

Franks Forage No 34.

Major-General Charles Powlett Lane

Charles Powlett Lane, born in Bloomsbury on 8th February 1826, was the eldest son of Charles Lane of Badgemore, Oxfordshire and his wife Emily Maria, second daughter of John Thornhill, an East India Company director.

Charles was educated at Eton and then nominated as a cadet for the Bengal Cavalry, passed the Military Committee at East India House and set sail for India on 20th January 1846, the day he was commissioned a cornet in the Bengal Cavalry and subsequently posted to the 6th Bengal Light Cavalry in December of that year. He served in the 2nd Sikh War and received the Punjab Medal with clasps (*see illustration*). In 1852 he passed the course to act as an interpreter and was promoted to Captain in November 1856. He returned to England in March 1857 and on 2nd November of that year married Caroline (Carry) Lucy, the ceremony conducted by her uncle, Reverend John Lucy.

Charles returned to India (without Carry) in December 1857 and during his absence an uprising by the troopers of the 3rd Bengal Light Cavalry against the officers ignited the Indian mutiny. Arriving in India, he was put in charge of a Ghurkha brigade and participated in the relief of Lucknow. He received the Indian Mutiny Medal with clasp Lucknow, was mentioned in despatches and promoted to Brevet Major in July 1858. He was granted an 18-month furlough from 10th April 1858. In 1860 on returning to India he joined the newly-formed 21st Hussars in which he served for the rest of his military career.

On 2nd July 1860, Caroline gave birth to a son, Aymer and on the 18th the Lanes embarked for India, leaving Aymer at Charlecote with his nurse. Carry did not enjoy good health in India. In the spring of 1861 she suffered from tetanus and in July 1862 she prematurely gave birth to a still-born son. In 1863 the Lanes arrived back in England and Charles returned to India alone.

In February 1864, Carry, unwell again and pregnant, went with Aymer to spend some time at Boddlewyddan and during that time she departed from this world. It is sad to realise that Charles, in India, wrote letters to Carry unaware of her passing.

On 14th September, Charles Powlett Lane married Bertha d'Albiac Du Boulay at Sturminster, Dorset. They had two sons; Reginald Powlett, born in India in 1871 and Marwood Elton born in London in 1874. Charles wrote to Mary Elizabeth Lucy announcing his intention to re-marry but she was not over-enthusiastic and referred to Bertha as no more than a 'connexion.'

Charles was promoted Lt. Colonel in March 1868. The 21st Hussars returned to England in 1873; he was promoted Major General in May 1878 and retired on full pay that year. On his retirement, the family lived in Corfe Mullen where Charles served as a JP and Deputy Lieutenant for the county of Dorset. He died on 17th November 1910 aged 85 and is buried in Corfe Mullen churchyard. Bertha died in January 1939 and is buried with him.

Aymer was educated at Eton after which he entered the army, rising through the ranks to Major in 1914. He fought in the Boer War where he was taken prisoner for four months. In WW1 he was

appointed to the Staff as an Embarkation Officer in September 1916. Aymer died unmarried and without issue in 1929. He kept in touch with the Lucy family and Constance mentions in her diary of 1886 that he attended the funeral of his cousin Sybil Mary who died that year aged 18.



The coffee shop at Rawalpindi. Charles Powlett Lane is at the back on the right of the right hand Pillar with black hair and beard.



Charles' medals



The memorial in St. Hubert's Church

There is some confusion with Charles Powlett Lane's name. Mary Elizabeth Lucy in her diaries refers to him as Pawlett Lane (without the Charles) and other references give his name as Paulet Lane. I wonder why this is?

Also, Aymer is sometimes spelt Aylmer. From Mary Elizabeth's and Constance Linda's diaries, Aymer would appear to be correct.

Mary Elizabeth was very fond of Carry, a relationship encapsulated in my forage no. 15.

Frank Storr