

WYNDHAM-QUIN, WINDHAM THOMAS (1841 - 1926), 4th EARL of DUNRAVEN AND MOUNT-EARL in the Irish peerage and 2nd Baron KENRY of the United Kingdom, K.P. 1872, C.M.G. 1902, Glamorgan landowner and politician, sportsman and author

**Name:** Windham Thomas Wyndham-quin

**Date of birth:** 1841

**Date of death:** 1926

**Spouse:** Florence Elizabeth Wyndham-Quin (née Kerr)

**Parent:** Augusta Wyndham-Quin (née Goold)

**Parent:** Edwin Richard Windham Wyndham-Quin

**Gender:** Male

**Occupation:** Glamorgan landowner and politician, sportsman and author

**Area of activity:** Land Ownership; Literature and Writing; Politics, Government and Political Movements; Sports and Leisure Pursuits

**Author:** Muriel E. Chamberlain

Born 12 February 1841 at Adare, county Limerick, but spent his childhood at his father's home, Dunraven Castle, on the Glamorgan coast near Porthcawl. He was descended from the ancient Irish family of Quin, one of the few families of genuinely native origin in the Irish peerage and from the Gloucestershire family of Wyndham, who had been Glamorgan landowners since the 17th century. They were connected by marriage with the Carnes of Ewenny, the Thomases of Llanfihangel and the Vivians of Swansea. His father, Edwin Richard Windham Wyndham-Quin, 3rd Earl of Dunraven, was M.P. for Glamorgan, 1837-1850. His mother was Augusta, daughter of Thomas Goold, master in chancery in Ireland. Owing to his father's conversion to Roman Catholicism (although the son remained a Protestant), he was educated abroad in Paris and Rome before being sent to Christ Church, Oxford, in 1858. He joined the Life Guards as a cornet in 1862. In 1867 he obtained leave to go as a war correspondent with the British expedition to Abyssinia, commanded by General Sir Robert Napier, later Lord Napier of Magdala, the brother of Captain Napier, the first Chief Constable of Glamorgan. While on the expedition he shared a tent with another Welshman, [Henry Morton Stanley](#), then the correspondent of the *New York Herald* and wrote some of his copy for him. In 1869, Lord Adare, as he then was, married Florence Elizabeth, daughter of Lord Charles Lennox Kerr, and visited America for the first time. He constantly returned to that country and even bought a ranch in Colorado. His insatiable curiosity led him to investigate many things, including spiritualism. He succeeded to the earldom and other titles on the death of his father in 1871 but did not immediately take his seat in the House of Lords. In December 1877, while staying in the United States with a party which included Lord Rosebery, he wrote an article for *The World* on the state of Europe which attracted attention. He made his maiden speech in the Lords in February 1878. In June 1885 he became under-secretary at the Colonial Office in Lord Salisbury's first administration and returned to that position when the Conservatives resumed office in August 1886 but resigned in February 1887. This was partly in sympathy with his close friend, Lord Randolph Churchill, who had resigned a few weeks earlier, partly because he feared that the British government's attitude to the Newfoundland fishery question breached the autonomy of the Newfoundland assembly. He

never held office again but he remained in the public eye as an active campaigner for tariff reform, the first President of the Fair Trade League and a leading signatory of the minority Report of the Royal Commission on the Depression in Trade and Industry of 1885-86, which advocated moderate protection and imperial preference. He chaired the parliamentary committee which investigated sweated labour, 1888-90. Dunraven opposed Gladstone's Irish Home Rule measure of 1886 because he saw it as tantamount to separatism but he was a strong advocate of devolution, arguing that if it worked for the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man, it must work for larger units like Scotland and Wales. Ireland was the great cause of Dunraven's later years. He helped to secure the passage of the Irish Land Act in 1903 and the following year joined with other moderate Unionist landlords in the Irish Reform Association to suggest, unsuccessfully, a new scheme for Irish devolution. In December 1921 he seconded John Morley in replying to the King's Speech announcing the setting up of the Irish Free State. He did not, however, abandon his Welsh interests. He entertained many prominent politicians, including Joseph Chamberlain, at Dunraven Castle. He was a J.P. for Glamorgan and honorary Colonel of the Glamorgan Royal Garrison Artillery. He became president of the Cardiff Tariff Reform League and frequently addressed political meetings in the county. He was a wealthy man. In 1883 he owned 39,756 acres in various parts of the country and had an annual income of £35,478. A large part of his income derived from his Welsh estates, which consisted of farmland in the Vale of Glamorgan and mineral rights in the south Wales coalfield. Most of the town of Bridgend lay on the estate. He was a prominent sportsman, who owned racehorses in partnership with Lord Randolph Churchill, but he was best known as a yachtsman who made two gallant but unsuccessful attempts to bring the America Cup back to Britain with *Valkyrie II and III* in 1893 and 1895. During the World War I, although aged over seventy, he turned his steam yacht, the *Grianaig*, into a hospital ship and served in her himself. He died in London, 14 June 1926. He had three daughters, two of whom predeceased him. He was succeeded in his titles by his cousin, [Windham Henry Wyndham-Quin](#), MP for South Glamorgan, 1895-1906.

Publications: *Experiences in spiritualism* with D.D. Home, 1871; *The Great divide: Travels in the Upper Yellowstone*, 1876; *The Irish Question*, 1880; *The Soudan: its history, geography and characteristics*, 1884; *The Labour Question*, 1885; *Self-instruction in the practice and theory of Navigation*, 1900; *No Army, No Empire*, 1901; *Ireland and Scotland under the Unions: failure and success*, 1905; *Devolution in the British Empire*, 1906; *The Outlook in Ireland: the case for devolution and conciliation*, 1907; *Irish Land Purchase*, 1909; *The Legacy of past years*, 1911; *The New spirit in Ireland*, 1912; *The Finances of Ireland*, 1912; *Canadian Nights ... reminiscences of life and sport in the Rockies etc.*, 1914; *The Crisis in Ireland - Federal Union through devolution*, 1920; *Past times and pastimes* (autobiography), 1922; *Dunraven Castle, Glamorgan: some notes on its history and associations*, 1926.

## Author

Dr Muriel E. Chamberlain

## Sources

*Past times and pastimes* (London 1922), 1922

*Dunraven Castle, Glamorgan some notes on its history and association* (London 1926), 1926

*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* Supplement, 1922-30

*The Times*, 15 June 1926

*Western Mail*, 15 June 1926

*Burke's ... Peerage, Baronetage, and Knightage*, 4, 549

Dunraven Papers, N.L.W. Aberystwyth

## Further Reading

Wikipedia Article: [Q12056754](#)

## Additional Links

Wikidata: [4th Earl of Dunraven and Mount-Earl](#)

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