

Lt. Col. Stanley Chatfeild-Clarke

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THE LATE COLONEL CHATFEILD-CLARKE

DEVOTED SERVICE TO NATION AND ISLAND

Lieut-Col. Stanley Chatfeild-Clarke, V.D., D.L. whose death after only a few hours illness at his residence, Oakfield, Wootton, on Friday week, we deeply regret to record, had for many years been a distinguished figure in the public life of the Island. To the several offices which he filled he brought a natural dignity and charm and an exemplary thoroughness which added lustre to the organisations with which he was associated and gained for him universal respect and affection. At Wootton, where he took a deep interest and active part in the affairs of the village, his death is particularly felt, and from the more important plane of Island public life there passes a figure who had done much to enrich it.

Stanley Chatfeild-Clarke was born on March 24th, 1864, the third son of Thomas and Ellen Chatfeild-Clarke, of Westbourne Terrace, London, and Oakfield, Wootton. His father's family came to the Island in the early 18th century from Somerset and originally conducted a tannery at Newport. His paternal grandmother was a member of the Chatfeild family of Ditchling, to which distinction has since been brought by Admiral of the Fleet Lord Chatfeild. With his two elder brothers, Howard and Sir Edgar, he assumed by deed poll the name of Chatfeild-Clarke. His father twice contested Parliamentary divisions as a Liberal, but was unsuccessful. His brother, the Late Sir Edgar Chatfeild-Clarke, was returned as Liberal M.P. for the Island in 1922, but, on account of ill-health, sought the Chiltern Hundreds in the following year. On his mother's side the political back-ground was no less significant, as she was a cousin of Joseph Chamberlain, and the colonel himself was a second cousin of Sir Austen Chamberlain. It was to the Liberal Party, however, that Colonel Chatfeild-Clarke was a staunch adherent, and a foremost figure in Island political life.

After attending King's College School, London, he was sent to Dresden to complete his education. In 1881 he was articled to Mr. Holmes Leonard, an estimating and quantity surveyor, and subsequently entered the business at Bishopsgate, the firm being known as Leonard and Clarke, and he conducted a considerable practice for many years. After Mr. Leonard's death in 1897 he carried on the firm alone. He was a Fellow of the Chartered Institution of Surveyors and also a past president of the Quantity Surveyor's Association.

In 1882 he joined the Artists' Volunteer Rifle Corps as a private, passing through all ranks to sergeant and being given a commission in 1891. He was a junior major in 1901, when the battalion became the 38th Batt. (Artists' Rifles) London Regiment. When the battalion was mobilised in 1914 he was the senior major, and went to France in October that year, being promoted to lieutenant-colonel in March 1916. He returned home in November 1917, when he was appointed a member of the V.I.C. Selection Board in Lincoln's Inn, on which he served until the Armistice.

Although Col. Chatfeild-Clarke had regularly visited the Island he did not make it his permanent home until the death of Sir Edgar in 1925. Oakfield, which then became his home, had been in the family for about 100 years. The present handsome house was built to his father's design. In 1928 he was elected a county alderman and then commenced a long period of diligent public service, which terminated only this year, when, although he had expressed the wish to retire on account of his advanced age, he was persuaded to allow his name to go forward, but was not elected. He had been chairman of the General Purposes Committee, during the war was vice-chairman of the County Emergency Committee, and had also served on the Standing Joint, Finance, Parliamentary and Railway, and Staff committees. His retirement from the council robbed it of one of its most polished and stylish speakers. He had been one of

the County Council representatives on the Island branch of the Council for the Preservation of Rural England and on the Hampshire and I.W. Territorial Association. A lasting memorial to his deep interest in the Island remains in the county arms, in which design he assisted the College of Heralds and generously gave it to the county authority. He was also mainly responsible in selecting the county motto "All this beauty is of God." He had been a deputy lieutenant since 1927. His interest in the welfare of ex-Service men was deep and he had for a long period been president of the Wootton branch and when in 1941 the county council of the British Legion elected him as county president there could have been no more popular choice. In this work he showed understanding and enthusiasm which he displayed in his other public duties, and he was seldom absent from any of the county functions of the Legion.

Both in his public and private life horticulture possessed a great fascination for him, and he was perhaps never more happy than when tending to the oversight of his extensive and beautiful garden. He was a great lover of flowers, but all branches of horticulture deeply interested him, and he did much to encourage the work of the local associations. He was a frequent and successful exhibitor and president of the Wootton and Arreton Horticultural Societies. At the annual show on Monday of the Wootton society it had been arranged to present him with a gift to mark their appreciation of his having held the office for 25 years, and it was a sad reflection that his rather sudden death robbed the society of carrying out their intention.

Despite the eclipse of the Liberal Party, Col. Chatfeild-Clarke remained one of the stalwart of the cause in the Island. He was for some years hon. treasurer of the I.W. Liberal Association and latterly a vice-president. He was president of the Newport, East Cowes, and Wootton Liberal Clubs. Largely through his efforts and those of his brothers Leslie the Unity Hall, Wootton, was built.

He was among the most distinguished figures in the Unitarian Church, with which members of his family had been closely associated for many years. For about 10 years he was hon. treasurer of the General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches. He was also chairman of the congregation and hon. treasurer of the Unitarian Church, Newport. He was a trustee of Dr. William's Trust, which runs his library in Gordon Square, and also of the Hibbert Trust, which publishes the Hibbert Journal.

As a younger man Col. Chatfeild-Clarke was much interested in yachting and was a member of the Island S.C. He owned the 12-tonner Citara, which, until a few years ago, he kept in Wootton Creek.

Col. Chatfeild-Clarke was unmarried. He leaves several nephews and nieces.

The funeral took place at Southampton Crematorium on Wednesday and was of a private character. A memorial service will be held at the Congregational Church, Newport, on Friday, at 3 p.m., and the ashes will afterwards be buried in Sir Edgar Chatfeild-Clarke's grave at Fairlee Cemetery. Flags at the Newport and East Cowes Liberal Clubs have been flown at half-mast during the week.

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