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FORMER MAYOR OF RYDE

**DEATH OF LIEUT.-COLONEL
L. W. LEWER, D.S.O.**

Lieut.-Colonel **Leonard William LEWER**, D.S.O. (87) who served in four wars and was mayor of Ryde for two years, died on Monday night at his home, 10 Partlands Avenue, Ryde.

Born in India in September 1881, he was the son of the late Surgeon Lieut.-Colonel Alfred LEWER, of the Royal Horse Artillery, at that time medical officer in charge of Delhi Fort. In 1889 he came to England and was educated at Cheltenham College before passing into the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich. In 1900 he was commissioned in the Royal Field Artillery and served in the South African war, meeting Sir Winston CHURCHILL during that campaign. In 1906 he returned to the British Isles and four years later was appointed staff captain, Royal Artillery, for the West Riding of Yorkshire. At the outbreak of the 1914-1918 war he was promoted brigade major and was posted to France in February, 1913. Two years later he was appointed acting lieutenant colonel in command of the Field Brigade, 59th Division, where he remained until the end of 1917, when he was invalided home after being gassed. He had served with gallantry and distinction during the fighting on the Western Front, winning the Distinguished Service Order and being mentioned in dispatches on five occasions.

In February, 1919, he was again posted abroad and took part in the Afghan campaign on the North-West frontier. In 1925 he was appointed to command the Royal Artillery training centre in India, a command involving the reorganisation of brigades, which he held until March 1926, when he returned to England and retired at his own request.

At the outbreak of the last war he was appointed to important duties at the experimental research at Woolwich Arsenal, continuing this work until October, 1946. In that year he came to St. Helens to live in retirement, but soon took an active interest in village and Island activities. He was elected president of the village branches of the British Legion and Conservative Association, chairman of the St. Helens Cricket Club, and vice-chairman of the Horticultural Society and Football Club.

In November, 1951, Colonel LEWER was elected a St. Helens Ward representative of Ryde Town Council, serving continuously until May, 1962, when he did not seek re-election, having moved from St. Helens Ward. He had twice been returned unopposed, in 1953 and 1956, and for a short time in 1954 was deputy mayor to the late Alderman L. A. WHEELER, who took office as mayor for a further three months following the resignation of his successor in office, the late Mr. A. E. AYMES. In May, 1958, and again in the following year, Colonel LEWER was a popular choice as mayor, the first St. Helens resident to be honoured. As a member of the council, he served on the Public Health, Cemeteries, General Purposes, Housing, Civil Defence and Finance committees, being vice-chairman of the Finance Committee for five years. He represented the council on the managing bodies of the St. Helens and Nettlestone schools, and on the former I.W. River Board. Before his council work he was Civil Defence officer at Ryde. As chairman of the Ryde Group of Friends of the Deaf for several years up to the time of his death, he worked energetically and successfully in raising funds for the Hampshire, I.W. and Channel Islands Association for the Deaf Home at Easthill, Ashley Road, Ryde. He was a staunch advocate of the National Savings movement, and at one time was chairman of the Ryde and Bembridge Savings Committee. Another national organisation which claimed his keen interest was the Boy Scout movement, and he was frequently a popular guest at functions organised by the North-East Wight Boy Scout Association. He was a prominent Freemason, being a member of the Grand Lodge and Grand Chapter and for several years secretary of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Hampshire and the Island. He was president and former hon. treasurer of the Island branch of the South African Wars Veterans'

Association, and was one of the six members to parade for the last time in March 1963, when the association standard was laid up at the Newport Parish Church. He leaves a widow and one son.

The funeral service was held at Ryde Parish Church yesterday.

Researched & typed by
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