

Death of Mr B. V. C. RANSOME J.P.
1863 - 1940
Former County Cricketer

Isle of Thanet Gazette 2nd February 1940

Less than two years after the death of his wife, Mr Bernard Vincent Charles Ransome M.A. J.P., of Sea Tower, Spencer Road Birchington, died in Kent & Canterbury Hospital on Thursday last week, at the age of seventy-seven years.

He was the co-founder with Mr H. E. E. Jeston J.P. of Grenham House School thirty years ago. The son of a clergyman, Mr Ransome was born in Australia, where his father was acting as Chaplain to the first Bishop of Brisbane. His father, who was the sole survivor of a shipwreck off Ireland when he was four years old, returned to England, to a Dorset incumbency, when his son was less than two years old. Later he became Rector of Compton Bassett, Wiltshire and it was while the family lived there that Mr Bernard Ransome became a County Cricketer. He played for Wiltshire on a number of occasions, being an excellent bat. He was an all-round sportsman, being a fine shot and a good boxer.

Mr Ransome was educated at Wadham College, Oxford, where he obtained his M.A. degree. After leaving Oxford he became assistant master at two well-known schools - first at Temple Grove, East Sheen and later at St Neot's, Hampshire.

It was about 1900 when he came to Birchington and started The Bay School at Minnis Bay with about six boys. In 1904 he was joined by Mr H E E Jeston J.P. in partnership while he was at Minnis Bay and in 1910 they founded the Grenham House School. It prospered so that one time there were as many as seventy boys at the school. He retired in 1930.

It was in 1908 that he married Miss Helen Ethel Spencer, only child of Colonel T E Spencer, who, at the age of 93, still resides at Sea Tower. Mrs Ransome, who took a keen interest in many local organisations, died in May 1938.

Mr Ransome, who was a Justice of the Peace for the Cinque Ports sitting at Margate, was a keen churchman and although he was often pressed to take some office in the church at All Saints, he declined to do so. He was also an active member of the

Conservative Party and was for some considerable period President of the local Association.

He took a live interest in the affairs of Birchington. For a number of years he served on the Parish Council and also on the Isle of Thanet Rural District Council and Board of Guardians (of the Thanet Union Work House). Even after he retired, he continued his interest in education being a member of the local Higher Education Committee.

Mr Ransome leaves one son, Mr W A S (Tony) Ransome who is at present working in London.

The Funeral

The funeral took place at All Saints Church on Monday. The Vicar, the Rev. N M Granville Sharp officiated, assisted by The Rev. P. Birkett (Curate). During the service the hymns "Now the labourer's work is o'er" and "Peace perfect peace" were sung. The family mourners were Mr Tony Ransome (son), Colonel T E Spencer (father-in-law), Miss Ransome (sister) and Mr F. Ransome (brother).

Among those at the church were Mr H E E. Jeston J.P. and Mrs Jeston, Major P H G Powell-Cotton, Mrs Powell-Cotton, Mr Powell-Cotton. Councillor S W Pearce J.P. (representing the Cinque Ports Magistrates), Mr C C Maughan (Magistrates' Clerk), Councillor R W Curtis, Mr & Mrs H T Symons, Miss K Phillips, Mrs Carr, Mrs Forrest, Miss Morris, Miss Colson Phillips, Mr A W Miller, the Rev A E Bloore, Mr A P Tate, Mr F. V. Barrow, Mr R. Thurgood, Mrs N M Granville Sharp and Mr W H Taylor.

Major E L Hunter was unable to attend owing to illness and a number of relatives and other friends were prevented from attending by the weather. There were no flowers by request.

Magistrates' Tribute

Prior to the business at the Cinque Ports Police Court, Margate on Monday, Mr W Booth Reeve, chairman of the Magistrates, referred to the passing of Mr Ransome.

"He was a member of this Bench for some eighteen years," he said, "and was highly respected and esteemed by us all. He was one of those whom I would term an old-style English gentleman, and as such, we miss him very much."

On behalf of his colleagues, Mr Booth Reeve expressed deep sympathy with the members of Mr Ransome's family.