

The Dillwyn Collection

The Journals of Lewis Llewelyn Dillwyn (b.1814 d.1892)

Transcribed by Richard Morris

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Note: This is a working edition of the journals that have been transcribed over a number of years by Richard Morris. This edition includes inconsistencies in presentation and orthography – in part due to inconsistencies in the originals. This work is presented to aid research into the Dillwyn family and related topics. It is part of an ongoing project that aims in the future to bring together a number of diaries and to convert them to modern, marked-up formats that will allow more powerful features and searching.

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**DIARY OF LEWIS LLEWELYN DILLWYN
1833-4**

Swansea University Library ref: D1

This is only a partial Diary of events and is written in an ordinary notebook. In transcribing this, and the other volumes, I have kept to original spelling and where a sentence has been begun with a lower case letter, or there is an absence of a full stop etc, I have followed the originals.

**L Ll Dillwyn
Burrows Lodge**

October 1833

The lengthen'd night elapsed, the Morning shines
Serene, in all her dewy beauty bright,
Unfolding fair the last Autumnal day.
And now the mountain Sun dispels the fog;
The rigid Hoar frost melts before his beam;
And hung on every spray, on every blade
Of grass, the myriad dewdrops twinkle round

Thompson Seasons

11th

The weather hitherto has been remarkably fine, the days have been warm & Cloudless, and the nights clear & frosty. Woodcocks have made their appearance much earlier than usual, one was killed the 1st of this month, above Clyne wood by Gregory the Dukes keeper, & I myself saw two, of which I killed one on the 7th. This day the weather is rainy & unsettled and there is every appearance of a continuation of it; as the glass is falling and it is nearly new moon. I have observed several large flights of Fieldfares, but as yet I have not seen any Buntings [?]; the Starlings also have begun to congregate into large flights, and may generally be seen flying about, over the Salt marshes.-

15th.

Since the 11th the Weather has continued Stormy as I expected it would. Last night between 11 & 12 o clock there was a Thunder Storm accompanied by the most tremendous rain. The wind continues to blow from the South West –

20

The weather though still stormy is much finer than it has been for the last week. Yesterday while Shooting at the **Gnoll CHECK WORD IS IN ORIGINAL**⁻¹ I observed some fox gloves.

29

¹ At Neath. The house is no longer standing but the park is open to the public.

Since the 20th the weather has been very stormy but today is has cleared off & looks as though it would be fine. Yesterday I saw some Swallows playing about before their departure.

31

the weather continues fine, but without frosts at night. I was on the sands with the Duck gun this morning where I killed a Godwit & a Golden Plover of which I saw several - -

November

Thus solitary, & in pensive guise
Oft let me wander oer the russet mead,
And through the Saddened grove, Where scarce is heard
One dying strain to cheer the woodmans toil
Haply some widowed songster pours his plaint
Far in feint warbling, through the tawny copse: (thrushes,)
While congregated linnets, larks
And each wild throat, whose artless strains so late
Swelled all the music of the swarming shades,
Robbed of their tuneful souls, now shivering sit
On the dead tree, a dull despondent flock;
With not a brightness waving oer their plumes,
& nought save chattering discord in their note.

Thompson Seasons

November

Penllergare

30

This month has been extremely Stormy all through on the 20th and the two following days there was a dense fog more so than in common in this part of the Country. Last Monday night there was a Sharp frost which was followed on Wednesday & Thursday by incessant rain the whole time.

Woodcocks are scarcer Than I ever remember to have seen them at this time f year, 6 being the greatest number I have seen any day as yet.

Yesterday morning & Friday night it blew a very heavy Gale from the North West and wrecked two vessels in Swansea bay, one of them close to the Pier head, but happily there were no lives lost in either of them -

March 1834

Burrows Lodge

Winter still lingering on the Verge of Spring,
Retires reluctant and from time to time
Looks back while at his keen & chilling breath
Fair Flora Sickens

As yet the trembling year is unconfirmed
And Winter oft at ever resuming the breeze;
Chills the pale moon, and bids his driving Sleet
Deform the day delightles, *[sic]*

Thompson

March 1834

I have passed over the months of December, January and February as there has been very little change in the weather, which has been quite free from frost and very Stormy & rainy.

There were plenty of primroses & Daffodils in January – and Elm Chesnut *[sic]* and Hawthorn leaves began to make their appearance about the 20th of February.

March 7

The weather as yet has been very stormy the wind keeping down to west and south west – The land is quite saturated with water which is very bad for Farmers and Gardeners as it prevents their sowing seeds, in a great measure – I went out this morning at Penllergare with my fishing rod and found that the Trout rose pretty freely – I also observed a wood Anemone which is first I have seen this year, but they have been in blow some time in warmer situations. The Poetic Narcissus is also in blow there –

March 17

The weather for the few last days has been very fine but the wind has been rather easterly – for my own part I have not been out as I have been laid up with the Influenza which is very much about, though I believe not so much as it was last year –

John told me on the 14th that he had found Blue Bells in blow – Horse Chesnuts *[sic]* small Elms, Sycamores, Larches, **Jackamhacks** &c- begin to look green, and every thing is very forward.

March 21

For the last week the weather has been cold & the Wind from East & North East but there has been no frost –

Today However the Wind has changed to South West, and it is altogether much milder –

This morning I saw a Crow flying at a great hight *[sic]* from the ground over the shore, when suddenly he saw something that attracted his attention on the ground. (Carrion I suppose) upon which he dropped in a slanting direction about half way to the ground when he changed the position of his wings and slanted down to the ground directly under the place he first began to fall from; descending with such rapidity that if he had been shot he would not have arrived at ground much sooner; this feat is often done by rooks as well as crows but I do not think that ever I observed it before –

The rooks have begun to build sometime at Penllergare. Cowslips are in blow in the field at Sketty Hall.

March 31

Since the 21st the weather has been changeable, the Wind changing from South West to North East - - I have not as yet observed any of our Summer Birds of Passage, but perhaps the reason is that I have not been much in the country. Curlews, Oyster catchers, Sanderlings and the other Birds that inhabit this Coast in the winter have I believe quite left us -

April 1834

Burrows Lodge

April 4

The weather since the last date has been generally fine, with the wind up to the North -

Today I was in the Willows Garden where I saw a Thrushes nest with Eggs in it - when I said that Oyster catchers had quite left us I was mistaken as I have seen one or two small parties of them since.

April 6

Today at Penllergare I saw White Lilac with some few flowers out upon it -

April 12

Today while walking from Sketty I saw a Martin flying about over the Sand banks. John told me that he has seen a Swallow on the tenth, two days before.

April 18

The weather for some time past has been very dry the wind keeping to the east. Vegetation has lately been much checked but as yet not much mischief has been done.

Today I saw oak & beech in leaf at Penllergare and the lilies of the Valley are likewise in blow there -

I have heard several young Rooks -

April 22

Today at Penllergare I heard a Cuckow [*sic*] - I likewise saw a Redstart for the first time this year -

April 29

The Weather up to the day before yesterday (Sunday) continued dry, and Rain began to be very much wanted, then however in the afternoon a heavy rain came on and continued more or less through the night - Yesterday it was Showery and today there seems to be every probability that there will be a continuence [*sic*] of heavy weather - - On Friday last I took a walk with John on the Crumlen Bog where we saw a flag in blow -

May - 1834

Sketty Hall

May 10

Yesterday I saw the Sand Roses in blow in several places on the Sand Banks –
The cockchafer are very numerous this year –
There is plenty of May in blow about here –
The Oak trees in the valley at Penllergare are nearly in full leaf.-
Many of the young Rooks are able to fly nearly as well as the old ones.-

June 1834

June 9

Since the last date I have been in London for a fortnight during which time the weather has been very dry and hot.

On my way down I saw wheat which had turned color – near Salt Hill –

June 23

for the last fortnight we have had a great deal of Rain and Stormy weather the rain was much wanted and has done a great deal of good to the Country.

June 20

in the beginning of the week we began to cut our Hay which made me wish for fine weather till yesterday however it was wet and rainy – but then it was a very fine day and today there is every prospect of another –

On Sunday last I was out with John at Penllergare Curculio² meadow when we found the plants of the Penguicola but they were all out of flower – In the same meadow we also found the little cranbury [*sic*] in flower but there were very few as it is rather early for them yet –

Yesterday I saw mushrooms in the Fields about here –

July 1834

All through this month the weather has been rainy and Bad – there have been likewise in different places heavy thunderstorms.

August

August 1.

This morning there was the most tremendous thunder Storm accompanies with rain I ever saw. At Newton there was a man killed and at Foxhole a house was struck –

August 19

Today John & I returned home from a fortnights tour though Cumberland & Westmorland for account of which see Journal.

During the time we have been away the weather has been tolerably fine –

August 27 –

Since we have returned the weather has been stormy and cold – and there have been Thunder Storms about for several days

² In other sources this is called Curcules Meadow

September –

September 8

The rain and Stormy weather has continued with very little abatement so that the Farmers have not been able to get any of the Barley in –

September 15

Scince [*sic*] Friday last the weather has been very fine and there appears to be every chance of a continuance of it

September 26

The weather has continued fine Scince [*sic*] the 19th but all last night & this morning it has been pouring rain – The leaves have begun to fall for some time past –

October 25

for some time past there have been heavy equinoctial Gales but yesterday morning the Weather changed and there was a heavy fall of Snow which however cleared off and scince [*sic*] that it has been very clear and cold – this morning between Neath & Swansea I saw a large flight of wood pigeons.

28

The wind has changed & the weather is mild and rainy –

November

2. The weather has continued without any alteration Mild & fine – On Wednesday last I went out at Penllergare with a gun and killed a couple of Cocks the first I had seen this Season Yesterday I also shot one – They appear to keep about the small covers & Hedgerows –

17. Last week we had a very heavy gale of wind which was followed by a sharp frost which lasted three or four days – the wind this morning us up at north west & there are showers of hail & rain falling occasionally –

December

6. from about the 17th November to the 28 the weather continued cold & dry with the wind from North to East, but without much frost – from the 25 however to this day it has been very mild & rainy – In my garden there is now a Damask rose which I planted late in the spring with several blossoms upon it –

January 1835

All the latter part of December and generally speaking through out the month the weather has been very fine & dry but there has been no frost or Snow –

10. On the 3rd there was a frost which continued till 8th Thursday when it began to thaw – on Tuesday night it froze very hard and all Wednesday & Thursday the

ice at Penllergare was hard enough to bear – Yesterday & today the whether *[sic]* has been very mild accompanied with wind & rain from the South West –

August 1835

23. The weather for the last fortnight in July and hitherto though this month has been extremely hot and dry today and yesterday however there has been some rain -

September

This month has been stormy and rainy throughout

October 1835

The weather through this month has been with the exception of about a week in beginning of it, very bad – and there have been several heavy gales.

*[For November 1835 Dillwyn has made a chart to illustrate the weather conditions.
I have reproduced this as a scan of the original]*

Burrows Lodge, 2, 3, 5

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Crumlen Bog, 5

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