

# Admiral Terence Thornton Lewin Baron Lewin of Greenwich

19th November 1920 – 23rd January 1999

Reported by Alan Lee

Sunday 19th November 2023 saw the unveiling of the eighteenth Dover Society plaque on what would have been the 103rd birthday of Baron Lewin of Greenwich. Originally planned as a series of ten plaques to mark the millennium in 2000, from a suggestion, by Terry Sutton MBE, a founding member of the society, they are now known simply as the Dover Society Blue Plaques.

Over thirty-five people gathered outside Moray House, now the Presbytery, of St Paul's Roman Catholic Church, 103 Maison Dieu Road, Dover for the unveiling. The Society would like to thank the Parish Priest, Father Leo Illah CSSp, the present occupier of the property, and the Diocese of Southwark for granting permission in siting the plaque.

The unveiling commenced with the piping *On Board* by a contingent of Sea Cadets followed by an initial introduction and

welcome by Jenny Olpin, Chair of the Dover Society. Martyn Webster, Dover Society executive member for plaques, then gave a short history and background to today's recipient. The plaque was then unveiled by Sue Roe, daughter of Baron Lewin, accompanied by her daughter and two grandchildren. Words of blessing were given by the Parish Priest, Father Leo Illah. The piping of *Still* by the Sea Cadets then concluded the ceremony.

All people at the unveiling were then invited into the church hall for tea, coffee and light refreshments served by a willing group of church volunteers. The Society wishes to thank all who helped on the day.

Terence Thornton Lewin was born on 19th November 1920 at Moray House, the home of his maternal grandparents John and Cecelia Falconer. The house was built for them in the late 1800's and named after Morayshire, Cecilia's place of birth.



Sea Cadets, Lord Lewin Pre Plaque Unveiling



Words of blessing from Father Leo Illah

Terence was the son of their daughter Margaret who married Eric Lewin a postmaster. Not long after he was born Terence and his parents moved to Tonbridge where he was educated at the Judd school, becoming head prefect. He excelled at athletics and rugby and would later represent the Royal Navy in both.

He joined the Navy as a cadet in 1939 and on the outbreak of war was posted to the cruiser *HMS Belfast*, then two months later to the battleship *HMS Valiant*. In October 1941 he transferred to the destroyer *HMS Highlander* and then in January 1942 transferred to the destroyer *HMS Ashanti* to the end of the war. He was promoted to Lieutenant on 1st July 1942. During 1942, aboard *HMS Ashanti*, he took part in Operation Pedestal, in August, to relieve Malta and in November the allied landings in North Africa. Then followed a further eighteen months of Arctic convoys before taking part in the Normandy landings in June 1944. He was mentioned in despatches three times and awarded the Distinguished Service Cross in 1942 for saving many lives when the destroyer *HMS Somali* was hit by a torpedo.

In 1944, Lewin married Jane Branch-Evans; they had three children Timothy, Susan and Jonathon.

Lewin assumed command of the destroyer *HMS Corunna* in 1955 at the age of 35. Spells at sea interspersed with a variety of shore-bound staff appointments followed and in 1957, as a commander, he became executive officer on the royal yacht Britannia. In 1961, promoted captain, he took charge of the Dartmouth (naval college) Training Squadron, including two frigates.

He was appointed Member, Royal Victorian Order (M.V.O.) in 1958. Knight

Commander, Order of the Bath (K.C.B.) in 1973, Commander-in-Chief of the Fleet between 1973 and 1975. He held the office of Flag Aide-de-Camp to HM Queen Elizabeth II in 1975. He gained the rank of Admiral of the Fleet. Commander-in-Chief of the Naval Home Command between 1975 and 1977, he was appointed Knight Grand Cross, Order of the Bath (G.C.B.) in 1976. He held the office of First and Principal Aide-de-Camp to HM Queen Elizabeth II in 1977 and the office of First Sea Lord between 1977 and 1979. He held the office of Chief of the Defence Staff in 1979 and through the Falklands war of 1982.

He was created Baron Lewin, of Greenwich in Greater London [U.K. Life Peer] on 19th November 1982. Appointed Knight, Order of the Garter (K.G.) in 1983. He was awarded the honorary degree of Doctor of Science (D.Sc.) by City University, London and awarded the honorary degree of Doctor of Letters (D.Litt.) by Greenwich University, Greenwich, London in 1993. He gained the rank of Life Colonel Commandant in 1995 in the Royal Marines.

He became Chairman of the Trustees of the National Maritime Museum, President of the Society for Nautical Research, a Liveryman of the Skinners' Company and of the Shipwrights' Company and an elder brother of Trinity House.

He died at his home at Ufford in Suffolk on 23rd January 1999.



Baron Lewin Coat of Arms