

IN THE BOSOM OF HER FATHER

May 2017

April 1848. Europe in the flames of Revolution. The 19-year-old daughter of England's greatest living author lies dying alone in a boarding house in Brompton. All the dreams of her short life shattered, a clandestine visit by the mother she has not seen in 10 years leaves her dead – her story forgotten, her mystery unsolved.

Henry Lytton Cobbold breaks into the mausoleum at Knebworth House – literally – to uncover the life and death of the first of his ancestor Edward Bulwer Lytton's forgotten children...and finds a remarkable girl whose story is more dramatic and gothic than the most sensational of her father's bestsellers.

A bittersweet exploration into real-life Victorian melodrama, blending original letters and manuscripts, modern detective work, humour and a deftness of touch with the dark truths of a heartbreaking family tragedy

This is a huge book in every sense. It comes in two volumes and has 992 pages and 465 images but much more importantly it is a hugely rewarding read which has appeal to at least three quite separate audiences. It is a 'must' for the literary historian who cannot forego the behind-the-scenes look at England's greatest living author. For the family history man and woman, withdrawal symptoms are inevitable when it is put down and for the general reader there is the sheer fascination of the detective story as it ebbs and flows on its way to the known conclusion.

That the content is addictive is as nothing compared with the way the reader is gently led from page to page, as if by the hand, in a style of writing that never speaks at you but is always beside and encouraging you.

On all levels this is an outstandingly good book. www.knebworthhouse.com

Anthony Cobbold. June 2017



The Front Covers



Emily Bulwer Lytton



Rosina Bulwer Lytton and Edward Bulwer Lytton against Knebworth Park as it was in Emily's day.