

The Ingleby Family of Valentines



Mrs Ingleby and her
children c.1870

© Barbara
Wellington



By Georgina Green

Published by The Friends of Valentines Mansion

To commemorate the birth of

Dr Clement M Ingleby on 29th October 1823 at Edgbaston

and his wife, **Sarah Oakes on 22nd December 1823** at Gravesend.

THE FRIENDS OF VALENTINES MANSION

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A Victorian role model

Mrs Sarah Ingleby lived at Valentines for over fifty years and died there on 3rd January 1906. She was very much a product of the Victorian era, being four years younger than Queen Victoria and dying five years after her. Charles Dickens was about ten years older than Mrs Ingleby. *David Copperfield* (1849/50) and *Bleak House* (1852/3) were both published when she was in her late twenties.

The local papers considered her passing as a great loss to the community due to her kindness and benevolence. The *Ilford Guardian* of 5th January 1906 said “Words utterly fail to express the keen regret that was felt in Ilford on Wednesday, when news was received of the death of Mrs Ingleby, of Valentines. That lady had so consistently and wholeheartedly lent her wonderful energies to philanthropic work that every resident, rich and poor, had a feeling of something more than respect for her, whilst in the immediate neighbourhood of Valentines – particularly in the Beehive District – she was loved by all.”

Sarah Oakes

Sarah Ingleby was the daughter of Robert Oakes, who was born in 1788 at Milton, now part of Gravesend, and married Sarah Cummings there on 20th April 1819. Their first child was a boy, christened Robert after his father, but he died aged five months. Sarah was born on 22nd December 1823 but she was not christened until the following June, which is a surprisingly long time later for those days. We know that Sarah’s mother died when she was small (in 1826) so maybe this is the explanation. Robert Oakes was shown as a coal merchant on the two baptism entries.



The home of Robert Oakes:
South House, 109 Windmill Street,
Gravesend, Kent
© Georgina Green, 2008

Sarah was brought up by her aunt and uncle. Charles Thomas Holcombe had married Margaret Cummings (the sister of Sarah's mother) in 1820 and it was Margaret who took care of little Sarah. Robert Oakes re-married in 1835, when Sarah was eleven, but by this time she was happily settled with the Holcombes, who had no children of their own, and there she stayed. Charles Holcombe was himself an orphan who had been brought up by a guardian, so he must have appreciated Sarah's position. However, it is clear Robert Oakes kept in touch with his daughter throughout his life. He died at Gravesend in February 1873 aged 84 and his death certificate gives his occupation as "Gentleman, Justice of the Peace for the Borough of Gravesend." His second wife, Ann, had died a year earlier.

Charles Holcombe

Sarah spent her early years at the Holcombes' home, Mill Green House at Fryerning near Ingatestone. This is still a rural part of Essex even though it is only a mile or so from the A12. Young Sarah would have been very familiar with the windmill which was just across the road from her house. However, in 1838 Charles Holcombe bought Valentines, so when they moved in Sarah was about 16, her uncle about 46 and her aunt probably about 45. The house was already 140 years old in 1838 but it had been thoroughly renovated by Charles Welstead thirty years before Holcombe bought it, and there is no evidence to suggest that he undertook any serious restoration.



Charles Holcombe (1792 – 1870)
© Redbridge Museum & Heritage Centre

The property was described in the sale documents as "a capital Family Mansion and Estate, called Valentines, with ornamental park, pleasure

grounds, gardens, conservatory, pinery, hot-houses, green-houses, and double coach-house and stables, farm and other out-buildings, with sundry inclosures of arable and pasture land” in all about 175 acres. The price paid was £12,600. Some of the glass houses were at least forty, if not sixty years old then, and it is a pity they and the conservatory have not survived.

At this time Charles Holcombe was a businessman who leased a large plot of land beside the Thames at Greenwich where he had a “brass foundry, tar and Asfelt works”. He is also described in directories in the 1840s as a “refiner of coal tar, spirit, pitch and varnish”. Holcombe developed the site by building a wharf with a road leading to it, with houses and a pub called “The Sea Witch” on the riverbank. This area is beside the approach to the Blackwall Tunnel, near the O² arena. He also owned other property in south London, notably at New Cross and what is now Telegraph Hill Park.

Clement Ingleby

From letters donated to the Borough in October 2011 it is clear that the Holcombes were on friendly terms with the family of Clement Ingleby, a solicitor in Birmingham. He was well respected because of his work in connection with the construction of canals and railways and he moved in the highest social and political circles in Birmingham at that time. He may have acted in a legal capacity for an Ingleby family business, the Cheadle Brass Company, and this may be how the families met.

However, from comments in a letter written by Margaret Holcombe it seems she knew some of the relatives of Clement Ingleby’s wife, Elizabeth Jukes, although it has not been possible to trace a family connection. It is clear that their son, Clement Mansfield Ingleby,¹ knew the Holcombes well and had visited them at Valentines early in 1840. At

¹ Clement and Elizabeth Ingleby named their children Clement Mansfield Ingleby and Elizabeth Anne Ingleby, and they were referred to by the family as Mansfield and Anne. (Mansfield was the maiden name of the mother of Elizabeth Jukes.) Clement junior usually signed his name C. Mansfield Ingleby, or just CMI, but his full name or Clement M Ingleby is given on his published works and this is how he is known today.

the age of seventeen he had been exchanging views with Charles Holcombe about developments in atmospheric pressure which could lead to propulsion, and was interested in the working of an experimental railway set up at Southwark.

Clement M Ingleby was a delicate child, not expected to survive, and he suffered from ill-health most of his life. He had been educated at home but entered Trinity College at Cambridge when he was twenty to study mathematics, and he had a very logical mind. But a letter survives from Clement to his sister, dated March 26th 1842, in which he describes the glories of Trinity College which he adores. It goes on to quote from a poem he has found which he thinks she will enjoy reading and it also shows he had a great sense of fun.

On 3rd October 1850 Sarah Oakes married Clement Ingleby at the Parish Church of Great Ilford (St. Mary's in the High Road) when they were both 26. They had obviously known one another for at least ten years and Sarah addressed him as Mansfield (his middle name) in a letter she wrote just four weeks before their wedding. She was a

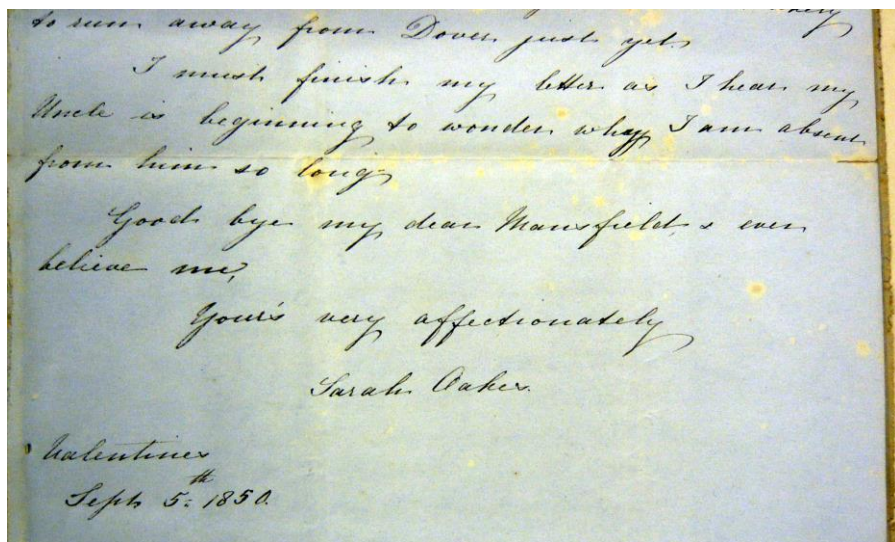
deeply religious young lady and it appears they could not agree on some beliefs. Sarah made many sincere comments, suggested readings from the Bible, and said *“that when we are called to our final account we shall not be asked whether we belonged to high or low church or attended Church or Chapel but the solemn question will be Have you loved Christ & faithfully kept his commandments? ... Believe me my dear I did not accept your proposal without deep consideration & prayer on the step I was about to take. For days I endured great doubts, fears & anxieties knowing that trials greatly increase in the married life but I found my love for*



Sarah Oakes c.1850

© Redbridge Museum & Heritage Centre

you could surmount my fears; this love has since then increased & I can now look forward with sweet confidence to the time when we can share each others joys & sorrows & I trust bear with patience our different doubts & infirmities."



Letter to C. Mansfield Ingleby from Sarah Oakes
© Redbridge Museum & Heritage Centre

They settled down together at 35 Carpenter Road, Edgbaston, but Sarah did not lose touch with her father. The 1851 census shows her as a visitor at his house in Gravesend.

Clement was taken into partnership as a solicitor in the family firm of Ingleby, Wragge and Ingleby of Birmingham. However he did not enjoy the legal profession and in his spare time he studied philosophy and



35 Carpenter Road, Edgbaston
© Cameron Woodrow

English literature. On the title page of his book *Outlines of Theoretical Logic*, published in 1856 as a school text-book, C. Mansfield Ingleby, M A is described as "Teacher of Metaphysics and Logic in the Industrial

Department of the Birmingham and Midland Institute”. Apparently for a time he held the Chair of Logic there, but an interest in Shakespeare was taking over as his main preoccupation.

Clement Ingleby first became interested in Shakespeare through an acquaintance with Howard Staunton with whom he played chess. Staunton had been the champion chess player in 1843 and was the author of *The Chess Player’s Handbook*. He was a Shakespearean scholar who produced an edition of Shakespeare in 1858-60. Clement Ingleby’s first paper on Shakespeare was read before a literary society in Birmingham in 1850, the year he married. In 1859 he published a study of the “Perkins Folio” which had been claimed as a newly discovered work of Shakespeare but was later acknowledged as a forgery. His legal training and logical mind were soon put to good use in setting out the facts of this fraud in a more detailed work. In the same year he became a Doctor of Literature at Cambridge.

Mrs Ingleby, Mother of four

Meanwhile Sarah had given birth to four children: Arthur on 18th September 1852, Holcombe on 18th March 1854, Herbert on 19th May 1856 and Clementina Rose on 27th December 1857. Their father was described on the birth certificates as Attorney or later Solicitor.

We do not know to what extent Sarah had been involved with the running of Valentines before her marriage and if running her own establishment at Edgbaston was something she undertook naturally. She was obviously a good manager and it is likely she was a very kindly employer. It wasn’t until Sarah had been married nearly ten years that Mrs. Beeton published her book on household management, but we know she did take a great interest in cooking and had her own large collection of recipes from various friends.

After ten years in Edgbaston several events precipitated a move back to Valentines for Sarah and her family. In August 1859 Clement Ingleby senior died. Clement junior no longer needed to respect his father’s wish that he worked in the family firm, and presumably he inherited some wealth at this time. He wanted to spend more time visiting the library at the British Museum to study the documents which would help him in his

research. In April 1860 Sarah's aunt Margaret died, leaving Charles Holcombe alone at the age of 68.

So we can imagine the family life at Valentines as the children grew up in what was later described as the "stately mansion with a noble lawn, and park, a grand avenue of yew-trees, and famous gardens." Sarah seems to have run the house and estate while Clement pursued his passion as a gentleman of letters, spending much time in his library.



Painting of Valentines when it was the home of the Ingleby family
© Redbridge Museum & Heritage Centre

The 1861 census shows Sarah and the three younger children at Valentines with Charles Holcombe. Presumably their eldest son, Arthur, was away at boarding school on the night of the census. Dr Clement Ingleby was shown with his mother at her house in Edgbaston. While Sarah was keeping a loving eye on her uncle, he was doing the same for his mother, visiting her from time to time. She survived her husband by 18 years, dying in 1877 at the age of 94.

Charles Thomas Holcombe died 28th September 1870, and was buried with his wife at St. Mary's, the parish church of Great Ilford. He left Valentines to his niece, Mrs. Ingleby, for her life and then to his great-nephew and godson, Holcombe Ingleby. A schedule of deeds relating to properties belonging to him at his death include the Greenwich land

leased from Morden College, other holdings in Camberwell and Waltham Abbey, and property in Ware and Cheshunt associated with the Northern and Eastern Railway Company.



Arthur Ingleby aged about eighteen

© Barbara Wellington

The Inglebys' eldest son, Arthur, obtained a BA from Trinity College, Cambridge, and in 1876 he married Minnie Paula Walker, daughter of Revd. Thomas Andrew Walker, the Curate of Holy Trinity, Barkingside. Arthur was appointed as Curate at Folkestone in 1876 (presumably he took up the post following the wedding) and was ordained as a priest at Canterbury the following year. While they were at Folkestone Minnie had two babies – Ethel Mary Rose and Richard Arthur. They

left Folkestone in 1879 for St Matthias in Stoke Newington where Arthur stayed until 1881, when he transferred to All Saints at Stoke Newington for a year or so.

Valentine House, family home

The composition of the household changed as the family grew up. In 1871 the two younger boys were at boarding school in Malvern and there was a governess for Clementina. However the family were not at home on the night of the census and the butler, Francis Cox, was left in charge of the house. His family were living in Beehive Lane.

In the 1881 census Dr Ingleby was described as “Doctor of Law and Author” and head of the household. His wife, Sarah Ingleby was “tenant for life of 170 acres, employing 12 labourers and 1 boy”. Of the children

only Holcombe and Clementina were at home on the night of the census, and eight servants were listed in the house. This included Martha Findlay, widow of the butler shown on the 1861 census, who was the housekeeper and in fact she appears in the census in that role from 1861 – 91. Mrs Ingleby's grandson, Clement (son of Holcombe Ingleby), remembered "*Mrs. Findlay in her lovely room on the ground floor, surrounded by all the best tea and dinner services arranged in glass-fronted, mahogany presses, and only to be handled and washed up by the head housemaid, supervised by the severe housekeeper. I can see Grandmama now in that room with her basket of keys, interviewing Mrs. Findlay, who stood primly at attention awaiting her orders.*"



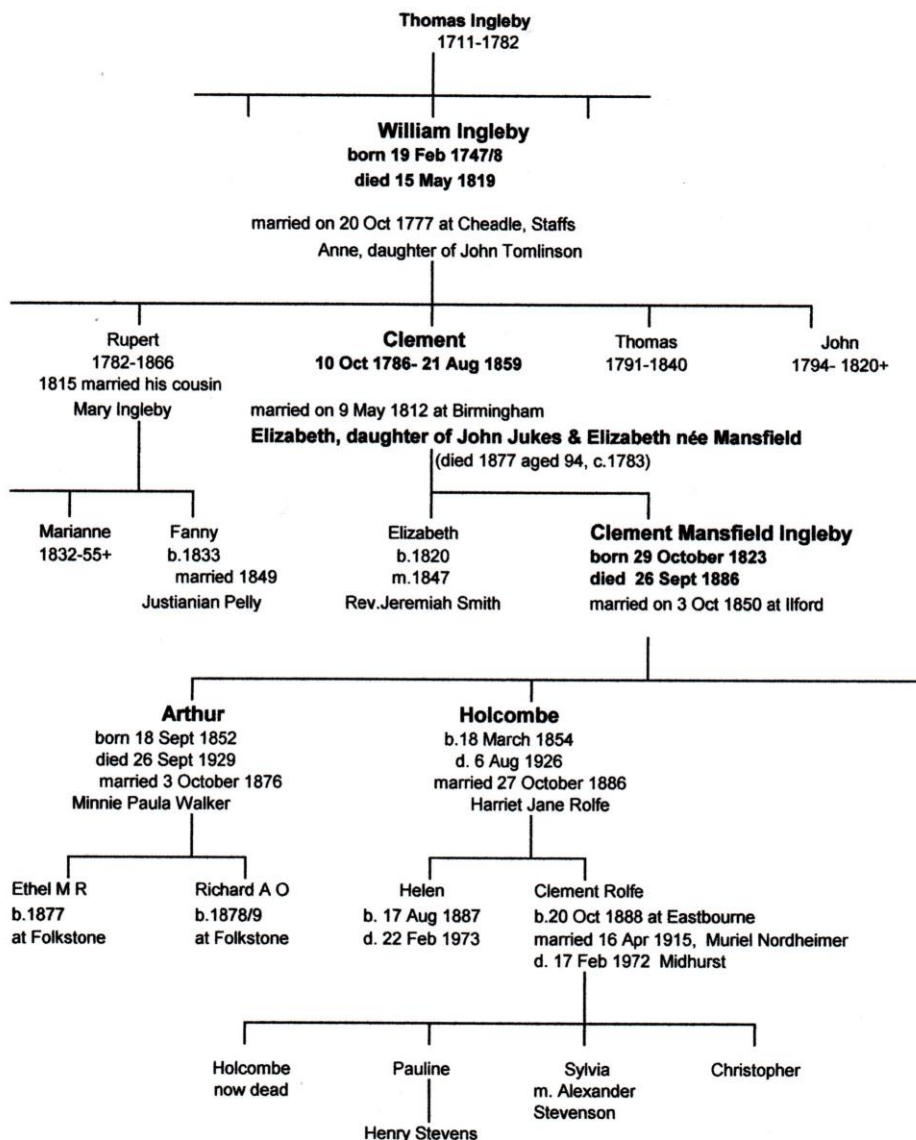
Clementina Rose Ingleby c.1870

© Barbara Wellington

In the 1881 census the servants are all just listed as that, but Charlotte Gunner was the Lady's Maid, and it seems likely Mrs Findlay's daughter was the cook, and there would have been three housemaids, a kitchen maid and a footman. It has not been possible to trace the butler in 1881 as Francis Cox had apparently retired. In 1891 and 1901 the butler was Joseph Southworth who lived at No.2 Lime Cottages, Beehive Lane. He is remembered as "*the inestimable butler, the energetic and red-bearded Southworth (friend of my childhood), who had a deep bass voice.*" His eldest son was the

same age as young Clement and it seems they had a good relationship when Holcombe Ingleby's family came to stay and young Clement got up to mischief.

INGLEBY FAMILY TREE



OAKES, CUMMINGS & HOLCOMBE LINKS

Joseph Pegler Cummings

married 18 May 1783 Ann Gosling
(c.1757 - buried 10 May 1796)

Joseph Pegler Cummings m. 8 June 1797
Eliza Bella Burnsted

Margaret

(born 16 June 1792, died 25 April 1860)
10 January 1820 married

Charles Thomas Holcombe

(born 21 April 1792, died 28 September 1870)

Sarah

(Born c.1795 died 1826)
married on 20 April 1819

Robert Oakes

born 1788, buried Feb 1873

Eliza

(born c.1805)
married

Henry Ditchburn

Sarah Oakes

born 22 December 1823
died 3 January 1906

married on 3 Oct 1850 at Ilford

Robert

christened 16 Jan 1822
buried 3 April 1822 aged 5 months

Herbert

b. 19 May 1856

d. 5 Jan 1900

married 3 July 1896

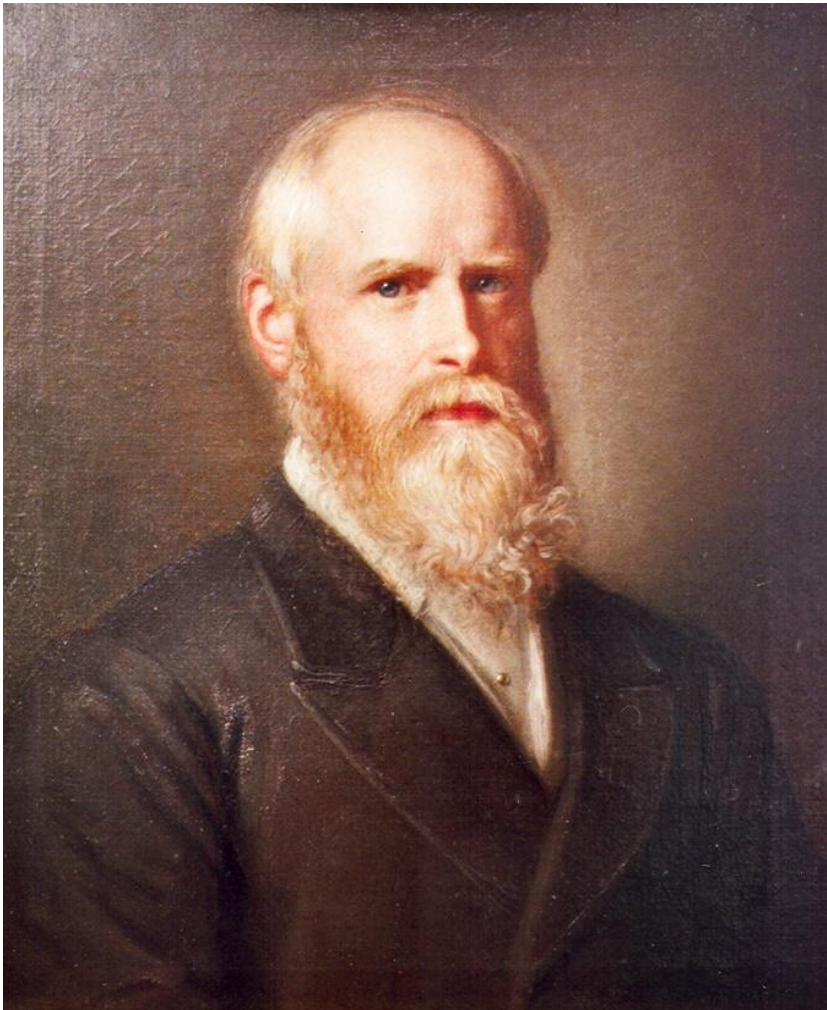
Florence I Hall

Ivor Herbert

Clementina Rose

born 27 December 1857

died 7 February 1938



Dr Clement M Ingleby by Guido Philipp Schmitt, 1879
© Redbridge Museum & Heritage Centre

The 1881 census shows William Sheppard, steward and bailiff, and William Burn, the head gardener, living with their families in cottages on the estate. The estate lodge was occupied by William Lewis, the groom, who was also the coachman, and his family. Mrs Ingleby's grandson remembered "*Before Grandpapa died they frequently drove to London, and Lewis*



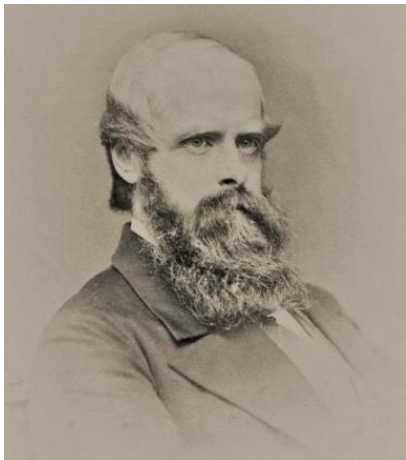
Mrs Sarah Ingleby by Guido Philipp Schmitt, 1884
© Norfolk Museums Service (Lynn Museum, King's Lynn)

took them to Hyde Park Corner within the hour. They probably halted in Bishopsgate for housekeeping purposes, and the ever faithful Mr. Fitch, clad in white apron, came out to the carriage to take their order for groceries, which were collected on the way home. Then, possibly, to the Athenaeum to set down Grandpapa, who would

dine there at 3 o'clock to meet his cronies and discuss passages from Shakespeare or abstruse mathematical problems, whilst Grandmama drove on to the pleasant village of Belgravia where she dined with friends, and the horses where bailed. Home later, again within the hour, the clop-clop of hooves in unison resounding under the stately colonnade, the bays tossing their heads at the front door as though asking, 'Where to next?'.’”

Dr Clement M Ingleby, Shakespearean scholar

At the Annual Meeting of Shakespeare’s Birthplace Trust at Stratford-upon-Avon on 5th May 1875 the Trustees unanimously agreed to elect Dr Ingleby one of the Life Trustees. He was also elected a Vice-President of



Dr Clement M Ingleby 1866/7
© London Mathematical Society

the Royal Society of Literature in 1876, an honorary member of the Shakespeare Society of New York, and an honorary member of the German Shakespeare Society (elected 1881 to the Weimar Shakespeare Society).

Apart from various essays, and contributions to several publications like *Notes & Queries* Clement M Ingleby published around 18 books in 29 editions, plus writing poetry. Of his books, 12 were about Shakespeare and 6 were on logic, metaphysics and other subjects.

Mrs Ingleby, Widow

Clement Ingleby had a serious rheumatic attack in August 1886 and, although he seemed to recover, he died on 26th September. An obituary spoke of him in the most glowing terms, of his cheerfulness, courtesy and kindness, and his hearty laugh. Apart from his intellectual skills, he had an exquisite singing voice which was used both in public and in private. It was said “He probably never made an enemy and never lost a

friend.” Although Sarah must have been accustomed to his ill-health, she took his death very badly. It seems theirs was a marriage based on true love. The family and staff gave her support and she took strength from her Christian beliefs. It must also have given her great comfort as her sons married and her grandchildren grew up. Later accounts show they regarded her with both respect and affection.

Mrs Ingleby served as President of the Ilford Philanthropic Society for a number of years. Unlike many grand ladies taking on such a position, she was not just a figurehead. Her address at the Annual General Meeting was always pleasantly anticipated by the membership as she spoke from her heart, with some eloquence. She took a great interest in the welfare of her less fortunate neighbours and seems to have had an intuitive understanding of their problems.

When her father died in February 1873 Sarah had inherited dividends of various investments, in her own right, providing her with a regular income quite separate from her husband. She was a wealthy woman but the money was used to benefit others rather than herself. It is clear that she was very generous to those in need but she avoided publicity and much was achieved which was known to very few.

Mrs Ingleby was warm-hearted and sympathetic, and she was constantly thinking about how she

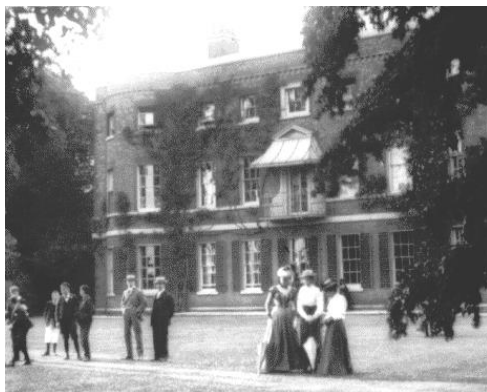


Mrs Ingleby c.1902
Photograph donated to Valentines

could help the poor. Many of the workers on the Valentines estate, and in her own household, lived in the enclave around The Beehive. She instigated the building of a school there and contributed to its maintenance. An obituary said that her “great work has been the maintenance of the Beehive School which has been under her care for a long number of years, and upon it she has expended thousands of pounds, and if ever Mrs Ingleby was perfectly happy, it was amongst her children in her school.” She took an interest in the local residents and supported them in any way she could. She shared their grief and tried to lessen it with kindly advice. Where appropriate she gave actual help.

For the greater part of her widowhood, nearly twenty years, Mrs Ingleby served on the Romford Board of Guardians, attending their meetings regularly. She took a keen interest in the welfare of the “deserving poor” (as they were referred to in those days), and especially watching over the women, the young girls and children who were compelled to seek charity. She sponsored a “Home for Fallen Girls” at Romford, helping to finance the building.

Mrs Ingleby allowed the gardens at Valentines to be used for a great many functions. These ranged from genteel tea parties, to large-scale fêtes. Mrs Ingleby’s hospitality was extended to everyone regardless of politics (she was a Conservative) or religious inclinations (she was a faithful member of the Church of England.) The gardens were a source of great pride to



Valentines c.1900

© Redbridge Museum & Heritage Centre

Mrs. Ingleby and she regularly opened the grounds to the Horticultural Society. But as the sprawl of London extended towards Valentines in the 1890s, she decided to sell about 48 acres of the estate to the then Urban District Council for the creation of Central Park, which opened in 1899.

Sarah generally enjoyed good health and her death, just after her 82nd birthday, came as a shock to everyone. She caught ‘flu which developed

into bronchial pneumonia and died at home on 3rd January 1906. She was buried with her husband at Ovingdean, near Brighton. It appears Dr Ingleby had purchased the right to the living (the advowson) shortly before he died, presumably thinking Arthur would settle there.

Clement Ingleby said of his grandmother “*She never gave us a hard mouth; she was a wise old woman, firm, sweet of temper, large-hearted and entirely fearless; generous to a fault, and of great understanding.*”

Mrs Ingleby was a person of far more importance in our community a century ago than she would have acknowledged herself. Her obituaries speak of someone who lived her life in accordance with the Christian principles of her upbringing and who was loved and respected by the whole community. Our ancestors were lucky to have benefited from her kindness and it is hoped future generations will benefit too by learning about her life in this house now it has been restored. As her grandson said “*Well deserved are the simple words that surround the marble of her grave in the tiny churchyard of Ovingdean, She did what she could.*”

Arthur Ingleby

In 1882 Arthur became Perpetual Curate and Chaplain of the Ilford Hospital Chapel where he served for ten years, until 1892. It must have been a great comfort to Mrs Ingleby that her son was in post nearby when her husband died. This was Arthur’s last place of service and during his time at the Chapel a major restoration took place. It was Revd Arthur Ingleby who added the beautiful stone Reredos while Dr Ingleby donated a lych gate at the entrance to the Chapel yard. After his death the beautiful stained-glass windows depicting to *St. Clement, Pope and Martyr, and St. Valentine, Priest and Martyr* designed by Edward Burne-Jones and made by Morris & Co., were dedicated to Clement Ingleby.

It seems Arthur and his family moved to Exeter where they stayed for about eleven years until their final move - to Worthing. Arthur bought a house called West Elloe Lodge in Mill Road at Heene, but changed the name to St. Clements. He enjoyed his retirement and was well liked. He died on 26th September 1929 at home. His obituary says he was “the embodiment of courtesy” and his keen sense of humour never failed.

Holcombe Ingleby and the Rolfe family

Holcombe Ingleby studied history at Corpus Christi College, Oxford, matriculating with honours. He joined the Inner Temple with a view to being called to the bar, but eventually became a solicitor and had a brief but successful career with a well-established firm. He assisted his father in some Shakespearean research and did some writing on his own account. Also like his father, he had a wonderful singing voice. He was a keen sportsman who rowed at Oxford, played cricket for Worcestershire, and later became a leading golfer.

In 1884 Dr and Mrs Ingleby of Valentines took the tenancy of Heacham Hall from Eustace Neville-Rolfe, though why is not known. The village of Heacham lies close to the Norfolk coast, south of Hunstanton, and for over two centuries the Heacham estate was owned by the Rolfe family. In 1614 John Rolfe had married the Indian princess Pocahontas and the village sign commemorates the local tradition that she visited Heacham. It is a coincidence that Gravesend, where Mrs Ingleby was born, is the burial place of the Indian princess.



Heacham Hall c.1900

The Hall, an 18th century house with later extensions, was destroyed by fire during World War Two.

The estate comprised 2,643 acres, Heacham Hall park and gardens, three farms, five villa residences and nineteen cottages plus Sedgeford Hall park and gardens, three farms and twenty-five cottages in Sedgeford. It is clear that Eustace Neville-Rolfe was a caring landlord both respected and admired by his tenants, but the effects of the agricultural depression in the 1880s meant he had to economise by renting out both Heacham and Sedgeford Halls, with members of his family living either abroad or in one of the estate villas.

Eustace had a sister, Harriet Jane Neville-Rolfe, a talented artist (referred to by the family as Jane), who was staying in Heacham with her sister Mary when she met Holcombe Ingleby, and on 27th October 1886 they married. He was described as a Gentleman, of Heacham Hall, and her address was given as Park House, Heacham. They set up home at Eastbourne where they had two children: Helen Ingleby and Clement Rolfe Ingleby, but in 1893 they took the tenancy and moved into Heacham Hall.



Holcombe Ingleby (1854 – 1926)
© Redbridge Museum & Heritage Centre

When the new Succession Duty law was passed Eustace Neville-Rolfe realised his family would have to pay death duties on his property after he died. In 1899 he reluctantly agreed when Holcombe Ingleby offered to buy the whole estate, as this meant that it continued in the family of his sister. However even Holcombe found it difficult to manage the finances and in the early 1900s he sold Heacham Hall and

moved to Sedgeford Hall where he and Jane lived for the rest of their lives. Holcombe Ingleby became Mayor of King's Lynn in 1909, 1919, 1920 and 1921; from 1910-1918 he was MP for West Norfolk and in 1923 High Sheriff of Norfolk.

Holcombe died on 6th August 1926 and his wife two years later, but Sedgeford Hall continued as the family home of their son, Clement Rolfe Ingleby, until 1956 when he sold up and moved to Sussex. It was at this time that he gave the family portraits to the then Ilford Borough Council.

Herbert Ingleby



Presumably Holcombe's brother Herbert must have come to visit as on 3rd July 1895 he (Gentleman, of Valentines) married Florence Isabel Hall of Heacham, daughter of Robert Newton Hall, Judge of the Province of Quebec, at Heacham. There is no evidence that they stayed to live in Heacham, in fact no record of where they lived has been found and sadly Herbert died on 5th January 1900, leaving his young wife and their son, Ivor, who was three years old.

Herbert Ingleby © Barbara Wellington

Clementina Ingleby

In 1894 Clementina Rose Ingleby had an operation which in those days was dangerously experimental, and her mind became affected. By 1906 the family had her certified as of "unsound mind" and she was living at Wimbledon in 1906. However, by the 1930s she was at Church House, Heacham, and was referred to by a member of the family who remembered "Aunt Rose was an invalid". When she died in 1938 she was buried in the family plot at Heacham.



The graves of Clementina Rose Ingleby, Holcombe and Harriet Jane Ingleby, Herbert Ingleby, and Holcombe's daughter Dr Helen Ingleby, in the churchyard at Heacham. © Georgina Green, 2008



Mrs Ingleby c.1902
presumably with her grandson, Ivor.
Photograph donated to Valentines

Valentines Mansion

At the north of Valentines Park, Valentines Mansion is listed Grade II* with several listed features in the formal garden.



Valentines, or Valentine House, was built in around 1696, a new brick house standing in open countryside.

City banker Robert Surman purchased the estate in 1724 and created the formal gardens and canals. In 1754 Charles Raymond, retired East India Company captain, bought the estate. He became a leading City banker and renovated the house c.1769 giving it the Georgian appearance we see today.

Sarah Ingleby was the last private owner of Valentines. The council acquired the house in 1912 and renamed it Valentines Mansion. In the First World War it served as a home for Belgian refugees, then a hospital and later a public health centre and the council housing department.

After standing empty for 15 years, the mansion was restored and opened to the public in 2009 and is available as a beautiful venue for weddings and other private functions.

The support of The Friends of Valentines Mansion was key to the council obtaining a Heritage Lottery Grant towards the restoration. Today they promote learning about Valentines, organise events to raise money to buy items for the period rooms, run open day activities and help with volunteering.

Valentines is open to the public on Sundays & Mondays 10.30am – 4pm. Entry is free.