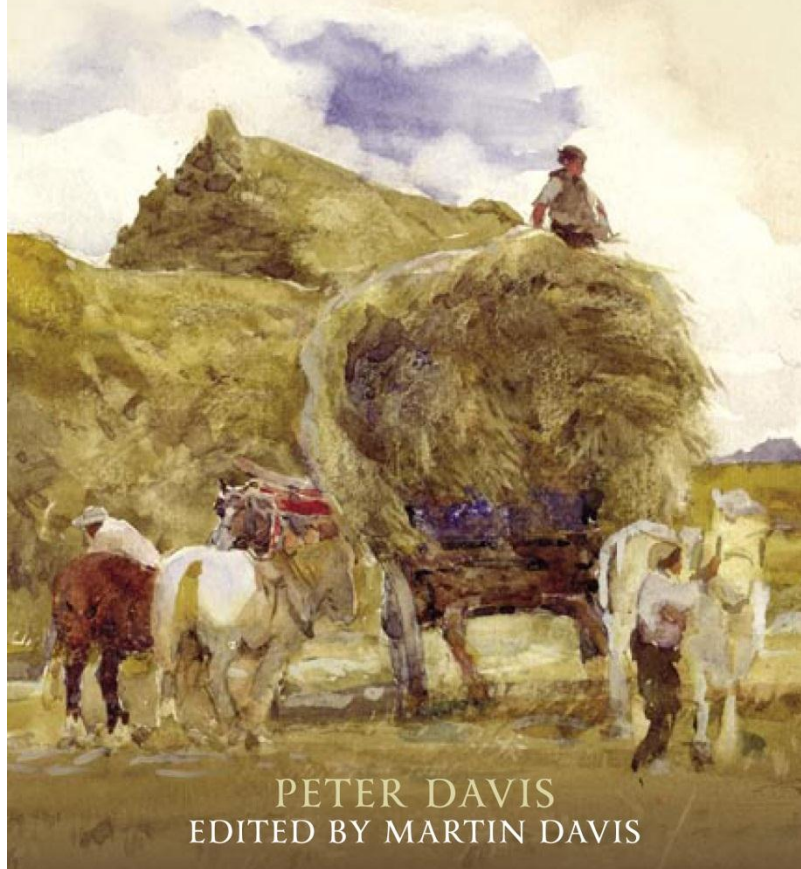


THE DIARY OF A SHROPSHIRE FARMER

A YOUNG YEOMAN'S LIFE AND TRAVELS 1835-37



Alongside is the front cover of a June 2011 publication* (from Amberley), of which I, as the editor, am happy to bring you news.

Not many young farmers of the early nineteenth century left diaries that have come down to us intact today, still fewer from Shropshire, at a time when country life continued much as it had since long before the Industrial Revolution.

In June 1835, my great-great-grandfather, the twenty-three-year-old Peter Davis set out from his home in the Teme valley on a mini grand tour. As one might expect, his first concern was for the current agricultural scene. Not surprisingly, however, when he came to the great cities of Liverpool and Edinburgh, it was they that took more of his attention. This young man's travel diary presents a vivid snapshot of the experience of passing through the north of England and southern Scotland during the reign of King William IV.

It is complemented by Peter Davis' longer narrative, describing the day-to-day events of his life at home during the years 1836/7, culminating in his beloved father's last illness and death. Before the railways came to Shropshire, Worcestershire and Herefordshire, every journey from Peter's home in Burford was significant. Through the discovery of this diary, to which I have added maps, a substantial biographical appendix and a number of genealogies, it has been possible to think ourselves into the lives of past generations.

Having long been interested in conservation issues, I draw comparisons in my introductory essay between the changes affecting the landscape at the time of the diaries and those we face today. My photographs, some taken during my 2009 tour following in the footsteps of Peter Davis' travels, illustrate the text.

This unique book will be of interest to local Shropshire, Worcestershire and Herefordshire residents, family historians and all those with a concern and love for country life in preindustrial times.

Copies are available from me at 28 Moorend Park Road, Cheltenham GL53 0JY, *email* martinmdavis@gmail.com, *telephone* 01242 575779, price £16.99 (or £18.95 post-paid in the UK).

Martin Davis

* 235 x 156 mm | paperback | 224 pages | 59 b&w illustrations