

CHAPTER

B9

The BECK Family

“ Swiss Maid ”

The BECK family is one of those lines where we have made little progress in terms of research. Our GG-Grandmother was **Suzette Cecilia Beck**. Some of this is guesswork, but we believe that she probably came over to England as the servant of a fairly wealthy family.

Today, if one refers to someone as a servant, it is probably considered to be a lowly job. However, this was not the case in former times. Up to the early 20thC, it was common for wealthy families to have a large household of servants and being “in service “ was considered to be a lifelong occupation of good standing, with the “downstairs” servants being a community within itself. The head of the servants’ household was the butler and there was a whole hierarchy of service roles - valets, footmen, ladies’ maids, housemaids, kitchen maids, etc.

We first encountered Suzette Cecilia Beck whilst searching for her daughter, Charlotte Louisa Tyler, who we knew to have been born in Slaugham, Sussex. Anyway, here is what we know.

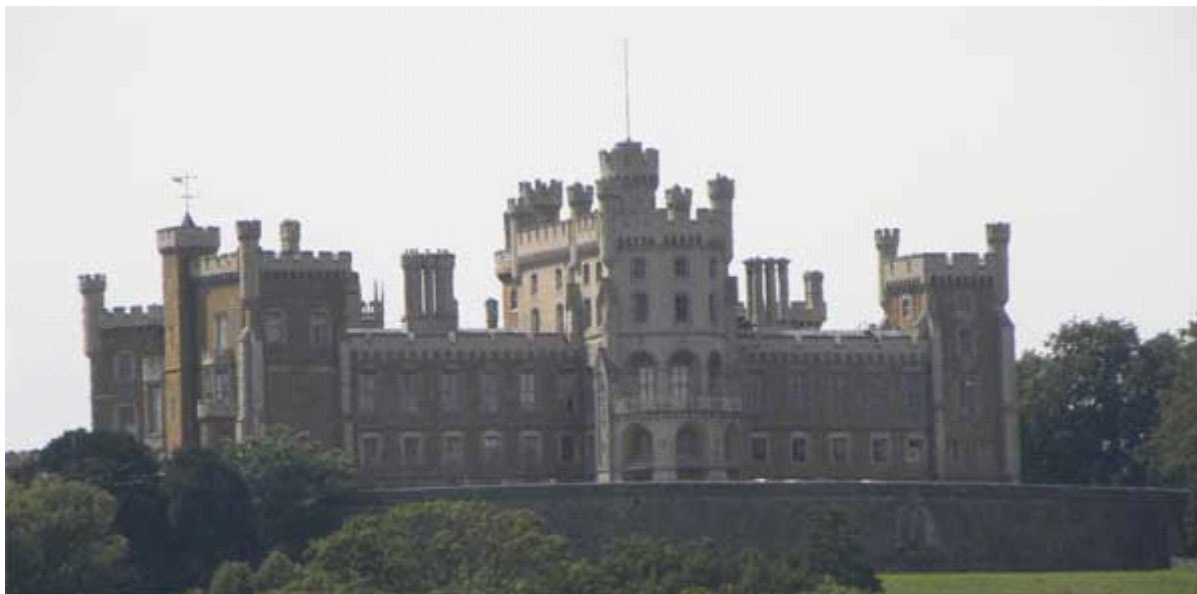
Suzette Cecilia Beck (b. circa 1830 - 1895)

Suzette Beck (or just Cecilia as she later became to be known) was born around 1830 in Switzerland. She was the daughter of Daniel Beck. She married Frederick George Tyler, probably in the later 1850s.

In the 1861 census, we find our GG-Grandfather, **Frederick George Tyler**, as the head of a household living at Ashfold Lodge, Slaugham, Sussex where he was “in service” as a Butler for William Peters (a Banker, from St.Georges, London) who resided in the main Ashfold House.

Living with Frederick in Ashfold Lodge were his wife, **Suzette Cecilia Tyler** who was described as a naturalised British Subject and worked as the Lodge Keeper, and their young daughter **Charlotte**, aged 2. Also living with them was **Louisa Beck**, a Lady’s Maid. Both Suzette Cecilia and Louisa were of a similar age and both were born in Switzerland. Given that Charlotte was christened with a middle name of Louisa, it is probably a fair assumption that Suzette Cecilia and Louisa were sisters and that their family name was Beck.

Frederick died in 1868 in St.Georges, London, presumably whilst working in his role as a Butler, as his widow, Cecilia, was subsequently listed in the 1871 census in service as a Housemaid at St.George, Hannover Square, London. This was the residence of Alexander Cochrane, a Member of Parliament.



Belvoir Castle

The home of the Duke of Rutland

Cecilia Tyler (Beck) was listed as “in service” at the castle in the 1881 Census

At the time of the 1881 census, Cecilia was listed amongst the servants at Belvoir Castle at Grantham, Lincolnshire. The head of the household was the Duke of Rutland, but also listed at the Castle on the day of the census was Lord Lamington (named as A.B. Cochrane-Baillei) and his wife, Lady Lamington, who was also identified as the neice of the Duke of Rutland. A.B.Cochrane-Baillei is the same person as the Alexander Cochrane for whom Cecilia had worked “in service” in the 1871 census. So, even though Cecilia was listed as a Housekeeper at Belvoir Castle, it is likely that the Lamingtons were “just visiting” and Cecilia was a servant of the Lamingtons rather than the Duke.

Alexander Cochrane-Baillei was a prominent Conservative politician who had served as a Member of Parliament since 1841, representing various constituencies such as Bridport, Lanarkshire, Honiton and the Isle of Wight. In 1880, he gained the title of 1st Baron Lamington and his political career continued in the House of Lords. He also inherited the family estate of Lamington in Lanarkshire. In addition to a large area of land, it included the residence of Lamington House and that became their primary residence.



In the 1891 census, Cecilia is recorded as being the Housekeeper for the Lamingtons, living at Lamington House in the small Scottish village of Lamington. She died in 1895, aged 65 years. Her death registration indicates that the cause of death was "gall stones" and 4 days Syncope. This suggests that she was unconscious for 4 days prior to death. Cecilia was buried in the local churchyard at Lamington and the inscription on her gravestone reads

"Cecilia Tyler, Faithful Servant at Lamington for 29 Years,
Died 20.10.1895".

Regarding the early life of the Beck sisters (Suzette Cecilia and Louisa), so far we have discovered little, other than the fact that they were born in Switzerland and their father was **Daniel Beck**. At some time it may be worth trying to follow this lineage, but it would require access to Swiss records. At the moment, we do not have that access.

The full name of Cecilia's sister was **Louisa Leontine Beck**. In 1861 she married **Adolph Otto Hartnagl** and the marriage was registered in Hannover Square, St. Georges. This suggests that, at the time, she was still "in service" with her employers. Soon after marriage the Hartnagl family emigrated to Canada, settling in the city of Victoria, the capital of British Columbia. It was here that they had a number of children, all registered in Victoria. Otto became the joint proprietor of Driard House (Hotel) - see photo below. Otto died in 1883 and was buried in Ross Bay Cemetery in Victoria..

