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## OBITUARY

MAJOR-GENERAL THE VISCOUNT MONCKTON OF BRENCHELEY  
C.B., O.B.E., M.C., D.L., F.S.A.  
(1915-2006)

After a period of illness, Viscount Monckton of Brenchley died peacefully on 22 June 2006 – a former war hero who was one of Kent's most prominent figures. He was President of the Kent Archaeological Society from 1968-1975. He was made a Fellow of The Society of Antiquaries of London in 1987. In 1970 he was appointed Deputy Lieutenant of the County of Kent.

The son of the first Viscount Monckton of Brenchley whom he succeeded in 1965, Gilbert Walter Riversdale Monckton was born at Ightham Mote on 3 November 1915. He was educated at Harrow and Trinity College, Cambridge, where he was a founding member of the Cambridge University Whip Club with Quiller-Couch. He joined the 5th Royal Inniskilling Dragoon Guards as a 2nd Lieutenant in 1938, and was on active service in 1939-40. He was awarded the Military Cross shortly before the evacuation of British troops from Dunkirk in 1940. As a senior negotiator in Indo-China and Korea he was made O.B.E. in 1956, and C.B. for his services as Chief of Staff, HQ, BAOR in 1966. In the county he maintained his military interests as Hon. Colonel of the Kent & Sharpshooters Yeomanry Squadron, 1974-1979 and the Rifle Association, 1970-75.

Viscount Monckton had a life-long interest in heraldry and genealogy and served as President of the Canterbury-based Institute of Heraldic and Genealogical Studies from 1964 to 2000 and was one of its first Trustees. He remained President Emeritus and a keen supporter. He presided over the XIIIth International Congress of Genealogical and Heraldic Sciences held at Imperial College, London, in 1976. Later he entertained members of l'Académie Internationale d'Héraldique at a meeting in Canterbury in 1993.

From school days, Gilbert Monckton had a keen interest in archaeology, digging in the area around Ightham and on prehistoric Downland sites in Kent. He was gifted as a keen and accurate dowser and this aided him in making various discoveries. When he and his wife and five children

moved to their pedigree beef farm at Runhams that straddles the ancient parishes of Harrietsham and Lenham he knew that he was on an interesting Romano-British site where he and colleagues found considerable evidence of ironworking. As early as 1933 he had joined the Kent Archaeological Society and made several life-long friends through it.

After his retirement from the Army in 1967 he played an active role in county affairs generally ; he was President of the Kent Association of Boys' Clubs from 1965-78; he served on the Council of the Order of St John in Kent, 1969-75, and as President of the British Association of the Ancient Hospitaller Order, 1973-86. His widow, Marianna, was sometime President of St John's Ambulance and High Sheriff of Kent (1981-2).

CECIL HUMPHERY-SMITH