

Chapter 12

1.4.1846-
30.7.1910

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1889-1892 Lt Col Lewis Payan Dawnay

In which we learn about our link with Earl Grey tea; Queen Victoria's godchild living at the house; an 1890 photograph of the family possibly taken at the old cedar tree; a honeymoon at the house, and our links with Lawrence of Arabia & Boris Johnson (Prime Minister).



Lewis Payan Dawnay inherited Bookham Grove from his brother Guy, under the conditions as laid down in his will ²⁻⁴, that he give it up to Eustace, his younger brother, 1 year after he took over Beningbrough Hall, which he did in 1892 ⁵.

Lewis was educated at Eton College and joined the Coldstream Guards in 1865, reaching the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel, he retired in 1879 ⁶.

In 1874 he stood unsuccessfully for parliament at York, but was elected at the 1880 general election as MP for Thirsk, Yorkshire on the 31st March, and he held that seat until November 24th 1885, when it was replaced under the Redistribution of Seats Act. On the same day he was then elected as MP for the replacement constituency of Thirsk and Malton and held the seat until he stood down on July 4th 1892 ^{6, 7}. His contributions in Parliament can be read here ⁷.

1880 ⁸

Lewis married Victoria Alexandrina Elizabeth Grey on the 6th June 1877.

1877-
15.6.1922

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Victoria was the granddaughter of the 2nd Earl Grey, Charles (1764-1845), who was the British Prime Minister from 1830-1834. His most notable political achievements include the Reform Act of 1832 and the Slavery Abolition Act of 1833, yet he is most well known throughout history for the tea bearing his name ^{5, 10}.

Earl Grey tea is a tea blend which has been flavoured with the addition of oil of bergamot. The rind's fragrant oil is added to black tea to give Earl Grey its unique taste ¹⁰.



Oval pendant in the neo-Renaissance style composed of a medallion (possibly silver-gilt) of the profile of Queen Victoria mounted in a gold frame enameled in blue, black and white, and mounted with diamonds and rubies. The blue and black enamel is overlaid with opaque white enamel ornament. A pendant pearl hangs from a diamond at the base of the frame ¹¹

This pendant by a leading London jeweller was a gift from Queen Victoria to one of her godchildren, Victoria Alexandrina Elizabeth Grey when she married Lt. Col. the Hon. Lewis Rayan Dawnay, on 6 June 1877 ¹¹.



'To / V. A. E. D. / on her marriage / June 6th. 1877. / From the Queen.' (On a gold plate on the back of the medallion ¹¹

She was the daughter of a key figure in Queen Victoria's court, Lt. Gen. the Hon. Charles Grey (1804-70). Grey was an equerry to the queen from 1837-67, and private secretary to Prince Albert from 1849-61. After Albert's death she placed great reliance on him and he became private secretary to her, although not called by that title officially until 1867. ¹¹

Her mother was Caroline Grey (nee Farquahar of Polesden Lacey ⁵.

She was given the honorary title Lady Victoria in 1895 after her brother became 4th Earl Grey. ⁵

The couple had 4 children:

1. Guy Payan (23.3.1878-19.1.1952)
2. Margaret (8.4.1880-27.2.1948)
3. Marion Vere (16.2.1884-15.2.1956)
4. Alan Geoffrey Charles (24.3.1888-28.9.1938)

This image was too expensive to purchase. It is a portrait of Victoria Dawnay and can be seen at the reference below
<http://www.nationaltrustcollections.org.uk/object/1191143>

Victoria Dawnay 1890 ⁵



Lewis Payan Dawnay and family, possibly taken at Bookham Grove c.1889 ¹²

The Whitby Gazette of 11th April 1890 states that Lewis and Victoria 'are at present staying at Bookham, Surrey' ¹³ and the York Herald of 12th April 1890 (along with other papers ¹⁴⁻¹⁵) elaborates further by saying they 'are spending the holidays at Bookham, Surrey' ¹⁶. It is then reported that they arrived in town (London) on the 22nd April from their stay at Bookham ^{17, 18}. Easter Sunday in 1890 fell on the 6th April, so assuming that this is the holiday referred to, it means the family of 6 spent over 2 weeks at Bookham Grove at this time. The photograph above may well have been taken on this holiday, possibly at the old cedar tree

Lewis is listed as the occupier of Bookham Grove in the 1891 census along with his wife and 4 children, along with 9 servants ¹⁹:

Name	Age	
Hon Lewis P Dawnay	45	
Victoria A E Dawnay	37	
Guy P Dawnay	13	
Margaret Dawnay	10	
M Vere Dawnay	7	
Alan G C Dawnay	3	
Margaret Brown	39	Nurse (domestic servant)
Elizabeth Donaldson	40	Ladies maid
Caroline Batten	45	Housemaid
Sarah Green	10	Under Housemaid
Christina Grady	22	Kitchen maid
Marie Wiscope	20	Nursery maid (France)
Henry Lothian	27	Butler (domestic servant)
Thomas Hand	23	Footman
Mary Mason	20	Cook

On the 24th October 1891 Lewis and Victoria attended the wedding in Knightsbridge, London, of Mary Beatrice Sydney Lane to Mr Walter R Shaw-Stewart. (Mary was the daughter of Mary Isobel Bagot (The Dowager Viscountess Downe) and Sydney Lane, ie half sister to Lewis.

The wedding reception was held at Belgrave Square - the residence of Viscountess Downe and Sydney Lane. Later that afternoon the bride and groom left for Bookham Grove, 'lent by Colonel the Hon. L. P. Dawnay, M.P.' ²⁰, 'where they intend passing the first part of the honeymoon'.

The bride's travelling dress was of grey cloth trimmed with white grebe, large white felt hat trimmed with grey ostrich feathers ²¹, so we can picture her walking into the hallway of Bookham Grove that evening wearing this outfit.

The wedding was widely reported ²²⁻³⁴ indicating how high in society this family was placed.

A Mrs Hylton-Foster, who lived at Old Dene at the foot of Bagden Hill since 1908, and presumably in the village elsewhere prior to that, (she had a sister called Lady Dunphie who lived at Flushings House for instance) was a close friend of Lady Victoria.

'One of Mrs Hylton-Foster's closest friends was Lady Victoria Downe of Bookham Grove, who was the daughter of Earl Grey....Mrs Hylton-Foster died in July 1974' ³⁵.

Lewis inherited Beningborough Hall in 1892 and the family moved in soon afterwards ⁵, and so Bookham Grove passed into the ownership of his younger brother, Eustace, as per the requirements laid out in Guy Dawnay's will ²⁻⁴.

Lady Victoria brought fun to Beningbrough, her four children were allowed to skate on the pond in winter, present plays in the Hall, play shuttlecock in the gallery and toboggan down the main stairs! ⁵

From the 29th December for a week or so in 1892, over 3 performances, Lewis invited about 120 local children, 40-50 estate tenants & friends of the family, and the work people on the estate, to his residence, Beningborough Hall, for an evening of tea and amateur theatrical entertainment provided by his family members ³⁶⁻³⁸. The reports describe the dramatics in detail. The aim was enjoyment and a bonding exercise between the tenants and landowners.

Lewis is still registered as the owner of Bookham Grove in the 1893 Electoral Register ¹⁹ although this is likely slightly out of date as the property passed to Eustace in 1892 and Lewis and family had moved to Beningborough Hall in August 1892 ⁵.

Lewis' eldest son, Guy Payan, (seen on the right in the family photograph above), joined the military and achieved the rank of Major-General. He fought in the Boer War, where he was a brilliant intelligence officer and strategist. He had dealings with TE Lawrence - commonly known as Lawrence of Arabia ³⁹.

Guy Payan, had a son called Oliver Payan, who had a son called Ivo Nicholas Payan Dawnay, born on the 9th December 1952. Nicholas's second marriage in 1992 is to Rachel S Johnson, sister to Boris Johnson the Prime Minister of England ^{41, 42}.



Lieutenant-Colonel Thomas Edward Lawrence (1888 - 1935, left); D.G. Hogarth (1862 - 1927) and Lieutenant-Colonel Dawnay, at the Arab Bureau of Britain's Foreign Office, Cairo, May 1918. ⁴⁰

Ivo Dawnay describes Lewis as a 'vile tempered, hang'em all, horse whipping cantankerous man...the rudest man in Yorkshire' ⁵.

Lewis died at Brighton on the 30th July 1910.

His funeral and burial took place at St Barnabas Church, Ranmore, Surrey on the 4th August 'the gallant officer having, some years back, resided at The Grove, Bookham' ^{45, 46}.

The reports describe the impressive funeral in some detail including:

'the grave had been beautifully lined with carnations, sweet peas and other white flowers by Albert Hitchcock's, of Eastwick, who was employed as gardener at The Grove when Col Dawnay resided there...

....Lady Victoria Dawnay has received messages of sympathy from their Majesties the King and Queen, Queen Alexandra, The Duke of Connaught, Princess Henry of Battenburg, Princess Christian, and the Landgrave of Hesse' ^{45, 46}.

Again testament to the level of society in which the Dawnays moved.

Bookham Grove passed to his younger brother Eustace at this time.

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