

BEYOND THE GRAVES

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UPSTAIRS DOWNSTAIRS ~ In My Lady's Chamber

Upstairs and Downstairs, for ever entwined,
My Lord and My Lady, so very refined.
A bob or a curtsey, the master to please,
Blend into the background, when they pass on the stairs.
Content with their lot, it seems was the way,
'Twas a roof, bed and vittles, at the end of each day. [By Annabelle]



Right – Servants at Ryde - unknown location
[Roy Brinton Collection]

Just as upstairs, below stairs there was a hierarchy to be observed. In most houses the servants would have worked in the basement, possibly sleeping in the attics. In the servants dining hall the butler, the most important servant, took the position at the head of the table, just as the master would upstairs.

After the butler, the cook was the most important member of the domestic staff, and would earn double that of a housemaid. The lady of the house would have discussed menus with the cook, who would then have been responsible for the shopping and the preparing of the food. She would also have provided meals for the servants.



The governess would have been in a difficult position, above the servants, she would probably have eaten upstairs, but was not part of the family. [Wikipedia].

Bell pulls would have summoned the servant to do the bidding of their master or mistress.

Right – the servants' bells at Tyntesfield House, Gloucestershire
[National Trust]



Left – This unknown lady was photographed at Mr Lacy's Studio in Union Street, Ryde. She would have employed servants, including, no doubt, a lady's maid to help her dress and to style her hair.

[Hilary Lloyd Collection]

MRS. BUTLER'S REGISTER OFFICE FOR SERVANTS,
COLONNADE, LIND STREET, RYDE.
Letters of Enquiry must be Prepaid, and contain STAMPED Envelopes if Answers be required.
The numerous Applications make this Rule necessary.

WANTED, by a family of two persons only, residing in the environs of London, a respectable Young Woman, from 22 and upwards, as **GENERAL SERVANT.** Must be a Good Plain Cook.—Apply at the "Observer" Office, Ryde.

WANTED, an experienced **HOUSEMAID**, under 30 years of age. Man-servant and lady's maid are kept.—Apply at the "Observer" Office, Ryde.

WANTED, in a tradesman's family, a good **GENERAL SERVANT.** Age, about 25 years.—Apply at the "Observer" Office, Ryde.

WANTED, in a gentleman's family, a good **COOK.** Age, not under 30 years.—For particulars apply at the "Observer" Office, Ryde.

WANTED, in a gentleman's family, a good **PLAIN COOK.** Wages, £22 per annum. She must thoroughly understand her duties. Age, from 24 to 30.—Apply at the "Observer" Office, Ryde.

WANTED, a **SITUATION** as **COACHMAN,** or **GROOM** and **COACHMAN.** Can drive pair or single harness. An excellent reference can be given.—Apply at the "Observer" Office, Ryde.

WANTED, a **Situation** as **GROOM** or **COACHMAN.** Four years' good character.—Apply to G. B., "Observer" Office, Ryde.

WANTED, a **SITUATION** as **HOUSEMAID.**—Apply at the "Observer" Office, Ryde.

Left - advert from the Isle of Wight Observer dated 30 June 1866 for Mrs Butler's Register Office for Servants in Ryde. Positions were available on the mainland, or in quite grand houses where other servants were employed, down to a tradesman's house with just one. Servants looking for work were also featured in the advert.

Below - a later advert for an agency from the IW Observer 22 October 1898

THE "MIKADO" REGISTRY OFFICE for SERVANTS.—2, Union Street, Ryde.

Sir Anthony Sterling has taken Denmark House, Quarr, for the season.

Sir Augustus and the Misses Clifford, and Mrs. Buckley, left Westfield on Friday last, for their town residence.

The Marquis and Marchioness of Exeter and family are about to occupy their seat, Brookfield, for two months.

Lady Harriet Fowler has removed from Elmhurst, to Widecombe Lodge, John-street.

Mrs. Arnold left Stonham House, Strand, on Thursday, for Worcestershire.

Mrs. Hamilton Irvine and family have removed from Cambridge House, George-street, to Melville House, Melville-street.

Mr. and Mrs. Hudgson have arrived at Hawthorn House, Strand.

Mr. and Mrs. Williams have arrived at Chesham House, Nelson-street.

Mr. Gerard de Witte, of Birstall House, Leicestershire, has arrived at Fountain Villa, Buckingham-road.

Miss Smith, of Clapham, has arrived at No. 32, Union-street.

Mr. and Mrs. Bargman and family, of Dorking, have arrived at 67, George-street.

Sir T. N. Lade, bart., Mrs. George Reeves, and Mrs. Thomas have arrived at Vicuna Villa, Strand.

Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Leach and family have left Windsor House, for London, for two months.

FASHIONABLE INTELLIGENCE.

Right - Isle of Wight Observer 20 June 1866

Every week a Fashionable List appeared in the newspapers. Many of the gentry either had a residence in Ryde, such as the Cliffords at Westfield, or 'took' a large property for the season. Some, like Mrs Hamilton Irvine, even moved from one Ryde property to another. Most families probably brought their servants with them. Anyone paying a visit to one of the grander houses would certainly have brought at least one servant - a lady's maid for the mistress and a valet for the master.

A SERVANTS' BALL



Occasionally the servants were rewarded for their long hours of drudgery. At Christmastime, in 1864, Mrs Sullivan and Sir John and Lady Lees, of Beachlands, Ryde, continued the long tradition in the house of giving a Christmas Ball to the domestics and their friends. *"On the Tuesday evening about 100 persons assembled at the mansion. Dancing commenced at 9 o'clock, Lady Lees leading off the first dance with the butler, and Sir John with the housekeeper."* [Isle of Wight Observer 7 January 1865]

At another time the newspaper reported on the Lees entertaining Langdon's workmen, who were carrying out the renovations at Beachlands. *"After the meal pipes and tobacco were provided and numerous toasts made to tremendous cheers. Toasts included the butler and housekeeper."* [Isle of Wight Observer 9 January 1864]



The newspapers, despite naming the gentry, seemed only to give the servant their position in the household.



Two grand interiors of Ryde properties. Left is believed to be St. Clare and below is the Drawing Room at Westridge House [Isle of Wight County Record Office]

The Housemaids would have worked hard in these houses. Up early they would start the day cleaning, seeing to the coal fires, oil lamps and candles. Then came dusting, sweeping the carpets and making the beds. They had to do the laundry if there was no laundry maid employed. [Wikipedia]

In 1881 Maria Hancock, the widow of a Rear Admiral, was living at Berwick Lodge, Pelham Fields, with her two teenage daughters. She had five servants living in, her lady's maid, her cook Elizabeth Cribb born in Cowes, her two parlour maids also born on the Island and a gardener.

Even when Mrs Hancock had moved to the smaller Sydney Terrace in Ryde [by the time of the 1901 census] with her two daughters, they still had four servants, but had no need of the gardener. Her lady's maid was Alice Franks and her cook was Lilian Stroud from St. Helens.



Westridge House Drawing Room

If a family employed a gardener or a coachman, they often lived in separate accommodation, maybe a cottage in the grounds, or over the stables.



Left - The Drawing Room at Appley Towers photographed by Debenham [Roy Brinton Collection]

Appley Towers was the home of George Young, a Scottish merchant and land owner, and his wife, Emma. In the 1861 census they had eight living in house servants, all from the mainland. Ten years later there are six listed, with their duties. Mrs Young had her lady's maid, Martha Barty. The butler was John Pattison, but only the footman, Henry Tharle was born on the Island, in Ryde.

WANTED, a situation as **KITCHEN MAID** or **UNDER HOUSEMAID**. Aged 18.—Address "B." Office of this Paper.

WANTED, by a boy, aged 15, a **SITUATION** under a butler. Can wait at tables and is good plate cleaner, &c.—Address "G. D.," 10, Victoria-street, Ryde.

Right - Isle of Wight Observer 13 October 1883 - Adverts placed in the newspaper for positions wanted. The boy obviously wanting a job in a better establishment who could afford a butler, a position he might hope to aspire to one day.



Edward Vernon Utterson [Image Roy Brinton Collection] lived at **Beldornie Towers, Pelham Fields**. In the 1841 census [below] five servants were living in, but just described as 'ms' or 'fs' [male servant or female servant] Of the male servants, listed first, Thomas Pigeon was probably the butler, whilst the youngest girl, Mary Harmsworth could have been a kitchen maid, just starting a career in domestic service. The oldest woman, Ellen, possibly from Ireland, could have been the cook

Beldornie Towers	No. 1	Edward Utterson	60	ms	9
		Thomas Pigeon	55	ms	9
		Maria Ridgway	45	ms	2
		Thomas Pigeon	35	ms	2
		Edward Linker	15	ms	2
		Ellen Barker	40	fs	2
		Sarah Matthews	25	fs	2
		Mary Harmsworth	15	fs	2

Employing servants cost more than their board and keep and their wages. In the IW Observer of 8 April 1854 a new scale of duties was printed, which included servants. Those over eighteen were taxed at a guinea, the same as a riding or carriage horse of over 13 hands.

ASSESSED TAXES.—The following is the new scale of duties which came into operation on Wednesday:—			£.	s.	d.
Servants. —For every servant aged 18 years or upwards ...			1	1	0
Under that age			0	10	6
Under Gardeners and Under Gamekeepers, each ...			0	10	6
Carriages. —For every carriage with four wheels—					
Where drawn by two or more horses or mules			3	10	0
Where drawn by one horse or mule only			2	0	0

The Isle of Wight Observer of 6 April 1907 carried a piece about insuring domestic servants.



Left - Image of the young Queen Victoria from Wikipedia



INSURE YOUR WORKMEN AND DOMESTICS AGAINST ACCIDENT.

BY the recent extension of the Workmen's Compensation Act, on and after July 1st next all Householders who employ Domestic Servants will be held liable to pay Compensation for any Accident a Domestic may sustain. The Act includes ALL SERVANTS who are regularly employed on one or more days a week.

ISLE OF WIGHT OBSERVER 11 JUNE 1853 A ROYAL SERVANT

Mrs Mackintosh, appointed wet nurse to her Majesty has returned north. It appears that her milk was too rich for the infant Prince. Mrs Mackintosh left Osborne amidst regrets of the whole establishment.

Her Majesty presented her with a large and valuable gold brooch, an ample wardrobe of clothes and a cheque for £100, all this being exclusive of travelling expenses, all given by the Queen with her own hand.

MASTERS AND SERVANTS

Both Alike in Death

It was usual for the Servants to be present at a funeral for a member of the family they worked for. The family, too, would have honoured a long serving or particularly valued servant.

In the IW Observer's 9 February 1895 report on the funeral of Miss Clifford [daughter of the late Sir Augustus Clifford of Westfield, Ryde] after the family mourners present it stated 'and the servants'.

Our obituary this week contains the announcement of the death of Mrs. Noys, a beloved and valued friend and servant for over 50 years to Mrs. Pilkington, Loudoun House. The funeral took place at the Ryde Cemetery, on Wednesday afternoon, and was attended by Mr. and Mrs. George Noys and Mrs. Blake, relatives of the deceased. The affectionate esteem in which she was held by those whom she had served so long and well, was shown by the attendance of the following members of Mrs. Pilkington's family: Captain G. Pilkington R.N. Mrs. Stenning, Miss Pilkington, Miss H. Pilkington, Mrs. Nicholl Clayton and Miss E. F. Pilkington.

Above - a report from the Isle of Wight Observer 15 February 1890 describes the funeral of Mrs Noys, a beloved and valued friend and servant.

Georgiana Eustatia Loring died 27 May 1892 at Ryde, where she had resided for many years. In 1871 living at Leven House, Melville Street, with her sister and mother, the widow of an Admiral, the family had employed a butler, a lady's maid and a cook. The funeral cortege, of hearse, four carriages and family mourners, also included the Servants from Westbury [her home at her death] and Stonelands, [Source - Isle of Wight Observer 4 June 1892 and 1871 Census return.]



Lucy Fowler was for many years the faithful servant of Sophia Mackenzie of Beachlands. When she died, 14 August 1845, aged 72, she was buried alongside her mistress in St Thomas Churchyard. Left - photograph of the remains of the memorial.

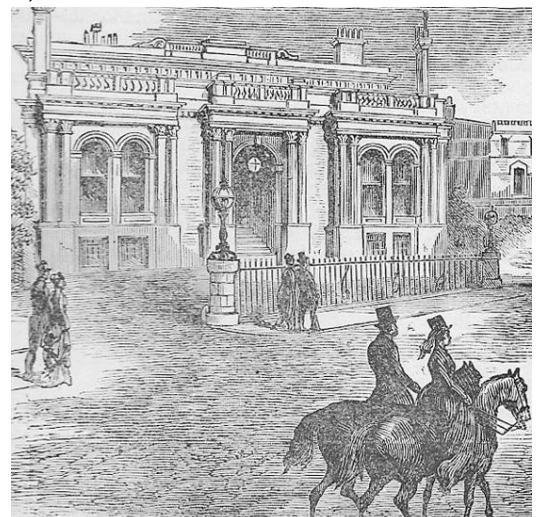
The Rev. Vernon Tippinge lived at Quarr Wood Lodge for over 30 years. At each of the census returns he had two or three living in female servants. In 1871 his cook was Emma Pearce, with Caroline Flux as parlour maid. By 1881 Sophia Porter was his cook/housekeeper, with Jane Taylor and Emily Taylor as maids. The year before his death, the 1891 census listed Sarah Warder as cook, and Emily Osborne and Eliza Danlee as maids.

This may seem like a large turnover of staff, but many women would have had to leave service upon marriage, unless the couple could find employment together, maybe as housekeeper and gardener. In the Rev. Tippinge's case he was obviously held in great esteem by his servants. The Isle of Wight Observer 30 April 1892 reported on his funeral. After the family mourners, his servants were mentioned, sadly not by name.

"The Captain and some of the crew of his yacht, 'Amulet', the Coachman, Gardener and the Servants also followed and evidently sincerely mourned one of the kindest and best of masters." Several wreaths and crosses were placed on the coffin, including one from the Servants.

Right - From Ward Lock's Illustrated Guide to the Isle of Wight, circa 1890, an engraving of the Royal Victoria Yacht Club in Ryde, where the Rev. Tippinge was a member. Establishments such as this and hotels would also have employed servants to attend to the needs of the members and visitors, which could be fraught with unknown dangers as reported below -

Waiters do not at all like the modern fashion of ladies wearing feathers in their hats, some of which are so stiff that they are really formidable weapons. When raising their head, they sometimes send the long hat quill into the face of the poor waiter behind them. [Isle of Wight Observer 13 December 1902]





By some unfortunate process housework has come to be regarded as menial and derogatory, and however gorgeous her uniform might be, the housemaid would never be proud of it, as her young man the soldier is supposed to be proud of his.

[Isle of Wight Observer 2 July 1905]

Left - the Carter family's staff with Maud Watson, 3rd from the right in her very smart uniform. [Roy Brinton Collection]

A letter to the Editor of the Isle of Wight County Press 28 February 1901 deplored the restrictions put on the

leisure time of domestic servants. On their one free evening in the week they had to be in by 8.30, 9 pm at the latest. Young girls of the same age in business were allowed to stay out until 10 pm.

Right - Isle of Wight County Press 2 March 1901 - were country girls less likely to want to go gallivanting about at all hours?

GIRL, strong, honest, wanted as General Servant, age 16 or 17, from the country preferred. —Mrs. King, Nuneham, Binstead, Ryde.

WANTED.—Kitchenmaid, strong, willing, one who has been out before preferred.—Apply, Miss Lowther Crofton, Hazelmount, Binstead, Ryde. d 97

Left - Miss Lowther Crofton used the Isle of Wight Observer, 13 December 1902, to find herself a strong girl & below right - advert for Morning Governess [Isle of Wight County Press 2 April 1904]

Below - Housemaids can be careless! [Isle of Wight Observer 29 June 1878]

DAILY Morning Governess, not kindergarten, required for Ryde early in May for two children 6 and 8, must be conversant with modern methods of teaching.—Apply A.B., County Press, Ryde.

OLD SILVER.—The mania for old china has lasted so long that it is not surprising to hear that it is now on the wane, and that collectors have discovered a new object for costly enthusiasm. Old silver has one merit over old china in the fact that it is more durable. A careless housemaid cannot annihilate it with a duster. Another merit is that it is nearly as scarce. All of it that exists, we may be sure, is well known and sufficiently prized.

THE DECLINE OF THE DOMESTIC SERVANT

Up until the First World War a large percentage of the population was engaged in some sort of domestic service. In Victorian times a life in service was often the only choice, working long

hours, maybe only one day a month off, with one weeks holiday a year, and a couple of hours off on Sunday, to attend Church.

For women in particular the War opened up new opportunities for employment. While the middle class was still, for the time being, able to afford a servant, the working woman, who may have filled that position, could now aspire to working in an office, or even for the local bus company, with better pay and conditions.

Labour saving domestic appliances, such as vacuum cleaners, electric irons, cookers, etc. were becoming more widely used. The introduction of cars meant there was no need for coachmen, stable lads, etc., just a chauffeur, who, hopefully was a skilled mechanic as well.

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