

Robert Talbot Lawn

Isle of Wight County Press – 29 July 1972

“COUNTY PRESS” EMPLOYEE FOR 55 YEARS

DEATH OF MR. R. T. LAWN

Mr. Robert Talbot Lawn, aged 91, of 33, Victoria Road, Newport, for 55 years a “County Press” employee until his retirement in August, 1959, died at his home on Saturday. He is survived by his wife, two sons, Mr. Robert T. Lawn, who has himself been with the “County Press” for 48 years, and Mr. Kenneth Lawn, of Colchester, also a former “County Press” employee. There are six grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

A native of Bermondsey, London, Mr. Lawn began his career as an apprentice machine-minder on the “Croydon Advertiser” and about the same time joined the Croydon Volunteers. In January, 1900, he volunteered for the active service company of the Queen’s Regiment and joined the regiment’s second battalion to take part in the South African War. Eighteen months later he returned to Croydon to complete his apprenticeship, and in 1904 became machine-room foreman at the “County Press” works at Newport.

He married on December 19th, 1909, and took up residence at 33, Victoria Road, where he and his wife have lived ever since. A marble clock, a wedding gift from his “County Press” colleagues, still keeps perfect time in the sitting-room.

On coming to the Island Mr. Lawn was transferred to the 5th Volunteer Battalion of the Hampshire Regiment and continued to serve when the Territorial Army was formed. In 1914 he was called up for service with the I.W. Rifles, and served as a sergeant in Gallipoli and Egypt. He returned to the “County Press” on demobilisation and in 1954, on completion of 50 years’ service, retired from full-time work and was succeeded as foreman by his eldest son. Mr. Lawn, senior, continued in part-time work for a further five years.

He was a founder-member of the Island branch of the South African Wars Veterans’ Association, of which he was a vice-president, and a member of the Ancient Order of Foresters, being a trustee of the Newport Court and a past District Chief Ranger.

Mr. Lawn was a founder-member of the Typographical Association in the Island in 1918. From that year until 1945 he was president of the association and continued as a trustee until 1967. He was also a member of Newport Labour Party and of the local Trades Council.

Mr. and Mrs. Lawn had been married for 62 years, having celebrated both their golden and diamond anniversaries. Mrs. Lawn was born at Brighstone, and all her life has been an active worker for St. Paul’s Church, Barton. During the last war she was for six years in the W.V.S. and was a leader of a National Savings group.

The funeral service at St. Paul’s Church on Wednesday was conducted by the Rev. J. F. Buckett, vicar of Newport and Mr. Frank Chiverton read the lesson. The hymn “Jesu, lover of

my soul” and the metrical version of the 23rd psalm to Crimond were accompanied by Mrs. M. Pluckett, organist. The mourners were Mr. and Mrs. R. T. Lawn, Mr. K. Lawn and Mrs. L. Lawn (sons and daughters-in-law) Mr. A. T. Lawn (grandson), Miss J. Lawn (grand-daughter, Mrs. V. Ta’bois and Mrs. P. Bishop (nieces), Mr. Rolfe (nephew) and Mrs. Rolfe and Mr. T. Dawes. Mrs. Lawn (widow) and Mrs. J. Lawn (grandson’s wife) were unable to attend. Lieut.-Colonel C. W. Brannon, M.C., T.D., D.L., J.P. (chairman of the directors) represented the “County Press” and others attending including Mr. P. Appel and Mr. B. P. R. Smith (“County Press” colleagues now retired), Mr. R. Cooke (representing present staff and the National Graphical Association), Mr. and Mrs. Blee (former caretakers at 29, High Street, Newport), Mr. J. Clarke, Mrs. W. West and Mrs. D. M. Jolliffe (Ancient Order of Foresters), Chum Bruce Wescomb (Old Contemptibles Association), Messrs. W. Cox and F. Reynard, Mr. and Mrs. Cousins and Mrs. A. Matthews.

Interment was at St. Paul’s Cemetery.

The many floral tributes included one from the “County Press” directors and staff.

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