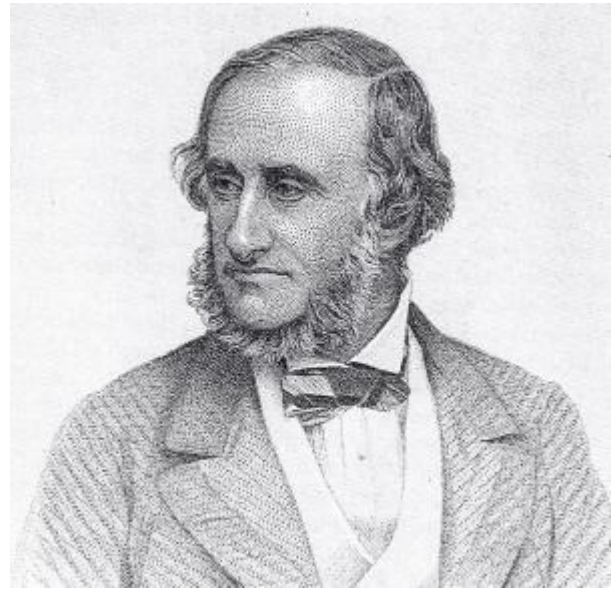


## SIR EDWARD AND LADY KERRISON

### Their Contribution to the Establishment of Framlingham College in 1864



As elsewhere, the subjects of Queen Victoria resolved upon the constitution of some suitable memorial in Suffolk within a few weeks of Prince Albert's death on 14 December 1861.

A proposition was made by Sir Edward Clarence Kerrison Bart MP JP DL who wanted full and better use of the Framlingham estate bequeathed in 1636 by Sir Robert Hitcham to the Master and Fellows of Pembroke College, Cambridge, in part for educational purposes. Lady Kerrison fully shared her husband's feelings of desiring to found a great school within the county's borders. They wanted Suffolk boys to receive instruction in agricultural science and other subjects to stand them in good stead in later life. It was thought such a school would replace the small private schools and 'academies' which were not very satisfactory.

The Ipswich Journal printed an announcement on 22 February 1862 which commenced:

*"A DEPUTATION waited on the EARL of STRADBROKE on the 20<sup>th</sup> of February for the purpose of urging the expediency of raising a MEMORIAL TO THE LATE PRINCE ALBERT IN THE SHAPE OF A COLLEGE for affording a Scientific Education to the Middle Classes at a moderate cost."*

One of the signatories to the above, Cornelius Welton, had met Prince Albert when he was in Suffolk in 1851 staying at Shrubland Park and they discussed educational opportunities for farmers' sons. The Prince commented on the lack of facilities in many counties especially the ones with agricultural areas and he said Middle Schools might be conducted upon the plan of German schools.

Within a week of the Deputation, a requisition was signed by 700 persons comprising Noblemen, Gentlemen, Clergy and principal Yeoman of the County and on 18 March at Ipswich Town Hall one of the largest and most influential meetings in the town was held. Many present later became connected with the school and four resolutions were passed to establish a School or College including the constitution of a Committee. Subscriptions were received in such a volume as to provide approval. A sum of £6,000 was subscribed at the end of the meeting.

The Committee assembled in the board room of the Ipswich Railway Station on 31 March and subject to the approval of Her Majesty the school was to be named "The Royal Albert Middle-Class School and College." In the end, the Royal Assent was not sought to this cumbersome title. The next meeting was held in the Town Hall at Bury St Edmunds under the chairmanship of the Marquess of Bristol. A number of resolutions were adopted and many subscriptions received. Amongst the speakers were Sir Charles Bunbury and Lord Arthur Hervey (later Bishop of Bath and Wells). On the question of site, proposals were dealt with on the lines drawn up by Lady Kerrison.

Later in 1862, the Master and Fellows of Pembroke College voluntarily submitted to the Charity Commissioners the management of the estate and negotiations were opened regarding acquisition of some 15 acres of freehold land to a value of £2,000 a year.

On 16 July 1864 a meeting under the Charter about to be granted was held for choosing the first Headmaster at 140 Piccadilly, the town house of Sir Edward. The appointment was made of Rev A C Daymond MA.

The Charter was granted on 30 July 1864 for the founding of "Albert Middle Class College in Suffolk" with a Corporation of 26 Members. Sir Edward was appointed Vice President and he topped the subscription list with £2,500 out of a total of £25,000. A medallion portrait of Sir Edward in white marble was placed on the North wall of The Hall.

Sir Edward Kerrison was much delighted with the School's successful work to the extent he took the Masters and boys to Lowestoft for a day by the sea wholly at the expense of the Vice-President which included a sumptuous dinner. The School had attained First Places in passes and honours in the Cambridge University Local Examinations in the four consecutive years 1873 to 1876.

Sir Edward took the chair at Speech Days in 1867 and 1877. He became President of the Corporation upon the death of the Earl of Stradbroke in 1886 but Sir Edward died the same year. He was

second and last baronet of Brome Hall and Oakley Park, Scole, and had been MP for Eye and for East Suffolk.

John Booth in "The First Sixty Years" reports that Sir Edward was as much liked in the House of Commons and Grillon's Club as he was in Suffolk and was a good judge of livestock and game.

At the end of 1886 the School was in debt to the tune of £3,000. An appeal was launched to "continue the school" and Lady Kerrison led the list with £500, the rest of the donors giving £100

and lower. Lady Caroline Kerrison lived until 1895.

This memorial was erected to him in the square by the Town Hall in Eye.

