

The Graylingwell Stuarts



Stained glass windows. Photo by Emily Lovell

On the far (eastern) wall of the Chapel as you enter it, just above where the Altar would have been, you will see three stained glass windows.

These honour three brothers, Walter, Arthur and Charles Stuart, who all died in tragic circumstances at the beginning of the 20th century.

What do we know of them and their family and why are they honoured in Graylingwell's Chapel?

The three brothers were of Irish heritage. Their father was Burleigh Stuart (1823-1905) an Officer in the Royal Tyrone Fusiliers and their mother (Burleigh's second wife) was Charlotte (née Ellis) (1843-1931) of Dublin.

Burleigh was the son of Andrew Stewart (Stewart and Stuart seemed to be interchangeable spellings at the time) and the grandson of the First Earl of Castle Stewart, an Irish peerage created in 1800. This means the three brothers were the great grandsons of the First Earl although not in line to inherit the title.

The Earldom still exists. The seventh Earl, Arthur, succeeded to the title in 1921. He was an MP and married to Eleanor Guggenheim, the eldest daughter of Solomon Guggenheim (the American businessman, art collector and philanthropist) and Irene Rothschild.

The eighth Earl, also Arthur, was born in 1928 and succeeded in 1961. However tragedy had again struck the family as he succeeded to the title as a result of the death of his

two older brothers in the Second World War. Sadly, he died in November 2023 at the age of 95 whilst this display was being finalised. His son, Andrew, has succeeded to the peerage and is now the ninth Earl. He is, obviously, a very distant cousin of the three brothers.

Recently, using DNA testing, it has been proved that the family is directly related to one of Robert the Bruce's generals, Walter Stewart, who fought at the Battle of Bannockburn. He was a descendant of King Robert II of Scotland who reigned between 1371 and 1390.

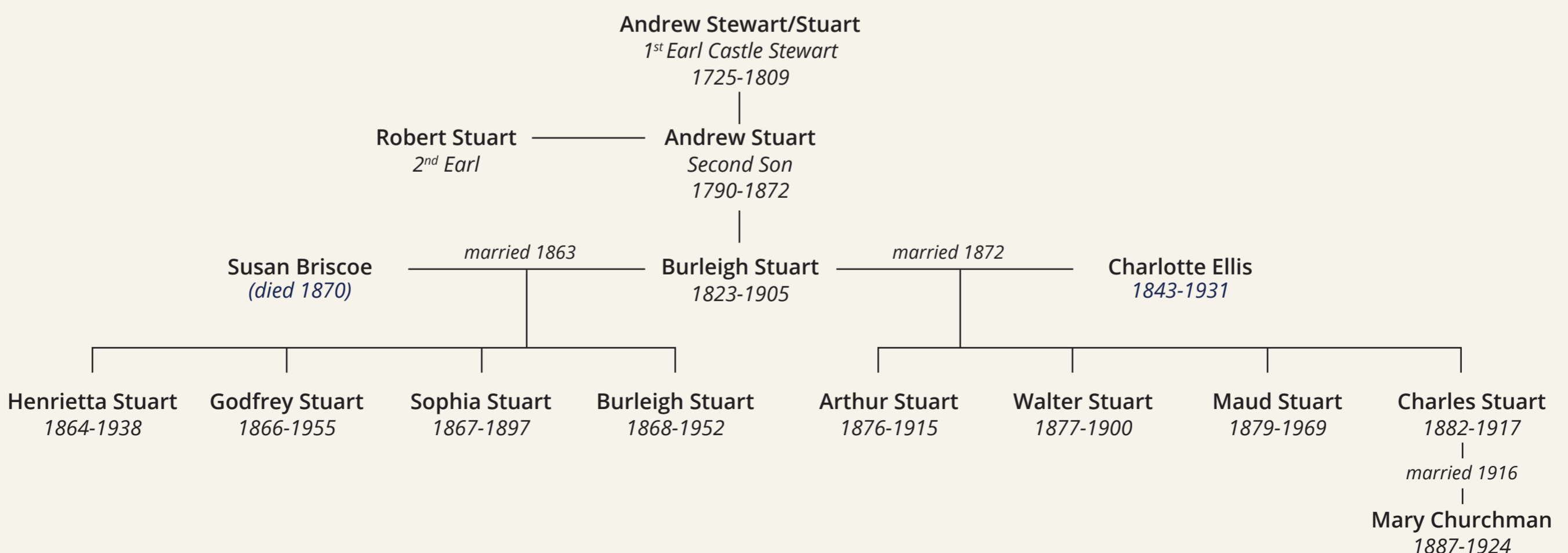
The brothers had a sister, Maud, and she and their mother Charlotte survived the First World War and Maud devoted the rest of her life to charitable works, as we mention later.

Burleigh and his first wife, Susan, had four children who in turn had a number of children, some of whom Maud kept in touch with until her death.



Stuart family crest (with thanks to the present Earl of Castle Stuart)

Family tree





Sketch of Walter



Walter's war memorial
(with thanks to Hugh Bland)

Walter Ochiltree Stuart (1877-1900)

Lieutenant, Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers

Killed in action at Pieters Hill, South Africa February 23rd 1900 aged 22

At the time of Walter's death, the UK was in a conflict for supremacy with the Boers in South Africa. The Boers were of Dutch descent and mainly Afrikaans-speaking farmers who had surprised the British Army with their fighting prowess. They had laid siege to Ladysmith, and previous battles to lift the siege had resulted in embarrassing defeats for the British.

The battle in which Walter was killed, alongside his Commanding Officer, was also an unsuccessful one to capture one of the strategically important hills near Ladysmith. It is reported that Walter's Regiment lost nearly three quarters of its officers and over one quarter of its other ranks on 23rd February 1900. However, this battle laid the ground for the successful lifting of the siege on 28th February 1900.

Walter is honoured in a war memorial at the foot of Harts Hill (the actual Battle of Pieter's Hill took place a few days after Walter's death so it is debatable why his inscription suggests otherwise).

At the time, slides of the battles were produced for use in magic lanterns, so it is easy to imagine that such slides were shown on the lantern in the display case near the entrance to the Chapel.



Magic lantern slide

Walter's middle name of Ochiltree is interesting. The Scottish title of Lord Ochiltree was held by the Stuart family until the 17th century and the DNA testing referred to above may enable the family to re-instate the title.

Arthur Knox Stuart (1876-1915)

To the glory of God and in loving memory of Arthur Knox Stuart for seven years medical officer at Graylingwell Hospital died from an accident March 9th 1915 aged 39 and of his two brothers.

Arthur started work at Graylingwell in 1907 and worked alongside the first Medical Superintendent at the time, Dr Harold Kidd, about whom there are other records in the Chapel. Dr Kidd also has a stained glass window in his honour, to the left of the three brothers' windows.

In Kelly's Directory of the time (this was a Trade Directory which listed all businesses and tradespeople in a particular city or town together with details of local gentry, landowners, charities and other facilities) Arthur is shown as number three at Graylingwell so clearly he was a senior member of staff.

It is tragic that his family probably thought he was safe from harm during the First World War (Graylingwell was an Army Hospital during the War and presumably Arthur was exempted from Army duties. Dr Kidd was made a Lieutenant Colonel but there is no evidence so far that Arthur was awarded an Army Rank).

However, he was not safe. He was a very sporty individual and on 23rd February 1915 (15 years to the day after his brother Walter's

death) he set out on his motor cycle to play golf in Littlehampton. He didn't make it. He was involved in a road traffic accident near Eartham and suffered serious injuries. As a doctor he must have realised how badly injured he was as he was recorded as saying to Dr Kidd that he was afraid he was "done for". His right leg was amputated at the knee joint on 5th March but he never recovered from the shock and died four days later.

His Inquest was held in the Concert Hall at Graylingwell and a verdict of Accidental Death was recorded. His coffin was then taken to the Chapel (described as a "beautiful Church" in the newspaper report of the time) where his funeral service ("an impressive ceremony") was held attended by his mother Charlotte, his sister Maud, his brother Charles and a half brother and a half sister from his father's first marriage together with a great number of Graylingwell staff, local dignitaries, friends and acquaintances.

He was later buried in Portfield cemetery, Chichester.

His sister Maud obtained letters of administration to his estate.

DR. STUART'S SAD DEATH.
STORY OF HOW THE ACCIDENT HAPPENED.
JURY AND CHAUFFEUR'S INDISCRETION.
IMPRESSIVE FUNERAL SCENE.

Nearly four hours were occupied on Thursday in the investigation of the circumstances which led to the sad death of Dr. Francis Arthur Knox Stuart, senior assistant medical officer at the Graylingwell Hospital, recorded in our last week's issue.

The inquiry was held in the concert hall of the Asylum, the Coroner, Mr. J. W. Loader Cooper, conducting, and the foreman of the jury, composed chiefly of Chichester tradesmen, was Mr. E. Fogden.

After viewing the body, the jury were allowed to inspect Dr. Pearson's motor car, which came into collision with Dr. Stuart's motor cycle and side car.

Expressions of Sympathy.

In opening, the Coroner said that though all those inquiries called for sympathy with the families, it was not infrequent that that sympathy was not expressed, but in view of the position that Dr. Stuart held there and in the city, and his having been well-known, and having also appeared before them at inquiries of that character he thought he probably be expressing their views when he expressed to the relatives and to his fellow officers and to the patients who would miss his ministrations, their deep and respectful sympathy. He had been there a considerable time—long enough for everyone connected with him to know his work—and he was generally liked and beloved by everyone with whom he came into contact.

Mr. Hickson, who appeared for Dr. Pearson and his chauffeur, added their sympathy and regret.

Mr. E. H. Blaker, Clerk to the Visiting Committee of the Asylum, who appeared on behalf of the Committee and also of the relatives of Dr. Stuart, took the opportunity of saying how deeply the Committee deplored his death, and how very much they had always valued his services. He also expressed the sympathy of the Committee with the family in their great bereavement.

Dr. H. A. Kidd, the Medical Superintendent

Extract from Arthur's inquest report



Photo of Charles (with thanks to the Master and Fellows of Trinity College, Cambridge for this image)



Charles's headstone at Varennes Cemetery

Charles Erskine Stuart (1882-1917)

Fellow of Trinity College Cambridge. Captain, Suffolk Regiment. Died of wounds in France March 15th 1917 aged 34.

Charles was the youngest of Burleigh and Charlotte's children. He was very academically gifted and you will see a depiction of Wisdom at the bottom of his window.

He had a brilliant career at Cambridge, winning a scholarship on entrance and later winning the Craven Scholarship two years running (this was to research the ancient Greek and Roman languages; there are several of his learned papers still online).

He joined the paid staff and lectured on Classics.

He was a member of the Territorial Army, Suffolk Regiment, and on the outbreak of the First World War in 1914 was sent to fight, with the rank of Captain. At one stage he served in the Bicycle Regiment which may seem odd now but often then a bicycle was better than horses or vehicles to travel around on to obtain information about the surrounding countryside.

We have not, so far, been able to establish what Battle Charles was wounded in but he died a few days later on 15th March 1917

in the "47 Casualty Clearing Station" and is buried in the War Cemetery at Varennes, France.

As an interesting aside, the last Tsar of Russia (Nicholas II) abdicated on 15th March 1917.

Charles had married only in December 1916. His bride was Mary Churchman and she was the daughter of Sir Albert Churchman MP. He later became the First Baron Woodbridge and helped found British American Tobacco which is a company still trading today. He was a senior officer in Charles's Territorial Regiment and one can imagine him sizing Charles up as a future son-in-law.

At the time of Charles's death, the Military Authorities would write to the family of a deceased serviceman asking what personal inscription they would like on the headstone. Sadly, the letter to Mary was returned marked 'not known' so Charles did not have any inscription other than his name, Regiment and date of death.

His sister Maud obtained probate to his estate.

Maud Erinvine Stuart (1879-1969)

So, by the end of the First World War, Charlotte and Maud had lost their closest family.

Following the end of the War, they instructed Heaton, Butler & Bayne (a firm founded in 1862) to produce and install the stained glass windows in Graylingwell Chapel in honour of Walter, Arthur and Charles. Clearly the connection with Graylingwell was through Arthur but it is interesting to speculate if there was any closer connection which prompted them to choose the Chapel. We do not know how much the windows cost but the windows depicting the Saints at the opposite end of the Chapel cost £235 which does seem remarkably good value even for a hundred plus years ago.

The windows were dedicated by the Bishop of Lewes at a service in the Chapel in February 1919.

In the 1921 Census, Charlotte and Maud are shown as living in Holland Park, London.

Maud spent the rest of her life performing charitable works for disabled servicemen. She became Honorary Secretary of the

Disabled Soldiers' Embroidery Industry. This was a charity set up as a commercial industry to sell embroidery created by disabled servicemen. The gentle movements involved with embroidery exercised muscles and calmed the mind. The charity was instrumental in the revival of embroidery in the 20th century. Examples of its work could be found in Buckingham Palace (it probably still exists) and on the original Queen Mary Liner (again, this probably still exists as the Liner is docked permanently in Long Beach, Los Angeles).

The Charity had been co-founded in 1918 by Ernest Thesiger who was a very famous actor of the time.

Maud was awarded an MBE in the 1960s for her charitable work and died in a nursing home in Kingston-on-Thames in 1969 aged 90. What is comforting is that she left her estate mainly to her relations by her father's first marriage so she must have been, one hopes, in regular contact with them throughout her life.



DSEI Emblem

Maud Stuart in 1921								
1921 Census of England and Wales								
33, Clarendon Road, Kensington, London & Middlesex, England								
Household members (7 people)								
First name(s)	Last name	Relationship to head	Sex	Birth year	Age in years	Birth Place	Occupation	Employer
Charlotte	Stuart	Head	Female	1842	78	Dublin, Dublin, Ireland	-	-
Maud	Stuart	Daughter	Female	1879	41	Tyrone, Ireland	-	-
Ada	Parry-Cox	Visitor	Female	1846	75	Seaforth, Lancashire, England	-	-
Ethel	Parry-Cox	Visitor	Female	1876	45	Southampton, Hampshire, England	-	-
Mary Anne	Gair	Visitor	Female	1847	74	Richmond, Surrey, England	Ladies Maid	Private
Isabella	Ramsay	Servant	Female	1843	78	Leith, Midlothian, Scotland	Lady's Maid	Private
Mabel	Fairbrother	Servant	Female	1885	36	Sussex, England	Cook General	Private

Extract from 1921 census