

ISLE OF WIGHT OBSERVER Sat 26th March 1881

Death Notice:-

**LEACH** .. On the 23rd inst., at Ryde, **T. LEACH**, Esq., J.P. aged 68 years.

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**DEATH OF MR. THOMAS LEACH, J.P.**

It is with deep regret we record the death of **Thomas LEACH**, Esq., J.P., of Seaford Lodge. Those acquainted with the deceased gentleman must have noticed his altered look for some time past, and a few months ago he went abroad for the benefit of his health. The change seemed to do him little permanent good, and although he has kept about till comparatively a recent date, he was evidently very feeble. The weakness increased; all hope of recovery was evidently vain; and he quietly and peacefully sank to rest at his residence on Wednesday morning.

There were few amongst our local residents so well known as Mr. LEACH. Having lived in Ryde for over thirty years, he was well acquainted with the wants and requirements of the Island. Apart from the respect which long residence and high character must secure, Mr. LEACH had other claims to consideration. He was a barrister of very high standing, and at one time we understand filled a judgeship in India. The judicial training, clear intellect, and great business capacity of Mr. LEACH were not long passed unrecognised here, and shortly after taking up residence in Ryde he was placed on the commission of the peace for the Island. He was always attentive to his magisterial duties, and was one of the most valuable members of our Island county Bench. A good lawyer, he at the same time always studied the equity of the cases which came before him, and it was noted that as a magistrate he mingled justice with mercy. At the Quarter Sessions he also rendered valuable assistance, and for years he represented the Island on the County Finance Committee.

A staunch Conservative, Mr. LEACH was ever ready to aid the cause, and he greatly assisted in establishing the Conservative Association here. The papers on the political topics of the day which he has read at the Association meetings have shown him to be a scholarly writer and a hard hitter. Mr. LEACH, however, first came prominently before the Ryde public about ten or eleven years ago. We do not desire to re-open the questions which agitated the ratepayers during that stormy and troublesome period in the history of our town, and which commenced with the opposition to the purchase of the Gas-Works. Suffice it to say that Mr. LEACH took a leading part in the opposition against that purchase, and was one of the most prominent members of the Ratepayers' Association which was then formed. Mr. LEACH with characteristic energy, espoused the cause of the ratepayers, and it was no doubt in a great measure due to his influence and exertions, that the then members of the Town Council were induced to resign. Mr. LEACH and the party, of which he was the head, took office, and Mr. LEACH was duly elected an Alderman and Mayor of the borough.

He held the position of chief magistrate two years. During that time he had the honour of welcoming, as the head of the Corporation, the Crown Prince and Princess of Prussia, on the occasion of their visit to the Island. It will be remembered their Royal Highnesses land at the Royal Victoria Yacht Club House, and that the town was *en fete* on the occasion.

The mutability of public opinion is proverbial, and at the expiration of two years the party which Mr. LEACH headed were perceptibly weakened. The ratepayers returned a new set of men to the Council, and Mr. BARROW became Mayor. Mr. LEACH held office as Alderman a short time

afterwards, but he eventually resigned. He had now time to turn his attention to politics, and to strengthening the position of the Conservatives here.

A leading member of the Royal Victoria Yacht Club, and intimately connected with the management of that institution, he fully understood the benefit it conferred upon the upper classes. desirous of seeing similar comforts extended to the working men and tradesmen here, he suggested the establishment of a Conservative club in Ryde. In spite of some little opposition, he at last succeeded in accomplishing that object, and lived to see the club which he worked so hard to found, flourish and soon remove to the larger premises its members now occupy.

Always an active man and one whose opinion was received with deference, Mr. LEACH cannot fail to be greatly missed, not only here but all over the Island, and we are sure that the greatest sympathy is felt for his family in their bereavement.

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ISLE OF WIGHT OBSERVER Sat 2nd April 1881

### **FUNERAL OF MR. THOMAS LEACH**

The remains of this respected gentleman, whose death wer recorded in our last issue, were interred at our Cemetery on Saturday afternoon. The coffin, which was of polished oak, and bore the inscription "Thomas LEACH; born 28th Dec, 1912; died 23rd March, 1881," was conveyed to the Parish Church in an open hearse. Here the first part of the service was performed by the Rev. C. A. Le GEYT, curate. Besides the numerous relatives of the deceased, a number of local gentlemen showed their respect by attending. The magistrates were represented by Gen. MAXWELL and Mr. Mark HUNTER; and the Royal Victoria Yacht Club by Capt. DAUBUZ, Capt. BOGER, R.N., Mr. W. E. RATCLIFFE, &c. About 25 members of the Conservative Club also attended, including Mr. SCHOLEFIELD, Mr. J. E. ERSKINE, Mr. A. A. AUSTIN (hon sec of the club), Mr. W. LANGDON (secretary of the Ryde Conservative Association), Mr. J. MORRANT (borough treasurer), Mr. Henry KNIGHT, &c.

The service at the grave was performed by the Vicar, the Rev. A. POOLE, and on the coffin being lowered into its last resting place it was covered with most beautiful flowers.

The funeral arrangements were efficiently carried out by Messrs. MARVIN and Sons.

---A meeting of the members of the Conservative Club was held on Friday evening, when it was agreed that a deputation representing the club should show their respect for Mr. LEACH by attending the funeral, and a vote of condolence to the family of the deceased was passed.

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