

# Chapter 10

Mary Isabel  
Bagot  
25.4.1825-  
14.4.1900

## 1857-1869 Mary Isabel Bagot, Viscountess Downe & her son Hugh Dawnay, 8<sup>th</sup> Viscount

*In which we learn about the beautiful and confident Mary Bagot who spent most of her early life producing children; that Hugh never took up his inheritance of the Grove; and who was at the house at the 1851 and 1861 census's*

### July 1869

**T**he summer was hot and had been for a few days now. Mary fanned herself gently whilst sitting at the open window of the sitting room in her new country house. She had purchased the Manor House at Great Addington in Northamptonshire with her



8 Belgrave Square, London

These remained their main residences for the rest of their lives <sup>1</sup>



The Manor House, Great Addington, Northamptonshire <sup>2</sup>

husband Sidney, just the previous year.

She was doubly pleased, firstly to be out of London (they had also purchased 8 Belgrave Square in the same year) and secondly to no longer be in charge of Baldersby Hall and all the other family estates, which they had moved out of, again just last year <sup>1</sup>

**H**er eldest son, Hugh had shown that he could take on all the responsibility which she had shouldered on his behalf since his father, William Henry Downe, the 7<sup>th</sup> Viscount had died in 1857 when Hugh was only 12 years old. He had become the 8<sup>th</sup> Viscount at this point <sup>3</sup> but had obviously been unable at such a young age of taking charge of everything. Having become 21 in the summer of 1865, she had spent several years handing over the control and advising him. Now she could relax <sup>1</sup>.

Thinking about this caused her to cast her mind back to her first marriage. She had loved William but he had been a good deal older than her, and when he died she was still young (32 years old), and so people told her, still attractive.

She had needed to be strong at this difficult time as she had a large family aged between 4 months and 13 years of age. Baldersby Park remained the main family home <sup>1</sup>, although they had also spent some time at Bookham Grove, which Hugh had inherited but was now passed to Guy.

Mary “was still a beautiful woman with delicate features, full bright eyes and grey hair” <sup>1</sup>

Mary kept a herd of fallow deer at Baldersby Park <sup>1</sup>

**W**illiam had looked after her though, leaving all of his estates to her in his Will, and specifying quite explicitly and clearly that she could decide how it was apportioned at any point to their children <sup>4</sup>. It had been stipulated that in the event of her own death, Hugh would inherit the Bookham Grove estate upon condition that he give it up to his brother, Guy, as soon as he reached 21 years of age and could take on the full responsibilities of the 8<sup>th</sup> Viscount. Because she was still alive at this point Hugh actually never owned Bookham Grove and Guy, who was now 21 years himself, now had ownership. She felt this was the proper course to take given the wishes of her first husband.

**S**he had been blessed with meeting Sidney and marrying again 6 years after William's death. And indeed having 2 more children with him, her 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>, Sidney and Mary, who were now 3 and 6 years old.

Sidney Levenson Lane a cousin on the Bagot side. 12<sup>th</sup> April 1831 - 29<sup>th</sup> Dec 1910

Married 6<sup>th</sup> Jan 1863 <sup>1</sup>

1. Sidney Ernald Ralph Lane (15.11.1863 - )
2. Mary Beatrice Sidney Lane (1866 - )

Along with the 6 children from her first marriage, who still lived with them, the house was filled with the vitality of the young - just as she liked it.

Sidney was trained in the law and was called to the Bar in 1853. He was also a Justice of the Peace and was appointed Deputy Lieutenant for Yorkshire, North Riding.

She apparently was not a lady short of confidence and she had exercised her influence in various aspects of the Baldersby estate, particularly with regard to ecclesiastical matters, the Church of St James and the adjacent school:

"In Baldersby Church a clock was erected in the spandrel of the arches opposite the pulpit and the Dawnay pew. So soon as the vicar mounted the pulpit, every Dawnay eye was directed upon the dial. The preacher was only allowed so many minutes for his allocution. Should he transgress the allotted term there came to the Vicarage in the ensuing week no presents of game, salmon, grapes or apricots, etc. Lady Downe set the hymns on Saturday for the ensuing Sunday, but I do not think she appointed to the preacher his texts. She desired to be consulted not only upon everything that went on in Baldersby, but also in Dalton, and my predecessor had studiously humoured this hobby of hers. She was, notwithstanding this dictatorship, a most kindly, generous and religiously minded lady and no sick person in any of the parishes over which she reigned lacked any comfort and alleviation that could be afforded to them. She was indeed the Lady Bountiful, and liked to be so esteemed." <sup>1</sup>

*Reverend Baring-Gould, perpetual curate of Dalton, writing in his memoirs in the late 1860's of his encounters with her*

Was she a visitor or a tenant or a servant?

This is perhaps supported by a notification in the Cheshire Observer of 1st September 1860 noting the death of the 74 year old Mrs Anne Foster, of Davenham, Cheshire on the 28th of August at Bookham Grove <sup>5</sup>.

Given her very close involvement and commitment to Baldersby Park it seems unlikely that she spent much, if any, time at Bookham Grove.

On the 7th December 1861 a report of the local fox and hounds cross country race with the Epsom College Pack is recorded, running more than 20 miles from Epsom race track to Guildford, and passing through the grounds of Bookham Grove to Talsten Arber and on in a straight line to East Horsley <sup>6</sup>.

Mary died on the 14th April 1900 (Easter Eve) at the age of 74 years, and Sidney died on the 29th Dec 1910. They are buried alongside William Henry Downe in the graveyard of the Church of St James in Baldersby, Yorkshire <sup>1</sup>. Their graves are now Grade II listed.

In her will Mary states that her first husband, William Henry Viscount Downe <sup>7</sup>

‘gave to his third son (by whom he meant as he stated in another part of his will, Guy Cuthbert, who was then his third surviving son) or whoever might in future be so if it pleased God he should be taken from them, the Wold Newton Estate and the advowson of the living there, and his farm at Huston...and whereas in consequence of the death of the said Guy Cuthbert Dawnay, who never married, I am desirous of exercising in manner hereinafter expressed the aforesaid power of revocation and new disposition given to me by the said will of the said testator (William Henry Viscount Downe).

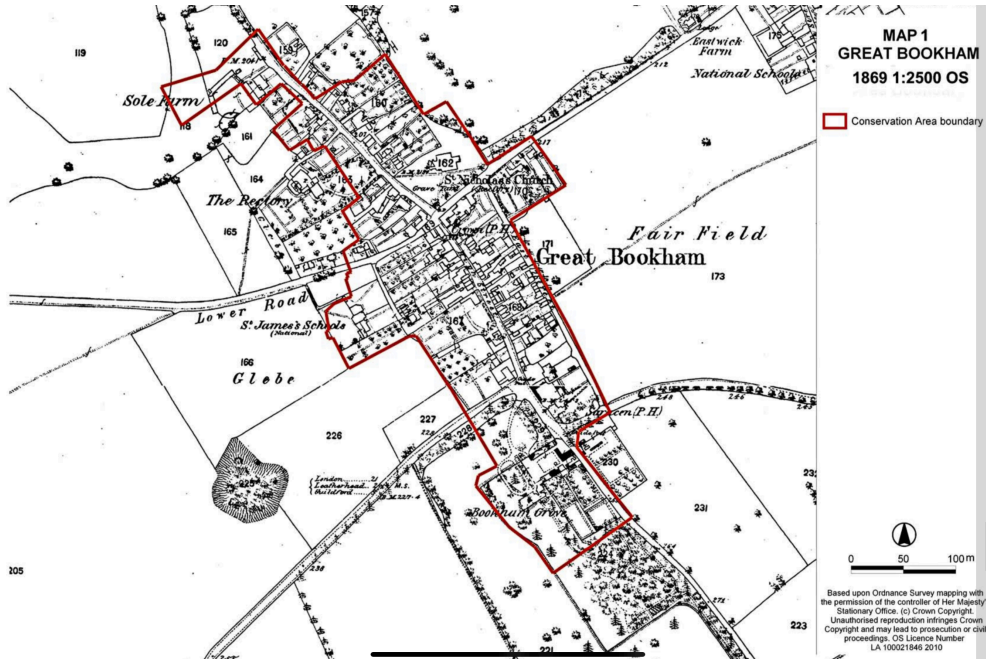
Now in exercise of the power in this behalf so as aforesaid given to me by the said will of the said William Henry Viscount Downe, and of all other powers (if any) in anywise enabling me in this behalf do hereby revoke and make void the disposition in the said will of the said testator contained of the said Wold Newton Estate and the advowson of the living there and the farm at Huston to the said Guy Cuthbert Dawnay, and I do hereby limit, appoint and dispose of the same hereditaments unto and to the use of my son the Honourable Eustace Henry Dawnay, who is now the third surviving son of the said William Henry Viscount Downe.’



Mary Isabel Downe's signature on her will, 13<sup>th</sup> July 1878 <sup>7</sup>

So Guy and then Eustace both had estates in Lincolnshire as well as Bookham Grove. This would have meant that neither of them would have necessarily spent much time at Bookham Grove during their ownership.

This is what Bookham Grove Estate looked like in 1869, when Mary Isabel passed it to Guy Cuthbert Dawnay



Bookham in 1869 <sup>8</sup>



1869 Ordnance Survey map of the village <sup>8</sup>

Hugh  
Dawnay  
20.7.1844-  
21.1.1924

**H**ugh, the 8<sup>th</sup> Viscount, did not actually own Bookham Grove at any point, since his mother, Mary Isabel Bagot, was willed it by her first husband, William Henry Dawnay, the 7<sup>th</sup> Viscount in 1857 <sup>4,7</sup>.

He would only have owned it if she had either passed it to him whilst she was alive, or else upon her death, neither of which happened before he was 21 years of age, when his father's will stated he should pass the property onto his brother Guy <sup>4,7</sup>.

Hugh  
became 21  
on the 20<sup>th</sup>  
July 1865

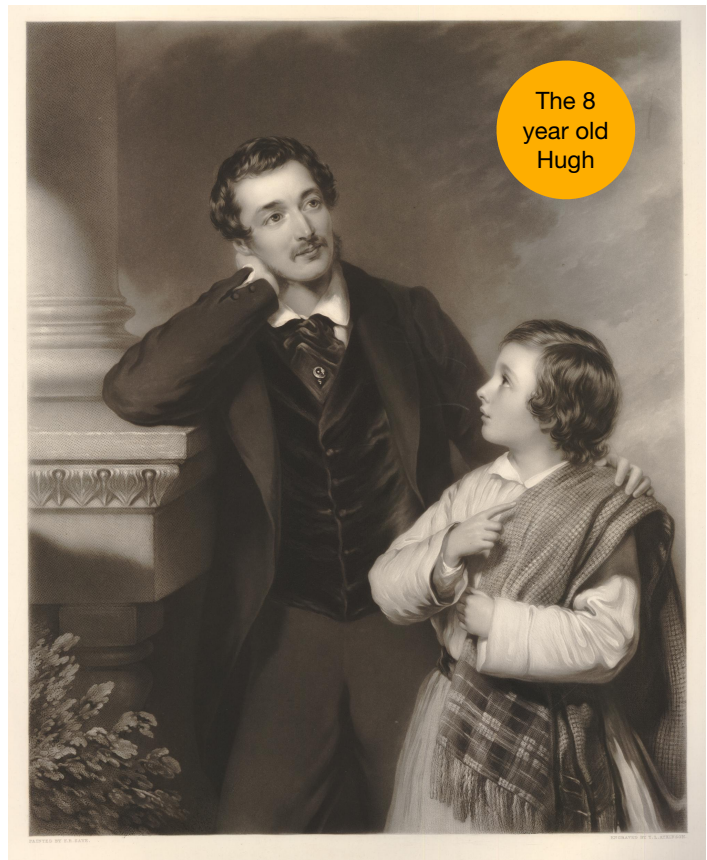
**H**owever, he would have spent time at Bookham Grove from his birth onwards since his mother and father already owned it before he was born.

For instance the 1851 census shows that he was present in the house at the age of 6 years, along with his brothers, sisters, parents and aunt and uncle, and 13 servants <sup>9</sup>.

**B**ut Baldersby Park became the major family home after his father's death in 1857, so it is possible that he did not spend much time at Bookham Grove House between 1857 and 1869 <sup>1</sup>.

So was it  
rented out  
during this  
time?

Perhaps the house was rented out, although there is no evidence for this in terms of leases, or perhaps it was used occasionally.



William Henry Dawnay, 7<sup>th</sup> Viscount  
with his son Hugh Dawnay, 8<sup>th</sup> Viscount, c.1852 <sup>10</sup>

The 1861 census only names a 50 year old widow, Elizabeth McNaughton (House Servant), and her 15 year old daughter, also called Elizabeth (a dressmaker), as living at Bookham Grove. So, not many staff there at all which would suggest no one really using the property, certainly at the time around the census <sup>9</sup>

87	Downe	H. H. Downe	Head	Mar	38	Viscount (in Ireland) M. A. Captain (with hon) Major General	London
		Mary T do	Wife	Mar	25	Widow	Staffs Biddulph
		Hugh R Dawnay	Son	-	6	Widow	London
		Lewis P do	Son	-	4	do	London
		Alan C do	Son	-	3	do	London
		Guy C do	Son	-	2	do	Staffs Biddulph
		Eustace do	Son	-	11 Mo	do	London
		Lydia F C do	Daughter	Mar	37	Land & Fund holder	London

1851 Census 9

Parish or Township of Brookharrow		Ecclesiastical District of		City or Borough of		Town of		Village of	
No. of House	Name of Street, Place, or Road, and Name or No. of House	Name and Surname of each Person who abode in the house, on the Night of the 30th March, 1851	Relation to Head of Family	Condition	Age of		Rank, Profession, or Occupation	Where Born	Sex
					Male	Female			
87	Downe	Payan Dawnay	Brother Visitor	M		35	Widow Landowner	London	M
		Eliza James	Housekeeper	W		42	Housekeeper	Gloucester	F
		Mary Buckland	Servant	W		32	Ladysmaid	Staffs Coventry	F
		Hannah Lane	do	W		46	Nurse	Staffs Weston	F
		Lucy Palmer	Visitor	W		29	Ladysmaid	Staffs Biddulph	F
		Harriet Asbury	do	W		30	Laundry do	Staffs Biddulph	F
		Elizabeth Wyatt	do	W		26	House do	Staffs Biddulph	F
		Eliza Coust	do	W		18	Nursery do	Staffs Biddulph	F
		Charlotte Baker	do	W		22	Kitchen do	Staffs Biddulph	F
		Caroline Ragge	do	W		21	Laundry do	Staffs Biddulph	F
		Harriet Wood	do	W		19	Housemaid do	Staffs Biddulph	F
		Maria Wood	do	W		17	Kitchen do	Staffs Biddulph	F
		George Loftus	do	M		27	Butler	Staffs Biddulph	M
		Arthur Beckett	do	M		20	Footman	Staffs Biddulph	M

1851 Census 9

Name	Age
W H Downe	38
Mary T Downe	25
Hugh R Dawnay	6
Lewis P Dawnay	4
Alan C Dawnay	3
Guy C Dawnay	2
Eustace Dawnay	11 Mo
Lydia F C Dawnay	37
Payan Dawnay	35

Name	Occupation	Age
Eliza James	Housekeeper	42
Mary Buckland	Ladysmaid	32
Hannah Lane	Nurse	46
Lucy Palmer	Ladysmaid (marked as a visitor)	29
Harriet Asbury	Laundry maid	30
Elizabeth Wyatt	House maid	26
Eliza Coust	Nursery maid	18
Charlotte Baker	Kitchen maid	22
Caroline Ragge	Laundry maid	21
Harriet Wood	House maid	19
Maria Wood	Kitchen maid	17
George Loftus	Butler	27
Arthur Beckett	Footman	20

In 1868 Hugh played a cricket international at Lords against a touring Aboriginal team - the first Australian team tour of England. He became president of the Marylebone Cricket Club in 1872, and head of Queen Victoria's bodyguards, and he helped to introduce the spiked helmet to Britain. He became the 1st Baron of Danby in 1897 and subsequently sat in the House of Lords <sup>3, 11</sup>.

Hugh was married to Cecilia Maria Charlotte Dawnay (née Molyneux) on 12th July 1869, after he had let Guy have Bookham Grove, so she would not have lived at Bookham Grove <sup>12</sup>.



Cecilia Molyneux 1860 <sup>13</sup>



Cecilia Molyneux 5.7.1861 <sup>13</sup>



Viscount Downe, 1889 <sup>14</sup>



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Hugh Dawnay in 1889  
at 45 years old <sup>14</sup>



Hugh Dawnay, 8<sup>th</sup> Viscount Downe. Ogden's  
Cigarette Card, 1889 <sup>14</sup>



Lord Downe (seated 2<sup>nd</sup> from left) returning from the Boer War on the RMS Dunottar Castle, July 1900. (Winston Churchill is seated 2<sup>nd</sup> from right) <sup>14</sup>



## References and Notes

1. This link is currently unavailable at 21.5.21. It was accessed in 2020. <http://stjamesbstj.org.Uk/the-dawnay-family/> Copy of the document can be found in the DropBox documents file associated with this Chapter
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