

SIR LIONEL MONTAGUE JACOB KCSI

Born 24th April 1853 - Died 9th February 1934



A son of [Major-General Herbert Jacob](#), he was born on 24th April 1853. Lionel was intended for the Army after schooling at Bath, but the attractions of the first prospectus of the Royal Indian Engineering College, Cooper's Hill, induced his father to embark him on a civil profession. He passed out of the college with distinction in 1875, and was posted to the Punjab for work in the irrigation Branch of the Public Works Department. He saw and assisted in the early steps leading to the great schemes of development which have brought the harnessing for purposes of cultivation of all the five rivers from which the province takes its name. He had four years in the secretariat at Lahore from 1894, and he then was given charge of the Chenab Canal projects, which were destined to prove so successful and remunerative.

After more than a quarter of a century in Northern India, he was transferred to Burma as Chief Engineer. Confronted with a new and varied line of work, he brought to bear upon it unflagging zeal and quick perception. He was in charge of the Canal Bill passed through the Burma Legislature. After two years in Rangoon he went to headquarters as Secretary of the Public Works Department, combining with the post for a short time the Inspector-Generalship of Irrigation. He was due to retire under the age rules in 1908, but the Government of India placed so much value on his versatile service, that his term was extended for three years. He had been made CSI in 1905, and when he retired in 1911 he was advanced to the knighthood of the order.

Very few engineers in India have come near the literary gifts of Lionel Jacob. These were mostly displayed in Indian days in fugitive pieces of wit and wisdom in the columns of the Pioneer, but now and again there were popular reprints, notable "Mr and Mrs Brown at Home". In this country he was a frequent contributor to periodicals. An amateur actor in great request, he was for five years president of the Simla ADC. He loved painting in oils and watercolours, and was a connoisseur in many departments of art. He was an excellent judge of dogs and a good game shot. Quick and impulsive, he could be hasty in argument, but no one could long be out of temper with a man whose disposition was so generally charming.

It is perhaps his expert knowledge of dogs, especially Indian dogs, for which he is remembered today. He drew up a 'description and standard of points'. Although it must be stressed that this was not an official breed standard, this description was published in the Kennel Gazette and Dog Owners' Annual in 1901. He did not agree with the term Bhuteer Terrier, but felt that as Lhasa was 'the headquarters of the breed', Lhasa Terrier was the most accurate name and preferable to any other. Clearly he was also of the opinion that the breed should be accepted as a distinct one and should be recognised by the Kennel Club.

He married twice. 1stly Marion Brown, who was born on 7th July 1861, at



Ferozepore on 29th January 1880. She died at sea on the way to India on 19th April 1888. 2ndly, in 1890, he married Minnie Winstanley Rushton. They had no children. Lionel died on 9th February 1934.

Sources:

(Obituary: The Times)

Jacob MSS (Correspondence, pedigrees)

TC & EC Jack, The Plantagenet Roll of the Blood Royal, The Anne of Exeter Volume, London 1907.