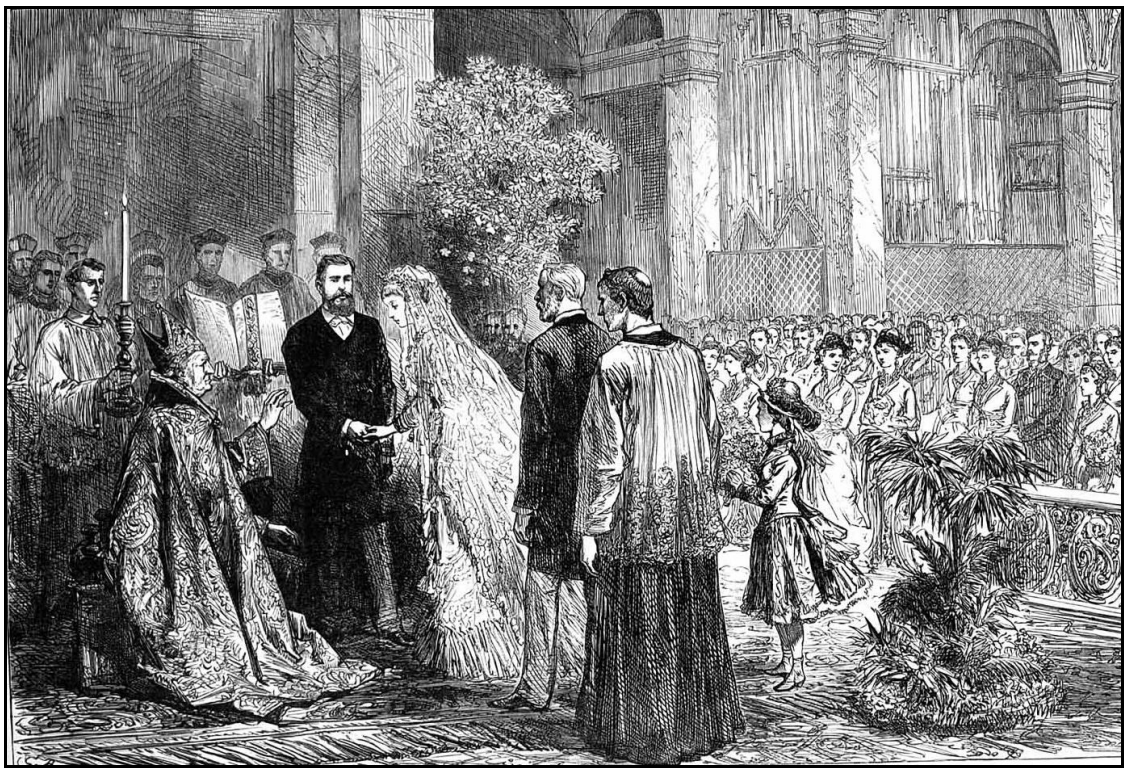
WEDDING OF THE DUKE OF NORFOLK TO LADY FLORA HASTINGS 21 NOVEMBER 1877



Digital image of the wedding of the Duke of Norfolk to Lady flora Hastings at the Oratory, Brompton.

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Lady Flora & the Duke of Norfolk

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BY SAMUEL T STEWART - NOV 2026

INTRODUCTION

The Author recommends a visit to the family church (Arundel Fitzalan Chapel), the private Roman catholic chapel and burial place of the Dukes of Norfolk (Howard family) - The Howard family is *an English noble family* founded by John Howard, who was created Duke of Norfolk (third creation) by King Richard III of England in 1483.

The Church is situated within Arundel Castle grounds and is uniquely divided between Roman Catholic worship (Fitzalan Chapel) and Anglican worship (the nave and transepts). Founded around 1380 under the will of Richard FitzAlan, Earl of Arundel. It suffered damage during the English Civil War (1643–1644) and was restored in the 19th century by the Dukes of Norfolk.

The Dukes of Norfolk were formally the Earls of Arundel. Earl of Arundel is *a title of nobility in England*, and one of the oldest extant in the English peerage. and is currently held by the Duke of Norfolk.

Located across from the Arundel Castle, is the imposing French Gothic Catholic cathedral which was commissioned by Henry, 15th Duke of Norfolk, and opened in 1873

- Recommending complimentary reading from the author's publications on his website **samueltstewart.com** 'AHISTORY OF LIMESTONE BURNING IN NW LEICESTERSHIRE' which can be found under subsection 'OTHER INDUSTRIES'. From page 112 onwards.

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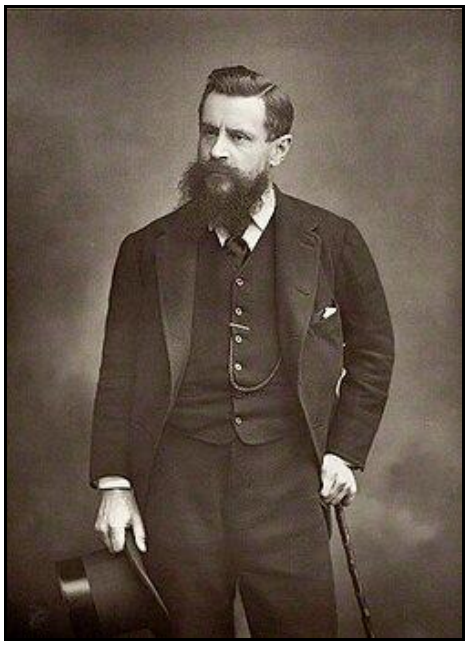
THE DUKE OF NORFOLK'S MARRIAGE TO LADY FLORA HASTINGS

HENRY FITZ-ALAN HOWARD, his Grace the Duke of Norfolk, premier Duke and Earl, was born in Carlton-terrace, December 27, 1847, and succeeded to the title on the death of his father in 1860.

As the 15th Duke of Norfolk, he later married Lady Flora Hastings (born Flora Paulyna Hetty Barbara Clifton, later styled Lady Flora Abney-Hastings) at the Oratory in Brompton, London.

Lady Flora Hastings (daughter of Charles Abney-Hastings, 1st Baron Donington, and Edith Rawdon-Hastings, 10th Countess of Loudoun). She was the niece of the earlier Lady Flora Hastings (1806–1839), who died unmarried at Queen Victoria's court.







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Flora converted to Catholicism before the marriage, drawing objection from her father and leading her to stay under the protection of the Dowager Duchess of Norfolk. The couple had one severely disabled son before Flora died on 11 April 1887 at age 33 at Arundel Castle.

Wedding guests included Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli (Earl of Beaconsfield), Princess Louise, Lord Bute, and Lord Howard.

THE MARRIAGE CELEBRATIONS

The following is transcribed from a report in the Leicester Daily Mercury - Fri 23rd Nov 1877.

Donington Park, Derbyshire, the seat of Abney Hastings, Esq., was on Wednesday and Thursday the scene of great festivities, on the occasion of the marriage of the Duke of Norfolk with Lady Flora Hastings. There was scarcely a man to be seen without some decoration appropriate to the occasion; and girls and women wore neckties and bonnet-ribbons, and not a few wore dresses of the festive order. Donington, Breedon, Wilson, Moira, and **Griffydam** were manifestly *en fête*. The weather was all that could be desired; and if there be any truth in the old Irish adage that “Happy is the bride that the sun shines on,” there is a happy prospect in store for the fair lady who espoused the scion of another noble house. However, later on rain set in, and continued throughout the day. On Wednesday Donington and the several villages already mentioned exhibited a liveliness that probably they never did before. The road from Donington was thronged at times by persons gravitating towards Ashby and other places were social festivities were announced. The bells of the churches of Donington, Breedon, Ashby, and other places rang out merry peals at and the rejoicings over the event were universal at the various villages for miles around. The town of Ashby was gaily decorated, and presented quite a holiday-like appearance. The completeness

of the arrangements were in no small way added to by the untiring and indefatigable exertions of Mr. German, steward to Mr. Hastings.

GRAND BANQUET AT ASHBY-DE-LA-ZOUCH.

On Wednesday night a splendid banquet was given at Ashby-de-la-Zouch, in celebration of the marriage of his daughter with the Duke of Norfolk, by Mr. Abney-Hastings to over 400 of his tenantry and tradesmen. The chair was taken by Mr. W. E. Smith, private solicitor to the Hastings family, and after the usual toasts, the health of the Duke and Duchess of Norfolk (the bride and bridegroom) was proposed in felicitous terms by the chairman, who alluded to the universal chorus of praise which had appeared in all the newspapers concerning the Duke, who was known to be a good man, and deserved to be a very happy one. Having spoken of the bride's mother, the Countess of Loudoun, whose memory would ever be affectionately cherished in that town, he said he felt sure that the Duchess would follow the example of both her parents. The toast was received with much enthusiasm, and a portion of the wedding cake, which had been expressly brought from the breakfast-table in Upper Grosvenor-street, London was handed round. The health of Mr. Abney-Hastings, the Lord of the Manor, was then proposed by the Rev. J. Denton, Vicar of Ashby-de-la-Zouch, who spoke in high praise of the manner in which Mr. Abney-Hastings and the late Countess of Loudoun had succeeded at no small sacrifice in preserving from the hands of strangers the family estates. The healths of the Earl of Loudoun, the Hon. Paulyn Hastings, and the younger members of the Hastings family were proposed and duly honoured. Other toasts followed, and the company separated at a late hour.

TREAT TO COLLIERS' WIVES.

The wives of the colliers in the employ of Mr. Abney-Hastings at Moira and the neighbouring collieries, to the number of several hundred, were entertained at a good, substantial tea (through the kindness of Mr. Hastings) in the new schoolroom at Moira. Neither trouble nor expense had been spared in adding comfort to those invited. The room had been gaily decorated with flags, banners, evergreens, and various devices, and it presented quite a festive appearance. To add to the pleasure of those present, gas had been laid down for upwards of half a mile. A thoroughly enjoyable evening was spent. Before separating, hearty cheers were called for, and enthusiastically given, for the health and happiness of the newly-married pair. Cheers were also given for Mr. Abney-Hastings and family in a very hearty manner.

GIFTS TO THE AGED AND INFIRM.

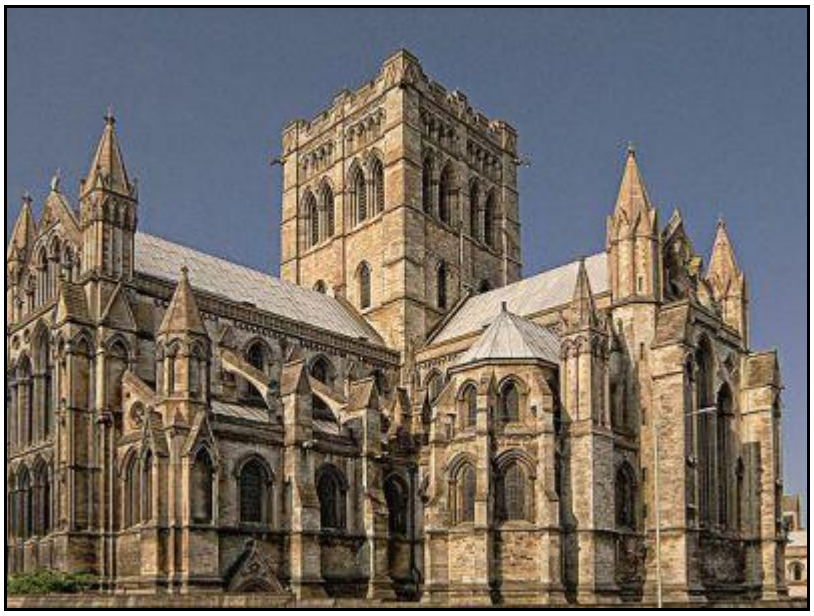
The poor had not been forgotten. Mr. Hastings had taken especial care of this, for Mr. James Thompson, the indefatigable steward at Donington Park, had received Mr. Hastings' order to ascertain the names and addresses of every aged and infirm woman, not only in Castle Donington, but in the villages around—Tonge, Breedon, Wilson, and **Griffydam**—and to each of these, whether tenants or not, was delivered one pound of tea. The thanks of the

poor and their well-wishes for the future health and happiness of the newly-married pair were not less ardent than those of others.

BALL AT DONINGTON PARK.

What might be termed the final scene in the great wedding festivities on the Derbyshire side of the country was a grand ball to the servants in the employ of Mr. Abney-Hastings, which was arranged to take place at Donington Park on Thursday evening. A sumptuous dinner had been provided, followed by a ball in the servants' hall at the mansion.

St. John the Baptist Cathedral, Norwich



Constructed between 1882 and 1910, the cathedral was originally designed by George Gilbert Scott Jr. and later completed by his brother, John Oldrid Scott, after George's early death. **Funded by Henry Fitzalan-Howard, 15th Duke of Norfolk, as a gesture of gratitude for his marriage to Lady Flora Abney-Hastings,** the cathedral stands on the site of the former Norwich City Gaol. It was initially a parish church dedicated to John the Baptist but was elevated to cathedral status in 1976.