

**MEMORIALS OF T.  
G. GODFREY-  
FAUSSETT**

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Memorials of T. G. Godfrey-Faussett by William John Loftie

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**WILLIAM JOHN LOFTIE**

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MEMORIALS

OF

*Thomas Godfrey*

T. G. GODFREY-FAUSSETT.

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JAMES PARKER AND CO.,

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1878.

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SOME PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS  
OF  
T. G. GODFREY-FAUSSETT.



I CAN never forget how, one hot day in Egypt less than a year ago, I received a letter full of the sprightly kindness and profound learning which characterised the subject of this notice, and by the same post a copy of the *Times* containing the announcement of his death on the 26th February, a few days after he had dictated the letter. Thus it happened to me that a remote town in the Said is indelibly connected in my mind with the memory of a friend, who, during the years in which I had been privileged to know him, spent his days for the most part in one English city,



one house, one room. To others of his friends perhaps that room over the Norman Gateway at Canterbury will be a more distinct memorial of Thomas Godfrey-Faussett. It was the pleasantest of studies, the most home-like of libraries, and at the same time perhaps one of the most ancient inhabited rooms in England. And never were the characteristics of an occupier more clearly reflected by his surroundings. From the western window the Almonry Court and the old town beyond were visible. The eastern window looked into the Green Court, and on a summer day, when the sun sloped through the trees, and the air was full of the perfume of lime blossoms and the hum of bees, to sit in the window-seat and look out at the old Deanery opposite, the old Canons' houses on the left, and the still older and half-ruined Priory on the right, conveyed such impressions that it was easy to pass away hours in antiquarian meditation or passive enjoyment. The Cathedral bells, at regular intervals chiming away the quarters, marked time too melodiously to waken a day-dreamer, and it was only with an effort that one could

work under such tranquillising influences. But when work was to be done Mr. Faussett was an inexorable task-master, not so much to others as to himself. Thus it came to pass that he often laboured that others might idle, and though at the time when I first visited him, now seven years ago, exertion was already becoming difficult to his wasted frame, his mental energy overcame every obstacle. Even after increasing weakness made it impossible for him to turn over the leaves of a book, a great chart would be spread before him, and the complicated results of hours of careful thought would be recorded at leisure, so accurate was his memory and so distinct were his views. On one table in this room he had the great annotated folios of the History of Kent, which, begun by Streatfeild and continued by Larking, were destined to remain incomplete when death removed their third editor also. Round the walls, above bookshelves containing the manuscript collections of three generations of antiquaries, were hung the family portraits from his beloved Heppington. From the timbers of the open roof depended banners blazoned with the arms of the county,

of the Cathedral, and of many an old Kentish family. Everywhere there was evidence of hard work, combined with the lighter graces of taste and culture. Tall copies of rare books, illuminated pictures, carvings, quaint furniture, Anglo-Saxon relics, were scattered about, yet it was not a museum. Comfort was studied as well as archæology, and on the hearthrug the toys of the child, on the sofa an open workbox, showed that the dearest surroundings of home life were not out of place in the study of the man of law and of history.

Here in many a pleasant meeting were gathered his friends, and not his friends alone, but inquirers who sought his counsel and knowledge from all parts of the world. Hence were dated long letters full of abstruse reasoning, or of legal advice, or of the happy banter in which he excelled; and here after ten years of gradual decline, to use the words of one of his dearest companions and latest comforters, he awaited "thoughtfully and cheerfully" the inevitable end.

How many of us will miss the merry little notes written in this old room! Here is a business letter to the incumbent of a Chapter living:—