

**DIARY OF FRANCIS
EVANS, SECRETARY TO
BISHOP LLOYD, 1699-1706**

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Diary of Francis Evans, secretary to Bishop Lloyd, 1699-1706 by Francis Evans & David Robertson

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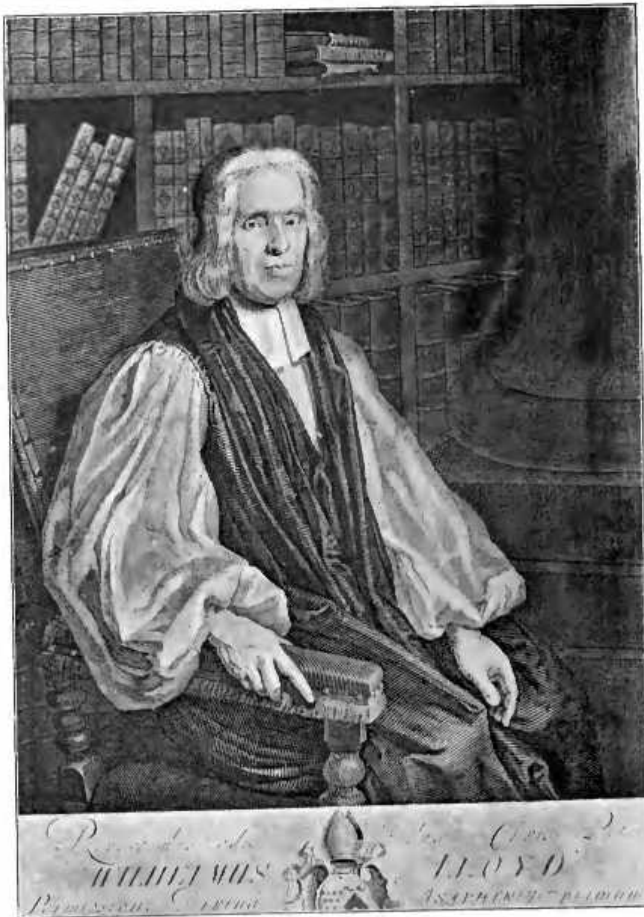
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FRANCIS EVANS & DAVID ROBERTSON

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EVANS, SECRETARY TO
BISHOP LLOYD, 1699-1706**



BISHOP LLOYD,
At the age of 87.

From a Print in Nash's "History of Worcestershire."

DIARY OF FRANCIS EVANS,

SECRETARY TO BISHOP LLOYD,

1699—1703.

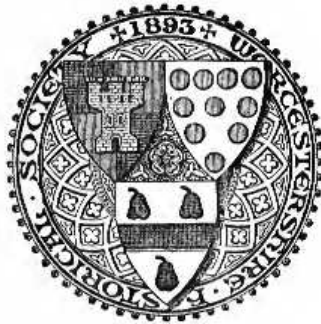
EDITED FOR

THE WORCESTERSHIRE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

BY THE

REV. DAVID ROBERTSON, M.A.,

RECTOR OF HARTLEBURY, AND HON. CHAPLAIN TO THE KING.



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INTRODUCTION.

THE Diary of Francis Evans, Secretary to Bishop Lloyd, one of the famous Seven Bishops, was found by the late Bishop Philpott in the Muniment Room of Hartlebury Castle, and was deposited by him in the Diocesan Registry at Worcester.

It is beautifully written in the clear and careful handwriting of a professional clerk, and it gives a unique picture of a bishop's life in England 200 years ago.

FRANCIS EVANS was, like his master, a Welshman. He followed the Bishop from St. Asaph to Lichfield, and from Lichfield to Worcester. His father, John Evans, kept the 'Bell Inn' at Oswestry. Frank seems to have married above his position, for his wife was the daughter of the Lord of the Manor of Snelston in Derbyshire. He was a most faithful and diligent scribe. He chronicled everything, events great and small—the death of King William III., and the death of the deer in the park; the Consecration of a church, and the appointment of a gamekeeper; the Livings in the Bishop's gift, and the haunches of venison sent to the Bishop's friends; the places where he himself "lay" each night, and the friends with whom "his Lo^p" dined.

He was hardworking and energetic, constantly riding about the country on business. He made long journeys on horseback, sometimes sleeping in a different bed each night for three months on end. He met with many adventures; for instance, at Tredington, "where y^e room above stairs fell under us; though there were many persons in it, and many below, wee suffered no harme." Again, a year afterwards, "This day I escaped falling and being stifled in M^r Jones' house of office at Oxford (as I did this day 12 months being hurt at Tredington), when the floor fell under the Chancellor, Stewart, Jury, and myself, and many others that attended the Court there." Again, Nov. 26th, 1703, "I went to Tredington and thence to Dascot, and thro' a most violent wet storme thence to Blockley, passing y^e waters wth

great difficulty, and that night happened the most violent storme that has been known in the memory of man in this kingdom, but it did little damage in y^e Northern parts." And the next day "I went from Blockley to Shipston in a very stormy day, and going thence to Honington in the night, being dark and y^e ways deep, crossing a rut, my horse fel upon me, and lay some time on my leg, wth endangered breaking of it, but by y^e assistance of two p^rsons that were on y^e road I got from under him . . . hurt¹"

He met, poor man, with other misfortunes, for in those eight years he lost in succession his young wife, his mother, his father, and his father-in-law.

He had the greatest veneration for "my Lord," and was much trusted by him. A clergyman in the Diocese of Lichfield wrote to the "wicked" Bishop Watson, who was deprived for simony by Archbishop Tenison, in these terms of Francis Evans—"The Bishop's will was his law. A *sic volumus* from Frank Evans the Secretary was enough to remove a poor clergyman from his livelhood. I know several displaced upon Frank's order, and two lines from him was as powerful and as legal as the *long pole of Canterbury's* sentence against your Lordship."

THE DIARY begins in 1699. The Bishop was then in his 73rd year. He had been a bishop for 19 years—12 years at St. Asaph, and 7 years at Lichfield. He was born at Tilehurst Rectory near Reading. His father, the Rev. Richard Lloyd, was a Royalist, devoted to the cause of Charles I. He "suffered very much upon the king's account in the time of the wars, and was four or five times imprisoned by the rebels." His wife's name was Anne Wicken. He sent his son to Oriel, where he had been himself. William Lloyd, the future bishop, while yet a boy, "gave proof of so fertile an intellect, and so diligently studied Greek and Latin authors and oriental literature, that at the age of eleven years he turned out a distinguished ornament of the University of Oxford²." He took his Degree at the age of 15, on the 25th October, 1642, "*being Tuesday after Edgehill Fight*." He was ordained Deacon when only 21, during the Commonwealth, by Bishop Skinner of Oxford,

¹ Words in cypher.

² From the monument in Fladbury Church.

afterwards Bishop of Worcester. "In those very iniquitous times, when the Church was falling, he was not afraid to take the sacred Orders of a Deacon, and, when it was almost trodden underfoot, those of the Priesthood¹."

After he was ordained he went to be tutor in the family of Mr. William Backhouse, of Swallowfield near Reading. Mr. Backhouse was a Rosicrucian and student of the occult sciences. He gave great encouragement to those who were addicted to the same pursuits, especially to Elias Ashmole. He sent his son John to Wadham, and Lloyd went with him, just as Bentley took his pupil, James Stillingfleet, the Bishop's son, to the same College 20 years later. John Backhouse died young, and his sister succeeded to Swallowfield. She married into the Clarendon family, and it was at Swallowfield that Lord Clarendon wrote the History of the Great Rebellion.

At the Restoration Lloyd was made Prebend of Ripon, but fell ill of "a quartan ague and had no health for business for three or four years."

He married, but his first wife only lived a year. After being fourteen years a widower he was married again in Westminster Abbey to a daughter of one of the Prebendaries². He was then King's Chaplain and Rector of St. Mary's, Reading. He became also Dean of Bangor and Canon Residentiary of Salisbury, and was preferred in 1676 to the Vicarage of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, "the greatest Cure in England;" and "there he stood in the front of the battel all King James' reign³."

This is the description given of his learning and scholarship by his contemporary Bishop Burnet:—

"Lloyd was a great critick in the Greek and Latin authors, but chiefly in the Scriptures; of the words and phrases of which he carried the most perfect concordance in his memory, and had it the readiest about him of all the men that ever I knew. He was an exact historian, and the most punctual in chronology of all our divines. He had read the most books, and with the best

¹ From the monument in Fladbury Samuel Fell, Dean of Christ Church, Church.

² Anne, d. of Walter Jones, Preb. of Westminster, and granddaughter of Dr.

³ Burnet's "History of his own Times."

judgment, and had made the most copious abstracts out of them of any in this age, so that Wilkins¹ used to say he had the most learning *in ready cash* of any he ever knew."

While Vicar of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields he went with the Princess Mary into Holland, being her first Chaplain. Charles II. promoted him to the See of St. Asaph, to which he was consecrated 3rd October, 1680. He was then 53. He lived to be over 90, so that he was a bishop for more than 37 years. It was while he was at St. Asaph that he was committed to the Tower by James II. for resisting his illegal proceedings. Along with him were Sancroft, Archbishop of Canterbury, Ken, Bishop of Bath and Wells, Turner of Ely, White of Peterborough, Lake of Chichester, and Trelawney of Bristol. The popular feeling in favour of the seven bishops was very strong. Macaulay's account of their Trial and Acquittal is one of the most striking passages in his History. Lloyd, who had lived much in London, seems to have been as popular as any of them. "He was unable to get through Palace yard by reason of the crowds of people who pressed round him in their enthusiasm, and kissed his hands and garments; and was rescued by Lord Clarendon in his carriage by a circuitous way²."

When James II. was dethroned, Lloyd took the oaths to William and Mary with willingness, for he was a strong Protestant, and made every effort to persuade the clergy to follow his example. He was soon promoted to Lichfield, where he rebuilt Eccleshall Castle, which had fallen into ruin, and after seven years he was advanced to Worcester. The King had a high opinion of him, and perhaps thought he would do something to make his government more popular in a country not specially favourable to his cause.

If the number of portraits of a man be any guide to his greatness, then indeed Bishop Lloyd must have been among the greatest of bishops, for the number of his portraits is quite confusing. Three of them are engraved, and extremely well engraved, in Nash's "History of Worcestershire." Besides these there is a portrait at Lambeth, another at Lichfield, another in the pos-

¹ Bishop of Chester, a great authority.

² Clarendon's Correspondence.