

Story associated with the Jonathan Rashleigh 1820- 1905.

The author Seraphima Nickolaevna Bogomolova¹ writes about the fascinating connection between the fictional book '*Rebecca*', written by Daphne du Maurier (and later made into two movies, one directed by Alfred Hitchcock), and the Rashleigh family and their Cornwall Estate, Menabilly, and one of its secrets associated with the mother of John Cosmo Stuart Rashleigh (1872–1961) - Mary Frances Labouchere (1848–1874).

“In the mid-1920s, Daphne du Maurier, then a teenager, discovered the house (Menabilly) while on a holiday with her family in Cornwall. To her surprise John C.S. Rashleigh granted her a lease. She then set about restoring it and made it her home for twenty something years before returning it to the Rashleighs in 1969². It became the real life inspiration for her book, '*Rebecca*'.

“In real life, there were three candidates for the role of Maximilian de Winter, all coming from the Rashleigh family. They were Jonathan Rashleigh (1820–1905), Jonathan Rashleigh, jun. (1845–1872), and John Cosmo Rashleigh (1872–1961)”.

“Two out of the three men — the father and his eldest son, — successfully married within the period of a little bit more than a year. The marriage of Jonathan Rashleigh, jun., to the youngest daughter of an English banker, Mary Frances Labouchere, in November 1870, had been preceded by the second marriage of his father to an Irish heiress. On 3rd of August 1869, Jonathan Rashleigh (1820–1905) married Jane Elizabeth Pugh (1836–1902), the daughter of Arthur Pugh, of Lissadrone, Co.Mayo”¹

“The second marriage of Jonathan Rashleigh (1820–1905) was a crucial turning point in his and his eldest son’s lives. The father had become a landed proprietor, and the son — the heir to the lands in Ireland. Before that, neither owned any land, for the biggest in Cornwall estate, Menabilly, belonged to William Rashleigh (1817–1871), the older brother of Jonathan Rashleigh (1820–1905), who was still alive”.¹

“The respective matrimonial unions of the father and the son had greatly improved their financial and social status. Jonathan Rashleigh, jun., gained part of the Labouchere’s money, and his father — the lands of Arthur Pugh Esq., that his daughter had inherited being the only child of his. In both cases, the dowries of the brides had become the property of their husbands”.¹

In 1871, Jonathan Rashleigh (1820–1905) purchased the Feniton Court Estate, and about the same time his older brother William died on 31 October of that year.

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“As William had had no sons, Jonathan inherited the family’s 30,000 acres Menabilly estate in Cornwall. This turn of events made Jonathan Rashleigh’s eldest son the heir to the Menabilly Estate, the Feniton Court Estate, and the Lissadrone Estate, Co. Mayo, literally overnight”.¹

“The overnight ‘*future worldly prospects*’ that were bestowed onto the young man made his wife, Mary Frances Labouchere, the future Lady of Menabilly. In 1872, after two years of marriage, having died, Jonathan Rashleigh, jun., leaving only a third of his wife’s money”¹. Seraphima Nickolaevna Bogomolova suggests she was sharing it with her father-in law and investing in her future home. Seraphima Nickolaevna Bogomolova also describes some hints in the book ‘*Rebecca*’ that suggest a passionate connection between Mary Frances Labouchere (1848–1874) and Jonathan Rashleigh (1820–1905).

“The relationship dynamics depicted in the book ‘*Rebecca*’ can be also traced in a sequence of pregnancies and births that occurred in the two Rashleigh households, — the one of the son, Jonathan Rashleigh, jun., (1845–1872), and the one of his father, Jonathan Rashleigh (1820–1905).¹

“Jane Elizabeth Pugh (1836–1902), was pregnant with her second child, Arthur Rashleigh, who had been conceived in September 1870 and born 24 June 1871. Since September 1870, there would be a gap of three and a half years before the third child of that marriage would be conceived. This is the gap during which Mary Frances Labouchere (1848–1874) married in November 1870, conceived in October 1871, and gave birth on 2 July 1872 to her son, John Cosmo Stuart Rashleigh. These facts lead to an intriguing assumption that John Cosmo Stuart Rashleigh (1872–1961) was the son of Mary Frances Labouchere (1848–1874) and Jonathan Rashleigh (1820–1905)”.¹

1 [Seraphima Bogomolova / book 'Menabilly, My Love'](#)

2 “ [Menabilly - Wikipedia](#)