

Back in Time - 11 - History of Ellesmere Park & the Earls of Ellesmere

by Robert Berry

Ellesmere Park was part of the large Bridgewater Estates owned by Francis Egerton 3rd Duke of Bridgewater (1736-1803) who never married and the Dukedom expired with him. His nephew, George Granville Leveson-Gower 2nd Marquess of Stafford (1758-1833) MP and later Ambassador to France during the French Revolution, subsequently Postmaster General, inherited the estates but not the title. George was described as a leviathan of wealth and the richest individual who ever died.

George had two surviving sons, but under the will of the late Duke, upon George's death, the estates were then to pass to second son Francis Leveson-Gower (who in 1833 by Royal Licence took the surname Egerton) 1800-1857, rather than his elder brother.

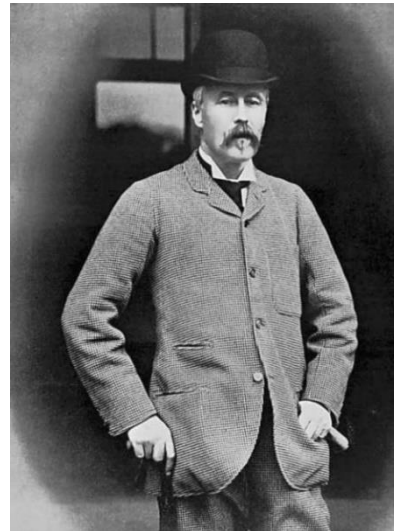
Francis Egerton was an MP, poet, writer, traveller and patron of the arts. He was the only person raised to the peerage in June 1846 in Robert Peel's resignation honours, becoming **1st Earl of Ellesmere**. Ellesmere Island, the world's tenth largest island, in Nunavut, the Canadian Arctic, was named after him, as was Lake Ellesmere in New Zealand. Ellesmere Island at 75,767 square miles is only just behind Great Britain which is ranked world's ninth largest island at 80,823 square miles. Francis had two sons, the youngest of whom, the Honourable Alfred John Francis Egerton, served as Conservative MP for Eccles from 1885 until his death in 1890, aged 36, from consumption.



The title and estates then went to Francis Egerton's eldest son **George Granville Francis Egerton** (1823-1862) MP **2nd Earl of Ellesmere**. George Egerton served as Conservative Member of Parliament for North Staffordshire from 1847 until resigning, aged 28, due to ill health in 1851. There is no record of a portrait of the 2nd Earl being held in any public collection. He died aged 39.

**Unfortunately
no
picture
available.**

Georges's eldest son was **Francis Charles Granville Egerton** (1847-1914) who became **3rd Earl of Ellesmere** when he was aged just 15. He was a soldier (Hon. Colonel of the 4th Volunteer Battalion Manchester Regiment) author and racehorse owner.



Francis Egerton's fourth child, but eldest son, then inherited the title and estates. The Right Honourable **John Francis Granville Scrope Egerton** (1872-1944) **4th Earl of Ellesmere**, a soldier serving with the Royal Scots in the Boer War and World War 1.



The last Earl was John's 5th.child, but only son, **John Sutherland Egerton 5th Earl of Ellesmere** (1915-2000). He travelled to France in the Second World War as part of the British Expeditionary Force but was captured in 1940 and spent four years as a prisoner of war. He re-married in 1979 after the death of his first wife, but there were no children from either marriage.



The Earldom of Ellesmere is now just one of the subsidiary titles held under the Dukedom of Sutherland. The current Duke of Sutherland is John Sutherland Egerton's first cousin once removed and the family seat is Dunrobin Castle in the Scottish Highlands.

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