THE MILITARY PAPERS AND CORRESPONDENCE OF MAJOR GENERAL GUY DAWNAY, 1915–1919

EDITED BY
AIMÉE FOX

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Members of General Sir Ian Hamilton's General Staff on board ship, probably at Mudros, April 1915. Left to right: Captain Guy Dawnay, Lieutenant Colonel Cecil Aspinall, and Major Henry Grant. Image reproduced by kind permission of the Imperial War Museum (HU 57774) and Mrs Janet Bettesworth.

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Jacket illustration: Studio photograph of Guy Dawnay, taken in Cairo in 1916 while he was serving in Egypt. Image reproduced by courtesy of the Dawnay family

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I have chased Guy Dawnay through the archives for over a decade. During the early stages of my doctoral research in 2012, I consulted his voluminous papers at the Imperial War Museum (IWM), amazed at the detail and experiences captured in incredibly neat handwriting. At the time, I wondered why there had not been an Army Records Society volume of his correspondence. I also wondered whether, one day, I might be the one to edit that volume. I am, therefore, delighted to have realised this long-standing ambition and to bring Dawnay's papers to a wider audience.

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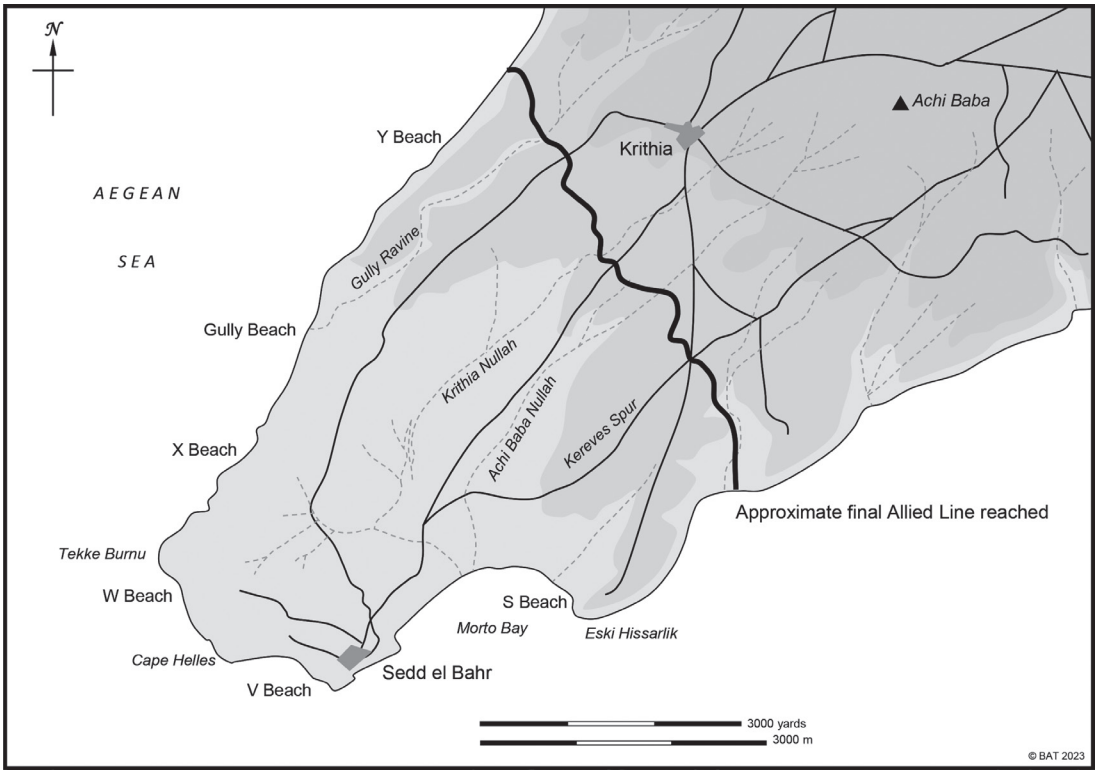
Abbreviations

ADC	Aide-de-camp
ADMS	Assistant Director Medical Services
ADVS	Assistant Director Veterinary Services
AG	Adjutant General
AJB	Arthur James Balfour
ANZAC	Australian and New Zealand Army Corps
AWM	Australian War Memorial
BEF	British Expeditionary Force
BGGS	Brigadier General, General Staff
Bt	Brevet
CAC	Churchill Archives Centre, Churchill College Cambridge
CB	Companion of the Order of the Bath
CGS	Chief of the General Staff
CID	Committee of Imperial Defence
CIGS	Chief of the Imperial General Staff
CinC	Commander-in-Chief
CMG	Companion of the Most Distinguished Order of St Michael and St George
CO	Commanding Officer
CVO	Companion of the Royal Victorian Order
DAQMG	Deputy Assistant Quartermaster General
DCGS	Deputy Chief of the General Staff
DFPC	Dawnay Family's Private Collection
DMC	Desert Mounted Corps
DMO	Director of Military Operations
DMT	Director of Military Training

DRO	Durham Record Office
DSD	Director of Staff Duties
DSO	Distinguished Service Order
DUL	Durham University Library
EEF	Egyptian Expeditionary Force
FO	Foreign Office
FSR	*Field Service Regulations*
GHQ	General Headquarters
GOC	General Officer Commanding
GPD	Guy Payan Dawnay
GS	General Staff
GSO	General Staff Officer
HAL	Herbert Alexander Lawrence – Dawnay's uncle by marriage
HMSO	His Majesty's Stationery Office
HQ	Headquarters
IGT	Inspector General of Training
IoWRO	Isle of Wight Record Office
IWM	Imperial War Museum
KCB	Knight Commander of the Order of the Bath
KM	King's Messenger
LG	David Lloyd George
LHCMA	Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives
LofC	Lines of Communication
MC	Military Cross
MEF	Mediterranean Expeditionary Force
MGGS	Major General, General Staff
MP	Member of Parliament
MT2	Military Training 2 – a section of the Directorate of Military Training, War Office
NAM	National Army Museum
NCO	Non-Commissioned Officer
OC	Officer Commanding

ODNB	*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*
OM	Order of Merit
PM	Prime Minister
psc	*passed Staff College*
QMG	Quartermaster General
RA	Royal Artillery
RAF	Royal Air Force
RFC	Royal Flying Corps
RN	Royal Navy
SD2	Staff Duties 2 – a section of the Directorate of Staff Duties, War Office
SofS	Secretary of State
TF	Territorial Force
TNA	The National Archives of the United Kingdom
VC	Victoria Cross
WO	War Office

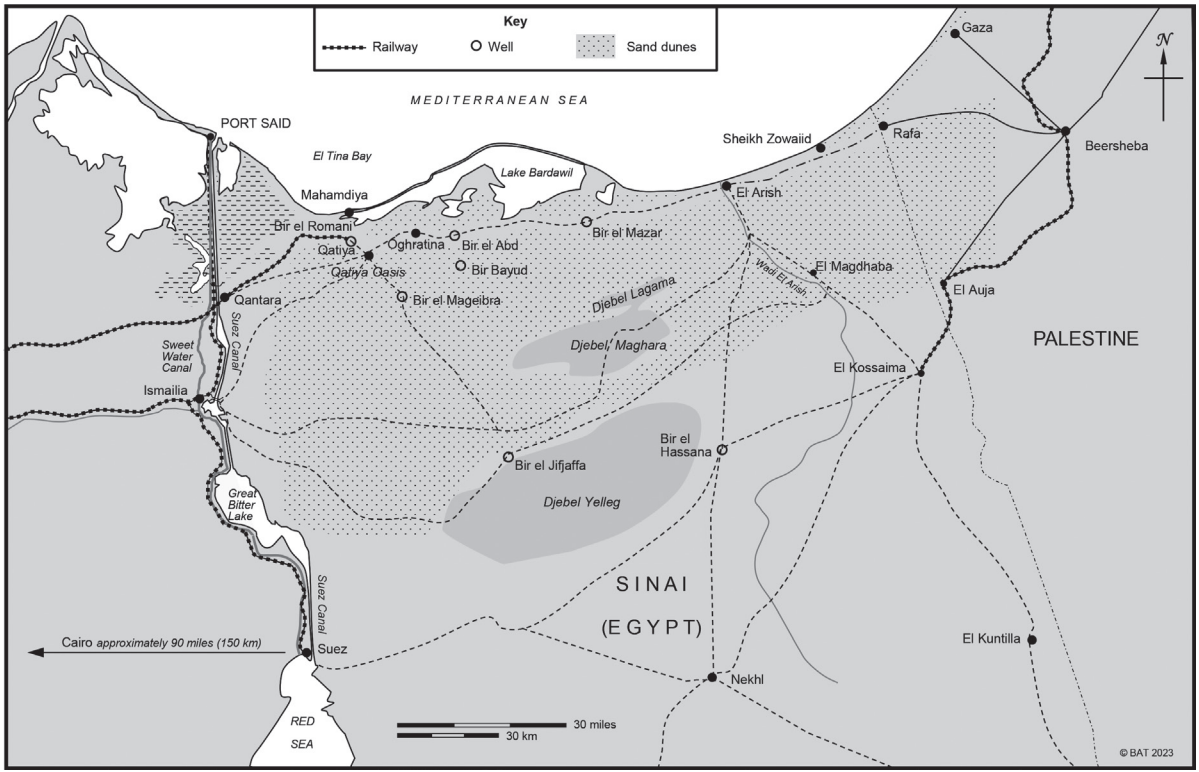
Map 1. Eastern Mediterranean



Map 2. Cape Helles

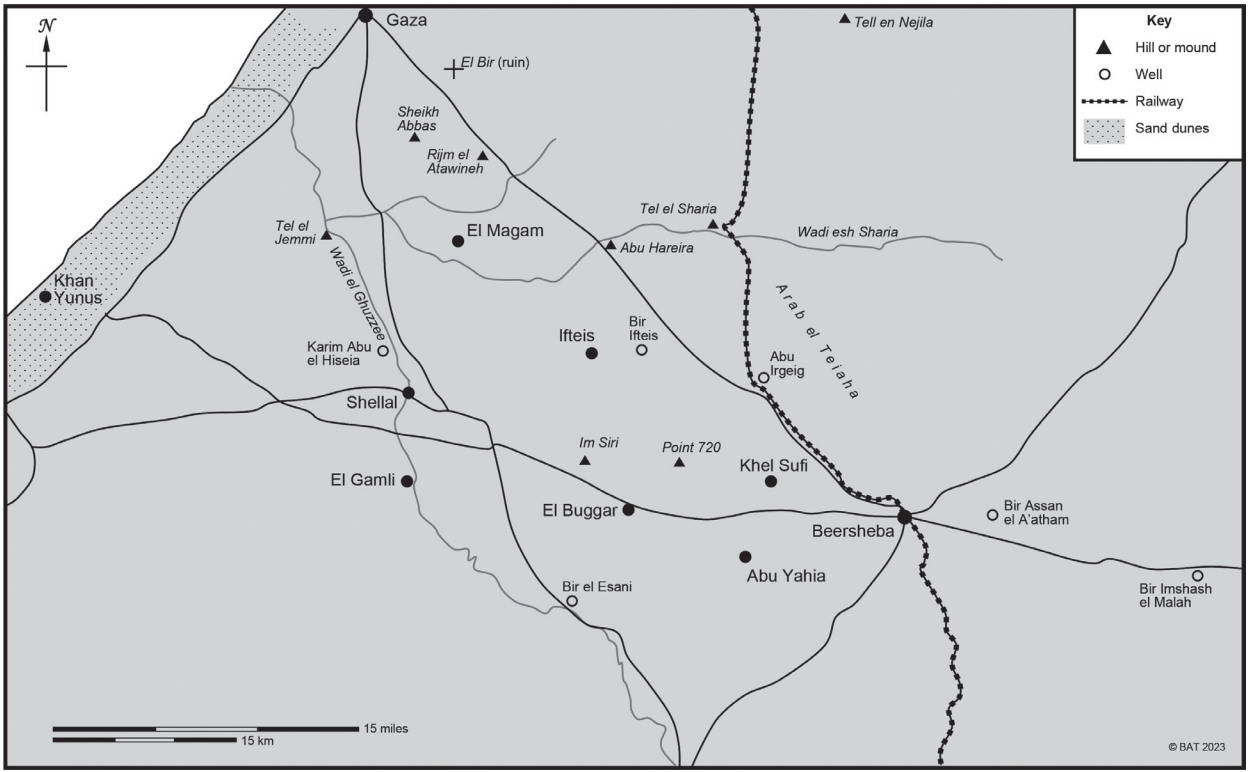

N
GULF OF
XEROS
Ejelmer Bay
Final Line 31 August
Kiretch Tepe Sirt
Karakol Dagh
Kavak Tepe
Tekke Tepe
Kuchuk Anafarta Ova
Suvla Point
'A' Beach
Old 'A' Beach
Hill 10
The Cut
SUVLA
BAY
SALT LAKE (dry)
Anafarta Sagir
Sumalik
Scimitar Hill
Anafarta Spur
Chocolate Hill
Green Hill
W Hills (Ismail Oglu Tepe)
Lala Baba
Nibrunesi Point
'C' Beach
'B' Beach
Biyuk Anafarta
Azmak Dere
Hill 60
Damakjelik Spur
Aghyl Dere
Abdul Rahman Spur
Hill 971 (Koja Chemen Tepe)
Bauchops Hill
Hill Q
AEGEAN SEA
Ocean Beach
Sazli Beit Dere
Chunuk Bair
Battleship Hill
SARI BAIR
Ari Burnu
Anzac Cove
Hell Spit
Position After 25 April Landings
Kurija Dere
Brighton Beach
3000 yards
3000 m
Gaba Tepe
© BAT 2023

Map 3. Suvla



Map 4. Eastern Desert

Map 5. Southern Palestine



Map 6. Gaza–Beersheba axis

Introduction

> Dawnay was mainly intellect … [His] cold, shy mind gazed upon our efforts with bleak eye, always thinking, thinking. Beneath this mathematical surface he hid passionate many-sided convictions, a reasoned scholarship in higher warfare, and the brilliant bitterness of a judgement disappointed with us, and with life.
>
> He was the least professional of soldiers, a banker who read Greek history, a strategist unashamed, and a burning poet with strength over daily things. During the war he had had the grief of planning the attack at Suvla (spoiled by incompetent tacticians) and the battle for Gaza. As each work of his was ruined he withdrew further into the hardnesses of frosted pride, for he was of the stuff of fanatics.
>
> T. E. Lawrence

> No one could assert of Dawnay
> That his intellect was borne
> Poet, critic, strategist,
> Radico-Imperialist,
> Pioneer of high finance,
> With his guardsman's elegance,
> He's the perfect specimen
> Of the soldier-citizen
>
> Anon., 'Ribald Rhymes in "O"'

These two pen portraits of Major General Guy Dawnay depict a complicated man who defies easy categorisation. In these descriptions he embodies reason and passion alongside brilliance and bitterness. He was a poet, a banker, a citizen, and a soldier. In many respects his legacy is as enigmatic as his character and career. Though his neat signature appears at the bottom of hundreds of appreciations, memoranda, and routine orders from the Dardanelles to the Western Front, he, like many other staff officers, remains obscured, lingering in the half light. His

wartime service is boiled down to his staff work for less than a handful of operations – Suvla, Gaza, Beersheba. A 'fragile figure' with a 'small face', Dawnay was boy-like and unassuming, lacking the physical presence that marked out generals like Edmund Allenby and Henry Wilson. Though his wartime service and physical characteristics are understated, he is by no means a forgotten figure. Very few 'dug out' staff officers have dedicated entries in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, for example.[1] For the novelist, Compton Mackenzie, Dawnay was remote and elusive. He captured Dawnay's contradictory legacy in artistic terms, likening him to 'one of those small figures of warriors in the foreground' of a Carlo Crivelli painting, who 'seems to have detached itself from the crowded scene of chivalry behind and to have stepped forward from the past to commune with ourselves'.[2] While not necessarily a bold presence in the flesh, Dawnay's character and personality jump off the page – his experiences, flaws, desires, and emotions expressed with clarity, resonating across time and space.

Guy Payan Dawnay was born on 23 March 1878 at St James's Palace – the first child and eldest son of Colonel the Honourable Lewis Payan Dawnay (second son of William, 7th Viscount Downe) and Lady Victoria Dawnay (née Grey). The Dawnays were an old Yorkshire family with a long history of both political and military service and strong associations with the Conservative Party and the Brigade of Guards. According to Dawnay's nephew, Alan Pryce-Jones, the family were a 'self-satisfied clan, not given to questionings or doubts, not introspective – though with an intermittent tendency to suicide – confident that God and the state were on their side'.[3] Richard Davenport-Hines, Dawnay's *ODNB* biographer, is slightly more charitable, remarking that several members of the family were 'highly strung'.[4] Dawnay's father, Lewis, joined the Coldstream Guards after finishing his schooling at Eton, reaching the rank of colonel. During that time, he also had a brief political career, elected as Conservative Member of Parliament (MP) for Thirsk in the 1880 General Election, holding that seat until he stood down in 1892.[5]

1 R. Davenport-Hines, 'Dawnay, Guy Payan (1878–1952)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2004) https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/45721 [Accessed 1 June 2021].

2 C. Mackenzie, *Gallipoli Memories* (London, 1965 [1929]), pp. 84–5.

3 A. Pryce-Jones, *The Bonus of Laughter* (London, 2012 [1987]), p. 21.

4 Davenport-Hines, 'Dawnay, Guy Payan (1878–1952)', *ODNB*.

5 Under the 1885 Redistribution Act, his seat was replaced and he was re-elected to the replacement constituency, Thirsk and Malton, until he stood down.

His political ambitions were no doubt aided by his marriage to Victoria Grey in 1877. The Dawnays and Greys had very different political sympathies. The Greys were an influential and ancient political dynasty with a strong Liberal bent in contrast to the Dawnays' Conservative loyalties. Victoria's grandfather, Charles, 2nd Earl Grey, had served as Whig Prime Minister from 1830 to 1834, while her father, General Sir Charles Grey, was private secretary to Prince Albert and then to Queen Victoria. The Grey family's connections to the Royal household were deep and longstanding. Victoria's younger sister, Louisa, Countess of Antrim, was Lady of the Bedchamber to both Queen Victoria and Queen Alexandra, while Victoria herself had a close friendship with Princess Beatrice, with whom she regularly corresponded.[6] These royal links were maintained by subsequent generations with Dawnay's sister, Margaret, serving as a maid of honour to Queen Alexandra and Dawnay's youngest son, Oliver, serving as private secretary to Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother in the early 1950s. The world that Dawnay was born into and grew up in was rich with powerful relations and influential connections. With this aristocratic social world at his fingertips, Dawnay's life was one of immense privilege and opportunity.

The Dawnays split their time between 51 Charles Street, a four-storey town house in Mayfair, and Beningbrough Hall, a large Georgian mansion north-west of York, inherited by Lewis in 1892.[7] Dawnay's childhood was rural and artistic. Field sports were mainstays of family life with Dawnay and his three siblings – Margaret, Vere, and Alan – encouraged to participate in outdoor pursuits, often riding from an early age with the York and Ainsty Hunt.[8] They were also frequently involved in plays for local school children and tenants on the Beningbrough estate.[9] It is difficult to discern whether Dawnay's childhood was a happy one. The relationships between the four siblings waxed and waned over time. As the eldest, there appeared to be a studied distance between Dawnay and his siblings, punctuated by bursts of intimacy, particularly with Vere during her engagement to Harry Pryce-Jones in the early 1900s and with Alan

6 Beatrice's letters to Victoria can be found in Durham University Library (DUL), Papers of General Charles Grey, GRE-D/XVIII/1–18, 22–105, 180–153, 21 April 1870–30 December 1921.

7 For further details on the history of Beningbrough Hall and interior pictures, see 'Country Homes: Beningbrough Hall', *Country Life* 20: 505 (1906), pp. 342–51.

8 Pryce-Jones, *Bonus of Laughter*, p. 17.

9 DUL, Papers of Henry George, 3rd Earl Grey, GRE/B82/8B/7, Victoria Dawnay to Henry Grey, 27 December 1892.

during their shared service in Egypt and Palestine between 1916 and 1917. While Dawnay's relationship with his mother remained close, his relationship with his father was often strained. This was, in part, due to Dawnay's political leanings, which were described as radical (and 'stink of the *Westminster Gazette*', wrote Cuthbert Headlam).[10] Indeed, Headlam noted how Dawnay 'nearly drove his father mad – or rather made him madder. The father was almost a maniac in his prehistoric Tory ideas.'[11] Dawnay fervently believed in the ideals of Liberalism, yet he had no fixed political abode, flirting with both the Liberal and Labour parties throughout his life.

Dawnay's education was typical of his upbringing and background, attending Eton just after his thirteenth birthday in 1891. By all accounts, Dawnay was a diligent student. School reports noted his aptitude for Greek and Latin translation (an interest that would continue throughout his life) and in 1893 he won first prize in Trials – Eton's internal examinations.[12] After finishing his schooling in July 1895, he joined the militia as a second lieutenant in the 3rd (Militia) Battalion, The Princess of Wales' Own (Yorkshire Regiment) in November 1895, subsequently passing top of the militia literacy examination in 1896, which qualified him 'for admission to the military competitive examinations for commissions in the cavalry and infantry'.[13] Given the long history of military service in both the Grey and Dawnay families, it is perhaps unsurprising that Dawnay decided to embark on a military career. Nor is it that surprising that he joined the militia in the first instance. He followed a 'back door' route used by many officers, including John French, who secured a commission in the militia first before transferring into the regular army.[14]

Prior to embarking on his army career, Dawnay went up to Magdalen College, Oxford, in January 1897. While at Oxford, he studied classics

10 J. Beach (ed.), *The Military Papers of Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Cuthbert Headlam 1910–1942* (Stroud, 2010), p. 49. The *Westminster Gazette* was a Liberal-aligned paper.

11 Durham Record Office (DRO), Papers of Cuthbert Headlam, D/He 177/12, Headlam to his wife, 8 August 1918.

12 Dawnay Family Private Collection (DFPC), Sidney James to Lewis Dawnay, 18 December 1891; DFPC, Eton College reports, Michaelmas and Christmas Terms, 1891; Eton College Archives, Clerks Record, 1878–1907, p. 95.

13 *Army List* (London, 1896), p. 858; 'Military News', *York Herald*, 25 May 1896, p. 6.

14 T. Bowman and M. Connelly, *The Edwardian Army: Recruiting, Training, and Deploying the British Army, 1902–1914* (Oxford, 2012), pp. 12–13, 26–8; E. M. Spiers, *The Late Victorian Army 1868–1902* (Manchester, 1992), p. 97.

under Herbert Greene, and also began learning Russian under William Morfill.[15] It was at Oxford that he made the acquaintance of men who would prove lifelong friends, including Cuthbert Headlam. His time at Oxford was short-lived, however, and he went down in June 1898 without taking a degree. The only clue in the historical record is in one of Herbert Greene's notebooks: a list titled 'Army' with Dawnay and several other students' names recorded underneath.[16] It was not uncommon for 'university candidates' to enter the army without completing their degrees. Douglas Haig, the future commander-in-chief (CinC) of the British Expeditionary Force (BEF), is a good example. Dawnay successfully sat the university candidate examination in May 1899 and was gazetted as a second lieutenant in the Coldstream Guards – the regiment that his father and uncle had served in – joining the 1st Battalion at Gibraltar in July 1899.[17]

With the outbreak of the South African War, the battalion shipped to Cape Town towards the end of October. For most of the war, Dawnay served in No. 6 company, initially seeing action at Belmont, Enslin, the Battle of Modder River, and Magersfontein.[18] At the latter, he served with his father who had used his connections to join the battalion and was attached as an extra aide-de-camp (ADC). Lewis conveyed messages to Lord Methuen (General Officer Commanding (GOC) 1st Division) and Major General Sir Henry Colville (GOC 1st Guards Brigade), while Dawnay's company sat on the extreme right, connecting with the 3rd Grenadier Guards in the rear and the remainder of the battalion at the front. Serving with his father marked a high point in their relationship. Writing to his sister, Margaret, Dawnay remarked that they had 'such splendid times while he was here and it made it feel to me like campaigning at home, seeing him about always – instead of being some trifle like seven thousand miles away'.[19]

Throughout 1900 Dawnay was involved in further operations in the Orange Free State, including actions at Poplar Grove, Drienfontein, Vet

15 DFPC, Herbert Warren to Dawnay, 5 December 1915.

16 Magdalen College Archive, Papers of Herbert Wilson Greene, F29/1/MS5/3, Notebook of students and grades, October 1896–1901.

17 *Army list* (London, 1898), p. 858; *London Gazette*, 19 May 1899, p. 3196. For Dawnay's relationship with the Coldstream Guards, see S. Robbins, *British Generalship on the Western Front, 1914–18: Defeat into Victory* (Abingdon, 2005), p. 12.

18 Dawnay briefly transferred to No. 1 company after Magersfontein.

19 DFPC, Dawnay to Margaret, 4 January 1900.

River, and Zand River. Following the crossing of the Vaal, Dawnay was predominantly involved in operations in the Transvaal and Cape Colony during 1900 and 1901. During that time, he was promoted to lieutenant and, in June 1901, had his first experience of staff work as a railway staff officer at Naauwpoort. He was a reluctant staff officer and was distinctly unimpressed by the appointment. 'I have … had to answer some 979 questions', he wrote to his parents, 'of which 797 were simply idiotic; have been sworn at five times – and all for two shillings!'[20]

After a month in the role, Dawnay re-joined No. 6 company until a new staff opportunity emerged. Captain Raymond Marker, a fellow Coldstreamer, had been asked to recommend someone to act as a 'galloper' to Major General Bruce Hamilton (GOC 21st Brigade). 'Marker had advised me very strongly to accept from a professional point of view', wrote Dawnay to his parents, 'and Col Codrington said I ought certainly to accept'.[21] His personal desire was to remain with the battalion, but to refuse would be to throw away 'what might turn out to be a great opportunity'. Dawnay left the battalion and joined Hamilton in October 1901 and was formally appointed his ADC a month later. He served as Hamilton's ADC for the remainder of the South African War. During that time he was exposed to different kinds of staff work, such as intelligence duties, cyphering and deciphering telegrams, as well as producing an account of Hamilton's actions around Ermelo.[22] The account was published in *The Times* in March 1902 and revealed Dawnay's aptitude for writing for a public audience, as well as marking the beginning of a long association with print media and interest in military history.[23] While serving as Hamilton's ADC, he was brought into contact with several future generals with whom he would closely interact during the First World War, including Edmund Allenby and Henry Rawlinson, who were both commanding columns under Hamilton.

When the Treaty of Vereeniging was signed, Dawnay had been away from home for almost three years. In that time, he had seen combat, experienced his first taste of staff work, been mentioned in despatches, and awarded the Distinguished Service Order (DSO) 'in recognition of

20 DFPC, Dawnay to his parents, 17 June 1901.

21 DFPC, Dawnay to his parents, 11 October 1901. Colonel Alfred Codrington was Commanding Officer (CO) 1st Coldstream Guards.

22 DFPC, Dawnay to his parents, 30 January 1902.

23 The account was published as 'A Fortnight of Guerilla [*sic*] Warfare', *The Times*, 29 March 1902, p. 8.

services during the operations in South Africa'.[24] Though the war had ended, his close association with Hamilton continued. For the next two years Dawnay remained as Hamilton's ADC during the latter's command of the 3rd and 2nd Divisions respectively. Yet, by April 1904, Dawnay was keen to return to his regiment. His father urged caution: 'you cannot yet get back until there is a vacancy', he remarked, 'and in the meantime I should think a drill season under [Hamilton] at Aldershot would be a most useful experience to you – far more so than sentry-go at St James'.[25]

There were, however, other personal matters at play during this time which further complicated any decision. In 1903 Dawnay had made the acquaintance of Cecil ('Cis') Buxton, daughter of Francis Buxton (a barrister and the former Liberal MP for Andover) and the Honourable Mary Lawrence. A prominent Liberal family that had a long association with radicalism and social reform, the Buxtons' politics were very much in line with Dawnay's own – though certainly not with his father's. Dawnay and Cis's courtship was fraught. His father – who thought the relationship a passing fancy – was at pains to remind Dawnay that his army pay did not give him enough money to marry on, and that to 'marry on nothing' would invariably result in bitterness and misery.[26] Perhaps more damning though was Cis's rejection of Dawnay's marriage proposal in June 1904. The fallout of Cis's rejection led to family pressure for Dawnay to accompany his uncle, Albert Grey, to Canada following the latter's appointment as Governor-General. His parents believed that serving as an ADC on Grey's staff would prepare Dawnay for a life in politics, as he would benefit from Grey's intimacy with Cabinet ministers and broader influence within the Liberal party. Yet Dawnay's opportunity to join his uncle was thwarted by regimental politics.[27] Instead, in November 1904, he was appointed adjutant to the Guards Depot at Caterham.

While little correspondence survives from Dawnay's time at Caterham, his major achievement as adjutant was helping implement revisions to the 'syllabus of instruction' alongside the new commandant, Major John Ponsonby. Attempts to overhaul the training syllabus at Caterham highlighted some of the perennial challenges associated with army training with disagreements over what should be taught, and whether the 'teaching of initiative', for example, was simply a pathway to 'insubordination and

24 *London Gazette*, 29 July 1902, p. 4842; *London Gazette*, 31 October 1902, p. 6900.
25 DFPC, Lewis to Dawnay, 12 April 1904.
26 DFPC, Lewis to Dawnay, 12 April 1904.
27 DFPC, Ivor Maxse to Dawnay, 1 October 1907.

disobedience'.[28] As part of the eventual revision to the syllabus, Dawnay also oversaw the preparation of *Lectures for Recruits of the Brigade of Guards*, published in June 1906, which covered military law, accounts, drills and discipline, and an outline of the Brigade's history and that of its regiments. The appointment gave him his first experience of training matters and the production of training manuals, instilling in Dawnay the importance of the essentials of effective training, which he would revisit during the First World War.

1906 proved to be an important year for Dawnay both personally and professionally. He proposed to Cis for a second time and was accepted, marrying her on 12 July at Holy Trinity Church, Chelsea. Soon thereafter, as he came towards the end of his second year at Caterham, he began to have doubts about his military career, precipitated by the prospect of returning to mundane regimental duties. This episode of dissatisfaction highlights Dawnay's combative and fraught relationship with the British Army. Though he was interested and invested in its improvement, he was frustrated at the lack of scope for initiative and intellect – a theme he would return to during his wartime service. A letter from his brother, Alan, in September 1906 serves to illuminate some of Dawnay's misgivings. 'Before your visit [to Beningbrough], I had practically decided upon the army', wrote Alan, '[so] your objections were not a little disconcerting'. But, as Alan noted:

> What you seem to me to overlook is the fact that not 10 people … in 100 have your intellectual ability – and that of those 10 probably not more than 2 or 3 have your ambition – so that, while to you, the absence of free scope for your brains makes of the army a purgatory, yet, most likely very few soldiers even notice its absence …[29]

Letters from Ponsonby and others cautioned him about 'chucking' his army career. If Dawnay stayed in the army, reasoned Ponsonby, he would not be rich, but there was no doubt that he would achieve great things. Ponsonby went on: 'Bruce Hamilton told me you were much the best staff officer he knew. Infinitely better than all his majors and colonels who had passed the Staff College. What higher tribute could you want.'[30] Frank Farquhar, a fellow Coldstreamer and close friend, wrote to Dawnay at

28 DFPC, George Pleydell-Bouverie to Dawnay, 16 March 1906.
29 DFPC, Alan to Dawnay, 8 September 1906. Original emphasis.
30 DFPC, Ponsonby to Dawnay, 3 November 1906.

length, horrified that 'you are about to beat your "Wilkinson" into a double entry ledger'. For Farquhar, there was 'no reason why you should not be one of the half dozen soldiers of your generation', and he was frustrated that Dawnay would give up that opportunity 'for cash'.[31] Rather, Dawnay would be better served preparing for the Staff College examination – a suggestion with which his father strongly agreed, believing it would help his son secure civilian employment in the future.

For the time being, then, Dawnay resolved to continue with his military career, requiring him to juggle regimental duties with Staff College cramming and the birth of his first child, Pamela. The competitive examination for admission to the Staff College took place in August 1907 with twenty-four vacancies available (plus a further eight by nomination) and 129 candidates sitting the examination. Seventy-one officers qualified, with Dawnay passing out top of the list.[32] Hugh Dawnay wrote to congratulate his cousin, remarking that 'it isn't often that one of us stupid soldiers can defeat the "scientific" arms in tests of learning'.[33]

Dawnay attended the Staff College from January 1908 until December 1909. His time at Camberley made a significant impression on him, bringing him new acquaintances and friendships, notably Rupert Ommanney, Anthony Henley, and Duncan Glasfurd. It also brought him into the orbit of the College's commandant, Brigadier General Henry Wilson. Much has been written about Wilson's tenure at the Staff College, particularly his 'School of Thought' and his encouragement of students to 'think big', considering matters of strategy and policy sometimes at the expense of the 'good practical problems' that accompanied soldiering.[34] Dawnay later recalled how 'a little high flying probably did us no harm', clearly relishing the opportunity to grapple with these bigger questions.[35] He also strongly agreed with many of Wilson's policy preferences, including Britain's alignment with France and the desirability of conscription. Anecdotes from Dawnay's time at

31 DFPC, Farquhar to Dawnay, 23 October 1906.

32 Joint Services Command and Staff College Archive, SC 12, 'Report on the Examination for Admission to Staff College Camberley' (London, 1907), pp. 3–4.

33 DFPC, Hugh Dawnay to Dawnay, 30 September 1907.

34 K. Jeffery, *Field Marshal Sir Henry Wilson: A Political Soldier* (Oxford, 2005), pp. 64–84 (esp. pp. 78–81); B. Bond, *The Victorian Army and the Staff College 1854–1914* (London, 1972), pp. 244–73.

35 DFPC, 'Address given at 21st Birthday Dinner of Chatham Dining Club', 22 July 1931.

the Staff College suggest a highly capable student, though easily bored. Charles Sackville-West, an instructor at Camberley, recalled how he always used to watch Dawnay's face and 'when his lip began to curl he took that as a danger-signal and began to draw towards the close of his discourse'.[36] Wilson recounted that Dawnay was 'recognised by his fellow students as standing out among them for his clearness of thought and expression as well as for his grasp of all that war means. This was also the view of myself.'[37] During his time at Camberley, he was promoted to captain and became a father for the second time: his son, Christopher ('Kit'), was born on 24 July 1909.

With his time at the Staff College coming to an end, the prospect of the next billet loomed. In December 1909, Dawnay received the welcome news that he had been offered his first choice: the position of assistant secretary to the Committee of Imperial Defence's (CID) Historical Section, where he would help prepare the CID's three-volume naval and military history of the Russo-Japanese War.[38] Hamilton, while pleased that Dawnay had secured employment so soon, recommended him not to stay in the position for more than two years: 'If you once get fixed in this literary groove, you will find it most difficult ever to quit.'[39]

Dawnay's position within the CID and the social and professional connections he developed there gave him the impetus to bring to fruition a project begun at the Staff College with Rupert Ommanney: an intellectual gathering focused on matters of Empire that moved beyond 'the homogeneity of opinion' within the military profession.[40] Following conversations with Cuthbert Headlam (Dawnay's old friend from Magdalen) and Neill Malcolm (Dawnay's chief at the CID), this gathering was formalised as the Chatham Dining Club in May 1910.[41] The object of the Chatham was to 'bring together for the interchange of ideas men of various professions and political creeds, who are anxious to overcome the obstacles in the way of the effective consolidation of the British Empire' and to

36 Mackenzie, *Gallipoli Memories*, p. 84.
37 DFPC, Wilson to Vice-Chancellor, Oxford University, n.d. (*c.* September 1919).
38 For further details on this history, see A. Dighton, 'Army Officers, Historians and Journalists: The Emergence, Expansion and Diversification of British Military History, 1854–1914' (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Salford, 2016), esp. pp. 192–6.
39 DFPC, Hamilton to Dawnay, 9 January 1910.
40 DFPC, 'Address to Chatham Dining Club', 22 July 1931.
41 Chatham Dining Club Archive, 'Records of Chatham Dining Club Meetings, Vol. 1 1910–1933'; DRO, Headlam Papers, D/He/9, Headlam diary entry, 29 April 1910.

examine how that object was to be obtained.[42] The first official meeting took place on 15 July 1910 with a paper from Leo Amery on 'The Idea of Imperial Unity'. Sixteen members were present, including John Buchan, Frank Farquhar, Maurice Hankey, and Cyril Brudenell White. Subsequent meetings had papers presented by, *inter alia*, Norman Angell, Lord Selborne, and Walter Long.[43] The club's membership started off modestly with twenty-nine members by October 1910 – ten were British Army officers, three were members of Lord Milner's Kindergarten, and the remainder were drawn from various professions, including the civil service, diplomatic service, finance, and journalism.[44] By July 1914 the Chatham had just over 100 members and included several Royal Navy officers, notably Herbert Richmond, Edmond Slade, Reginald Plunkett, and Reginald 'Blinker' Hall.[45] Though a product of Dawnay and Ommanney's experience at the Staff College and inspired by the intellectual foundations established by Henry Wilson, the Chatham was not an echo chamber. Its ethos and diverse membership underpinned a deep-seated belief that the military was just one of many professions associated with imperial and national security.

Through his work at the CID and his involvement with the Chatham, Dawnay's professional and social life went from strength to strength. Yet 1910 would mark the beginning of the end of his regular army career. On 30 July, his father died and Dawnay, as heir-presumptive, inherited Beningbrough Hall (although without the money to run it) along with the considerable death duties that accompanied his father's passing. Alongside these financial worries, Dawnay's deep-seated frustrations about the slowness of army promotion and the 'absence of free scope' contributed to another period of introspection over his military career. Despite that, he remained deeply interested – and thought deeply – about questions related to the British Army, national defence, and imperial unity. The publication of Ian Hamilton's *Compulsory Service*, for example, presented Dawnay – a strong advocate of conscription – with the opportunity to take apart what he saw as the spurious arguments against compulsion. Written under a pseudonym ('Paganus') for the *United Services Magazine*, Dawnay's reply brought him to the attention of prominent members of

42 DRO, D/He 224/4, 'Rules of the Chatham Dining Club', n.d.

43 The titles of these papers can be found on the Chatham's website: http://www.chathamdiningclub.org.uk/speakers/ [Accessed 2 June 2021].

44 DRO, D/HE 224/1, List of Members of Chatham Dining Club, October 1910.

45 Anon., *The Records of the Chatham Dining Club, 1910–1914* (Edinburgh, 1915), pp. ix–xii.

the National Service League, including Leo Amery, Leo Maxse, and Lord Roberts – the latter thought the article 'quite excellent' and expressed a keen desire to meet the author.[46] Farquhar remarked how he had seen the various directors of the General Staff 'passing [the article] round with crowings and chuckles of delight'.[47] The article clearly underlined Dawnay's enjoyment of intellectual cut-and-thrust, particularly where matters of imperial defence were concerned. While there was a variety of opinion over compulsory service in the army, the article highlighted differences between Dawnay and Ian Hamilton which foreshadowed later disagreements between the two during the Gallipoli campaign.

After several months of deliberation, Dawnay left the regular army as a captain in May 1911, transferring on to the reserve list. Like his uncle-in-law, Herbert Lawrence, who had left the army in 1903, Dawnay went into finance, working for the London office of William Salomon & Co, a private banking house.[48] While there, he struck up a friendship with Julian Day – the son of a Wall Street stockbroker – who was keen to start an investment bank specialising in American securities. Both Dawnay and Day talked of going in on this plan together, hoping to set up their own private merchant bank, which would eventually come to fruition in 1928.[49] Dawnay's three years with Salomon & Co provided him with important connections and experience that would enable his successful post-war career in trusts and securities.

While his professional life was beginning to satisfy his career ambitions, his private life was punctuated with both sadness and joy. On 25 April 1912, Dawnay's third child – Frances Priscilla – was born. However, she died at four weeks old on 28 May. This loss was difficult for both parents. The dates of Frances's birth and death would prove important emotional markers, mentioned in both Dawnay's and Cis's correspondence during the war years. For Cis in particular, Frances's death filled her with anxiety about the health and wellbeing of their other children, particularly their fourth child, Lavender, who was born on 29 June 1914. Throughout their wartime correspondence, Cis would frequently apprise Dawnay of Lavender's health, detailing her eating and sleeping patterns and general development.

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46 DFPC, Roberts to A. W. A. Pollock (editor, *United Services Magazine*), 24 March 1911; Roberts to Dawnay, 11 July 1911.

47 DFPC, Farquhar to Dawnay, 23 March 1911.

48 *The Investor's Review*, 6 January 1912, p. 15.

49 W. Veevers-Carter, *Clarence Day: An American Writer, Volume 1* (Lincoln, NE, 2006), p. 400.

On the eve of the First World War, Dawnay was a 36-year-old reservist with a promising career in finance, a large and expensive country estate that was falling into disrepair, and a young family. While he was still interested in military affairs, regularly reviewing military books for *The Spectator*, he had seemingly closed the door on his army career. The outbreak of war would change that. Dug out of the reserve, Dawnay was initially appointed as GSO2 to the 1st London Division's headquarters (HQ) where he was involved in the division's training at Crowborough.[50] Owing to the high numbers of *psc* officers required to staff the BEF, Dawnay was quickly transferred to the Directorate of Military Training in September 1914 as GSO2. During his almost six months at the War Office (WO), he worked in the MT2 section where he initially had responsibility for arranging musketry training for the army and then subsequently helped produce the training pamphlet *Trench Warfare: Notes on Attack and Defence* in February 1915.[51]

In March 1915 Dawnay was called up for active service overseas and selected for 'Special Service' as a GSO3 in the operations section of the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force (MEF). In June 1915 he was appointed GSO2 and, by November 1915, he was GSO1 in charge of the MEF's 'operations' section. During his time in the section, he helped plan the original April landings and the subsequent landings at Suvla Bay in August 1915. With those appointments came corresponding, albeit temporary or brevet, promotions with Dawnay ending 1915 as a temporary lieutenant colonel. Dawnay remained as GSO1 for almost ten months in the operations branch in Egypt, under Lieutenant General Sir Archibald Murray, assisting in the MEF's disbandment and the establishment of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force (EEF). In September 1916, after the battle of Romani (where he was effectively acting as the EEF's Chief of the General Staff), he was appointed chief of staff – Brigadier General, General Staff (BGGS) – to Herbert Lawrence at No. 3 Section, Canal Defences with the temporary rank of brigadier general. Dawnay's time with Lawrence and No. 3 Section was short lived. In October 1916, the EEF was reorganised. All forces east of the Suez Canal were formed into Eastern Force of which Dawnay became BGGS with Charles Dobell taking command. Serving as chief of staff to a field formation was a new

50 In January 1916, the division was reformed in France as 56th (1st London) Division.

51 Veevers-Carter, *Clarence Day*, p. 448; General Staff, *Trench Warfare: Notes on Attack and Defence* (London, 1915).

experience for Dawnay who had, thus far in the war, served primarily in appointments at General Headquarters (GHQ). As BGGS Eastern Force, he helped plan the formation's advance across the Sinai, which led to the occupation of El Arish and the eventual capture of Magdhaba and Rafa. Dawnay and Dobell worked together in the planning of both the first and second battles of Gaza in March and April 1917 respectively. The failure of these two operations precipitated Dobell's removal and replacement by Philip Chetwode on 22 April. The Chetwode–Dawnay partnership was a productive and successful one – their plans for a turn to the east and *coup de main* against Beersheba found favour with the EEF's new CinC, Edmund Allenby, who replaced Murray in late June 1917. Dawnay continued as BGGS Eastern Force until August 1917 when the EEF was reorganised once again. For two weeks, Dawnay remained as BGGS to Chetwode in the newly formed XX Corps until his appointment on 13 August 1917 as BGGS (or sub-chief of the General Staff) at EEF's GHQ. In this position, he deputised to the Chief of the General Staff (CGS) and had responsibility for all General Staff matters within the Palestine theatre, including operations, staff duties, training, and intelligence. While in this role, he was intimately involved in the Third Battle of Gaza in October 1917 and the broader Southern Palestine Offensive which resulted in the capture of Jerusalem in December 1917. He served as BGGS to EEF GHQ until February 1918 when he was appointed Major General, General Staff (MGGS) to BEF GHQ as a temporary major general with responsibility for Staff Duties, which included training, censorship and publicity, and anti-aircraft sub-sections.[52] This appointment proved a challenge for Dawnay who had been involved in operations rather than organisation. The role saw him contend with a variety of administrative and policy matters, notably the creation of the Inspectorate of Training. Dawnay remained in this role until February 1919 when he returned to the UK and was subsequently demobilised in May. During his service, he was awarded the CMG and CB along with several foreign decorations, including the Russian Order of St Anne (2nd class with swords), the Italian Order of St Maurice and St Lazarus, the French Legion d'honneur and the Croix de Guerre (with palm), and the American Distinguished Service Medal – the latter in recognition of

52 D. Todman, 'The Grand Lamasery revisited: General Headquarters on the Western Front, 1914–1918', in G. Sheffield and D. Todman (eds), *Command and Control on the Western Front: The British Army's Experience 1914–18* (Stroud, 2007), pp. 60–1.

his involvement in the training of US formations.[53] He was mentioned in despatches eleven times.

While Dawnay's formal relationship with the British Army had come to an end (though he remained on the reserve list until 1933), his interest in that institution and broader military matters continued throughout the remainder of his life, manifesting in different ways. Initially, this connection was fairly conventional: he lectured on the Gallipoli and Palestine campaigns at the Staff College and was also asked to chair an interdepartmental committee on combined operations in 1921 – likely owing to his experiences at Gallipoli.[54] Beyond this, he flirted with academic and literary endeavours, keen to use his pen to contribute to the military's intellectual life. While still in uniform, he had expressed a desire to both Cuthbert Headlam and Lieutenant General Sir Ivor Maxse that he wished to succeed Spenser Wilkinson as the Chichele Professor of Military History at All Souls, Oxford.[55] In 1919 Wilkinson had asked to be relieved of his obligation 'to lecture and give instruction in Military History, with special reference to the conditions of modern warfare'. This request formed part of his application for a third five-year term and was not well received.[56] Influential voices within both the university and the War Office pushed for his replacement. Dawnay's candidature was supported by two powerful patrons: Winston Churchill, who had been invited to serve as an elector, and Field Marshal Sir Henry Wilson, who wrote in support of Dawnay's application.[57] Yet, despite these important patrons, Dawnay's application – described as 'meagre' by the electoral board – was rejected and Wilkinson's application for a third term was granted.[58] According to Headlam, Dawnay was approached about the

53 War Department, *American Decorations: A List of Awards of the Congressional Medal of Honor, the Distinguished Service Cross, and Distinguished Service Medal, 1862–1926* (Washington, 1927), p. 796.

54 The National Archives of the United Kingdom (TNA), WO 237/14, 'Interdepartmental Committee on Combined Operations', 1921.

55 Beach (ed.), *Headlam*, p. 230. See also J. Hattendorff, 'The Study of War History at Oxford, 1862–1990', in J. B. Hattendorff and M. H. Murfett (eds), *The Limitations of Military Power: Essays presented to Professor Norman Gibbs on his eightieth birthday* (London, 1990), pp. 3–61; H. Strachan, 'The Study of War at Oxford 1909–2009', in C. Hood, D. King, and G. Peele (eds), *Forging a Discipline: A Critical Assessment of Oxford's Development of the Study of Politics and International Relations in Comparative Perspective* (Oxford, 2014), pp. 204–21.

56 Strachan, 'The Study of War at Oxford', pp. 209–10.

57 DFPC, Wilson to Vice Chancellor, n.d.

58 Strachan, 'The Study of War at Oxford', p. 210.

Chichele once again following Wilkinson's retirement in 1923, but he felt 'reluctantly obliged to decline', suggesting his brother-in-law, Sidney Clive, as a possible candidate.[59] The chair went to Ernest Swinton instead. Perhaps more successful than his stalled academic career was the establishment of the *Army Quarterly* in 1920, which Dawnay co-edited with Cuthbert Headlam. Little of the journal's success had much to do with Dawnay, however. As Jim Beach has observed, Dawnay's involvement was 'mostly ornamental', with Headlam taking on the day-to-day burden, much to the latter's chagrin.[60]

After the much-lamented sale of Beningbrough during the war, the Dawnays eventually settled at Longparish House in 1919 – an early eighteenth-century mansion located on the banks of the River Test. As business required Dawnay to travel frequently, Longparish represented a place of tranquillity and permanence – a 'paradise' according to one friend.[61] Not long after the family had settled in Hampshire, the Dawnays' fifth child, Oliver, was born in April 1920. Dawnay's two sons would follow in his footsteps with both serving in the Coldstream Guards and then working in the City of London – Kit as managing director of Lazard Brothers and Oliver, after service in the Royal Household, as a partner with Grieveson Grant.[62]

Having partially satisfied his literary endeavours with the *Army Quarterly*, Dawnay returned to the banking career that he had tentatively begun before the war. With Julian Day, his old friend from Salomon & Co, Dawnay formed the private merchant bank, Dawnay, Day in 1928, specialising in investment and financial business as well as the reconstruction of firms hit by the depression.[63] From the early 1920s and for the remainder of his life, Dawnay marked himself out as a 'champion of the boards', serving as chairman to a range of companies, including Army and Navy Stores Ltd, Financial Newspaper Proprietors Ltd, Gordon Hotels, and Armstrong Whitworth – where he played an important role in the industrial rationalisation movement.[64] He also served as a director of Vickers-Armstrong. With Dawnay – though perhaps more so with Herbert

59 Beach, *Headlam*, p. 260.
60 Beach, *Headlam*, p. 226.
61 DFPC, Orlo Williams to Cis, 19 July 1920; Viscount Mersey, *A Picture of Life 1872–1940* (London, 1941), p. 323.
62 'Captain Oliver Dawnay', *The Times*, 21 March 1988, p. 14.
63 Davenport-Hines, 'Dawnay, Guy Payan', *ODNB*.
64 D. Kynaston, *The City of London Volume 3: Illusions of Gold 1914–1945* (London, 2000); Davenport-Hines, 'Dawnay, Guy Payan', *ODNB*.

Lawrence (who was chairman of Vickers-Armstrong) – we see a clear example of the 'revolving door' associated with the military-industrial complex. As Edward Packard has argued, Lawrence 'personified and understood the unique connections between heavy industry, the City of London and national defence that characterised the inter-war armaments business'.[65] Dawnay was not so different. Though not called as a witness by the Royal Commission on the Private Manufacture of and Trading in Arms (1935–6), Dawnay's financial dealings and connections were of interest, particularly to members of the Labour Party.[66] A discussion in the House of Lords on the commission's terms of reference, for example, mentioned Dawnay and his brother-in-law, Sidney Clive, as examples of the murky, knotted relationship between the armed forces, the City of London, and the armaments industry:

> … General Sir George Clive … was Military Secretary at the War Office for four years up to June 1, 1934. While he was at the War Office, he was running a private employment bureau for officers. He is a brother-in-law of the Chairman of Armstrong Whitworth's, General Dawnay, who is also a Director of Vickers-Armstrong and managing partner in a private bank, Dawnay-Day, which controls an armament firm called the Andrews Toledo Company, which is on the War Office List. In this private firm … the largest shareholder is Sir George Clive. When Sir George Clive was running this private employment bureau for finding places for officers, applications … had to come to him as Military Secretary. When he left the War Office … he continued this employment bureau for officers and ex-officers, a bureau set up by the Government, and the members of the bureau were all officers, with one exception, Mr. Piggott, whose brother was the Assistant Military Secretary of the War Office, and who recently went to Manchuria with the Barnby Inquiry Commission, Lord Barnby being also a director of the same company, Dawnay-Day.[67]

65 E. Packard, 'Whitehall, Industrial Mobilisation and the Private Manufacture of Armaments: British State-Industry Relations, 1918–1936' (unpublished PhD thesis, London School of Economics and Political Science, 2009), p. 165.

66 For context on the Royal Commission, see D. G. Anderson, 'British Rearmament and the "Merchants of Death": The 1935–36 Royal Commission on the Manufacture of and Trade in Armaments', *Journal of Contemporary History* 29:1 (1994), pp. 5–37.

67 'Arms Inquiry', House of Lords debate, 27 March 1935, *Hansard*, vol. 96 c385. See also W. H. Williams, *Who's Who in Arms* (London, 1935), p. 15.

Nor did interest in Dawnay's dealings cease after the Royal Commission. In 1945 the Labour MP Manny Shinwell mentioned Dawnay in his discussion of 'octopus firms' – businesses like Armstrong-Whitworth – and their deleterious impact on retail traders and the 'small man'.[68] Given Dawnay's wartime condemnation of industrialists such as Sir Hugh Bell, his 'rage and righteous indignation' at the 'injustices of society', and his belief that a 'few multi-millionaires ought to be bled for the benefit of the masses', his post-war financial career appears to sit in contrast to his earlier radicalism.[69]

During the Second World War, Dawnay served in the Home Guard, ultimately reaching the rank of lieutenant. Mervyn Haigh, then Bishop of Winchester, vividly remembered 'seeing [Dawnay] (by this time a corporal) marching to a church parade in single file at the rear of the local platoon', while Dawnay's former chief, Archibald Murray, found it amusing to think of him 'crawling on your stomach with the Home Guards'.[70] Dawnay took great pride in his Home Guard service, writing about the community spirit it engendered within the village. 'Our comradeship is made markedly closer and more intimate', he mused. 'We foregather in a new way; and have come to know each other in new aspects'.[71] Following a short bout of pneumonia, Dawnay died at Longparish from a cerebral thrombosis on 19 January 1952, aged 73.

Dawnay's obituary in *The Times* was titled 'an able administrator'. As this volume reveals, Dawnay certainly was 'able' – a talented and ambitious staff officer who won plaudits from colleagues and superiors alike. In many respects, though, the bland epithet of 'able administrator' downplays Dawnay's creative and literary sides. While an equal source of pride and frustration, the military was only one aspect of his life. An 'old friend', keen to add further colour to *The Times* obituary, gives us a better sense of Dawnay's life beyond the army:

> In addition to proving himself to be an exceptionally able staff officer … and subsequently making his mark in the world of business and finance, he was a keen agriculturist and took an active interest in

68 'Cartels and Monopolies', House of Commons debate, 13 June 1945, *Hansard*, vol. 411 c1729.

69 DRO, D/He 178/10, Headlam to his wife, 27 September 1918; D/He 180/4, Headlam to his wife, 2 November 1918.

70 'Maj Gen Guy Dawnay', *The Times*, 25 January 1952, p. 6; IWM, Papers of Major General G. P. Dawnay, 69/21/3, Murray to Dawnay, 29 December 1943.

71 G. P. Dawnay, *Parthian Shots*, ed. O. P. Dawnay (privately published, 1985), p. 79.

> the countryside. But at heart Guy Dawnay was a scholar and a man of letters, widely read and gifted with a subtle and discriminating literary taste. He understood the art of writing and appreciated the value and meaning of words. Everything he wrote himself – whether a military memorandum, a letter to the Press, an article in a review, a speech at a company meeting, or a lyrical ode – was invariably composed with fastidious care and perfectly phrased.[72]

Literature and the arts were his lifeblood. He was a regular correspondent in *The Times* and *The Economist*, but, according to his youngest son, it was poetry that animated life at Longparish.[73] Scattered within Dawnay's wartime correspondence are scraps of Greek verse (often the product of translation competitions with colleagues) and annotated drafts of sonnets – many of which would be refined, reworked, and included in *Nigella*, a book of poetry published in 1919, and the posthumously published *The Nightingales*, which included various poems and essays. Dawnay's poems were heavily inspired by his love of the South Downs and the High Weald, particularly the countryside around Stanmer, Firle, and Mount Caburn. His keen knowledge of and fascination with the natural world, particularly wildlife and plants, filled his letters home from Gallipoli and Palestine. It is, perhaps, unsurprising that his poetry was heavily influenced by Romanticism, particularly Robert Browning's early works, which he read and re-read during the war.

The introspection and sensitivity that we glean from Dawnay's poetry appears to stand in juxtaposition to other aspects of his personality. In both his correspondence and his staff work, we glimpse a man who was self-assured, ambitious, and self-satisfied, but who was also anxious, nervous, and empathetic. This empathy was particularly evident in his desire to keep in touch with the front line during the war. Throughout the war there are frequent references to initiatives Dawnay put in place to ensure that staff officers visited troops at the front. When he became the EEF's sub-CGS in August 1917, for example, one of his first actions was to insist on a 'regular system' where one staff officer from the General Staff 'must be out every day with one or other of the Corps in the front line'. By doing so, he ensured that 'various formations and all parts of the PALESTINE front are visited and kept in touch with' [148]. When workload or pressures prevented him from visiting formations, Dawnay

72 'Maj Gen Guy Dawnay', *The Times*, 31 January 1952, p. 6.

73 G. P. Dawnay, *The Nightingales*, ed. O. P. Dawnay (privately published, 1986), vii.

expressed disappointment in his letters home. His keen desire to keep in touch with the front line highlights the balance between the cerebral and the practical. While taking pleasure in the intellectual aspects of the military profession, Dawnay was not content to keep his head in the clouds. He was certainly suited to 'big matters' and the writing of strategic appreciations, but he grounded that intellectualism in the practical. The cerebral and the practical then, though often held in tension, proved mutually reinforcing elements of Dawnay's personality.

His personality and predilections were not to everyone's liking, however. While many contemporaries, such as Chetwode, Murray, and Braithwaite, were quick to acknowledge his intelligence and acumen, others were less generous in their appreciations. His brother-in-law, Harry Pryce-Jones, for example, thought Dawnay rather conceited ('there's too much "I" about everything', he wrote) – an observation echoed by Sir Maurice Hankey, who thought Dawnay had become 'disagreeable and too big for his boots'.[74] Even Headlam thought him 'a little too quick for other people' and that he was 'rather apt to believe that the rest of the world is more stupid than it really is'.[75] For others, like Charles Bean, the Australian official historian, Dawnay was a 'rather spoilt-boy, dogmatic English university type', who was 'not intending to be patronizing, but he was' [227]. Blanche Lloyd, a friend of Dawnay's wife, wondered whether Dawnay was trustworthy: 'I never really like him very much myself', she confided to her husband.[76] Throughout the volume, these impressions and the various sides of Dawnay's personality are thrown into sharp relief, revealing an individual who often divided opinion.

While contemporaries had much to say about Dawnay – be that praise or criticism – he flits in and out of the historiography of the British Army in the First World War. When he does appear, it is usually in relation to his role in the planning of the April and August landings at Gallipoli in 1915, his intellectual partnership with Philip Chetwode, which provided the blueprint for the Third Battle of Gaza in 1917, or a brief mention of his role in relation to BEF training and doctrine in 1918.[77] However,

74 NAM, Papers of Colonel Henry Pryce-Jones, 2009-10-7/2545, Pryce-Jones to Vere, 19 April 1918; S. Roskill, *Hankey: Man of Secrets Volume 1: 1877–1918* (London, 1970), p. 201.

75 DRO, D/He 174/6, Headlam to his wife, 4 May 1918.

76 Churchill Archives Centre (CAC), Papers of Lord Lloyd, GLLD4/19A, Blanche Lloyd to her husband, 23 September 1915.

77 For Dawnay's involvement in the Gallipoli campaign, see J. Macleod, *Reconsidering Gallipoli* (Manchester, 2015 [2004]), pp. 131–3; R. Prior, *Gallipoli:*

once we move past these headlines and famous operations, we know decidedly little about Dawnay's day-to-day experiences as a staff officer, reflecting a broader dearth of understanding on staff work within the wartime army as a whole.

In many respects, the particulars of Dawnay's wartime career – a 'dug out' staff officer who served primarily in the extra-European or 'sideshow' theatres of war – speaks to three lacunae in the historiography of the British Army in this conflict. First, it highlights the experience of service beyond the Western Front. Almost a third of the British Army's combat formations saw service in these so-called 'sideshow' theatres. Before eventually serving on the Western Front in 1918, Dawnay served in Gallipoli, Egypt, and Palestine. While scholarship by Matthew Hughes, James Kitchen, Justin Fantauzzo, and Edward Erickson has sought to reassess the war outside of France and Belgium, these extra-European theatres – and the relationships between them – have suffered from relative historical indifference, particularly by military historians: their marginalised nature in wartime reflected in their marginalised position within the historiography of the British military.[78] Dawnay's service in Gallipoli and Palestine in particular highlights several important themes, namely how different environments, allies, and enemies affected British strategy and operational conduct in these theatres; the impact that this geographical distance could have on intimate relations; and the negative influence that service in those theatres could have on an officer's promotion prospects.

Secondly, Dawnay's wartime career was spent entirely on the General Staff, often with responsibility for the planning of operations, and predominantly at the GHQ of three different expeditionary forces. The staff have been much maligned in popular literature, viewed as incompetent, indulged, and isolated. Such views had currency at the time too.

The End of the Myth (New Haven, CT, 2009), pp. 213–14; and J. Cleverly, 'More than a Sideshow? An Analysis of GHQ Decision Making during the Planning for the Landings at Suvla Bay, Gallipoli, August 1915', *War in History* 24:1 (2017), pp. 44–63. Dawnay's involvement in the conceptual origins of the Third Battle of Gaza are discussed in J. Q. C. Newell, 'British Military Policy in Egypt and Palestine: August 1914 – June 1917' (unpublished PhD thesis, King's College London, 1990), and M. Hughes, *Allenby and British Strategy in the Middle East 1917–1919* (London, 1999), pp. 43–5. For discussion of Dawnay's involvement in training and doctrine, see J. Beach, 'Issued by the General Staff: Doctrine Writing at British GHQ, 1917–1918', *War in History* 19:4 (2012), pp. 464–91.

78 P. Satia, 'Sideshows at the Center: British Campaigns in the Middle East during the Great War', *Annales HSS* 71:1 (2016), p. 82.

Indeed, Dawnay was cognisant of the tension between the staff and the ordinary soldier, regretful of 'feeling between the troops and the staff' [23]. It was a concern that he returned to both during and after the war [233].[79] In the historiography, the staff have largely been relegated to footnotes in the study of command – the mouthpiece of a general, rather than vital players with significant influence in the planning and outcome of an operation. Yet as Ian Beckett and Steven Corvi have remarked, 'army commanders cannot be seen in isolation from their immediate circle of advisors'.[80] Important, systematic analyses by Simon Robbins and Paul Harris have shed much needed light on the staff's role, including their training, duties, and career paths.[81] These analyses have been supplemented by studies on brigade staff, GHQ, and the role of imperial staff officers.[82] Yet these analyses have primarily focused on the General Staff on the Western Front. To date, there has been very little attention paid to the challenges faced by staff officers beyond France and Flanders.[83] Dawnay's experiences then are particularly valuable in broadening out our understanding of these challenges, revealing to us the myriad tensions and pressures of staff work in those theatres. Serving under multiple commanders-in-chief and subordinate commanders, Dawnay's career also shows the importance of personalities and personal relationships to the effective planning and conduct of operations. Readers looking for gossip or stinging critiques of commanders, however, will need to read between the lines. Loyalty was an important quality to Dawnay, who exercised restraint when expressing his personal opinions on his various

79 See also 'The Staff', *Army Quarterly* 1:1 (1920), pp. 19–35.

80 I. F. W. Beckett and S. J. Corvi, 'Introduction', in I. F. W. Beckett and S. J. Corvi (eds), *Haig's Generals* (Barnsley, 2006), p. 8.

81 S. Robbins, *British Generalship*; P. Harris, *The Men Who Planned the War: A Study of the Staff of the British Army on the Western Front, 1914–1918* (Farnham, 2016).

82 See A. Fox-Godden, '"Hopeless Inefficiency"?: The Transformation and Operational Performance of Brigade Staff, 1916–1918', in M. LoCicero, R. Mahoney, and S. Mitchell (eds), *A Military Transformed? Adaptation and Innovation in the British Military, 1792–1945* (Solihull, 2014), pp. 139–56; Todman, 'Grand Lamasery'; R. Lee, 'The Australian Staff: The Forgotten Men of the First AIF', in P. Dennis and J. Grey (eds), *1918: Defining Victory* (Canberra, 1998), pp. 63–71; D. Delaney, 'Army Apostles: Imperial Officers on Loan and the Standardization of the Canadian, Australian, and New Zealand Armies 1904–1914', *War in History* 23:2 (2016), pp. 169–89.

83 An exception to this is B. Bond and S. Robbins (eds), *Staff Officer: The Diaries of Walter Guinness (first Lord Moyne), 1914–1918* (London, 1987).

chiefs. Though certainly cautious when discussing his own superiors, he was far more opinionated about other political and society figures. He strongly disliked Andrew Bonar Law, for example, owing to his behaviour during the Curragh Incident where he vigorously opposed Home Rule, frequently referring to him as a 'coward'. He expressed disdain over General Sir John Cowans' role in the Patsy Cornwallis-West affair, which led to a War Office enquiry.[84] More problematic, though, are discreet examples of anti-Semitism with derogatory comments on the marriage of Venetia Stanley and Edwin Montagu [28], and his retelling of Hilaire Belloc's anti-Semitic views – the latter having helped found the League for Clean Government – at a GHQ dinner in October 1918.[85] Anti-Semitism within the British elite was pervasive, but often subtle. As Thomas Weber has argued, while 'the British establishment abstained from open forms of anti-Semitism', it was 'structurally as anti-Semitic as its German counterpart'.[86]

Finally, as a reservist, Dawnay's career reveals some of the challenges faced by citizen-soldiers and 'dug-outs' *vis-à-vis* regular army officers. Reservists were largely disenfranchised when it came to senior appointments in the army. As John Bourne notes, by the end of September 1918, there were only seventeen generals from this source on the Western Front, representing 0.3 per cent of the total number of reservist officers at the outbreak of war.[87] That Dawnay achieved general officer rank (albeit temporary) speaks to the complex dynamics associated with military

84 The Cornwallis-West affair centred around Mrs 'Patsy' Cornwallis-West's relationship with Sergeant Patrick Barrett. Cornwallis-West had petitioned her husband and John Cowans to arrange a commission for Barrett. When the relationship between Barrett and Cornwallis-West soured, she pressured Cowans (and other senior officers) to secure him a posting elsewhere. The scandal was subject to an Army court of inquiry, which censured Cornwallis-West, Cowans, and Field Marshal Sir John French – the latter having removed a senior officer at Cornwallis-West's request. For further details, see R. Deeks, 'Officers Not Gentlemen: Officers Commissioned from the Ranks of the Pre-First World War British Regular Army, 1903–1918' (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Birmingham, 2017), pp. 272–4 and A. J. A. Morris, *Reporting the First World War: Charles Repington, The Times, and the Great War* (Cambridge, 2015), pp. 216–18.

85 IWM, 69/21/3, Dawnay to Cis, 12 October 1918.

86 T. Weber, 'Anti-Semitism and Philo-Semitism among the British and German Elite: Oxford and Heidelberg before the First World War', *English Historical Review* 118:475 (2003), p. 107.

87 J. Bourne, 'The BEF's Generals on 29 September 1918: An Empirical Portrait with some British and Australian Comparisons', in Dennis and Grey (eds), *1918: Defining Victory*, p. 56.