

TRIVIA

How much do you know about Downton Abbey?

Family, Servants, Etc.

1. What historic event launches the plot of *Downton Abbey*?

- A. The end of the Boer War
- B. The death of Queen Victoria
- C. Halley's Comet
- D. The sinking of the *Titanic*

Answer: D. The *Titanic* sank in the early hours of April 15, 1912, after hitting an iceberg. Among the missing was James Crawley, first cousin of Robert, Earl of Grantham. James was heir to the earldom, the estate, and the family fortune. Also presumed drowned was James's only son, Patrick, who was the fiancé of Lady Mary, eldest daughter of Robert and his wife, Cora.

2. Matthew Crawley is the new heir to Downton Abbey. What is his relationship to Robert?

- A. Half-nephew
- B. Third cousin, once removed
- C. Illegitimate son
- D. No relation. Matthew is a newly-made earl

Answer: B. Third cousin, once removed (in the male line) means that Matthew's father and Robert share the same great-great grandfather.

3. What is Matthew's occupation?

- A. Solicitor
- B. Barrister
- C. Doctor
- D. Newspaper editor

Answer: A. Matthew is a solicitor, specializing in company law. In the British system, a solicitor deals with legal matters apart from advocacy in court, which is the function of a barrister.

4. What was Carson's occupation before rising to butler at Downton Abbey?

- A. Song-and-dance man
- B. Batman to Robert in the Boer War
- C. Maître d'
- D. Farmer

Answer: A. In the 1890s, Carson (whose first name is Charles) was in a double act called "The Cheerful Charlies." He offers his resignation out of shame when the other Charlie shows up to blackmail him. Amused by the revelation, Robert refuses to let Carson leave.

5. To what does Carson refer when he tells Robert, "I would rather be put to death, my lord!"

- A. Opening a tea shop in retirement
- B. Tidying up the room where the Turkish diplomat Mr. Pamuk has died
- C. Assigning a maid to wait on a duke
- D. Expressing his true feelings for the head housekeeper, Mrs. Hughes

Answer: A. Robert has just remarked that Branson's predecessor as chauffeur has "gone off to run a tea shop."

6. Gwen, one of the housemaids, wants to become a secretary. After multiple interviews, where does she finally land a job?

- A. With Sir Richard Carlisle's newspaper empire
- B. With the telephone company
- C. In a solicitor's office
- D. She becomes pregnant and has to give up her dream

Answer B. Lack of experience leads to several rejections for Gwen. But when a telephone company manager comes to Downton Abbey to arrange phone service, he is impressed with her because she is a hardworking housemaid, just as his mother was. He hires her.

7. What is the name of Robert's big white dog, seen in the opening credits and starring in the last episode of Season 2?

- A. Moby Dick
- B. Isis
- C. Anastasia
- D. Sita

Answer: B. Actually, Isis is a big *yellow* dog—a yellow Labrador. In the final episode of Season 2, Thomas, the footman, hides Isis so that he can find her and curry favor with Robert. A village boy discovers the missing dog, but Thomas's distress over the pooch earns him the job of Robert's valet.

8. At the flower show, who is the judges' choice for the Best Bloom in the Village Award?

- A. William Molesley, father of Matthew's valet
- B. Lady Mary
- C. Violet, Dowager Countess of Grantham, Robert's mother
- D. Isobel, Matthew's mother

Answer: C. As a matter of tradition, Violet wins every year since she is the matriarch of the community. She also gets to announce the award. At the show, the judges once again choose her. But when she reads aloud their decision, she substitutes William Molesley's name for her own—having been persuaded by Isobel and others that the old man has been unfairly denied the prize for years.

9. What trick (or tricks) does the lady's maid O'Brien play on Ethel, the new housemaid?

- A. Poisoning her stew
- B. Sending her a forged love letter from Major Bryant
- C. Making her barge in on the Crawleys in the drawing room
- D. Having her check the electric plugs for "vapors"

Answer: C and D. According to Carson's strict protocol, only footmen and the butler (i.e., men) are allowed to serve at upstairs gatherings. As for electricity—then few people knew exactly what it was.

10. What fashion statement of Lady Sybil's shocks her family?

- A. She gives up corsets
- B. She sports a man's tuxedo at the servants' ball
- C. She wears jodhpurs to tea
- D. She appears for dinner wearing harem pants

Answer: D. Forward thinking in fashion as well as politics, Sybil, youngest daughter of Robert and Cora, dons blue silk chiffon trousers after the style of the Ballet Russe, which inspired a vogue for the harem look. She completes the outfit with a blue peacock bodice, gold net sleeves, a beaded belt, and a stunning headpiece.

11. What happens to Henry Lang, Bates's replacement as Robert's valet?

- A. He is ensnared in the blackmail plot related to the Pamuk scandal
- B. Shell shock from the war makes him unfit for the job
- C. He is caught stealing wine and dismissed
- D. Sir Richard Carlisle hires him for his new house

Answer: B. What is now called post-traumatic stress disorder was little recognized before World War I. The ferocity of bombardment on the Western Front made cases of "shell shock" common among survivors.

The Pamuk Affair

12. What is Dr. Clarkson’s ruling on the cause of death of Mr. Pamuk, the Turkish diplomat?

- A. Likely heart attack
- B. Strangulation
- C. Stroke
- D. Appendicitis

Answer: A. There is no sign of foul play in the demise of the amorous young Turk, who expired in the arms of Lady Mary. She tells her stunned mother, “he was alive and suddenly he cried out and then he was dead!”

13. What source lies behind Vera’s knowledge of the Pamuk scandal, which she uses to blackmail her husband, Bates?

- A. Daisy, the kitchen maid
- B. Lady Edith, Robert and Cora’s middle daughter
- C. Lady Flintshire, Robert’s cousin
- D. All of the above

Answer: D. Daisy, who observed Pamuk’s body being carried away, told Lady Edith. Edith secretly wrote the Turkish ambassador. The ambassador’s wife made the story the subject of general gossip in London. Vera heard about it from the maid of Lady Flintshire, who was keen on the scandal because it involved family. Vera was working for Lady Flintshire at the time, having used her estranged husband’s employment with the Crawleys to get the job.

14. At the end of Season 2, Lady Mary and her lady’s maid, Anna (who has married Bates), are set to go to New York. Which facts change their plans?

- A. Bates’s death sentence for murdering Vera is commuted to life in prison
- B. Sir Richard Carlisle promises not to publish the scandal about Mr. Pamuk
- C. The ship they are to take hits an iceberg and sinks
- D. Matthew proposes to Mary

Answer: A and D. One premise behind the New York plan is that as soon as Mary breaks off her engagement to Sir Richard, he will retaliate by publishing the Pamuk scandal. The other premise is that Bates will hang for murder. A prolonged overseas trip will allow both women to escape the ensuing publicity. Bates’s reprieve means that Anna will stay to pursue his exoneration. Meanwhile, Matthew’s proposal and indifference to the Pamuk matter mean that Mary has no reason to leave the country. Sir Richard doesn’t reveal whether he will break the news about Pamuk.

Medical Matters

15. What medical authority correctly diagnoses Molesley's hand ailment?

- A. Dr. Clarkson
- B. Isobel
- C. Violet
- D. Lady Sybil

Answer: C. First diagnosed by Isobel (a former nurse) as erysipelas, the condition does not respond to treatment. When Violet sees Molesley's hand, she immediately recognizes the problem as a rue allergy, not erysipelas. She advises Molesley to wear gloves while gardening.

16. In Season 1, Isobel convinces Dr. Clarkson to use a new treatment to save the life of John Drake, a local workman. Drake shows up again in Season 2. In what context?

- A. As the farmer who kisses his tractor driver, Lady Edith
- B. As a client of the soup kitchen run by Mrs. Bird, Isobel's cook
- C. As a fellow army medic in the trenches with Thomas
- D. As recipient of a "white feather of cowardice," given to men who did not enlist during the war

Answer A: Fully recovered from dropsy of the heart, Drake is nonetheless impeded in his farm work by his inability to drive a tractor. Having learned to drive from Branson, Edith volunteers her services. The two hit it off to the brink of an improbable romance—until Mrs. Drake puts a stop to the relationship.

Romances

17. Why does the Duke of Crowborough, one of Lady Mary's suitors, not ask for her hand in marriage?

- A. He is gay.
- B. Mary doesn't have enough money.
- C. Mary doesn't like him.
- D. All of the above.

Answer: B. Robert refuses to break the entail that ties his fortune to the estate, which will be inherited by Matthew. Mary would therefore get only whatever additional money Robert can supply, which is not enough for the duke's needs. The duke has had a liaison with Thomas, the footman, but this does not appear to influence his marital calculation. Mary has been fond of the duke since childhood, and she is almost certainly unaware of his sexual preferences.

18. Who is Daisy's first love interest?

- A. Bates
- B. Branson
- C. William
- D. Thomas

Answer: D. Daisy's first crush is on Thomas, who reciprocates only to tease her or to spite his fellow footman, William. He and Daisy dance the "grizzly bear," and he invites her to the village fair. Daisy switches her affection to William when Thomas speaks cruelly of William's recently deceased mother, and William slugs him for it. Daisy is smitten.

19. Two Downton Abbey maids are tempted into romantic relationships outside their social class. Who are they and who are their partners?

- A. Gwen and Dr. Clarkson
- B. Ethel and Major Bryant
- C. Daisy and Sir Richard Carlisle
- D. Jane and Robert

Answer: B and D. Ethel and Major Bryant are caught in the act, and she is dismissed. He dies in the war, and she bears his child. Robert impulsively kisses Jane, and they are on the verge of an affair when he comes to his senses. They part amicably.

20. Who proposes to Mrs. Hughes, the head housekeeper?

- A. William Molesley
- B. Carson
- C. Joe Burns, a local farmer
- D. No one. She's already married.

Answer: C. "Mrs." is an honorific for head housekeepers and cooks, whether they are married or not. Mrs. Hughes has always been single. Years before, Joe Burns proposed to her. She declined and he married another woman, who has since died. When Burns and Mrs. Hughes meet at the village fair, he proposes again, with the same result.

War and Politics

21. What good luck charm does Lady Mary give Matthew when he returns to the trenches?

- A. A stuffed dog
- B. A Saint Christopher medal
- C. A rabbit's foot
- D. A lucky penny

Answer: A. The small stuffed animal apparently worked, since Matthew was carrying it when he survived a nearby shell explosion.

22. Which of Downton Abbey's staff serve as batmen in wartime?

- A. Thomas
- B. William
- C. Branson
- D. Bates

Answer: B and D. William serves as Matthew's batman in World War I. Bates was batman to Robert during the Boer War. A batman is a personal servant to an officer. The term is derived from the Old French word *bat*, meaning "packsaddle."

23. In what battle are Matthew and William wounded?

- A. Gallipoli
- B. Arras
- C. Jutland
- D. Amiens

Answer: D. The Battle of Amiens was the opening phase of the Allies' final offensive against Germany, which lasted from August to November 1918. Matthew and William were among more than one million casualties on the Allied side during the campaign, which ended with the Armistice.

24. The suicide of Lieutenant Courtenay, a wounded officer, leads to what change at Downton Abbey?

- A. Increased security
- B. Conversion to a convalescent home
- C. Thomas's dismissal
- D. Dr. Clarkson's reprimand of Lady Sybil

Answer B. Permanently blinded in a gas attack, Lieutenant Courtenay is evacuated to the military hospital near Downton Abbey, where he is befriended by Thomas and Sybil, who are on the medical staff. After a short stay, he is ordered to a distant convalescent facility by Dr. Clarkson. He kills himself out of depression over the move. Isobel and Sybil argue that by setting up a convalescent home at Downton Abbey, there can be more continuity in the care of the men.

25. A horribly disfigured officer shows up at Downton Abbey just before the end of the war. Who does he claim to be?

- A. Evelyn Napier, Mary's former suitor
- B. James Crawley, heir to Downton Abbey, lost on the *Titanic*
- C. Patrick Crawley, James's son, also lost
- D. Lord Kitchener, British field marshal, missing at sea

Answer: C. The officer claims he is Patrick Crawley, who survived the *Titanic* with amnesia and whose memory returned after an explosion on the front. In fact, he appears to be Peter Gordon, a Foreign Office friend of Patrick's. Gordon heard details about the Crawley family and the inheritance before his friend was lost on the *Titanic*.

26. Branson intends to strike a blow for Ireland when General Sir Herbert Strut comes to dine. How?

- A. He will unfurl an Irish Republican banner
- B. He has hidden a bomb in the soup terrine
- C. He will pour a foul-smelling mixture on the general
- D. He has poisoned the general's soup

Answer: C. A note to Sybil tips off the staff that Branson is about to make a scene, although no one knows how violent. Carson intercepts Branson before he can make his move. The defiant chauffeur explains that the general "would have needed a bath ... but not a funeral."

27. Violet exhorts one of her relatives to "Remember your great aunt Roberta. She loaded the guns at Lucknow!" Who is Violet addressing?

- A. Lady Mary, on her way to see her difficult fiancé, Sir Richard Carlisle
- B. Lady Edith, about to give Mary unwelcome news
- C. Lady Sybil, leaving to become a military nurse
- D. Lady Rosamond, Robert's sister, trying to split Matthew from his fiancée, Lavinia Swire

Answer: C. Traumatized by the death of so many young men in her circle, Sybil resolves to do her part for the war effort. With Isobel's help, she enrolls in a nurse training course. Lucknow was a famous siege during the Indian Rebellion of 1857.

Death and the Supernatural

28. How does Vera die?

- A. Gunshot
- B. Multiple stab wounds
- C. Rat poison
- D. Fall from height

Answer: C. Vera's death from ingesting rat poison looks like suicide. However, Bates tells his new fiancé, Anna, that months earlier he had bought the poison at Vera's request. Anna advises him to tell the police. Unfortunately, this makes the police think there are other facts that Bates is hiding, and they build a circumstantial murder case against him.

29. What is William's dying request to Daisy shortly after they have been married?

- A. Take care of my dad.
- B. Tell Matthew I'm sorry he got hurt
- C. Never forget me.
- D. He makes no dying request.

Answer: D. William passes into a coma soon after their marriage and makes no dying request.

30. At the end of the last episode of Season 2, Anna and Daisy sit down at the servants' Ouija board, where an unseen power takes hold of their hands and writes, "May they be happy. With my love." Who is the message from?

- A. Vera, Bates's deceased first wife
- B. William, Daisy's deceased husband
- C. Lavinia, Matthew's deceased fiancée
- D. Patrick Crawley, deceased heir of Downton Abbey

Answer: C?? No one can be sure about messages from the spirit world. However, Matthew proposes to Lady Mary immediately after this communication, which was presumably Lavinia's blessing.

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