

Kings Bromley

Historians 2019



*Sir Ronald Bertram Lane ,
Knight of Kings Bromley*

This document has been written by Allan Howard for Kings Bromley Historians, one of a series of documents which have not been formally published, but can be printed off at any time:

1. The Family Trees of the Newtons and Lanes
2. The Electric Turbines at Kings Bromley Manor
3. The Lanes of Kings Bromley and the Lucys of Charlecote
4. Mentions of the Lanes and Kings Bromley in Anne Bagot's Diary
5. Woodend Farm and the Isolation Hospital
6. Lilian Bromley Davenport
7. The Anti-Slavery Debate Around Lichfield
8. The First Creamery at Kings Bromley Wharfe
9. John Newton at Spettisbury House
10. Number 9, The Circus, Bath
11. Arthur Lane
12. The Lanes in the Eight Censuses 1841 – 1911
13. Thomas Gainsborough – The River Trent at Kings Bromley – Philadelphia Art Museum (2016)
14. The Journal of the Rev. William Bagshaw Stevens throws light on the Catherine Newton affair and the Lane Inheritance (2016)
15. The World war II Evacuees Stories.
16. Kings Bromley and the Ionian Islands
17. The Contested Will of Lister Holte

In addition the following are formally published:

- 2015: "Hark Back" by Ivy Butcher and the Kings Bromley Historians £9
- 2015: The Life and Times of Agnes, the Little Queen of Kings Bromley £10
- 2012: A History of the Almshouses in Kings Bromley £5
- 2012: The Scandalous Divorce of John Newton £10
- 2012: A Portrait of Dean Lane £2.50
- 2012: The Lane Inheritance: Kings Bromley and Barbados £7.99
- 2006: Perambulation of the Bounds, The Parish Boundary Walk £5
- 2004: There's More to Kings Bromley by Ivy Butcher £10
- 2004: 250 Years of Kings Bromley Schools £3
- 2004: The Village in the time of the Lane Family £5
- 1999: Our Village No.4: A Walk along the Town Street £3
- 1985: Our Village No.3: A Few Cameos of Interesting Local History
- 1983: Our Village No.2: Kings Bromley in 1851 £5

The photograph of Ronald Lane on the title page is in the collection of Queen Victoria in the Royal Collection Trust. He is wearing the uniform of the Rifle Brigade.

Ronald's Family- The Lanes of Bentley and Kings Bromley

Ronald Lane was the only member of the Lane family of Bentley and Kings Bromley ever to receive a knighthood, eventually gaining the impressive title Major General Sir Ronald Bertram Lane K.C.V.O. K.C.B. He was the thirteenth out of fourteen children born to John Newton Lane, Lord of the Manor of Kings Bromley and his wife Agnes, née Bagot. Eight of the children lived to adulthood.

The Lane family's claim to fame was that after the Battle of Worcester, Charles II escaped to Bentley, the residence of Colonel John Lane. From there he made his way to the south coast dressed as the servant of Colonel Lane's sister, Jane, who had a military pass to visit Bristol. Charles kept in contact with Jane and three letters written to her from his exile in France are in existence. On his restoration Charles gave her a pension and granted the Lane family the right to have the royal three lions displayed on their coat of arms: the only commoner family to have this honour. The Lanes of Kings Bromley were directly descended from Colonel John Lane of Bentley.



The picture of Jane Lane which used to hang (along with one of the letters which Charles II sent her) in the dining room of Kings Bromley Hall. Both the picture and the letter are now at Moseley Old Hall.

The Lane/Bagot coat of arms, complete with its three lions can still be seen in Kings Bromley on the Village Hall (previously the Dean Lane Institute) and on the Almshouses.



There is no doubt that Ronald Lane used this royal connection to advance his career.

The Lanes of Bentley fell on hard times in the late 18th century and had to sell the Bentley estate. However, in 1794 John Lane, the heir, and his brother Thomas, who were both practising London lawyers, unexpectedly inherited a fortune from their distant cousin Elizabeth Newton, the last of the Newton line. The Newtons, whose money came from sugar plantations in Barbados, owned Kings Bromley Parish and Hall, where John Lane took up residence. John Lane died in 1824 and was succeeded by John Newton Lane, Ronald's father. He married the truly aristocratic Hon. Agnes Bagot in 1828.



Ronald Lane's father John Newton Lane and mother Agnes

Ronald was born 19th February 1847 and christened 29th September 1847, his sponsors (godparents) being his cousins, Rev. John Lucy, Rev. Charles Lane, William Tomline, the Lady Frances Finch and Emily Mary Lucy (subsequently Mrs. FitzHugh). He was the thirteenth of 14 children, of whom 8 survived to adulthood.

John Newton Lane = Hon. Agnes Bagot (m 1828)

John Henry Bagot Lane = Susan Anne Vincent
[1829–1886] (m 1864) [1832–1899]^P

- 13 other children:
1. Albert William [1830-1831]
 2. Sidney Leveson [1831-1910] JP, Barrister
 3. William [1832- 1832]
 4. Cecil Newton [1833-1887] CMG
 5. Greville Charles [1834 –1878] Captain
 6. Ernald [1836 – 1913] Dean of Rochester
 7. Arthur Louis [1840–1846]
 8. Edward Alfred Reginald [1841–1854] RN
 9. Agnes Louisa [1842-1842]
 10. Alice Frances Jane [1844-1846]
 11. Edith Emmeline Mary [1846- 1929]
 12. **Ronald Bertram** [1847-1936]
 13. Isabel Emma Beatrice [1849-1876]

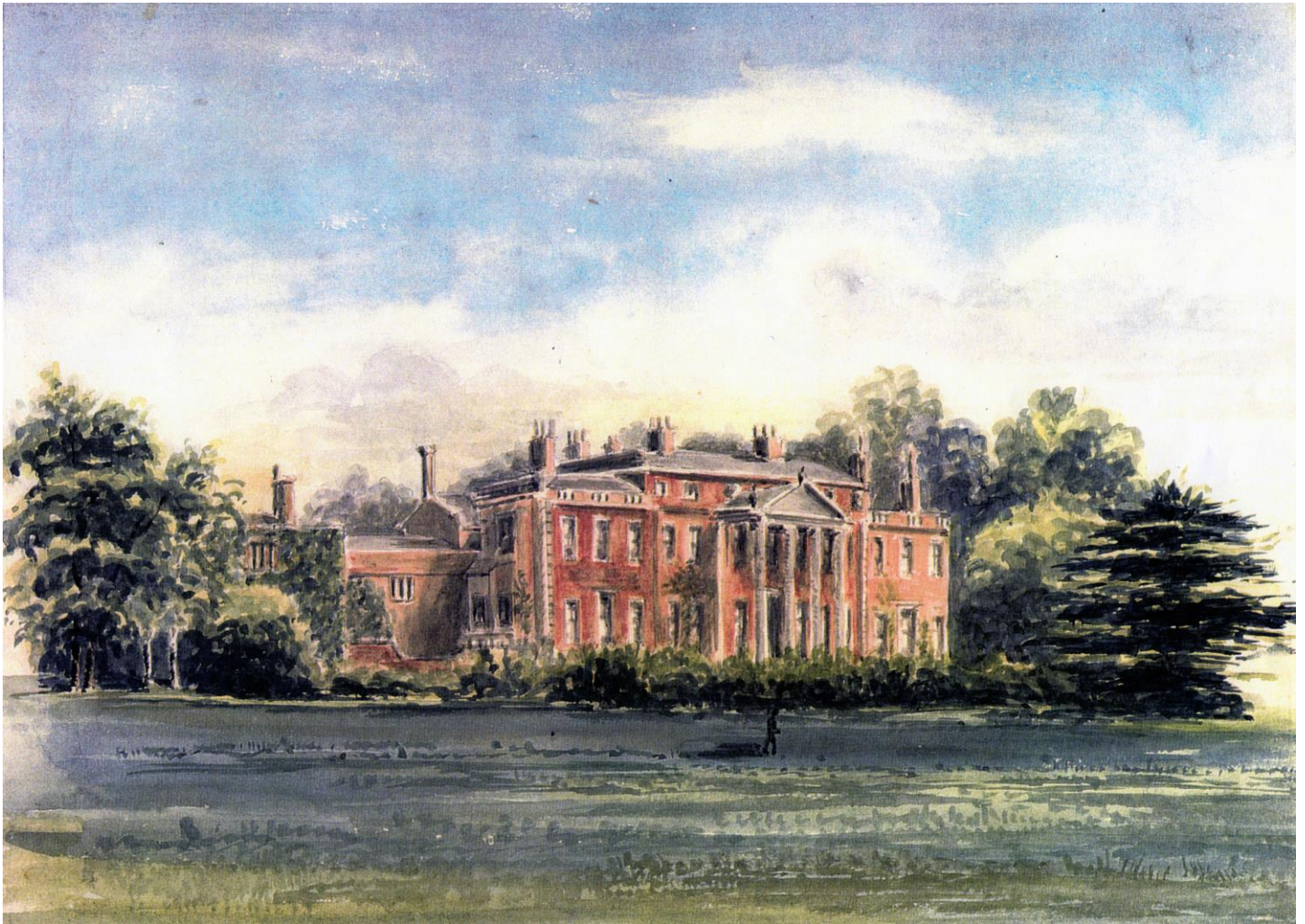
The 1851 Census

This was taken on the 3rd March when Ronald was four and shows a large family and establishment:

	Status	Age	Occupation	Where born
Sarah Lane	head	86	Esquire's Widow, Blind	Shrewsbury
John Newton Lane	son	50	Magistrate & Deputy Lieutenant	Aston, Warks
Sidney Leveson Lane	grandson	19	Undergraduate at Christ Chch. Coll.	Blithfield
Cecil Newton Lane	grandson	17	Scholar at home	Kings Bromley
Greville Charles Lane	grandson	16	Scholar at home	Kings Bromley
Ernald Lane	grandson	15	Scholar at home	Kings Bromley
E. A. Reginald Lane	grandson	10	Scholar at home	Kings Bromley
Edith E. M. Lane	granddau	5		Kings Bromley
Ronald B Lane	grandson	4		Kings Bromley
Isabel E. B. Lane	granddau	1		Kings Bromley
Hannah Humpage	visitor	71	Dame de Compagnie	Rugeley
J. Francisca m Gunkey	servant	53	Head nurse	Switzerland
Maria Middleton	servant	35	Housekeeper	Chorley
Mary Henwood	servant	29	Cook	?
Ellen Mathiesson	servant	36	Upper laundry maid	Scotland
Hannah ?	servant	30	Under laundry maid	Berkshire
Elizabeth Jackson	servant	34	Upper house maid	Leicestershire
Mary Benley?	servant	22	Under house maid	Hill Ridware
Harriet Abberley	servant	20	Dairy maid	Abbots Bromley
Hannah Tomlinson	servant	25	Under nurserymaid	Kings Bromley
Dorothy Sanders	servant	15	Stillroom maid	Kings Bromley
Sarah Truman	servant	15	Kitchen maid	Piehall?
Abraham Page	servant	36	Butler	Whittington
William Ruggins	servant	25	Gardener	Piford?
Alfred Gailer	servant	21	Footman	Little Eaton
George Shelley	servant	20	Second footman	Beckwith?
Thomas Powers	servant	25	Coachman	Warks, Aston
William Kidd	servant	20	Postillion	Kings Bromley

In the census Agnes Lane, who had her last child, Isobel in 1849, is listed as visiting Blithfield Hall with her father Lord William Bagot, two brothers, a sister and 21 servants. All of John Newton Lane's children are at home apart from the eldest John Henry Bagot Lane. He may be away at school, but has not yet been found on any census. Ronald was privately educated.

Kings Bromley Hall stood in a park with three lodges, a gamekeeper lived in the West Lodge with his family, a gardener lived in the East lodge with his family and a garden labourer lived in the South Lodge with his family. This painting, made some twenty years later, shows the manor as it was during Ronald's childhood. John Newton Lane had received a windfall in 1836. While slave trading had been abolished by the British government in 1807, slavery itself, using the existing slave workforce and their children, continued until the 1834 Emancipation Act. The slave owners were well compensated by the government for the loss of their 'property' and on 2nd May 1836 John Newton Lane received £4746 1s 10d for the 224 slaves on the Seawells estate in Barbados. This money had been used to extend the hall and to build a wall around the park.



When Ronald's oldest brother John Henry Bagot Lane married the heiress Susan Anne Vincent in 1864, her father, Henry Vincent, described John Newton Lane as 'not a rich man'. However, the manor had 51 rooms and 17 live-in servants, a large park and extensive gardens and he had the income from about 1500 acres in Kings Bromley Parish. As described in the Kings Bromley Historians publication, 'Agnes, The Little Queen of Kings Bromley', Agnes made sure that her six sons made good careers: three in the army, one a barrister, one in the church and one in the foreign office, and that her two daughters married well into the aristocracy.

Ronald's Early Career in the Rifle Brigade

Ronald was clearly marked by the family for a military career. John Henry Bagot, Ronald's older brother and the heir to the manor, had his career in the Coldstream Guards. Guards regiments had always been considered the more fashionable ones. However, at 20 years of age, in 1867, Ronald was gazetted ensign in The Rifle Brigade and joined the 1st Battalion of the Regiment in Canada. Prince Albert had taken over as colonel-in-chief of the Rifle Brigade in 1852. In 1862 it became 'The Prince Consort's Own Rifle Brigade' and received great cachet; Arthur, Duke of Connaught and third son of Queen Victoria, then joined the Brigade.

In 1869 Ronald had witnessed the will of his father John Newton Lane; when his father died two years later Ronald inherited £2000, equivalent to about a quarter of a million pounds these days. Ronald was promoted to lieutenant in October 1871. In 1873 there was an incident that changed Ronald's life which was recorded in Queen Victoria's Journal Entry – Balmoral, Friday 22nd August 1873:

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Leopold had a letter from Arthur, saying that, for fear absurd rumours should reach me, he wrote to explain that he, Capt: Lane & 2 others had been bathing off the sands at Trouville, & swimming about for some time, not noticing that the strong tide was carrying them away from the shore. They had found it hard work trying to get back. A lot

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of Frenchmen seeing their difficulty had become very excited & rushed out to them with ropes & life belts, which had been rather a relief, as they were very blown. Thank God! the dear Boy is safe, but very little more, & the danger might have been very great. — Dull early, but turned bright & fine. — Drove Beatrice in the pony carriage, & afterwards sat in the tent. — Letters arriving, congratulating me on Arthur's safety. — The afternoon become showery. — Took a short drive. — Beatrice & the 2 Ladies dined. —

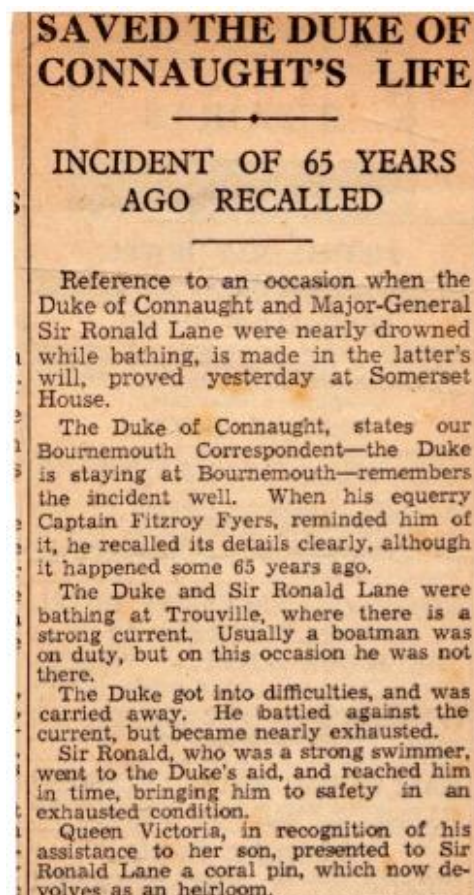
[« Previous journal entry](#) | [Next journal entry »](#)

Further details

Journal Entry: Friday 22nd August 1873

Place of Writing: (Principal Royal Residence) Balmoral Castle 

Ronald had saved Arthur from drowning! An article in the Times, sixty-five years later, discussing Ronald's will, recalled this incident:



Much of the information that Kings Bromley Historians have on the life of Ronald came from his great-niece Rosemary Lane who had inherited his scrapbooks and other memorabilia. We visited her in Aberdeen in September 2013, two years before her death. According to her, the truth about the rescue was slightly different. She called Ronald 'Uncle Lonnie' and said "Uncle Lonnie's claim to fame was that he supposedly saved the Duke of Connaught's life when he nearly drowned... In fact, it wasn't true. He said to the ... fishermen, 'Save the Duke first, I can swim!'".

We have these pictures of Ronald as a young man:



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Ronald's army career gradually progressed:

In Nov 1873 (aged 26) he was appointed A.D.C to Major-General W. Parke, commanding the 1st Infantry Brigade at Aldershot.

In Jan 1875 (aged 28) he became A.D.C to Lieutenant-General Sir James Hope Grant, commanding at Aldershot.

In April 1877 (aged 30) he was ADC to Lord Alex George Russell, who was GOC South Eastern District.

From April 1878 to Feb. 1879 (aged 32) he was ADC to Major-General E. Newdigate at Chatham, accompanying this officer to South Africa.

An aide-de-camp (ADC) is a French expression meaning, literally, helper; he is a personal assistant or secretary to a person of high rank. In Ronald's obituary in *The Times* it states: "... he was the perfect A.D.C. [he was] a keen sportsman and a good man to hounds, his charm of manner and unaffected disposition made and retained him a large circle of friends."

This gives some indication of his character. He was what we might call today 'clubbable', a man who got on with his peers and shared their pastimes and opinions. He was also, according to Rosemary, 'something of a social climber and name dropper'. However, once in South Africa, he was to show that he was much more than a behind-the-lines staff officer. He was promoted to the rank of Captain in October 1878 at age 31, was given the command of a division in the Zulu war, and was present at the battle of Ulundi. Ronald Lane was mentioned in Despatches. In the supplement to the London Gazette, 21 August 1879 it states:

"I would especially mention Captain Lane, Rifle Brigade, my Aide-de-Camp, who is a most useful staff officer under fire. He is cool and courageous, and on the march he is always the first to give a helping hand wherever he can make himself useful." Edward Newdigate, Major-General, Commanding 2nd. Division, South African Army (after battle of Ulundi).

The battle of Ulundi was between a modern army equipped with rifles, field artillery and Gatling guns and an opposition mainly armed with spears. Of the British, 15 were killed, 87 were wounded and 10 eventually died of wounds. The Zulus lost about 1,500. The bravery of the British soldiers should not, however, be discounted. Aware of their technical inferiority, the Zulus' tactic was to overwhelm by sheer force of numbers. If any of the four lines of the 'square' had been breached, the result could have been very different. 'Holding the line' required courage and cool heads. In 1906 an anecdote about Ronald ('Rowdy' to his friends, 'Lonnie' to his family) was published in 'Vanity Fair' alongside a 'Spy' cartoon:



"Of his coolness and humour those who were in the Zulu War have still a story to tell. A certain war correspondent of assurance and reputation had declared that if the Zulus were crushed, that they would not fight again. Lane held a contrary opinion, and a bet of a tenner was the result. The battle of Ulundi followed. The firing had been a trifle wild. The Zulus were within two hundred yards and coming on fast. An order was given to resume volley firing. In the few seconds pause Lane was heard to call out cheerily to the correspondent, 'I say,, as we don't seem likely to get out of this square, I'll trouble you to hand over that tenner now'...."

Some of the memorabilia from the Zulu war ended up in the entrance hall of the Kings Bromley Manor:



Ronald was promoted to Major. He stayed in S. Africa and was employed during the first Boer War of 1881 (aged 34) in the Transvaal as Deputy Assistant Adjutant and Quartermaster General. Back in England he was appointed A.D.C to his old friend Arthur, the Duke of Connaught in June 1882. In this capacity he appeared once more in Queen Victoria's diary 15th Nov. 1882, dining at Windsor Castle. He accompanied the Duke to Egypt where he was present at the battle of Tel-el-Kebir 1882, where he was again mentioned in despatches. As a result of this battle Britain gained control of the Suez Canal which had been built in 1869. Once again this was a rout with the Egyptians losing 1,396 and the British 57.

After the battle he was promoted to lieutenant-colonel at age 35

	Field Marshal	General	Lieutenant-General	Major-General	Brigadier	Colonel	Lieutenant-Colonel	Major	Captain	Lieutenant	Second Lieutenant	Officer Cadet
Abbreviation:	FM	Gen	Lt Gen	Maj Gen	Brig	Col	Lt Col	Maj	Capt	Lt	2Lt	OCdt
Typical command size or appointment:	no longer used	most senior appointments	corps	division	brigade or director on staff	Rarely a Field Command except in RAMC	battalion/regiment	company/battery/squadron	company/battery/squadron (second in command) or leader of smaller specialised team	platoon/troop	platoon/troop	platoon/troop
Typical promotion to after:								8-10 years	3 years after training	12-24 months after training	44 weeks officer training	

From 1883 to 1888 (age 36-41) he was Assistant Military Secretary to Lord Russell when that general went out to command the troops in Canada. According to a Service Portrait in 'The Broad Arrow', he greatly enjoyed his five years in Canada where he 'settled down ... and gave himself up to all the sport and amusement which the bright Canadian life can afford'. This was the start of a life-long interest in Canada, where he eventually became Chairman of the Southern Alberta Land Company. His old friend, Arthur, Duke of Connaught, was Governor General of Canada from 1911 to 1916. Ronald was also instrumental in setting up the boy scouts movement in Canada in 1912. While in Canada, in November 1886 (age 39) he became a full colonel.

On March 22nd 1886 his older brother JHB Lane died and JHB's son JHHV Lane took over as Lord of the Manor. Ronald clearly returned to England during 1887 as this photograph shows the family at the Manor at JHHV's coming of age celebrations. From the left, standing: Ernald (51), Arthur(16), George(12), Sidney(56), Florence(22), Constance(18), Ronald (41); sitting : Susan Anne(56), Evelyn- Ernald's wife(30), JHHV (21), Adela - Cecil's wife(42), Lilian (10).



This photograph was probably taken by Cecil. His sister Isabel had died in 1876. The only missing sibling of Ronald's at the ceremony was Edith, who had married Sir William James in 1868: he succeeded to his father's title and became Lord Northbourne of Betteshanger in 1893. JHHV's siblings Florence, Constance, Arthur, George and Lilian are all present. As time went on, Ronald stayed on very friendly terms with the families of Ernald and Edith, but became somewhat estranged from JHHV and his family at Kings Bromley.

In April 1889, after returning from Canada, Ronald became A.D.C. to the Commander-in-Chief (military head of the armed forces) Prince George, Duke of Cambridge, who was a cousin of Queen Victoria and maternal uncle of Queen Mary, consort of King George V. Ronald's social status was assured, his scrapbooks full of invitations to royal dinners, weddings and funerals.

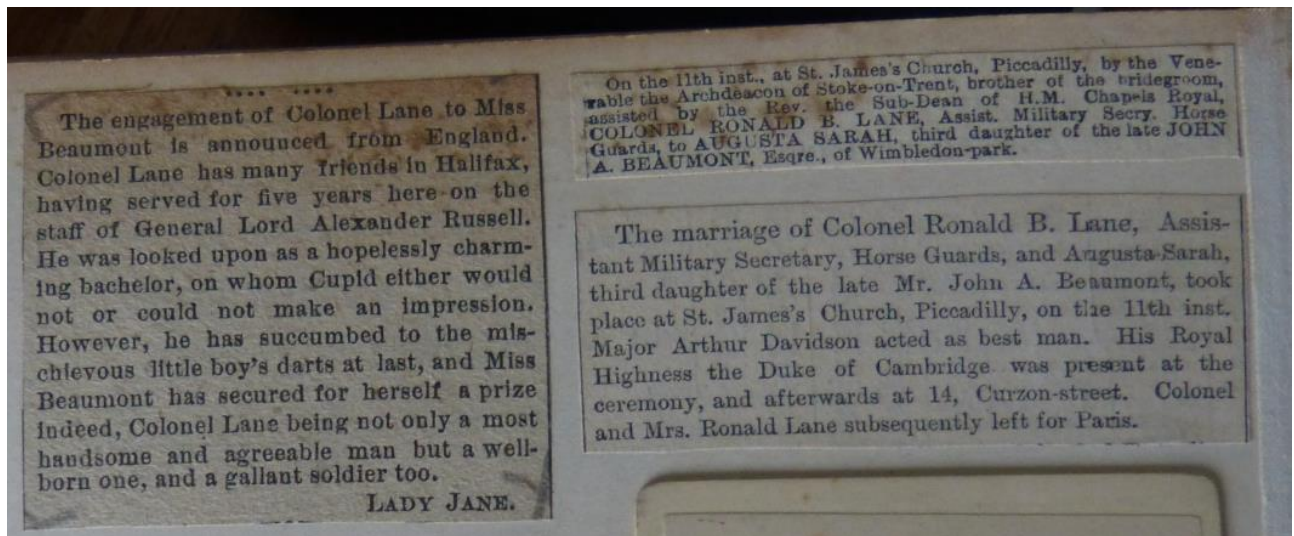
The Duke of Cambridge was an army officer by profession and served as Commander in Chief from 1856 to 1895.



The British Army had not had to fight a well-equipped European army since the Crimean war. Its successes against native armies disguised the fact that it needed modernising and the Duke has been criticised by many historians for resisting this. The inadequacies of the British Army were to be exposed in the Second Boer War of 1899-1902.

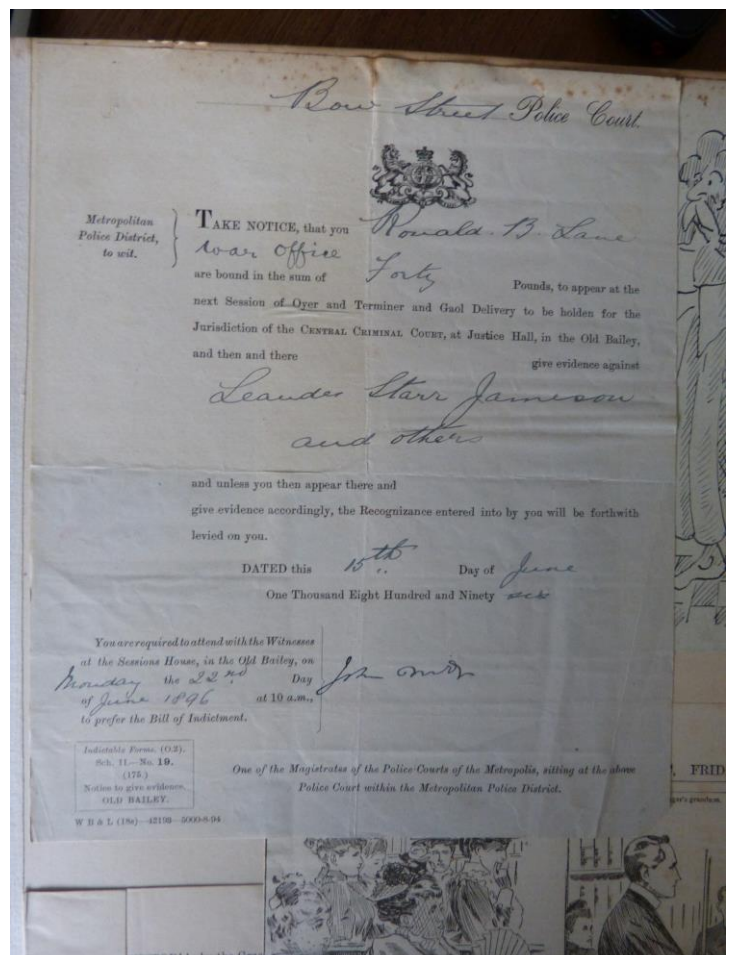
In 1892, Ronald, aged 45, after three years serving the Duke, was selected to be Assistant Military Secretary at the War Office.

In 1893 at the age of 46, Ronald married Augusta Sarah Beaumont, daughter of John Augustus Beaumont, 'insurance magnate' and developer of Wimbledon Park. She was 42.



Augusta was the third of five daughters, and there was a younger son. John Augustus Beaumont had died in 1886 leaving £46,000 (£5.6m). In the 1891 Census, Florence, Augusta and Laura were 'living on own means' in 14 Curzon St with 5 servants. This was clearly a convenient marriage, he having the status, she the money. A son George was born on 27th Feb 1894, who became a page in the Royal household. According to Rosemary Lane, who was thirteen when Ronald died at the age of eighty-nine, "Uncle Lonnie was 'a darling' but Aunt Augusta was a 'frightening old lady' who had the money"

In 1896, while still Assistant Military Secretary at the War Office, he became involved in the trial of Dr. Jameson who was being prosecuted in London for his part in the so-called 'Jameson Raid' of 1895. Gold had been discovered in the Transvaal, an area north of British South Africa governed by the Boers: white settlers who originated in Holland and who practised an apartheid system which amounted to the enslavement of the indigenous population. Large numbers of people, many British, known by the Boers as 'uitlanders' flocked into the area and demanded a say in government which the Boers strongly resisted. Dr. Jameson, with an irregular army of mercenaries, attempted a completely illegal military Coup which was soundly defeated. It was widely believed that the coup was supported by both the South African government under Cecil Rhodes and by the British imperialist Foreign Secretary Joseph Chamberlain.



The Jameson Raiders arrived in England at the end of February 1896 to face trial. There were some months of investigations initially held at Bow Street, where Ronald Lane appeared. This clip from the Times is dated June 12th 1896:



Dr. Jameson was cheered into the courtroom by admiring crowds, the British public having no love for the Boers, their beliefs and their closeness to the German Empire. They also believed that Jameson had been chosen as a scapegoat to cover the embarrassment of Rhodes and Chamberlain. No doubt Ronald Lane, as Assistant Military Secretary at the War Office, was there to state that the British Army had no involvement in the affair. Following the appearance at the Bow Street court, the 'trial at bar' (a legal procedure reserved only for very important cases) began on 20 June 1896, at the High Court of Judicature. The trial lasted seven days, following which Dr Jameson was found guilty and sentenced to imprisonment as a first-class misdemeanant for fifteen months. He was, however, released from Holloway in the following December on account of illness. He returned to South Africa and eventually became its Prime Minister. This looks like a cynical exercise in power politics; the British Government was clearly intent on annexing the Transvaal and its goldfields, which it did by way of the 2nd Boer war which started just two years later.

Soon after the trial, Ronald received the CB, the Order of the Bath. Ronald and Augusta lived at the Curzon Street house after their marriage and it was their London base until 1905.

In October 1897, aged 50, Ronald went on half pay. On November 3rd of that year he was invited to the funeral of Princess Mary Adelaide of Teck at St. George's Chapel, Windsor Castle. Before their respective marriages it is known that Mary Adelaide and Susan Anne Vincent (later to become Susan Anne Lane, Ronald's sister in law) had been friends, and it is probable that they remained so. According to the report in the Lichfield Mercury of Susan Anne's own funeral the next October, Susan Anne had been seriously ill in the autumn of 1897 and spring of 1898, so it is possible that Ronald attended in his sister in law's place. Princess Mary Adelaide's daughter Mary married George V and was therefore great grandmother of the present queen Elizabeth.

Ronald, despite a youth where he had acquired the nickname ‘Rowdy’, had become a ‘safe pair of hands’ and he went to Egypt at the end of 1898 to take up command of the Alexandria Brigade, having been promoted to major-general in December, seemingly leapfrogging the post of Brigadier. His life in Egypt, if the entries in his scrapbooks are to be believed, was one of dinners, official ceremonies and time spent at the Sporting Club. His young son George clearly enjoyed himself with his pony and cart. While they were in Egypt the Lanes rented out their Curzon Street house to a Mr. and Lady Lilian Ogle.



In October 1898, while serving in Egypt, Ronald's sister-in-law Susan Anne Lane died. Ronald was unable to attend the funeral in Kings Bromley, however his brother Ernald, now Archdeacon, brother-in-law Lord Northbourne and Susan Anne's children all attended. While in Egypt he was promoted to Major General. This family photograph dated 1899 shows him in his full military regalia:



C54

In 1901 he took command of the Infantry Brigade at Malta. According to Rosemary "... Uncle Lonnie said that the Officers' Mess [in Malta] was [so] intolerable so he shipped his own butler out to run it!". He stood in as Governor while Lord Grenfell attended the crowning of Edward VII. This photo shows him there when his old boss the Duke of Connaught visited. He is far right, seated, Augusta is second left, seated.



After his coronation, Edward VII also visited Malta, after which Ronald was made CVC, Commander of the Royal Victorian Order - The Royal Victorian Order recognises distinguished personal service to the monarch. He returned to England in April 1903 and was appointed Military Secretary at the War Office. His health, however, was a problem to him. Kings Bromley Historians has in its possession a letter from a villager which recalls "Mother spoke of General Sir Ronald Lane who was wheeled in a spinal carriage. The Queen sent a messenger each week to enquire how he was". This incapacity is referred to in a letter to him from Lord Wolseley, dated 1903, which states "My dear Rowdy Lane, I am very sorry to hear that you are confined to bed. We had a very pleasant party at Mount-Stephen's; you are always the life and soul of the party wherever you go. I can't bear to think of you being an invalid. Hoping that I may soon see you walking as briskly as ever - a hope which I know is shared by all your friends. Believe me, Very sincerely yours, Wolseley (Lord Wolseley became C in C after the Duke of Cambridge).

Ronald remained Military Secretary at the War Office until March 1904 while the Esher Committee reforms were in hand. The Esher Report of 1904 recommended radical reform of the British Army such as the creation of an Army Council, General Staff and the abolition of the Commander in Chief of the Forces. These recommendations were to form the basis of Army reform for the next 60 years. Military historian Corelli Barnett wrote that the Esher Report's importance "and its consequences can hardly be exaggerated.... Without the Esher Report... it is inconceivable that the mammoth British military efforts of two world wars could have been possible, let alone so generally successful." It is difficult to resist the speculation that Ronald represented the old Victorian colonial army.

He was made KCV, Knight Commander of the Royal Victorian Order in 1904 and KCB, Knight of the Order of the Bath in 1912, so he could now be called 'Sir' Ronald Bertram Lane. As stated at the start of this document he was the only member of the Lane family ever to be knighted, and it is a matter of conjecture as to whether he, or his brother Ernald, who became Dean of Rochester Cathedral, was the most distinguished Lane. The two brothers were great friends as can be seen in these photos of them indulging in horse play at Kings Bromley Hall:



A cutting in his scrapbook dated July 1905 states:

“Major General Sir Ronald Lane K.C.V.O., C.B., has been selected ... as Lieutenant-Governor and Secretary of Chelsea Hospital. Sir Ronald's last appointment was that of Military Secretary to Lord Roberts, a post he lost in the spring of last year at the general exodus of the whole of the War Office executive staff, as a result of the Esher Commission. Sir Ronald Lane is one of the most universally popular men in the Army, and his friends will be glad to know that his health has greatly improved of late. He is still known to his contemporaries by a nickname that has survived his salad days, when his unfailing light-heartedness gained him the soubriquet of “Rowdy” Lane.”

This appointment can be seen as a sinecure for a popular old soldier who did not fit in with the new modernised army.

On his appointment he and Augusta moved from Curzon Street to the Lieutenant-Governor's house at the Royal Hospital, Chelsea. At the same time took up a twenty one year lease on Carlton Hall, Saxmundham, Suffolk and the 88 acres of Carlton Park. In the 1911 census, Ronald and Augusta were living in Carlton House, Saxmundham, Surrey, with a ladies maid, two housemaids, a kitchen maid, a scullery maid and two footmen. The house had 24 rooms. By comparison his nephew JHHV Lane was living in Kings Bromley Hall with 11 house servants, a butler, a coachman, 5 gardeners, a gamekeeper and an estate carpenter. The Hall had 51 rooms.



These photos show Ronald at Carlton House, Saxmundham:



Ronald retired from the Army in February 1909 under the 'age clause'. He would have been 62. Although retired from the Army, Ronald still retained his Royal connections and in May 1910 he and Lady Lane were invited to attend the funeral of Edward VII at St. George's Chapel, Windsor, and on 22nd June 1911 they attended the coronation of George V at Westminster Abbey:



In November 1911 he was asked to present the prizes at Dover College speech day, an occasion presided over by his brother-in-law Lord Northbourne who was Chairman of the College Council and owned the nearby Northbourne Park at Betteshanger. This is an extract from the report of the occasion taken from the Dover Standard, Nov. 4th 1911:

“The Headmaster, the Rev. F. de Winton Lushington ... made his annual report. He said it was a very great pleasure for him to have present, at his first prize-giving at the College, his old friend General Sir Ronald Lane, whom he remembered particularly at Malta ... Lord Northbourne briefly introduced General Sir R. Lane (his brother -in-law) who presented the prizes with a word of commendation for each winner, amidst the enthusiastic applause of the massed College students...”

Lord Northbourne then rose to speak, concentrating on the last war, the Boer war, which he called the ‘Great War’ which:

“... to some was an event in the far distant past to some of the happier ones who were just standing on the threshold of life. He thought it would be one of the saddest things that could happen to this country if any generation of boys was to grow up forgetful of the last great war in which their country was engaged. The boys might not bear - as their seniors did - the clear imprint of the light hearted way in which this country entered upon that war; all the doubts and difficulties that arose as the war progressed; all the dreadful sacrifices, that came home to almost every household in the country; and finally the great union of the Empire which showed the whole world that the British Empire was alive and vigorous (applause). He was sure that those who had received their prizes at the hands of Sir Ronald Lane would never forget that event, and it would impress upon the boys, who entered the career of officers in the army, the height of the ideal to which they could attain. The vote of thanks was carried by acclamation.

"General Sir R. Lane, who was heartily cheered on rising, expressed his sincere thanks for the vote which he had been accorded. He felt it a very great honour that Lord Northbourne, and the Board of Governors and Mr. Lushington should have asked him to come and present the prizes. It was always a pleasure to him to come to Dover. He had been there a great deal in the old days and had pleasant recollections of Dover and the kindness he received from everybody in the town (applause). Dover had its faults, which he remembered keenly (laughter). The first was the detestable east wind, which blew ones hat down the parade oftener than was pleasant (laughter); and another thing for which he bore a grudge against Dover was the number of steps to the Shaft barracks (laughter). Still his recollections of Dover were pleasant, and perhaps the pleasantest were when coming back from abroad, he landed at the pier, after a crossing in a nasty south west gale - despite some very moderate tea on that pier (laughter). He had no doubt that the tea there was now very much better than it used to be (laughter). He wished to congratulate Lord Northbourne and the Governors, and Mr. Lushington, on the appearance of the boys of the College. It was a special pleasure to present the prizes in the first year of Mr. Lushington taking command of the school, because Mr. Lushington was a very old friend whom he knew very well in Malta. There was no man he would rather see taking charge of any young friend of his own than Mr Lushington (applause). In Malta Mr Lushington never let anything stand in the way of doing all the good he could (applause). He should like to say a few words by way of advice to the boys who were just beginning life. He, unfortunately, was coming towards the end of his life's work, and the sight of the boys made him perhaps a little envious. But if he had to begin his life over again, he thought he should select Dover College for this early training; because not only was he quite certain that he would take many prizes there, but he was equally certain that he would deserve a certain amount of caning (laughter). He trusted the boys did not deserve the cane; but if they did, it should be applied with a pretty heavy hand (laughter). He should like to speak to the boys about esprit de corps, which he thought embodied perfectly both discipline and duty. Discipline he need not touch on much, because they all knew the necessity of that; but depend on it, the more they disciplined themselves through life, the more perfectly and faithfully they would perform their duty. They should always think they had done their duty well when they had performed more than their duty (hear, hear)."

Mr Lushington replied to the address and the report continues:

"General Lane had struck the right chord in his address not only for schoolboys, but for every man and woman in the British Empire. They should all learn to have esprit de corps and to be unselfish. That was sadly needed today. Our patriotism seemed to be dormant. We wanted to "wake up" as our King told us, on his return from his tour around the world."

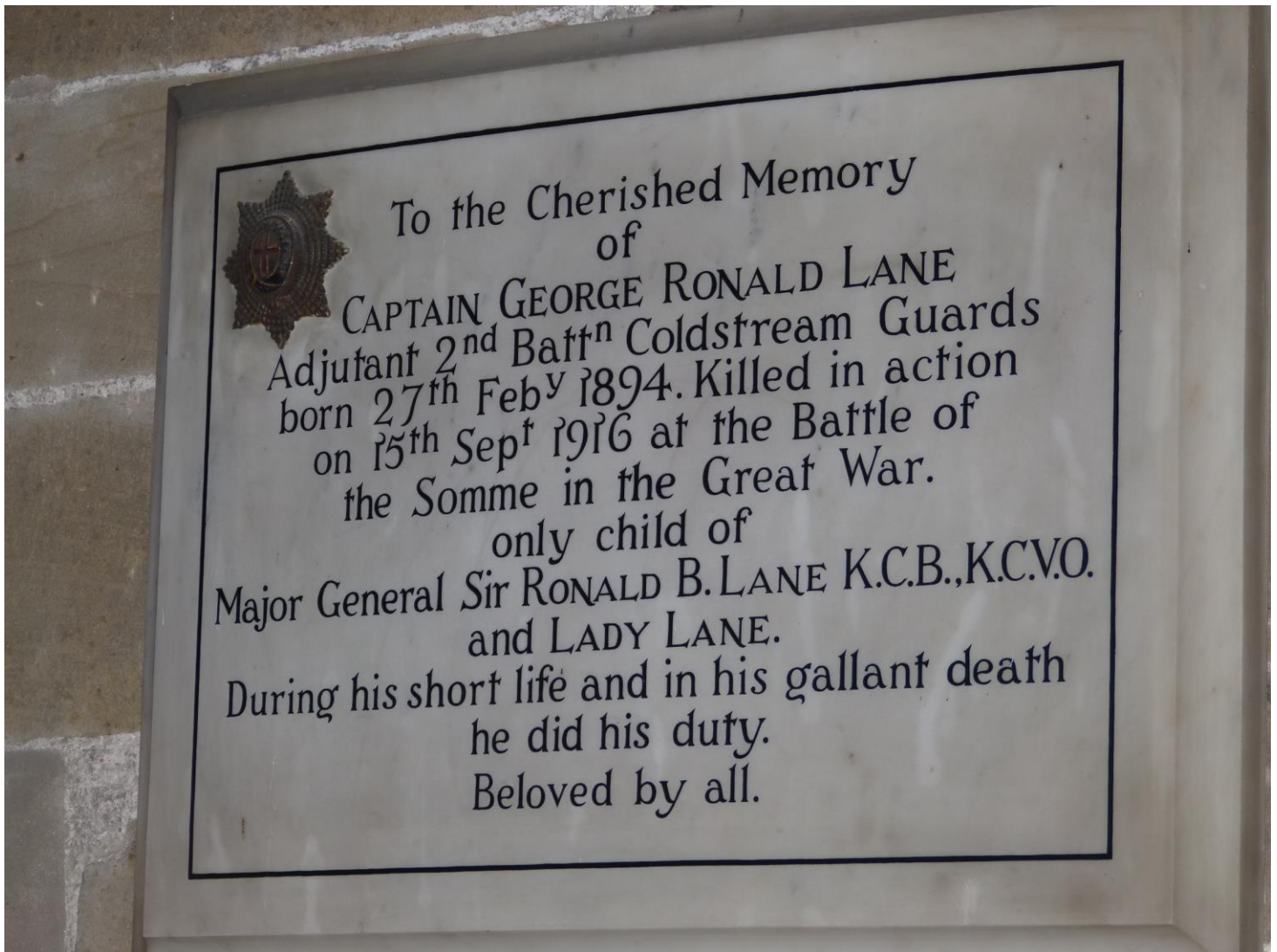
The tone of the speeches at the prize-giving gives a resonant snapshot of the feeling of the times. The pre-war Edwardian era is sometimes called the 'golden afternoon' when the British Empire was at its height and life for the privileged classes was at its easiest. However, there is the feeling that a certain complacency is setting in and the schoolboys are being exhorted to exhibit ideals of discipline, duty and esprit de corps. Sadly, it was this very cohort of schoolboys who would be decimated in the coming real Great War which started only three years later. One wonders just how many of them perished.

Ronald's brother, Sidney, who had married Lady Downe, had died in Dec 1910. Now only Edith, Lady Northbourne, remained of his eight siblings.

Ronald, though retired from the army, had an active life. He was on the Council of the Boy Scouts Association when it got its Royal Charter in 1912. His old friend Arthur, Duke of Connaught was president of the Boy Scouts Association and one of Lord Baden Powell's friends and admirers. Other members of the Council included the Archbishop of Canterbury, Henry, Duke of Norfolk, Field Marshall Fredrick Sleigh, the Archbishop of York and a long list of Earls, Admirals and high ranking clerics. and soldiers. Baden Powell had been shocked by the physical and moral qualities of many of the young recruits that he saw in the Boer War, and his response was to try, through the scout movement, to build a nation of strong, healthy boys imbued with the spirit of self reliance, team spirit and concern for others; qualities that would soon be much needed.

Ronald was also an active freemason, as was his friend the Duke of Connaught and many of the Royal family. It appears that Ronald was the only member of the Lane family to be a freemason and it may be that it was helpful in progressing his career. Membership of the Freemasons was quite common in the British Army of the Victorian era, but due to its secretive nature it is difficult to judge its influence or importance to an officer's career. However we do know that freemason attendees at his funeral included Brig-General S.E. Massey Lloyd who represented the Grand Lodge of England, the Grand Master of Suffolk Freemasonry, the Earl of Stradbroke and many others.

Tragedy struck in 1916 when his only son George was killed on the Somme. He put up this plaque to George's memory in the Chancel of All Saints' Church, Kings Bromley:

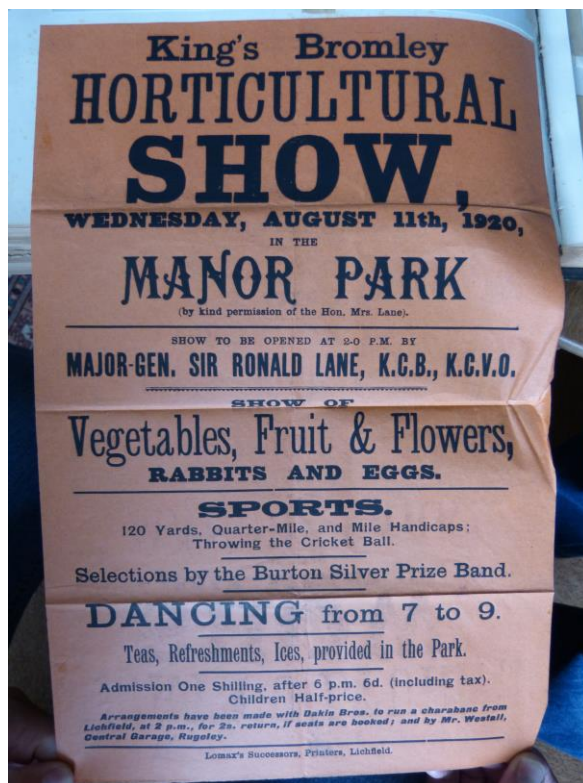
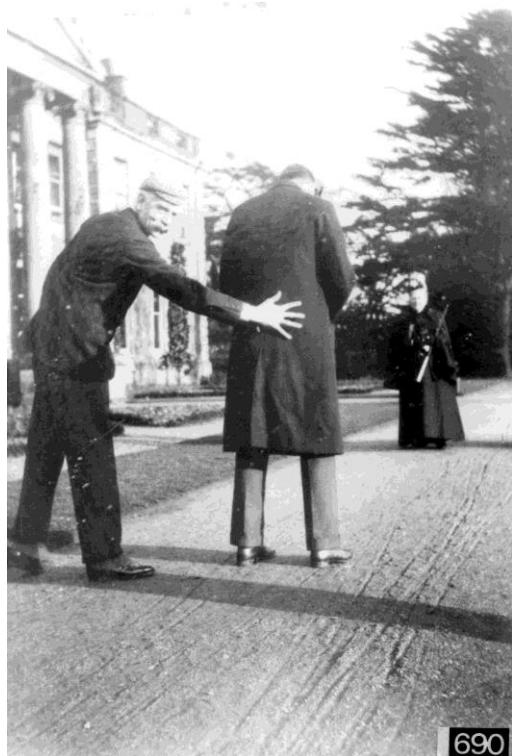


An obituary of Ronald in the Rifle Brigade Chronicle stated:

“The death of his son, Captain George Ronald Lane, Adjutant of the 2nd Battalion Coldstream Guards, killed in action on the Somme in September 1916, was a terrible blow. He was his only son and was, I believe, a most promising young officer, and I don't think Sir Ronald ever got over it.”

Ronald's brother Dean Ernald Lane had died in 1914, leaving his only son Geoffrey (Rosemary's father), also of the Rifle Brigade, who had been born in 1883. Ronald, now childless, took Geoffrey, though 10 years older than his son George, under his wing, and he became his heir, an unofficial adopted son. Geoffrey had three daughters; Rosemary, born 1923, was the last remaining one so she inherited all the Lane memorabilia that had passed down either through Ernald Lane or Geoffrey Lane (see Appendix 1).

Ronald kept up his connections with Kings Bromley, visiting frequently (here he is outside the manor) and opening the Show held in the Manor Park in 1920:



In April 1922 he unveiled the Kings Bromley war memorial. Here he can be seen at the ceremony, white haired and standing stiffly to attention with his back to the camera:



He could clearly empathise with villagers, some of whom had also lost only sons or multiple sons in the war. In his address, reported in the Lichfield Mercury, he referred to his own loss:

In a short address, Sir Ronald said he was proud to come back to his native village to perform this ceremony. He was the only one of the family left of his generation, and when he looked at the names on the memorial he could recognise several of them, probably the grandsons of those whom he had known. He expressed the deepest sympathy for the relatives of the fallen. He and his wife (who was present at the ceremony) knew to the full their sorrow, for they had lost their only son in the war. But that beautiful memorial, standing by the roadside where they would see it every day, would always give them feelings of thankfulness and pride—thankfulness to God for the victory and for sparing us from the ruin and devastation which he had seen in France and Belgium, and pride in the self-sacrifice of the men who fell. Although the war was over, England was badly in need of the same spirit of service and sacrifice as they exhibited.

Already here there can be seen that he was becoming out of sympathy with the times. He gave an address on Armistice Day in 1926 at Saxmundham, where this becomes clear:

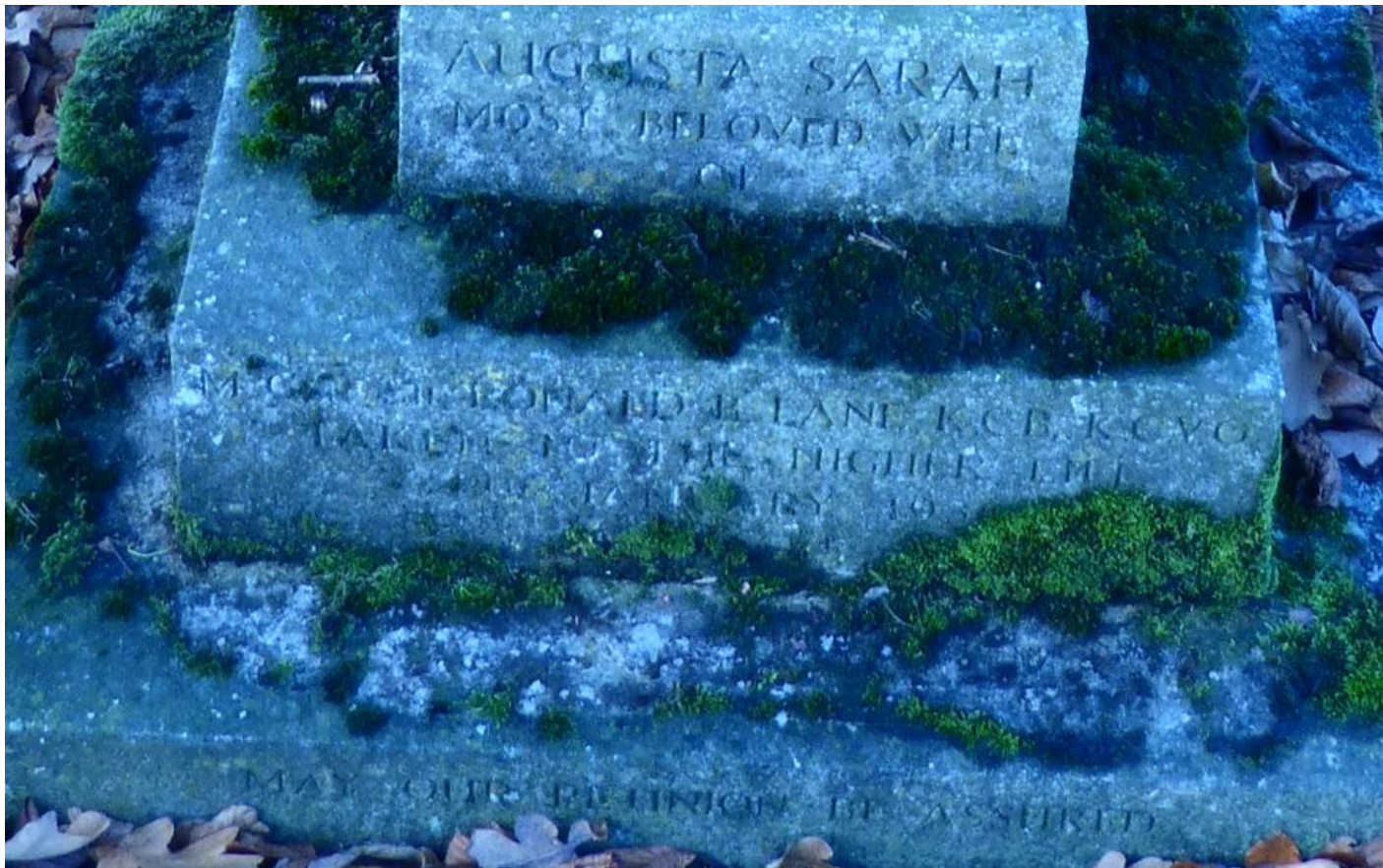
“He said it hardly seemed a year since they were together on the last Remembrance Sunday. On that occasion they had been looking forward to a year of peace and comfort in the country, he was sorry to say that the year had not been so prosperous and there was a lot of poison being spread in the country ... the men who had fallen were near to us now ... they had fought and died for freedom in the world against treachery. They had fought for freedom, and we on this earth must fight and work for freedom also and check this horrible poison. The year with its long strike had been very bad for the country, but he thought the general strike had brought out that feeling that Englishmen had, and what they always had, that they were free to work. Sir Ronald urged all to do all they could to counter the poison, spread by aliens, who, during the war had done all they could so that we should lose the war – men who were paid with aliens’ money. He said we should discourage this feeling and show by example and all our work that there was still freedom in our country. Sir Ronald said ten years ago there was progressing one of the biggest battles ever fought, that on the Somme, in which a great number of dear fellows had lost their lives ...”

His attitude to the General Strike was that it had been fomented by aliens, or fifth columnists, who had also been active during the war. Perhaps most striking is his contention that ‘Englishmen .. always ...[felt] ... they were free to work.’. The very nature of the post-war depression was that there was mass unemployment and many workers could not find work. While his views might seem somewhat reactionary to many, they are hardly surprising given his privileged background, and perhaps a residual bitterness at the loss of his son.

JHHV Lane died in 1917 and his wife Grace and their seven children left Kings Bromley after the war. Kings Bromley Hall, which like many others at the time could not find a buyer, was knocked down in 1928. Rosemary Lane recalled that Ronald said that he would have bought it for her had she been a boy. In her usual forthright manner she said that she would not have known what to do with the draughty old place anyway.

In 1923 his brother-in-law Lord Northbourne died. Attending the funeral were his sons-in-law, Geoffrey and Sidney. Ronald, Augusta and George, his other son-in-law, were unable to attend and sent floral tributes. It is significant that neither Grace nor her children, including the Kings Bromley heir Thomas, attended or sent floral tributes. The rift between the Kings Bromley Lanes and the rest of the family had been growing since JHHV Lane's accession to the Manor and his marriage to Grace in 1902. According to Rosemary her father Geoffrey stated that 'the trouble with Kings Bromley was entirely due to alcohol'. Grace did in fact become an alcoholic and Thomas drank himself to death at the age of 39.

In 1929 his last sister Edith, Lady Northbourne, died at the age of 83. Ronald, now 82 himself, must have felt even more than when he gave his speech at Dover College that he "was coming towards the end of his life's work" and Augusta, Lady Lane, died on 4th January 1936, aged 85. Her gravestone is in All Saints Church:



The inscription reads:

“AUGUSTA SARAH / most beloved wife of / M. GEN^L SIR RONALD B. LANE / K.C.B. K.C.V.O. / Taken to the higher LML / 4th January 1936 Aged 85 / May our reunion be assured”.

LML I believe refers to 'Le Myosotis Ligurien'. The forget-me-not (Myosotis) is often used as a symbol of freemasonry. Ligurien means 'of the Loire region', a lodge recognised as regular by the majority of the world's freemasons including the United Grand Lodge of England. Ronald clearly identified strongly enough with freemasonry as to wish to record the fact on his wife's gravestone.

Ronald himself died only a year later on 7th March 1937. On 26th Oct 1936 he had written a letter to his adopted son Major Geoffrey Lane giving him instructions on how to dispose of his books and war trophies. This letter also mentions that Augusta had left £500 to be spent on a memorial to him at Kings Bromley:

TELEGRAMS & STATION,
SAXMUNDHAM.
TELEPHONE
13 SAXMUNDHAM.

CARLETON HALL,
SAXMUNDHAM,
SUFFOLK.

26 Oct/36

For Major Geoffrey Lane to be kept
with my will & refers to certain articles
of my Property here to be sold after my
death -

The Gold Ring with single Turquoise
stones, wh. I have worn always for
many years to be kept by Major G. Lane
or given to any close relative, by him,
who may value it -

Any such relative, including Cap^t. Sidney
Lane, to have the choice, before date,
of any books (including large Scrap
Book in the Hall here) & South African
& Egyptian War Trophies also Canadian
Indian native & War Apparel, the
Large Chain-Armour, taken from
a Sheik when Osman Digna was

defeated in the Egyptian War; all
these last mentioned war relics are
hanging in the Passage, here, between my
dining room & the front Hall -
Any of these articles not chosen by relatives
or close friends to be sold -
Lady Lane, my dear wife, left, in the Will,
£500 to be spent in a Memorial to me at
Kings Bromley, Leicestershire; if possible I wd
wish this to be chiefly devoted to the
help of the poor & sick in that Village -

Carleton Hall
Saxmundham Ronald. B. Lane

26 Oct 1936

His obituary appeared in The Times. Here it stated that Ronald "...belonged to the era before the Great War". Indeed he had outlived most of his contemporaries and most of his family. The family mourners were Major Geoffrey Lane and Mrs Lane and his nephew George Lane's widow.

The Rifle Brigade Chronicle obituary stated "Some old Riflemen, and I fear that their numbers are few, who read of the death of Major General Sir Ronald Lane will, I am sure, experience a feeling of great regret at the passing away of such a distinguished and universally popular figure. Popular everywhere, with a fund of high spirits and gaiety, he carried all before him. I think it must have been early in his career that he was always known in the Regiment as "Rowdy" Lane and the descriptive nickname stuck to him all his life. As his age was 90 when he died, he outlived nearly all his contemporaries.... It is sad when men, especially those such as Sir Ronald Lane, with a long and useful record of honourable service behind them, outlive their time, and must therefore feel a loneliness when, in looking around them, they could hardly see a single face they knew "when all the world was young.""

The continued estrangement between Ronald and the ex-Kings Bromley Lanes may be shown by the fact that neither JHHV Lane's wife, nor any of her seven living children attended the funeral. The way that he disposed of the £35,982 (£1.7 m in today's money) in his will also gives an indication of how he regarded his extant relatives.

Obituary

MAJOR-GENERAL SIR RONALD LANE

DISTINGUISHED SOLDIER AND SPORTSMAN

Major-General Sir Ronald Bertram Lane, K.C.B., K.C.V.O., late The Rifle Brigade, who died at Carlton Hall, Saxmundham, yesterday, at the age of 90, belonged to the era before the Great War. In his younger days he was the perfect A.D.C. and the tale of the personal staff appointments he held is a long one. A keen sportsman and a good man to hounds, his charm of manner and unaffected disposition made and retained him a large circle of friends, and in the later stages of his career he proved his capacity in higher staff employment and the command of troops.

The General came of the historic family of Lane, formerly of King's Bromley. An ancestor, Colonel John Lane, was instrumental in saving the life of King Charles II after the Battle of Worcester



FUNERAL SERVICE FOR SIR RONALD LANE

LARGE CONGREGATION AT KELSALE CHURCH

Kelsale Parish Church was filled by a large and distinguished congregation yesterday afternoon for the funeral service of Major-General Sir Ronald Bertram Lane, K.C.B., K.C.V.O., veteran of the Zulu and Egyptian Wars, who died at his residence, Carlton Hall, Saxmundham, on Sunday. He celebrated his 90th birthday last month.

The officiating clergy were Canon E. E. Eddowes (rector of Kelsale), the Ven. J. G. R. Darling (Archdeacon of Suffolk), Canon the Very Worshipful Bro. H. C. O. Lanchester (Past Grand Chaplain of the Grand Lodge of England), who recited Masonic prayers, and the Rev. J. P. B. Hart, a former rector of the parish. The service was choral, and at the close Mr. Frank Scarff (organist) played Chopin's Marche Funebre. Two hymns were sung—Sir Ronald's favourite, "O God Our Help in Ages Past," and "Now the labourer's task is o'er."

Preceding the cortege into the church walked Mr. David Murray, gardener at Carlton Hall, who carried Sir Ronald's decorations. On the coffin, which was draped with the Union Jack, lay a simple spray of acacia—a tribute from the brethren of the Abiff Lodge of Freemasons (No. 2810), Saxmundham—which will accompany the coffin at the interment to-day at King's Bromley Churchyard, near Burton-on-Trent, where Lady Lane is buried. Employees of the Hall and estate followed.

The family mourners were: Major Geoffrey Lane (nephew) and Mrs. Lane, Mrs. George Lane, Mrs. Maitland (niece) and Miss Bycroft.

Also among the mourners were Sir Malcolm Murray, representing H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught, the Earl of Stradbroke (Lord-Lieutenant of Suffolk and R.W. Provincial Grand Master of Suffolk Freemasonry) and Lady Stradbroke.

FREEMASONRY

Freemasonry was also represented by the following:—W. Bro. Brig-General S. E. Massy Lloyd, C.B.E., D.L., J.P., P.G.D., who represented the Grand Lodge of England; W. Bro. Viscount Donagh (Deputy Provincial Grand Master of Suffolk); E. Comd. J. E. Pierce, P.O. Std. B., representing the Supreme Grand Chapter of England; W. Bro. F. W. Cook, P.P.O.T., Prov. A.G. Sec.; W. Bro. Admiral E. F. Bruen, C.M., P.P.G.W.; the Rev. W. H. N. Matthews, Prov. Grand Chaplain (No. 1983); "Abiff" Lodge (No. 2810), Saxmundham, the W.M., W. Bro. C. R. Fowler, W. Bro. D. W. Ryder Richardson, I.P.M., W. Bro. H. E. [unclear], P.P.G.W., W. Bro. C. H. Hayward, P.P.G.D.

His final will was signed on 29th May 1936. In this he bequeathed to his trustees some heirlooms that were of considerable personal importance to him:

‘My General’s Sword (given to me by H.R.H. The Duke of Connaught)

The two Cups given to me by the Head Quarters Staff of the War Office on my marriage

The Rose Water Dish given to me by H.R.H. The Duke of Connaught on my marriage

The Pink Coral Pin given to me by her late Majesty Queen Victoria after the bathing accident in which prince Arthur (now Duke of Connaught) and I were nearly drowned

The small Silver Hot Water Jug given to me by H.R.H. Princess Louise Duchess of Argyll on my marriage

The Travelling clock given to me by Field Marshall H.R.H. The Duke of Cambridge on my marriage

The Silver Watch (by Dent) given to me by H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught on my leaving for the Zulu War in One thousand eight hundred and seventy nine

The Bamboo Cane Walking Stock with Amber Handle which belonged to Field Marshall The Duke of Cambridge (to whom I was aide de camp) and was given to me at his death by his son Colonel Augustus FitzGeorge as a keepsake

The 1914 Star and Medals awarded to my son Captain George Ronald Lane who was killed in action in One thousand nine hundred and sixteen when he was Adjutant of the Second Battalion Coldstream Guards

The Portrait (in Oils) of myself and also the Miniature of Dame Jane Lane from the Bohn Collection (which was sold at Messrs. Christies some years ago and was purchased by me there on its being sold again)

The Oil Painting three quarter length (believed to be by Lawrence) of my mother the late Honourable Mrs. Newton Lane

The gilt round salver ("Dear Old Rowdie" engraved thereon) and the Silver Cup for the centre of a table given to me by Mr. Arthur R. Grenfell

The Oil Painting of my said son George Ronald Lane as Kings Page of Honour

My Water Colour Painting by Prout of the Interior of a Church left to me by my Mother'

Of all these items, the only ones we have knowledge of are the gilt round salver and the walking stick. The salver was in the possession of Rosemary Lane when she was visited in 2013. It displays the Lane coat of arms. After Rosemary's death it was noticed that this salver was being offered at auction.



During the 2013 interview Rosemary stated “the Duke of Cambridge gave Uncle Lonnie a walking stick that belonged to George IV and that I gave to Aberdeen Arts Centre so it's in the Arts Centre.”

It is a shame that the portraits mentioned here are lost. The three-quarter length painting of his mother, Agnes, may be the same one that his brother Cecil had with him in Cephalonia when he was resident there between 1860 and 1864. This is mentioned in a letter of Edward Lear dated May 4th 1863. He visited Argostoli when he was touring and painting the Ionian islands. Cecil, who was temporarily away, offered him a room in the Residency. He wrote: "Down to the Residency (wh. stands well, a garden behind, olives on the hill in front) & found my room all ready & very nice. Mrs. Newton Lane's portrait above the chimney, & my recognizing it as his mother seemed to please the 2 servants." Sir Thomas Lawrence 1769 - 1830 was a leading British portrait painter of the early 19th century, portraying most of the important personalities of the day.

In addition to these items that were given to the Trustees to dispose of as they wished, Ronald made some specific bequest to Geoffrey:

“The two silver figures of a Rifle Brigade Officer and Rifleman made out of the lace of my old uniforms.

The three silver bowls given to me on my marriage by my Brother Officers of the Rifle Brigade

The Fur Coat which belonged to his father the Dean of Rochester

The Water Colour by Oakley of my father John Newton Lane and the Water Colour of my mother which usually hangs below it and the Water Colour by Oakley of my uncle the Reverend Leveson Lane

All my Medals and Decorations and all my guns rifles fishing rods and other articles of sporting use and all my furniture silver plate jewellery books pictures prints photographs articles of vertu and other articles of household or personal use or ornament belonging to me at my death not otherwise effectively disposed of by this my will.”

Once again it is unfortunate that these items appear to have been lost. Kings Bromley Historians have no portrait of Ronald's uncle the Reverend Leveson Lane who was vicar of Wasperton, Warks., the local parish church of the Lucy family of Charlecote (his aunt Maria Lane had married John Hammond Lucy of Charlecote).

Apart from these various objects Ronald left £35,982, or about £1.7m in today's money. How he disposed of this money is explained in Appendix 2. The main beneficiary was Geoffrey who received both income from money in trust and a capital sum. Apart from some small bequests it was extant members of the Lane family who received money, and Ronald was careful only to give to those who needed it, or in his eyes deserved it. I think he was keenly aware of his position in the Lane family and that family's past connection with Kings Bromley, which was perhaps fading from memory. His concern in this matter is highlighted in another part of the will where he leaves the income from £200 in trust to the Vicar and Churchwardens of All Saints Kings Bromley to maintain the graves and monuments of the various members of the Lane family - any residue to go to the poor of Kings Bromley. The arrangements for his own burial were to be simple:

“I WISH to be buried in the Churchyard of Kings Bromley near Lichfield Staffordshire in a grave alongside that of my late dear Wife AND I DESIRE that my funeral shall be as simple and inexpensive as possible and that such of my friends as may have intended to send flowers to my funeral shall instead of so doing send subscriptions in my memory to the East Suffolk and Ipswich Hospital.”

This might have been the end of the story as far as Kings Bromley is concerned were it not for a legacy of £500 that Ronald's wife Augusta had left for a memorial to Ronald at All Saints. There is an interesting story involved in the bequest. Because of a disagreement in 1937 as to what form this memorial should take, followed by the uncertainty of the war years, it was 1952 before the project was completed. In the church records there are very elaborate drawings for making a panelled chapel in the area at present occupied by the children's altar. One of the arches with the nave was to contain a screen, with another across the north aisle at the south end of this chapel. We have no written evidence to say that Lady Lane's bequest was to be used for this new chapel, but it is highly probable that this was the intention, but it never happened. This is an extract from the minutes of Kings Bromley Parochial Church Council held on November 16th 1951 " ...They reported that the Sub-Committee appointed by the Council to deal with the affair of the Lane Bequest had met twice, and unanimously recommended that the money - if and when available should be used for the erection of choir stalls in church, instead of a stained glass window as previously suggested ... The Council approved the action of the sub-committee and, after discussion agreed to its recommendation". In July 1952 Lichfield Diocese created a faculty "authorising the placing of new carved oak stalls", the work to be carried out by Bridgeman and Sons of Lichfield and the replaced stalls to be sold to a member of the Lane family. My guess is that the only living Lane who would have been interested in buying the old choir stalls would have been Dame Lilian Bromley Davenport who might have taken them to her home at 'The Kennels' at Capesthorpe.

The choir stalls are still in the Chancel, All Saints, Kings Bromley:





The inscription reads:

**THESE CHOIR STALLS WERE PLACED HERE IN 1953 BY THE BEQUEST OF LADY LANE
IN MEMORY OF HER HUSBAND MAJ. GEN. SIR RONALD BERTRAM LANE KCB KCVO RIFLE
BRIGADE WHO DIED 7 MARCH 1937**

Appendix 1 - Rosemary Lane and the Ronald Lane Scrapbooks

Rosemary Lane was the daughter of Major Geoffrey Lane, Dean Ernald Lane's son and the heir of Ronald Lane. Kings Bromley Historians first became aware of her existence when she rang Allan Howard, Leader, in 2011. She had got the contact details from the Historians' website. She said '... you don't know me, but when I tell you my name you might have some idea of who I am'. She went on to explain that she wished to help us buy a picture of her grandfather, Ernald Lane, Dean of Rochester Cathedral.

We were aware of the existence of this painting since representatives of St. Matthew's Church, in Northampton, had earlier contacted Mavis Crockett of the Kings Bromley Historians asking whether she could identify two paintings in their possession as being of Dean Ernald Lane. They had been able trace the coat of arms shown on the second picture, see below, as being the Lane family crest. The two paintings had been bought by a church member from the estate of Derek Nimmo and subsequently donated to the church.

The first of the paintings, on the left, had been bought by Rosemary for Rochester Cathedral. The second was going to be put up for auction on ebay.



With financial assistance from Rosemary, Kings Bromley Historians were successful in obtaining the painting which now hangs in the main hall of Kings Bromley Village Hall, once known as the 'Ernald Lane Institute'.

After this there was regular contact between Rosemary and Allan Howard. She donated to the Historians a set of 41 photographs of the Lane family and the Hall which, since her father had identified who was who, have proved invaluable in our research, particularly into the family of John Newton Lane, his wife Agnes and their children, who included Ernald.

Rosemary Lane who was now 90 years old was living in Aberdeen. In September 2013 Allan and Alison Howard, who were going on holiday to the Orkneys, visited her. She was very welcoming and very sharp witted and agreed to have an extended interview which was recorded on a voice recorder. She gave us a review of her long and interesting life.

Her father Geoffrey Lane had served in WWI first as a Captain then as a Major in the Rifle Brigade. He married Elizabeth A C Boyle in 1919. They had three daughters Priscilla E Lane was born in 1921, Rosemary E J Lane, born in 1923 and Audrey E Lane, born in 1926 in Reigate. She let us have copies of photos of her parents and herself as a child.



She described her upbringing. Priscilla, the older sister, was ‘the clever one’ and got a scholarship to Oxford, but could not take it up due a recurrence of TB that she had as a child. Rosemary herself had no formal education up to the age of 12, but from 13 -16 was at a boarding school at Hayes Court in Kent ‘... it was a great place ... that’s my only education, three years, not bad really’. From there she was sent ‘as all young ladies were sent, to learn how to iron their husbands’ shirts so I went to a finishing school in Lyme Regis and I was there at the beginning of the war. We were evacuated when the Dunkirk thing happened, because they wanted the place where we lived for wounded soldiers. I then spent a year at home and then of course joined the WAAF [as a fighter plotter]’. At the end of the war she was at a loose end and decided that she would go to America and have a career in physiotherapy:

“Yes. I went out... I had a bit of a stand-up with the superintendent at Hammersmith because I didn't think we were doing as much as we ought to be doing and a week later there was an advertisement in the Physiotherapy Journal for somebody to go as a research assistant to Duke University, North Carolina, so I applied. I had absolutely no qualifications to do it at all, absolutely none. I'd been qualified for two years but of course I was a mature student because I'd been in the WAAF and I got the job!

And so I was there for two years and I spent the last eighteen months writing a postgraduate degree course for physiotherapists which was something for which I was totally academically unprepared to do. I had to study. They gave me eighteen months to do it, I did it actually in the last three months. The first six months I did just about nothing!

I was determined to have my own school. I was in hospital, oh for some ridiculous reason, I can't remember why, but anyway, there was a girl in the bed opposite me who'd broken her leg and she had her kneecap screwed and she was lying in bed and the physiotherapist came to see her every day. I wasn't qualified by this time. The physiotherapist came to see her every day and said to her, "Can you lift your leg off the bed?" and she said, "No". So I listened to this and I thought "This is absolutely appalling! I can teach that girl to get her leg off the bed in five minutes. I must go away and teach the physiotherapists".

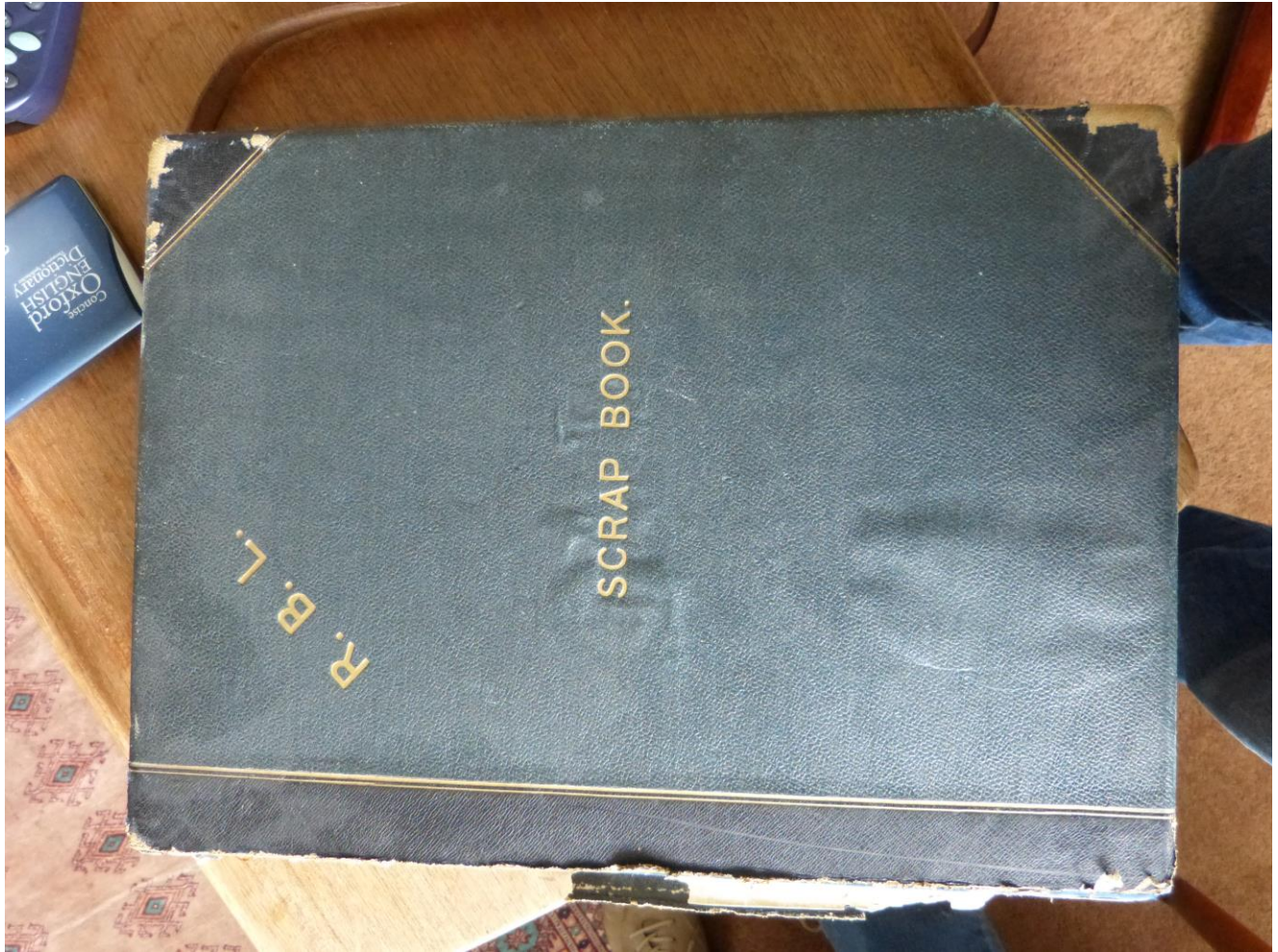
Then I trained at Westminster and it closed down and I was very lucky because we had a tutor who taught anatomy and she disappeared, I don't quite know why, but she left anyway and there was nobody to teach anatomy. So, in my second year as a student I was teaching anatomy to the next lots of students. It was long before degree courses, of course, because degree courses didn't come out, practically till I retired. I mean I retired when I was 63"

This is the sum total of what Rosemary Lane FCSP, Dip TP was prepared to say about her distinguished career in physiotherapy. She was the founder and Principal of the School of Physiology in Aberdeen from which she retired from in 1986 and received the MBE for her work. On retirement she became a driving force behind the local branch of the Riding and Disabled Association.



It was during the interview that she told us how, after her great uncle Ronald Bertram Lane had lost his only son George in WW1, her father had become Ronald's adopted son. Then she said that she had inherited two scrapbooks of Ronald's and if we were interested we could have a look at them.

These scrapbooks form the basis of this current work, and a lot of other research carried out by Kings Bromley Historians. She allowed me to photograph every page:



There were about 150 pages in the two scrapbooks. Rosemary said that she intended to leave them to the Rifle Brigade, but they have not received them and what happened to them after her death is unknown.

She gave us a lunch served with silver cutlery with the Lane crest on it.

We kept in contact over the next two years and I dedicated the Historians publication 'The Life and Times of Agnes, the Little Queen of Kings Bromley' to her. Her father had always described her as 'Pure Bagot', and I detected a similarity between Rosemary and her great grandmother. She died on 5th September 2015 with a copy of the publication on her bedside table.

Appendix 2- The Explanation of the Pecuniary Bequests in Ronald Lane's Will

These figures are all gross figures before the imposition of death duties

The family trees on the following page help in understanding the financial side of the will. At the time of Ronald's death he had no siblings left alive. Ronald was very careful to bequeath his money to those of his Lane relatives that he thought needed and deserved it. No money was bequeathed to Augusta's family.

Of the children of his brother John Henry Bagot Lane, Lilian had married and was financially secure and Constance who was 'of weak mind' was living in secure accommodation in Bexhill-on-Sea on a trust fund set up by her father. Given that George died in 1936, the only child of JHB who needed money was Arthur Lane, who had emigrated to Canada, and he duly inherited the interest from £5000 in trust for life. He died in 1947.

Of the children of his brother Cecil Lane, Georgina Lane received the interest from £2000 in trust, and John Ronald Lane received £3000.

The children of his brother, Sidney, who had married the heiress Lady Downe, needed no financial assistance and got none.

The child of his brother Ernald Lane, Geoffrey, who he had in effect adopted, was the main beneficiary, receiving the interest from £5000 held in trust, and the residue from the estate after the various bequests had been made.

His nephew JHHV Lane's wife Grace received nothing and neither did JHHV's heir Thomas. Of JHHV's other children, Richard had inherited Seawells in Barbados and it is probable that he was his uncle George's heir, so Ronald left him nothing. Of JHHV's daughters, who had been left bereft by their brother Thomas, Katherine Withy Jane Lane was left £1000 and Jane, Grace, Lettice and Dorothy £500 each.

The other bequests were to Sir Malcolm Donald Murray (friend) - £1000, to three trustees Charles Frederick Booth, Geoffrey Lane & Ethelbert Reed - £100 each if they carried out the will properly, £500 to the Rifleman's Aid Society, £300, to the Albert Orphan Asylum Bagshot Surrey, £100 to his gardener, £100 to his chauffeur, and £100 to his housekeeper and nurse and the income from £200 in trust to the Vicar and Churchwardens of All Saints Kings Bromley to maintain the graves and monuments of the various members of the Lane family (any residue to go to the poor of Kings Bromley).

At the time of the will, £12,000 was in trust, income to beneficiaries. £8,150 went as direct payments to beneficiaries. The total value of will, according to The Times, was £36,000. This leaves £15,850 as 'residue' going to Geoffrey, who also has the income from his £5000 'in trust' payment, and also in 1947 would have received Arthur's £5000. This, along with any Army pension, will explain how he managed to retire early, but Rosemary Lane thought that they 'never had any money'. These things are relative.

It is nice that Ronald remembered JHHV's daughters in his will. Dorothy and Lettice married, but Jane, Grace and Katherine (Withy) were spinsters and seemed to live in genteel poverty. Perhaps Withy was a favourite as she got £1000 and the others £500.

Ronald Lane's Siblings

John Newton Lane = (Hon) Agnes Bagot (m 1828)

John Henry Bagot Lane = Susan Anne Vincent
[1829 –1886] (m 1864) [1832–1899]^P

13 other children:

1. Albert William+ [1830-1831]
2. Sidney Leveson [1831-1910] JP, Barrister
3. William [1832- 1832]
4. Cecil Newton [1833-1887] CMG
5. Greville Charles [1834 –1878] Captain
6. Ernald [1836 – 1913] Dean of Rochester
7. Arthur Louis [1840–1846]
8. Edward Alfred Reginald [1841–1854] RN
9. Agnes Louisa [1842-1842]
10. Alice Frances Jane [1844-1846]
11. Edith Emmeline Mary [1846- 1929]
12. **Ronald Bertram** [1847-1936]
13. Isabel Emma Beatrice [1849-1876]

1. John Henry Bagot Lane (Ronald's brother and Lord of KB Manor)'s Family

John Henry Bagot Lane = Susan Anne Vincent

John Henry Hervey Vincent Lane = (Hon) Grace Louisa Edwardes
[1867-1917] [1872-1957]
m 1902

6 Other Children:

1. Grace Mary Jane [1864-1871]
2. Florence Louisa Jane [1865- 1908]
3. Constance Emily Jane [1869-1939]
4. Arthur Edward Cecil [1871-1947]
5. George Alfred Osborne+ [1875-1936]
6. Lilian Emily Isabel Jane+ [1878-1972]

2. JHHV Lane (Ronald's Nephew and Lord of KB Manor)'s Family

John Henry Hervey Vincent Lane = Grace Louisa Edwardes

Jane [1903-?]	Grace Lilian Jane [1904-1985]	Thomas John Henry Vincent [1905-1942]	Katherine Withy Jane 1908-1984]	Richard William Walter de Lone [1908-1984]	Lettice Georgina Jane [1911-1991]	Dorothy Edith Jane+ [1913-1939]
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