

The Descendants of Samuel Davenport

1760 - 1954

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Three brothers, Charles, Samuel and Edward Davenport, left a small Leicestershire village towards the end of the eighteenth century to make their fortune in London. They were all rewarded with considerable financial success, particularly the middle brother Samuel. This chapter is the history of Samuel and his descendants. While there are no representatives of this line alive today, for almost 200 years they played an interesting role in British life. Their story involves hereditary insanity, including one of the classic nineteenth century lunacy cases, election to Parliament and a scandalous mésalliance. The abundant documents which record the lives of most members of the family have allowed me to draw a clear picture of the people involved. They were rich, they were troubled and more than a bit litigious - all of which has left its trace. We can follow their path through life in surprising detail. This narrative will be combined one day with those of the other lines of the Davenport family still in existence today.

Origins of the Davenport Family

The brothers' branch of the Davenport family came from Leicestershire. A Thomas Davenport was mayor of Leicester in 1553-54 during the time of Queen Mary I. A biographical note on him in the 1886 annual of the Leicestershire Architectural Society confirms that the family was not native to Leicestershire, although there were families with that name resident both at Oadby and Belgrave at about the same time. These were all likely offshoots of the better-known Davenport family who claimed ancestry from the semi-legendary Orme de Davenport, born about 1089 in Cheshire. More certainly, the family descended from Richard Davenport, gentleman, of Wigston Magna. He was born about 1543 and was buried at Wigston Magna on January 9, 1624. While there is no documented connection between Richard and the Cheshire family, some of his descendants used the same coat of arms (although this may have been a case of appropriation) and subsequent DNA testing has shown that the two families are connected. Further research continues. Richard married his wife Alice around 1566 and they had eleven children who themselves had large families. Their descendants spread across the parishes to the east of Leicester – Wigston Magna, Evington, Thurnby, Scraftoft and Oadby. Some were country gentlemen or prosperous farmers while others were husbandmen and framework knitters. A few of these early Davenports attended Cambridge to become clergymen and at least one crossed the Atlantic to found a Davenport line in America.

Richard's second son Thomas was born around 1569. He married Mary Sherwoode, a widow, née Lacy, on January 14, 1605 at Bushby where he is described as a yeoman. Bushby, part of the parish of Thurnby, lies just to the East of the city of Leicester. Thomas was buried at Bushby on March 22, 1637. They had five children – two sons and three daughters. Their eldest son John was baptised at Bushby on October 11, 1607. He married Elizabeth Skillington in about 1633 and they had five sons and two daughters. John was buried at Wigston Magna on February 15, 1686 when he was described as a gentleman. The couple's third son, St John, was baptised at Bushby on August 18, 1639. He in turn married Mary Porter at Saint Martins, Leicester on April 13, 1681. They had four sons and a daughter, of whom John, baptised on February 28, 1682 at Ashby Folville and Samuel,

baptised at Bushby on October 19, 1686. John married Frances Swan on July 21, 1706 while Samuel married Hannah Meadows on November 28, 1712. Both brothers had a son named Thomas born around 1714, the first baptised on March 3, 1713 and the second June 27, 1714 both at Bushby. While it is clear that one of these two was the father of the three brothers, there is a slight doubt as to which one. John Davenport was described as a yeoman which would fit better with Thomas's subsequent occupation as a farmer and gentleman, while Samuel was a framework knitter. However, if the date of death and age given on Thomas's headstone - September 11, 1768 aged 54 - is correct, this can only point to Samuel as being his father. The other Thomas would have been born too early. Further research may remove any lingering doubts about this assertion.

Samuel and Hannah had six children in total but only two reached adulthood. Hannah was baptised at Bushby on July 3, 1713 but was buried on August 23. Thomas followed on June 27, 1714 followed by Samuel, baptised on June 6, 1716 only to be buried a few days later on June 17. A second Hannah was baptised on July 23, 1717 and reached adulthood, although it is unknown at this point whether she married and when she died. Mary was baptised on May 18, 1719 and was buried on July 9 of that year. Finally, Samuel was baptised on July 20, 1720 and survived his father, only to be buried on May 13, 1722. Samuel himself died on September 13, 1720 and left a will dated September 10, 1720, clearly in the face of a serious illness that threatened death. He left his close – an enclosed piece of land – in the lordship of Bushby to Thomas, the kernel of what was to become a much larger family holding in that parish. When he reached twenty-one years of age he was to pay to his sister Hannah and brother Samuel the sum of £10 each or £20 to the survivor. If Thomas died, Samuel was to have the close and pay £20 to Hannah. He named his wife Hannah his executrix and was not, at least in extremis, capable of writing his own name. It appears that Hannah remarried at Evington to a John Carter on June 18, 1726 and so far it is unclear when she died. Thomas and his sister also inherited £2 10 s. each from their grandmother Mary, the wife of St. John Davenport, who died at Billesdon, Leicestershire on December 12, 1744.

Thomas married Elizabeth Spencer at Evington on December 22, 1745. She was the daughter of Joseph Spencer and Ann his second wife and was baptised at Evington on June 13, 1721. Thomas was described as a country gentleman in Evington and the couple had at least eight children. Certainty with respect to their birth dates is difficult because the parish registers were not kept at Evington for a period of twenty years from 1747 until about 1769 - just the time that interests us. Only marriages were recorded with any degree of fidelity. Accordingly, we are forced to conjecture the major events in the lives of Thomas, his wife and their children from other evidence.

Their first children, the twins Thomas and Ann, do appear in the parish registers; she was baptised at Evington on October 14, 1746, the same day that Thomas was buried. The next sibling is more elusive as the registers now go silent. A Harriet Davenport was buried among the family graves of Charles Davenport, Thomas's eldest surviving son, at Staines, Middlesex. She died in 1831 (the precise date has been effaced by time) at the age of 84 which would make her birth around 1747. There is no certainty that she was actually Thomas and Elizabeth's daughter but it is not difficult to posit that Charles brought his elderly sister down to Staines in her later years, the last sibling he had still in Evington. This would have occurred after their mother's death in 1808. The next daughter is

Elizabeth who was buried at the age of 26 on May 22, 1776 in Evington. She is identified as being the daughter of Thomas and Elizabeth on her grave stone and would have been born around 1749. Charles Davenport was born about 1750 based on his age of 84 at the time of his death on January 28, 1834. Thomas followed, born about 1753 as he is stated as being 35 at the time of his burial in Evington on July 7, 1788. Mary Davenport was born in about 1756 based on her being 9 at the time of her burial on June 10, 1765. Samuel Davenport would have been born about 1760 based on his age at death and Edward, the youngest, was born around 1764 as he died at 80 in January, 1844. At this point their mother would have been 43 and there were likely no further children of that marriage. However, the list is almost certainly incomplete as there are clear gaps between Thomas (1753) and Mary (1756) and even larger ones between Mary and her two younger brothers Samuel (1760) and Edward (1764) although, with the registers not having been kept, it is impossible to be certain. There are no other children buried at Evington whose grave stones survive and none mentioned in any of the family wills.

Surprisingly few of Thomas and Elizabeth's children married. Mary died before she was of marriageable age. Harriet, Thomas and Elizabeth reached adulthood but never married. One would have expected that, if Thomas were married, his wife's grave would have been next to his in the church yard. Equally Harriet and Elizabeth did not have a married name and must have died single. Ann was the first of the remaining children to wed and she married Richard Bryan, another prosperous local farmer, at Evington on September 3, 1770. This union produced at least one child, Thomas Bryan. We do not have his baptism either but, from later records, it is clear that he was born around 1771 as he died on January 1, 1848 aged 77. There may have been other children but they do not appear in any of the available records. The Bryan family was for a long time closely connected with the Davenports, certainly as a result of blood but also as a result of shared religious views. Charles, Samuel and Edward also married as we shall see further on.

As noted, we have no parish register entries as evidence that Samuel Davenport and his two brothers were born in Evington and are forced to fit together a number of documents to come to certainty that they were. The youngest brother, Edward, was the only member of the family to live long enough to appear in the 1841 census, when he was residing at Evington. His entry indicates he had been born in Leicestershire. We know from the preamble of his will that, while he was currently a resident in Evington, he had previously spent a long period in London. In addition, both Edward and Samuel's wills indicate they were related to the Bryan family of Evington. The brothers clearly had a sister who married a Bryan son and we know that Ann Davenport, the daughter of Thomas and Elizabeth Davenport, had married Richard Bryan in 1770. Furthermore, we find in 1793 that Ann (Davenport) Bryan was granted the administration of the estate of her husband Richard Bryan and that her mother Elizabeth Davenport, a widow, signed with her on the bond.

The most conclusive evidence which establishes a connection between Samuel and his brothers both with Evington and with Thomas and Elizabeth Davenport as parents is the apprenticeship papers for Samuel and Edward. Samuel apprenticed with a Richard Gimbert, a member of the Worshipful Company of Wheelwrights, on April 8, 1780 for the suspiciously low amount of one penny – an amount that makes one think there was a closer

connection between the two families. As a part of the initial formula to the apprenticeship document, he is indicated as being the “son of Thomas Davenport, late of Evington, Leicestershire, deceased”. The same formula was used when Edward sought freedom of the City of London by “redemption” (purchase) in March 9, 1822. These few words tie two of the brothers, and of necessity the third, back to Evington and sons of a deceased Thomas Davenport – all of which fits the other facts. Given all this surrounding evidence, the inevitable conclusion is that Charles, Samuel and Edward were in fact born in the village of Evington and were the sons of Thomas and Elizabeth Davenport.

Thomas was buried in Evington on September 11, 1768 at the age of 54 but left no will that can now be located. Evington was a peculiar court with respect to probate and maintained its own records separate from the Archdeaconry of Leicester. While the wills of a number of family members were probated there, his is notably absent. Equally, his will was not probated at the Archdeaconry Court in Leicester or at the Prerogative Court of the Archbishop of Canterbury. This seems unusual. He did not die young, at least by eighteenth century standards, and was a land owner which would argue in favour of a will or administration. One can still hope that his will was probated in another jurisdiction which cannot yet be identified

A few traces of Thomas Davenport *pere* can be found in Evington. It appears that he was the recipient in July, 1755 of a legacy of £100 from the estate of one Charles Seamark who lived in the not too distant parish of Stretton Parva, five kilometres to the east. This was a large sum in the day and one wonders at the reason he received it. The legacy does indicate that he was a person of some substance. The will does not state that the legacy was the repayment of a debt and Thomas’s name appears in a series of bequests that were made to business associates. Seamark had close relations with various London merchants which may also mean that, while Thomas was to all appearances a Leicestershire farmer, he too may have had London business connections. Thomas was also included in the list of electors in 1741. He was resident in Evington but was able to vote because of his freehold interest in the close in Bushby. Other records found so far include a Thomas Davenport who witnessed the will of Ann Davenport, née Airland, on November 29, 1748. She was the widow of George Davenport, the brother of the John and Samuel Davenport, Thomas’s uncle and Thomas’s aunt by marriage. As a witness, Thomas could not legally have been a beneficiary under the estate which underlines that he was not her child. There is no evidence that George and Ann had a son named Thomas, despite having seventeen children. Finally, Thomas also signed as an evaluator of the estate of another member of the Bryan family, Thomas, who died on July 6, 1752. The signature is the same as on Ann Davenport’s will. Elizabeth Davenport, Thomas’s wife, died at the advanced age of 86. She was buried on January 1, 1808 with several of her children nearby. We catch a brief glimpse of her in the land tax lists of 1798 where she had to pay 4 shillings for land in Bushby, likely the close that her husband had inherited. She did not leave a will so far as can be determined.

Cast of Characters

Accordingly, at the beginning of the period which concerns us, the cast of characters included the following

family members. The eldest of the three brothers, Charles, lived in the parish of Saint Andrew Holborn and was married there by licence to Mary Lovett, daughter of Thomas Lovett, paviour, on April 17, 1777. They had a large family. Their first four children were baptised at Saint Andrew: Elizabeth Lovett (August 27, 1778), Ann (August 10, 1779), Frederick Charles (January 18, 1781) and Thomas (December 24, 1782). The family then moved to Colnbrook, Buckinghamshire where Mary (March 1, 1785) and Elizabeth (January 24, 1787) were baptised. Samuel and Edward were baptised at Isleworth, Middlesex on January 29, 1790 and August 18, 1791 respectively. Tax records show Charles at Isleworth as the tenant of the estate of Mr. Gardner from 1790 to 1797 with an initial rent of £5, escalating to £34 in 1794. From 1797, Charles appears as the tenant of Thomas Finch senior at Staines, paying an enormous cumulative rent of £289 10 s. on three properties, including Pond Mill. The records for his later children are incomplete. Some are recorded in the Staines parish registers, although not methodically. Edward died there on September 12, 1791 before the family appears to have moved there. Sophia (August 13, 1792-March 6, 1798) was buried at Staines as was Henry (July 7, 1794-August 9, 1815). Richard (September 2, 1797-January 21, 1798) was baptised at Staines on October 18, 1797 but was not recorded among the burials. The separate land tax lists of 1798 show Charles assessed at the very high amount of £13 2 s. 6 d. The land tax was one of the taxes imposed by Parliament in order to raise money to fight the almost twenty-five years of near constant war against revolutionary and Napoleonic France.

Only Frederick Charles, Mary and Samuel married. Frederick Charles married Margaret Thistlewood at Staines on October 31, 1810 and they had a large family. Samuel married Ann Winch on October 22, 1812 also at Staines and had two children, George Charles and Eliza Juliet. Mary married George Whiteley at Staines on August 12, 1834, just after her father died. She was almost fifty at this point and there were no children of that marriage. George was an old family friend who had lost his own wife.

The youngest brother, Edward, lived with Samuel at 15 Lime Street, London and had married Mary Darkin in the parish of Saint James, Clerkenwell on January 14, 1796. They had no children of which any record remains. He is listed in Lime Street in the 1798 tax rolls assessed at £6 12 s.

One should also not lose sight of the Bryan cousins back in Evington as they continued to interact with the family in London well into the nineteenth century. Thomas Bryan had married Mary Ann Fawkes at Saint Martin's, Leicester on December 30, 1805 and they seem to have had five children: Caroline (born and died 1807), Frederick Thomas (1810), Eloisa (1812), Edward Davenport (1816) and perhaps Elizabeth Jane (1817), all born at Evington with the exception of Elizabeth, baptised in Saint Margaret's, Leicester. It is not absolutely certain that she was in fact Thomas and Mary Ann's daughter and she is not traceable thereafter.

Samuel Davenport (circa 1760 – September 4, 1834)

Samuel and his brothers must have moved to London some time after the death of their father in 1768. It is likely that Charles was the first to arrive. The first sign of any of them in London was Charles' marriage in 1777. It

would have been very unlikely that the three would have moved to London without some sort of network on which they could rely in order to establish themselves in a trade or profession. It seems certain that the brothers had connections in London already, both extended family members and business associates of their father. Perhaps the Seamark connection stretched to London.

The most likely scenario for a “welcoming committee” to assist the young brothers is the family of Burrage Davenport who were relations who had moved to London two generations before. The Burrage Davenport family shared a similar occupation as silversmiths, resided initially in the same street and has a reasonably close family relationship all of which make this surmise almost a certainty.

Burrage Davenport the elder was baptised at Saint Andrew Holborn on March 16, 1749, the son of William and Ann Davenport. A William Davenport was baptised in Bushby, Leicestershire on December 21, 1721, the son of John Davenport and Elizabeth Bradgate. John was the first cousin of the brothers’ grandfather Samuel Davenport (died 1720) and lived in the parish of Bushby as well. William was apprenticed to William Thompson of the Company of Merchant Tailors on June 7, 1738 (when he would have been 16). The indenture contains the standard recital that he was the son of John Davenport of Bushby, in the County of Leicester, grazier. It is possible that this William was the son of the John Davenport deceased in Bushby on March 7, 1729. This John was the brothers’ uncle, a rather closer relationship. However, John’s son William would have been 20 at the time of the apprenticeship which seems too old. In addition, the formula on apprenticeship records is careful to specify whether the father was deceased or not. There was no indication that William’s father was not living at the time of his apprenticeship which would rule the second John out.

Burrage was apprenticed to Samuel Herbert, a citizen and cloth worker on April 13, 1763 for no apparent fee. He was admitted into the Company on April 18, 1768 and practised as a plate worker in Foster Lane in the mid 1770s. He then moved to 46 Lime Street, close to where both Samuel and Edward eventually lived and established their warehouse. He registered his mark with the Company of Goldsmiths in 1774 and had a long and productive career. His silver works frequently come up for auction today and have been widely studied. His style was elegantly neo-classical and, while perhaps not at the height of the silversmith’s art, they are not far from it. He was buried at Ealing on June 9, 1819 where he no doubt retired after leaving business. He married Sarah Ward, the widow of fellow goldsmith Henry Baily, also of Foster Lane, on March 24, 1773 at Saint Ethelburga, Bishopsgate. They had at least four children, including a son, another Burrage, who was baptised in the parish of Saint Leonard, Foster Lane in 1778.

The younger Burrage does not appear to have apprenticed and claimed the right of citizen through patrimony by way of an undated document from around 1800, likely when he reached majority. He became a West India merchant and owned sugar plantations in Jamaica including the New Ground plantation and land in Morant, Saint Thomas parish. He married Hannah Kitchener, the daughter of George Kitchener of Russington, Sussex. They had a large family of nine children – six daughters and three sons. The family was friends of the poet Keats and lived

in close proximity to Keats' close friend Charles Armitage Brown in Hampstead. Various members of the family are mentioned in Keats' letters, sometimes in a less than positive light. Keats considered Burrage a kindly but dull and pompous man. The younger Burrage seems to have lived a grand life until he went bankrupt in February, 1832. It seems likely that the slave rebellion in Jamaica in 1831 as well as the abolition of slavery in the British Empire in 1833 greatly reduced his income. He must have had large debts indeed as the dividend payable to creditors was 1 s. 9 d. in the pound with a total of £1371 to distribute. However, life does not seem to have been too cruel to him as the 1841 census finds him in Russell Place, Marylebone with three female servants and the 1851 census in Fulham with two servants. He lived on until February 4, 1863 when he died in Kensington. His estate was estimated at only £300 when letters of administration were granted to one of his unmarried daughters.

Initially, no trace could be found of any apprenticeship records for either Samuel or his brother Edward as silversmiths. The Goldsmith's Company, while it maintains very complete records, had no information regarding the apprenticeship for either of them. Nevertheless, the Company does record Samuel registering his mark as a plate worker on March 24, 1786 when he was already resident in Lime Street. He later registered a second mark in partnership with his brother Edward as smallworkers on April 8, 1794, resident at the same address. It was hard to know how one could become a silversmith in the late eighteenth century without having apprenticed. However, further research uncovered the apprenticeship record for Samuel and the much later Freedom certificate for Edward as members of the Worshipful Company of Wheelwrights. Samuel was initially apprenticed on April 20, 1780 to Richard Gimbert who died on July 16, 1785 at the age of 71. As a result, at the age of 25, Samuel was forced to petition the magistrates at the Guildhall for a new master as the Archbishop of Canterbury, who was legally responsible to manage the estate of the deceased who had died intestate, had not provided the necessaries of life and could not provide a route for his becoming a Freeman of the City. This request was granted by the court of the Mayor and Aldermen at the Guildhall on January 3, 1786 and he was turned over to one George Gray, a wheelwright and citizen of London. Samuel was in turn made a Freeman on September 4, 1792.

Membership in the Company of Wheelwrights, given that both brothers spent their subsequent careers as silversmiths and hardwaremen seems highly unusual. However, we have already seen a similar situation where Burrage Davenport, also a silversmith, was apprenticed as a cloth worker and was a member of that Company. In fact, by the end of the eighteenth century, the occupation of the members of the Company and what the Company had traditionally done were wildly divergent. The website of the Company, still in operation today, records that considerable changes had taken place in the last quarter of the 18th Century:

On the one hand the Company flourished growing in both numbers and social status. The Company applied for and obtained a grant of Livery in 1763 and in 1793 it achieved the distinction of providing its first Lord Mayor of London – Sir Robert Peckham. On the other hand by 1801 it was discovered that there was not one practising craftsman amongst the Company's membership. There is little doubt that this came about as a result of the greatly increased worldwide trade that was passing through the City. This in turn led to high rents and wages so that even those men who had

started life as craftsmen were probably finding more lucrative employment for themselves or more profitable use for their premises. In short, the craft had left the City and moved to the surrounding countryside. In November 1817 twenty-seven new Liverymen were admitted to the Company, amongst them were four drapers, four brokers, two grocers, two ship owners, two pawnbrokers and one fishmonger; there were no wheelwrights.

Membership in a company appears to have been a means to an end – becoming a citizen of London - rather than the perfection of a particular skill. Edward does not seem to have apprenticed at all. Later in life, on March 5, 1822, he bought his Freedom “through Redemption” which granted him the same status with the Company of Wheelwrights as his brother for the sum of 46 s. 8 d. Pieces of silver created by Samuel and Edward come up for auction with reasonable frequency. They are in the late-eighteenth century neo-classical style with sober decoration and a utilitarian feel. It is not hard to see the work as an extension of their serious, no-nonsense personalities. I own a cream jug made by them which has almost mid-century modern lines with only a slight band of engraving.

Samuel Davenport obtained a marriage license from the Faculty Office dated October 2, 1792 – a month after he was made a citizen. He was resident in Lime Street in the tiny parish of Saint Dionis, Backchurch. His bride was Elizabeth Butler, the daughter of Daniel Butler of the parish of Saint Sepulchre, an undertaker. She was only 17 at the time and needed her father’s consent to be able to marry. While Daniel’s signature showed he did not write much, Samuel’s demonstrates a complete mastery of the art. He must have received a decent education in Evington as there could be no question of his literacy. They were married the next day with Elizabeth’s mother and father acting as witnesses. Elizabeth also signed competently showing that she had some education as well.

The Butler family lived in the Fleet Market in the parish of Saint Sepulchre. Elizabeth’s mother was Mary Chatfield, Daniel’s second wife. Her family was originally from Cuckfield, Sussex where her father Charles was an apothecary. Mary was baptised there on December 6, 1748. She and Daniel married in Saint Sepulchre on March 7, 1774 by banns. Together they had five children: Elizabeth, baptised on December 24, 1774, a son Daniel, baptised on November 30, 1776 and three more daughters: Sarah (October 7, 1779), Mary Ann (November 25, 1782) and Rebecca (November 12, 1784). Despite being ostensibly Anglican, the Butlers appeared to favour non-conformist religion. All of the baptisms noted above were in fact registered in Dr. William’s Library, Red-Cross Street, Cripplegate, a centre for non-conformists.

Daniel was the first in a three generation line of London undertakers operating between 1774 and 1853, first at 17 Fleet Market and then at 17 Farringdon Street. He was initially apprenticed as a joiner on August 2, 1748 to John Gladman and was turned over to Edward Williams on January 23, 1753 because his previous apprenticeship had not been “according to the custom of London”. The Butler family originally came from Berkhamstead in Hertfordshire and his deceased father Richard was described as a minister of the Gospel – a dissenting minister. As a member of the Company of Joiners, Daniel made the leap from cabinets to coffins and then to making the

other arrangements for funerals as well. Daniel was buried at the Bunhill Fields cemetery on October 25, 1814, a place which catered primarily to non-conformists. He left a will dated August 11, 1814 which was probated on February 9, 1815 at the Prerogative Court of Canterbury. He left £1000 each to his two unmarried daughters Sarah and Rebecca. His wife also received £1000 as well as the household furnishings and the residuum of the estate. His one married daughter Mary Ann, the wife of William Warne of Bedford Street, Covent Garden received £700 and his son £200 plus his father's wearing apparel (and presumably the business itself). A further £400 was to be divided between the four surviving children of Samuel Davenport, his son in law, as his daughter Elizabeth was by that point deceased. Mary Ann Warne seems to have been close to the family as she is mentioned in Samuel Jr's will.

Children

In all Samuel and Elizabeth had eight children for whom records survive. They were Samuel (October 31, 1794), Elizabeth (July 22, 1796), Thomas (June 13, 1798), Edward Daniel (May 10, 1800), Charles (June 25, 1802), Mary Ann (April 11, 1804), John (February 26, 1806) and George (May 24, 1807). They were all born at the house in Lime Street and baptised shortly thereafter at the King's Weigh House, Fish Street Hill, an independent chapel. Infant mortality was high and Elizabeth, Charles and John died within the first year of their life. Thomas lived to 15 and was buried on April 19, 1813. All of these children were buried at the Bunhill Fields cemetery. Their mother Elizabeth died on September 5, 1808 and is recorded in the burials for Saint Sepulchre parish. The timing of her death suggests that she died as a result of her last pregnancy. The child, if this assumption is correct, must have been born dead as there is no reference to either a baptism or burial.

Samuel comes across as a true patriarch and perhaps not always an agreeable one. Unusually, none of the children who lived to adulthood married before his death. Two of these, Edward Daniel and Mary Ann, died in 1826 at the age of 26 and 22 respectively, over the age where one could expect them to marry. Samuel took out letters of administration with the London Commissary Court to permit him to transfer the funds which had been in Edward Daniel's name, an estate of about £100. The surviving two sons, Samuel and George, married later in life: Samuel was 44 and George 31 – after their father's death. It is not clear whether their father denied them the money necessary to be able to marry or had a very strict idea of the bride his sons should have, perhaps for religious reasons.

Several members of the Davenport family in the late eighteenth century and into the first years of the nineteenth century were strongly influenced by non-conformist religion, particularly Congregationalism. Samuel seems to have been the most involved and he strongly favoured non-conformist religious houses. All of his children were baptised at the King's Weigh House, Fish Street Hill which, as the name implies, was a customs building where the wares of foreign merchants were assessed. It also contained, on an upper floor, a chapel with Congregationalist views from at least 1695. A new chapel had to be built on the same site because of road widening for London

Bridge in 1834. That building survived until 1882 when it was expropriated for the building of the Metropolitan Railway. The church then moved to Mayfair. Its substantial neo-gothic buildings are now occupied by the Ukrainian Cathedral of the Holy Family in Exile.

Samuel must have become wealthy quite early in his career. His name appears in a list of donors to the “Loyalty Loan” listed in the Morning Post of June 19, 1797. The loan was to assist the Government in raising £18 million in order to fight the French during the Revolutionary Wars. Samuel Davenport of Lime Street gave £1000, a very significant sum. The 1798 land tax rolls show him living in the parish of Saint Dionis Backchurch and assessed the property he owned at substantial £8 5 s. Samuel also became a member of the London Stock Exchange, likely after 1810. This would suggest that his business interests had expanded beyond the making of silverware and that he was trading in a variety of commodities. His brother Edward, while he clearly started as a silversmith, is later described as a “hardwareman” which implies a trade in iron and other metal products.

Samuel was buried on September 4, 1834 in the Bunhill Fields cemetery. He was no doubt buried near the graves of his wife and the children who had predeceased him. He also died a very wealthy man – his estate was worth at least £90,000. He made his will on September 8, 1832 and named his brother Edward and the family solicitor George Powell as executors. He further named his nephew, Frederick Charles Davenport, as a co-trustee with them of £40,000 which Samuel set aside in trust for his two surviving sons. Samuel and George were to be paid the income in equal amounts, with the capital being transferred to their children or, failing that, to be disposed of by their last will and testament. Samuel left certain personal legacies. To his brother Edward, he left £500. Mary, Elizabeth and Thomas Davenport, his nephew and nieces as well as Eliza Juliet Davenport and Eloisa Bryan his grand nieces were to receive annuities of £30 each. Thomas Bryan received £1000 in the event he repaid a promissory note in favour of one William Collison, of which Samuel was now the holder. No money was left to Frederick Charles Davenport as £500 had already been advanced to him. Samuel also created a tail male tenure for his property in the parish of Beeby, Leicestershire in favour of his eldest son Samuel. Tail male, now abolished, was a form of land tenure which required land to pass to the eldest male descendant of the previous owner. The remainder of the estate was divided between Samuel’s two sons, share and share alike. Probate was granted on October 22, 1834.

Edward Davenport continued on in London for a few more years after Samuel’s death but ultimately returned to Evington. He had maintained a close relationship with the parish even before he moved back. One of the major aspects of his character was charity, certainly out of religious conviction but also perhaps because he had no children of his own. Other than the chapel at Evington, which he helped to fund and which we will discuss shortly, he also contributed to the poor of the parish of Evington on a number of occasions which were noted in the local papers. For example, the Leicester Chronicle reported that Edward Davenport of London had donated £20 for the benefit of the poor of Evington to be used for blankets, coal and food during a harsh winter. This is reported again in the same paper a few years later when a further bequest of cloth and coals was made.

Edward died in January 1844 and his will was probated at the Canterbury Prerogative Court on March 14 of that year. He is stated as being of Evington in the county of Leicester but late of London. He named as executors of his estate his wife Mary, William Powell (the son of George who followed him into the practise) and his nephew Edward Davenport Bryan. The will records a number of properties in Leicestershire in Evington, Thurnby cum Bushby and Knossington. Most of the individuals who benefited under Samuel's will also appear in this will with a few additions. Frederick Thomas Bryan, another brother to Eloisa (who had by now married a Benjamin Barston of Leicester, ironmonger), was to have the properties at Knossington, while the Samuel Davenport, son of Edward's brother Samuel, received the properties at Thurnby. Frederick Charles and his sister Mary (who had married Thomas Whiteley, gentleman, of Staines), Eliza Juliet Davenport, George and Samuel Davenport, Thomas Bryan and his wife Mary Ann, George Charles Davenport, Eliza's brother, and Margaret, Frederick Charles' daughter, all received legacies.

Life was not entirely uneventful in Evington as the Leicester Chronicle reported on March 30, 1844 that the house of Edward Davenport, recently deceased, was intended to be burgled by a gang of less than the normal amount of criminal intelligence. The constabulary was informed of the impending event which the thieves had planned for when Mrs. Davenport and her servants were at chapel on Sunday afternoon. During the day, several constables from Leicester made their way to the house and hid there in expectation of the thieves. The gang arrived shortly thereafter as planned, using a skeleton key to gain access, and began to loot the property. They were apprehended by the police with the booty in their hands after a sharp scuffle. The culprits were sent to Leicester that night and pleaded guilty before the magistrates the next day. Four were sentenced to transportation to Australia for life and a final thief, who obtained a good character, was sentenced to a year in prison and hard labour. What is interesting is the long list of objects which the attempted thieves tried to make away with. This was likely as a result of the evidence given at the trial as normally one would expect the owners to be more discreet about their belongings. The report referred to silverware such as a coffee urn, decanter stands, flatware, candlesticks and tea accessories, as one would expect for a silversmith, as well as the contents of Mrs. Davenport's "escritoire".

Samuel Davenport Junior (1794-1850)

Samuel was born on October 31, 1794 and was baptised at the King's Weigh House, Fish Street Hill chapel on November 26 of that year. He was apprenticed on May 3, 1809 at the age of fourteen to William Seaman, "Citizen and Goldsmith" resident in Hulls Street, Saint Luke's, Middlesex to learn the trade of a silversmith. Seaman was paid £10 for teaching the craft. Samuel took up his freedom by service on August 7, 1816 when he was described as a jeweller and goldsmith in Lime Street, London. He did not take any apprentices of his own and never registered a mark with the Company. However, he must have exercised his calling to at least some degree as certain documents continue to refer to him as a silversmith. After his father's death and perhaps before, Samuel resided at least part of his time in Evington near his uncle Edward and in Leicester. His will discloses that he invested in real estate in Leicester itself. He was interested primarily in the warehouses that distributed coal and timber in that city. He also had landholdings around Leicester and at Beeby in particular, in part inherited from his

father. We do not have the whole picture of the lands that were held there but a contemporary advertisement indicates that he had a farm of 243 acres to let at Beeby together with all related outbuildings. This was likely only a portion of the total property held.

Marriage

Samuel married late in life. He obtained a marriage licence from the Faculty Office on August 1, 1839, when he was almost 45. He stated he was from Leicester while his bride, Sarah Weatherhead, lived at 1, Newcastle Place, in the parish of Saint James, Clerkenwell. They married on August 6, 1839 at Saint James. Several of her family – brothers and sisters – were witnesses to the wedding while no one signed for his side. Samuel seems to have been much closer with his Weatherhead relatives than with the Davenport family. Samuel's father was stated as being a gentleman while hers was a "water gilder" – a branch of the silversmith's trade. Her father Henry Weatherhead was for a long while in partnership, with a number of other participants, with Paul Storr as Paul Storr and Co. Storr (1771 – 1844) is one of the best-known early nineteenth century silversmiths and he seems to have set up, together with his partners, a complex structure of production with each partner dealing with the portion of the silversmith's craft that was their speciality. Examples of the luxury work they produced include the trophy made for Horatio Nelson after his victory over Bonaparte at the Battle of the Nile. This company was dissolved on February 18, 1819 and presumably Henry practised on his own account thereafter. He died on August 16, 1847 leaving an estate of £2000. Sarah had renounced any entitlement she might have under his will as she was amply provided for. In addition, she undertook to be guardian of her half-sister Eliza Joyce who died in 1849 at the age of 8.

The Weatherheads were a large and active family originally from Kirby Lonsdale in Yorkshire who had moved to London two generations before Sarah's birth. Her father had a large family by two wives. Sarah was from his first marriage with Harriet Matilda Green. They married at Saint Andrew, Holborn on November 23, 1805. Harriet died in 1814 after giving birth to three sons and two daughters. Henry then married Frances Ann Joyce on February 20, 1816 at Saint Ann, Soho. They had a further three sons and two daughters, although both daughters died young. To judge from the dispositions made in her will, Sarah was closer with her second family than with her siblings of the whole blood. She lived her years of widowhood with her step mother and various nieces, the daughters of her half brothers. The brothers of the whole blood took varying roads in the world – Henry became an India rubber manufacturer employing about ten people, William was a silversmith (perhaps the manner in which Sarah and Samuel were introduced) and John became a tailor. Her younger brothers also had varied occupations – Samuel was a carpenter, George a seal engraver and Alfred started as a clerk in a mining company and then moved on to be a manager in a clock factory. As hard-working as no doubt these people were, Sarah's marriage to Samuel gave them access to money beyond their fondest dreams and they were able to profit by it down the road. Henry Weatherhead had been a reasonably prosperous silversmith and thus within Samuel's field of knowledge. Equally, several of Sarah's brothers were strong non-conformists, both facts which might explain

how the pair met. However, the marriage still seems unequal – her father having an estate of £2000 and his £90,000. One wonders how such a marriage could happen as Victorian values were strict with respect to marrying within ones tier. Could it have been that they shared religious views? Or perhaps Samuel simply needed a nurse as his health declined.

Chapel

Samuel was a major promoter in the building of a non-conformist chapel built in Evington in 1838 to be used by his family as well as like-minded people in the district. The Davenport family had taken an interest in the religious life in the parish for some time and there is an application from Thomas Bryan to the Quarter Sessions to erect a non-conformist chapel in Evington as early as 1811. The credit for building the chapel is generally given to Samuel but it was clearly a joint effort involving most senior members of the family as well as William Powell, the family solicitor. The first seven trustees of the Evington Chapel were all drawn from a tight circle around Edward and Samuel Jr. (Samuel the elder had, of course, died in 1834): Thomas Whiteley, Benjamin Barston, Frederick Thomas Bryan, Edward Davenport Bryan and William Powell. Samuel, Edward and Thomas Bryan are remembered to this day with a plaque in the chapel commemorating its foundation.

The Whiteleys had been established in London for some time but seem to have roots in Halifax, Yorkshire. They had strong connections with the Davenport family. Thomas Whiteley was born in about 1781 and married Charles Davenport's daughter Mary late in life in 1834 as his second wife. His son by his first marriage with Henrietta Friend was George Friend Whiteley, a Justice of the Peace, and his grandson, George Crispe Whiteley, a Member of Parliament for South Kent in 1885. George Whiteley's daughter Jane married Frederick Charles Davenport's son Henry in 1840. Most of the Whiteleys were lawyers, many having distinguished careers, including writing legal text books. The 1841 census showed Thomas and Mary Whiteley as visitors with Edward Davenport at Evington together with Elizabeth Davenport, Mary's unmarried sister.

Thomas Bryan married Mary Ann Fawkes on December 30, 1805. She was born in Englefield Green, Surrey (which is a part of the parish of Egham) in 1785. It seems likely that Thomas came down to visit his uncle Charles or his cousins at Egham and met a local girl. It may be that the Fawkes had business interests in Leicester as the 1798 land tax rolls show a Mr. Bryan as an occupant of land owned by a Mr. Fowkes. More certainly, her family had strong connections with Guildford going back several generations. Thomas amassed a fair bit of property in Evington and Leicester. His will, probated at the peculiar court at Evington in 1848 after his death on January 1 of that year, speaks of property at Evington, Scraftoft and in each of the parishes of Saint Mary, Saint Martin and Saint Margaret in Leicester. Mary Ann brought considerable additional property as well, including a house in Brighton. Frederick Thomas Bryan and Edward Davenport Bryan were Thomas's sons, born in 1810 and 1816 respectively, both at Evington. Edward began life as an ironmonger but this does not seem to have stuck. Both he and his brother Frederick became gentleman farmers. Edward spent much of his life at the watering places on the

Sussex and Kent coasts as shown by the censuses through the nineteenth century. Frederick Thomas remained for the most part on his property in Knossington where he frequently won prizes for his livestock at the local county fairs. Benjamin Barston was an ironmonger at Leicester who married Eloisa, Thomas's only surviving daughter, in 1834. Benjamin left the iron-mongering business as well by 1861 when he and his family were living in Stamford, Lincolnshire on their own means. The Bryan children all benefited significantly under the wills of their Davenport relations, in addition to what they might have had under their father's will. The three surviving children were the residuary legatees under Edward's will after the decease of his wife Mary in 1852.

William Powell was the only trustee that does not seem to have been connected with the Davenport family by blood or marriage. What is clear, however, is that he and his father George were close business associates of both Edward and Samuel. Both gentlemen were solicitors who acted for the family for decades. George was one of the executors of the will of Edward Davenport, Samuel Davenport senior and Samuel Davenport junior, the latter together with his son William. They are described as being of York Buildings, Islington and they had been involved with many of the legal proceedings that the family had had to deal with in the first part of the nineteenth century. Several of the cases set out in this history are "Powell and Davenport v. opposing party". It is not clear whether William shared the religious views of the other trustees or was involved because of his legal skill. Both seem likely as it is hard to imagine, given their closeness and the nature of the project, that they did not have similar religious values. The Powells do not seem, however, to have had any Leicestershire connections.

A book published in relation to the 150th anniversary of the foundation of the chapel quotes a letter printed in the Leicester Chronicle on May 15, 1880 which states: "For the foundation of the dissenting cause we must go back to the early years of the present century. At that time Mr. Edward Davenport, one of the "natives", went to the Metropolis, where he became a silversmith and amassed a fortune. He visited Evington and, on one occasion, observing the spiritual destitution that prevailed, erected a chapel in the garden of his relative, Mr. Bryan and maintained a local evangelist." This likely refers to the request for permission to the Quarter Sessions made by Thomas Bryan on July 6, 1811, to erect a dissenting chapel. The 1880 letter continues "On retiring from business, Mr. E. Davenport built a house and returned to live in Evington. Here he was joined by his nephew, Mr. Samuel Davenport, and all the members of the family soon became known for their liberality. One of their chief benefactions was the erection of the present chapel, with the adjoining minister's house."

The chapel still exists. It is a neat gothic revival building of yellow brick with stone pinnacles and tracery. The inside is sober, as one would imagine in a non-conformist chapel, but does have an organ, presented by Samuel Davenport, as well as dark wood finishings throughout. The Victorian County History of England pointed out that the chapel presented a liturgy that was closest to the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion but had no formal relationship with that sect or with any other. Apparently some of the Book of Common Prayer was read there as well, making it a hot-house flower liturgically. This state of affairs likely represented the religious views of Edward Davenport and some of the subsequent generation such as Samuel Davenport junior. By the 1880s, however, the senior members of the family had died and the initial crowds that came to the chapel had dissipated,

particularly after the death of its long-time minister and friend to the Davenport family, Mr. Thomas Charles Dymock. The chapel was eventually turned over to the Baptists in 1881 who run it to this day. There had been a manse next door for the officiating minister. This was a plain but comfortable looking two story house which was torn down as part of a road-widening scheme in 1963. The chapel itself is a listed building.

Samuel died on January 31, 1850 at his home at 4 Manor Villas, Upper Holloway, Middlesex, a property that had been owned by his father-in-law. The causes of his death are a litany of all the diseases of the day: phthisis, diabetes, typhoid and pneumonia which had existed in some combination for at least 28 days. He was fifty-five years old. He had retired by this point and was simply indicated as being of independent means. In fact, Samuel was a very wealthy man. He had preserved, and likely added to, the fortune left to him by his father. Pre-1858 probates do not give the total of the estate but it is clear from his will that he retained the real property at Beeby in Leicestershire, as well as the £20,000 over which he had a power of appointment under his father's will. He and his wife seem to have lived relatively modestly as the census return for 1841 shows them living together without any live-in servants, an oddity for a person in his position.

Samuel made his will on November 21, 1845 and named the family solicitor George Powell and William Powell, the former's son, and his brother-in-law Henry Weatherhead as executors. The £20,000 was left to his wife absolutely as well as his household and personal effects. The Beeby real property in Leicestershire was entailed to his brother George and to George's heirs male. However, Samuel owned a number of other properties in Leicester. He left two properties in Church Gate, Leicester to his wife for her life. After her death, they were to pass to his cousin, Frederick Thomas Bryan for his life and that of his wife Elizabeth but only if Frederick repaid £1000 he owed Samuel. If he did not (and apparently he did not as Samuel's widow was still pursuing him in January, 1859 as evidenced by an affidavit filed in court) the trust assets were to be transferred to Eliza Juliet Davenport, granddaughter of his uncle Charles and now the wife of John David Kerrison, or to her children. In the event that Frederick had repaid the loan, the properties were then to pass to the Bryan's children in full possession and Eliza Juliet was to receive £1000 in consolidated three percent Bank annuities. He had another property which he called the Coal Wharf Dye House in Leicester which he left to another cousin, Eloisa [Bryan] Barston, Frederick Thomas's sister. She was to have the property for her life as well as that of her husband Benjamin. Again, their children were to have full possession of the property in equal portions after the decease of their parents. Samuel owned a further coal and timber wharf in Leicester which he ordered sold and the proceeds divided between the children of another cousin, the son of his uncle Charles, Frederick Charles Davenport of Egham.

His residuary estate was to be held in trust with the income being paid to his wife and, on her decease, to his children. As he had none at the time of his death, the funds were to be held for the children of Frederick Charles Davenport, the children of Samuel Davenport (which would only have been Eliza Juliet, her brother George Charles having died in 1845) and the children of his maternal aunt Mary Ann Butler, the widow of William Warne. He then left specific legacies of £500 each to Mary (Davenport) Whiteley and Elizabeth Davenport her sister. His wife's brothers Henry, John, Samuel, William, George and Alfred each received £100. The minister of

the family chapel at Evington, the Rev. Mr. Thomas Charles Dymock, was to receive £500, a significant sum. James Barston, an ironmonger from Leicester received £100. This man was the brother-in-law of the husband of his cousin Eloisa Barston. This family originally came from Grantham and had been active non-conformists in the Leicester area and had founded a chapel in Freeschool Lane. Samuel put £500 in trust for his wife's younger sister Eliza Joyce Weatherhead who was his godchild. The same amount was also placed in trust for his nephew John Henry Weatherhead. Finally, he left donations of £300 in favour of the Home Missionary Society of 4 Blomfield Street in London of which he was a life subscriber and a further £300 to the Aged Pilgrims Friends Society. The remainder of his estate after the death of his wife and the payment of all of the legacies was to be held in trust for Mary Ann Warne and her children. He made a codicil on January 3, 1850 shortly before his death. His godchild had died in the interim and he gave certain additional legal powers to his executors. The will was probated at the Prerogative Court of the Archbishop of Canterbury on February 21, 1850.

Sarah never remarried and moved around after her husband's death. She was handsomely provided for under her husband's will, as we have seen, and she generally lived with other female relatives. 1851 found her visiting two Barston sisters, Mary Ann and Sarah, in Leicester. These ladies were the sisters of Benjamin and James Barston. In 1861, Sarah had moved with her step-mother, a niece and the three spinster Reynolds sisters to 21 Marine Parade, Dover in lodgings run by a Mrs. Handcock and her children. The Reynolds, Charlotte, Sarah Elizabeth and Louisa, were the daughters of Henry Reynolds, the husband of Sarah's deceased sister Harriet Matilda, by a previous marriage. Finally, in 1871, Sarah was living at 10 Calverley Terrace in Tunbridge Wells. The houses in this part of Tunbridge Wells are grand indeed although Sarah may have resided in a small stretch of terrace homes to the north of the park. She lived together with her niece, Ann Sarah Weatherhead and her step-mother. Her household was of moderate size and they kept three servants.

Sarah lived on until September 28, 1877. The cause of her death was a fatty heart and pulmonary obstruction, likely what we would call articular sclerosis today. She left a will with a codicil dated September 30, 1873 and September 26, 1877 respectively – a few days before her death and obviously in anticipation of that event. Her estate was under £14,000 – a considerable sum given that she owned no real estate – but less than one might have imagined given the very generous bequests made to her under Samuel's will. There had clearly been some erosion of her fortune over time, likely as gifts to family members.

No bequest was made to any member of the Davenport family. She had been a widow for twenty-seven years and it is perhaps not surprising that the beneficiaries under her will were all from the Weatherhead family. The person within the Davenport family with whom she would have had the closest relations – Edward Gershom Davenport – was a wealthy man in his own right and in any event had died in 1874. There was an unstated but very clear theme in Sarah's will. She obviously intended to provide a degree of support for various female friends and relations who could not, without losing status, earn an income for themselves. She ensured that her step-mother, with whom she had been living for many years, received the sum of £3000 to be held in trust for her. She left certain gifts of jewellery and personal items to her sisters in law and nieces. Equally, she left small, but no

doubt helpful, legacies to several of her spinster friends, particularly the three Reynolds sisters with whom she was living in 1861. She set aside larger amounts, typically £3000, in trust for her brothers Alfred and Samuel and their wives and children, as well as those of her deceased brother George. Her two nieces, one of whom was living with her at her death, were also beneficiaries – Ann Sarah received £3000 and Katherine Eliza was her residuary legatee. These legacies represented significant amounts of money in any event but, to many of her family, would have seemed munificent.

George Davenport (1807 – 1869)

George was the younger of Samuel Davenport's two surviving sons. There is no information that George attended any school or studied for any trade or profession. The first document we have in relation to him is the marriage license he obtained from the Faculty Office on May 15, 1837. His bride was Frances Smith and both parties were resident in Stoke Newington, Middlesex. The marriage took place on May 17 in that parish. The witnesses were the bride's father and brother, both named Richard. There was one child of the marriage, Edward Gershom Davenport, born in 1838.

Frances was the daughter of Richard Smith and Sarah Horton and was born in Stoke Newington on November 11, 1800. The family was originally from Nottinghamshire – likely Mansfield – and moved to London in the third quarter of the eighteenth century. They initially lived in the City but had migrated to Stoke Newington by the early 1800s. Richard Smith described himself as a "laceman". He certainly did not make any lace himself and it seems more likely that he was a merchant dealing with lace and related articles of luxury dress. He was already well-off when Frances and George married and had entered into a settlement dated May 13, 1837 with George in anticipation of his marriage. The trustees of the settlement were William Powell of York Buildings, Islington, George Powell of Raymond Buildings, Grays Inn and his son Richard Smith. The trust was to hold, perhaps among other assets, an amount equal to what Frances would have obtained under the intestacy of her father. The income of the trust was to be paid first to Frances in her life time and then to George if he should survive her.

Richard senior made a will shortly afterwards dated June 27, 1838 with a codicil dated November 17, 1838. He died on March 25, 1839 at Stoke Newington. He had previously given out large sums of money to his children Ann, the wife of Nicholas Mason, his deceased daughter Sarah, the wife of Matthew Surtees and his son Richard. He equalised these so that each child, now including Frances and another son Henry, received £1,100 each. In addition, he left a fifth of the remainder of his estate to each of his children and to his grand daughter Mary Augusta Surtees. The amounts for Ann, Frances, and Mary Augusta were to be paid into a trust, in Frances's case, to the one already established. The remainder of Richard's will left small gifts to friends and relatives, largely for the purchase of a ring in memory of the deceased: his nephews William and John Barlow, his niece Mary Smith and Henry Horton (who must have been a relative of his mother's), among others.

His son Henry was a special case as there was a trust already set up for him on April 23, 1838. One suspects that he was either a spendthrift or otherwise incapable of managing money, perhaps through mental debility. His trustees were William Golden Lumley of Church Yard, Court Temple and Arthur Greville of 3 Inn Court, Cornhill. The trustees were to pay out £1 5 shillings each week for his benefit. All of the beneficiaries, except Henry, had the ability to will their interest as they saw fit after their decease. Henry's was to be divided among the remaining survivors. In fact he died on September 28, 1842 at the age of 29. The division of his estate gave rise to litigation which is still cited in trust law. The case of *Davenport v. Hinchcliffe* decided whether the funds would fall into the trust established for Frances or whether they devolved to her personally (or, in the case, her heirs) in full right. The amount in question was about £1000.

Richard's children married into prominent families in the City and several of them had a continued role in the history of the Davenport family. Of his seven children, five survived into adulthood. His son Richard continued in his father's lace-making business. He married Elizabeth Lumley on May 31, 1828. The daughters each married. Ann married Nicholas Mason, a lace merchant from Leicestershire, on December 7, 1827 at Stoke Newington. They eventually moved to Ealing. Sarah married Matthew Surtees from a Newcastle family on October 22, 1816 also at Stoke Newington. Both died young, she in 1819 and he in 1825, leaving Mary Augusta. Henry did not marry.

Many of Richard's descendents felt the need to decorate the plain name of Smith with an additional surname. Accordingly, his son Richard's son, another Richard, became Richard Horton-Smith, a barrister and KC, Horton being the surname of his grandmother who came from an old Leicestershire family. Another son, Lumley, kept his birth name but named all of his children "Lumley-Smith". He was a barrister and a judge and married Jessie Croll Gabriel, the daughter of Sir Thomas Gabriel (a forefather of the modern singer Peter Gabriel). He would have a role to play as legal advisor and executor for the family. Equally, Nicholas and Ann Mason's son, John Nicholas Mason, a solicitor, named all of his children "Willicombe-Mason", adding the surname of their mother. It is an interesting comment on Victorian values.

Insanity

After his father's death in 1834, George was left with £20,000 in 3 percent Consols and another £25,000 over which he had complete control. As we have seen, he married Frances Smith in early 1837 and they went on their honeymoon in May of that year to south Wales. However, by July, those around him began to notice a change in his demeanour which caused concern. George had already shown signs of religious obsession. An example was reported in the London Morning Post on May 8, 1837. George's great coat was stolen by one Abraham Samuels from his open carriage in Saint Paul's church yard. The culprit was quickly caught through the intervention of various witnesses and passers-by. George is reported as begging to be excused from prosecuting as it was repugnant to his religious feelings to do so and that "they had all many infirmities which need be forgiven." The

authorities would have none of this. Mr. Alderman Winchester countered that George would have a greater infirmity to answer for if he refused to prosecute a well-known thief for mere religious scruples: “to prosecute such a man was a duty which Mr. Davenport owed society and he must compel him to do his duty, however inconvenient or irksome it might be.” George responded that he did not refuse to prosecute out of a matter of convenience but rather “because men were prone to error and hoped for pardon.” When Alderman Winchester insisted, George clearly had a “render unto Caesar” moment and said that he would submit.

George began to give away large sums of money to charitable purposes, primarily connected with the Established Church. He had given £6500 to the Bishop of Sodor and Man for the erection of churches on that island as well as £3000 to the Rev. Mr. Mortimer, of Providence Chapel, Gray’s Inn Lane, for the erection of a college for young men destined for the priesthood. Other examples included £1100 for the building and endowment of a church in Coalville, Leicestershire and a similar endowment for the same purpose in the neighbouring parish of Ashby de la Zouche (perhaps his response to the non-conformist chapel in Evington?), £2000 to the Society for the Promoting the Enlargement, Building and Repairing of Churches and Chapels, and £1000 for the London Missionary Society. In total, in the four years since George had received his inheritance, he had given away £21,700 for charitable purposes. As a result of his various donations, he had only about £10,000 to his name. While George’s actions would certainly give rise to a reasonable concern about the state of his mind, one can only imagine the mounting horror of friends and family as the family’s fortune was depleted with such rapidity. This finally provoked Richard Smith on behalf of his daughter to request the empanelling of a commission to determine the state of George’s sanity.

This enquiry was established on January 31, 1838 at the Gray’s Inn Coffee House in Holborn. A number of witnesses were called to testify as to the state of his mind. In reading the report of the hearings it becomes clear that George was obsessed with and delusional about religion and it is not hard to see the influence of a grim, authoritarian father imbued with puritanical views. George was clearly no non-conformist as his delusions occurred within the Established Church. However, he aimed to live a simple, ascetic existence, despite his great wealth, and appeared to consider that he had some special qualities which distanced him from the common sinner. It is also interesting that the mania occurred so closely after his marriage. All the witnesses testified that he changed towards the end of his honeymoon. He perhaps had religious difficulties with the sexual act as well, although this is never referred to in the testimony.

The first witness was Rebecca Jackson, a servant. She described the extempore family prayers (which must have been excruciating) where she noted, in early July 1837 something “peculiar in his manner”. He thought he saw a great curse coming on Great Britain and that he was going to flee to the Isle of Man (he had been a friend of the recently-deceased bishop). He was in the habit of leaving the house at odd hours, sometimes for a few weeks at a time, without forewarning anyone in the household. He had the water closets of the house taken out because they were an “abomination”. Later he indicated he wanted to have twelve poor people to dinner every night and asked his servants how this could be accomplished. At Christmas he said “this is the only house in which God dwells.

Yes, there might be two or three others, but I am not certain.” He said the devil existed in every room of the house and prayers were held at almost every hour of the day. Finally, as a result of his interpretation of Deuteronomy 13 6-13 (where God admonishes not to follow other gods), he smashed a dessert service as well as other ornaments saying “Now they are God’s”.

A Quaker neighbour, Edward Harris, then testified that he had formed the habit of coming to the house to talk to George. George indicated that any person could take from the house what they wished and he would not oppose it. George also said that he noted, in relation to gratitude to God, that even the chickens acknowledged Him as they looked to the sky whenever they picked something up. The next witness was Daniel Church, the family coachman. He too noticed a wildness once the couple had finished their honeymoon and were returning to London via Oxford. On September 28, 1837, George told the coachman that he intended to make him a gift of his coach and horses as the carriage was an abomination. Later they went to Dover for two weeks and George’s scheme of becoming a priest on the Isle of Man became clearer. He also requested that the new chapel being erected in Evington should be placed under the control of the Bishop – something that would not have found favour with his semi-conformist relatives. Daniel Church said he noted an even greater change in his master after Christmas of that year.

Margaret Davenport, a daughter of Frederick Charles Davenport, George’s cousin, came to visit the couple during their trip to Dover. At family prayers, Margaret had said in relation to Romans 8 that “we shall all be heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ”. George replied “don’t say we shall be; if I am not equal to Christ now, I shall be exalted.” He then went on to tell her she was destined for Hell as he had a “special discernment”. He also forbade her medicine when she had a cold as one is only afflicted as a result of sin. Interestingly for what would happen later, he ripped up a copy of *Tracts for the Times*, a catholicising text. He was also given to scribbling lengthy pages in relation to religious subjects, sending them to a local parson whose position had offended him or simply to unburden his mind of what was in it. He told Margaret, on his return to Stoke Newington, that he could no longer love his wife as she was proud and that, as she recounted, “he generally appeared very violent, but occasionally calm and tranquil. The violence generally came on when he had a Bible in his hand.”

Edward Davenport Bryan, another cousin, testified that George harassed a local Jew who had come to solicit for a charity. George cried that the devil was in him to the astonishment of his visitor and preached for about a quarter of an hour until his uncle Edward came downstairs at which point he fled. Finally Mary Augusta Surtees, a niece of Mrs. Davenport, testified that, when staying with them in Stoke Newington, they had attended church and the minister had referred to the altar. George took great offence to this, as he had previously in Dover, and refused to communicate.

The Commission examined George at length and it is noted that his demeanour “was calm and his answers clear and rational”. He clearly wished to give away his property and live as a clergyman would on the Isle of Man. He defended the Bishop, who clearly had been accused of taking advantage of an incompetent, saying that he should

not give away anything that would encumber the comfort of his wife. He attempted to explain the gift of the carriage, the attempted exorcism of the Jew, breaking the dessert service and the removal of the water closets. He considered that his wife would continue to be comfortable with the funds in the marriage settlement created by her father as well as the £20,000 which remained in trust from his father's estate. He also stated his views on the *Tracts for the Times* and the altar/table of the Lord controversy. He specifically denied that he was personifying Jesus but that said that he was sent to Earth to fulfill a divine purpose. He finished his testimony with the statement, which apparently made an impression among the audience that "many of the things which now appeared strange to men, would be unravelled by the light of eternity".

Several parties testified to their view that George was not insane. Not unexpectedly, these included clergymen who had benefited from George's largesse. Clearly they would have to return what he had given to them if he were determined to be insane at the point the gift was made. Among the witnesses were the son of the deceased Bishop, Dr. Pusey who was a Regius Professor in Hebrew at Oxford as well as the Bishop of Lincoln and others. After this, the Commissioner framed the question to the jury in the following manner: Whether Mr. Davenport was so far insane as to be incapable of taking care of himself and his property. They should not base their determination on the private habits or religious beliefs of the individual – this was not relevant to the question as to whether he was non compos mentis at law. After six and a half hours of deliberation, fourteen of the twenty-one jurymen found him to be insane while a further six did not. Accordingly, by order dated February 28, 1838, he was found to have been insane since July 31, 1837

George Powell, the solicitor closely connected with the Davenport family, was appointed as committee for George Davenport in relation to his property by order of the Lord Chancellor on March 30, 1844. More immediate steps were taken to recoup some of the fortune which George had given away to various charities on the basis that he was not in his right mind when he made the gifts. While the Commission of Lunacy had found that George had been insane from July 31, 1837, several of the major donations had taken place prior to that date and could not be recovered. However, there are traces of the legal steps Powell took to attempt to obtain the return of the funds.

Powell took action to seek the return of the £3000 given to Mr. Mortimer for the college in the matter of *Davenport v. Mortimer* in 1839 using the mortmain statutes. The gift was made on August 23, 1836, prior to George's having been declared insane, and the use of the mortmain statutes appears to have been rather creative lawyering to force the funds returned without having a particularly good right to have them. The attempt failed. Equally, it does not seem that there was success in reclaiming the gift to the Bishop of Sodor and Man. This matter reached the House of Lords on December 13, 1837 when the Earl of Ripon commented that the Bishop had funds that he could distribute among the Manx people that he wished, but had no legal obligation, to do. The inference was that, as the funds were given to him personally, he had no obligation to further distribute them. However, the Bishop indicated that he would. His executors are alleged to have spent £1200 in order to retain the £6000, so clearly the estate did not give up without a fight.

While these two attempts were unsuccessful, the size of George's estate at the time of his death clearly indicates that some of the money was returned. For example, the amount promised for the building of the church at Ashby de la Zouche was clearly cancelled. An advertisement in the Derby Mercury on June 17, 1840 announced a bazaar, under the august patronage of Queen Adelaide, of useful and ornamental fancy work for September of that year to raise funds for the building of the church – necessary as a result of the loss of the £1000 promised by George Davenport.

George was placed in the care of a Dr. Hubert Kelly who resided at Pinner, near Harrow. George is recorded in the 1841 census at Woodbine Cottage, Pinner living with Dr. Kelly and three servants. George's son's admission to Cambridge in 1856 gives his address as Woodcroft Cottage, Millington, Yorkshire. George must have moved there after the 1851 census as he is not present at that time in either place. He finally settled at Globe House, High Street, Great Marlow, Buckinghamshire. The 1861 census shows father and son living together with George's companion George Whitehead and four other servants. It would seem that George had achieved a certain degree of stability and lived a relatively normal life. Whitehead was then 45 but he was assisted by a 29 year old footman and a 13 year-old page. Mrs. Lane kept house together with a maid.

His wife Frances lived only a few years after George was declared insane. She died at Clarence Cottages, Albion Road, Stoke Newington on April 23, 1845. The cause was pleurisy combined with a disease of the lungs. This may have been tuberculosis. Dr. Robert Brett was the informant. She made her will on May 1, 1839. As the wife of a lunatic, she would have had the right to own property independently of her husband. In her will she merely disposed of certain funds left in trust for her by her father prior to her marriage in favour of her nieces Mary Augusta Surtees and Mary Ann Mason should her husband or child die before her. In the event, she predeceased both and the trust funds were likely paid to her husband's committee during his life. She did not in fact name executors nor did she deal with any property other than the trust funds. Letters of administration were granted in her estate to William Powell with a special administration granted on May 26, 1846 to allow Miss Surtees to deal with the terms of her will as well as any other property she might have possessed. Edward would, of course, have inherited any funds covered by the letters of administration as well as a portion of those held in the trust created by Richard Smith.

George Davenport died on March 6, 1869 at Globe House, Great Marlow. The cause of death was given as severe apoplexy – perhaps a heart attack. He was 61. If he ever made a will, it was after the time he was declared to be insane. Accordingly, Letters of Administration were granted to his son Edward Gershom on March 22, 1869 by the Central Probate Court. The amount of the estate was initially sworn as being below £50,000, resworn in June of that year as being under £45,000. As George was a widower and had no other children, under the laws of intestacy, Edward would have inherited the totality of the estate.

Edward Gershom Davenport (1838-1874)

George and Frances's son was born on April 4, 1838 at Paradise Row, Stoke Newington. They named him Edward, no doubt after George's uncle, and Gershom, a Hebrew name which means "a sojourner there". The first-born son of Moses and Zipporah was called Gershom and it is not hard to see the influence of George's religious obsession in the choice of name.

Initially, Edward's guardians were his mother and two gentlemen close to her. Frances Davenport, Robert Brett (1809-1874) and the Rev. John Aubone Cook (1811-1859) were appointed as guardians in July 1844. Brett was a physician and High Church layman in Stoke Newington. His obituary paints him as a tireless practitioner and builder of churches. Cook was the curate of Saint Margaret's, Westminster and later vicar of South Benfleet, Essex. Frances died in April, 1845, leaving the two other guardians in place. What followed was a bit unseemly. Within hours of Mrs. Davenport's death, the two remaining guardians applied to be confirmed in their position, supported by the child's uncle Samuel Davenport. If they were not considered suitable, it was suggested that Frances's niece, Mary Augusta Surtees, who had testified at George's lunacy commission, should be appointed in their place as she "held the same opinions as Mrs. Davenport and themselves on the important subjects of religion and education". The Rev. Mr. Cook was likely a cousin of this lady as her grandfather's first name was Aubone. No doubt this suggestion was made with a view of continuing their influence through the proposed guardian and several of the child's closest relations took action. The true reasons behind contesting the guardianship are not at all clear. The decision on the matter, reported in the *Times* on June 8, 1845 raises at least two separate concerns. The first and most obvious was that neither of the two gentlemen were blood relations, contrary to the general bias of the Court against placing strangers in such a position. It was acknowledged, however, that the pair had been appointed as guardians initially with Mrs. Davenport and that their re-appointment at her death made sense in the context of the decision the Court had to make.

The second issue, somewhat surprising, was the role religion played in discrediting the two. Both Mr. Brett and the Rev. Mr. Cook were at pains to point out that they were communicating members of the Church of England. However, it is clear that they were supporters of the publication "Tracts for the Times". Given the strong non-conformist opinions of Samuel Davenport the elder, it is surprising that Mrs. Davenport should be influenced by what became Anglo-Catholicism. The underlying concern here was that the child might be brought up as a Roman Catholic. The Vice-Chancellor, Sir L. Shadwell made several observations with respect to the Tractarian movement and the subject matter of the tracts themselves which no doubt represented the Anglican orthodoxy of the time. He stated "with regard to what were called the Tracts for the Times, his Honour observed the he had read very word of the last three of them and thought it difficult to state in a clear set of articles what were really the opinions they approved. . . . It was impossible however to read the tracts without seeing that there was either a tendency to raise questions than bottle them and to set the mind roving rather than keep it fixed on settled and acknowledged truths" - an interesting insight into the elite view of what religion should do. What seems also to have weighed heavily on the Court's mind was that George Davenport's religious views were strongly dissimilar

from those of the proposed guardians - an odd emphasis given that George's madness was largely one of religious mania. Frances's judgment was also called into question with a fair bit of paternalism. The Court stated "that Mrs. Davenport was a woman of kind, affectionate and soft spirit, apparently easily led, and prone to take the course that was not unusual with persons whose minds were strongly impressed with the notion that they could not do right without being always absent from the society of those most closely connected with them." From this one infers that she, or her advisors, attempted to isolate the child from its family and from opinions which were contrary to her own.

The family's attempt to remove the two Anglo-Catholic gentlemen was successful and, by court order dated May, 1846, Edward's guardians were replaced by his mother's brother Richard Smith and her sister and brother-in-law, Nicholas and Ann (Smith) Mason. They were provided with an allowance of £950 per annum.

An issue arose in June 1847 when Richard Smith removed George from the care of Dr. Kelly, whom he had come to consider as being an inappropriate guardian for a lunatic, and brought him to live with his family and Edward. Mr. and Mrs. Mason applied to court in June 1848 on alleging that such a move would be harmful to the child. They requested a review of Edward's educational plan and even suggested that Mr. Smith be removed as guardian. Smith responded that he did not consider George to be capable of violence but, nevertheless, never let them be alone together and ensured that they could not communicate at night. In addition, he indicated that, if the Court considered it appropriate, he would separate them. Samuel Davenport, the child's uncle, intervened to say that he opposed the removal of Richard Smith as guardian but would be governed by the Court as to the other matters. The Court expressed its concern with respect to the possibility that, while George was perhaps not violent (they seemed less certain on this point), contact between father and son would necessarily result in "an effect on the child to its injury" as reported in the Times on July 18, 1848. However, as lunacy was the jurisdiction of the Lord Chancellor, the matter was referred to him. The result of this referral is not yet known but clearly Richard Smith was not removed as Edward's guardian as Edward was living with Richard's family in the 1851 census. George appears to have been removed from his son's company as he is not present in the same census.

Through all of these battles, it is difficult to discern what the motivation of the parties concerned was. Was it to direct the moral and religious upbringing of the child? Gain control over his substantial annual allowance? Or was it a general concern about the child's welfare and a sense of family solidarity? In any event, it is not hard to see Edward's upbringing as being unsettled both because of the early death of his mother and the caution with which he was allowed to approach his father - who himself might have been erratic and confusing. Equally, the child could not have failed to notice the different people who took control of his life and their likely very different approach to child-rearing. In the end he seems to have ended up with the best of all his options with his uncle Richard Smith who comes through the documents as a sensible, aware man. Edward was living with him and his family in 1851 at 57 Great Guildford Street, Bloomsbury. Richard and his wife had four of their own children at home at this point and kept three servants. This would have been his home until at least late 1858 when Richard

Smith died, although Edward was at Cambridge by that time.

Education and Early Career

Edward was first educated at the University College School. This school was founded in 1831 on the principles of Jeremy Bentham. It was located within the precinct of University College in the Strand and was never a boarding school. Students studied modern languages as well as Latin and Greek. There was no corporal punishment and the school had a scientific curriculum as well as a gymnasium. All of these aspects strongly distinguished it from the older Church of England schools. Edward soon transferred to King's College School, founded in 1829 and then also located in the Strand. Its reputation had been growing steadily in the short period of time it had been open. Gabriele Rosetti, father of Dante, taught Italian there and John Sell Cotman taught water colours. Because of the central location of the school, many of the boys walked to school each day. The route between Great Guildford Street and King's College is about 1.8 kilometres.

Edward left Kings in 1856 and entered Trinity College, Cambridge. Trinity was founded in the wake of the Reformation in 1546 with the fusion of two even older colleges – Michaelhouse and King's Hall. The wealthiest of the Oxbridge colleges, most of the principal buildings were constructed in the seventeenth century, although both earlier and later periods have left their mark. Edward would have been at Trinity at the same time as future prime minister Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman and perhaps King Edward VII, then Prince of Wales. He graduated from Trinity with an honours BA in mathematics in 1860. In 1869, he returned to the University and took a Master of Arts degree.

After Cambridge, Edward was articled for three years with Mr. R. P. Brereton, M. Inst., a civil engineer. One of his first assignments was to work on the Cornwall railway under the direction of a Mr. Blatchley, the resident civil engineer. After the end of his articles, he became, for five years, the chief assistant to Mr. Brereton. During this period, Edward was in charge of providing the designs and specifications as well as seeing to completion a number of large projects. These included the harbours at Dartmouth, Porthcawl and Neath as well as drainage projects at Paignton, Dartmouth and Torbay, Llynvi and Ogmore. He also worked on the Saint Ives and West Cornwall railway. The majority of his career seems to have been focussed on the south-west of England and Cornwall in particular. He was elected as an Associate of the Institution of Civil Engineers on May 4, 1869.

Marriage

Edward married Louisa Oxenford in Paris on April 11, 1863. She was the daughter of Edward Oxenford, one of the first British merchants in South America and London banker who had to leave England in 1855 after his

affairs became embarrassed. At the time of the marriage he was living in Tours, France. The couple were married in the chapel of the British Embassy. Both parties were stated as being from Budock, Cornwall which could not have been correct for Louisa, although she did have relatives who lived there. The witnesses were Louisa's parents – a very shaky signature from Edward and a strong, firm one from her mother Emily. The ceremony was performed by the embassy chaplain and consented to by the Ambassador and counter-signed by the embassy secretary. How they met and why Edward was in Paris can now only be conjectured. There does not seem to be any obvious connections between the Oxenfords with either the Davenports or the Smiths unless Edward met some of Louisa's Cornish relatives when he was working there and they made a subtle suggestion. It is also possible that Louisa was in fact in Cornwall at the same time as Edward's duties took him there. However, it is perhaps not too romantic to imagine Edward coming to Paris to see and enjoy the city and, being invited to an entertainment which included members of the local English community, met Louisa, the impoverished daughter of a once prominent British man of business, who was up from Tours for the Season. Mr. Oxenford likely had little to give to his daughter for her marriage but money would not have been a primary concern for one who was to inherit a very large sum from his father. The couple moved back to London almost immediately as their first child was born in 1864 at 2 Conduit Street, Paddington. Louisa was referred to in Edward's obituaries as "amiable".

The Oxenfords

The Oxenfords originally came from Saint Mary Newington, Surrey and had a long association with the Customs House. A John Oxenford was Assistant Inspector General of Customs as early as 1730. His son John, born in 1753, followed his father's foot steps by becoming one of the collectors of H.M. Customs. Prior to a reform in 1831, the customs clerks exacted fees on goods entering England which substantially increased their annual income from £60 to well over £1000. The younger John died in 1803 but his son William followed after him and was paid a pension after the abolition of his position. He lived to be 100 years old, dying in 1883 and had received, over 52 years, a total of £10,400. John married Ellen Watkinson on June 20, 1778 by license in the parish of Saint Botolph, Aldgate. The pair had a large family with most members reaching adulthood. In all, they had eleven children, eight sons and three daughters. Louisa's father Edward was baptised on July 29, 1791 at Saint Mary Newington.

Edward Oxenford is considered the first British merchant to explore South America, and Brazil in particular, with a view to exploiting its resources. He arrived in Brazil as early as 1810, shortly after the Portuguese-Brazilian royal family fled to Brazil to avoid the Napoleonic invasion of their country and opened Brazil to outside merchants. Edward set up operations in Vila Rica and quickly became well-established and acquainted with the principal families of the province of Minas Gerais. He had to return to England for health reasons in 1813 but sent his brother Ferdinand as his agent in Rio de Janeiro. An Imperial decree of September 16, 1824 allowed, for the first time, foreign ownership of "productive assets". Edward founded the Imperial Brazilian Mining Association to explore for mining opportunities and soon began work at the old Gongo Soco mine which found new life as a result of British technology. He was forced out of this company by the London shareholders and responded by

founding the National Brazilian Mining Association in 1828. He returned to Brazil in that year and was granted mining privileges on the estates of the barons de Cocais and Catas Altas, old acquaintances of his, at Mocaubas. He was permitted to mine gold and silver (but not diamonds) in return for a premium to be paid to those gentlemen and the Emperor. The National Brazilian Mining Association continued to function, under a variety of names, until 1912. In the meantime, Ferdinand had established himself at the Imperial court and had close connections with the Imperial Government. He was key in certain negotiations between Brazil and England for the raising of large loans in favour of the Brazilian Government.

Edward Oxenford married Emily Tippet on December 27, 1827 in Falmouth, Cornwall. She was born on August 21, 1802, the youngest daughter of James Tippet, a prominent local solicitor and town clerk for Falmouth and his wife Harriet née Bell. Edward no doubt met Emily on a return trip from Brazil that landed in Falmouth. The Tippets were a large and well-established family in that town. In all there were twelve Tippet children to reach adulthood and they followed a variety of paths in life. Emily's older brother James Vivian was also a lawyer and had been mayor of Falmouth in 1817-1818. In 1817 he had adopted the surname and arms of Vivian as a result of a grandparent's will to allow him to take inherit the estate of Pencalenick. His brother George Bell Tippet was the captain of the packet ship "Montague" while their brother Charles Edward was a lieutenant in the Honourable East India Company army. The daughters – and there were eight of them – generally married into the local gentry. Three remained unmarried. The case of Georgina is more interesting. She married John William Brown, the son of a rear-admiral, in Naples and spent much of the rest of her life in Florence, dying there in 1849. Her husband is remembered as the author of one of the first biographies in English of Leonardo da Vinci and wrote other works on Florentine art. However, none of the male members of the Tippet family lived long lives: William Dashwood died before 1818, John Vivian in 1820, John Bell in 1811 and Charles Edward in 1820 in India. This may have meant that money was a bit tight, although James divided the portion of his estate between his sisters.

In total, Edward and Emily had nine children. His first daughter, Emily Mocaubas, was born in Brazil on March 16, 1829. The other children were born either in Falmouth or Saint Pancras. In the first group, Harriet, was born on September 25, 1830 followed by a first Ellen on August 8, 1833. Edward was the first child born in Saint Pancras on October 9, 1834 followed by William, Louisa, Susan, Caroline Mary, John Clarence, a second Ellen and Henry Edward. Several of the daughters died young: the first Ellen died before 1846 (her death was not registered in England) followed by Harriet on January 6, 1850. Emily Mocaubas married a solicitor, Charles Bannister, in March 1852. They had at least three children. She died, however, in March 1858.

Louisa was born in Saint Pancras on November 30, 1837 at 44 Mecklenbergh Square, near Gray's Inn, the house having been purchased for Edward by his mother. There has been some bomb damage or redevelopment in the area but Mecklenbergh Square looks much as it did in the 1840s and 50s. The family lived in style there. The 1851 census finds them employing four servants. Their prosperity was evident as they were burgled on March 5, 1849 and the list of stolen goods was recited in the Morning Post. These included Brazilian gold bars, gold dust, plate, jewellery and a great number of gold and silver coins to a value of £700 - 800. In particular, the report mentions a

gold mourning ring in honour of Edward's mother Ellen as well as two gold medallions portraying Oliver Cromwell and Simon Bolivar. One assumes that this information either came from the police report or was given to alert pawnbrokers of the stolen goods, perhaps with a hope of having them returned.

It seems that Edward Oxenford's business dealings had always been a bit on the edge and contemporary newspapers are full of accusations and counter accusations concerning his tactics. Of his two main ventures, the National Brazilian Mining Association produced significant amounts of gold, using Cornish deep-mining methods to extract the ore, as well as discovering new ore veins. He used the profits of this company to fund the Commercial Bank of London which he founded in 1830 and which actively participated in the London banking market. Despite being apparently profitable, the shares in National Brazilian sold into the London market did not yield sufficient dividends. There were strong allegations that Edward, who was the principal throughout, had diverted company funds for his own use. He was also accused of having appropriated £3000 from the estate of a neighbour, Lucinda Bourne, of which he was an executor.

Finally, after fifteen years of attempting to gain control over Oxenford's actions, the shareholders revolted, led by Robert Sheppard, a broker on the London Stock Exchange. The fight went on for two years but, by 1855, appeared to be destined for success. As the hammer was coming down on him, Edward asked for two days' respite before answering certain questions about the financing and books of the company. He used this time to clean out anything of a compromising nature from the company's offices in Throgmorton Street and, on April 9, 1855, fled the country. He first returned in May to Brazil to personally over-see the activities of the company. However, decrees issued out of the Court of Chancery were printed in the Brazilian newspapers, such as the *Jornal do Comercio*, on May 23, 1857, indicating that he had been relieved of his positions as general manager and director of the companies. He extracted what gold he could during that time and sailed for France in June 1856. He spent the rest of his life there, together with his wife Emily and their daughters Ellen and Louisa, on the quai Saint-Symphorien in a pleasant but not over-grand house facing the Loire. It is still reasonably pastoral today. In the 1850s, it must have been the country indeed. There is some evidence that he returned to England in March 1857 claiming to be a Dutch citizen but using his real name, although other evidence shows him in Brazil at that time.

Edward's affairs in London remained complicated and he had to resign as a director and trustee of the Commercial Bank of London as well. He executed a deed giving up his trusteeship over property on which the Bank held a security interest. The judgment which decided the issues arising from his resignation is still cited in trust texts to this day as *Hopkinson v. Lusk* from 1865. The case determined that Edward had resigned as trustee for only the secured properties but not from some other valuable leasehold interests which he continued to hold. One wonders what he exacted to have these returned to the Bank. After that, life seems to have quietened for him. Edward died in Tours on September 16, 1876. He still had some estate left in England as letters of administration were issued in relation to his personal estate there to his daughter Ellen Oxenford on July 30, 1877. The estimated value of his estate in England was initially stated as £450. This proved to be a hopeful assessment and the estate was later re-sworn for under £100, a tiny portion of what he must once have been worth. His wife had pre-deceased him by a

few years. Other than Ellen, who remained a spinster, the other daughters married English husbands and returned to live in England.

None of Edward's sons returned to England. Henry Edward and possibly Edward emigrated to South America and became pillars of the British community in Buenos Aires. The family is still prominent in Argentina as Eduardo Oxenford was minister of Industry in 1981 and is a prominent company director in Argentina today. Another prominent businessman of the same name was kidnapped and murdered by Argentine police in 1978. John Clarence sailed off for America and we find him in Texas throughout the latter part of the nineteenth century. He seems to have prospered there as he is listed as the county clerk for Milam County in 1880 and a lawyer in 1900. He had a son and a daughter and no doubt his descendents still live in the area.

The Oxenfords had cousins in Camberwell, two of whom reached considerable fame. Edward Oxenford (1848 - 1929) (often confused with both Edward senior and his son Edward) became a composer of light music and achieved considerable notoriety. It was he who popularised the Italian ballad "Finiculi, Finicula" for English-speaking audiences, for which one should not blame him too much. On a more serious note, his cousin John (1812-1877) was the initial translator of some of Goethe's works, Schopenhauer and other German literary figures. He had a lighter side as well as he was a popular dramatist, writing "My Fellow Clerk", "Twice Killed" and "the Porter's Knot". While these plays have no doubt not been presented for many years, they loomed larger in the literature of the time.

Children

There were three children born of the marriage between Edward and Louisa. Frances Emily arrived on November 3, 1864 at Conduit Street West, Paddington. The origins of her name are clear enough – Frances for Edward's mother and Emily for Louisa's. A boy, Vivian Edward, was born on August 11, 1870 by which time the family had moved to 28 Lancaster Gate and Edward had changed from a civil engineer to a landowner. Edward, of course, was in reference to the child's father. However, his first name may show a consciousness of position and is a reference to prominent Davenports from the past and an attempt to clothe the child in the antiquity of the family. The first Vivian de Davenport was born around 1204 in Cheshire and lived to the 1290s. He was probably a descendent of Ormus (Orme) de Davenport, the first recorded person to have that surname, and was Grand Sargeant of the Macclesfield Forest and a founder of the Davenport family in Cheshire. The name had been used a number of times by Vivian's descendants. While it is likely that this branch of the Davenport family and the Orme line were connected, it is doubtful that Edward knew this for certain. However, it is just as likely that the name was chosen in honour of Louisa's family connections with the old landed Vivian family near Falmouth. As noted, her uncle James had always had Vivian as a middle name and adopted it as a surname as a result of an inheritance.

Finally, on July 16, 1875, Ellen Marie was born posthumously, almost certainly in Paris. Ellen was probably in honour of Louisa's sister with whom she appeared to have been close. "Marie" may simply be the French influence which permeated Louisa's life. The timing of the births is unusual for Victorian families where children usually arrived every two years. There is an almost six year gap between Frances and Vivian and another five year gap between Vivian and Ellen. It is possible that there were miscarriages or children who did not survive to be recorded in the next census after their birth. However, it might also point to less than warm relations between husband and wife. No other baptisms have been found.

Later Career

On George's death, Edward re-created himself with incredible speed into a country gentleman and left behind his promising career as a civil engineer. His father left him approximately £45,000. He also benefited from the trust created by his grandfather Richard Smith for his mother on her marriage. In addition, he would have accumulated some capital from his own employment. This left him in a position to buy the lease of 28 Lancaster Gate by April 1871. The 1871 census shows Edward living there in great style with eight servants in the house: a house keeper, Mrs. Torrance, butler, William Maxton, a wet nurse, ladies maid, upper and under housemaids, footman and kitchen maid (presumably Mrs. Torrance did the cooking or they were in the unenviable position of being between cooks). The houses in Lancaster Gate, which seem to have survived externally intact to this day, are grand classical five story stucco-faced mansions forming a U around a central square just north of Hyde Park. Built in the middle of the nineteenth century, they would have been the new suburbs and, despite their grandeur, one might expect they were a bit parvenus. In the centre of the square was Christ Church, Lancaster Gate. This church closed in 1977 and is now a (truly unattractive) housing development. Only the spire remains intact. Number 28 sits at the southeast corner and was for many years the Central London Hostel, fondly remembered by a generation of Australian travellers. It appears now to have been converted into flats.

Any aspiring member of the upper classes also required a country seat. To supply this need, Edward's gaze again looked back to Cornwall, from which his mother-in-law Emily Tippet came and where he had spent so much of his early career. He leased Tregenna Castle, just outside of Saint Ives, in 1872. This large castellated house was built high on a hill with a view of the ocean. It dated from 1775 and had been built in the fashionable eighteenth century Gothick style by the (unrelated) Smith family who occupied it for almost a century. It was sold in 1870. The initial sale notice was published in the London *Standard* on October 7, 1870. It is described as a superior freehold with a view of the city and harbour of Saint Ives. The house and stables were built of granite, which made it "unequaled" as a summer, autumn and winter residence. It had elegant reception rooms, twenty bedrooms and dressing rooms, bathrooms and all other domestic offices. The house was fully furnished and the purchaser could take the furniture at a valuation. The advertisement also described substantial out-buildings and extensive gardens replete with luxurious evergreens and rare varieties of ferns. The house sat on 470 acres of land and included a number of farms and buildings within Saint Ives itself which produced a rental income of £1000 per

annum. Two smaller manors were included in the property, Dinas Ia and Porth Ia, which brought in a further £222 for a total rental income of £3250 if “in hand”. There were also tin mines on the property which were let subject to a royalty from which a “very considerable” income was produced. A similar advertisement was published in the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* but with rather more conservative statements about the income the property would produce. It is unclear whether Edward took possession of all of the assets of the estate but the *Gazette* reported that Edward took the property for a lease of a term of years. It is now a luxury hotel with a golf course. Thereafter he was referred to as Edward Gershom Davenport of 28 Lancaster Gate and Tregenna Castle, Cornwall, a style that fit well within the Victorian world view.

In his obituary, Edward was described as an energetic and respected member of the Vestry of the parish of Paddington and was also on the parish’s board of Governors. He was on the committee of the Paddington Branch of the Charity Organisation Society and took an active part in the elections for the London School Board. As we shall see, he also involved himself with country life around Tregenna Castle. He joined the local militia as a Captain in the Saint Ives Volunteer Artillery and on August 1, 1873 founded a cricket club which used the grounds of the estate.

Parliament

With his great wealth, and his social position having been consolidated, Edward considered a second phase of his ascension. His eyes turned towards Parliament. He chose the borough of Saint Ives where he had worked as an engineer in his earlier days. Or rather, as we shall see, it chose him. The Tippetts, Louisa’s mother’s family, had deep roots in Cornwall and likely provided an entrée. No doubt Edward also had contacts there and in the local Conservative riding association, all of which seems much less formal than it is today. Reports in the local papers allow us to follow the dance required before accepting to run for Parliament. The first rule appears to have been that one had to be sought out and convinced to run rather than putting oneself forward. The *Royal Cornwall Gazette* noted in August 1873 that they had “frequently referred to the probability” of Edward running as a candidate for Saint Ives in the next election. The article goes on to assert that “the probability is now increased almost to a certainty. A requisition to Mr. Davenport to allow himself to be put forward as a candidate for the representation of the borough is, we are informed, being very numerously signed.” His opponent, Mr. Magniac, was not going to go down without a fight and had taken up residence in the borough to counter-act the influence of Mr. Davenport, who was of course resident at Tregenna Castle. Gladstone had Parliament dissolved on January 24, 1874 with an impossibly short campaign of three weeks. The 1874 election was held between January 31 and February 17. The contest in Saint Ives was between the Liberal John Borlase Bolitho, successor to Mr. Magniac, and Edward as the Conservative. Edward received 752 votes, a majority of 319 votes over his rival. These results mirrored themselves across the country as Gladstone’s Liberals, while they garnered an over-all majority in votes, lost 139 seats and declined in popularity by 9.5 % against Disraeli’s Conservatives. Gladstone campaigned on a platform of fiscal responsibility but Liberal organization on the ground had apparently suffered since the last election and the working-class press, who would be Gladstone’s natural backers, were unable to react in time to

prevent a Conservative victory. Saint Ives must have been something of a Liberal bastion as it took what was described as a special series of events, unlikely to be repeated, to elect a Conservative member.

Each step of the local campaign was extensively reported in the local press. The *Royal Cornwall Gazette* reported on August 30, 1873 that Edward had been actively campaigning in the borough and had a “very hearty reception”. At the same time, he gave a fete on the grounds of Tregenna Castle for the teachers and children of the Zion Chapel (Lady Huntington’s Connexion) who were regaled with tea and cake. The ladies of the sewing meeting provided a stall of useful and ornamental articles for sale. The whole was deemed by the paper, which one suspects had Conservative leanings, a success. It is interesting that Edward patronised non-conformist religious groups. This seems unusual for a Conservative Churchman but he may have felt a greater comfort with non-conformists because of his family history and the likely fact that Cornwall had a substantial non-conformist population. In January, 1874, once he had been prevailed upon to accept the nomination, he gave a long speech at the gates of Tregenna Castle touching on the issues of the day. Some of these issues resonate down to us today: taxation and the efficiency of government, the expansion of trade and the political scandals of the opposing party. Others spoke to that time and place: the Ashanti War, public drunkenness among the lower classes, Ireland and the Zanzibar contract. Of particular interest to the constituents was the health of the port of Saint Ives and the expansion of the railroad. He promised them a railroad and further said, with an independence that we have not come to expect of politicians, that he would support any Bill, regardless of source, that made sense to him and which would better the lot of the people. The weather was inclement but the audience numerous and, the *Gazette* assured its readers, deeply appreciative.

It is also interesting to note the role of the candidate’s wife, important then as now. On April 26, 1873 Louisa presented medals given to participants in the Royal National Lifeboat Institution. Edward first gave what was described as a “capital speech” in which he said that the simple medal of the Institution was worth more than a tawdry ribbon or gaudy star given by a foreign potentate as the former represented both Christian duty and British pluck. Louisa is also reported as giving a fete at Tregenna on August 8, 1873 as a fundraiser for the local Methodist New Connexion Sunday School, another non-conformist group. The event was heavily subscribed and the teachers and children had a grand time. The local brass band was in attendance “to enliven the proceedings”.

On February 1, 1874, The *Royal Cornwall Gazette* reported that the victory procession wended its way from Tregenna Castle down into Saint Ives with Edward, Louisa and the children drawn in a carriage by local fisherman instead of horses. The town was festooned with the red and white Conservative colours and the ovation, the paper reported, was general and repeated. When the procession came to the quay, Edward descended and made a speech to the towns folk thanking them for their constancy as all those who pledged to vote for him did so “almost without exception”. How this was known for certain is unclear as this was the first election with a secret ballot. He went on to declare that “his constant aim would be to advance the interests of the town in every way” and he “feelingly” asked the meeting to give to him “their prayers and good wishes in order that he might rightly to discharge the important and high trust imposed in him.” The festivities continued that night with illuminated tar

barrels on the terrace, New Road and quay and the fishing boys formed processions throughout the town with the flambeaux used on the fishing boats which was deemed “very picturesque”. The *Gazette* went on to assure its readers that “As during the entire election, everything was conducted in a remarkably orderly way, and drunkenness was no-where visible.”

Edward’s parliamentary career was, according to contemporaries, as short as it was full of promise. Edward does not seem to have participated greatly in debates – there is no maiden speech to record here. The session began on January 31, 1874 and lasted until June. Edward entered on February 5 and seems to have been able to present himself only during this first term. When Parliament resumed in the autumn, he was already seriously ill. His total contribution seems to have been the following question to Benjamin Disraeli on April 27, 1874:

§ *MR. E. DAVENPORT*

asked the First Lord of the Treasury, What is the present amount of the unappropriated balance of the proceeds from the disendowment of the Irish Church, and who has the control of it?

§ *MR. DISRAELI*

I am not surprised that my hon. Friend the Member for St. Ives has given Notice of this Question, for I know it is a question which is in many mouths. The point is, to ascertain the present amount of the unappropriated balance of the proceeds from the disendowment of the Irish Church and who has the control of it. Now, I am sorry to say that there is no balance, or, rather, no unappropriated balance of the proceeds from the disendowment of the Irish Church. The account is the other way, and the items are so important and interesting that I will take this opportunity of stating them to the House. Unfortunately, the debt due on the part of the Commissioners amounts to no less than £9,700,000. Of this £8,400,000 is owing to the Commissioners for the reduction of the National Debt, and £1,800,000 is due to the Representative Church Body. After the Notice of inquiry was given by my hon. Friend, I asked for some information in order that, having learnt this was the state of the unappropriated balance, I might ascertain what would be the future result of all these proceedings. I am told it is estimated that this debt of £9,700,000 with interest, the annual charge in respect of which is at present £240,000, will be paid off in about 17 years, and when that time shall have arrived and the liabilities of the Commission shall have been discharged, it is calculated that the capitalized value of the Terminable Annuities which will then be outstanding, will amount to about £5,000,000 sterling. This last-mentioned sum when realized will constitute the surplus to be disposed of by Parliament.

It is possible he made other contributions – not all of Hansard has been transcribed on-line. For instance, he also supported a number of bills making their way through the session such as those dealing with Offences Against the Person, Infanticide and the Sale of Liquors on Sunday. Drunkenness was one of the themes which characterised his speeches during the election and seems to have been a pre-occupation of the day.

Death and Will

Edward died at home on December 4, 1874 as a result of meningitis which had been present for three months. He was only 36. His illness seems to have been of a longer duration. On October 7, 1874, the *Liverpool Mercury* reported that Edward had been in poor health since his election and was, at the time of writing, in a perilous state. He had originally been suffering from pulmonary disease but this had been complicated by “brain fever” and that there was no hope for his recovery. The *Mercury* must have been a Liberal paper as it went on to speculate that the by-election would be the Liberal party’s first victory. This is to be contrasted by a report from the Times on October 8, 1874 which stated that Edward was “out of all danger”. Edward was buried in Kensal Green Cemetery. His monument, substantial but not overly grand, recited that he was late MP for Saint Ives and that he was “Respected and regretted by all who knew him.”

Perhaps there was some truth to the Times’ report as Edward was able to add a codicil to his will on October 19, 1874 and his last child would have been conceived at about this time. His will is an extensive document but most of it was devoted to setting out the legal powers available to his trustees. He continued the estate in tail male with respect to the lands in Beeby and gave Louisa an immediate legacy of £500. She also received all of the household goods at the Lancaster Gate house but not those at Tregenna Castle. It appeared to be his intention to allow his trustees to assign the lease to Tregenna either with or without its contents. He made bequests to two servants: Rebecca Thomas who appears to have been a long-time servant of the family and Lydia Child who had served his mother. Both received annuities, Rebecca of £25 per annum and Lydia of £20. He left the remainder of his estate in trust to pay the income to his wife and thereafter to their children. In addition, five percent of the total amount of the trust income, if it exceeded £1000, and ten percent if it exceeded £2000, was to be set aside in a separate trust account for the children.

Edward was clearly concerned about the manner in which his children would be raised. He named his wife as their guardian during her life. Should she die before they reached the age of majority, he appointed Susan Gregory, his wife’s sister, as guardian together with a cousin Richard Horton Smith and Charles Evans Newton, the latter two being lawyers. He also stated that his children should “reside and be educated in England and shall be brought up in the Religion of the Church of England and shall not be taken or permitted to go out of England except temporarily for an excursion or short trip abroad.” Perhaps he feared that Louisa would return to France, as she subsequently did, and raise the children there. She may also have been attracted by Catholicism, although there is no firm evidence of this, which excited Edward’s fears.

The provisions made for Louisa were to diminish substantially if she remarried, a standard clause in wills of this time. However, Edward did not entirely cancel the annuity but, rather, reduced it to one-eighth of what it would otherwise be which would have been considered generous in the day. In the event that his wife and children predeceased him, Edward remembered a few family members to receive the income from his estate: William Davenport, a solicitor and one of the sons of Frederick Charles Davenport, Edward’s brother in law William Anthony Gregory and his two sisters in law Susan Gregory and Ellen Oxenford as well as all the first cousins on

his mother's side of which there were a significant number. The reference to William Davenport is the last in the records so far of any connection between the descendents of Charles Davenport and those of Samuel. We have no record of contact during the life-time of Vivian Edward Davenport or that of his son. Apparently the disposition of Edward's estate did not run smoothly as, in July 1876, the children, through their next friend Richard Horton-Smith, sued the executors of his estate. While the report of the case is not clear, it seems that there was delay in administering the estate and the payment of income.

Edward Gershom seems an odd mix of a man. In some senses he was very modern. He went to progressive schools, chose a newer profession which was on the forefront of the technological changes of the Victorian age and seemed to be very socially aware. On the other hand, once he reached a considerable degree of financial security, he turned to the more conservative social norms of his time: he was an orthodox member of the Church of England, an involved landowner and ultimately member of Parliament for the Conservative party. The obituaries after his death were unreservedly laudatory. Even cutting through the pious Victorian cant, it seems he was a popular, energetic man who was respected by those on both sides of the issues of the day. As the obituary in the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* stated on December 12, 1874 "the relations which existed between Mr. Davenport and his constituents, of every party, creed and class, were of the most friendly and, one might say affectionate character. From the first he openly declared that he did not mean to be the representative of a party but of the whole borough, and well did he carry out this resolve." The obituary continues "although in all these matters he held and expressed strong opinions, he was able, from the kindness of his disposition, to keep on good terms with those from whom he most differed". The notice went on to say that he had accomplished much in a short period of time and that his passing was regretted by both Liberals and Conservatives, Dissenters and Churchmen and that the first thing the Liberals did in a meeting after his death was to pass a resolution of condolences to Louisa and the children.

Deaths of Louisa Oxenford and the younger children

When Edward died, Louisa was pregnant with their last child, Ellen Marie. It appears that she did not stay long in England after her husband's death and had returned to Paris by July of 1875. It seems that her heart was in France and she lived at 8, rue Rabelais, a small street just to the north of the Elysée Palace. The building seems to have been one of the few in the area to have been redeveloped but would have been on the outskirts of the newer fashionable neighbourhood around the Champs Elysées. She made her will on July 5, 1875 before two solicitors resident in Paris and gave birth to Ellen Marie on July 16. This raised two difficulties. First, as we have seen, one of the provisions of Edward's will was that his children be raised in England and in the Anglican faith. While there is no evidence that Louisa was anything other than a member of the Church of England, she had lived in Catholic countries for much of her life and named her daughter "Marie" – perhaps simply a fashionable gesture but which may point to an interest in the Church of Rome. A likely scenario is that her sister and brother in law, the Gregorys, were present at the birth of the child and took little Ellen back to England shortly thereafter to meet

the conditions of Edward's will. This escapade could hardly have been beneficial as the child died in their home in Wimbledon on August 5, 1875 of Actetosis. Louisa herself had died on July 24, 1875 in her home in Paris, no doubt from the complications of child birth. Her death certificate, filed at the *mairie* of the 8e arrondissement in Paris, is signed by Reginald Gesling and his younger brother Randolph. These were the undertakers attached to the British Embassy who apparently dealt with the necessary arrangements for deceased British subjects. Reginald would later do the same for Oscar Wilde in 1900.

Louisa's will is a short document. She left no money to her children as, to use her words, "they have been amply provided for under their father's will". She remembered her father (her mother was dead by this point as attested in her death certificate) and her three surviving sisters – Ellen, Susan and Caroline. The document gives a glimpse of the train of life she led as an MP's wife: she left her sables, her court dresses and a seal skin jacket to each of her sisters. Her estate was not overly large – only £2000. She left a small token to each of her older children – her "little girl's watch and chain" for Frances and his father's watch and seal with crest for Vivian and requested that her sister Ellen be given the ability to "bring up" the children with a comfortable house for that purpose. This does not seem to have happened, at least in a formal sense. Ellen was resident at 30 Montpelier Crescent - where the children lived - in July, 1877 but is not listed there in any subsequent censuses. However, she seems to have remained closely connected with the children and there is a reference in later documents from the family solicitor that she "was a lady of the highest character and was devoted to the said Vivian Edward Davenport".

Vivian did not forget his aunt. In his 1905 will he left her the income of £5000 worth of consolidated preference stock of the London, Brighton and South Coast Railway. She never lived to enjoy this gift but one assumes that Vivian kept an eye on her. Ellen died at Richmond on September 12, 1908, leaving a will dated September 10, 1906. In the end, her estate was not inconsequential at an estimated at £3530 and one can only assume that she inherited from other members of the family. Alternatively, there may have been more Oxenford money available in England than her father's estate would lead one to believe. She named her nephew, Anson Vivian Squire and the family solicitor Fillmer as executors. She favoured the family of her sister Caroline: after disposing of several pieces of what appears to be fairly nice jewellery to various female relations, she left a series of small legacies of £20 or £25 to various of her Squire nieces and nephews – Caroline Oxenford Squire, Anson Vivian Squire and the three brothers Paul, Dashwood and Leonard Lovell Squire. The remainder she left to the survivor of her sister Caroline or the latter's husband Anson. All beneficiaries survived Ellen.

Vivian Edward Davenport (1870 – 1945)

After their mother's death, the children were committed to the care of their aunt Susan and her husband, William Anthony Gregory, a civil engineer. William and Susan soon moved from Wimbledon to the house located at 30 Montpelier Crescent, Brighton. This was a large stucco mansion atop a hill, clearly an elegant and wealthy place

to live. It was here that Frances Emily died on February 9, 1879 at the age of fourteen. The cause of death was stated as being phthisis (a disease of the lungs similar to tuberculosis). William Gregory was the informant. She was buried with her father at Kensal Green. Her epitaph was “Come to me, saith one, and coming be at rest.” Vivian was now the only surviving member of his family. However kind his guardians were, he had lost his father and mother a year apart from each other at the age of five and his older sister at the age of nine which must have left him isolated. He appears to have been close with his nanny, Sarah Odell Pearce, to the extent that in one of his codicils he left her a small working man’s house he owned in the north end of Brighton.

William and Susan had only one child, Maud Gregory, who was the same age as Vivian. The 1881 census finds them at Montpelier Crescent. William had clearly prospered. In 1871 he was a civil engineer living with his wife and child in a cottage in Wimbledon and no live in servants. By 1881, he had become a brick manufacturer and merchant employing eighty men and ten boys. For a family of four they had four servants: a nurse, house maid, parlour maid and cook. By 1891 he had sold the brickworks and was living off his own means with his wife and daughter and three servants. Vivian was still living with them and had by this time qualified as a civil engineer. William died shortly after that in March 1893. His wife followed him quickly in June 1894. Vivian would then have been of age and had access to the money from his father’s estate. He continued to live in Montpelier Crescent until about 1900. Maud Gregory fades from history. She appears to have died in 1956, unmarried, in Battle, Sussex.

Education

Vivian attended Harrow, living at Mr. Hutton’s and left at the Midsummer term 1887, at the age of 17. One wonders whether the choice of school was made because of George Davenport’s residence nearby in the 1840s. Edward must have visited his father there on a number of occasions. Harrow is, of course, one of the great English public schools, founded unofficially as early as 1253 but granted a royal charter in 1572. One assumes that he learned Latin and Greek, patronised the cricket pitch and football field and socialised with the ruling class during his stay there.

On leaving Harrow, Vivian enrolled as a student at the Institution of Mechanical Engineers on March 5, 1889, following his father’s and uncle’s foot-steps. He was listed as a member of the Institution in 1895 and 1896, residing at the Montpelier Crescent address. Vivian may in fact have exercised the profession of a mechanical engineer, if only for a short while. He travelled with a colleague, Guy L. Bidwell, to New York and ultimately to San Francisco on November 3, 1894 aboard the “Germanic”. They returned on December 29, 1894 on the “Umbria” in both cases as cabin passengers. It is not noted what their business was or what they were going to see. However, from an engineering perspective, San Francisco would be extremely interesting with its attempts to master a highly uneven topography. Another aspect of Vivian’s interest in inventions and engineering is a patent he applied for on January 1, 1904. It was for improvements for stirrup irons. The patent seems to have been

granted, although the document does not give any indication of what the improvements were. After that time, there is no indication that Vivian made any attempt to pursue his profession and the 1901 census finds him back in Brighton, living off his own means with a married couple acting as his butler and cook.

The absence of a profession was perhaps a dangerous state for a well-off and, as it turns out, amorous young man. Affidavits filed in connection with a later custody battle describe his life at this point as being wild. Horatio Rutter Fillmer, the family solicitor, stated in 1914 that he had known Vivian for 23 years and that Vivian had always been “eccentric and wanting in mental balance”. He had taken to drinking excessively and “lived a most irregular life”. This may only have represented a bohemian streak, repellent in the eyes of a conservative Victorian lawyer. Whatever the case, sometime during late 1897 he met a young working class girl called Alice Maud Lavinia Tinham who lived not far from him. They may have met on the street or perhaps in a shop. In any event, this meeting was to have a profound impact on Vivian’s life.

The Tinhams

The Tinhams were from rough stock indeed. Richard Tinham, Alice’s father, started off life as a labourer. In subsequent censuses, he is indicated as a warehouseman (1861) and fishmonger (1871 and 1891). His father had been a labourer as well. By 1881, he and his wife had parted ways and she cannot be found in subsequent censuses. They had four children: Richard Frederick (1860), Ellen Ada, Alfred Charles (1869) and Alice, the youngest, born in West Ham, Essex in September 1875. In the 1901 census, Richard is described as a railway engine driver while Alfred Charles was a bricklayer’s labourer. Ellen Ada may have died young as she appears in no censuses beyond 1871. Those children still at home resided with their father. By 1901, Mr. Tinham had retired and was living in Brighton with Alice. One assumes that Vivian and Alice met in the neighbourhood. Vivian likely still lived at Montpelier Crescent, just up the hill from the Tinhams’ home in Clifton Hill Road.

Their affair likely began as a courtship in the fall of 1897 leading to a relationship, however brief, as time progressed. By December Alice was pregnant. This would not be the first time in history that a working class girl was left in an awkward situation by a socially superior man. The usual result - the girl left in misery and the child put up for adoption - failed to materialise. The documents suggest a rather different scenario - that Alice may not have been a victim and in fact had a number of lovers. Vivian, who all agreed was wild at the time, may have been merely one of a crowd. This was certainly the view of her detractors.

Birth of Edward Vivian

Vivian and Alice’s son Edward Vivian was born on August 4, 1898 at 94 Centurion Road, Brighton, a small working class house not far from Alice’s father’s home. On the birth certificate his name was given as Edward Vivian Tinham, the son of his true mother and one Edward Vivian Tinham, a commercial traveller. Her address

was given as 34 Old Steine, a building on the main square of Brighton just above the pier, likely a hotel or lodging house. Her maiden name was given as “Edwards”. This was her mother’s middle name and likely the maiden name of her maternal grandmother. The birth was not registered until September 15, which makes one think there was some discussion about it and how it should be approached.

Certain of the affidavits surrounding the battle for his custody in 1914 question whether Vivian was in fact the father. Mr. Rolleston, Vivian’s future guardian, could only bring himself to say that Vivian was “reputed” to be Edward’s father. Solicitor Fillmer stated in relation to whether Vivian was Edward’s father “Whether this is the fact or not, he adopted the boy as his own and treated him in all respects as if he were his lawful son.” While none of the documents in relation to Edward state the fact so baldly, there is a strong inference that Alice had a number of lovers and that she may have chosen the richest as the likely candidate for a father. However, Vivian clearly had sexual relations with her or else he would never have acknowledged the child or ultimately married the mother.

The birth certificate was finally re-registered as a result of the Legitimacy Act, 1926. This Act confirmed that parents who married after the birth of their child could re-register the birth under the name of the father. Accordingly, on August 15, 1927, the parents swore a statutory declaration which allowed for the deletion of the untrue material and registered his birth under the name Davenport in the September quarter of that year.

In 1898, this relatively enlightened legislation was still years away and the 1901 census finds young Edward at Weybridge, Surrey in a house run by one Stanley Morris, an “outfitter” aged 30 and single who employed Amy Tinham, aged 27, as a general servant. Amy Edith Tinham was listed as a servant in the 1891 census with the family of a bank clerk. She was likely Alice’s cousin as they were born near each other in Essex. One is permitted to ponder the relationship between Amy and her young, single employer. It was clearly undesirable that the unmarried Alice be seen raising a child or, at any rate, she had no desire to do so. Accordingly, Edward was farmed off to a small village, no doubt funded by Vivian in the background. We will never know what influence this period of his life had on Edward. He might have been well cared for and perfectly happy – or he may have wondered, when he was able to do so, why he did not have a mother and father or why they visited only rarely.

In the 1901 census, taken in April, Alice was living with her father at 16 Clifton Hill, a fairly large house about 200 metres down the hill from Montpelier Crescent where Vivian had grown up. They kept a single servant with her young son and a boarder. Mr. Tinham was stated as living from his own means. This perhaps indicates that Mr. Tinham, while still a fishmonger, had been successful in his business and could live a comfortable and genteel existence in retirement. Vivian himself now lived a very short walk away at 4 Powis Grove, a small street also not very far from Montpelier Crescent. This house appears to have been redeveloped but the remaining houses are large and suitable for someone of his status.

Married Life [not] Together

Alice and Vivian finally married quietly on November 27, 1901 in the Brighton register office. There does not appear to have been any of the normal announcements made concerning the match. They were then both living in the Powis Grove house. Alice's father was described as a soldier on the certificate. No doubt he had been a soldier in his younger days and this calling was more ambiguous and potentially more socially acceptable than fishmonger. Vivian's father was listed as an M.P. The witnesses were John Gravett and Edith Marshall, neither of them members of either family. There can be no question that this marriage was a classic *mésalliance*. Perhaps one day a picture from a London illustrated newspaper will show that Alice was very pretty or perhaps the marriage happened because of the child. Maybe Vivian simply needed companionship and was unsuitable to be released in Edwardian society to find a more conventional wife. We may never know what caused them to wed. The marriage lasted until Alice's death but there were no further children. As we will see, they spent most of their lives apart from 1906 onwards and contact between the spouses was infrequent and acrimonious.

One assumes that Edward returned to his parents at the time of their marriage. How they explained the existence of a child over three years old at that point is anybody's guess. Perhaps they simply relied on no one really wanting to ask the obvious questions. In 1902, the Court Directory places Vivian at 180 Portsdown Road. In 1905 he indicated in his will that he lived at Sandhill House, Sheen Road, Mortlake, Surrey. In looking at the aerial photos of Mortlake, it is difficult to see where he could have lived. No doubt the area has been substantially developed since 1905 but most of the houses are small and middle class, many of them post-War. Other documents refer to him living at Richmond and he likely lived near the borders of Richmond Park where there are still a number of substantial homes where a person of his stature could live. The will also gives some insights into his style of life at this time, both because of the lengthy description of the personal property he might have – manuscripts and articles of vertu for example – but also his steam yacht, complete with skipper.

In 1906, shortly after he made his will, he was declared to be insane and was placed by order of the Master in Lunacy in the care of a Mr. Arthur Hampden Vilette Rolleston, his wife Alice and daughter Stella at 11 Waterloo Crescent, Dover. This was a large house right on the beach near the yacht club. Arthur called himself a guardian in a mental case. He was born into a prosperous family from Leamington, Warwickshire. His real profession, if he had one, is unclear as he always stated he was living off his own means. The only other clue is that his daughter was born in New Zealand. He died in Brentford in 1930. A portion of Vivian's considerable income would be paid to Mr. Rolleston for Vivian's care and maintenance and there is an inference that the family undertook this type of care for other patients as well.

Alice lived in London during much of this time. She was listed in the telephone directories as early as 1906 when she was resident at Sandhill House. By 1910, the house was likely disposed of as thereafter they are referred to as being "formerly" of Sandhill House. There is also a mention in 1908 that the house was closed up. The telephone directories after 1910 place Alice at 29 Evelyn Mansions, Carlyle Place, Westminster until at least 1920, the last date for which we have the telephone directories on-line. Carlyle Place is a series of Edwardian apartment houses

between Victoria Station and Westminster cathedral. Later custody affidavits describe that she lived there full-time except for her frequent stays at hotels on the South Coast. It was an eight-room flat with four bedrooms, two sitting rooms and a kitchen. She generally kept a single cook-general but seems to have had difficulty in keeping staff. Later affidavits were in part from disgruntled former servants who were not kind to Alice. As well, we have Alice's own frequent comments that she was between maids.

The 1911 census finds the family in three different places. Edward had been placed at the Temple Grove School at Eastbourne. Alice was living a short distance away at the Royal Albion Hotel in the Old Steine in Brighton. Vivian was in Mr. Rolleston's care in Dover.

The exact nature of the mental illness Vivian suffered from is difficult to know but was clearly severe. It was perhaps a type of manic-depression, which the comments about his previous life style might support. However, there is no precise description. He was under the care of Mr. Rolleston from 1906 until at least the summer of 1914. His stay there likely continued after that time as he did not sign as consenting parent on his son's application to the Royal Flying Corps in 1916. He likely moved from Mr. Rolleston's care to a rest home in Tunbridge Wells before 1920, once he regained a degree of sanity. For some unknown reason, his condition did not preclude him from entering into legal engagements. He was able to make codicils to his will in 1920, 1927 and 1928 and swore the affidavit in relation to Edward's birth in 1927. The codicils were drafted by the same Horatio Rutter Fillmer and the 1920 and 1928 codicils were witnessed by his physician as well so there must have been certainty as to his legal capacity. His death certificate listed as a subsidiary cause of death "old mental disease – many years" so his condition does not seem to have disappeared entirely. He was also very dependent on his male staff and remembered them in the codicils to his will.

For the last 25 years of his life, Vivian lived at "Heathside" 75 Mount Ephraim, Tunbridge Wells. This appears to have been a rest home for the well-to-do as he refers to "his rooms" in one of his codicils. The place appears to have been run by George Trustram Watson (1868- 1952), FRCS, MB, OBE. In the codicils, Dr. Watson was resident at Heathside and one assumes he also provided professional services there, caring for the inhabitants. Dr. Watson's obituary claims that he moved into the house itself in 1936, although that date might be earlier.

Custody Battle

While Vivian was sequestered, a serious battle erupted over who should be Edward Vivian's guardian, a recurring theme for this family. It is clear that several people around Alice did not like her and felt that she was both a bad mother and a selfish and immoral woman. The proceedings were instituted by the Master in Lunacy in June 1914 as a result of information which had come to his attention about the manner in which the boy was being raised. A good bet would be that the family solicitor Fillmer supplied this information to the Master as his firm's agents in London commenced the action. His animosity to Alice is clear from the two affidavits he filed in the matter. He characterised Alice as having "an ungovernable temper and habit of "nagging"". She is recorded as having struck

her husband and thrown things at him. She was prone to epileptic fits which, the solicitor alleged, “had some effect on her mind, as her irritability and unreasonableness are so extreme as scarcely to be compatible with complete mental soundness.” The claim of epilepsy was a real one as the affidavit of a former servant stated she had four seizures between early January and late May 1914. This may have been exacerbated by, as she later claimed, a disease of the most “painful and revolting character” - one assumes a form venereal disease – contracted as a result of Vivian’s previous mode of life. Fillmer also reported that she frequently came into his office to complain of her husband and expressed the wish that he were dead.

It was proposed that Edward be placed in the care of William Arthur Crabtree, an Anglican priest and former missionary in East Africa, whose current parish was Coton in Cambridgeshire. He was married with a young daughter. He was lauded as having a high moral character and experience in managing boys and young men. He was the brother of one of Edward’s masters at Charterhouse. One assumes that the attempt by Mr. Crabtree to become Edward’s guardian was motivated out of genuine concern. The fact that his brother was one of the boy’s masters who saw him day to day seems to indicate this. However, it is impossible to be certain when a superior income is involved what the true aim was. The financial circumstances under which Crabtree was willing to act was an annual stipend of not less than £100 and £2 2 shillings a week in addition to board.

The affidavits in support of the custody application paint Alice as an uncaring mother. Rather than have her son return to her after his first term at Eastbourne in 1907, she attempted to arrange that he should stay at the school through his holidays. This was impossible as there would be no one at the school to care for him. A friend, Georgina Stuart-Browne, whose husband worked as a doctor at the school, had him stay with them for the first part of the vacation. Apparently this practise continued. Equally, when Edward had chicken pox in 1908, Alice attempted to foist him onto Mr. Rolleston rather than nurse him herself after they had been asked to leave the Hotel Metropole in Folkstone. During the 1913 Christmas vacation, Edward was left in the flat alone until a maid was hired in the beginning of January. He had to seek his breakfast at the local Lyon’s restaurants as his mother only made a cup of tea for herself. On New Year’s Eve, Alice and her companion Mr. Cunnah went to the Savoy Hotel, leaving Edward alone. This repeated itself for the Easter vacation when Alice went away again to Eastbourne for ten days, leaving the child alone with a maid.

Vivian had an annual income at this time of about £2000. Of this, £800 per annum was allocated to his wife after he entered Mr. Rolleston’s care. A further £200 was allocated to his son Edward for his education and care. Alice took steps in 1908 and 1913 to have Vivian removed from Mr. Rolleston’s care, both times without success. While it is clear that Vivian did not like Rolleston and complained often of him, Fillmer alleged that she was attempting to reduce his expenses so that she might have a larger allowance. Alice countered by saying that she was simply attempting to meet his wishes and to have him closer to London where she could see him more frequently. She stated that she still had considerable affection for her husband and that it pained her to see him in such a state. Given the other allegations made against her, it is hard to see that this was true.

Fillmer also alleged that Alice refused her son any “extras” offered through the schools he attended. The inference here is that Alice again wished to add the funds to her own income. Edward’s total expenses at Charterhouse totalled £140 a year which were allegedly less than any other boy in his house. Alice had also cancelled several of the extras which Edward enjoyed such as music. She responded by asserting that the full amount of Edward’s allowance was spent on him and provided a list of extras that she had permitted. She did, however, admit that she had corresponded with the school in order to reduce the extras. Dorothy Daynes, a general servant employed by Alice, recounted that Alice had left her and Edward alone over the 1914 Easter holidays with little money to spend on food and other necessities. Dorothy had to spend all her own money to ensure some form of food on the table and ultimately had to contact Alice at Eastbourne to have further money sent. She also stated that she had to give Edward her own money to allow him to see the “cinematographic entertainments”.

Dorothy Daynes also made it clear that Hugh Lupus Cunnah was living with Alice in the flat in the months leading up to the filing of the custody application. Dorothy was employed there from January 2 until May 29, 1914. During that time, the servant saw a man whom Alice represented as being the husband of her younger sister. The two had adjoining bedrooms and had pet names for each other. Based on her observations, however, it was clear that the two were “living as man and wife”. At Easter, Alice said she was going to Eastbourne with friends. Mr. Cunnah had indicated he was returning home to Cheshire. However Daynes noticed on their return that their luggage both showed signs of coming from the same room at the Grand Hotel in Eastbourne.

Cunnah was born in Chester in 1847 and was married twice. In 1881 he was a railway clerk in Richmond. The 1901 census shows him living in Saint Martin’s Lane, Westminster as the managing director of the Fireproof Partition Company together with his son Ernest, a medical student. 1911 found him living with his unmarried sister in Chester, together with his daughter Daisy. His first wife died in 1916 and he remarried a few months before his death in 1925. A scratched out portion of the affidavit attempts to portray their bond as a result Cunnah’s wife being institutionalised as well, although this seems untrue based on the censuses. He and his wife had been living separate and apart for about twenty years prior to meeting Alice but there is no indication she was in an institution. It is clear from Alice’s own testimony that she depended on Cunnah considerably emotionally, despite his being a much older man.

The affidavits paint a picture of Edward as a nervous and melancholic boy. He was not without friends as these are referred to as visiting in Mrs. Stuart-Browne’s affidavit and there were certainly those who took an interest in him. Mrs. Stuart-Browne described Edward as “over-grown” and that he was “naturally high-strung and over-wrought”. On one occasion he came to her house and sobbed. On being asked whether he was lonely or not, he responded “I will not be lonely much longer”. Dorothy Daynes had a similar view. To be fair, there were other affidavits from persons more favourable to Alice which paint a rosier picture indicating that mother and son seemed to get on and that he was happy enough with her. However, it is hard not to see in Edward a sad, lonely boy of questionable parentage - an insane, alcoholic father, whose influence before his institutionalisation must have been unstable, and a selfish, coarse, erratic mother.

Alice countered with several affidavits of her own, as well as one from a servant currently in her employ, two old friends - Fanny Searle and Florence Sharp - and her doctor. Alice's affidavits are the most interesting. She asserts that she was a good and dutiful mother who wrote to her son every week and kept his letters. She acknowledges that they ate in restaurants every night for dinner as she had only one servant and that Edward often ate his breakfast and lunch there. She also admits that she had told her son to find his breakfast at Lyon's but that this had only happened once and that normally breakfast was prepared by the servant "in the usual way." Her view of Mrs. Stuart-Browne was that she was attempting to entice Edward away from his mother because she did not have a son of her own. Alice acknowledged that Mrs Stuart-Browne was kind to Edward but that she spoiled him in an attempt to make him believe he is badly used. She dodged several of the issues around where he spent his holidays on the basis that her memory was poor, although she notes that her son told her that he was never away from her at holidays except for the time he spent with the Stuart-Browne's. She admitted the New Years Eve incident but stated that she had asked her son and he said that he did not mind at all. She did not contradict the assertion made by her former servant that she had left them with insufficient money. Equally, she admitted that Cunnah lived with her but pointed out that he was 66 years old and that their life together was "conducted on strictly moral principles" and that the inferences being made were false.

The application to have Mr. Crabtree named as Edward's guardian failed. Alice signed Edward's application to the Royal Flying Corps in 1916 and Mr. Cunnah completed the form both with educational information and a certification of his moral fitness. As Mr. Rolleston stated in his affidavit, he never saw any actual unkindness on her part but that she cowed him and "rules him more by fear than love". Equally, he stated "she has very little regard for the boy's welfare and, although she has a certain amount of affection for him, that is always put on one side when her own interest and comfort are concerned". The error of the applicants may have been to choose a complete stranger as a guardian who, however morally worthy he might have been, did not know the boy or anything of his life. The picture created by the more hostile affidavits was, allowing for embellishments, likely accurate as it was not generally contradicted – just explained away. However, even considering all of Alice's failings, this was not enough for a court to place a stranger in a mother's place. Despite this struggle, Edward's bond with Mrs. Stuart-Browne and her family was clearly a strong one and her daughter Dorothy Margaret Stuart became Edward's closest friend for the rest of his life.

Death and Estate

There are few documents which illuminate any part of Alice's life after 1916. Her relationship with Mr. Cunnah clearly ended as he remarried in 1924. She made a will dated November 23, 1923 when she was living "at present" at the Portman Hotel, Portman Street. In addition, she and Vivian swore the joint affidavit in 1927 in order to register Edward's birth under the name Davenport setting out his real father. The custody affidavits refer at several points to her poor state of health around 1914. Her final years do not seem to have been healthy ones either and she died before her husband on April 26, 1945. She was then living at 30 Glen Road, Bournemouth, away from her husband. The informant was another occupant of the property. The house itself was a large one in a

leafy Edwardian neighbourhood just up from the coast, almost certainly a rest home as her death certificate indicated lengthy, debilitating illness.

The cause of her death was a heart attack, together with epilepsy, breast cancer and urinary incontinence. She also had bed sores which can only be explained by being bed-ridden for long periods of time without the ability to move. The speed with which her death was registered – the same day – indicates that it was expected. Alice's will is very simple. She left everything to her "very dear" son Edward Vivian Davenport who was also the sole executor. Her estate was not inconsequential. Her gross estate was £8069, leaving a net estate of £7970 on which £319 15s 1d estate duty was paid. She no doubt continued to receive an allowance from her husband's income and would have, in any event, enough from her own resources to see to her needs. She was clearly no spendthrift, although her estate may have grown through years of poor health which curtailed her activities. She seems to have been quietly accumulating a fortune from her allowance which was likely her only source of money.

Her husband did not long survive her. He died at 38 Chilston Road, Tunbridge Wells on October 30, 1945. The cause of death was anaemia, heart failure and an "old mental disease – many years". Chilston Road is a small street in the western part of the town. It has been substantially redeveloped but there are several large houses still remaining which give an indication of what it must have looked like. It is unclear why he was removed from Heathside, where he had lived from at least 1920. Chilston Road may have been a palliative care facility where patients went when they could no longer care for themselves in any way. Dr. Watson was the informant on Vivian's death certificate and they would have been doctor and patient for at least 25 years. He was buried with his father at Kensal Green.

Vivian's main will was executed on February 27, 1905. He added three codicils, largely to remember servants in his employ, dated September 21, 1920, July 11, 1927 and August 28, 1928. He named as his executors his cousins Lumley Smith and Anson Vivian Squire and Horatio Ritter Fullmer, the family solicitor. In 1905 he still owned the family property in Beeby, Leicestershire and left that property in trust for his son with a life estate in the rents and profits to his wife, should she survive him. He specifically acknowledged Edward Vivian Davenport as his son regardless of the fact that he was born before his marriage. He left Edward his gold pocket watch and chain. Alice received all his personal effects, including his steam yacht "Guntin", with all her fittings and furniture. Finally he created a trust of his remaining property to pay the income to his wife or, if she predeceased him, to his children equally. If none of his children survived him, the payments were to be made to the children of his aunt Caroline Mary Squire. A separate income of £500 annually was to be carved out for his son from the income from otherwise payable to his wife together with an ability to draw other moneys for his care and education.

He left a number of specific legacies to various relatives and servants: Lumley Smith was to receive £500, Anson Vivian Squire £1250, and Leonard Lovell Squire, another cousin, £50. Other legacies were left to present and former servants: He left £500, an enormous sum, to his coachman Charles Hunt. George Bowles, the skipper on his steam yacht, was to receive £50 with smaller amounts going to others whose relation to him is not spelled out.

Caroline Mary and her husband Anson Squire (father of Anson Vivian) were to receive £3000 and £50 was to go to the Sussex County Hospital where one assumes he was already receiving treatment. Finally, as noted above, Ellen Oxenford was to receive the income of £5000 in railway stock. It is interesting that the family of his old guardians received nothing under his will. William and Susan Gregory had been dead since 1893 and 1894 respectively but they had a daughter Maud who would have been almost the same age as Vivian. It is possible that Maud was already well provided for or that their relations were not very cordial once Vivian gained control of his estate.

The 1920 codicil merely recognised that Charles Hunt had died and that his widow should receive 50 guineas. However, his current valet, John Brenchley, was to receive 10 guineas and his old governess, Sarah Odell Pearce, was given a freehold house at 32 Whippingham Road, Brighton. In 1927, he left a bracket clock to Edward Vivian and all other furniture and objects of personal or household use at Heathside to his valet, still John Brenchley, who was also to receive a legacy of £275. Finally in 1928, he revoked the trusts he had created in favour of his wife and split the income into two trusts for his wife and his son. The quality of his signature deteriorated significantly over these years which no doubt mirrors a mental and physical decline as well. In 1905 it is firm and elegant. By 1920 it had degraded but was still recognisable. The later codicils showed a considerable difficulty in writing, especially that from 1928 where the signature is little more than a scrawl.

The elaborate provisions made in his will were mostly for naught. His wife pre-deceased him by several months and most of the other beneficiaries were also dead: Anson Squire died in 1914, his wife in 1922, Ellen Oxenford in 1908, and Lumley Smith in 1918. Anson Vivian Squire and his brother Leonard Lovell were both alive at his death. It is not possible to determine whether Miss Pearce or the other servants were alive in 1945, although she was clearly alive in 1911 when she was 58. Anson Squire was the only executor able to fulfill the role as Fullmer had died in 1942. One can be fairly certain that the steam yacht was long gone as Vivian's world was reduced to a few rooms in a rest home in Tunbridge Wells. He died a very wealthy man, having seemingly largely maintained the family fortune, despite some high "irregular" living in his earlier years. His gross estate was £65,424, with a net estate of £56,538. On this a punishing tax of £13,614 was levied, obviously to pay for the War and perhaps as a result of the social views of the new Labour government which came into power on July 26, 1945.

Edward Vivian [Tinham-] Davenport (1898 – 1954)

We have already followed Edward Vivian in the early years of his life. As noted above, he was educated first at the Temple Grove School in Eastbourne from 1907 and then at Charterhouse from the beginning of 1912. At Temple Grove there were perhaps 120 other boys, with a seeming popularity among the sons of those who served in India. The school was founded in 1810 in East Sheen and occupied a house formerly owned by Sir John Temple called Temple Grove. According to the school history, it attracted the sons of the aristocracy and the

scions of the merchant class. What no doubt attracted Alice to the School was that in 1907 it left East Sheen and moved to Eastbourne, one of her favourite haunts. The curriculum seems to have been the standard fare offered by English public schools of the day – Greek, Latin and the like. However, from the alumni it produced, there seems to have been a strong literary bent. Edward's aptitude as a student was up for discussion. Dorothy Daynes in her affidavit said he was "not very quick at his school work". However, he seems to have been athletic and, as his mother noted, she always attempted during holidays to ensure that he had access to games. Mr. Cunah, who alleged, improbably, that he was a retired school master, stated in Edward's Royal Flying Corps application that his reports were good, especially in languages and that he was a good all-round athlete who had won several cups. This was corroborated by his mother who indicated that he received three cups at Eastbourne and one at Charterhouse.

Charterhouse was a much grander affair, being one of the premier public schools in England and one of nine listed in the *Public Schools Act* of 1868. It had initially been quartered in the buildings of the old Carthusian monastery in Smithfields, London which had been secularised in the 1530s. The school itself was founded in 1611 but, by the time Edward attended, it had moved to Godalming, Surrey where new buildings had been erected in high Victorian gothic style. He was at Girdlestonites ("Duckites") House and together with him at school were Robert Graves and Richard Hughes, novelists, Major-General Orde Wingate of Burma, and John Samuel Tunnard, a modernist artist, to mention only a few. The education provided there was again presumably the standard public school fare of Greek, Latin and games. He seems to have been happy at school and looked forward to it based on the affidavits filed in relation to the custody application.

World War I

Edward's war career was inglorious. He left Charterhouse School on April 6, 1916. He was then seventeen and it would have been expected, with a long war raging on, that he join the war effort. He applied to the Royal Flying Corps which was no doubt prestigious and attractive to a young, wealthy public school boy. On May 29, 1916 he applied, as Edward Vivian Tinham-Davenport, for admission. He was living with his mother at the Regent Palace Hotel in London. His mother signed the application as consenting parent as Edward was not yet of legal age. His handwriting is mature and artistic. Her handwriting, while fluent, belies a certain crudeness, betraying her no doubt less than perfect education. He had to supply a copy of his birth registration which stated his last name as Tinham. His medical state was found to be acceptable. He was 5' 10" inches tall, 130 pounds with an expanded chest of 36". Interestingly, one of the questions asked on the admission forms was whether one was of "pure European descent".

Edward was admitted into the RFC on June 4, 1916 as a second lieutenant on probation, to be gazetted on June 17. He was to report on that date to his commanding officer at Christ Church College, Oxford to be provided with instruction on aviation. He was also to supply himself with his own kit for which he would be given a credit of

£50. His performance as a flying officer was quickly determined to be unsatisfactory. In a letter to the Headquarters of the Training Brigade of the Royal Flying Corps dated August 16, 1916, the Brigadier General expressed his view that Edward should cease to receive instruction in aviation as being “unlikely to become an efficient pilot”. An attached report, prepared by a Captain F. Simpson, stated “I have taken special trouble with this officer but am convinced that he will never come up to the standard of pilots required by the R.F.C. also he shows a lack of keenness & in spite of repeated admonitions has been late for parade several times. With regard to his flying, he has done about 5 hours solo, but has crashed one machine completely & damaged two others.” This must have been a highly humiliating moment in his life as well as extremely frustrating for the RFC. One also wonders whether the turmoil of his early years did not have an impact on his belief in himself. Mrs. Stuart-Browne’s affidavit from 1914 mentioned that, in her view, his home life was “not healthy or calculated to maintain his self-respect but [is] injurious and prejudicial.”

A note in his file dated August 19, 1916 enquired whether any use could be made of Edward’s services. The reply came back on August 22 that they had no use for his services but were prepared to recommend him for the Officers Training Corps of the Artist’s Rifles for further training and gazetted with a temporary commission. Should he fail at that, he would have to serve in the ranks, a serious blow. A letter to the RFC General Command dated August 29, 1916 set this out. On September 2, 1916, Edward wrote to the commanding officer of the 27th squadron of the RFC resigning his commission “on the understanding that I will not make an efficient pilot, and also that I am to be admitted for a course of instruction in the Artists Rifles OTC prior to a temporary commission if found suitable and efficient”. He signed with a flourish Edward V. Davenport. The wording of the letter is too close to the correspondence surrounding the events for it not to have been dictated to him. His resignation was accepted on September 15 and he was informed that he should seek an interview for a further posting on September 20.

It is unclear from the file what exactly happened to him after his resignation. The *Charterhouse Register* indicates that he was a signaller in the Royal Flying Auxiliary. There are also notes in the file as late as November 4, 1918. A notation “submit to the King” from later in 1916 leads one to believe that he was granted a commission of some sort, perhaps in the Artists Rifles. While the name of this regiment seems a bit fanciful, it was in fact a serious operation. It was founded in 1859 as a result of a perceived threat of a French invasion of England by Napoleon III. It fought extensively in France and Belgium, particularly in the latter part of the War, and was present at Ypres, Passchendaele, and the Somme among other battles. The regiment had heavy losses during the War – 2,000 dead, 3,500 wounded. It continued through World War II and is active today, judging from its web site. There is also a Royal Air Force service record for an E. V. Davenport which starts on October 1, 1918. There is no further information which could connect this person with Edward beyond the initials and the fact that it was an RAF document, the successor unit to the Royal Flying Corps. The events recorded cover late 1918 into 1919. During this time the individual was based in Port Said, Egypt. He remained in the Middle East until March, 1919 at which point he was transferred to Durham for “dispersal”. The odds are that this is Edward. There are few if any E. V.

Davenports born who would have been of serviceable age around that time and it would coincide with the *Charterhouse Register's* record that Edward remained with the RAF.

The Thirties – Literary Pursuits

There is little trace of Edward in the 1920s. He would have had a decent income from his father and was a mere twenty years old at the end of the War. One hopes that he was able to enjoy life in Jazz Age London after more than his share of unhappiness. The *Charterhouse Register*, published in 1922, indicates that he was still living, presumably with his mother, at the Evelyn Mansions apartment. It is highly likely that he attended Oxford University in the mid 1920s as his name appears in an Oxford Calendar of uncertain date. It seems at this point that he took up fencing and met Sammy Cromarty-Dickson, who ran the Oxford fencing *salle*.

By 1935 he was firmly a part of the London literary scene. He worked almost exclusively with his friend Dorothy Margaret Stuart, the daughter of his old protectress Georgina Stuart-Browne. Together they edited Shakespeare's *Henry V* in 1935. This seems to have become a standard school edition of the work and many copies of it exist in libraries the world over from India to Chicago. They also authored two plays which were included in a collection of the best one act plays of 1935 and 1937. The first was called *An Interlude in Porcelain*. This was a light social "ironical" comedy where three ladies of quality interact around three vases given to a British diplomat by Madame de Pompadour. The denouement apparently only amuses one lady. In 1937, they co-wrote a further play called *The Map*, a mediaeval comedy set in fifteenth century Flanders. In 1936, they presented a radio play on the life of John Keats, based on his letters and journals for the years 1818 to 1820. A further piece was called *Brother to Rachel*, printed in the Windsor Magazine in 1936. The pair likely collaborated on other projects which have not yet been catalogued on the Internet. The tone of their works was sophisticated, rather precious and likely a bit on the intellectually light side. Both Edward and Dorothy had a keen interest in history and biography which showed in the choice of subjects for their co-productions.

Dorothy's participation in the literary world of her time was much greater. Her initial love seems to have been poetry. She won a silver medal at the 1924 Olympics at Paris for a cycle of poems on the subject of fencing called *Sword Songs*, likely a common interest for her and Edward. She seems to have left poetry fairly soon after her silver medal - perhaps just as well as her style strikes the modern ear as mannered and turgid. In relation to World War I she wrote a poem called *Mater Dolorosa*. The first two stanzas read:

What have I given thee,
England, beloved of me?
I have no gold for thy desolate,
I have no spear to guard thy gate,
My hands are weak on the harp of fate
In the hour of threnody.

Yet I have given, I;
 And, England, my gifts lie
 Far from thee and thy sacred strand.
 I have given the hand that held my hand,
 The feet that once on my palm could stand,
 The hopes I was nourished by.

A further effort, called *In the Red Dawn* contains the epic line:

Oh, my England! thou hast heard --
 Could the hearing leave thee cold ? --
 Shattered vow and shameless word,
 Bribe and menace and affront;
 Think they that thou growest old
 Since La Haie and Hougoumont?

More successfully, she was the author of a long series of histories about various personalities in British history throughout her life. These include Christina Rossetti, Horace Walpole, Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire, as well as the daughters of George III. She also wrote *Boys Through the Ages* and its companion *Girls Through the Ages*. She never married and one sees her as an elegant spinster with vast knowledge, considerable stamina and a pleasant style. Her prose writing was clearly appreciated and she was both a respected literary reviewer and editor. She worked diligently over 50 years in the literary field with considerable success and her work is still remembered today.

Edward lived most of his life in Kensington. In 1945, when he wrote his will, he lived at 59 Cromwell Road. His primary residence, however, seems to have been 7 Knaresborough Place, a few streets west of the Boltons. In his final years he lived at 162 Chatsworth Court, Pembroke Road, Kensington near the Victoria and Albert Museum. Edward's literary activity seems to have lessened after World War II, although he described himself as an author in the letters probate of his mother's will in 1945. One suspects, given the immense literary out-put of Miss Stuart and the closeness of their friendship, that she involved him in projects she found rather than them engaging in a true partnership. She had to work. He did not and he appears to have let his literary activity drop after what had been a period of some success.

Death and Estate

Edward Vivian died on July 22, 1954 in Knaresborough Place, Kensington. The causes of his death were cachexia (wasting), multiple secondary causes and anal cancer. There is not the slightest evidence that Edward married nor can one determine that he had any children – in fact, there is the inference of homosexuality in his life and interests. His will showed that he had developed close bonds in his life and he honoured these in death. He made a will dated June 11, 1945, a few weeks after the death of his mother. He inherited from her and may have made some provision for her in earlier wills which was no longer necessary. He asked his executors to collect his property and create a trust. The income of the trust was to be paid first to Louisa Booth-Knight of 3 Harrow Apartments, Grosvenor and Harrow, Winnipeg, Manitoba. It is unclear who she was or what role she had in his

life. A person by that name died at White Rock, British Columbia on August 7, 1958 who was born April 20, 1879 in West Ham, Essex. She was the widow of Thomas Charleston Knight a rather younger man who died in 1953. This is likely her – having left the brutal Manitoba winters for the relative warmth of the West Coast. After her death, the income was to be paid to his former co-author and great friend Dorothy Margaret Stuart. She died in Putney on September 14, 1963 having been born in 1889. After her death, the income would be paid to Pilot-officer Samuel Cromarty-Dickson. He was born on May 20, 1890 in Wick, Caithness and died at Littlemore, Oxfordshire on December 29, 1963 leaving a surprisingly large estate of £16,300. As Samuel Cromarty Dickson, he was one of nine children. His father was a carter. From such unlikely beginnings, he somehow became involved with fencing and is referred to as being “French-trained”. He was in partnership with a Felix Grave from the mid-20s and ran operations as fencing and dancing masters at 97 Cornwall Gardens, Kensington and the fencing *salle* at 21 George Street, Oxford. The partnership was dissolved in 1930 but, now Sammy Cromarty-Dickson, he continued on at Oxford until his retirement in the late 1950s. He would have received the trust funds for only a few months. Finally, the income was to be paid to Pierre-Louis-Georges Corne of Pandavoine a Melamere, canton de Lillebonne, Seine-Inferieure, France. Based on the clear gradation of the birth dates of his various beneficiaries, one can assume he was the youngest. He is untraceable and we have no idea of what role he played in Edward’s life – although fencing would be a likely guess. The survivor of the four was to receive the capital which we can assume was likely M. Corne.

Through a codicil dated June 11, 1954, only eleven days before his death, Edward removed the solicitors who were to act as his executors and replaced them with Lloyd’s Bank. The remainder of the changes were purely technical and did not change the arrangement he had previously made. He asked that his body be cremated but this does not seem to have been done as there is a notation on his death certificate that his friend Dorothy Stuart had collected the body to be buried.

The estate left to him by both his father and mother was greatly diminished at the time of his death. His father left him £58,810 and his mother £7749, both net, for a total of £66,559. When he died, he left an estate estimated at only £24,274 - a spectacular collapse. This could have been as a result of punitive taxation, poor management, over-consumption or inflation but there is some indication that he may have lost funds invested in the business called Allom & Cook, estate agents, of 2 Glendower Place, Kensington which he petitioned into bankruptcy in October 7, 1953. There is a brief reference in the Estates Gazette in 1950 that Messrs. Allom & Cook, of 29 Beauchamp Place, SW3, were expanding their operations to 47 Brewer Street, Piccadilly. Edward may have invested in a real estate scheme and the principals of the company absconded with his funds. There is an indication in the bankruptcy notice that their current address of the principals was unknown to him.

At the end of the day, one is left with the impression of a cultivated but diffuse man who never really found any strong direction in his life. He lived as a gentleman of his times would have, even if those times were changing rapidly. Once he got control of his own life, there is no reason to believe that he lived anything but a very pleasant existence, surrounded by interesting people and beautiful things. Of this we might feel a bit envious. However,

one cannot avoid the fact that his childhood must have been traumatic and that this could not but have scarred him in later life.

He was the last of the line of descendents of Samuel Davenport. My over-all impression of them is one of sadness. They all lived in great material comfort but the line is marked with madness, infighting and ill-use. The only member who seemed to have climbed above these detractors was Edward Gershom Davenport and he died too young to fully enjoy what he had created. What has allowed me to create this history is the rich documentation that their triumphs and excesses have left behind which at points lets us know their lives almost day by day. No doubt the future will bring further insight into the lives of this family. Given what we have found so far, one can only hope for more. It is pleasing to think that this is still a work in progress.

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SOURCES

This document has been prepared based on the original documents listed below which I have separated into document types. I have not noted every document consulted for this work as this would be more than the general reader would require. However, all facts set out here are verifiable, allowing for errors on my part. Newspaper articles, census returns and parish register entries are referred to specifically throughout the text and are not repeated here. In this regard, I would like to thank Jo Smallbon for her invaluable assistance in tracking down fleeting references to the family in the newspapers of the day as well as for her inspired deduction. I could never have found them on my own. I must equally acknowledge a large debt to the compilers of “The Descendants of Richard Davenport (c. 1545 – 1623/4) of Great Wigston in Leicestershire” and Martin R. Davenport and Colin Davenport in particular. This work permitted me to graft my own research into the larger picture that is the Davenport family and to paint – briefly - the origins of the branch discussed here. The remainder of the sources are available on-line as no traditional books or journals were consulted in the creation of this work. I am not too proud to say that I made use of Wikipedia for general information about places and institutions, Google Books for odd references to the characters of this narrative and Bing maps for the current state of neighbourhoods where the family lived. There is certainly more out there concerning this family than I have found and I remain open to suggestions.

Parish Registers

Evington, Leicestershire (supplemented by monumental inscriptions); Saint Andrew, Holborn, London; Staines, Middlesex (also supplemented by monumental inscriptions).

Marriage Licenses

Charles Davenport, April 9, 1777; Samuel Davenport, October 2, 1792; Edward Davenport January 13, 1796; Edward Oxenford, December 17, 1827; George Davenport, May 15, 1837; Samuel Davenport, August 1, 1839.

General Register Office (births, deaths and marriages 1837 – 1954)

Births

George Gershom Davenport (April 4, 1838); Frances Emily Davenport (November 3, 1864); Vivian Edward Davenport (August 11, 1870); Edward Vivian [Tinham] Davenport (August 4, 1898);

Marriages

Samuel Davenport/Sarah Weatherhead (August 6, 1839); Vivian Edward Davenpoer/Alice Maud Lavinia Tinham (November 27, 1901);

Deaths

Edward Davenport (January 30, 1844); Frances Davenport (April 23, 1845); Samuel Davenport (January

21, 1850); George Davenport (March 6, 1869); Edward Gershom Davenport (December 4, 1874); Ellen Marie Davenport (August 5, 1875); Sarah [Weatherhead] Davenport (September 28, 1877); Frances Emily Davenport (January 9, 1879); Alice Maud Davenport (April 26, 1945); Vivian Edward Davenport (October 30, 1945); Edward Vivian Davenport (July 22, 1954).

Foreign Vital Statistics Documents

Edward Gershom Davenport/Louisa Oxenford marriage British Embassy registers 1863; Oxenford, Louisa femme Davenport extrait de deces, 8^e arrondissement, Paris, July 24, 1875.

Prerogative Court of the Archbishop of Canterbury (available through National Archives site)

Daniel Butler, February 9, 1815; Samuel Davenport senior, October 22, 1834; Richard Smith, April 9, 1839; Edward Davenport, March 14, 1844; Frances [Smith] Davenport, May 27, 1846; Samuel Davenport junior, February 21, 1850.

Other Pre-1858 Probate

Ann [Airland] Davenport, Evington Peculiar Court 1758; Richard Bryan, Evington Peculiar Court, 1793; Edward Daniel Davenport, London Commissary Court, 1826; Thomas Bryan, Evington Peculiar Court, 1848.

Central Probate Registry

George Davenport, March 23, 1869; Edward Gershom Davenport, January 8, 1875; Louisa [Oxenford] Davenport, August 24, 1875; Edward Oxenford, July 30, 1877; Sarah [Weatherhead] Davenport, October 27, 1877; Ellen Oxenford, November 6, 1908; Alice Maud Lavinia [Tinhams] Davenport, July 13, 1945; Vivian Edward Davenport June 11, 1946; Edward Vivian Davenport, November 5, 1954.

Censuses, 1798 Land Tax and Apprenticeship Papers (referenced through Ancestry.com).

National Archives (London)

Pleadings in Davenport v Hinchcliffe, February 4 et seq. 1861 Reference C16/13/D9 C419843); Edward Vivian Davenport Guardianship Proceedings 1914 - Reference J 901 1890 C414173; Edward Vivian Davenport Military Service 1916 -18 - Reference WO 339 162769 C404757.

Ship Manifests (available through Ancestry.com)

Vivian Edward Davenport's voyage to San Francisco, 1894.

Newspapers

Edward Gershom Davenport Guardianship Times of London June 8, 1845; Report of Davenport v. Powell Times, July 18, 1848.

Miscellaneous Articles

Gentleman's Magazine February 8, 1838 p. 277 (George Davenport's Commission of Lunacy); Members Returned to Serve in Parliament 1874; Institute of Civil Engineers Minutes of Proceedings, vol. 41, issue 1875 pp. 225-6; Communication from the Goldsmith's Company re Davenport apprenticeships April 23, 2010; Negocios com Minas de Ouro Envolvendo Familias Nobiliarquicas do Imperio Brasil; Fabio Carlos da Silva (Edward Oxenford's career in Brazil).