

# Obituary

Earl of Mansfield



**RICH HISTORY:** Lord and Lady Mansfield outside Scone Palace. He was a personal friend and regular host to the late Queen Mother and other members of the royal family.

## Earl of Mansfield, landowner and politician, dies aged 85

FORMER politician and one of Scotland's richest landowners, the Earl of Mansfield, has died at the age of 85.

William David Mungo James Murray, the 8th Earl of Mansfield, owned the Scone Palace estate and was a personal friend and regular host to the late Queen Mother and other members of the royal family.

He died peacefully on Wednesday at Logie House,

Logiealmond in Perthshire. The funeral will take place at St John's Kirk in Perth on Friday and will be followed by a memorial service at Scone Palace.

Born on July 7, 1930, William, Lord Mansfield, was the only son of Mungo Murray, 7th Earl of Mansfield, and his wife Dorothea. Then Viscount Stormont, he was educated at Eton College and afterwards read Law at

Christ Church, Oxford. Between 1949 and 1950, the peer served his national service with the Scots Guards in Malaya. After this he was called to the bar, Inner Temple, in 1958. As an English barrister, the Earl developed an extensive common law practice from 1958 until 1971.

On his father's death in 1971, William succeeded as Earl of Mansfield and shortly

thereafter took up the first of several political roles.

With his wife Pamela, he had three children; Alexander, Viscount Stormont, 59, who will succeed him to the title, Lady Georgina Bullough and the Hon James Murray.

The Earl was a keen observer of Scone Palace's rich history and its role as the former crowning seat of Scottish kings.

The Earl ensured that a replica of the Stone of Destiny was placed in the palace grounds for the public to visit and he also commissioned replicas of the Crown jewels for visitors to view.

He was appointed a member of the first British delegation to the European Parliament from 1973 to 1975, and was an opposition spokesman in the House of Lords from 1975 to 1979.

This was followed by serving as a Minister of State in the Scottish Office in Margaret Thatcher's Conservative administration and then in the Northern Ireland Office.

Lord Mansfield was appointed an Honorary Sheriff for Perthshire in 1974. He became a Justice of the Peace in 1975 and was called to be a Deputy Lord Lieutenant for Perth and Kinross in 1980.

# The Earl of Mansfield

## Landowner and politician

Born: July 7 1930;

Died: October 21 2015.

THE Earl of Mansfield, who has died aged 85, was a prominent nobleman, lawyer and landowner, and a Minister of State, first in the Scottish Office and then in the Northern Ireland Office, in Margaret Thatcher's government.

The family seat is Scone Palace, the traditional coronation site for the Kings of Scotland from at least the 9th century; the eighth Earl also conformed to the pattern of his ancestors in his career as both a lawyer and a Tory politician.

William David Mungo James Murray was, technically, both the seventh and the eighth Earl of Mansfield, since the title had two distinct creations. The Earl-



dom of Mansfield in Nottingham was created in 1776 for the Scottish lawyer William Murray, who had held its barony since 1756, when he became Lord Chief Justice. In 1792, he also became Earl of Mansfield of Caen Wood, Middlesex. The titles descended

through different branches of the family until the fourth earl of the 1792 creation, a Treasury peer in Sir Robert Peel's government, inherited the earlier title from his grandmother, thus becoming its third earl, in 1843.

Although the barony of Mansfield died out in 1793, the family had no shortage of other titles. Until succeeding on his father's death in 1971, William Murray was styled Lord Scone and Viscount Stormont; thereafter he was also Baron Balvaird, Hereditary Keeper of Bruce's Castle of Lochmaben, Honorary Sheriff for Perthshire (from 1974) and Deputy Lieutenant for Perth and Kinross (1980). In the Jacobite Peerage he could count himself Earl of Dunbar, Viscount Drumcairn and Baron Hall-dykes. He was born on July 7, 1930, the

only son of the 7th Earl and his wife Dorothea. Murray was educated at Eton and served in the Scots Guards during the Malaya Emergency from 1949-50. After National Service, he went up to Christ Church, Oxford to read law.

In 1955 he married Pamela Foster, with whom he had two sons and a daughter, and in 1958 was called to the English Bar at Inner Temple. During the 1960s he built a successful practice as a barrister.

His maiden speech in the House of Lords in 1972 drew on this experience; he argued that compensation orders should be more widespread and victims should have a say in the proceedings.

From 1973 until 1975, before the creation of elected MEPs, he served as a member of the British delegation to the European Parliament, and was an oppo-

sition spokesman in the Lords from 1975 until 1979. During the progress of the Scotland Bill dealing with the proposed Assembly, he raised issues ranging from the rules of statutory interpretation to the position of the Atholl Highlanders. In common with many Tories at the time, Mansfield was in favour of devolution in principle, but opposed to the Bill.

He became a minister after the 1979 election; in addition to his legal expertise, he handled the government's response on topics from forestry to fisheries, to prison conditions, energy provision and the fate of barnacle geese on Islay. His wife, sons and daughter survive him.

**ANDREW MCKIE**