

## Lord Fenimore's death: accident, suicide or murder?

After a few weeks' investigation, Inspector Dryfather closed the case and his conclusion was: accidental death.

And yet, a lot of clues indicated that the explanation was not as simple as that...

Study those clues and find out what really happened...

### 1. Westmorland Castle

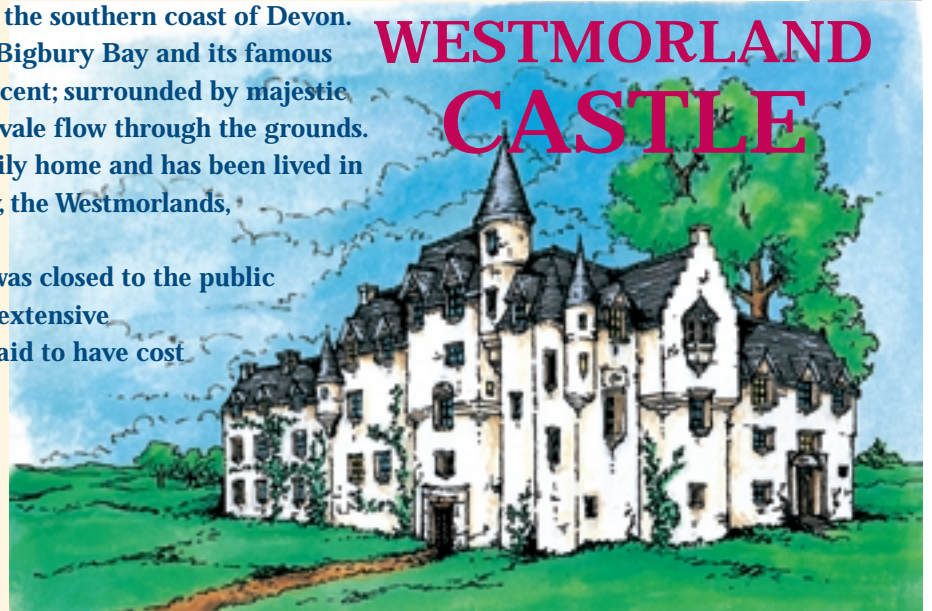
This is a leaflet (*dépliant*) about Westmorland Castle, published in July 1952 by the *Tourist Information Office* in Kingsbridge. Inspector Dryfather seemed to be quite interested in it... Can you guess why?

**W**estmorland is one of the most beautiful and romantic castles on the southern coast of Devon. It lies not far from Bigbury Bay and its famous Dark Cliffs. The setting is magnificent; surrounded by majestic hills, the waters of the river Willervale flow through the grounds. Westmorland is a much-loved family home and has been lived in continuously by its original family, the Westmorlands, since 1546.

**W**estmorland Castle was closed to the public three years ago for extensive repairs, which are said to have cost

its present owner, Lord Fenimore Westmorland, more than £500,000.

It is now open again (by appointment) on Saturday afternoons (2 pm-6 pm) from Easter to 30th September (admission free – no cars/coaches allowed in the grounds). Telephone: 01803 863010.



#### Toolbox

**Nouns:** face look *regard* • moustache, beard [brəd] • forehead [ˈfɒrɪd] *front*, lips, cheeks *joues*, • complexion *teint*, wrinkles *rides*.

**Adjectives:** hair: dark, brown, fair *blond*, grey, bald [bɔ:ld] *chauve* • nose: sharp *pointu* • skin *peau*: white, pale, tanned *bronzé*, dark • grey-haired, blue-eyed, dark-skinned... • good-looking, attractive, pretty [ˈprɪtɪ] *belle [pour une femme]* • ugly • strange / nice / sinister-looking.

**Verbs:** look + adj. *sembler*, seem to V.

### 2. The suspects



The seven characters on page 79 were all in or near Westmorland Castle the day Lord Fenimore died. As Inspector Dryfather suspected all of them, he gathered (*recueilli*) some information about them at the beginning of his investigation.

1. **Observe** the suspects, read the notes about them and use the *Toolbox* to describe them.
2. **Listen** to Inspector Dryfather's interview of two suspects, Angus Westmorland and Sean Mortimer. Use the worksheets in the *Student's Workbook*.

**3. Now it's up to you** to interview the five other suspects...

To do so, you will have to use:

- a. The notes you took during the interviews of Angus Westmorland and Sean Mortimer.
- b. The information Inspector Dryfather gathered about these five suspects.
- c. The role cards in the *Student's Workbook*.
- d. The *Toolbox*.

- 1. steady: *stable* – 2. gambler: *joueur* – 3. racecourses: *champs de courses* –
- 4. own: *posséder* – 5. wedding: *mariage* – 6. despite: *malgré* – 7. forgive [fɔ'gɪv] [forgave, forgiven]: *pardonner* – 8. devoted: *dévoué* – 9. groom: *palefrenier* –
- 10. housekeeper: *gouvernante* – 11. rent: *louer*



**Angus WESTMORLAND, 50**

- has never had a steady<sup>1</sup> job in his whole life.
- compulsive gambler<sup>2</sup> (and loser...): spends most of his time on the racecourses<sup>3</sup> or in casinos.
- was disinherited by his father when he married Lulu Belle Doolittle in 1932 (divorced in 1933; never remarried).



**Sean MORTIMER, 48**

- Lord Fenimore's long-time friend (met him in India).
- owned<sup>4</sup> several tea plantations near Calcutta; lost all his fortune in 1947, when India became independent.
- was often invited to Westmorland Castle.
- never married (was secretly in love with Lady Isabella).



**Rajiv SINGH, 50**

- was Lord Fenimore's servant in India.
- followed his master to South Devon in 1946, when Lord Fenimore retired.
- has a wife and children in India, but never talks about them.
- very secretive man.



**Derek VANDERBILT, Jr, 26**

- inherited his mother's fortune when she died.
- met and married Princess Devi in India in 1946.
- lives in London with his wife and three-year-old daughter Durga.



**Princess DEVI, 26**

- only daughter of the Maharajah of Midnapore (Province of Calcutta).
- met Derek at his mother's wedding<sup>5</sup> ceremony and married him two weeks later, despite<sup>6</sup> her father's wishes.
- sometimes travels to India to see her father, who forgave<sup>7</sup> her when Durga was born.



**Paul LITTLEJOHN, 70**

- American: half white, half Sioux Indian.
- served Isabella all his life and was devoted<sup>8</sup> to her.
- taught Isabella to ride when she was five.
- followed Isabella to South Devon when she got married.
- after Isabella's death, asked Lord Fenimore to keep him on as a groom<sup>9</sup>.



**Millicent PETTICOAT, 72**

- has known Lord Fenimore and Angus since they were children.
- has been Lord Fenimore's housekeeper<sup>10</sup> since he came back from India.
- lives with her husband Fergus at "Sunnyside", a cottage she rents<sup>11</sup> from Lord Fenimore.

**Gap-fillers**

Pour ces cinq interviews, vous aurez besoin de quelques **gap-fillers**, mots et expressions très utiles pour:

- **Demander à quelqu'un de répéter** → *Pardon?*... [pa:'dɒn] – *Sorry, I didn't understand...* – *Would/Could you say that again?...*
- **Vérifier que vous avez compris** → *So...* – *Does that mean that...?* – *Do you mean that...?*
- **Dire les choses différemment** → *In other words...* – ... or *rather* [rɪ:'ðɔ] plutôt... – *What I mean is...* – *I mean...* – *That's to say...*
- **Vous donner le temps de réfléchir** → *Well, er...* – *Let me see/think...* – *Just a moment...* – ... you see... – ... you know...
- **Vérifier que l'on vous a compris** → ... *if you see what I mean...* – *Do you see/know what I mean?...*