



# FACTsheet 14

## Lucy Cavendish

Lady Lucy Caroline Lyttleton was born on 5th September 1841. She was one of 12 children of Mary Glynne and George Lyttleton, 4th Baron Lyttleton. She grew up on the family estate at Hagley, Worcestershire. Her mother's sister married William Ewart Gladstone, who served as Prime Minister for the United Kingdom over a collective period of twelve years.

In 1863, Lucy became Maid of Honour to Queen Victoria. A year later she married Lord Frederick Cavendish, the second son of the 7th Duke of Devonshire.

Lucy kept a detailed journal for over twenty years. The journal indicates that she spent a lot of time with her uncle, William Ewart Gladstone, whom she held in great esteem. It also demonstrates that Lucy had a keen interest in politics, to the extent that she would sneak into the House of Lords to listen to proceedings that were important to her.

In May 1882, Prime Minister William Gladstone appointed Lucy's husband Frederick as Chief Secretary for Ireland. Within a few hours of being sworn in, he was assassinated in Phoenix Park, Dublin.



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The accounts from friends accompanying Lucy's journals reveal her distress and crippling grief upon hearing the news of her husband's death. Gladstone invited her to spend time with him and his wife in Orme View, Penmaenmawr after the funeral. She accepted the invitation and stayed for three weeks. Orme View was later the site of the Rogark Doll Factory and it is now known as Penholm.

Throughout her life, Lucy held strong views about the need for the education of girls.

*"We went to Bradford, where I had to declare a Girls' Day Grammar-School open; the 1st of the sort, inasmuch as it has an endowment of £200 clawed from the boys' education by the Endowed Sch. Commn. It has made a famous start, with over 160 pupils."*

3rd October, 1875

In 1894, Lucy became a member of the Royal Commission on Secondary Education. Lucy Cavendish College, Cambridge was named after her in the 1960s, because of the work she had undertaken to promote the cause of women's education.

There is no evidence that Lucy continued her journals after her husband's death, and we don't know if she ever returned to Penmaenmawr.

