

## PREFACE

My grandmother, Lucy Winifred Wates, began to write this biography of my grandfather probably in about 1967 some ten years after he had died and when she was already well into her 80s. I assisted her with the typing of the first draft. She continued working on it for some years, sitting at her desk in the dining room of Rowhill Grange. The last draft was typed by a local friend Doreen Butler. As it does not compare exactly with earlier drafts I think she must have dictated it. She made further manuscript amendments to that draft, but the work was never completed. The story finishes at the end of the Second World War, although it seems that she had intended to write about the post-war years as evidenced by the enquiries she made of Mr. Reeves (see appendix III). She left Rowhill in 1976 to live in an annex to the house of her daughter, Helen Grant, in Kemsing near Sevenoaks, and died in 1978 at the age of 94.

Although her children knew of the work, and Barbara Argles refers to it in her own history of the marriage, there appears to have been no desire to do anything with it. I think there was a feeling that the story was told too much from the perspective of their mother, who adored their father, and was therefore not entirely accurate. However I, and possibly others in my generation, knew him largely through her eyes and the record is one that we can identify with. Furthermore I feel that the whole atmosphere of Rowhill as we knew it comes across in the book. This is so even though the period described is before our memories, because life there continued much as before.

I have edited the book considerably. Other than for obvious grammatical or factual errors I have avoided altering the wording, but I have changed the order of paragraphs and sections. The structure of the book including the headings and subheadings are mine although I have used many of her headings. I found that she had a tendency to ramble and repeat herself, so I have tried to cut out the repetitions. I also found that in the final draft a number of stories and anecdotes had been omitted. She may have felt that these were too frivolous or did not add to the main story of her husband's life. However she could tell a story very well, and in many ways these are the best parts. I have reinstated these, the best example being the story of Mrs. Barker's will.

I have inserted photographs where I have found ones that are relevant to the text. I have also added the appendices. The Times obituary and information supplied by Mr. Reeves take the story on past the end of the war and I have added an epilogue. The maps and family tree are to assist the reader

.Brian A. Wates

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