

DEATH OF "THE OLDEST INHABITANT"

There is scarcely a man-of-war afloat, and certainly no colony, where Ryde men are not to be found, and whom the *Observer* does not reach; whether at home or at the antipodes, the eye of every middle-aged native of Ryde which falls upon our obituary of this week will conjure up in his "mind's-eye" the well-known form of Mrs. **WOOD**, "Granny WOOD," wife of "Johnny WOOD" of Free School celebrity.

This venerable lady was born in White-cottage, on the shore at Ryde, in 1766; and, when a blushing maiden of "sweet 16," witnessed the capsizing of the Royal George and "twice five hundred men" upwards of 80 years ago, the very bones of whom are now turned into sand on the Dover, and their graves (which we can recollect) obliterated.

She was several years the senior of the Duke of Wellington and Napoleon, who have long since tumbled into the limbo of history; she had attained her majority when the American Constitution was born; she was what is usually considered a middle-aged person when the nineteenth century began to roar; and she was jogging on towards the allotted "three score years and ten" when she literally used to hold the rod over our head about 30 years ago.

The life of such an aged person covers almost the most eventful century of the world's history, and we much doubt if it will ever be matched, whether the wars and conquests in India, the discovery and populating of the colonies, the wars of Europe, the discovery and invention in the arts and sciences, be considered.

She will be the first one interred in what is called the "unconsecrated" portion of the new Ryde cemetery, that set apart for Catholics, as several years ago she embraced that faith; and she will impart an historical character to the ground.
