

1851 CENSUS: HO107/1664. folio 161. page 24.
Address: 3 Colonnade, Ryde, Newchurch, IW.

George BUTLER. Head. Mar. 31. Master Printer (empl 2 men). Ryde, IW.

Hannah BUTLER. Wife. Mar. 33. Landport, Hants.
George Coombs BUTLER. Son. 7. Ryde, IW.
Sarah BUTLER. Dau. 5. Landport, Hants.
Caroline BUTLER. Dau. 3. Ryde, IW.
Arthur BUTLER. Son. 1. Ryde, IW.
Mary BUSHELL. Serv. Un. 20. Servant. Binstead, IW.

1859 WHITE's DIRECTORY of Hampshire & Isle of Wight - page 661
Isle of Wight Observer (published every Saturday) **Geo. BUTLER**, 3 Colonnade, Ryde.

1861 CENSUS: RG9/658. folio 63. pages 3/4.
Address: Lind-street, 3 Colonnade, Ryde, Newchurch, IW.

**George BUTLER. Head. Mar. 41. News & Gen Printer & Bookbinder empl 5men 2youths.
Ryde, IW**

Hannah BUTLER. Wife. Mar. 42. Landport, Hants.
George C. BUTLER. Son. Un. 17. Printer's App. Ryde, IW.
Caroline BUTLER. Dau. 13. Ryde, IW.
Arthur D. BUTLER. Son. 11. Scholar. Ryde, IW.
Alexander BUTLER. Son. 9. Scholar. Ryde, IW.
Bessie BUTLER. Dau. 7. Scholar. Ryde, IW.
Oliver BUTLER. Son. 5. Scholar. Ryde, IW.

ISLE OF WIGHT OBSERVER Saturday 9th September 1865

OUR LATE EDITOR

The mournful aspect which this portion of our paper wears will be the first intimation to many of our readers that the hand that has written nearly all that has appeared in the editorial columns of this journal since its commencement, September 4th, 1852- now lies inanimate in the grave. After a struggle of nearly six long years with a terrible disease, which never quits a final hold on its victim, and during which period his intellect never failed him, Mr. **Geo. BUTLER** expired a few hours after the issue of our last paper. A passing notice of one so widely-known to the Aquatic World and in his native Island is due both to the deceased and to our readers, and we hope to give the same in a spirit of impartiality and fairness and without undue flattery to the memory of the dead. The late Editor of this paper was the son of a village shoemaker- at least, so the latter might be termed, as when his son George was born in "Upper Ryde" in 1820 it was then one of the two villages which were incorporated by Act of Parliament in 1829. he was, therefore, just old enough to remember that event, which was inaugurated by a visit from the celebrated Irish barrister, the late Mr. Cilas PHILLIPS, whom some of the inhabitants, whose property was claimed for the town purposes, had retained to look after their interests. A real barrister was in those days a great novelty in Ryde, and the sayings of the witty Irishman were treasured up in the town for many years afterwards. Then followed the erection of the market-house, and its threatened destruction during an election riot by the inhabitants of the town; all of which events our departed Editor had a vivid

remembrance of, and to them he has frequently referred in this journal. Taking, therefore, into consideration the important events that, so far as Ryde is concerned, have been crowded into a short space of time, and the vast increase of the town since he was born, George BUTLER was a link between the past and present times of Ryde. The early life of the late Editor of this paper did not afford him many opportunities of elevating himself in the social scale. From the National School he was sent as a cow-keeper; which employment he threw up in disgust; and a Mr. RADDON having set up a small printing office in the town, young George became his assistant, and subsequently was apprenticed to two other printers in the town. He was the first, therefore, that ever acquired a knowledge of the art of printing in the town of Ryde, and he was admitted by the most competent judges to be one of the best practical printers in the South of England. The nature of the employment in which he was engaged soon gave him a taste for reading and the desire to overcome the disadvantages arising from the want of an early education. In 1837 he purchased a Cobbett's Grammar, and laid therefrom a foundation for the future. The opportunities for improvements in those days were by no means so abundant as at present; but that George BUTLER made the best use of them is evidenced from the numerous articles that have appeared from his pen in this paper. There are very few editors who have written on such numerous topics as has the deceased. His nautical knowledge was admitted by men of eminence. On subjects connected with agriculture, he was at home; and some useful hints upon the shoeing of horses given in this journal have recently been carried out. He was also a great authority on parochial and town matters, and was thoroughly acquainted with the history of the Island in which he was born. If a little one-sided in political views, it should be borne in mind that it is a common fault with many who have possessed greater advantages to attribute much that is owing to circumstances to class legislation. An old sailor, a native of Ryde, used to exhibit his bare back to a retired naval officer in this town when George BUTLER was a little boy. The man had been cruelly flogged when under the command of this officer, and as there could be no particular punishment awarded to a man for exhibiting his scars, and as general curiosity was created thereby to hear the man's tale, it soon became exceedingly unpleasant to the gentleman for whose especial benefit this exhibition was made. It became, in fact, absolutely necessary for him to either silence the "old salt" or to quit the town. So one fine afternoon seeing the old sailor near the Pier and about to strip, the gentleman stepped up to him, and after informing his victim that he was sorry for what he had done, and that he had become a better man since the power of flogging people was taken from him, he compromised the matter with a £5 note and a suit of clothes. It was this man's tale that gave out late Editor such an abhorrence of the system of flogging in the Army and Navy- a system which he never neglected the slightest opportunity to expose and denounce. George BUTLER was born at a time when the memory of the Old French War was fresh in men's minds, and had many a tale told him when a boy of the doings of the press-gang in Ryde. Revenue cruisers were in those days too much occupied in watching or avoiding the enemy to exercise very great vigilance upon the contrabandists. Smuggling, therefore, was the order of the day. The middle-class men ventured their money- the hardy mariner his life- and the Island gentry were their customers. When regulations became more stringent, and the bold smuggler could no longer cross the Channel with the impunity he had done, those who were captured by the Coastguard were regarded as the victims of a tyrannical Government. In early life George BUTLER was impregnated with such notions as these; but we need not add that he did not long retain them. Great, however, was his indignation when some St. Helens men - who had been taught to smuggle from their infancy - were, upon conviction, because they could not pay a fine, cast into the dungeons of Winchester goal and subjected to the ignominious treatment of felons. The flannel of these men were taken from off their backs, and they were compelled to work at the treadmill upon insufficient food. The consequence was, that several of the men died shortly after their liberation, and others were injured for life. Our departed Editor denounced - and we think properly - these official acts of cruelty and the bench of magistrates who sanctioned them; and to the close of his life his two great standing grievances were "flogging in the Army" and "the Winchester Bastille." It is not saying anything derogatory to a man's memory to state that he was somewhat prejudiced in favor of his native town, and that he was more attached to the aborigines

and their descendants than he was to “oveners,” especially when he had resided the whole of his life in the place of his birth, and had no opportunity of becoming acquainted with men and manners elsewhere. This feeling is, one would imagine from the recent speech of the hon. baronet who is supposed to be the chosen representative of the intelligence of this county in Parliament, still running very strong in the Island; but in the columns of this journal it had never been too apparent, nor was it ever so strongly displayed as on the occasion of the neglect of a poor townsman, who unquestionably possessed great natural abilities and mechanical skill, by the governing body of the town. To sum up all that need to be added with respect to the departed, “He surprised all who knew him, from the beginning to end of his career.” Since the commencement of the year 1860 his life was one scene of continued pain and suffering – a strong man in the prime of life struggling with the angel of death. Many of those who read the leading articles in this journal little imagined the couch of agony on which they were produced. Should any unpleasant remembrance exist in the minds of any with respect to what has been written we ask them to keep in mind this extenuating circumstance, and bear no animosity to the dead. The love of life is strong within us, and it is not surprising that poor George BUTLER clung to it till almost to the last. Accustomed from his earliest years to ramble along the shores and among the nooks and corners of his native Isle, he refused to believe that at the early age of 45 he should be removed therefrom, but fondly hoped that joyous health would

Once more waft him to that sunny shore,
Which e’en in slumber he will tread no more.

A continual dropping is, however, said to wear away stones, and a few days before his death the once strong young man yielded himself to the will of an exorable law. Satisfied that his time was come, a few minute before he died he exclaimed, “It is all over for me,” yielded up the spirit which his poor emaciated frame had not the strength to retain. He was followed to the grave by a large number of the members of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, M.U., the interests of which he had ever done his best to promote and many others by whom he was esteemed. To this brief notice we will add “May he rest in peace !”

Researched & typed by
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