

# **Dictionary of National Biography, 1885-1900, Volume 47 — Ramsay, George (1806-1880)**

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**1896**

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**RAMSAY, GEORGE**, twelfth EARL OF DALHOUSIE (1806–1880), admiral, second son of John, the fourth son of George Ramsay, eighth earl of Dalhousie, was born on 26 April 1806. He entered the navy in December December 1820, served in the Cambrian and Euryalus frigates in the Mediterranean, and on the South American station in the Doris, from which, on 30 April 1827, he was promoted to be lieutenant of the Heron brig. He afterwards served in the Ganges, the flagship of Sir Robert Otway at Rio, and in the Orestes, on the coast of Ireland; was for three years first lieutenant of the Nimrod on the Lisbon station; and in the Rodney, in the Mediterranean, from November 1835 till his promotion to the rank of commander on 10 Jan. 1837. From August 1838 to August 1842 he commanded the Pilot brig in the West Indies, and on 20 March 1843 was advanced to post rank. From August 1849 to the end of 1852 he commanded the Alarm of 26 guns on the North American and West Indian station, and in December 1853 commissioned the Euryalus, a new screw frigate, then considered one of the finest ships in the navy. During the two following years he commanded her in the Baltic. On 4 Feb. 1856 he was nominated a C.B., and on the conclusion of peace with Russia was sent, still in the Euryalus, to the West Indies, whence he returned in the spring of 1857. He was then appointed superintendent of Pembroke dockyard, where he continued till September 1862. On 22 Nov. 1862 he was promoted to the rank of rear-admiral, and from 1866 to 1869, with his flag in the Narcissus, was commander-in-

chief on the east coast of South America. He became vice-admiral on 17 March 1869, and admiral, on the retired list, on 20 July 1875. On 6 July 1874, by the death of his cousin, Fox Maule, eleventh earl of Dalhousie [q. v.] without issue, he succeeded to the title, and on 12 June 1875 was created Baron Ramsay in the peerage of the United Kingdom. He died suddenly at Dalhousie Castle, Mid-Lothian, on 20 July 1880. He married, on 12 Aug. 1845, Sarah Frances, only daughter of William Robertson of Logan House, Mid-Lothian, and left issue. His eldest son,

RAMSAY, JOHN WILLIAM, thirteenth EARL OF DALHOUSIE (1847–1887), entered the navy in January 1861, and having passed his examination with unparalleled brilliancy, was promoted to the rank of lieutenant on 12 April 1867. He was then appointed flag-lieutenant to his father in the *Narcissus*, but it is doubtful if he ever joined her, being lent to the *Galatea*, then commanded by the Duke of Edinburgh, with whom he remained till the ship was paid off in the summer of 1871. In September 1872 he joined the Lord Warden as flag-lieutenant of Sir Hastings Yelverton [q. v.], the commander-in-chief in the Mediterranean, and, on Yelverton's striking his flag, was promoted to be commander, 4 March 1874. For the next three years he was equerry to the Duke of Edinburgh, and from April 1877 to August 1879 was commander of the *Britannia* training ship of naval cadets. After this he virtually retired from the navy, and devoted himself to study and politics. He had matriculated at Balliol College, Oxford, on 20 Oct. 1875,

and spent some months there as an undergraduate. In February 1880 he was a candidate for Liverpool in a by-election, as an advanced liberal and a follower of Mr. Gladstone, but was defeated, mainly, it was said, by the influence of his father, who was a staunch conservative. In the general election of 1880 he was returned as the minority member for Liverpool unopposed with two conservatives; but by his father's death on 20 July was called to the House of Lords. In September he was appointed one of the queen's lords in waiting; in November 1881 he was nominated a knight of the Thistle. In January 1883 he spent some weeks in Ireland as one of a royal commission to inquire into the state of the country, and came back, in his own words, 'even more impressed than I was before I went with the serious state of discontent, quite apart from outrages, which seems to pervade all Ireland out of Ulster.' This impression led him to support Mr. Gladstone's home rule policy in 1886, and in March he joined the liberal ministry as secretary for Scotland in succession to Mr. (later Sir George) Trevelyan, resigning with his colleagues in July.

He married, in December 1877, Lady Ida Louise Bennet, daughter of the sixth Earl of Tankerville, who was also active in political society. In 1887 he and his wife made a prolonged tour through the United States. They arrived at Havre in feeble health on their return voyage in November. On the 24th the countess's illness proved fatal, and Dalhousie, unable to bear the shock, died the next morning.

The bodies were buried in the family vault in Cockpen parish church. They left issue two sons.

[Times, 21 July 1880, 28 Nov. 2 Dec. 1887; Ann. Register, 1887, pt. ii. p. 161; O'Byrne's Nav. Biogr. Dict.; Navy Lists; Foster's Peerage; personal knowledge.]

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