



THE ST CLAIR FAMILY OF DORMANS LAND

This branch of the St Clair family, whose ancestors came from Scotland and were probably related to the St Clairs of Rosslyn, had a strong association with the village of Dormans Land and its surrounding area, which it seems was preferable to that of Staverton, Gloucestershire, Staverton Court being their family seat.

They were a prominent family in the area from the mid 19th century to the mid 20th, during this time they became owners of several properties. In Felcourt they owned Felcourt Lodge and in Dormans Land, The Beacon, Farindons, Beacon Cottage, Apsley Farm and Apsley Cottage, Farthingdale Farm, Quakers Platt Farm, Rosslyn Cottage, Little Farindons, Starborough Cottages and Charlocks which was the gardeners cottage to The Beacon in the 19th century. The family donated one of their fields, on Apsley Town Farm, to the village for use as a cricket ground, it is called the St Clair Field and has been the home to the Dormans Land Cricket Club ever since. The St Clair's also helped to provide a Mission Chapel with a social room for the men working on the construction of the railway during the early 1880s. Shortly after a Mission Hall was built next to Starborough Cottages, in the St Clair field, to leave the Mission Chapel free for religious services, the hall was renamed the Dormans Land Institute and for many years was the hub for village entertainment. The Parish Room was another gift to the community.

In the late 1800s their carriage driver was a Mr Steel whose family was provided with a cottage which now overlooks the railway line at Dormans Station. In 1896 Farthingdale farmhouse, known as 'Clergy Rest', was rented as a 'home of rest for overworked and retired Clergy', this accommodation was replaced by the building of the nearby Homes of St Barnabas which was opened on the 15th June 1901. Farthingdale's land covered the area across to Hollow Lane and down to St Clair Cottages, the row of ten houses built by Godstone Rural District Council in Hollow Lane in 1929, which were named after the family. The St Clairs permitted villagers to use a strip of land adjoining Hollow Lane for use as allotments, this continued for many years up until 1955, when further land was purchased by the council to build the New Farthingdale estate. The Gloucestershire village of Staverton also has a row of council houses which are called St Clair Cottages.

Audrey St Clair, who passed away on the 13th November 1971, was the last surviving member of the family to live in the area.

Colonel James Pattison St Clair was the first member of this family to live in the Lingfield area. Being the eldest son of Colonel William St Clair of the 25th Royal Borderers, he served as a Colonel in the Royal Regiment of Artillery. In 1830 he

married Susannah, daughter of Sir Thomas Edward Mitchell Turton, Baronet, of Felcourt in Surrey. Living at Felcourt Lodge they had one child, Rosabella Mary Elizabeth. James died in January 1867, aged 87, and is buried at Lingfield.

Captain David Latimer St Clair, James Pattison's younger brother, whose residence was Staverton Court, the family seat, became a Captain in the Royal Navy. He was a knight of the sword, JP and Deputy Lieutenant. He was born on the 8th May 1784 and married on the 13th April 1819 to Elizabeth Isabella, daughter of John Farhill of Chichester. He died on the 24th November 1861. Having no children, he left Staverton Court to his nephew James Louis St Clair. Elizabeth died on the 30th October 1851 aged 55. They are both buried in Staverton churchyard, where their grand monuments, standing side by side, are known locally as 'Salt and Pepper', due to their square, pot like shape.

Rosabella Mary Elizabeth St Clair, the daughter of James Pattison St Clair was baptised at Lingfield parish church on the 2nd July 1835. In 1887 she was living at Rosslyn Cottage, off West Street in Dormans Land. She never married and died on the 15th October 1905. (*Presumably the house was named after Rosslyn in Scotland, an area which had strong connections with the St Clair family.*)

James had three sons from a previous marriage to Charlotte, daughter of Michael Head of Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada. They were William Augustus, James Louis and David John.

Colonel William Augustus St Clair, the first son of James Pattison St Clair, was born in Halifax, Nova Scotia on the 8th October 1811. He received military training at the East India Company Cadet College, in Addiscombe, Surrey from 1825 to 1827. William joined the Bombay Horse Artillery and was Commissioned as 2nd Lieutenant on the 15th June 1827 and Lieutenant on the 28th May 1833. He was engaged in the Afghanistan campaign of 1838-39 and present at the storm and capture of Ghuznee on the 23rd July 1839; at Kabul on the 7th August 1839 and at Kujjuck on the 20th February 1841 (Medal). In 1846 he married Emma, daughter of George Crawshay of Colney Hatch, Middlesex. He retired from the East India Company's service as Captain in February 1851 and in that year purchased The Beacon estate in Dormans Land and nearby Farindons in 1853. He joined the Artillery Battalion of the Royal Sussex Artillery Militia as Captain on the 10th May 1853; became Hon. Major in 1854 and Lt Col Commandant on the 2nd May 1861 and subsequently served for another 18 years as Colonel Commandant. He lived at The Beacon until his death on the 8th January 1879. Emma died on the 1st October 1909.

Lieutenant James Louis St Clair JP, HEICS (CB, CMC), the second son of James Pattison St Clair, was born in Halifax, Nova Scotia on the 10th September 1816. He was educated at Cambridge University, Corpus Christi College. He became a Commissioned Ensign in the 17th Madras Native Infantry in 1838 and made Lieutenant on 3rd Oct 1840. He served as an officer for the East India Company Service, retiring on the 10th November 1849. He married Juliet daughter of George Crawshay of Colney Hatch, Middlesex on the 28th June 1848. His residence was Staverton Court, Gloucestershire but he would often stay at Farindons with his wife Juliet and their three sons, James Latimer Crawshay, David Farhill and William

Augustus Edmund and two daughters, Charlotte Elizabeth Louise and Juliet Matilda who was a member of St John's Parochial Church Council in the 1920s. James passed away on the 31st August 1886 aged 69 and Juliet on the 8th November 1877 aged 53. Their lives are celebrated on a stained glass window in St John's Church, Dormans Land.

Captain David John St Clair, the third son of James Pattison St Clair of Felcourt Lodge, was born on the 18th September 1819. He received military training at the East India Company Cadet College, Addiscombe, Surrey from 1837 to 1839. Commissioned 11th June 1839, Ensign, 13th Bombay Native Infantry, made Lieutenant in 1841 and Captain in 1850, but resigned in India on the 1st June 1856. He married Harriet Anne Bond at Karachi, 4th Sept. 1845. He died at Chadarghat, Hyderabad, 4th June 1866.

James Latimer Crawshay St Clair CB 1906; CMG 1900; psc The first son of James Louis St Clair, born 16th October 1850. He entered the Army in 1871 and served as executive officer to a Battalion Commander in the 91st Argyllshire Highlanders, attending the Zulu war in 1879, receiving a medal with clasp. He became a Major in the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders and attended the Egyptian war in 1882, receiving a medal, and in South Africa from 1899 to 1902, receiving 2 medals. He became Deputy Judge Advocate at Headquarters from 1896-9 and again 1902-7. He was made Colonel in 1899 and retired in 1907. He married Ethel Mary daughter of Henry Grey Philpott of Brighton, on the 17th July 1889 at St John's Church, Dormans Land. He inherited Staverton Court from his father, but presumably preferring Dormans Land, took up residence at Beacon Cottage with his wife Ethel and children William Farhill and Audrey. In the 1920s he was at St John's Church and was Parish Warden. He was a barrister-of-law at Lincoln's Inn. He died on the 7th January 1940, aged 89, and his wife died on the 29th January 1944, aged 83.

David Farhill St Clair The second son of James Louis St Clair, was born on the 18th August 1852. He lived at Farindons and died unmarried on the 30th May 1901. Records state that he was living at Farindons in 1887. His life is celebrated on a stained glass window in St John's Church, Dormans Land.

William Augustus Edmund St Clair JP, CMG, The third son of James Louis St Clair, was born on the 18th August 1854. Educated at private school at the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich he entered the Royal Engineers in 1873 becoming a Lieutenant Colonel, but served as a Brevet Colonel. He served in the Afghan war in 1880, receiving a medal; in Soudan in 1885, receiving Suakin medal with clasp and bronze star, and the South African war in 1902, receiving the Queen's medal with four clasps. William retired in 1905 but then was re-employed in 1914-18 as a commanding officer in the Royal Engineers, Dublin District. He was awarded the CMG in 1918 and stood as JP for Surrey. In 1886 he married Louise, daughter of Walter Crawshay of Le Chasnay, Fourchambault, Nièvre, France, they had one child, Doreen. He later inherited The Beacon from his uncle William Augustus. He died on the 12th September 1923, aged 69, and Louise died on the 23rd September 1950. (*Was Col in 1878, Kelly's*) (*Brevet – a commission which entitles an officer to an honorary rank in the army above his actual rank.*)

Charlotte Elizabeth Louise St Clair The first daughter of James Louis St Clair was born in 1850 in Muswell Hill, Middlesex. She died unmarried on the 2nd April 1901. Her life is celebrated on a stained glass window in St John's Church, Dormans Land.

Juliet Matilda St Clair The second daughter of James Louis St Clair. She died unmarried on the 31st March 1945 aged 87. In 1933 she was living at Farindons.

William Farhill St Clair The son of James Latimer Crawshay St Clair was born on the 12th May 1890. He was a Captain and later made Major serving in the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders. William married Mary Joan Bernice Hutcheson, spinster of the parish of Nutley, Sussex, at St John's, Dormans Land in 1931. He lived at Little Farindons in Mutton Hill, Dormans Land. He served as a Trustee for the Dormans Land Memorial Club during the 1950s. William died on the 8th October 1967 at his residence, 17 Onslow Road, Hove, Sussex, aged 77.

Audrey Bay St Clair The daughter of James Latimer Crawshay St Clair was born on the 9th March 1894 and was known locally as Miss Bay St Clair. She suffered from polio in her 30s and was forced to give up living at Beacon Cottage for a more manageable residence, living in a new bungalow which was purposely built for her in the grounds of Beacon Cottage which she called 'Skeddaway'. It was said that she chose the name Skeddaway, as her family originated from there. She never married and passed away on the 13th November 1971. She was the last surviving member of the St Clair family to live in the area. Her life is celebrated on a stained glass window in St John's Church, Dormans Land.

Doreen St Clair The only child of William Augustus Edmund St Clair. It is recorded that she owned and lived at The Beacon in 1933.

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Sources:

Burke's Landed Gentry

The History of the Homes of St Barnabas

Dormans Land Parish Records

Lingfield Parish Records

Census returns

RH7 Factsheet 'Local Servants and Officers in the Indian Army' by Janet Bateson (re: Captain David John St Clair)