

LORD RIBBLESDALE DEAD; LINE EXTINCT

New York Times

Thursday 22 October 1925

Widow Was the First Wife of the Late John Jacob Astor, Formerly Miss Willing

BARON LOST SONS IN WAR

Aristocratic Appearance Drew Compliment From King Edward---Lady Oxford Kin by Marriage

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By Wireless to THE NEW YORK TIMES

LONDON, Oct. 21--- Lord Ribblesdale, who wed in 1919 the late John Jacob Astor's first wife, the former Miss Ava L. Willing, known as Mrs. John Astor after she had divorced the New Yorker, died this morning at his mansion in Grosvenor Square at the age of 71.

His two sons had been killed in wars, and the barony is now extinct. He gave to the National Gallery as a memorial to his sons a portrait of himself in hunter's costume, done by Sargent.

Admired by King Edward

King Edward VII is credited with having pointed out Lord Ribblesdale to the great portrait painter Sargent as a particularly fine type of British aristocrat, blending in appearance and bearing the modernity of this century with all that was courtly and gracious in the Victorian period. It was because of his picturesque stateliness and the impression that he gave of having stepped out of a family portrait that the late King bestowed on him the soubriquet [sic] "The Ancestor."

Thomas Lister, fourth Lord Ribblesdale, succeeded to his title in 1876. From 1880 to 1885 he was a Lord-in-Waiting to Queen Victoria, and from 1892 to 1895 Master of Buckhounds. In 1887 he married Charlotte Tennant, sister of Margot Asquith, now the Countess of Oxford and Asquith, and daughter of Sir Charles Tennant. The first Lady Ribblesdale died in 1911.

The death of Lord Ribblesdale's [sic] second son at Gallipoli during the World War left him without male heir. The elder son, Captain the Hon. Thomas Lister of the Tenth Hussars, fell in the Somaliland expedition in 1904. Lord Ribblesdale also had three daughters.

Marriage to Mrs. Astor a Surprise

Many times after the death of his first wife Lord Ribblesdale was reported engaged. His marriage to the former Mrs. John Jacob Astor, however, came as a surprise. Mrs. Astor, who was Ava L. Willing, a noted Philadelphia beauty, divorced her first husband in 1910. He subsequently married Madeline Force of this city and was drowned in the Titanic disaster. The first Mrs. Astor, who is the mother of Vincent Astor, then went to England, taking with her her daughter, Alice Muriel, who on July 24, 1924, was married to Prince Serge Obolensky of Russia.

The marriage of Mrs. Astor and Lord Ribblesdale took place so quietly in St Mary's Church, Brandon Square, London, in June, 1810, that even her servants were not aware of it.

For the last few years Lord Ribblesdale had been in ill health, which had been aggravated by the failure of the City Equitable Fire Insurance Company Ltd., of London, of which he was a director. Although he had had little actual connection with the firm, he subscribed with General Sir Douglas Dawson, another director, to a salvage fund of \$1,500,000.

Throughout his life Lord Ribblesdale clung to old-fashioned dress and customs. He was an all-around sportsman, being especially fond of hunting and boxing. His high, square hat, wide stock tie, eccentric manner of speaking, and inclination to use high sounding and sonorous words early stamped him as a man of personality.

Courtesy of Mark Baber

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