



Lady Almina and the Real Downton Abbey: The Lost Legacy of Highclere Castle

By Countess of Fiona Carnarvon

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The real-life inspiration and setting for Julian Fellowes's Emmy Award-winning PBS show *Downton Abbey*, *Lady Almina and the Real Downton Abbey* tells the story behind Highclere Castle and the life of one of its most famous inhabitants, Lady Almina, the 5th Countess of Carnarvon.

Drawing on a rich store of materials from the archives of Highclere Castle, including diaries, letters, and photographs, the current Lady Carnarvon has written a transporting story of this fabled home on the brink of war. Much like her *Masterpiece Classic* counterpart, Lady Cora Crawley, Lady Almina was the daughter of a wealthy industrialist, Alfred de Rothschild, who married his daughter off at a young age, her dowry serving as the crucial link in the effort to preserve the Earl of Carnarvon's ancestral home. Throwing open the doors of Highclere Castle to tend to the wounded of World War I, Lady Almina distinguished herself as a brave and remarkable woman.

This rich tale contrasts the splendor of Edwardian life in a great house against the backdrop of the First World War and offers an inspiring and revealing picture of the woman at the center of the history of Highclere Castle.

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Editorial Review

Review

A NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER

“Almina was a woman of great charm and courage.”

—New York Times Book Review

“The more interesting and entertaining book is *Lady Almina and the Real Downton Abbey: The Lost Legacy of Highclere Castle*. Written by the castle's current countess, Lady Fiona Carnarvon, the Eighth Countess of Carnarvon and great-granddaughter-in-law of Lady Almina, the book is a fascinating look at the woman of the house who turned her castle into a hospital for wounded British soldiers returning from World War I. (It corresponds perfectly with this season's war story line on *Downton Abbey*.)”

—USA Today

“Gives the juicy backstory behind last year's Emmy-winning 'Masterpiece Theater' drama.”

—New York Times

“If you can't wait for the new season of 'Downton Abbey'...this one's for you....a revealing portrait of the changing times.”

—New York Post

“[A] fascinating insight into how the seriously rich once lived.”

—Newsweek Daily Beast

“The present Lady Carnarvon, who tapped the family archives for her comprehensive research, dramatically captures the estate during the pre-war and war years, and paints a compelling...portrait of Lady Almina.”

—Newark Star-Ledger

About the Author

FIONA, *New York Times* bestselling author and the 8th Countess of CARNARVON, married Geordie, the 8th Earl of Carnarvon, in 1999, and aceded to Highclere ten years ago upon the death of Geordie's father. Highclere has become one of the most famous houses in England as the location for the PBS series *Downton Abbey*. She is also the author of the companion piece, *Lady Catherine, the Earl, and the Real Downton Abbey*.

Users Review

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Kevin Caputo:

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