

WIKIPEDIA

# Rennell Rodd, 1st Baron Rennell

**James Rennell Rodd, 1st Baron Rennell**, GCB, GCMG, GCVO, PC (9 November 1858 – 26 July 1941), known as **Sir Rennell Rodd** before 1933, was a British diplomat, poet and politician. He served as British Ambassador to Italy during the First World War.

## Contents

### Early life

### Career

Writing career and scholar

Honours

### Personal life

Descendants

### Arms

### References

### External links

## Early life

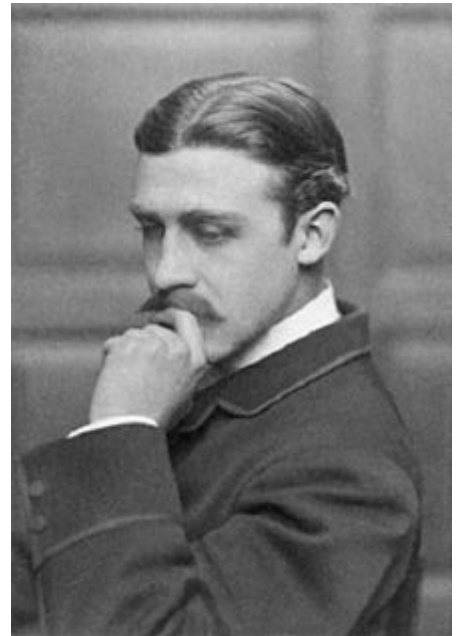
Rodd was born in London on 9 November 1858. He was the only son of Cornishman Major James Rennell Rodd (1812–1892) of the Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry, and his wife Elizabeth Anne Thomson, the third daughter of Dr. Anthony Todd Thomson. His paternal grandparents were Admiral Sir John Tremayne Rodd and the former Jane Rennell, a daughter of the geographer James Rennell.<sup>[1]</sup>

Rodd was educated at Haileybury and Balliol College, Oxford, where he was associated with the circle of Oscar Wilde. In 1880, he won the Newdigate prize for *Raleigh*.<sup>[2]</sup> Wilde later assisted Rodd in securing publication for his first book of verse, *Rose Leaf and Apple Leaf*, for which Wilde provided an introduction.<sup>[3]</sup> As Wilde began to court scandal in his public career, their friendship subsequently cooled.<sup>[4]</sup>

## Career

He entered the British Diplomatic Service in 1883, and served in minor positions at embassies in Berlin, Rome, Athens and Paris. From 1894 to 1902, Rodd worked under the Consul-General of Egypt, Lord Cromer. He played an important part in negotiating the Anglo-Ethiopian Treaty of 1897 with

The Right Honourable  
**The Lord Rennell**  
GCB GCMG GCVO PC



### British Ambassador to Italy

#### In office

1908–1919

**Monarch** Edward VII  
George V

**Preceded by** Edwin Henry Egerton

**Succeeded by** George Buchanan

### Member of Parliament for St Marylebone

#### In office

1928–1932

**Preceded by** Douglas McGarel Hogg

**Succeeded by** Alec Cunningham-Reid

### Personal details

**Born** James Rennell Rodd  
9 November 1858  
London, England

**Died** 26 July 1941  
(aged 82)

Emperor Menelik II of Ethiopia. In late 1901, he was appointed first secretary at the embassy in Rome, where he arrived in 1902, and remained for the next two years.<sup>[5]</sup>

In 1904, Rodd was made minister plenipotentiary to Sweden—and until November 1905, Norway—but did not arrive until 17 January 1905. He played an active and neutral part in the Dissolution of the union between Norway and Sweden, for which he was rewarded the Grand Cross of the Order of the Polar Star by King Oscar II. After the secession, he continued as a minister in Sweden until 1908.

In 1908 he was appointed ambassador to Italy. He remained in this post until 1919, and played a key role in securing Italy's adhesion to the Triple Entente. Rodd left the Diplomatic Service in 1919, but nonetheless served on the mission to Egypt in 1920, with The Viscount Milner. Rodd was the British delegate to the League of Nations from 1921 to 1923. He also sat as Unionist Member of Parliament for the constituency of St Marylebone between 1928 and 1932.<sup>[6]</sup>

<b>Spouse(s)</b>	<u>Lilias Georgina Guthrie</u> (m. 1894)
<b>Relations</b>	<u>John Tremayne Rodd</u> (grandfather) <u>Anthony Todd Thomson</u> (grandfather)
<b>Children</b>	6
<b>Parent(s)</b>	<u>James Rennell Rodd</u> <u>Elizabeth Anne Thomson</u>
<b>Education</b>	<u>Haileybury College</u>
<b>Alma mater</b>	<u>Balliol College, Oxford</u>

## Writing career and scholar

Apart from his diplomatic services Rodd was also a published poet and scholar of ancient Greece and Rome.<sup>[7]</sup> In 1920 he delivered the British Academy's Italian Lecture.<sup>[8][9]</sup> He published his memoirs, entitled *Social and Diplomatic Memories*, in three volumes between 1922 and 1925. His diaries were published in 1981 by Torsten Burgman, and edited by Victor Lal in 2005.<sup>[10]</sup>

## Honours

Rodd was appointed Companion of the Order of the Bath (CB) in 1897, Knight Commander of the Order of St Michael and St George (KCMG) in 1899, Knight Grand Cross of the Royal Victorian Order (GCVO) in 1905, Knight Grand Cross of the Order of St Michael and St George (GCMG) in 1915, and Knight Grand Cross of the Order of the Bath (GCB) in the 1920 New Year Honours.<sup>[11]</sup> He was appointed to the Privy Council in 1908 and in 1933 he was raised to the peerage as **Baron Rennell**, of Rodd in the County of Hereford.<sup>[12]</sup>

## Personal life

On 27 October 1894, Rennell Rodd was married to Lilias Georgina Guthrie (1864–1951) at St George's Hanover Square Church. She was the fourth daughter of James Alexander Guthrie, 4th Baron of Craigie and the former Elinor Stirling (a daughter of Adm. Sir James Stirling, Governor of Western Australia from 1834 to 1838). Lilias' sister, Rose Ellinor Guthrie, was the wife of Maj.-Gen. The Hon. Sir Cecil Edward Bingham (a younger son of Charles Bingham, 4th Earl of Lucan). They had four sons and two daughters, including:

- Francis James Rennell Rodd, 2nd Baron Rennell (1895–1978), who married the Hon. Mary Constance Vivian Smith, daughter of Vivian Smith, 1st Baron Bicester.
- Hon. Evelyn Violet Elizabeth Rodd (1899–1980), who was a Conservative politician and was created a life peer as *Baroness Emmet of Amberley* in 1965.
- Hon. Gloria Rodd (1901–1975), who married the painter Simon Elwes

- Hon. Peter Murray Rennell Rodd (1904–1968), who married the author Nancy Mitford, daughter of David Freeman-Mitford, 2nd Baron Redesdale and one of the famous Mitford sisters.
- Hon. Gustaf Guthrie Rennell Rodd (b. 1905), who married Yvonne Mary Marling, the youngest daughter of diplomat Sir Charles Murray Marling.

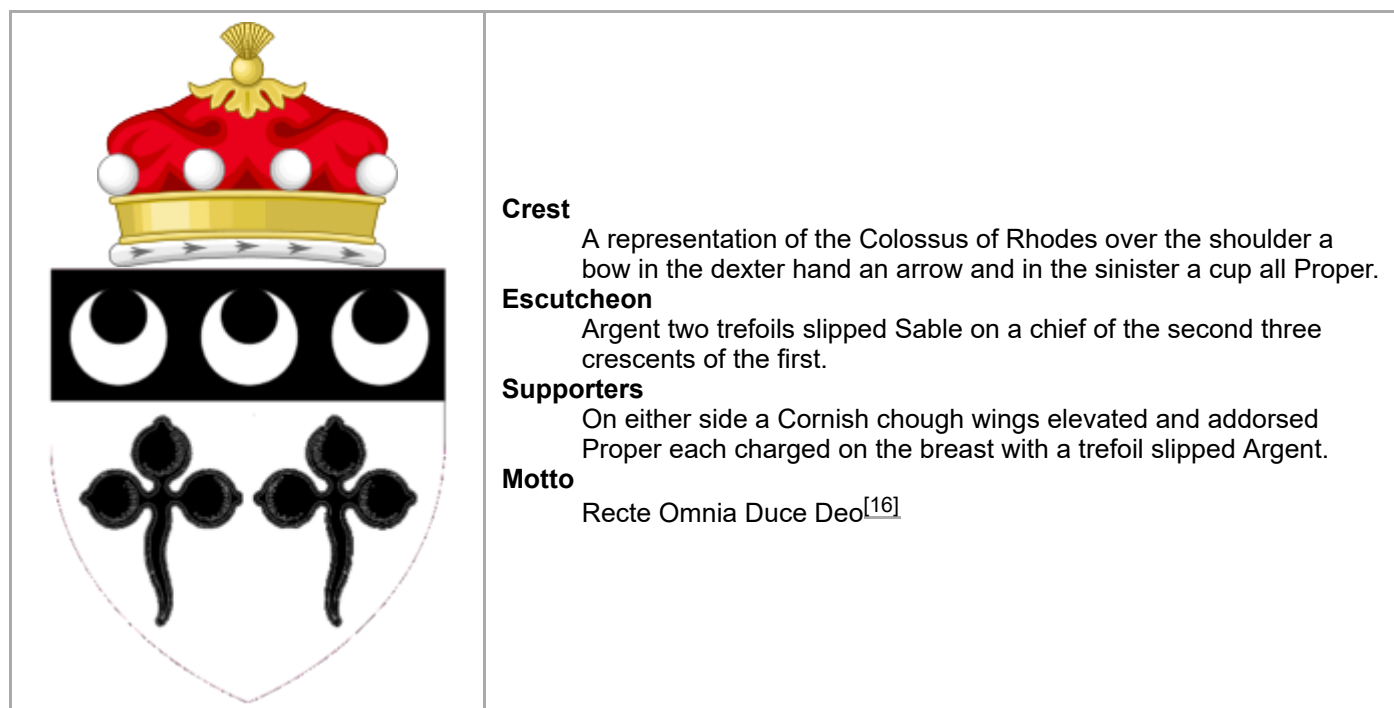
Lord Rennell died in July 1941, aged 82.<sup>[13]</sup> He was succeeded in the barony by his second, but eldest surviving, son Francis, who later served as President of the Royal Geographical Society.<sup>[14]</sup> His widow died on 20 September 1951.

## Descendants

Though his daughter Gloria, he was a grandfather of four boys, including the portrait painter Dominick Elwes, who had three sons with Tessa Kennedy, including actor Cary Elwes.<sup>[15]</sup>

## Arms

Coat of arms of Rennell Rodd, 1st Baron Rennell



## References

1. "Rodd, James Rennell, first Baron Rennell (1858–1941), diplomatist and classical scholar" (<https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-35809>). *www.oxforddnb.com*. Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. doi:10.1093/ref:odnb/35809 (<https://doi.org/10.1093%2Fref%3Aodnb%2F35809>). Retrieved 4 June 2020.
2. Bose, T.; Colbeck, R. N. (1 November 2011). *A Bookman's Catalogue Vol. 2 M-End: The Norman Colbeck Collection of Nineteenth-Century and Edwardian Poetry and Belles Lettres* (<https://books.google.com/books?id=aQetGZ2D3YYC&q=newdigate+Prize+Rennell+Rodd&pg=PA677>). UBC Press. ISBN 978-0-7748-4481-9.
3. *Oscar Wilde: Poems in Prose and Private Letters ; Including an Intimate Preface by His Biographer, Frank Harris* ([https://www.google.com/books/edition/Oscar\\_Wilde/0xZSAQAAMAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1&dq=Oscar+Wilde+rennell+rodd&pg=PP10](https://www.google.com/books/edition/Oscar_Wilde/0xZSAQAAMAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1&dq=Oscar+Wilde+rennell+rodd&pg=PP10)). Pearson's (25c) Library. 1919. p. 10. Retrieved 4 June 2020.


4. Grech, Leanne (2019). *Oscar Wilde's Aesthetic Education: The Oxford Classical Curriculum* ([https://www.google.com/books/edition/Oscar\\_Wilde\\_s\\_Aesthetic\\_Education/4niQDwAAQBAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1&dq=Oscar+Wilde+rennell+rodd&pg=PA26](https://www.google.com/books/edition/Oscar_Wilde_s_Aesthetic_Education/4niQDwAAQBAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1&dq=Oscar+Wilde+rennell+rodd&pg=PA26)). Springer. p. 26. ISBN 978-3-030-14374-9. Retrieved 4 June 2020.
5. "No. 27367" (<https://www.thegazette.co.uk/London/issue/27367/page/6846>). *The London Gazette*. 22 October 1901. p. 6846.
6. "Rodd, James Rennell (1858-1941) 1st Baron Rennell, diplomat" (<https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/c/F47232>). *discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk*. The National Archives. Retrieved 4 June 2020.
7. "James Rennell Rodd, 1st Baron Rennell (1858-1941) - Rome of the Renaissance and to-day / by Sir Rennell Rodd ; with illustrations by Henry Rushbury" (<https://www.rct.uk/collection/1078946/rome-of-the-renaissance-and-to-day-by-sir-rennell-rodd-with-illustrations-by>). *www.rct.uk*. Retrieved 4 June 2020.
8. Rodd, Sir Rennell (1920). "The Italian People" (<https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015029392563&view=1up&seq=413&q1=rodd>). *Proceedings of the British Academy*. **9**: 389–407.
9. "Italian Lectures" (<https://www.thebritishacademy.ac.uk/events/lectures/listings/italian-lectures-symposia/>). *British Academy*.
10. Legg, L. G. Wickham, Williams, E. T (editors). *The Dictionary of National Biography, 1941-1950*. Oxford University Press, 1959.
11. "No. 31712" (<https://www.thegazette.co.uk/London/issue/31712/supplement/3>). *The London Gazette* (Supplement). 30 December 1919. p. 3.
12. "No. 33917" (<https://www.thegazette.co.uk/London/issue/33917/page/1424>). *The London Gazette*. 3 March 1933. p. 1424.
13. "Rennell, Baron (UK, 1933)" (<http://www.cracroftspeerage.co.uk/rennell1933.htm>). *www.cracroftspeerage.co.uk*. Heraldic Media Limited. Retrieved 4 June 2020.
14. "Obituary: Lord Rennell of Rodd, KBE, CB, JP". *The Geographical Journal*. **144** (2): 392–393. 1978. ISSN 0016-7398 (<https://www.worldcat.org/issn/0016-7398>). JSTOR 634229 (<https://www.jstor.org/stable/634229>).
15. Burke's Peerage, Baronetage and Knightage, 107th edition, vol. 3, ed. Charles Mosley, Burke's Peerage Ltd, 2003, p. 3319
16. *Burke's Peerage*. 1956.

## Bibliography

- *Social and Diplomatic Memories* (<http://www.lib.byu.edu/~rdh/wwi/memoir/Rodd/RoddTC.htm>) of James Rennell Rodd
- *Sir Walter Raleigh* (<https://archive.org/stream/sirwalterraleigh00rodd#page/n7/mode/2up>) at Internet Archive
- *Frederick, Crown Prince and Emperor: a Biographical Sketch Dedicated to his Memory* (<https://archive.org/stream/frederickcrownpr00rodduoft#page/n7/mode/2up>) at Internet Archive
- *Social and Diplomatic Memories* (<https://archive.org/stream/socialdiplomatic01rodduoft#page/n9/mode/2up>) at Internet Archive
- *Love, Worship and Death; some renderings from the Greek Anthology* (<https://archive.org/stream/loveworshipdeath00rodd#page/n5/mode/2up>) at Internet Archive
- *Songs in the South* (<https://archive.org/stream/songsinsouth00roddrich#page/n7/mode/2up>) at Internet Archive
- *Feda: with other poems, chiefly lyrical* (<https://archive.org/stream/fedawithotherpoe00rodd#page/n3/mode/2up>) at Internet Archive
- *The Princes of Achaia and the Chronicles of Morea, a study of Greece in the middle ages* (<https://archive.org/stream/princesachaiaan00roddgoog#page/n4/mode/2up>) at Internet Archive
- *The Customs and Lore of Modern Greece* (<https://archive.org/stream/customsloreofmod00rodd#page/n3/mode/2up>) at Internet Archive

- *The Violet Crown* (<https://archive.org/stream/violetcrown00rodduoft#page/n5/mode/2up>) at Internet Archive
- *Ballads of the Fleet and other Poems* (<https://archive.org/stream/balladsoffleetot00roddrich#page/n5/mode/2up>) at Internet Archive
- *Poems in Many Lands* (<https://archive.org/stream/poemsinmanylands00rodd#page/n5/mode/2up>) at Internet Archive
- *The Unknown Madonna, and other Poems* (<https://archive.org/stream/unknownmadonnaot00rodd#page/n7/mode/2up>) at Internet Archive
- *Rose Leaf and Apple Leaf* (<https://archive.org/stream/roseleafapplelea00roddrich#page/n19/mode/2up>) with introduction by [Oscar Wilde](#) at Internet Archive
- *An Englishman in Greece* (<https://archive.org/stream/englishmaningree00rodduoft#page/n3/mode/2up>) with introduction by Sir Rennell Rodd at Internet Archive
- *The British mission to Uganda in 1893* (<https://archive.org/stream/britishmissionto00portuoft#page/n9/mode/2up>) edited and with a memoir by Rennell Rodd at Internet Archive

## External links

- [Portraits of Lord Rennell](https://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/person.php?LinkID=mp03745) (<https://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/person.php?LinkID=mp03745>) at the [National Portrait Gallery, London](#)
- [Hansard 1803–2005: contributions in Parliament by Rennell Rodd](https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/people/sir-james-rodd) (<https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/people/sir-james-rodd>)
- [Works by Rennell Rodd](https://www.gutenberg.org/author/Rodd,+Rennell) (<https://www.gutenberg.org/author/Rodd,+Rennell>) at [Project Gutenberg](#)
- [Works by or about Rennell Rodd](https://archive.org/search.php?query=%28%28subject%3A%22Rodd%2C%20Rennell%22%20OR%20subject%3A%22Rennell%20Rodd%22%20OR%20creator%3A%22Rodd%2C%20Rennell%22%20OR%20creator%3A%22Rennell%20Rodd%22%20OR%20creator%3A%22Rodd%2C%20R%2E%22%20OR%20title%3A%22Rennell%20Rodd%22%20OR%20description%3A%22Rodd%2C%20Rennell%22%20OR%20description%3A%22Rennell%20Rodd%22%29%20OR%20%28%221858-1941%22%20AND%20Rodd%29%29%20AND%20%28-mediatype:software%29) (<https://archive.org/search.php?query=%28%28subject%3A%22Rodd%2C%20Rennell%22%20OR%20subject%3A%22Rennell%20Rodd%22%20OR%20creator%3A%22Rodd%2C%20Rennell%22%20OR%20creator%3A%22Rennell%20Rodd%22%20OR%20creator%3A%22Rodd%2C%20R%2E%22%20OR%20title%3A%22Rennell%20Rodd%22%20OR%20description%3A%22Rodd%2C%20Rennell%22%20OR%20description%3A%22Rennell%20Rodd%22%29%20OR%20%28%221858-1941%22%20AND%20Rodd%29%29%20AND%20%28-mediatype:software%29>) at Internet Archive
- [Works by Rennell Rodd, 1st Baron Rennell](https://librivox.org/author/12208) (<https://librivox.org/author/12208>) at [LibriVox](#) (public domain audiobooks) 

Retrieved from "[https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Rennell\\_Rodd,\\_1st\\_Baron\\_Rennell&oldid=1066929511](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Rennell_Rodd,_1st_Baron_Rennell&oldid=1066929511)"

**This page was last edited on 20 January 2022, at 21:05 (UTC).**

Text is available under the [Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike License](#); additional terms may apply. By using this site, you agree to the [Terms of Use](#) and [Privacy Policy](#). Wikipedia® is a registered trademark of the Wikimedia Foundation, Inc., a non-profit organization.