

NPG · L. Cendrowicz, photograph, repro. in *Independent on Sunday* (17 June 2001) · N. Libbert, photograph, repro. in *The Observer* (26 Aug 1990) · obituary photographs · photograph, 1965, BBC [see illus.]

Wealth at death £2,588,516: probate, 2 Oct 2008, CGPLA Eng. & Wales

Lambton, Ann Katharine Swynford [Nancy] (1912–2008), orientalist and Persianist, was born at Mesnil Warren, Bury Road, Exning, Newmarket, Suffolk, on 8 February 1912, the elder daughter and second of the four children of George *Lambton (1860–1945), racehorse trainer, and his wife, Cecily Margaret, née Horner (1882–1972). She was the granddaughter of George Frederick D'Arcy Lambton, second earl of Durham, and of Sir John Francis Fortescue Horner of Mells Park, Somerset. Her father was an outstanding racehorse trainer and manager from the 1890s to the 1930s. One of her middle names, Swynford, commemorated her father's 1910 St Leger winner and she won acclaim aged fourteen for skill in the saddle at Newmarket Heath. She roller-skated in her teens and, later, commuted by bicycle from Maida Vale to teach and thrash varsity squash opponents at Russell Square.

A family friend, Sir Denison Ross, persuaded Lambton's parents to allow her to study Persian, initially as a student unregistered for a degree course, at the School of Oriental Studies, London, of which he was the founding director. On matriculation with a certificate in Persian in 1932, she began her Persian honours, with a subsidiary in classical Arabic, plus German, geology, and Latin studied at King's College. Her teachers were Ross, and professors Hamilton Gibb, Arthur Tritton, Vladimir Minorsky, and Hasan Taqizadeh. Conferred the Ouseley memorial scholarship in Persian in 1934, and her BA degree in 1935, along with the Aga Khan travelling scholarship, she commenced her doctorate in the latter year on Persian Seljuq administration and submitted it in 1939 despite spending thirteen months in Tehran and major provincial centres recording dialects (published as *Three Persian Dialects*, 1938, from the Furlong scholarship, Royal Asiatic Society); studying craft guilds as well as Persian and Arabic with local scholars; and teaching history in Persian in a girls' high school in Isfahan. She returned to Persia in July 1939 for further research and was there when the Second World War broke out. Appointed press attaché at the British legation, she made her mark interpreting at press conferences, summarizing local papers for a weekly digest, combating axis propaganda, and preparing news commentaries on allied efforts. She was appointed OBE in 1943. Links with Persians across all classes, predicated on a solid philological training, afforded her an extraordinary insight into local life.

The Ministry of Information reluctantly released Lambton to accept Arthur Arberry's offer of a post at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS, as the School of Oriental Studies had become in 1938). London University could not afford the proposed readership and Lambton came after VJ day as senior lecturer in October 1945. A readership, three years later, was swiftly followed by a professorship in 1953, a signal year when her landmark *Landlord and Peasant in Persia: a Study of Land Tenure and Land*

Revenue Administration and Persian Grammar appeared, for which London University awarded her a D.Lit. Both rapidly became standard works, even in Persian editions. Subsequently she published *Persian Vocabulary* (1964) and *The Persian Land Reform: 1962–66* (1969), which incisively analysed the mixed results of the shah's 1963 white revolution. Lambton's headship of the Near and Middle East department at SOAS (1972–8) spoke for her ability even as articles and profoundly meticulous studies appeared in the *Cambridge History of Islam* (co-edited with another Gibb protégé, Bernard Lewis), *The Cambridge History of Iran*, *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, and *Encyclopaedia Iranica*. Her *Theory and Practice in Medieval Persian Government* (1980) and *State and Government in Medieval Islam* (1981)—both published after her retirement from SOAS in 1979 (whereupon she became a professor emerita)—were indispensable for comprehending Muslim statecraft. Her Columbia University lectures, *Continuity and Change in Medieval Persia: Aspects of Administrative, Economic and Social History, 11th–14th century* (1988) crowned her output.

Among the litany of failures enumerated by James Bill in *The Eagle and the Lion: the Tragedy of American–Iranian Relations* (1988) was that only 10 per cent of American diplomats posted to Iran spoke and read fluent Persian compared with almost 45 per cent of British diplomats. He attributed this to Lambton's 'stiff exams', describing her as one of 'the West's leading Iran specialists', and noting that all senior British diplomats had been her SOAS students (Bill, 392). She possessed 'remarkable first-hand knowledge of Persians & their mentality', Anthony Eden declared, as did Whitehall's mandarins, who routinely sought her counsel and scrutiny of bilingual treaties. Lambton, unsurprisingly, in a Foreign Office brief during the 1951 oil crisis concluded that Americans 'lack our experience or the psychological insight' of Iran. She correctly concluded that 'it was impossible to do business' with Mohammed Mossadegh's cabinet, which would renege on any agreement—eastern erraticness was a familiar bane to the British—and recommended toughing it out during the deadlock by co-opting equally alarmed reasonable Persians whose otherwise explicit denouncement of the 'stupidity, greed and lack of judgement of the ruling classes' would be seditious. Lambton also baldly forewarned that the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company 'could not hope to return in any shape' thanks to the '10 years that A.I.O.C. were making a psychological mess of their relations with Persia' (TNA PRO, FO 371/91609). Revisionists and sensationalists later seized upon her advice as the genesis of the 1953 coup, which led indirectly to the 1979 Islamic revolution. Nevertheless, as William Roger Louis argued, Lambton's suggestions were misappropriated by London, whose diplomatic dénouement stemmed from the disastrous cupidity of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company and particularly its belligerent chairman, Sir William Fraser.

More embarrassed than even the shah's Western allies were those experts watching Iran implode in 1978–9. Lambton nobody prognosticated in 1964 that the tendency to look for the establishment of the kingdom

God t
lead
(Lam
al-Ta
1964,
exile
such
given
Persi
mode
vid. Q
tory; i
Lan
Sykes
(1960
docto
hono
SOAS
Studi
gold r
A. K. i
in 200
and p
which
ninet
2002.
dle E:
Cross
Both,
work.
and d
Newc
volum
and a
the Is
tional
men,
sake c
ton, V
2008.
Source
March
A. Lar
must ge
Aug 20
(1984).
Bulletin
K. S. L.
in the
J. Bill,
(1988),
100–02
War II
regenc
of Iran
FO 37
her ma
Lam p
Middle
orated
orient

God upon earth ... if pressed to its conclusion is likely to lead either to political quietism or violent revolution' (Lambton, 'A reconsideration of the position of the *Marja'at-Taqlid* and the religious institution', *Studia Islamica*, XX, 1964, 135). Published the very year Ruholla Khomeini was exiled to Turkey, its oracular import cannot be gainsaid. If such insights were revelatory they were only a bonus given Lambton's unrivalled breadth and stamp covering Persian grammar and dialectology; medieval and early modern Islamic political thought; Seljuq, Mongol, Safavid, Qajar, and Pahlavi administration; tribal and local history; and Iranian land tenure and agriculture.

Lambton received numerous honours: the Sir Percy Sykes memorial medal of the Royal Central Asian Society (1960); fellowship of the British Academy (1964); honorary doctorates from Durham (1971) and Cambridge (1973); honorary fellowships of New Hall, Cambridge (1973) and SOAS (1983); honorary life membership of the Middle East Studies Association of North America; and the triennial gold medal of the Royal Asiatic Society (1991). An annual A. K. S. Lambton honorary lecture series was established in 2001 at Durham University, which housed her library and papers. The British Institute of Persian Studies, of which she was an honorary vice-president, hosted her ninetieth birthday reception at Carlton House Terrace, in 2002. In 2004 she was awarded the British Society for Middle Eastern Studies' outstanding service award and the Cross of St Augustine by Archbishop Rowan Williams. Both, in a sense, were the ultimate recognition of her life's work. Lambton led morning prayer, preached on Sundays, and delivered Lent talks, even into her nineties, in the Newcastle diocese. In his *laudatio* the archbishop cited her voluntary work in Iran, assistance on inter-faith matters, and attempts to prevent the church's persecution after the Islamic revolution. He also commended her exceptional theological erudition, in comparison with churchmen, and particular devotion to Pope Gregory I, the namesake of her residence, Gregory Cottage, in East Kirknewton, Wooler, Northumberland, where she died on 19 July 2008. She was unmarried.

BURZINE K. WAGHMAR

Sources *The Economist* (6 Oct 1945); (31 Oct 1970) • *The Observer* (17 March 1946) • *The Times* (22 Aug 1951); (23 July 2008); (19 Aug 2008) • A. Lambton, *Islamic society in Persia* (1954) • R. Bullard, *The camels must go: an autobiography* (1961), 219 • *The Guardian* (6 Feb 1970); (15 Aug 2008) • W. R. Louis, *The British empire in the Middle East, 1945-1951* (1984), 659-61 • J. Bracken, 'Preface: Professor A. K. S. Lambton', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* [in honour of Ann K. S. Lambton], 49 (1986), 1-4 • A. Lambton, 'Recollections of Iran in the mid-twentieth century', *Asian Affairs*, 19 (Oct 1988), 273-88 • J. Bill, *The eagle and the lion: the tragedy of American-Iranian relations* (1988), 392 • J. Colville, *Those Lambtons! a most unusual family* (1988), 100-02 • R. Bullard, *Letters from Tehran: a British ambassador in World War II Persia* (1991), 6-7, 18, 67, 96, 190 • B. Waghmar, 'The viceroyalty of the jurisconsult: sacred politics in the Islamic Republic of Iran', diss., Boston University, 1996, 39 • *Women in diplomacy: the British 1782-1999* (1999), 11-12 • S. Dorril, *MI6: inside the covert world of Her Majesty's secret intelligence service* (2000), 560-78 • A. Lambton, 'Local particularism and the common people in pre-modern Iran', *Durham Middle East Papers*, 67 (2001) • W. R. Louis, 'How Mussadeq was picked', *TLS* (29 June 2001), 13 • C. E. Bosworth, *A century of British Iranists: 1902-2001* (2001), 27 • B. Waghmar, 'Ann Lambton at 90',

Circle of Inner Asian Art Newsletter, 15 (June 2002), 31 • A. Lambton, 'Remembering Seyyed Hasan Taqizadeh', *Iran Nâmeh: a Persian Journal of Iranian Studies*, 21 (spring-summer 2003), 109-11 • 'BRISMES award for services to Middle Eastern studies: Professor Ann Lambton', *British Society for Middle Eastern Studies Newsletter*, 19 (Nov 2004), 11 • R. Williams, 'Award to Professor Lambton', *Bible Lands: Magazine of the Jerusalem and Middle East Church Association*, Pentecost (2005), 31-2 • Sam Falle interviewed by Mike Thomson, 'A very British coup', BBC Radio 4, 22 Aug 2005 • C. de Bellaigue, 'Where Said was wrong', *TLS* (19 May 2006), 6 • R. Irwin, *For lust of knowing: the orientalisists and their enemies* (2006), 207, 258 • W. R. Louis, *Ends of British imperialism: the scramble for empire, Suez and decolonization* (2006), 732-57 • D. Morgan, 'Orientalism and after', *TLS* (2 June 2006), 17 • *Evening Chronicle* [Newcastle] (22 July 2008) • *The Independent* (1 Aug 2008) • *Daily Telegraph* (9 Aug 2008) • *The Chronicle* [Newcastle] (16 Aug 2008) • V. Stock, 'Sermon: Professor Ann Lambton', memorial address • *Journal of the Iran Society*, 2 (2008), 37-40 • *British Institute of Persian Studies Newsletter*, 34 (2008), 21 • *Bible Lands: Magazine of the Jerusalem and Middle East Church Association*, advent (2008), 11 • *The Middle East in London*, 5 (Sept 2008), 19 • *Iranian Studies*, 42 (2009), 139-43 • *Iran: Journal of the British Institute of Persian Studies*, 47 (2009), vii-x • *Middle East Studies*, 45 (2009), 161-3 • *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (2011), 99-109 • D. Morgan, 'Hollow crown', *TLS* (21 Oct 2011), 32 • J. Gurney, 'Ann K. S. Lambton', *PBA* [forthcoming] • D. Morgan, 'Ann K. S. Lambton', *Encyclopaedia Iranica* [forthcoming] • *WW* (2008) • Burke, *Peerage* • personal knowledge (2012) • private information (2012) • b. cert. • d. cert.

Archives SOAS • U. Durham, Palace Green Library | TNA: PRO, FO 371 | SOUND interview, 'Persian Studies in Britain', BBC World (Persian) Service, 2001

Likenesses J. Colville, photograph, repro. in Colville, *Those Lambtons!* • obituary photographs • photograph, repro. in *The Guardian* (6 Feb 1970) • photograph, repro. in 'BRISMES award' • photograph, repro. in 'Award to Professor Lambton' • photographs, SOAS • photographs, priv. coll.

Lambton, Antony Claud Frederick, styled Lord Lambton (1922-2006), politician and writer, was born on 10 July 1922 at West Marden Hall, Emsworth, Sussex, the younger son of John Frederick Lambton, fifth earl of Durham (1884-1970), and his first wife, Diana Mary (1901-1924), only daughter of Granville Frederick Richard Farquhar, of Dalton Hall, Beverley, Yorkshire. After attending Harrow School, in 1941 Antony Lambton became heir to the family earldom in tragic circumstances, when his elder brother, John, shot himself. Lambton joined the Hampshire regiment in the same year, but was soon invalidated out of the army due to eye trouble. (This affliction led him in later life always to wear sunglasses.) He went to work in a munitions factory, where he met the spirited Belinda Bidget (Bindy) Blew-Jones (1921-2003), daughter of Major Douglas Holden Blew-Jones, of Westward Ho!, Devon. The couple married on 10 August 1942 and had five daughters followed by a son.

Lambton belonged to an illustrious political family. The first earl of Durham, John George Lambton, a radical whig MP, cabinet minister, ambassador to Russia, and governor-general of Canada, was famous for the Durham report of 1838, which led to self-government in the Canadian and subsequently other colonies. Several other ancestors had served as MPs, usually for their native co. Durham. Lambton's first cousin was Lord Dunglass, later Sir Alec Douglas-Home (prime minister in 1963-4). It was