Sir William Arbuthnot-Lane, 1st Baronet

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Sir William Arbuthnot-Lane, 1st Baronet

Sir William ("Willie") Arbuthnot-Lane, 1st Baronet, Legion of Honour (Fort George, Invernesshire 4 July 1856 – 16 January 1943) was a Scottish surgeon. His father, Benjamin Lane, was an Irishman who was posted as military surgeon to Inverness, Scotland, where William was born.

Associated for most of his career with Guy's Hospital, Lane is known for three surgical procedures: the treatment of cleft palate, the application of internal splints to fractures using the strict aseptic 'Lane technique' and the treatment of chronic intestinal stasis. During the 1914–18 war, he organised and opened Queen Mary's Hospital, Sidcup, a pioneering institution in plastic surgery. This controversial surgeon asked to have his name removed from the Medical Register, in order to promote the New Health Society (the first organised body to deal with social medicine), to avoid being disciplined by the General Medical Council. He had founded the New Health Society in 1925 to publicise his views on healthy diet and life.

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Arbuthnot-Lane trained and later worked at Guy's Hospital in London. Lane is best known for his attempts at improving alignment of fractures by using internal fixation. He started off using silver wire, then he used steel screws and this was followed by the use of plates and screws. Lane was regarded at his peak as the best abdominal surgeon in England and was called on to operate on Royalty, politicians and many society figures of the Edwardian era.

Naturally rather shy, he found teaching and medical writing difficult, and taught mostly by example. His remarkable knowledge of anatomy and supreme surgical technique was much admired by surgeons from all over the world who flocked to watch him operate at Guys Hospital. This fame made him many enemies in London surgical circles. Remarkably, when he published a series on the operative repair of fractures by steel plate and screws, his fellow surgeons reported him to the General Medical Council (the doctors disciplinary body in Britain) and attempted to have him struck off the Medical Register and thus destroy his practice.

In 1904, Lane met the Russian Nobel prize winning bacteriologist Elie Metchnikoff who fatally influenced his thoughts. Believing that Darwin's theories on natural selection were right, Lane noticed that the skeletons of manual workers had undergone changes in their lifetime. This led him to believe that natural selection was happening much faster than Darwin suggested. Metchnikoff unfortunately had become convinced that humans were changing much faster as well and that several of our body structures were now obsolete and through evolutionary process going to disappear. He suggested that the colon was one such structure, that it was going to shrink like the appendix and dreamed of a day when we could have an operation to remove it entirely.
Lane realised that he had now developed abdominal surgical technique to a point where this was possible and decided to operate on some patients with very severe constipation. Gratified by the results of this first surgery, he then performed total colectomies as a cure for "auto-intoxication". This condition had no medical or scientific credibility and at a meeting of the Royal Society of Medicine in London to discuss the topic in 1913 many of Lane's enemies seized the opportunity to attack his ideas and to publicly humiliate him. Lane's reputation was irreversibly damaged and despite being asked to lead the British army's surgical service during World War One and setting up the first plastic and reconstructive surgery unit to cope with war injuries, he never recovered. After the war he left Guy's Hospital and soon retired from medicine.

In 1926, still convinced that auto-intoxication was a genuine disorder, he appeared to have completely changed his mind about removing the colon. In an extraordinary volte-face he started promoting exercise, fruit and vegetables and bran cereal as the answer to bowel problems. Using his many royal and society connections he set up The New Health Society to promote programmes of health education that mirror those present today. Lane wrote columns in the newspapers, held public lectures and improved the distribution of fruit and vegetables. In this he was 40 years ahead of his time.

[edit] Lane's syndrome

(Otherwise Lane's disease or Arbuthnot Lane syndrome).

A syndrome prevalent in women characterised by colonic inertia, contraction and lack of relaxation of the pelvis muscles, and rectal obstruction.

[edit] The Doctor's Dilemma

Lane is sometimes unfairly quoted as the model for George Bernard Shaw's scurrilous surgeon in his play The Doctor's Dilemma. This is not true. Shaw himself stated that he had written the play before he had ever heard of Lane. The original of Cutler Walpole according to Shaw was an Ear Nose and Throat surgeon in London who had made a fortune by performing an unnecessary operation to extirpate the uvula. Lane and Shaw never met, but Shaw was an admirer of his. He was fascinated by Lane's opinions about the speed of evolution and the two had corresponded on the subject.

Quotations include:

- The man whose first question after what he considers to be a right course of action has presented itself, is 'What will people say?' is not the man to do anything at all.
- If everyone believes a thing it is probably untrue!
- If you get a rude letter, always send a polite one back. It's much better.

[edit] Personal

He died from being run over during a wartime blackout outside the Athenaeum Club in Pall Mall.

[edit] External links

- Family tree
- Works by William Arbuthnot Lane at Project Gutenberg
- Sir William Arbuthnot Lane at Who Named It?
Sir William Arbuthnot Lane, 1856–1943

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Abstract


Sir William Arbuthnot Lane was born July 4, 1856, in Fort George, Inverness, Scotland [2, 7]. His early education was in Scotland. His father, a military officer, moved the family about. Owing to matters of convenience and finances at the time, his father arranged for him to enter Guy’s Hospital at the age of 16 for medical training. He was apparently shy [10] and had a youthful appearance even for his young age, a point that created some problems for him with his fellow students, who nonetheless soon realized his exceptional abilities [2]. He qualified at Guy’s Hospital and as a member of the Royal College of Surgeons in 1877 at the age of 21 (becoming a Fellow in 1883). He subsequently received Bachelor of Medicine and Master of Surgery degrees from the University of London [7]. He procured an appointment at Great Ormand Street in 1883 but returned to Guy’s in 1888 at the age of 32 and spent most of his career there.

He was evidently as skilled as he was prolific. Jones noted,

“In one morning at Guy’s I saw him do an unusually difficult palatoplasty for cleft palate in a small child, a resection of the lower jaw for malignant disease, an open reduction and plating of both bones of the forearm for fracture, and a total colectomy, from cecum to sigmoid, with a terminal ileosigmoidostomy, by his method of anastomosis—for the relief of what is still known as “Lane’s disease.” Upon all these operations he stamped the seal of his personality by the originality of his
procedures and the smoothness, ease, and perfection of technic that proclaimed a real master, a master who dared where others quailed and who succeeded where others would have failed without his skill, his precision, and the confidence with which he planned and executed his operations” [2].

Lane traveled extensively, developing international friendships and colleagues and frequently visited the United States [7]. He retired from practice at Guy’s Hospital in 1920, but continued a practice out of his home office [2]. He often held strong opinions and in fact after retirement “asked to have his name removed from the Medical Register, in order to promote the New Health Society (the first organised body to deal with social medicine), to avoid being disciplined by the General Medical Council. He had founded the New Health Society in 1925 to publicise his views on healthy diet and life” [10].

As with virtually all surgeons of the time, he had broad interests and became particularly well known for his work with cleft palate and intestinal tract [7]. However, perhaps his most lasting influence was with internal fixation of fractures. Peltier [9] suggested that prior to antiseptic surgery introduced by Lister in the 1860s [6], there were only anecdotal reports of using wire suture, cerclage, or ivory pegs to internally fix fractures. Lister himself reported internal fixation of a displaced patellar fracture with silver wire. Beginning in 1892 (before the introduction of radiographs) Lane began using screws and wires [8] to internally fix displaced fractures. His rationale was the poor results of nonoperative treatment in some of these fractures:

“A careful inquiry into the results of the treatment of fractures by splints and manipulation confirmed the experiences of the dissecting room and showed that the consequent joint changes meant depreciation in physique and the wage-earning capacity of those who had to engage in laborious pursuits” [5].

Our rationale for internally fixing fractures is similar over a century later. However, the notion of internal fixation raised no small amount of reaction from the conservative medical community. Lane himself noted,

“These views met with violent opposition till the discovery of X-rays proved that the first contention (the high rate of nonunion of displaced fractures) was true, while the law courts are steadily impressing on the profession, in a costly manner, the disabilities which are associated with the imperfect restoration in the form of broken bones” [5].
Evidently, lawsuits, then as now, helped dictate the evolving standards of treatment, with patients (and attorneys) not accepting less than perfect reductions. Matas, writing Lane’s obituary forty years later, also emphasized the controversy surrounding Lane’s advocacy of internal fixation:

“...his operating on simple fractures raised a storm of criticism and even abuse. In his hands the operation was performed under strict asepsis but some other surgeons less meticulous in their technique failed to obtain union of the fracture owing to sepsis. This led to a tendency to blame the operation rather than the manner in which it was performed” [7].

He nonetheless persisted and published his first book, “The Operative Treatment of Fractures” in 1905, reporting good results with apparently few cases of infection [3].

In the article from 1909 we reproduce here [5], Lane describes this procedure in some detail. To minimize infection, he used strict aseptic procedures and developed the “no touch” technique. In addition to using antiseptic agents, he ensured the skin and wound edges were covered by thick “gauze” and not exposed or touched. In the 1890s he had developed long instruments to ensure even the gloved hand did not touch any part of the wound. (Surgical gloves were relatively new and...
Halsted contracted with the Goodyear Rubber Company to create sufficiently thin gloves that would allow the surgeon adequate sensitivity. Though skilled technically, Lane recognized the difficulty in placing a screw through both cortices, “To reduce the difficulty of finding the drill hole in the distal compact layer of bone, which is frequently of no avail when the fragment is comminuted, I employ screws of a length only sufficient to engage the proximal compact tissue...” [5]. This is a practice, however, that had largely been abandoned by the time of the AO school of thought in the late 60s. Lane introduced plates in 1907 [4] (Figs. 176–178). “...in the vast majority of cases I prefer to use as long and as strong a steel plate as possible, carrying as many screws as space permits” [5]. These were not made of stainless steel, since most forms of stainless steel were not discovered until into the next decade, and then were not widely used for medical applications for some time after [11]. However, he often internally fixed complex fractures (Fig. 197). One author reported a 45-year followup of one of these plates, apparently without any subsequent complication [1] (whether and how most of these fared long term is unclear from my literature review).

Lane cautioned about operatively treating compound fractures, even those that had apparently healed:

“It is well to remember that it is never perfectly safe to operate on a compound fracture, even though the wound has been healed for months, and there be no evidence whatever of the presence of any inflammation process about the fracture. It would be possible for organisms
introduced at the time of injury to remain latent for long periods of time, and to light up into activity when a large foreign body is introduced” [3].

The apparent success of his approach to internal fixation no doubt attests to his meticulous aseptic and surgical technique and Lane likely had as much or more influence on the introduction of the internal fixation of fractures as any of the other early pioneers such as Lambotte and later Sherman.


Articles from Clinical Orthopaedics and Related Research are provided here courtesy of The Association of Bone and Joint Surgeons
Sir William Arbuthnot Lane (1856–1943)

Surgeon and health campaigner, William Arbuthnot Lane was born near Inverness in 1856, the eldest child of an army surgeon. His childhood was spent following the regiment in India, Corfu, Malta, Canada, South Africa and Ireland. In 1872 he went to Guy's Hospital to study medicine, and was persuaded to become a surgeon, as it was a surer way to advancement than through medicine.

He began his surgical career at the Victoria Hospital for Children, Chelsea, although he returned to Guy's in 1882 as an anatomy demonstrator and assistant surgeon. He served as a consultant at Great Ormond Street Hospital from 1883 to 1916, and his work as consulting surgeon at Aldershot and the French Hospital, in addition to opening St Mary's Hospital, Sidcup, earned him a CB on top of the baronetcy he was awarded in 1913 for an operation he performed on a member of the royal family.

A controversial character in many ways (his advocacy of complete removal of the colon found little favour among his colleagues), his reputation as a safe pair of hands in the operating theatre was unrivalled. He was fanatical about hygiene while operating, designed surgical instruments to reduce the disturbance of tissues, and was supremely successful in setting (and resetting) simple fractures using wires and screws to keep the knitting bones in place. At Great Ormond Street, he developed new techniques for cleft palate and hare lip surgery (with specially-developed breathing exercises) that attracted patients from across the globe.

He was an early advocate of healthy diet as a cancer prophylactic, and his much-publicised views on this topic brought him into final conflict with the BMA, from which he resigned in 1924. In 1925 he launched the New Health Society, which promoted wholemeal bread, increasing consumption of fruit and vegetables, the return of people to the land, maximizing exposure to sunlight, and physical exercise.

Dr John Poynton recalled him;

“In his day, one of England’s greatest surgeons. Guy’s Hospital. A tall, rather thin man with a clever and uncommon face, and seemed ageless. He was a surgeon –essentially - almost aloof from the patient. What he felt or thought was hard indeed to tell. What line of thought governed him was hard to tell also. He had the hands and dexterity of the born mechanic. I was his House Surgeon when he was intent on curing Hare Lip and Cleft Palate in babyhood. How he could manipulate needles in the tiny mouths was to me astounding. Naturally the operation often broke down later, but this in no way disturbed him in his course. He was a pioneer in the surgery of ear diseases, and Ballance by comparison seemed a strong cart-horse following an Arab steed. His curious mind was illustrated by this: He was removing a kidney and said to me “such a dull operation, don’t you think so?” Seeing that I had been a House Surgeon a matter of weeks I was hardly in the habit of removing kidneys. His method of wiring fractures and plating the bones were famous. Later he became intent on the colon and liquid paraffin. He was a wonderful abdominal surgeon, quick, light-fingered and dexterous, I never saw a better. There is no doubt his skill inspired the younger surgeons at G. O. S. ”
28. Sir William Arbuthnot LANE 1st Baronet MRCS, MB, FRCS\(^1\) (Benjamin, Matilda, George) was born\(^2\) on 4 Jul 1856 in Ardersier, Inverness, Scotland. He died\(^5\) on 16 Jan 1943 in London, England.

[Notes]


[Notes]

They had the following children:

68 F i Lottie Rhona Arbuthnot LANE\(^4\) was born\(^4\) on 27 Dec 1885. She died\(^3\) on 3 Sep 1953.

[Notes]

69 F ii Irene Briscoe Arbuthnot LANE was born\(^4\) on 23 Jul 1889.

Irene married Harold CHAPPLE on 12 Sep 1911. Harold died on 8 Mar 1945.

70 F iii Eileen Caroline Arbuthnot LANE

Eileen married Nathan MUTC\(H\) son of Nathan MUTC\(H\).

+ 71 M iv Sir William Arbuthnot LANE 2nd Baronet

William married\(^2\) (2) Jane MUTC\(H\)\(^1\) daughter of Nathan MUTC\(H\) on 26 Sep 1935. Jane died\(^3\) on 2 Dec 1966.

[Notes]

30. Benjamin Hugh LANE (Benjamin, Matilda, George) was born\(^4\) on 12 Jan 1860. He died\(^2\) on 16 Nov 1895.

Benjamin married\(^2\) F.M. BRADBURY\(^1\) on 8 Aug 1881.
They had the following children:

72 M i LANE

73 F ii LANE

37. Alexander LANE M.D. [image] (Matilda Ann LANE, Matilda, George) was born on 18 Jan 1859. He died in 1939.

Alexander married Edith Maria JELL. Edith was born about 1864. She died on 10 Feb 1892.

[Notes]

They had the following children:

74 M i George Ogilby Fox LANE was born on 7 Apr 1884. He died in 1895.

75 F ii Edith Rosina LANE was born on 25 Oct 1885.

76 M iii William LANE was born in Aug 1886. [Notes]

+ 77 F iv Augusta Matilda LANE

78 F v Matilda Augusta LANE was born on 22 Nov 1888. [Notes]

+ 79 F vi Mona Beatrice LANE

41. Mary Isabel Sybil LANE [image] (Matilda Ann LANE, Matilda, George) was born on 26 Nov 1868 in County Shropshire, England. She was christened on 2 May 1869 in Bishops Castle, County Shropshire, England. She died in 1940.

Mary married (1) Reverend Richard CORLETT. Richard died on 4 Nov 1899.

[Notes]

They had the following children:

80 M i Richard Gordon Lane CORLETT

81 M ii Ronald William CORLETT
Mary married (2) Charles TERRY.

They had the following children:

+ 84 F v Molly TERRY

42. John George Ogilby Hugh LANE M.D. [image] (Matilda Ann LANE, Matilda, George) was born¹ on 16 Jan 1871 in Co. Shropshire, England. He was christened² on 12 Mar 1871 in Bishops Castle, County Shropshire, England. He died³ on 15 Jul 1907 in Sarkapau, Oude, India.

John married Eva COLLINS.

They had the following children:

85 F i Leila Patricia Sarkan LANE

86 F ii Vida LANE

+ 87 F iii Millie LANE

+ 88 M iv John LANE

52. Henry Alexander LANE [image] (Henry Stanley, Alexander, George) was born¹,² on 15 May 1882 in Mahone Bay, Lunenburg, Nova Scotia. He died on 5 Mar 1967 in Burlington, Chittenden, Vermont. He was buried on 8 Mar 1967 in Ressurection Park, South Burlington, Chittenden, Vermont.

[Notes]

Henry married¹ (1) Margaret Agnes NALLY [image] daughter of Patrick Joseph NALLY and Mary A. KELLY on 23 Feb 1909 in Watertown, Middlesex, Massachusetts. Margaret was born² on 10 Dec 1885 in Watertown, Middlesex, Massachusetts. She died³ on 30 Jul 1914 in Watertown, Middlesex, Massachusetts. She was buried in Saint Patrick's Cemetery, Watertown, Massachusetts.

They had the following children:
Henry married¹ (2) Edith Kathryn MORRILL [image] daughter of John Henry MORRILL and Rose Ann BORA on 19 Apr 1915 in Burlington, Chittenden, Vermont. Edith was born on 29 Sep 1889 in Shelburne, Chittenden, Vermont. She died on 30 Jan 1960 in Burlington, Chittenden, Vermont. She was buried on 2 Feb 1960 in Resurrection Park, South Burlington, Chittenden, Vermont.

[Notes]

They had the following children:

92 M iv Robert Alexander LANE [image] "Bob" was born on 25 Jan 1917 in Newton, Middlesex, Massachusetts. He was christened¹ on 18 Feb 1917 in Church of our Lady, Newton, Massachusetts. He died on 29 Sep 1954 in Burlington, Chittenden, Vermont. The cause of death was a fracture to the skull due to an epilectic seizure. He was buried in Mount Carmel Cemetery, Charlotte, Vermont. [Notes]

+ 93 M v Edward John LANE

+ 94 F vi Rose Ann LANE

+ 95 M vii Joseph William LANE

+ 96 F viii Frances Emma LANE

53. Rose Dillon LANE [image] (Henry Stanley, Alexander, George) was born¹ 2 3 on 28 Dec 1885 in Mahone Bay, Lunenburg, Nova Scotia. She died¼ on 14 Mar 1985 in Charlestown Manor, Watertown, Middlesex, Massachusetts. The cause of death was congestive heart failure. She was buried in St. Patrick's Cemetery, Watertown, Middlesex, Massachusetts.

[Notes]

Rose married¹ Patrick Joseph NALLY [image] "Packie" son of Patrick Joseph NALLY and Mary A. KELLY on 5 Jan 1910 in Watertown, Middlesex, Massachusetts. Patrick was born on 5 Feb 1883 in Watertown, Middlesex, Massachusetts. He died¼ on 3 Feb 1971 in Cambridge, Middlesex, Massachusetts. He was buried on 6 Feb 1971 in Saint Patricks Cemetery, Watertown, Middlesex, Massachusetts.
They had the following children:

+ 97  M  i  Bernard Parker NALLY

+ 98  M  ii  Henry Stanley NALLY

54. Katherine Belle LANE [image] (Henry Stanley, Alexander, George) was born on 2 Oct 1887 in Mahone Bay, Lunenburg, Nova Scotia. She died on 27 Aug 1961 in Cambridge, Middlesex, Massachusetts. The cause of death was an "intracranial hemorrhage arteosclorisis". She was buried in Ridgelawn Cemetery, Watertown, Massachusetts.

Katherine married William Robert THOMPSON [image] son of Frank THOMPSON and Sarah GLYNN on 4 Jun 1923 in Watertown, Middlesex, Massachusetts. William was born in County Fermanagh, Ireland. He died on 21 Jan 1963 in Watertown, Middlesex, Massachusetts. He was buried on 24 Jan 1963 in Ridgelawn Cemetery, Watertown, Massachusetts.

They had the following children:

+ 99  F  i  Kathryn Georgina THOMPSON


Donald and Florence had the following children:

+ 100  F  i  Ruth Lane WILSON [image] was born on 27 Sep 1926 in Bridgewater, Nova Scotia. She died on 1 Dec 1934.

+ 101  M  ii  George Henry WILSON

Leonore Mary O'more Street [image] (Frances Margaret Lane, Alexander, George) was born on 2 Jul 1871 in Mahone Bay, Lunenburg, Nova Scotia.

Leonore married Alexander P. Dewar on 25 Sep 1901 in Saint Pauls Church, Brookline, Massachusetts. Alexander was born on 14 Feb 1870.

They had the following children:

Alfred Alexander Dewar [image] was born on 2 Jul 1902. He died on 27 Jul 1919. [Notes]

Gerald George Edward Street [image] (Frances Margaret Lane, Alexander, George) was born on 12 Mar 1875 in Mahone Bay, Lunenburg, Nova Scotia.

Gerald married Emma Lena Coburn on 15 Apr 1897.

They had the following children:

Frances Geraldine Street

George Edward Street

Harold Jerome Alley Street (Frances Margaret Lane, Alexander, George) was born on 2 Jan 1877 in Mahone Bay, Lunenburg, Nova Scotia. He died on 3 Sep.

Harold married Josephine Geneora Stowell on 21 Sep 1898.

They had the following children:

Harold Jerome Street

Lionel A. B. Street

William Gilbert Street was born on 8 Aug 1908. He died on 27 Jun.

William married Ethel Hewes.

Charles S. Street
Charles married Peggy.

110  F  v  Beatrice G. STREET

Beatrice married Parker WILLARD.

111  M  vi  Richard E. STREET
William Arbuthnot Lane 1st Baronet 1856 – 1943

By SUE on December 3, 2009

Sir William (“Willie”) Arbuthnot Lane 1st Baronet, Legion of Honour 1856 – 1943 was a Scottish surgeon (picture from the Clendening Library Portrait Collection).

Associated for most of his career with Guy’s Hospital, Lane is known for three surgical procedures: the treatment of cleft palate, the application of internal splints to fractures
using the strict aseptic ‘Lane technique’, and the treatment of chronic intestinal stasis, he founded the New Health Society in 1925 to publicise his views on healthy diet and life.

Lane was a firm believer as well as a pioneer in alternative or homeopathic medicine, and he was a hugely influential and controversial figure, a brilliant surgeon with an open mind – very rare indeed.

Lane co wrote, endorsed and wrote the foreward to homeopath J Ellis Barker's Cancer, how it is Caused, how it Can be Prevented,

Lane was a friend of Joseph Chamberlain, Marie Stopes, and a correspondent of George Bernard Shaw.

Lane retired from Guy’s Hospital and practiced from his home at 21 Cavendish Square, turning his attention to educating the public about healthy eating and healthy living, a hugely controversial and public campaign promoting the provision of fruit and vegetables to housewives, and a return to rural living, his New Health Society was largely responsible for the founding of a Chair of Dietics at London University,

**During the 1914–18 war, William Arbuthnot Lane organised and opened Queen Mary’s Hospital, Sidcup, a pioneering institution in plastic surgery.**

This controversial surgeon asked to have his name removed from the Medical Register, in order to promote the New Health Society (the first organised body to deal with social medicine), to avoid being disciplined by the General Medical Council.

He had founded the New Health Society in 1925 to publicise his views on healthy diet and life.

‘J Ellis Barker devoted his literary career, from 1900, to warning England of the danger of a war with Germany and to urging military, naval and economic preparation, cooperating with Frederick Sleigh Roberts 1st Earl Roberts, Joseph Chamberlain and others; one of the founders of the New Health Society, acting as Honorary Secretary from its beginning.’ (In this respect J Ellis Barker resembles Walter Johannes Stein).

Sir Arbuthnot Lane, Bart., C.B., M.B.,M.S., F.R.C.S., speaking in the House of Commons:

‘Cancer is a disease of civilisation. It is practically unknown to the primitive races leading primitive lives.

‘Hundreds of medical men who have practised for decades among the South African negroes have never seen a cancer case…

‘On the other hand, cancer is not uncommon among the South African negroes in the coast towns who for decades have lived more or less on the white man’s diet…
‘Cancer is essentially a nutritional disease. It is far more prevalent in the towns where people subsist on artificial food than in the country where men eat fresh natural food, take plenty of exercise and are less troubled with intestinal stagnation and auto-intoxication than are the sedentary inhabitants of the larger cities.

‘We need not abolish civilisation in order to abolish cancer. We need only reform our lives in accordance with the dictates of nature…’

William Arbuthnot Lane trained and later worked at Guy’s Hospital in London. Lane is best known for his attempts at improving alignment of fractures by using internal fixation. He started off using silver wire, then he used steel screws and this was followed by the use of plates and screws.

Lane was regarded at his peak as the best abdominal surgeon in England and was called on to operate on Royalty, politicians and many society figures of the Edwardian era.

Naturally rather shy, he found teaching and medical writing difficult, and taught mostly by example. His remarkable knowledge of anatomy and supreme surgical technique was much admired by surgeons from all over the world who flocked to watch him operate at Guys Hospital.

This fame made him many enemies in London surgical circles. Remarkably, when he published a series on the operative repair of fractures by steel plate and screws, his fellow surgeons reported him to the General Medical Council (the doctors disciplinary body in Britain) and attempted to have him struck off the Medical Register and thus destroy his practice.

In 1904, Lane met the Russian Nobel prize winning bacteriologist Elie Metchnikoff who fatally influenced his thoughts. Believing that Charles Darwin’s theories on natural selection were right, Lane noticed that the skeletons of manual workers had undergone changes in their lifetime. This led him to believe that natural selection was happening much faster than Charles Darwin suggested.

Elie Metchnikoff unfortunately had become convinced that humans were changing much faster as well and that several of our body structures were now obsolete and through evolutionary process going to disappear. He suggested that the colon was one such structure, that it was going to shrink like the appendix and dreamed of a day when we could have an operation to remove it entirely.

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This condition had no medical or scientific credibility and at a meeting of the Royal Society of Medicine in London to discuss the topic in 1913 many of Lane’s enemies seized the opportunity to attack his ideas and to publicly humiliate him.
Lane’s reputation was irreversibly damaged and despite being asked to lead the British army’s surgical service during World War One and setting up the first plastic and reconstructive surgery unit to cope with war injuries, he never recovered.

After the war he left Guy’s Hospital and soon retired from medicine.

In 1926, still convinced that auto intoxication was a genuine disorder, he appeared to have completely changed his mind about removing the colon. In an extraordinary volte face he started promoting exercise, fruit and vegetables and bran cereal as the answer to bowel problems.

Using his many royal and society connections he set up The **New Health Society** to promote programmes of health education that mirror those present today. Lane wrote columns in the newspapers, held public lectures and improved the distribution of fruit and vegetables. In this he was 40 years ahead of his time.

Lane’s syndrome – (Otherwise Lane’s disease or Arbuthnot Lane syndrome). A syndrome prevalent in women characterised by colonic inertia, contraction and lack of relaxation of the pelvis muscles, and rectal obstruction.

Lane is sometimes unfairly quoted as the model for **George Bernard Shaw**’s scurrilous surgeon in his play *The Doctors Dilemma*. This is not true. **George Bernard Shaw** himself stated that he had written the play before he had ever heard of Lane. The original of **Cutler Walpole** according to **George Bernard Shaw** was an Ear Nose and Throat surgeon in London who had made a fortune by performing an unnecessary operation to extirpate the uvula.

Lane and **George Bernard Shaw** never met, but **George Bernard Shaw** was an admirer of his. He was fascinated by Lane’s opinions about the speed of evolution and the two had corresponded on the subject.


He died from being run over during a wartime blackout outside the Athenaeum Club in Pall Mall.

**William Arbuthnot Lane** wrote *Everywoman’s home doctor*, *Cleft palate and hare lip*, *The operative treatment of fractures*, *The operative Treatment of chronic intestinal stasis*, *Operative treatment of chronic constipation*, *Chronic intestinal stasis*, *The consequences and treatment of alimentary toxæmia from a surgical point of view*, *Injuries and diseases of muscles and tendons*, *Remarkable example of the manner in which pressure-changes in the skeleton may reveal the labour-history of the individual*, *Can cancer be prevented?*, *Bibliography of the published writings (1883-1938) of Sir William Arbuthnot Lane*, *A surgical tribute to the late Dr Wooldridge*, and he wrote the
foreward to *Maori Symbolism* by Ettie A Rout (*where he expounds his disgust of Western civilisation as it pertains to diet and lifestyle and its role in cancer and ill health*), and he wrote *many medical articles* for various publications, and he edited his own journal *New Health: journal of the New Health Society*,

Lane has had many biographies written about him (*see Google Books*) and *Guy’s Hospital Reports: special number dedicated to Sir William Arbuthnot Lane*,
Hello, Hans!

I wonder if you know anything of Patrick W. Clarkson?

All I know is that he was married to Barbara Mutch in 1937, and they had two sons, Gerald & Ronald.

Of Barbara, it was said that “World War II had destroyed her marriage”.

Of course, that does not mean he served in the armed forces...

That's all I know!

Regards

Robin

---

From: J.N. Houterman

Sent: Sunday, March 11, 2012 6:11 PM

To: 'Robin B. Clay'

Subject: RE: WWII unit histories enquiry - Patrick W. Clarkson

I'm sure the undermentioned is enough detail. Fear I don't have time to add him to the website...

Regards,

Hans Houterman

www.unithistories.com

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Major, Royal Army Medical Corps

MBE
CLARKSON, Patrick Wensley.

Awards
MBE; MB, BS (Lond.), FRCS (Eng.).

Positions
Consultant Plastic Surgeon, Roehampton Plastic Centre (Westminster Hospital Group); Surgeon in charge of the Accident and Emergency Service, Emeritus Plastic Surgeon to the Accident Service, and in charge of Children's Burns Unit and of the Hand Clinic, Guy's Hospital; Hon. Civil Consultant Plastic Surgeon: Queen Alexandra Hospital, Millbank; Cambridge Military Hospital; President, Plastic Section of the RSM.

Personal Details
Born 20 February 1911; elder son of George Wensley Clarkson, Sheep Farmer, Meat Exporter, Christchurch, New Zealand and Ann Fraser O'Keeffe; married 1st, 1937, Eileen Barbara, daughter of Dr N. Mutch; (marriage dissolved, 1953); two sons; 2nd, 1953, Elizabeth, only child of late A. C. Daubeny, Somerset, and of Mrs A. C. Daubeny, London, W1.

Education
Christ College, NZ; NZ University, Edin. University, London University (Guy's Hosp.). Univ. Exhibnr, Guy's, 1932, Treasurer's, Gold Medal, Guy's, in Med. and Surg., 1935; Physical, Laidlaw Prizes, 1935.

Work

Publications
Various papers on Burns, Hands, Plastic and Cosmetic Surgery.

Recreations

Address
107 Harley Street, W1. Telephone: 01-935 2254.

Clubs
Athenæum, Buck's; Travellers' (Paris).

Death
_Died 28 December 1969._

See also cuttings in  _PW Clarkson cuttings.pdf_
### TABLE 75.

**THE DESCENDANTS OF Rev NICHOLAS ARBUTHNOT of Newton Hamilton including the Arbuthnot-Lane family.**

<p>| | |</p>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Richard Arbuthnot</strong> of Killala. Will dated 23 September 1777.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>B.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Rev Nicholas Arbuthnot.</strong> Entered Trinity College, Dublin, 1738. Appointed to the Parish of Newton Hamilton, Co Armagh, 1773.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td><strong>James Arbuthnot.</strong> Died before 1781. Married Judith Beauchamp.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td><strong>Rev Frederick Augustus Arbuthnot,</strong> sometime of Cavan. Entered Trinity College, 1778. Married in Donoghomore, Co Tyrone, 23 July 1789, <strong>Frances Hamilton</strong> of Capel Street, Dublin (died Fort George, Scotland 21 June 1867).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a.</td>
<td><strong>John Connor Arbuthnot.</strong> Born Arboe, Co Tyrone 22 May 1790.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td><strong>Jane Ann Arbuthnot.</strong> Bap Arboe 26 August 1791. Married Dr Joseph Ewing, retired inspector-general of hospitals, an Ulsterman.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i.</td>
<td><strong>Frances Ewing.</strong> Married in Dublin 1868 James Lumber McCallum as his second wife. He was an officer in the Coastal Brigade, Royal Artillery and had four children with his first wife Matilda Sommerville Gardiner.</td>
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<td>ii.</td>
<td><strong>Caroline Arbuthnot Ewing</strong> (born Armagh 23 June 1832, died Cheltenham 17 May 1893 [not 1903]). Married at Fort George, Invernesshire 23 April 1855 Brigade Surgeon <strong>Benjamin Lane</strong> (born Newtown, Limavady 9 July 1827; died Cheltenham 12 June 1907), Surgeon to the 80th foot regiment, son of Joseph Henry Lane.</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Dr Sir William (&quot;Willie&quot;) Arbuthnot Lane, 1st Bt, CB, LH, M.B., M.S. Lond., F.R.C.S. Eng.</strong> Born Fort George, Invernessshire (not recorded) 4 July 1856, died 16 January 1943. Surgeon; associated for most of his career with Guy’s Hospital, Lane is known particularly for three surgical procedures: treatment of the cleft palate, the application of internal splints to fractures using the aseptic ‘Lane technique’ and the treatment of chronic intestinal stasis. During the 1914-18 War he organised and opened Queen Mary’s Hospital, Sidcup, a pioneering institution in plastic surgery. This controversial surgeon had his name removed from the Medical Register, in order to promote the New Health Society (the first organised body to deal with social medicine) he had founded in 1925 to publicise his views on healthy diet and life, without being disciplined by the General Medical Council. He was an Irishman who was posted to Inverness, Scotland, who trained and later worked at Guy’s Hospital in London. Lane is known for his attempts at improving alignment of fractures by using internal fixation. He started off using silver wire, then he used steel screws and this was followed by the use of plates and screws. Lane was said to have been eccentric, regarding humans as machines and performed total colectomies as a cure for “auto-intoxication”. He also initiated the programmes of health education that are present today. Lane wrote columns in the newspapers, held public lectures and improved the</td>
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distribution of fruit and vegetables. Quotations include "The man whose first question after what he considers to be a right course of action has presented itself, is 'What will people say?' is not the man to do anything at all." "If everyone believes a thing it is probably untrue!" "If you get a rude letter, always send a polite one back. It's much better". Lane is sometimes unfairly quoted as the model for George Bernard Shaw Lane's scurrilous surgeon in his play *The Doctors Dilemma*. This is not true. Shaw himself stated that he had written the play before he had ever heard of Lane. The original of Cutler Walpole according to Shaw was an Ear Nose and Throat surgeon in London who had made a fortune by performing an unnecessary operation to extirpate the uvula. Lane and Shaw never met, but Shaw was an admirer of his. He was fascinated by Lane's opinions about the speed of evolution and the two had corresponded on the subject. 

Married first Charlotte Jane Briscoe (born q3 1856, died q2 1935 aged 78), dau of John Briscoe, son of Major Briscoe.

<p>| (1) | Lottie Rhona Arbuthnot Lane | Born 27 December 1885. Died unmarried 3 September 1953. Headmistress of Wycombe Abbey. |
| (a) | Dr Peter Arbuthnot Lane Chapple. |
| (i) | John Chapple |
| (b) | Archie Chapple. |
| (3) | Eileen Caroline Arbuthnot Lane | Born 19 June 1893. Died 4 July 1978. Married St George's, Hanover Sq (not q2) 23 December 1913 Nathan Mutch, M.A., M.D. Cantab., F.R.C.P. Lond., Consulting Physician to Guy's Hospital. |
| (4) | Sir William Arbuthnot Lane, 2nd Bt. Born 7 June [not July] 1897. Died 1972. After attending Winchester College, he worked in a field hospital in France in WW1 and then joined the RFC. He had his own pharmaceutical Company, Kaylene Ltd, founded in 1928. He joined the Special Constabulary in 1926 and between 1951-8 he was Commandant in Chief of the Specials. He was awarded the CBE. Married in Marylebone 29 May 1937 Fritzi Szamvald Markus (born 25 August 1907, died Westminster 2 Dec 1976). Sir William (1st Bt) and Lady and Mr William Arbuthnot Lane travelled on SS Vandeem to New York 13 October 1925. |</p>
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<td>(ii)</td>
<td><strong>Katy Louise Bowker.</strong> Born 30 November 1968. Married 5 August 1995 <strong>Timothy John Neal.</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Susan married second 31 May 1997 <strong>Roger Graham Prior.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>(B)</td>
<td><strong>Benjamin Hugh Lane</strong> Born 12 January 1860. Married 1881 Mrs Frances Mary Bradbury, née White, a widow and left issue a son and a daughter.</td>
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<td>(C)</td>
<td><strong>Jane Rose Lane</strong> Born 13 February 1861. Married abroad 18 March 1882 Lt Colonel <strong>Allan Scott Roberts.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>(D)</td>
<td><strong>Caroline Matilda Lane</strong> Born 27 April 1863. Died aged ten.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(E)</td>
<td><strong>Theodora Arbuthnot Lane</strong> Born 20 June 1866. Married <strong>Henry Bansall Todd.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(F)</td>
<td><strong>Emily Beatrice Lane.</strong> Born 11 September 1868. Died unmarried.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.</td>
<td><strong>Phoebe Arbuthnot.</strong> Died 1803. Buried Armagh.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d.</td>
<td>A daughter. Married Mr Jackson and had four children. She must have died as Mr Jackson then married Joseph Ewing's sister.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.</td>
<td><strong>Frances Arbuthnot</strong>, 4th dau. Married at Rathmullen Church, Co Down shortly before 22 May 1823, <strong>Osburn Kidd</strong>, Esq. of Armagh (sic).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>