

Plymouth

Successive generations of the Oglander family lived at Nunwell on the Isle of Wight for over 800 years. Following is an extract from the diary of Sir John Oglander (1585 - 1655), concerning the loss of his eldest son, who died from smallpox in 1632 while on holiday in France:

Here is set down the most sorrowful story that was ever written by the hand of a distressed father.

On the 21st July, being at Newport, and there busy in many things concerning the good of our Island, I heard a murmuring and sadness amongst the gentlemen and clergy and the rest. Mr Price of Calbourne told me he hoped the ill news that was come to town was not true. Then I, becoming suspicious, demanded whether he had heard any ill news of any of my family. And he, finding my ignorance, converted it to a loss of the King of Sweden's army. Many more overtures I had, but knew nothing until I was putting my foot in the stirrup.



Then Sir Robert Dillington and Sir Edward Dennys came unto me and told me of a flying report, brought by a bark off Weymouth, lately come from France, that my eldest son George was very sick - if not dead.

Let those judge, who have had a hopeful young son aged 23 years, well brought up and learned in all the arts, dutiful, wise, sober, discreet, and given to no vice; but tall, handsome, judicious, and understanding - yea, far above the capacity of his young years, what a case I was in and how deeply stricken, insomuch as I had much ado to get home.

With my tears instead of ink I write these last lines. O George, my beloved George, is dead, and with him most of my terrestrial comforts, although I acknowledge I have good and dutiful sons left. Only with my tears and a foul pen was this written.

Cecil Aspinall-Oglander: Nunwell Symphony (London, 1945)

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