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THE WAYFARER

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NAPOLEON THE THIRD HOTEL—EMERALD HILL

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

THE RED LION: A GORDON HAUNT 2

ADAM AND JANE REUNITED AT THE MANOR 3

A HUMOUROUS GORDON TALE 3

THE MANY INNS OF GORDON 4

By: John Adams

I could start this article in many ways, why call a hotel after Napoleon the Third in Emerald Hill or where was the Emerald Hill

Racecourse?

There was a Napoleon the Third and a Hotel and an Emerald Hill Racecourse.

The Second French Empire was the Imperial Bonapartist regime of Napoleon III from 1852 to 1870, between the Second Republic and the Third Republic whereby Napoleon III abolished French liberty and in its place encouraged festivities to keep the masses happy and encouraged material expansion whereby gold was imported from Australia and California.

The Napoleon the Third hotel, Emerald Hill, is mentioned in *The Argus* newspaper on 1 August 1855 where entrance could be made at the hotel to the racecourse. The hotel was probably then under construction and the racecourse was probably stretching from where the St. Vincent gardens are now. We note that on 16 April 1856 a license for the hotel was given

to David Lewis and on 28 April 1856 a notice was placed in *The Argus* saying that there were evening parties attended by a good pianist and violinist at the Hotel.

The racecourse was an informal one and stretched out on vacant land towards the back of the Volunteer Shooting Enclosure which is the area now south of the railway line loosely bounded by Park Street, Ferrars Street, Kerford Road and Beaconsfield Parade.

The racecourse became disused as people favoured Flemington, Caulfield and Moonee Valley and the area was made available for housing from the 1870s on.

We are told by an article in *The Argus* of 27 June 1892 on the occasion of the gathering at Gordon's grave organised by John Howlett Ross in which a wreath was laid from Gordon's first love Jane Bridges then a grandmother of 70 living at Worcestershire;

"Mr. John Whiteman recalled the days when Gordon used to visit his forge in Mackillop Street, and sit dangling his legs while he recited his

verses in a peculiar sing-song which was not unpleasant and brought out the rhythm very well; and told also of many pleasant evenings spent at the Napoleon the Third Hotel in Emerald Hill, at which Gordon lived for a while".

We are also told by an entry in *The South Eastern Star* 18 July 1927.

"Both Mr Wilson and Gordon removed their racing strings to Melbourne and were jointly quartered at The Napoleon III Hotel (now the Railway Hotel), Emerald Hill, kept by a Mr Trotter. There Mr Fountain as a lad of 14, attached to the Wilson ménage, was in daily contact with Gordon whom he describes as a thoroughbred gentleman and aristocrat. Jimmy Harcourt, Billy Trainor, (the father of Gordon Trainor) and Billy Simpson, lodged at the hotel. Simpson was the Tommy Hales of his day. Trainor cultivated the acquaintance of Gordon and possessed some of his unpublished verse."

(Source: *The Argus* 27 Jun 1892 p6)

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THE RED LION: A GORDON HAUNT

Adam Lindsay Gordon's remaining years in Melbourne are commonly associated with Brighton, Toorak and Victoria Barracks (where he resided), Flemington (where he rode to glory) and central Melbourne (where he mingled with the art fraternity). A place not commonly associated with Gordon is Hawthorn, where it was said he often drank at The Red Lion Hotel (1857-1937);

"OLD HOTEL BEING DEMOLISHED / Hawthorn Landmark

The Red Lion Hotel in Church St., Hawthorn, which was built in 1857, three years before the creation of Hawthorn itself, and was a haunt of Adam Lindsay Gordon and George Gordon McCrae, is being demolished. A two-storey building, it was built from bricks made behind the hotel site in the backyard belonging to its first owner (Mr. C. Scuffam). The hotel was a landmark before there were many houses in the district."

Charles Scuffam was buried in the Boroondara (Kew) Cemetery (Vic) on 24 Oct 1873 (CofE "C" 1174) in the same section as **George McCrae**. It is likely Gordon ventured off the beaten track and travelled to Hawthorn for nothing more than to enjoy a liquid lunch with McCrae.

"Hawthorn as a settlement is nearly as old as Melbourne itself. It was the site of the first cattle station in Victoria, for it was in that area that John Gardiner, leader of the first overland expedition with cattle from Sydney to Port Phillip,

squatted after crossing the Yarra at Dight's Falls in December, 1836. Gardiner built his homestead by the junction of the Yarra and the creek which bears his name near the present site of Scotch College. His run extended along the southern side of the Yarra for some miles, and south to Brighton district.

Hawthorn is said to have been given its name by one of the early residents, Sir James Palmer, because of the resemblance of some of its native shrubs to the white hawthorn hedges of England, but that may be only a legend, for a claim that the place was named by Surveyor Hoddle in 1844 after Lieutenant Hawthorne, a British naval officer then on a visit to Melbourne, is supported by the fact that in the older deeds and licences for the district the name is spelt Hawthorne.

Gardiner did not stay long in the district, nor did he secure title deeds for his cattle run, but as other squatters settled in the locality he moved out towards the Dandenong Ranges. As official sales of land were conducted in the forties the area was taken up largely for farming and market gardening, and the township was established on the hill by the river, near the junction of Burwood rd and Church st. The Red Lion Hotel, on the crest of the hill, was one of the first buildings, and until quite recent times was a landmark.

By 1845, when Melbourne's population was about 10,000, Hawthorn had become a settled

village, and smaller settlements began to grow farther out. On bullock waggons, drays, and carts the settlers brought supplies of timber, vegetables, and general farm produce along the main track to Hawthorn and the Red Lion, and thence across the river to Melbourne. The old track, which became known as Burwood rd, was as rough and dusty (or muddy) as heavy hooves and wheels could make it-even worse than the roads out Essendon way today.

Important developments took place in Hawthorn in the fifties, notwithstanding the exodus from Melbourne to the goldfields. A number of enterprising settlers from Germany and other parts of the Continent established farms, orchards, and vineyards in the district, and, as has been said, 'changed the unfruitful earth into beautiful gardens.' Brickyards were established in various parts of the district, and brickmaking became an important industry, which is still carried on in the eastern areas."

The Red Lion Inn (pictured) joins a long list of Gordon haunts that exist only in name.

(Source: *The Argus* 3 Aug 1937 p9, 19 Oct 1946 p16)

"The Red Lion Hotel, on the crest of the hill, was one of the first buildings, and until quite recent times was a landmark"



ADAM AND JANE REUNITED AT THE MANOR

By: Elrae Adams

When a request came from Alan Giles, the owner of The Manor, Broughton Hackett, for a portrait of Adam Lindsay Gordon to hang beside the one of Gordon's first love, Jane Bridges, my husband, John, answered readily that as none could be found in England or Australia, that maybe I could paint one for him.

I said yes, of course, and then thought about where I would get the best image of Gordon to be placed there.

We looked through all of the photos which we had, some from old books, some we

took with permission from a showcase at the Ballarat Racecourse in the small historical enclosure there, and decided that the one standing in his wedding garb was the best.

Then the next decision was the size and I chose a fairly large canvas and did a rough sketch in monochrome sepia, thinking that would be a good way to go, but as I progressed I thought that the effect was not strong enough for his outgoing personality.

So I began using a full colour palette, but keeping the clothing more muted so as to match a past era.

His complexion I thought,

needed to appear burnished by the sun because of the outdoor life he led, so I created a ruddy glow on his cheeks and a shiny forehead.

It was a challenge to do, but Alan was pleased, it seems, when he hung it beside "his Jane" at last. Portraits and flowers come first in my favourites to paint and it is very satisfying to think that one of my paintings hangs in the "Old Country".

Alan Giles, who is also one of our members, has extended to us all an invitation to visit The Manor, Broughton Hackett near Cheltenham when in England.



(above) Adam, left reunited with his beloved Jane, right on the wall of The Manor, Broughton Hackett

(Photo courtesy Alan Giles)

A HUMOUROUS GORDON TALE

Rare are the stories of Gordon's humour which makes this extract somewhat unique;

"I remember being in his company at Pearson's Station when a missionary, who was camping there for the night, suffered somewhat at his hands. The good man, with more zeal than discretion, was finding fault with dancing, and denouncing it right and left. Gordon was seated at a table, with his head buried in his hands, apparently not concerned. At last the

missionary overshot the mark by saying that no great man ever danced. Without moving from his position, the poet slowly drawled—'Wellington danced:' and then in tones of mild reproof, added—'David danced.' The following morning, too, I remember, the itinerant Gospeller wanted to borrow a horse, his own poor nag having been knocked up. He expressly stipulated that the lent animal should be quiet. Gordon remembered a sleepy-looking bay, dozing in a corner of the yard. 'Is he

quiet?' inquired the missionary. 'Quiet as a sheep,' said Gordon. (All horses were quiet with him.) The bay was saddled, and the poor missionary mounted, but was soon returned to terra firma. 'You said he was quiet,' he called out, somewhat indignantly to Gordon. 'Oh, he's quiet enough said the poet, 'only he hates carrying tracts'."

(Source: Kalgoorlie Western Argus 1 Mar 1904 p24)

A FRAGMENT

*They say that poison-sprinkled flowers
Are sweeter in perfume
Than when, untouched by deadly dew,
They glowed in early bloom.*

*They say that men condemned to die
Have quaffed the sweetened wine
With higher relish than the juice
Of the untampered vine.*

*They say that in the witch's song,
Though rude and harsh it be,
There blends a wild, mysterious strain
Of weirdest melody.*

*And I believe the devil's voice
Sinks deeper in our ear
Than any whisper sent from Heaven,
However sweet and clear.*

THE MANY INNS OF GORDON

What were some of the Inns and Hotels Gordon was associated with? Here is a list, which we may add, is by no means a complete one:

Roebuck Inn, Cheltenham (UK)

Plough Inn, Cheltenham (UK) (pictured below)



Port MacDonnell Inn, Port MacDonnell (SA)

Mt Gambier Hotel, Mt Gambier (SA)

The Bush Inn, Robe (SA)

Robe Hotel, Robe (SA)

Caledonian Inn (Hotel), Robe (SA)

Criterion Hotel, Robe (SA)

Royal Oak Hotel, Penola (SA)

Long's Hotel, Penola (SA)

The Red Lion, Hawthorn (Vic)

Adam and Eve Hotel, Melbourne (Vic)
(pictured right)

The Cattle Yards Inn, Ballarat (Vic)

Craig's Hotel, Ballarat (Vic)

Mueller's Tavern, Melbourne (Vic)

Hunt Club Hotel, Melbourne (Vic)

Scott's Hotel, Melbourne (Vic)

Argus Hotel, Melbourne (Vic)

Drummond's Hotel, Coleraine (Vic)

Napoleon The Third Hotel, South Melbourne (Vic)

Marine Hotel, Brighton (Vic) (pictured below)

