

THE TRELAWNY POCKET WATCH

James Day

On the 9th June 2010 a pocket watch came up for auction in a sale of fine watches at Bonhams of New Bond Street. I had known about this watch for some years and it was by sheer chance that I had learned of the impending sale. Although I put in a bid for the watch, it sold for way outside my price bracket.

As a watch it was not particularly interesting. It had been made by Le Roy and Fils of Paris around 1870. What made it interesting was an enameled coat of arms on the back of the case. In fact there were three coats of arms on the watch. The shield was impaled, that is to say divided down the middle, showing the husband's arms on the dexter or right hand side (as one would hold the shield) and the wife's arms on the sinister or left hand side. This arrangement of arms can only be used during the lifetime of the wife, so immediately the arms tell the story of a marriage between two families. The husband's arms on the dexter side are quartered showing one coat of arms in the first and third quarters and a second coat in the second and fourth quarters, thus telling yet another story.

The watch belonged originally to my great great grandfather, Harry Brereton Trelawny, who was born in 1791. In 1818 he married Caroline Escourt Monke, therefore the arms in question are those of Trelawny-Brereton on the dexter side and Monke on the sinister. Harry and Caroline were married for just over 50 years, until Harry's death in 1869. So the watch was probably a golden wedding anniversary present from Caroline to Harry in 1868.

Let us examine the arms in more detail and the story that they have to tell. The Trelawny arms, (*Argent a Chevron Sable between three Oakleaves*



Vert), first and third quarters, are those of the old established Trelawny family who originally came from Altarnun in Cornwall. Their ancestry is traced back in Burke to the General Survey of William the Conqueror in 1086. The arms show an augmentation of three oak leaves granted by Henry V to a certain Sir John Trelawny, together with a pension of £20.00 per year, for military services rendered at the battle of Agincourt in 1415. It is said that there was once a statue of Henry over the great gate into Launceston with an inscription which read:

*He that would do ought for me
Let him love well Sir John Tirlawnee*

Harry Brereton Trelawny was the eldest son of Charles Trelawny, a colonel in the Coldstream Guards, and Mary Hawkins, his wife. Charles's father had been a second son of the main Trelawny line. Second or later sons could not expect to inherit money or estates and therefore had to make their own way in the world, and succeeding generations of this branch of the family had opted for careers in the army. Charles, however, had managed to restore the family fortunes by marrying an heiress, Mary Hawkins, the only sister of Sir Christopher Hawkins Bt, the owner of the magnificent estate and house of Trewithen in Cornwall. Sir Christopher was member of parliament for Mitchell, a 'rotten borough' where he had pulled down half the houses in order to secure a more manageable electorate of five voters!



Trewithen Estate

Charles Trelawny had another stroke of luck. In 1800 he inherited the estate of Shotwick Park in Cheshire from a remote cousin, Owen Salusbury Brereton, a wealthy antiquary and MP, whose five children had died. Owen had left the estate to his cousin, Charles Trelawny, on condition that Charles took the name and arms of Brereton, (*Argent two Bars Sable*), thus ensuring the continuity of name of this ancient family. The arms reflect this generous legacy by being quartered with the arms of Trelawny as described above and Charles Trelawny became Charles Brereton Trelawny. A small addition to the Brereton arms, the crescents on the arms and crest, show that Owen Brereton was himself a second son, - a crescent being a cadency mark which indicates a second son - of Thomas Brereton and Mary Trelawny.



Shotwick Park

It was this situation that Harry Brereton Trelawny inherited on the death of his father in 1820. Being the eldest son he inherited Shotwick Park and by his marriage to Caroline Monke in 1818 he was entitled to impale his arms with those of her family (*Gules a Chevron between three Lions heads erased Argent*). Her father was Captain George Paris Monke RN who was descended from the

famous Monck (Monk, Monke) family that includes General Monck, the restorer of the monarchy after the civil war. He entered the navy in June 1775 as a Midshipman aged about 14 on board the *Worcester* 64 guns, Captain Mark Robinson.

Captain Mark Robinson must have had a good reputation because when Nelson returned from the West Indies in September 1776 he was appointed to the *Worcester* as fourth lieutenant, although officially still a Midshipman. Nelson, then aged 17, was treated with considerable care as his uncle, Captain Maurice Suckling, was Comptroller of the Navy. He left the *Worcester* in April 1777 on his formal promotion to Lieutenant. George Monke had left the *Worcester* just before in March 1777, still a Midshipman, so their paths had crossed briefly for a few months.

After an active career George Monke was promoted Captain in 1808. His last position was Post Captain of the frigate *Pallas* 32. Unfortunately he ran her aground off the north east coast of Scotland at night in December 1810, thus ending his career in the Navy. Captain Monke died on 14 November 1828, a disappointed and impoverished man.

Charles Brereton Trelawny and his wife, Mary, were against the marriage of their son Harry to Captain Monke's daughter Caroline. There had earlier been some scandal about the possibility of Caroline's mother being illegitimate and the Trelawnys threatened to make this public if the marriage went ahead. However, the matter must have been resolved because the marriage went ahead anyway at St George's, Hanover Square on 1st August 1818. The arms on the watch of Trelawny, Brereton and Monke are a celebration of this marriage.

The watch eventually passed down to my great grandfather, Clarence Trelawny. Clarence like his forbears before him, also led an adventurous life. He was born on 20 December 1826 at Shotwick Park and as a child he was sent to school in France, where the conditions were very harsh. Being a second son, he also had to find his own way in the world, and as a young man he obtained a commission in the Radetsky Hussars in the Austrian army.



Clarence Trelawny

As an eligible young man and moving in the right circles, he met and married on 16 May 1854 at St James, Piccadilly, Miss Howard, the notorious and beautiful cast-off mistress of the French Emperor, Napoleon III. Clarence was looking for a wealthy wife and Miss Howard for a respectable marriage. The marriage shocked his family who refused to recognise Miss Howard or invite her to their home.



Eliza Howard

Miss Howard, baptised at Brighton on 13 August 1823, was the daughter of a poor shoemaker, Joseph Gawen Harryett and his wife Elizabeth. Her real name was Elizabeth Ann Harryett. At an early age she had become a successful courtesan in London and had become the mistress of Francis

Mountjoy Martyn, a wealthy officer in the Lifeguards. Through him she met Prince Louis Napoleon Buonaparte, nephew of Napoleon I, to whom she transferred her affections. From the start she seems to have had great faith in him. She became his mistress, was installed in a house at 9 Berkeley Street and between 1846 -1852 advanced him large sums of money to finance his adventures.

When the Prince was elected President of France, Miss Howard followed him to Paris. After the coup d'état of 2 December 1852, when Napoleon turned himself from President into Emperor, she at last received her reward for her loyalty. The Emperor granted her a sum of 2,000,000 francs and an annual allowance. She fondly imagined she would become the uncrowned Empress, so when Napoleon married the beautiful Eugenie de Montijo her fury knew no bounds. She became a continual nuisance to them. At the Opera she would take the box opposite and stare at her Majesty and in the Bois de Boulogne she would overtake the Empress's carriage and stare rudely. Napoleon appeased her with the residence and estate of Beauregard at La Celle St Cloud outside Paris, formerly the property of Madame de Pompadour. A few days before his wedding he made her the Comtesse de Beauregard.

Miss Howard fully expected that her marriage to Clarence Trelawny the following year would assure her reception into English society. In this she was disappointed. The marriage was childless and unhappy and in February 1865 they were divorced. She retired to her estate at Beauregard and became renowned for her good works to the poor.

Five years after her death, Clarence Trelawny married on 15 November 1870, at the British Consulate in Geneva, another striking beauty, Mary Campbell, daughter of Mr William Shaw Campbell, the US Consul at Dresden. By her he had five daughters and, remarkably, managed for twenty years to keep his wife and children ignorant of his former marriage.

Clarence Trelawny had always led an extravagant lifestyle and as time went by he lived up to and

beyond his income, claiming 'he was too old to retrench'. Money worries must have preyed on his mind because on 27 November 1902, at the age of nearly 76, he committed suicide. At the time he was living at 9 Denzil Avenue, Southampton. On the day in question he had taken a train to Reading and then a cab to the Royal Berkshire Hospital. While the cabman was talking to the porter, he drew a pistol and shot himself in the head. He died the following morning. At the inquest the jury returned a verdict of suicide during temporary insanity.

An interesting footnote is that Clarence and his elder brother, Horace, both had five daughters. Perhaps both were trying for a son so that the Shotwick estate could pass down the male line. In the event, the estate was sold but not much filtered down to Clarence as a second son. However, from a genealogical viewpoint, he did inherit a very interesting watch.

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James Day

James Trelawny Day is a great grandson of Clarence Trelawny via his eldest daughter, Rose. He was inspired to write this article so that the meaning and significance of the watch would not be lost to posterity. The watch had descended in the family to a childless first cousin living in America whose widow had decided to put it up for sale. Email: jamesday@waitrose.com

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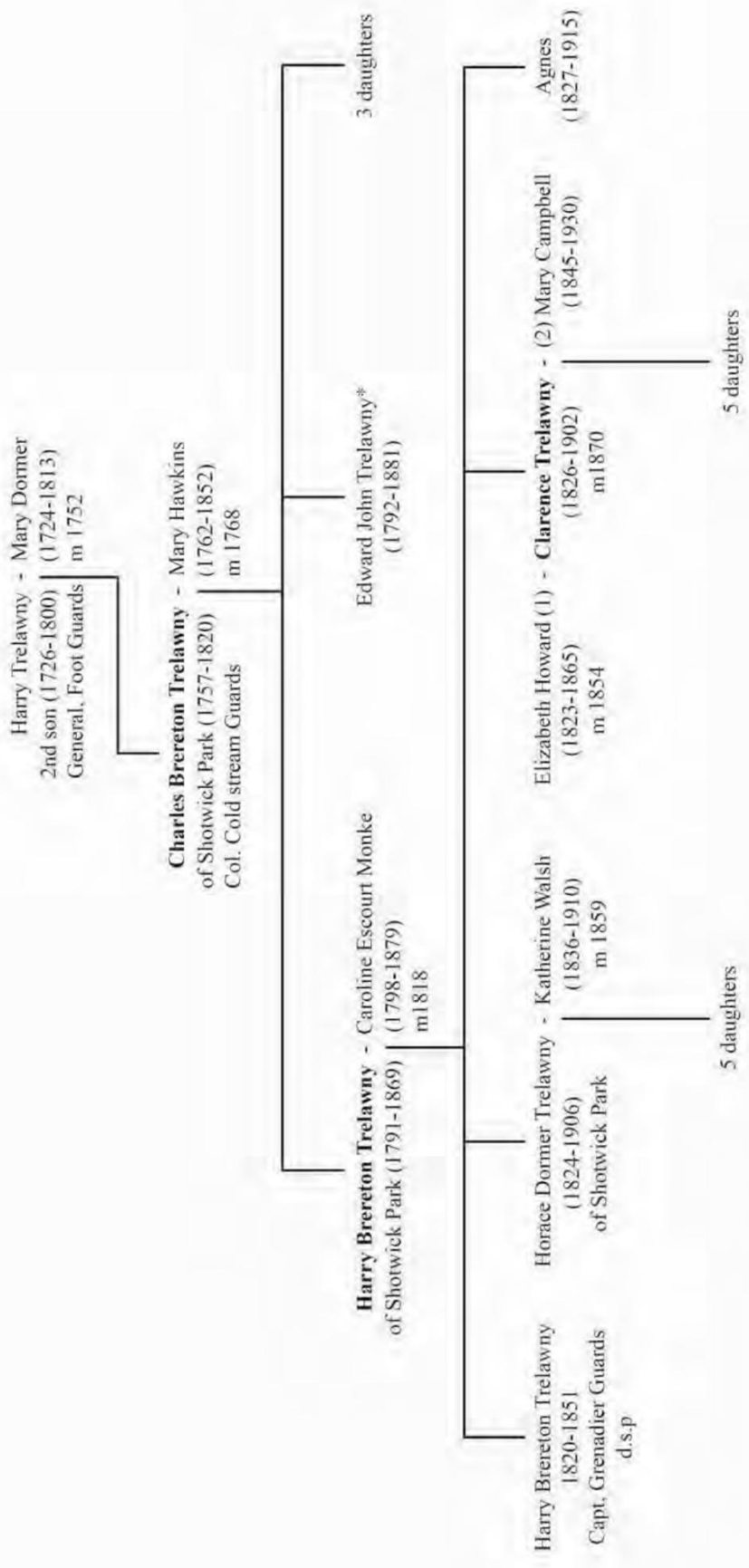
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* E.J Trelawny was the adventurer and writer who befriended Shelley and Byron

Trelawny Family Tree

Additional Photographs

These additional photographs, provided by the author James Day, show the pocket watch, and the Chateau Beauregard. The chateau and the title Comtesse de Beauregard were gifted by Napoleon III to his mistress Eliza Howard (later and briefly wife of Clarence Trelawny). The gifts were to appease the cast-off Eliza for her abandonment shortly before his wedding to Eugenie de Montijo.

