

The preserved part of the Foresters' poster reads in a rich diversity of types:

(A)ncient Order of  
(FO)RESTERS.  
(Court? Pe)rseverance no. 4906  
(?) Members of the above Court intend holding their  
(a)nnual  
(AN)NIVERSARY,  
(M)onday, July 12<sup>th</sup>, 1869  
at the  
(?) Hall, Wheat Sheaf Inn, Hay  
(?) will meet for business at half-past nine and at half-past Ten the  
(GRA)ND PROCESSION  
(?Fores)ters in full dress mounted on horseback, Banners, Streamers and Regalia.  
(?? Br)ass Band is engaged for the whole of the day.  
(M)embers will return to Foresters' Hall to Dinner, when/  
/the attendance of visiting  
(?) and Friends will be esteemed a favour.  
(Din)ner 2s. 6d. EACH  
.....  
(F)ORESTERS' BALL  
will take ple(asure) (?)ing  
.....



### Kilvert at the Hay Foresters Fete: Monday 11<sup>th</sup> June 1870

During the evening of July 7<sup>th</sup> 1870 when visiting Mr. and Mrs. Haigh Allen at Clifford Priory, Kilvert was invited by Mr. Henry Allen (aged 78) to luncheon at 'Oakfield' "when the Foresters are coming to his house".

William Plomer cut most of the day's entry for July 11<sup>th</sup> by omitting the account of the Foresters' Fete in favour of a romantic musing by Francis Kilvert on the girl who lived up the hill at Penllan. The truncated entry misled Plomer's indexer who made the index read 'Forester family (Clyro) 1, 171'. Fortunately Daffydd Ifans gives us the full entry which after the romantic musing over the girl reads:

"A small school (at Clyro) this morning because of the Foresters' Fete in The Hay perhaps. And, oh, the blank when I saw at a glance, or felt, that Gipsy (Elizabeth S. Jones, aged 9, of Pen-y-cae) was not there.

'The mountains this morning were a very unusually brilliant light blue. At 1.15 Mr. Venables drove me to Oakfield to luncheon and to see the gathering and parade of the Foresters. We stopped a few minutes in the town (Hay) at the corner near the Bank, and Father Ignatius's brother, (Clavering Lyne) trotted by on a strawberry roan pony round the back street under the castle wall with a white and black spaniel at his heels.

'The road was lively with people going to Oakfield to see the display.

'As we got to the top of the long winding steep drive we heard a sudden burst of cheering, green flags waved and two policemen, who kept the iron gates, saluted as we drove through.

"You are too late for my eloquence" said Mr. Allen as he greeted us. He had been making the Foresters a speech of which the burst of cheering we heard was the result and conclusion.

'The front lawn of the house was lined and filled with the Foresters in green scarves, holding large green and white picture banners representing relief being brought to a distressed family. Two men on horseback dressed to represent Robin Hood and Little John in green tunics, white capes, white breeches and large red boots, with flat black caps and bugles slung over the shoulder, rode and rolled about on their carty bay horses looking very foolish and uncomfortable in fine borrowed feathers and false beards.

'They ordered the march round the grass plat before the front door.

'First went Robin Hood and Little John rolling in their saddles like sacks, next straddled the Rifle Corps band blasting with their trumpets, and blowing out their cheeks till their eyes started, and the rear was brought up by the lurching banners and the men in green scarves marching to all sorts of time, and taking off their hats at the saluting point where Mr. Allen stood at the corner of the house.

'Then they took themselves off, the National Anthem having been played previously.

'After, to use his own words, 'lounging about' Kilvert with the gentry crowded into the house, 32 sitting down to a cold meal of salmon, chicken, salad, etc., 'and everything was very nice'. Kilvert thought Mr. Allen was aged 80 and "gets about and lives like other people and enjoys life".

It is clear from Kilvert's description that there are several large coloured picture banners in the field, these needed six Brothers to hold them still, two at the upright poles and one each on the four guy ropes. All the officers and initiated members would have worn the decorated sashes of their rank or green neck collars.

Although this fete was not reported in the Hereford Times it must have been a major event to have had several large banners present. These would have been either District Banners or those from large and prosperous Courts. Are we to conclude the day was organised by the new Hay and Wyeside District to mark its foundation the previous November with the local Courts being supported by those from the surrounding areas?

### The Forester's Walk in Chippenham 21<sup>st</sup> May 1872

Luckily for us William Plomer included in volume 2 of the Diary the following entry for Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> May 1872. This throws light on a more rural and informal procession. Francis Kilvert had come down to Langley in Wiltshire on a visit to his Father and Mother.

#### "Whitsun Tuesday, 21<sup>st</sup> May

As John Cozens was mowing the lawn this morning he told me that the Foresters were going to 'walk' in Chippenham today and as this is a high day with them, they were going to have a wagon bowered with green in which would be a shepherd and shepherdess with some sheep and lambs.

Perch (Kilvert's brother, Edward) and I could see nothing of the show in Chippenham so we came back to Cocklebury Lane where we still found the children waiting and we soon heard the band strike up, drum and trumpets. From the sound the procession was plainly marching on Langley. It stopped once or twice on the way to do honour to the house of some distinguished member of the Club, Strong or Bailey (possibly the Rev. Strong a low church minister, or Charles Bailey, the Chippenham doctor) but presently it arrived at the foot of Huntsman's Hill in full march preceded, surrounded, followed and escorted by an immense crowd. From the green outside the garden railings of Thomas Knight, the carpenter, we had an excellent view of the procession. First came two men on horse-back riding like flour sacks and rolling heavily from side to side. They wore green coats with gold ornaments, white breeches, hessian boots and ostrich feathers in their caps. Each bore a huge bugle and smote his horse with the edge of the sword.

After them walked gentlemen in black coats with green scarves and bearing wands of office. Then marched the band resplendent in a uniform of white green and gold, followed by a wagon bowered in green branches among which were ensconced the shepherd (James Gainey) in a white smock frock and broad flapping white straw hat, smoking a cigar. Opposite to the shepherd sat the shepherdess also dressed in white with a white straw hat, and the shepherd's little girl, Lily Gainey. Between them were wedged two stout sheep and a black sheep dog, and the shepherd looked as sheepish as the sheep. Behind them came another green embowered carriage with a buck's head and horns peering through the branches and Robin Hood lying down on the floor with his bow and arrows. The children were delighted with the show.

The procession marched in at the Pew Hills gate (Pew Hill subsequently the home of Mrs. Adderley) and round to the front of the house, and after a while came forth again, the band playing, the swords jingling, the horses curveting, riders rolling, shepherd smoking and the great banner born of two.

In the afternoon they were to go into the 'Forest', an island in the Avon above the Chippenham Bridge called 'the Ham'.

To be continued ...

#### **BORDER BELLS**

(Verses put together for the Jubilee Penny Reading but not used.  
With apologies to Sir John Betjeman)

Bells for matins ring at Clyro, Builth, Llanbedr, Newchurch too  
Bring the faithful in their carriage, or trudging meadows wet with dew,  
And work-worn hands now hold the hymn book which at dawn had milked the cow  
While Emmerline and Florence Hill, old John Morgan and the Solitary  
Lie sleeping in the churchyard now.

Ringing out across the landscape, Llanigon, Hardwick, Whitney, Hay,  
To Mouse Castle and the Bluff announce again the Sabbath day;  
And hands are active on the bell ropes, giving rest to team and plough,  
While Edward Morgan, the Thomas sisters, all the Dews and all the Bevans  
Are lying in the churchyard now.

Evening bells from Bredwardine reach Moccas Park and Merbach Hill,  
Men and women, children singing – come from cottage, farmstead, mill –  
“The day Thou gavest, Lord, is ended, the darkness falls at Thy Behest”  
While Francis Kilvert, the two Miss Newtons, Priscilla Price and Jack My Lord  
In the churchyard lie at rest.

Kilvert “being dead yet speaketh” of those who sang, recited, played,  
Though their graves may be forgotten neath some sombre yewtree's shade,  
Voices are long stilled and silent, fingers, fleshless, cold and numb;  
Instrumentalists and actors, reciters, singers – all are sleeping  
While they wait for Kingdom Come.

Edward West

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