

RETURN OF COLONEL CHALONER

“Completely broken down in health and requiring absolute rest” is said to express the present condition of Colonel Chaloner, M.P. Colonel Chaloner’s return from South Africa has been, and still continues to be a subject much commented upon, and people of all classes are very anxious to know the facts. With a view to ascertain them a representative of the “Wiltshire Times” called at Melksham House. He found that Colonel Chaloner was forbidden to see or interview anyone, but Mrs. Chaloner very courteously stated the circumstances, remarking that she was glad to correct certain wrong impressions and contradict unfounded rumours which have been afloat. The Britannic, in which Colonel Chaloner returned to England in company with Lieutenant Walter Long, son of the Right Honourable W. H. Long, M. P., arrived at Southampton at about 7 o’clock on Sunday morning. Mrs. Chaloner and Mr. Long were in waiting, and Colonel Chaloner proceeded the same day in company with Mrs. Chaloner to Melksham, arriving in the evening. The strain and anxiety which the Colonel went through prior to and on the voyage, followed by several weeks waiting and disappointment at Maitland Camp, are said to have so undermined his health, that the Doctor at Capetown absolutely refused to take the responsibility of allowing him to go to the front. After being treated at Winburg hospital, Colonel Chaloner found, to his regret and disappointment, that he was unable to fulfil the duties to which he had looked forward, and he, therefore, handed the command of his regiment over to Major Wyndham Quin, the second in command being Captain Golightly, D.S.O. The matter was one entirely between Colonel Chaloner and his medical advisers, and had nothing whatsoever to do with Lord Roberts or either of his subordinate officers. Dr. Shorland assured Colonel Chaloner that his only safe and proper course was to return to England, and his opinion is confirmed by Dr. Gray and others that the one thing needed is complete rest and change, as he is suffering from severe nervous exhaustion. With a view to carrying out the wishes of the Doctors, Mrs. Chaloner declines to allow any interviewers to see the Colonel, and he also abstains from reading correspondence, or does anything which would be calculated to worry, and so lessen his chances of recovery. Colonel Chaloner has not resigned his position, and is not without hope that he will still be able to do service in South Africa. He is on 6 months’ sick leave, but before he can return he must be so far recovered in health as to pass a board of doctors. Should he be able to go through this ordeal, he will be prepared to again start off for South Africa. Colonel Chaloner left Melksham on Thursday for North Wales.

With reference to Lieutenant Walter Long, it is satisfactory to believe he will ultimately recover from his serious wound. An expansive bullet entered his left arm, which was so injured that at first it was feared the arm would have to be amputated. Under the skilful treatment, however, of Sir William McCormack, he is progressing towards recovery, and although the arm has to be kept in a sling, there seems every probability that it will get right again. Like his uncle, Lord Chaloner, the gallant young officer is on 6 months’ leave. Mr. Long is staying in London.

The Bath Chronicle, Thursday, May 24th, 1900.



S.S. Britannic



**COLONEL RICHARD GODOLPHIN WALMESLEY
CHALONER D.L., J.P.**

Richard Godolphin Walmesley Long, the second son of Richard Penruddocke Long, M.P of Rood Ashton, Wiltshire, was born at Dolforgan Hall, Newtown, Montgomeryshire, the Welsh seat of the family, on the 12th. October 1856. His mother, Charlotte Anna Hume, was a descendant, through her grandmother, Frances Laura Dundas, of Robert de Brus, Lord of Skelton, who founded Gisborough Abbey in 1119.

He assumed the surname of Chaloner by Royal License under the will of his Grand Uncle, Admiral Thomas Chaloner, C.B. in 1888 and inherited the Gisborough Estate. He had a distinguished military career. He joined the army in January 1878 as a subaltern in the 6th. Dragoon Guards, and then transferred to the 3rd. King's Own Hussars in 1881. He also served with the North Somerset Yeomanry and the North Riding Volunteers Regiment, rising to the rank of Colonel. He served under Lord Roberts in the Afghan War 1879-80 and commanded the 1st. Battalion of the Imperial Yeomanry in the South African War 1900. From 1895 to 1900 he was the Member of Parliament for West Wiltshire and resided at Melksham House.

He became Member of Parliament for the Abercromby Division of Liverpool 1910-17. He was created the first Baron Gisborough in 1917. He left Melksham in 1903 and went to live at Gisborough Hall, Cleveland. He died there in 1938 at the age of 82.

The Chaloner family can be traced back to Mayloc Kryme (Maelawg Crwm), 1135-1180. According to J.Y.W. Lloyd's *History of Powys Fadog*, his son Maydoc was in France in 1199 with Richard I, who was returning from the Holy Land, and while he was there "*he took the Lord of Chaloner prisoner, seized his lands and assumed his armorial bearings, viz. sable, a chevron between three cherubim or.*" Trahayrne, circa 1214, son of Gwillm, son of Maydoc Kryme assumed the name of Chaloner to commemorate the exploits of his grandfather. Thus was the start of the Chaloner dynasty. The family still have the same arms and they are now depicted on the banner of the Chaloner Lodge.

(OPC note: my greatgrandfather Robert Henry Legg was the head gardener for Colonel Chaloner at Melksham House and for a while at Gisborough Hall, see separate article on Robert Henry Legg).