

CHAPTER FIVE

Harry Mainwaring Dunstan (1841-1903)

HARRY DUNSTAN was born at 10.30am on 30 November 1841 at Chester Castle, the seventh son and youngest child of John Dunstan and his first wife Elizabeth Hillidge. Although named Henry on his birth certificate, he was known to his family and friends as Harry. His middle name was probably added at his christening (see Chapter Eight).

Unlike his elder brothers, Harry was not educated at Manchester Grammar School. His mother died when he was 16, and two years later, in September 1859, Harry started work at the Woolwich Arsenal as a temporary clerk. He made rapid progress, becoming Military Store Clerk in June 1860, and gaining promotion to Deputy Assistant Superintendent of Stores (equivalent to the rank of Lieutenant) in April 1861.

In a letter to Harry's elder brother Richard later that year, his father wrote:

"Harry is wanting to go to Canada and I am using my influence to send him out when I have told him he must be quiet for he is a most impatient fellow, not 21 yet and receiving £160 per annum with periodical increase and rank of Lieutenant".

Harry's wish was not fulfilled, perhaps due to the outbreak of the American Civil War, and he remained at Woolwich.

Harry married Louisa Ellen Heritage on 30 November 1865 at St. Nicholas Church, Brighton. Louisa was the daughter of George Heritage, an Islington solicitor; her brother was a colleague of Harry's in the Military Store. Four days after the wedding, Harry sailed to Gibraltar with his regiment. He was promoted to Assistant Commissary in 1870 and his first son, Hugh, was born the same year. Two further sons were born in Gibraltar; Percy in 1871 and Frank in 1872.



HARRY MAINWARING DUNSTAN



PERCY MAINWARING
DUNSTAN



FRANK
MAINWARING
DUNSTAN

In 1874, Harry and his family returned to England, and in August of that year, Harry was transferred to the Ordnance Store Establishment at Aldershot. A daughter, Mabel, was born there in 1875, and later that year Harry was promoted to Deputy Commissary (equivalent to the rank of Captain). In 1877 a fourth son, *Bernard Dunstan*, was born.



MABEL L. DUNSTAN

Taken in Paris in 1895

Harry retired from the army on 1 November 1880 with a pension of £20 per month. At the time, he was living with his family, children's governess and servant in West Dulwich. In February 1882, Harry elected to exchange his pension for a lump sum of £3420 15s 6d. Shortly afterwards, he moved to a newly built house in Gipsy Hill, where his wife died in 1883.

Harry maintained an office in the City of London, and became involved with an unsuccessful gold mining venture in South Africa. He appears to have been socially connected with Baroness Burdett-Coutts. My cousin Valerie remembers a photograph of Harry taken with the Baroness, and I have discovered that Harry was a signee on a trustee account opened with Coutts & Co in 1883.

On 30 November 1893 Harry married Lucy Mary Hollocombe in a Catholic church in Kensington. Lucy was born in Rio de Janeiro, daughter of businessman John Hollocombe and his Brazilian wife. Witnesses to the wedding were Lucy's brother John Christiano Hollocombe and the French baron Eugene Oppenheim. It is possible that Harry and Lucy's brother were business associates (John was a banker in the City). Baron Oppenheim was involved at the time in a dubious business venture in South Africa. He had set up a company to build a railway line to the Selati gold fields in the Transvaal Republic. Within three days, Oppenheim had farmed out the contract and made a profit of £500,000. Oppenheim, his brother and their lawyer were jailed by a Belgian court in 1900 for falsifying accounts.

In July 1896, Lucy petitioned for divorce on the grounds of Harry's adultery with Florence Mary Speight, 30 years his junior and the daughter of a wool merchant who later became Mayor of Bradford. Harry and Florence had a son, Guy Mainwaring, born in September 1896. Lucy moved to Paris, where she lived until her death in November 1946.

Harry's divorce from Lucy became absolute in July 1897, and he married Florence the following December at Kensington Registry Office.

In January 1898, Harry made his last will and testament, naming Florence as sole executrix and beneficiary.

Harry died on 4 June 1903 in Fulham, aged 61. The following year, Florence married Michael Morton, a dramatic author. Probate of Harry's will was granted to Florence in 1910. The lengthy period of probate suggests that the will may have been contested by Harry's family.

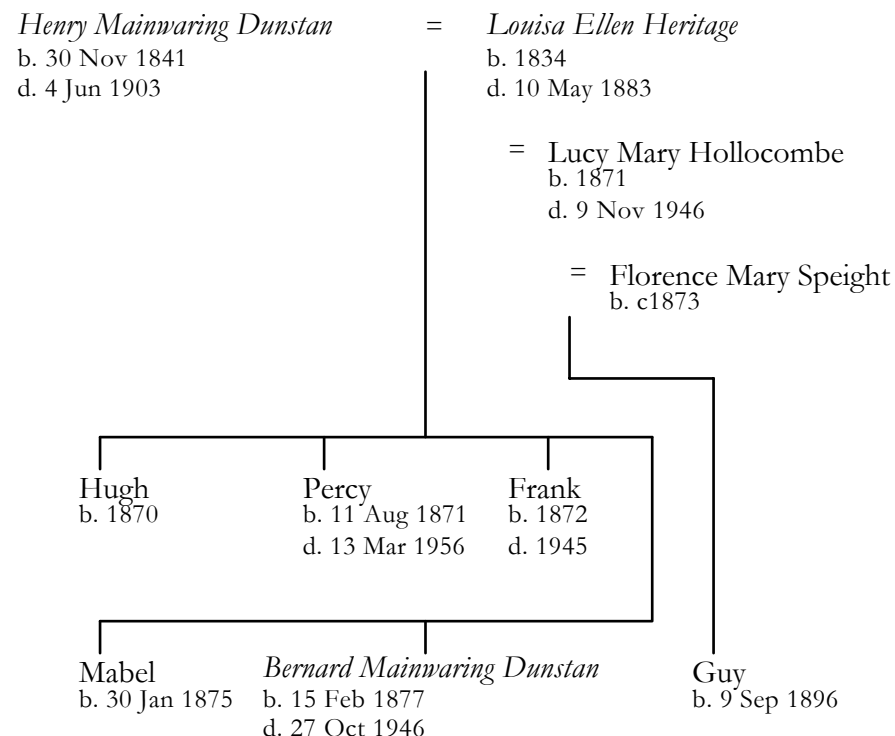
Little is known of Hugh, other than that he married Ada Pritchard in Wandsworth in 1904.

Percy was educated at a preparatory school in Barnes, and Dulwich College. He went to Freidberg University with his brother Hugh, but they had to return when financial difficulties arose at home. My cousin Valerie believes that this was connected with the aftermath of the Jamieson Raid in South Africa, suggesting that Harry was engaged in business activities there. (It is interesting to note that Ernest Oppenheimer, a founder of de Beers, was born at Freidberg, and in 1896 was working in a diamond merchants office in London). Percy married Edith Hayward in 1897, and they had two daughters, Vera and Eileen. Edith died in 1908. Percy enlisted into the Army Pay Corps in 1914, and transferred to the Royal West Kent Regiment a year later as Company Quartermaster Serjeant. In 1916 Percy married May Hanman. They had a son, Peter, and a daughter Valerie. Percy was commissioned as 2nd Lieutenant in the Royal Army Service Corps in 1917 and promoted to Lieutenant in 1918. He completed his service in 1922, after which he became a clerical officer with the Inland Revenue. Percy died in Battersea, London in 1956.

Frank joined the staff of Cobb and Co.'s bank in Margate, Kent in 1890. The bank later became a branch of Lloyds, and Frank retired in 1937 having risen to the position of cashier. In 1897, Frank was gazetted a Captain in The Buffs (a Territorial Army regiment). During WW1 Frank served in India and Aden. He was awarded the Territorial Decoration in 1918, and was appointed lieutenant-colonel in 1919. Frank died a bachelor in Margate in 1945.

I have heard stories that Mabel became a nun in France, and she may also have been a missionary in South America. I believe that she may have been influenced by her stepmother Lucy, who was a Catholic with family connections in South America. I have found no trace of her death, in this country or abroad.

Guy changed his surname to Morton when his mother remarried. He became an author and playwright, writing under his own name and a pseudonym (Peter Traill). He also co-wrote a number of books with his father.



Captain H. M. Dunstan

HARRY MAINWARING DUNSTAN AND HIS FAMILY