



THE WAYFARER

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE ADAM LINDSAY GORDON COMMEMORATIVE COMMITTEE INC.

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THE OLD DRILLROOM AT BRIGHTON

That so few buildings with links to Adam Lindsay Gordon still survive today was evident during our recent search of the plaque commemorating Poet Gordon in the old drillroom in Brighton (Vic). According to this article from *The Argus*, the plaque was unveiled in 1936;

"Residents of Brighton are proud of their Wilson Hall in Middle crescent, formerly known as the drillroom, but now the home of the Brighton branch of the Returned Sailors and Soldiers' Imperial League of Australia. Few of them, however, know its history nor have they every heard of the Brighton Artillery, for which corps it was erected.

It is a wooden building 70ft in length by 45ft in width on a block of land of about four acres. It was built in 1869, when the members of the Brighton Artillery collected enough money to purchase the land for £200 and to erect the hall at a cost of £800. The Brighton Artillery, under Major Moule, flourished for several years. Among its members were such leading Brighton residents as Messrs, Henry Hale Budd, John Ferrier Hamilton, each of whom became Mayor of Brighton; J. J. Blundell, afterwards Secretary

of Lands; Thomas Wilson, a councillor for 47 years and six times Mayor of Brighton; Samuel Clayton, for many years clerk of works of Brighton; Captain Ruddell, whose name is still seen on a little draper's shop at the corner of Cochrane and Bay streets; Sergeant Ivy, the instructor of the corps; Captain Mair, who became Colonel Mair; and Adam Lindsay Gordon, the poet.

To-morrow afternoon at 3 o'clock a memorial tablet to commemorate Adam Lindsay Gordon will be unveiled by the Mayor of Brighton (Councillor J. A. Grant), and two enlarged photographs of the corps will be unveiled by Mr. A. C. Wilson, a son of the former Mayor. The memorial tablet is:—

'To commemorate the association of Adam Lindsay Gordon with this building, in which the poet became a member of the Brighton Artillery Corps, signing his attestation here before the mayor of Brighton, Councillor Thomas Wilson, J.P., in the year 1869'.

What a wealth of memories surrounds the old drill ground! First of all it was the parade-ground for the Brighton Artillery Corps; then it became a cricket

ground, where a turf wicket was laid down by Thomas Boxshall, the first curator of the Exhibition Gardens. It was surrounded by a high fence and begirt by a stately row of pinus insignis. Once a year it was given over to the Brighton Flower Show, one of the social events of the spring.

The old building was the convincing ground in the many stirring elections—when the late Mr. George Higinbotham was deposed by Mr. Thomas Bent, and years afterwards when Mr. W. H. Moule (now Judge Moule) ousted Thomas Bent. At the time of the Great War it was the scene of innumerable patriotic meetings, and after the war was over, it was used as a hospital when Victoria suffered from severe epidemic of influenza. Later it became the seat of government for Brighton when the town hall was being rebuilt."

Believed to have been demolished, it is hoped the wreckers salvaged the plaque.

*Of those mentioned in the article, Bent, Boxshall, Budd, Grant, Higinbotham, Moule and Wilson are all buried within the Brighton General Cemetery where Gordon lies peacefully. (Source: *The Argus* 27 Jun 1936 p7)*

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GORDON'S OWN ARMY: SOLDIERS OF THE EMPIRE

A story attributed to the author Frank Maldon Robb related to how the sons of the empire heading off to the carnage of the Western Front could pack one, and only one book in their kit bags. And their choice of book, they told Robb was the collected works of Adam Lindsay Gordon—how many of these blood stained books lie under the Flemish clay can only be imagined.

The quote prompted The Adam Lindsay Gordon Commemorative Committee Inc. to undertake further research to ascertain just how many Australian soldiers fought in the Great War who bore the name of Australia's National Poet. Our research revealed that there were as many as 78 soldiers, 13 whom paid the ultimate sacrifice.

The remarkable aspect is that they came from all parts of the continent and not just from south-east Australia—Zeehan (Tas), Wilmington (SA), Fremantle (WA), Cairns (Qld), Corowa (NSW) and Wangoom (Vic). They won medals (DCM, MC, MM) as well as being Mentioned in Despatches. One even fought with the Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Force in Rabaul. And in the tradition of the Australian Digger, they had their run-ins with officialdom. Arguably the most colourful was Pte Lindsay Gordon Wright (13th

Battalion, 1916-19) who was charged with conduct prejudice (Jun 1917), AWOL (Jun, Oct, Nov 1917, Nov 1918 and Apr, Jun 1919), neglecting to obey an order (Jun 1917), absent from parade (Oct 1917), making a false statement and escape from custody (Dec 1917), creating a disturbance, using abusive language and striking his superior in the face (Oct 1918), breaking out of hospital (Apr 1919) and larceny (Jun 1919).

One name of interest who survived the war is Lindsay Gordon Lauder (23rd Battalion, 1915-19), grocer of Maryborough, Vic who may be related to Elizabeth Lauder who maintained Gordon's grave for many years. The 13 of Gordon's Own Army who were killed:

Lindsay Gordon BENNETT (d 17 Jul 1918): 43rd Battalion (1916-18). Born and resided at Mt Torrens, SA. Occupation—farm labourer.

Lindsay Gordon CUBBINS (d 14 Aug 1918): Australian Flying Corps (1917-18). Born and resided at St. Kilda, Vic. Occupation—motor trimmer.

Lindsay Gordon GLOWREY (d 11 Apr 1917) (pictured): 16th Battalion (1915-17). Born at St. Kilda, Vic. Law Clerk of Peth, WA.

Lindsay Adam Gordon HANNELL (d 31 Jul 1917): 43rd Battalion (1916-17). Born at Mount Gambier, SA. Farmer of Adelaide, SA.

Lindsay Gordon HOOD (d 26

May 1918) (pictured): 57th Battalion (1915-18). Born at Annandale Station, Birdsville, Qld. Farmer of Polkemmet, Vic.

Alfred Gordon LINDSAY (d 3 Sep 1916): 28th Battalion (1915-16). Born and resided at Perth, WA. Occupation—jeweller.

Cecil Gordon LINDSAY (d 15 Apr 1917): 20th Battalion (1915-17). Born at Trangie, NSW. Labourer of Redfern, NSW.

Lindsay Gordon MCDONALD (d 25 Apr 1915): 7th Battalion (1914-15). Born at Toongabbie, Vic. Labourer of Newmarket, Vic.

Lindsay Gordon MOLLER (d 10 Jun 1918): 26th Battalion (1916-18). Born and resided at Mount Morgan, Qld. Occupation—selector.

Lindsay Gordon Millwood RICHARDS (d 1 Apr 1918): 42nd Battalion (1916-18). Born St George, Qld. Station hand of Mitchell, Qld.

Lindsay Gordon SMITH, MM (d 19 Oct 1918) (pictured): 14th Field Artillery Brigade (1915-18). Born Orange, NSW. Labourer of Wellington, NSW.

Lindsay Gordon STEPHENS (d 23 Feb 1917): 42nd Battalion (1916-17). Born at Mongolata, SA. Grazier of Newikie Downs via Mitchell, Qld.

Lindsay Gordon WALLIS (d 6 Aug 1915): 8th Battalion (1914-15). Born and resided at Horsham, Vic. Occupation—clerk.



(above) Lindsay Gordon Lauder. (Australian War Memorial Collection—DASEY1908A)



(above) Lindsay Gordon Glowrey smoking a pipe. (Australian War Memorial Collection—P02912.005)



(above) Lindsay Gordon Smith, MM. (Australian War Memorial Collection—P04096.001)



(above) A cherub looking Lindsay Gordon Hood. (Australian War Memorial Collection—DA08206)

THE LIFE'S ROMANCE OF ADAM LINDSAY GORDON

"...the film production is a wonderful education which no Australian, either girl or boy should fail to go and see—and then go and see again"

It was some time ago in the early days of The Adam Lindsay Gordon Commemorative Committee Inc. that committee members had the fortune of watching *The Life's Romance of Adam Lindsay Gordon* (1916) held at The National Film and Sound Archives. The cost was prohibitive to obtain a copy, much less show it in public and so the matter was left in abeyance until we met Ross King at our recent talk for members of the Essendon and District Historical Society Inc. Ross' advice prompted us to again write to the Archives and we are pleased to announce we have secured a copy of this most unique Gordon film for not only our archives but to show in public. The silent film is only a small part of the entire film and primarily covers the story of Gordon's romance with Jane Bridges. Hugh Raymond McCrae (1876-1958), son of Gordon's contemporary George Gordon McCrae (1833-1927) played the lead role of Gordon—the physical resemblance between Gordon and McCrae is uncanny.

The film has special significance to our member Alan Giles (UK) who resides at Broughton Hackett, the former home of the Bridges family. At the time of going to press, we are ordering a copy to be sent to Alan which no doubt will be played ad

nauseam to residents in that quaint English town across the trackless seas.

Released when the Great War was showing no signs of ending, *The Life's Romance of Adam Lindsay Gordon* was often screened to raise funds for patriotic purposes. *The Adelaide Advertiser* had this to say on the film's release in South Australia where Gordon's memory was evergreen;

"Throughout the length and breadth of Australia—in every hamlet, in every home, and at every fireside—the name of Adam Lindsay Gordon is reverently and tenderly spoken of. He was not unworthy of his monuments, not unworthy of a warm place in the hearts of all those who have a love of bold manhood and spirit stirring song. He created for himself a monument more enduring than bronze. His rare and wonderful verse is even more recognised as the 'Bible of the Bush'.

This evening [Sat 27 Jan 1917], at the Town Hall, the screen version of the famous poet's life is to be presented in all its varying phases. It is thus the leading dailies of Melbourne and Sydney have referred to the picture—'Faithful in all phases of the great poet's career. A vivid and realistic screen story—redolent of romance and adventure—grips the heart strings'. And another—'A classic for the Australian

screen—impressive and absorbing story, instinct with romance—exciting episodes of the turf. Artistic and enthralling throughout its 5,000 ft.—a production all Australians will love to see, and see again'."

In an earlier review, the same newspaper wrote;

"The screened version of Gordon's life can only be shown with a certain amount of brevity, although the main features of his career are faithfully and truly depicted. His life, so full of romance and adventure, should make a powerful appeal to all humanity. In everything Gordon attempted he succeeded, save only in the matter of accumulating money. In the film story, Gordon is revealed as schoolboy, hunter, lover, mounted trooper, horse breaker, politician, steeplechase rider, and last, but no means least, poet and gentleman. It is as a poet that Gordon carved his niche high up on the walls of fame. In almost every instance they are strangely appropriate to the events that they precede, and apart from the powerfully interesting story of the film production, is a wonderful education, which no Australian, either girl or boy, should fail to go and see—and then go and see again".

(Source: *The Advertiser* 22 Jan 1917 p9 & 27 Jan 1917 p8)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We acknowledge the assistance of The National Film and Sound Archive for making available for our archives a copy of *The Life's Romance of Adam Lindsay Gordon*.

LAUDAMUS

THE Lord shall slay or the Lord shall save !
 He is righteous whether He save or slay—
 Brother ! give thanks for the gifts He gave,
 Though the gifts He gave He hath taken away.
 Shall we strive for that which is nothing ? Nay.
 Shall we hate each other for that which fled ?
 She is but a marvel of modelled clay,
 And the smooth, clear white, and the soft, pure red
 That we coveted, shall endure no day.

Was it wise or well that I hated you
 For the fruit that hung too high on the tree ?
 For the blossom out of our reach that grew
 Was it well or wise that you hated me ?—
 My hate has flown and your hate shall flee.
 Let us veil our faces like children chid—
 Can that violet orb we swore by see
 Through that violet-vein'd, transparent lid ?—
 Now the Lord forbid that this strife should be.

Would you knit the forehead or clench the fist,
 For the curls that never were well caress'd—
 For the red that never was fairly kiss'd—
 For the white that never was fondly press'd ?
 Shall we nourish wrath while she lies at rest
 Between us ? Surely our wrath shall cease.
 We would fain know better—the Lord knows best—
 Is there peace between us ? Yea, there is peace,
 In the soul's release she at least is blest.

Let us thank the Lord for His bounties all,
 For the brave old days of pleasure and pain,
 When the world for both of us seem'd too small—
 Though the love was void and the hate was vain—
 Though the word was bitter between us twain,
 And the bitter word was kin to the blow,
 For her gloss and ripple of rich gold rain,
 For her velvet crimson and satin snow—
 Though we never shall know the old days again.

The Lord !—His mercy is great, men say ;
 His wrath, men say, is a burning brand—
 Let us praise Him, whether He save or slay,
 And above her body let hand join hand.
 We shall meet, my friend, in the spirit land—
 Will our strife renew? Nay, I dare not trust,
 For the grim, great gulf that cannot be spann'd
 Will divide us from her. The Lord is just,
 She shall not be thrust where our spirits stand.

THE ADAM LINDSAY GORDON GRAVE RESTORATION APPEAL

We have now raised just over \$8,500 for The Adam Lindsay Gordon Grave Restoration Appeal with our target of \$10,000 in sight.

Thank you to everyone who donated to the Appeal especially the following:

Ross Tucker, Chris Wallace-Crabb, Loretta Fitzgerald (\$50), Robert McDonald (\$40), Chris Ingram, Tessa Spencer, Peter Hughes (\$30).



PROFESSOR WESTON AND JANICE BATE: PATRONS

We are grateful that Professor Weston and Janice Bate have accepted our invitation to be patrons of The Adam Lindsay Gordon Commemorative Committee Inc.

As some members may recall, we once wrote to none other than the Palace, but Her Majesty the Queen declined the honour. And we thought we had a good chance too given that the Queen included Gordon's most famous quote in her annual Christmas address in 1992. But alas!

In Weston and Janice Bate, we have no less a royal couple. For over four decades since

Professor Bate published his ground breaking *History of Brighton* (1962), the Bates have been at the forefront of the history movement.

In accepting the invitation, Professor Bate has since written to us to say;

"Gordon has always fascinated me especially for the way people who knew him and of him in Mt Gambier, Ballarat and Brighton have kept his memory alive....he is special in my mind as the representative of South Eastern Australian culture, in contrast with Lawson and Patterson."

On behalf of the committee and members, we warmly welcome the Bates as patrons.