

MEMOIRS OF MRS. OLDFIELD, BY HER SON, AND NOTICES
OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD OF OLDFIELD LAWN, FROM
1785 TO 1808; WITH AN ACCOUNT OF THE AUTHOR.

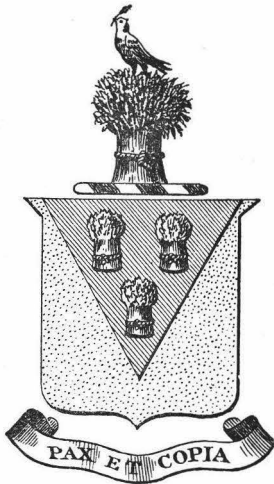
BY THE REV. F. H. ARNOLD, M.A., LL.B.



OLDFIELD LAWN, SUSSEX.

THE author of these Memoirs was one of those who followed the advice of Captain Cuttle, as regards men and women, places and things, "When found, make a note of." From his early days he delighted in making copious memoranda, and in writing letters descriptive of the scenes and occurrences he witnessed. These were greatly diversified. In Newfoundland, Canada, and the West Indies; in the Netherlands, and in Paris, after Waterloo (where his observations are the most interesting of any), in Jersey, in Scotland, and in Ireland; wherever he sojourned he made notes in many volumes, and also set down the books he perused in his daily reading, with comments thereon. These MSS. have been kindly lent me by Major-General Richard Oldfield, his son, with permission to make use of them. Most of these are of

general, rather than of local interest; but the contents of a little octavo volume are an exception. Towards the end of his days General John Oldfield wrote a biography of his mother, which, as containing many references to Sussex life, in the extreme western corner of the county, a century ago, is worthy of preservation among similar records in these "Collections." In the following extracts I give mainly the writer's own words, and prefix a brief account of his ancestry, with a sketch of his career, chiefly derived from his own letters. During the Civil War the Oldfield family took the Cavalier side, and after the Restoration was rewarded by a baronetcy. Sir Anthony Oldfield, son of John Oldfield, of Hylsted, co. York, was "for his loyalty and attachment to the royal cause," made a baronet by letters patent Aug. 6, 1660 (12 Car. II.) He was succeeded by his son, Sir John Oldfield, 2nd Bart., who had two sons; the elder became Sir Anthony, 3rd Bart.,



who left no male issue, and was succeeded by his brother, Sir John, 4th Bart., who died unmarried, the property devolving to his sisters and coheiresses, Mary and Margaret, and the title to Edward, grandson of Richard, 3rd son of Sir Anthony, 1st Bart. He also died without issue, and the title devolved to his brother Humphrey, from whom General Oldfield was descended.¹ Some of the most interesting of the armorial bearings which occur on Sussex monuments have punning arms, and more rarely punning crests, and we have an instance of both in those of Oldfield, which,

¹ His claim to be fifth baronet was submitted to the Herald's College, who expressed an opinion that although they had no doubt that General John Oldfield, R.E., was the representative of the baronetcy, yet that, owing to a system which had been noted of cutting and marring registers, there was great difficulty in actually tracing his descent from Richard, third son of Sir Anthony Oldfield, and a re-creation of the baronetcy would be necessitated. This involved great expense, which General Oldfield declined to incur.

with various quarterings, are to be seen in Westbourne Church. The arms of Oldfield are—*Or* on a pile *vert* 3 garbs (wheat sheaves). 2. 1 Crest upon a garb, a dove *azure*, close holding in its mouth a wheat ear.² The motto "*Pax et Copia*" is also very appropriate, both with respect to the dove and the full ear of corn.

Omitting here a particular account of General Oldfield's immediate ancestors, as they do not appear to have been connected with Sussex, we proceed to the events of his life.

He was born at Portsmouth, May 29, 1789, and received a classical and mathematical education from three clergymen successively, named Foster, Le Brock and Hoyle, and read French at home. All his amusements and reading out of study, he tells us, tended towards the Army, for which he had a strong predilection. On completing his 14th year he was taken to Woolwich Academy for entrance, when it was discovered that his height was $4\frac{1}{2}$ -ft.—*i.e.*, under the regulation standard of 4-ft. 9-in., and that consequently he could not enter without a dispensing order from the Master-General. This was obtained. He passed his examination Aug. 23, 1803, and then joined the Royal Military College at Great Marlow (now Sandhurst), from which cadets were sent to Woolwich. At Woolwich he was prepared for an Artillery commission; but the Earl of Moira, Master-General of the Ordnance, preferred placing him in the Engineers, which he joined August 23, 1805, exactly two years after his admission.³ His vacations were passed in Sussex. He next joined the Trigonometrical Survey, at Bodmin, and afterwards went to Portsmouth, where he was promoted to a First Lieutenancy. When under orders to go to Nova Scotia he was seized with typhus fever, and had to remain at

² The Wheatleys, at Pevensey, have also for their crest a garb or wheatsheaf ("S. A. C.," Vol. XXXVII., p. 9).

³ Among his notes, when cadet, he says, "His Majesty George III. visited the Academy on the 29th May, 1805, at which time I was within two or three of the top of the Academy. His Majesty noticed me, enquired my age and who I was. On being told, he was pleased to notice my uncle's services, as being fresh in his recollection. The Queen spoke German to Landmann and Blumenhaben, with the former Her Majesty conversed for some time."

Emsworth until another convoy sailed. On the 4th of June, 1807, he landed at Halifax, and served in America till 1809, when he returned to England and was quartered at Dorchester. He was ordered to Fort George, in Scotland, and continued there until he embarked for foreign service. He arrived at Helvoetsluys on the 28th of March, 1814, and was with the army of Holland and the Netherlands during that year. From a series of letters⁴ written home at that time we find that he was at Antwerp on the 5th of May, when the French garrison quitted it, and Sir Thomas Graham entered with the British troops.

“We were received,” he says, “with the greatest enthusiasm, and the air was rent with ‘*Vive l’Angleterre!*’ ‘*Vive l’Autriche!*’ the former cry predominating. The town was illuminated in the evening; we were received at the Theatre with the acclamations that had greeted us since the first day of our arrival, whenever an English uniform appeared. The piece was ‘Richard Cœur de Lion.’”

Writing from Antwerp, on the 12th of August, 1814, he thus describes his first acquaintance with the Duke of Wellington:—

“On the 10th His Grace the Duke of Wellington arrived at Antwerp on his route to Paris, to assume the duties of the British Embassy. He was accompanied by Lieut.-Cols. Chapman and Hessey, of the Royal Engineers, and was joined at Brussels by Lieut.-Col. Carmichael Smyth. His Grace’s object was to obtain such information as would enable him to give an opinion upon the defence of Belgium, which, by the treaty of Paris, was, together with Holland, to become the kingdom of the Low Countries. I accompanied his Grace on the following morning round the fortifications of both town and citadel. The Duke made a most minute inspection. His questions were numerous, and he did not appear dissatisfied with the information he received, although somewhat bored by the prosiug of the Commandant of the citadel, a retired Captain of the Irish Artillery, on full pay, of the 73rd

⁴ In one of these, dated from Calmptout, 1 April, 1814, after describing a dinner at head-quarters with the Prince of Orange, he relates the following anecdote:—“Col. Browne, formerly of the 28th Regt., and now commanding the 3rd Batt. of the 56th, a well-known eccentric character, also dined there a few days since. It being a wet day, he ordered a commissariat waggon to take him to dinner. Some of his friends chalked on both sides of the waggon in large letters, ‘From Pidcock’s collection of wild beasts—a wonderful collection.’ As the waggon drove through the cantonments the servants, idlers and villagers turned out, following the waggon, so that by the time it reached head-quarters a crowd had assembled, which, attracting the attention of the party collected in the drawing-room, they came to the window as the waggon stopped, when Tom Browne made his appearance, to the amusement of the company and the disappointment of the crowd, who expected at least to have seen a lion or a tiger.”

Regt., and whose Brevet rank placed him in this command. It was the first time I had met his Grace, with whom I had the gratification of breakfasting. He left Antwerp for Brussels at two o'clock."

The commotion which ensued on Bonaparte's escape from Elba is thus incidentally mentioned:—

"Brussels, 7th April, 1815. I had scarcely sat down to dinner when a servant came up to say a gentleman wished to see me. I enquired who he was, and was told a 'Bos gentleman,' for all the Belgians were known amongst the soldiers by the appellation of 'Bos.'⁵ I told him I was engaged; but he insisted on seeing me. After apologising for disturbing me, he said that as a family man it might be important for me to know that Napoleon had reached Paris, and that the King and Royal Family were on the road to Ypres, pursued by the rebels. I thanked him for the information, and ordered my family to pack up forthwith and prepare to leave Ypres for England at daylight. Going back to my quarters I gave the necessary orders for the next morning. My family were up before six, and drove out of the Court-yard of the Palace as the General and his A.D.C. drove in, and I sent an orderly to see they met with no difficulty in the intermediate stage between Ypres and Ostend. . . . They had a most boisterous passage. After remaining some days in town to recover themselves, they proceeded into Sussex to occupy my house, which had been vacated by the tenant, a Captain in the Navy, to whom the late events had given employment."

At the beginning of April, 1815, the Duke of Wellington, after going to Brussels, gave orders for putting the frontier into a state of defence by constructing new works at Ostend, Ypres, Oudenarde, Mons, and other fortresses, and inundating the country where absolutely necessary. Captain Oldfield was entrusted with inundating the district round Ypres, a troublesome and thankless operation.⁶

⁵ This word is explained in another letter. "We took up our billet in the village of Thoren. The house of our 'Bos,' for this is the term given to the host or landlord, was small, but beautifully clean."

⁶ With reference to these inundations, a characteristic anecdote of Wellington is here related:—"He asked an Engineer officer if the waters at a certain place were fordable, and on his replying with hesitation, he ordered him to try to pass, on which the unlucky officer got in horse and all, and escaped with a good ducking." Another, too, relating to the Duke's memory of particular persons, and occasioned by this visit, deserves record:—"His Grace has an unfortunate memory. In going round the works of Ypres, the C.R.E. and an officer were immediately before the Duke. The officer, with great want of tact, was enquiring of the Colonel the news of the day, and was with difficulty silenced. On leaving the works and getting into the carriage, the Duke turned to the C.R.E. and said, 'If you had not silenced the gentleman who was enquiring for news, I was about to tell him he was not in a coffee-room. I remember him well in the Peninsula. Instead of looking after his pontoons, he was amusing himself riding over the country.'"

“In consequence of representations as to the injury caused by the flooding,” he says, “the General desired me to draw off the waters. I stated to him my readiness to obey any directions he gave me; but if the inundations were not continued the place was not safe against a *coup de main*, as the breaches were not yet closed, the ditches cleared, or many of the palisades put up. They were therefore not interrupted, to the satisfaction of the Duke on his visit to Ypres at the end of the month. A complaint,” he observes, “was also made to the King of the Netherlands of our cutting the king’s timber for our palisades. I certainly did take what I wanted, wherever it was to be had, and I was told that the Duke was well satisfied with what we had done.”

The next letters relate to his joining the Army of the Duke of Wellington as Brigade Major, R.E., and the exertions which were made to put the frontier into a state of defence before the commencement of hostilities.

“On the 15th of June,” he says, “we had at Brussels all sorts of reports of the movements of the French and of the allies. Sir Colin Campbell was to dine with us; he brought with him his relation, Sir Neil, who had charge of the Emperor at Elba. My chief (Col. Carmichael Smyth), the two Campbells, the adjutant and myself sat down to dinner at our usual hour. The evening was a most interesting one; from Sir Neil we had numerous anecdotes of Napoleon; from Sir Colin we had the latest head-quarter reports. After dinner we strolled in the park. The Duke had been at or near Charleroi in the early part of the day, and given orders for the concentration of our troops, and we were hourly in expectation of a move.”

The original idea of the Duke of Wellington was that a battle would be fought near Antwerp. A sketch of the plains of Waterloo was obtained by him shortly before the battle from Major Oldfield, who furnished it to Sir J. Carmichael Smyth. The letter in which he describes the recovery of this plan, after being lost for a time, is so interesting that great part of it may be quoted:—

“On the morning of the 17th, upon my joining Col. Smyth, he desired me to receive from Lieut. Waters the plan of the position, which, according to his desire, I had sent to him from Brussels the preceding day, and of which I was told to take the greatest care; it had been lost in one of the charges of the French cavalry. Lieut. Waters, who had put it in his sabretache, was unhorsed in the *melée* and ridden over. On recovering himself, he found the cavalry had passed him, and his horse was nowhere to be seen. He felt alarmed for the loss of the plan. To look for his horse he imagined was in vain, and his only care was to avoid being taken prisoner, which he hoped to do by keeping well to the right, as the enemy, being repulsed, was returning by the left. After proceeding about fifty yards he was delighted to find his horse

quietly destroying the vegetables in a garden near the farm-house at Quatre Bras; he thus, fortunately, recovered his plan, and with it rejoined the Colonel. The retreat of the Prussians upon Wavre rendered it necessary for the Duke to make a corresponding movement, and upon the receipt of a communication from Blucher he called for Col. Smyth, and asked him for his plan of the position of Waterloo, which I immediately handed to him. The Duke then gave orders to General de Lancey to put the army in position at Waterloo, forming them across the Nivelles, &c.”

It has been sometimes asserted that part of the ground near Waterloo was entrenched. This General Oldfield states to be altogether erroneous.⁷ Some personal incidents which occurred to the writer on the field of battle are worthy of mention:—

“Sir William de Lancey, the Deputy-Quartermaster-General, fell early in the day. We were near a solitary tree, opposite La Haye Sainte; I was within a horse’s length of him when he fell. My mare reared, and turned round with me; I thought she had been wounded. The fire was very heavy. Whilst we were on the right a shell burst in the midst of us. During a charge of cavalry the enemy had penetrated to the second line, and in the *melée* I had the good fortune to save a Dutch Hussar from being cut down by one of our own, I believe of the Tenth. The uniform was very similar to that of a French corps with which we were engaged, but being well acquainted with the Dutch uniform I rode up in time to prevent mischief in this instance. Our Hussar, however, told me he had sabred two or three in that uniform. . . . It was I think between seven and eight, when, being on the left, I saw the Prussians at a distance. I returned to the right just before the French made their last grand effort. . . . It certainly was a glorious spectacle to see our line advancing upon the retiring enemy, and to hear the British cheer resounding from one flank to another. At the moment of the advance a battery of Belgian Horse Artillery was close to me, they were cheering enthusiastically, when a discharge from a French battery, I believe the last they fired, dismounted one or two guns and put nearly twenty of the officers and men *hors de combat*.”

The writer then goes on to describe his return to Waterloo in the dusk after the battle was over, and his finding his old friend, Sir Henry Ellis, of the 23rd, wounded by the side of the Nivelles Road, who begged

⁷ “On riding up to the field to make my report to Colonel Smyth, I learnt from him that the Duke had relinquished the idea of entrenchment, and from this circumstance, and from my having been several times during the day on the plateau, I can confidently state that not a shovelful of earth was stirred, and deny the assertion of the battle of Waterloo having been fought in an entrenched position, or of a redoubt being constructed.”

him to get him removed, for which he procured a tumbril. The way in which he spent the night of the 18th is thus graphically related :—

“ We found the billet we had left in the morning filled with wounded, our servants and orderlies gone to the rear. We put up our horses in the stable, and foraged them with straw from a neighbouring loft. Our next object was to get ourselves under cover, which we did, by breaking open a house on the opposite side of the road, to which we brought some straw from the stable, making ourselves as comfortable as might be for the night. The house was apparently empty ; in the kitchen Sir George Hoste found part of a ham, which was cut in slices, toasted on his sword, and being divided amongst us, formed a scanty repast. After some time the owner of the house was found in the cellar ; he was in great alarm, and declared that he had nothing whatever left. He pestered us about the events of the day, and enquired particularly about a Colonel of Belgian Carbineers, of whom we knew nothing ; but our witty friend Head turned the question to good account, by assuring him that his poor friend the Colonel was no more, but that after he was struck he had told him to go to his friend, who lived opposite the cabaret at Waterloo, and bid him be kind to his *cheres amis les Anglais*. The man naturally stared at Head, and at last, with a little persuasion and the sight of a few francs, was induced to bring forth some bottles of wine and some bread, which we divided with Sir George Wood, who had been less fortunate. Having made a hearty meal we threw ourselves on the straw and slept soundly.”

Of Major Oldfield's habit of careful observation and accurate description, we have a good example in his first letter after the occupation of Paris by the allies :—

“ Paris, July 28th, 1815.

“ My time since we entered Paris has been fully occupied with my official duties and sight-seeing. My first object was the establishment of my office at No. 36 in the Rue d'Anjou, nearly opposite the billet of my chief, with whom the Adjutant and myself used daily to breakfast, but as his hours were late, generally nearer eleven than ten, I permitted that honour to devolve on the Adjutant alone, in order that I might have time to myself, breakfasting at seven or eight. I gained fully two hours every day, being anxious to see all I could of the great city, where the period of our stay was uncertain. Immediately upon our occupation of Paris the Prussians were anxious to destroy the Pont de Jena, and it was with difficulty the Duke preserved this beautiful bridge from destruction by dissuading Blucher to delay the operation until the arrival of the Allied Sovereigns, who entered Paris on the night of the 10th of July, where we had assembled the Emperors of Austria and Russia, the King of Prussia, and the Grand Dukes Nicholas and Michael.

“ In the Emperor of Austria and King of Prussia there was nothing prepossessing, although both were well spoken of by their subjects

and represented as excellent Sovereigns. The Emperor I had seen at Antwerp. Alexander looked the Emperor. The Russian Archdukes Nicholas and Michael I had also met with at Antwerp, and at Paris they did me the honour to recognize me. The reviews of the different troops were most interesting; the British troops were the worst dressed, but decidedly the finest men, as might be observed when men of the different nations were bathing in the Seine. I was at the first ball the Duke of Wellington gave after our entry into Paris. His Grace was lodged at the Palace of the Elysée Bourbon, a mansion well calculated for giving fêtes. Anxious to see the company arrive, I went early and placed myself at the door of the reception room, where I was soon joined by the Hetman Platoff, who had also come early for the same purpose. We exchanged such information as we possessed in reference to the distinguished statesmen and soldiers of all Europe, who passed before us. The Hetman was a sharp and intelligent little man, and made himself very agreeable. We dined generally, a small party, at a restaurateurs, *à la carte*; the charges were moderate, the cooking excellent, and the wine good. Of the Cafés, the Café des Mille Couleurs was perhaps the most splendid, and *la belle limonaidiere* the greatest ornament; she was said to have attracted the attention of the Emperor of Russia. At the Café d'Etrangers in the Palais Royale there is generally very tolerable music. In my next letter I will make mention of the Theatre and of the Louvre. For the present Adieu.

"P.S.—I forgot to tell you that the Duke sent the Prince Regent Napoleon's spurs to place in his R.H.'s Museum; they were presented by a Prussian officer, who had taken them with some of the Emperor's baggage after the battle of Waterloo. The Duke with some difficulty put a stop to the Allies levying contributions on Paris, a measure they were most anxious to carry into effect."

After leaving Paris in September he had two months' leave, which he spent in Sussex, and then returned to the Continent, where he remained, principally at Cambrai, until the end of 1818. He then left for England, and lived for a while at home. In a letter dated Oldfield Lawn, Dec. 10, 1818, he looks forward to a little tranquility.

"My sapper servant I daily expect, when, like Uncle Toby and Corporal Trim, we may fight our campaigns together, not on the bowling green, but on the Lawn, and 'twill be long before we have another campaign, if ever we have one."

His retirement was, however, not so permanent as that of Uncle Toby. After being on half-pay in Sussex until 1825, he was sent on a special commission to the West Indies. Thence he went to Ireland, and was quartered for several years at Athlone. In 1830 he was ordered

to Newfoundland⁸ and afterwards to Jersey,⁹ where he remained until 1839. The next four years were spent in Canada, and his letters thence relating to the suppression of the Rebellion are full of interest. In 1843 he returned to Plymouth, and in 1848 was sent again to Ireland. In 1852 he came back to Oldfield Lawn, where he passed the remainder of his days.

General Oldfield married Mary, daughter of Christopher Arden, Esq., of Dorchester, March 12, 1810, by whom he had seven children—Elizabeth Mary, John Rawdon, Thomas, Edward Humphrey, Eliza Maria, Anthony, Jane. She died at Le Mans, France, July 6, 1820. He married secondly, July 8th, 1822, Alicia, daughter of the Rev. D. Hume, Rector of Arden, a descendant of the Earl of Marchmont and of his wife, Mrs. Macartney Hume, of Lissamore Castle, Co. Antrim, niece to the Right Hon. the Earl of Macartney, by whom he had eight children—Macartney Hume, Alicia, Letitia, Rodolphus Bryce, Adeline Harriet Cecilia, Richard, Margaret Araminta, Aldred, Catherine. She died in the Citadel of Plymouth, Feb. 5, 1840, and he married thirdly, March 12, 1849, Cordelia Anne Yonge, daughter of the Rev. D. Yonge, niece of Lieut.-Gen. Lord Seaton, G.C.B., who survived him. He died Aug. 2, 1863, and was buried in the churchyard at Westbourne.¹⁰

The account of his mother, with observations on the neighbourhood of Oldfield Lawn, commences in the middle of the 18th Century:—

⁸ In a letter from Mr. Shean to Col. Oldfield, dated Lumley, Feb. 6, 1832, we have an account of the prevalence at Westbourne of the influenza. The writer says:—"Notwithstanding the severities of your winter, you are better off than you would now be at the Lawn, as influenza prevails here to an alarming extent; there is scarcely a house without some sick, mine has been like an hospital for some weeks. It has been fatal to persons of advanced age. We have had an unusually mild winter, not twelve hours frost together, and to this unseasonable weather I conclude we may attribute so much sickness. What a pitiable state we shall be in if the cholera should make its appearance here; but its progress at present seems more in a northern direction. It has reached Edinburgh."

⁹ He was made a Knight of the Royal Hanoverian Guelphic Order, Jan., 1836, and was also appointed Aide-de-Camp to the Queen. His later commissions bear date—Major-General, 20 June, 1854; Lieut.-General, May 20, 1859.

¹⁰ Several Sussex families have notably supplied officers to the British army, but few more than that of Oldfield. During seven generations it has thus upheld the honour of our country, through a long line of soldiers, and Major-Gen. Richard Oldfield has at the present time all his sons in the army.

“Mrs. Oldfield was born at Gosport, on Jan. 26, 1756. Her maiden name was Hammond, her father being Lieut. Hammond, R.N.,¹¹ who had married Miss Barefoote. The issue of the marriage was a son (William) and a daughter (Elizabeth). He went to sea but little after his marriage, and was occasionally professionally employed at Weymouth and Southampton. After his death, at the latter place, his widow and her two children returned to Gosport, where, and at Titchfield, they had an agreeable circle of friends.”

A hiatus here ensues, and the narrative then proceeds as follows:—

“My mother was tall, her figure good, her manner graceful, and she was by no means deficient in personal beauty. She received a good education, excelled in all descriptions of needlework, and wrote a beautiful Italian hand. When about eighteen she suffered much from the small-pox, the marks of which were never eradicated. Soon after the removal of Mrs. Hammond and her mother to Portsmouth an attachment commenced between the latter and Mr. Oldfield, at that time a Lieutenant of Marines, and recently returned from America. Mr. Oldfield’s introduction to Miss Hammond was from her cousin, Mr. Short, his intimate friend and brother officer. Mr. Short and his cousin were constant correspondents whilst the latter was in America, and through this correspondence Mr. Oldfield and Miss Hammond were known to each other before they met.”

“Mr. Oldfield and his brother had purchased a cottage on Norman Common, near Emsworth, but situated in the parish of Westbourne, in Sussex. The Common has been enclosed with the other part of the property, and the whole (with the residence since erected) is now known as Oldfield Lawn.”

It is pleasantly situated, with its environment of oaks, on the confines of the county, and well suited for retirement.

“The marriage took place Nov. 14, 1784, in the Parish Church of Westbourne. Miss Stocker was a bridesmaid, and, as the story goes, the parson was with difficulty persuaded she was not to be the bride. My mother went to church for the first time as a bride at Westbourne.

¹¹ He had two sisters. One married Major Short, of the Marines, who was at the battle of Bunker’s Hill, and died shortly afterwards from the effects of fatigue and privation suffered during the campaign. He left a son, who became a Lieutenant in the Marines, and was in H.M.’s *Laurel* in a tremendous hurricane in the West Indies, and had also a posthumous son, Captain Short, of the Marines, who served with distinction in Egypt and America. The other sister married Dr. Stocker, of Titchfield, Hants, and had two sons, Richard and Charles, and a daughter, Elizabeth. Richard entered the medical profession, and Charles was killed in 1795, when First Lieutenant of the *Sans Pareil*, under Lord Hugh Seymour. “Elizabeth died at an advanced age and unmarried; she was the friend and companion of the subject of this memoir. She was much loved and esteemed by an extensive circle of friends and acquaintance for her good humour and other excellent qualities; although always suffering from ill-health, her spirits never flagged. She was the chronicle of the family for all its connections and traditions.”

I likewise went there the first Sunday after my marriage in 1822, and my son Anthony did the same in 1838. Shortly after the honeymoon, which was passed at the cottage, Mr. Oldfield was sent on the recruiting service to Birmingham, and subsequently to Manchester. On his return from this duty he was ordered to the West Indies. His brother Thomas went for him, and he shortly after retired from the service.

“The issue of the marriage of Mr. Oldfield with Miss Hammond was a son, born at Portsmouth, on the 29th of May, 1789.

“In 1790 Mrs. Hammond was seized with an attack of paralysis, and although she lived for some twelve years afterwards she never recovered the use of the left side, in other respects her health was excellent. Her intellects were perfect. She daily read the Psalms and Lessons; enjoyed society; liked a rubber of whist or pool of quadrille, both of which games she played well. Her cards were arranged in a small rack. Her memory seldom failed her, and she perfectly understood the rules of the game. She had a sweet voice, and would occasionally sing to please a friend. She rose about 8, had prayers in her room, was dressed with great care, her head powdered, a high cap, with lace ruffles; generally a silk gown. She was brought into the dining-room about 9 to breakfast, read until noon, conversed cheerfully with her family and friends until 2, when she dined; generally took a nap after dinner, drank tea at 6, played a game of cards, had a basin of gruel at 9, when she retired to her room, and after prayers went to bed.”

“In the month of April, 1793, my mother had the trial of losing my father. He got wet and sat in his wet clothes awaiting the coming home of my mother, who was dining at her brother’s. The next day he went to church in damp boots, and caught a violent cold, which carried him off in a few days. His constitution had never recovered the effects of his American campaigns, especially the privations he suffered during the siege of Charlestown in South Carolina. In America, as a Light Infantry Officer, he was constantly employed on out-post duties. His person was well known to the Americans, who were constantly on the look-out for him; but never succeeded in taking him. He was also on the staff in North America. On moving up with the army to form the siege of Charlestown, he met his brother Thomas, after an absence of several years; they were together for some time on the march before they discovered their mutual relationship. The brothers also subsequently met in a singular manner. Thomas was in a transport which was lost. He was picked up and carried on board a ship in which my father was embarked, and both were then cast away together.

“Another great loss which my mother sustained was that of Major Thomas Oldfield,¹² her brother-in-law, just mentioned, from whom both

¹² His career was very eventful. At Bunker’s Hill, 17th June, 1775, he was twice wounded—by a spent ball, which struck him in the breast, and by a musket ball, which passed through his wrist. He was also taken prisoner with Lord Cornwallis, at the capitulation of York Town. He was thrice shipwrecked, and on one occasion, when he preserved his life by swimming, he was the only person saved from the wreck. In July, 1797, he was engaged in two bombardments of Cadiz, and was slightly wounded. He was at Teneriffe when Nelson lost an arm, and at the Battle of the Nile, on board the *Theseus*, Nelson’s flag-ship. In a

she and myself always received the greatest possible kindness and attention. His fall at the memorable defence of St. Jean D'Acre, when Napoleon received his first repulse, was communicated to my mother by Mr. Spencer Smith, our Minister at Constantinople, in a kind and considerate letter. He fell gloriously in the enemy's trenches, leading a sortie. He was buried by the French with military honours, at the foot of Mount Carmel, 'carrying with him to the grave,' to use the words of the French official account of the siege, 'the respect and esteem of the French Army.' A monument to him remains at Acre in the Druse's Chapel."¹³

Mrs. Oldfield had the gratification of receiving kind and friendly letters bearing testimony to the merits of her brother-in-law, and offering services to her son from several of his old friends and companions. Among these we meet with the names of some of the most illustrious men of the day.

"The Earl of St. Vincent, Lord Nelson, and Sir Sydney Smith," says General Oldfield, "offered to provide for me in the Navy. Earl Spencer, at that time First Lord of the Treasury, proffered a commission in the Marines, when I should be of the proper age. The Marquis of Cornwallis, at that time Master-General of the Ordnance, promised my name among the list of candidates for the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich, and, in writing to my mother, expressed his sincere regret that Major Oldfield should now have lost that life which had so often been hazarded in the service of his country."

Of his career after entering the army the writer says little in these MS., but reverts to recollections of his boyhood, as spent in Sussex.

"When I first remember this part of the country, neither Bere Forest, Emsworth Common, or Norman Common, in Westbourne, were enclosed. Between Emsworth and Havant there was only one small cottage. At Hermitage a few houses. On Norman Common were several saw-pits, and it was a place for cricketing, bull-baiting, and other country sports. About the cottage on it, a little of the ground was enclosed for grazing, and there was a good deal of copse full of

private letter, speaking of that great action, he says:—"It was by no means so severe as the affair at Teneriffe, or the second night of the bombardment of Cadiz." After the *Theseus* had repaired damages, she sailed to join Sir Sydney Smith, off the coast of Syria.

¹³ It is thus inscribed:—"In Memory of Major Oldfield, of the British Marines, who fell in leading a sortie from this garrison, when besieged by Napoleon Bonaparte and the French Army, 7 April, 1799." The stone, which had been disturbed by Arabs in search of treasure, was restored by the French Army of Occupation in Syria, 1861-2. French flags, taken at this siege of Acre, were placed in Westbourne Church by General Oldfield, where they still remain. Captain Anthony Oldfield, R.A., his nephew, was also killed in the trenches before Sebastopol, Aug. 17, 1855 (See "S. A. C.," Vol. XXII., p. 203).

game. At Prinsted there was only a farm-house and some labourers' cottages. The Manors of Prinsted, Warblington and Stansted belonged to Mr. Barwell, an East Indian civilian,¹⁴ who resided at Stansted in oriental splendour; he had married Miss Coffin, a most beautiful American lady,¹⁵ sister of Sir Isaac Coffin¹⁶ and General Coffin, old friends of my father and uncle, the latter being their brother's companion in the American War. When a child I remember going to picnics at Stansted Castle (Racton Tower). This was built by Lord Halifax as an object from the house and as a sort of banqueting house; the grounds about it had been well laid out, but I can never remember their being well kept. The whole country for a considerable space around Stansted at one time belonged to Mr. Barwell,¹⁷ but when he wanted money he sold off farms and other parts of the estate, and at his death the remainder was sold to pay off the incumbrances on the estate, which were very many, from his having left a very numerous family, with claims directly and indirectly on his property. The Warblington estate sold well. The widow of Mr. Barwell married Mr. Munday, an M.P. for Derbyshire; she became again a widow, and again resided in the neighbourhood in an almost fairy house, made in the woods of Emsworth Common, where several other villas have since been built. In my mother's time it was a Common, as was Hambrook. Immediately without the Park was built an inn to receive the horses and servants of visitors, and near it a house by Mr. Dunn, who was a sort of agent to Mr. Barwell. Messrs. Dunn and Butler were executors to Mr. Barwell's will. The former acquired considerable property, but speculated and lost his own and other people's money. Stansted House,

¹⁴ Recent research among Indian correspondence has thrown fresh light on the career of Mr. Richard Barwell, when coadjutor to Warren Hastings, during a momentous crisis in the history of British India. Dr. Busted observes, "It was a fortunate thing for Great Britain that her interests in India in most troublous and critical times remained in the strong hands of Warren Hastings, and it must not be forgotten in estimating the services of Barwell, that were it not for the steady support of this colleague Hastings would have been deprived of all power, and early in the struggle must have succumbed to the rash and inexperienced majority." Two of Barwell's chief opponents were Mr. Francis and General Clavering; to Mr. Francis, who hated him, he is said to have lost £20,000 at whist, and with General Clavering, in 1775, he fought a duel with pistols, in which neither were injured. In 1780 he returned to England, taking back with him one of the largest fortunes ever made up to that time by any Englishman in India—currently reported to have been a million pounds—and, like other so-called "Nabobs," became noted for his lordly and reckless extravagance.

¹⁵ His former marriage in India is mentioned in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1777: "Richd. Barwell, Esq., first in Counsel at Bengal, to Miss Sanderson of the same place." She died in November, 1778.

¹⁶ Mr. Gretton describes Sir Isaac Coffin as "a rollicking naval officer," and as an instance of his practical jokes, states that having persuaded his father-in-law to give a ball, he then "sent the folk home with one horse of their own, the other owned by their neighbour; at the first turn for their different roads, of course the horses tried to go different ways." This the coachmen could not understand, and several of them came to grief. "Years after," he continues, "I stumbled upon him in a boarding house at Cheltenham; he was then very unpleasant, surly and snappish, like an old Newfoundland dog" (*Memory's Harkback*, p. 17).

¹⁷ His acquisitions also at Bosham and Bersted are described in "S. A. C.," Vol. VIII., p. 197, and Vol. XXV., p. 116.

purchased by Mr. Barwell for £102,500 of the executors of the Earl of Halifax, was considerably enlarged by him.¹⁸ At his death it was sold to Lewis Way,¹⁹ who was first a barrister²⁰ and afterwards a clergyman,²¹ a man of good family but, an enthusiast, and subsequently deranged. Aldsworth House was built as an appendage to Stansted. It was fitted by Mr. Way as a college²² for the education of missionaries for the conversion of the Jews. The Rev. Mr. Jacob, afterwards Principal of the College at Fredericton, New Brunswick, was its head. One of the students was the celebrated Joseph Wolff,²³ afterwards so well known from his journey to Bokhara in search of the murdered British officers, Stoddart and Connolly. Aldsworth House had one very handsome room; but the other apartments were indifferent. It was taken down when Mr. Dixon purchased the Stansted property, and the materials used to add to Aldsworth Cottage fitted as a residence for the Rev. Mr. Pannell, brother-in-law to Mr. Dixon. It had been built by Mr. Barwell for one of his friends, who had, it is believed, a gratuitous occupation. At her decease it was let. At this time the mill at Lumley²⁴ had fallen into the hands of Mr. Tollervey, who had

¹⁸ In 1786 he remodelled Stansted House at very great expense. Removing the wings, he had it cased with white bricks and finished with lofty porticoes facing east and west, each consisting of sixteen Doric and Ionic columns. The architects were Bononi and James Wyatt. It took five years for completion. Mr. Barwell had one of the most superb services of silver in the county, and, becoming a patron of the arts, bought choice examples of Cuyp, Teniers, Sir Joshua Reynolds and other masters. He became M.P. for Winchelsea in 1790. Some of his Indian proclivities, which are well known, appear to have culminated in England. These dissipated his enormous wealth, and at his death in 1805 Stansted was stripped of its art treasures, and the estate was sold in London.

¹⁹ The sum then paid for it was £173,000, the park consisting of 1,000 acres and the farms extending to 3,000 acres.

²⁰ It is stated by Mr. Longcroft, of this very eccentric person, that he was said to have become possessed of a very large fortune through an act of kindness to a stranger. Mr. Way was studying for the bar in Gray's Inn, and coming home late one stormy night, he stumbled in the dark over the body of a man at the foot of his chamber stairs. He found the man insensible, and he carried him up to his room, chafed his hands, and gave him some warm tea, after which the stranger recovered. He asked the name of the person who had taken compassion upon him, noted it carefully down, and dying shortly after, bequeathed his fortune to Mr. Way in return for his kindness.

²¹ Mr. Way took Holy Orders in 1816, became greatly interested in the Society for the Conversion of the Jews, and in 1817 journeyed with other clergymen to St. Petersburg to try to influence the Emperor in their behalf; but history is silent as to the result of the deputation.

²² The site of this college was on the left side of the road to Aldsworth from Westbourne, near Aldsworth Pond. Various curious stories are extant relating to the Jews who lived there, one of which is that when converted they were required by Mr. Way to shave their beards. These were laid by in a closet, and subsequently some bricklayers, being in want of hair, came upon them by accident and turned them to account in the composition of a wall, in which they still remain.

²³ Of Dr. Wolff, one of the most remarkable men of his time, it was said *inter alia* that he very rarely changed his shirt, and that he proposed to every lady whom he deemed eligible.

²⁴ Of this building and its owner, Mr. Longcroft gives the following account in his admirably-written pamphlet, "The Valley of the Ems" (now out of print). After mentioning that a channel was made in early times, conveying a portion of

made a large fortune at the Half-way Houses, Portsmouth; he purchased the property from Mr. Barwell, and expended on it large sums, in a profuse and extravagant manner. The estate soon became mortgaged, and ultimately Admiral Hawker took it for a portion of the money advanced, Mr. Tollervey becoming a ruined man. Below the mill, by the road to Westbourne, some cottages, called Lumley Row, were built by Stride, a shopkeeper at Emsworth, who coined copper halfpence, with which he erected them and ruined himself."²⁵

Enumerating his friends in the neighbourhood at that time, General Oldfield speaks of Major-General Smith, at Bedhampton; Colonel Monro, at Horndean; Captain Howe (whose life he had saved when in America), at Havant; the Fairhills, Murrays and Newlands, at Chichester; and amongst the clergy, Mr. Redding, Mr. Lyne, Mr. Thwaites, Mr. Richards and Mr. Norris, respectively of Westbourne, Compton, Marden, Farlington and Warblington. With an account of the illness and death of his mother in Nov., 1808, the MS. concludes. In other MSS. he describes many excursions in Sussex, which he made after settling at Oldfield Lawn.

the Ems, which separates the counties of Southampton and Sussex, to the mill called Lumley Mill, from the Lumley family, lords of Westbourne, he says:—"The mill itself is a large old building with stores of great extent. In 1802 one Edward Tollervey, then living at Westbourne and carrying on a large business as a merchant, bought this mill, with surrounding lands. He added stores and piggeries, and not content with the profit obtained upon his flour, he built bake-houses and tried to monopolise the profit of the baker on the bread and biscuit then largely in demand at Portsmouth during the war. He lived at a great rate, but in 1808 he was compelled to encumber the property, his trade became unremunerative, and ultimately he fell into great distress. Edward Tollervey vanished from the neighbourhood, and in a short time was well-nigh forgotten. But many years after this, on a cold November day, a gentleman was walking in Fleet Street, and was asked for charity by the sweeper of the crossing; he gave him a trifle, and as the man looked up, the gentleman recognised in the wretched beggar the once prosperous merchant, Edward Tollervey. He pitied his misfortune, asked what he could do for him, and promised to assist him. The only request was a broom and a barrow, if possible, both of which were supplied. He died soon after. His mill and lands are now the property of Mr. James Terry, who occupies the whole."

²⁵ Stride, who was a grocer, also built the house at Hermitage, Sussex, which I now occupy. Three of these halfpence, or rather tokens of different types, are in my possession, dated 1793-5. 1. *Obv.* A man-of-war in full sail, above "Emsworth." 2. *Obv.* The head of Lord Howe, with a pigtail, above "Lord Howe and the Glorious first of June." 3. *Obv.* Similar head, without pigtail, above, the same legend. All have on the *Rev.*, a figure of Britannia resting on an anchor, with her hand upon a globe, on the back of a crowned lion. Round the edge the words "Payable at the Warehouse of John Stride, Emsworth."