



London Rifle  
Brigade

The Drain,  
Blackdown Camp  
© *Lindsay Family Archive*

# **LINDSAY'S WAR**

**Copyright © PAUL MIDDLETON 2017**

**The right of Paul Middleton to be identified as the AUTHOR of this work has been asserted in accordance with the Copyrights, Designs and Patents Act 1988**

## **ALL IMAGES**

**from the Lindsay Family Archive, are the copyright © of Paul Middleton, unless otherwise assigned**

## **ALL RIGHTS RESERVED**

**No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in or introduced into a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior written permission of the author and publisher, except by a reviewer who may quote brief passages in a review. Any person who does any unauthorised act in relation to this publication may be liable to criminal prosecution and civil claims for damages**

## **THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED**

**to John Seymour Lindsay's daughter Margaret; also to my wife Pippa and my daughters Kate and Jessica, my grandchildren Rowan, Laurence and Bella, John Geerts and his sons Richard and Gerald and their families, in memory of their father, grand-father, great-grandfather and great-great-grandfather**

## **SPECIAL THANKS**

**to London Rifle Brigade Consultant Chris Rippingale and to the following who have helped with the assembly of this book: Margaret Campbell (Ramsay), Margaret Green (née Lindsay), Brenda Dougall Merriman, Pippa Middleton**

## **FOR OTHER PUBLICATIONS**

**by Paul Middleton, see [www.greatousebooks.com](http://www.greatousebooks.com)**

## **PRINTED AND BOUND**

**by Elite Publishing Academy, Hertford  
[www.elitepublishingacademy.com](http://www.elitepublishingacademy.com)**

**ISBN 978-1-5272-0314-3**

**Typeset in Palatino and Century Gothic  
Designed and created in InDesign CC 2015**

# Contents

**FOREWORD** page 6

**Chapter 1** page 8  
**14 Sep – 21 Dec 1914**  
**Preparing for War**  
*'... to fight for you and the King ...'*

**Chapter 2** page 26  
**22 Dec 1914 – 19 Jan 1915**  
**Waiting in France**  
*'... we are on our way up in Cattle Trucks ...'*

**Chapter 3** page 36  
**20 Jan – 15 Feb 1915**  
**Training**  
*'... one soon gets used to the whiz of stray shots ...'*

**Chapter 4** page 58  
**16 Feb – 22 Mar 1915**  
**Up to the Front Line**  
*'... we have been working very hard to make our position stronger ...'*

**Chapter 5** page 70  
**23 Mar – 30 Apr 1915**  
**Back to the Front**  
*'... close to the Huns who call out 'Good Morning' ...'*

**Chapter 6** page 94  
**1 May – 27 May 1915**  
**Realities of warfare**  
*'... when he fell back dead in my arms ...'*

**Chapter 7** page 112  
**28 May – 3 Aug 1915**  
**Rouen to London**  
*'... leave by the way has been suspended ...'*

**Chapter 8** page 124  
**4 Aug – 27 Nov 1915**  
**More Training**  
*'... we march and drill and then we drill and march ...'*

**Chapter 9** page 148  
**28 Nov 1915 – 2 Oct 1916**  
**Promotions**  
*'... but we are awfully proud of our boys as well ...'*

**Chapter 10** page 170  
**3 Oct 1916 – 9 May 1919**  
**Recuperation**  
*'... although not quite right in the ears ...'*



## CONTENTS

### FEATURES

- Bohemian Concert** *page 22*  
**Plug Street** *page 52*  
**Lisnacrieve** *page 76*  
**Second Battle of Ypres** *page 84*  
**Battle of Gommecourt** *page 166*  
**The Reality of the Trenches** *page 182*

### APPENDICES *page 194*

- Appendix 1 Biography John Seymour Lindsay DCM** *page 195*  
**Appendix 2 Military Biographies** *page 199*  
**Appendix 3 Reference to War Sketches** *page 207*  
**Appendix 4 A Short History of the London Rifle Brigade** *page 212*  
**Appendix 5 Promotion** *page 220*  
**Appendix 6 Invalided from the Service Certificate** *page 222*  
**Appendix 7 For Services Rendered** *page 224*  
**Appendix 8 Distinguished Conduct Medal DCM** *page 225*  
**Appendix 9 Great War Medals** *page 227*  
**Appendix 10 Sedley G Williams MC & BAR** *page 229*  
**Appendix 11 Medical and Service Records** *page 235*  
**Acknowledgements** *page 245*  
**Bibliography** *page 245*  
**Glossary & Abbreviations** *page 246*  
**Index** *page 248*

'Bridge-over-mud',  
Blackdown Camp  
© Lindsay Family Archive



17th December 1914  
Rifleman 1006 John Seymour Lindsay.

# Foreword

**J**OHNSY SEYMOUR LINDSAY was a man of many parts, all of them fascinating, many of them important, some of them heroic. His progress through the Great War was to be followed by thousand upon thousand young men, but JSL, as we shall call him from now on, was one of the 'lucky' ones – he survived.

His life has only just emerged in detail as the Lindsay family archive has lain dormant since his death in 1966. Only in the last few years has it been possible to examine his heritage in detail and the documents and artwork that emerged has painted a picture of a quite extraordinary man, with quite extraordinary talents.

There are a number of factors that make JSL so special even in the context of the Great War. His age, his talent and his humility. He was born in Kilburn, London on 16th May

1882 and so when he was drafted into the London Rifle Brigade in September 1914, he was aged 32, well above the age of his peers.

His talent was for drawing and painting. He was educated at home by his Aunt Esther after the early death of his mother and the estrangement of his father who owned an ironworks in Paddington. In 1899 he was apprenticed to Leonard Ashford in a design studio in Adelphi, London. It was here that his talents developed. He produced a series of cartoons in ink and watercolour on postcards which he sent to his family and to his girlfriend whom he married in 1915. They are full of humour and wit.

During the war he extended his artistic range sending a stream of sketches from January 1915 to September 1916 when he was wounded and repatriated to Osborne House on the Isle of Wight. These were for publication in *The Illustrated London News*, *The (London) Evening News*, *The Sketch*, *The Sphere* and *The Graphic*.

His sketches from the trenches are buried in letters to Mildred his fiancée then his wife, and to his brother Frank. It is these 376 letters which show JSL's humility. He writes feelingly, even lovingly of his brother soldiers, and searingly describes their daily fare of privation. But he writes to his fiancée so there is a veneer of hope and humour and homeliness overlain on the misery. Only when you compare the same event written in different letters to Mildred and Frank do you see the real truth behind the event. But in this biography I thought it really important to let the words of the letters do the talking as much as possible. The numerous letters and postcards are probably the finest legacy

that Lindsay could have left to history. His descriptions of The Barricade, the gassing at the Second Battle of Ypres, the Battle of Gommecourt, the impossible weather, the relentless shelling, and the death of his best friend in his arms, are truly heartbreaking. But his optimism breaks through as he enthuses over his new design of a *Squib-Lindsay Improved Bivvie Stove* for the trench billets.

Transcribing the hundreds of letters and postcards has been a fascinating task. The handwriting was often difficult to unlock and the writing style varied greatly according to JSL's location and degree of stress, so I decided on a uniform way of making the letters accessible. There are a lot of references to family and friends in the accounts, but put these to one side and you find a rich history of one man's war. Let the words of the letters do the talking. This is a very personal history.

John Seymour Lindsay Private No.1006, joined the 2nd Battalion of the 5th London Rifle Brigade in September 1914. He served in the France Theatre of War from 16th December 1914. Between January 1915 and July 1916 he served in the 1st Battalion.

In March 1915 he was transferred to a hospital in Le Treport, and then to a Convalescent Depot. In May he moved to hospitals in Étaples and Rouen. On 16th June 1915 he married on Licence, Mildred Ethel Williams, at Holy Cross St Pancras, London during a 2 day leave.

In March 1916 he was decorated with the Distinguished Conduct Medal for conspicuous gallantry on 3rd May 1915. In July 1916 as a Sergeant he was gazetted with direct commission to 2nd Lieutenant at Bienvillers. He survived the Battle of Gommecourt but in September he was wounded and invalided home to serve with 3rd Battalion. In October he joined the Pioneer School, Reading and in April 1917 the 1st London Reserve Brigade, moving to Aisne Barracks at Blackdown, Hampshire to become a designer and instructor of trench warfare.

In January 1918 he was promoted to Lieutenant and in May 1919 he received the Great War Invalided Certificate.

John Seymour Lindsay DCM died at the Stud Farm, Sulhampstead Abbots, Berkshire, on 8th January 1966. He was survived by his widow Iris, whom he had married in 1959, and his daughter Margaret Green (née Lindsay) who passed away on 17th March 2017 at the age of 95.

*Paul Middleton July 2017*

*For a full Biography see Appendix 1 on page 195.*



May 1919  
Lt John Seymour Lindsay DCM  
Four and a half years older.





# Chapter 1

14 Sep - 21 Dec 1914  
London, Hayward's Heath,  
Southampton

*'... to fight for you and the King ...'*



# Preparing for War with the London Rifle Brigade

JOHN SEYMOUR LINDSAY (and from now on we shall refer to him as simply JSL) left a fine record for us to read. He wrote hundreds of letters to Mildred his fiancée and later his wife, and to Frank his brother, describing his experiences and feelings, sometimes candidly, but more often hiding the reality. The letters passed through the military Censor so it has taken some time to decipher where he actually was, but in hindsight and with some important clues it has been possible to trace his career. He experienced devastating losses of his friends, he showed great bravery and privation, but above all what shines through is his enduring love of art. Maybe this saved his sanity. Among the platitudes of comments on the weather and his physical state, his letters continually refer to his sketching of colleagues, the trenches and the nearby villages. He obviously was well respected by all ranks in his Battalion – probably because of his age (in August 1914 he was 32) and his eccentricity.

This first part of JSL's story takes us from his enlistment as a volunteer in the City of London, his initial training at Bunhill Row<sup>1</sup>, transfer to Crowborough near Hayward's Heath, and eventual embarkation at Southampton in December 1914. On 14th September 1914, JSL wrote a note to his brother Frank telling him that he had been drilling:

*— 'We never know when we will go. Yes I was with a French firm Escaré and Denelle (who are at the above address 129 Wardour Street). Mr Escaré has been very decent to me – told me as I was chucking up my seat I was to count his house as my home he has paid my entrance fee to the Corps and I still work for them in old houses, I have done some (work) today 8 to 9.30 and 5-9 for which I get money my pay is 3/- per day as I am off the strength. I get 1/- a day in camp. I have gone in with Escaré's son (Claude) so I have a place. Jumpy Brown, Harold's brother is in our Battalion I have not spoken to him yet' —*

JSL started his training in Bunhill Row in the City, where the Regiment had been housed since 1893. The Headquarters were erected entirely from regimental funds, supplemented by contributions from members of the Brigade, from various City Companies and other friends of the Regiment. Since the formation of the Territorial Force the headquarters were shared with the Post Office Rifles. So began a new chapter in JSL's life and the beginning of over 40 months of service to King and country in the hell that was later to be termed 'The War to end all Wars'. If only that were so.

In November he was placed in the 2nd Battalion 'O' Company of the LRB. His smaller amount of work at Escaré's netted him only 10/- a week, but surprisingly, he was required to purchase many of the items of his equipment so he wrote to his brother Frank on 9 November:



— *‘Our first Battalion has now gone away and we expect to go to camp in a day or so. The work is hard but I can do it quite all right. We have been served out with quite a lot of clobber – one pair of boots 2 prs socks sweater 2 prs hands and 2 towels. My Firm Escaré and Denelle allow me 10/- per week but although very useful it doesn’t go a very long way. Then a lot of things I have had to get Footter togs, cutlery plates and cup haversack and no end of oddments as well as various subscriptions for we are quite a swagger lot. What I am in great need of is a pair of summer shorts with puttees we are expected to get these so as to save our trousers. Our Company is remade tomorrow and appointments are made I very much hope to retain my position as squad commander but it is a toss up. I have been passed as a Trained Man and have been drilling my squad and instructing in range firing. I am inoculated tomorrow ie Tuesday so I shall be knocked up for a day or two. Mr Escaré is making me very comfortable at his place at Thornton Heath. I hope Trixie (JSL’s sister) and you are keeping fit what a damn good thing raw cocoa don’t come from that swinish place Germany. How goes Henry? I got his last letter some time ago but he sent it to the wrong address and was still using that German Firms envelopes which I think quite mad I told him to chuck it when he was with me’ —*

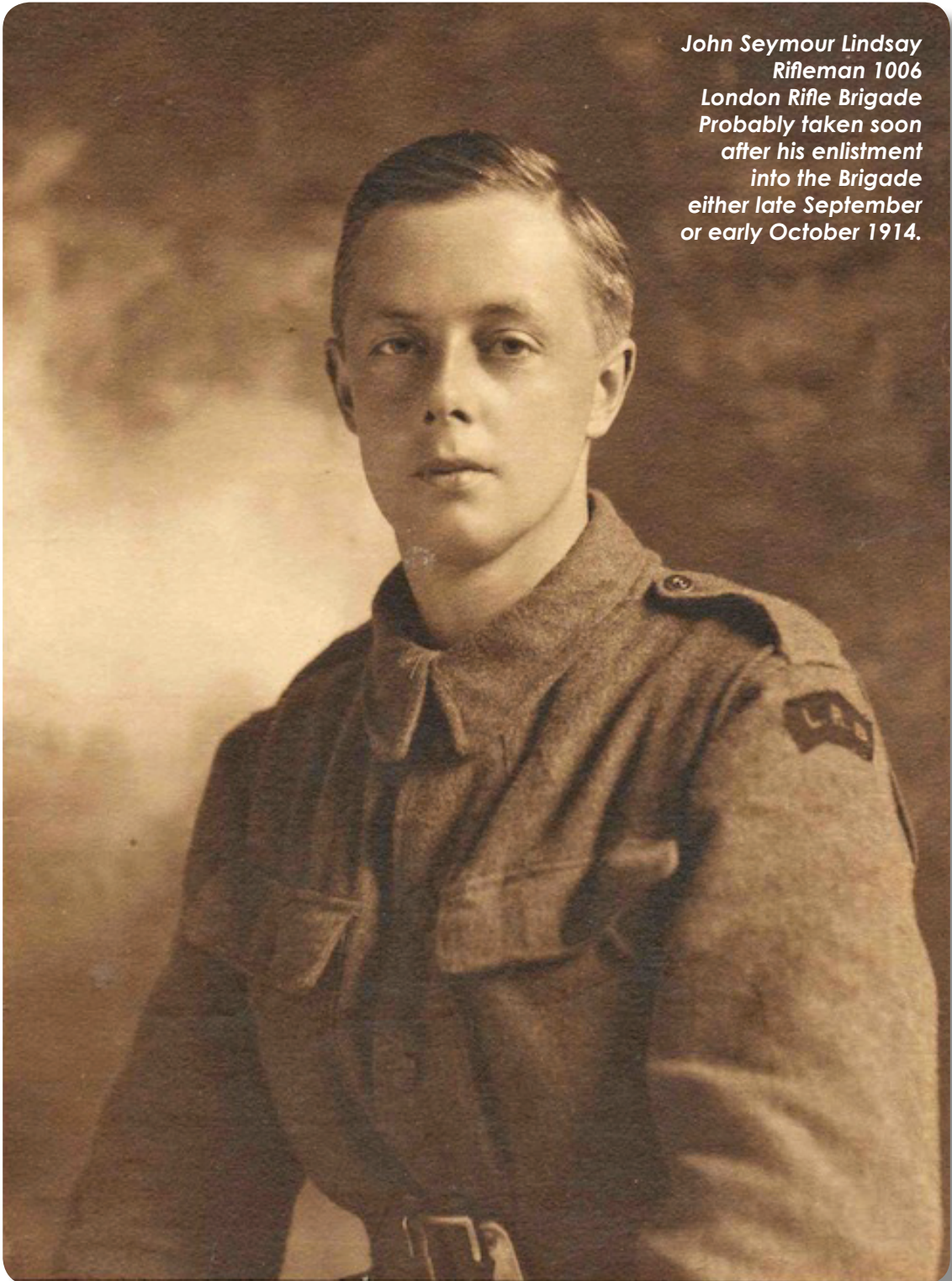
On 27th November JSL was allocated a billet in Haywards Heath at 1 Milton Cottages, Franklynn Road. A billet is a term for living quarters to which a soldier is assigned to sleep. Historically, it referred to a private dwelling that was required to accept the soldier. In his letter to Frank on that day, he refers also to — *‘an invasion scare’*—

— *‘We have been billeted down here now for a week and shall probably stay some time our quarters are rough but clean and we get almost enough to eat. We are not allowed day leave as there has been an invasion scare which will probably pass off. I dig in with two very decent chaps. I am now enjoying two days off as as I had my first anti-typhoid inoculation last night which makes you rather rotten at first. The ‘Chock’ (chocolate) has been very useful on route marches and I am now starting the ‘fags’. I am now right down on my army pay 8/2d per week so a ‘donation’ now and then is very welcome. Our first Battalion is in action and I hear one is killed and some wounded. I will write again soon.*

*Love to Trixie (his sister) and yourself and Posh (brother Frank’s dog!)’ —*

The ‘invasion scare’ was based on the events of 14th November 1914, when the 5th Battle Squadron transferred to Sheerness to guard against a possible German invasion. But on 26th November, HMS *Bulwark* was moored on the River Medway. She was taking on coal from the airship base at Kingsnorth, on the Isle of Grain. The ship had 11 magazines connected by passages that were packed with shells and cordite. At 7.50am, during breakfast, an explosion ripped the ship apart. 745 men and all 51 officers were killed, most instantly, including Captain Guy Sclater. There were only 12 survivors.

14 Sep – 21 Dec 1914



*John Seymour Lindsay  
Rifleman 1006  
London Rifle Brigade  
Probably taken soon  
after his enlistment  
into the Brigade  
either late September  
or early October 1914.*

Mildred Ethel Williams, JSL's fiancée, kept a scrapbook right from the time he left London after completing training, until his departure for the France and Belgium theatres of war, at the beginning of December 1914. She recorded his daily movements and preserved the numerous postcards that he sent on his slow journey down to Southampton. You can see from this selection that she mentioned the weather, and small details of his daily life. She also quotes from his inscriptions on the reverse of the postcards.

19<sup>th</sup> November 1914 -

Jack and 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion  
I.R.B. go to Haywards  
Heath - a very cold, wet  
and foggy day -  
"Comfortably billeted" at  
1 Milton Cottages, Franklin Rd.

21<sup>st</sup> November -

"Still going strong" -  
Inspected by the G.O.C. 1<sup>st</sup>  
London Division.

23<sup>rd</sup> November -

7 a.m. Jack had to take his  
Section down to get 60  
loaves of bread which were  
made in error. Each man  
bought one -  
"Drunk Parade at 9.30  
each evening and then  
straight to our billets."

24<sup>th</sup> - 26<sup>th</sup> November -

Marching!!!  
"Made a rough map of a  
Common for the Captain."

27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> November -

1<sup>st</sup> Inoculation - "a very  
rather time."

28<sup>th</sup> (Evening)

"Smolcer" (including  
Macpherson)

29<sup>th</sup> November -

"Quite fit and well now -  
Sketching at Lindfield after  
Church - 2 am to go down  
next Sunday - Jack to meet me  
outside Station. Lunch at an  
Inn & then tea at Jack's billet.  
(But it didn't come off)."

30<sup>th</sup> November -

"I am as wet as blazes,  
having just returned from  
tea with some awfully  
jolly people called Clewer,  
..... We are off to  
Crowborough tomorrow for  
2 weeks". I am to  
try and get down to  
new billet at Crowborough.

1<sup>st</sup> December -

"We (that is the 200 draft)  
left Haywards Heath on  
Tuesday morning East  
and after halting for  
dinner (cold meat and  
bread and cheese) we  
arrived at Jarvis Brook  
via Crowborough about  
3.30. Fine weather all  
the way."

2<sup>nd</sup> December -

"On the range all day but  
no shooting for me. The  
range is very wet but we  
manage to rest on branches  
laid on the ground".  
- This place is composed  
of miles and miles of  
heath all up and  
downs."



"I am billeted in this road" states JSL  
on this postcard sent from Jarvis  
Brook.

The opposite page shows two  
more of the ten postcards JSL sent  
from Crowborough and Jarvis  
Brook in East Sussex on his way to  
embarkation in Southampton.



14 Sep – 21 Dec 1914



German involvement was immediately suspected but the subsequent investigations pronounced the explosion accidental. It was probably caused by overheating of cordite that had been placed close to a boiler room bulkhead.

On 12th December 1914 JSL was convinced he was leaving immediately for The Front so he sent a postcard from his temporary billet in Crowborough, East Sussex to Frank and Trixie:

— *'Leaving here for the Front today. You will see my Billet is marked on the other side. Fondest and Best to You both' —*

It is pretty evident that on the 13th of December Mildred must have visited him just before he moved on to the Rest Camp in Southampton:

*My Very Own Darling*

*You were a very good brave girl last night it made things so much easier for me. I had to turn up at Headquarters this morning and get my full equipment and also had my second dose of inoculation. My arm is a bit stiff but not so bad as last time. I am inspected by the General Commanding tomorrow and will let you know when we go. It has been very wet down here today. I am writing this at Hollis's Billet as it is more comfortable than mine. I shall think of you at 10 o'clock tonight and every night. Goodnight My Beloved  
Your Own Johnnie*

From Waterloo Station on 15th December he wrote to Mildred:

*My own darling*

*Just off to Southampton I know you will be a brave girl. I hope to be back to you my own soon as the trouble is over what a time we will have! No time to write more. I will try to let you hear from me at Southampton. Goodbye my own Billa darling.  
Always your own  
Johnnie*

Later on that day (15th December) JSL arrived at the Rest Camp in Southampton.

*My own darling*

*Just arrived and am going to the rest camp for how long I don't know but will let you know my address. We had a great send off by our Company the Colonel and Major Harvest both shook hands I was jolly glad when it was all over. Hollis was not picked but would come because I was going. We are just having tea at Lowman's Tea Shop. The weather has turned out grand. If you feel downhearted remember I am going to help Sedley (Mildred's brother) fight for you and the King.*

*Always your own Johnnie*

*Remember NO NEWS is GOOD NEWS all the boys are busy writing*

By this time in December, JSL had befriended Rifleman Hollis and his name constantly crops up over the months and years. It is worth reading the summary of the career of this truly remarkable young man (*see page 202*). JSL and Hollis obviously became firm friends. On 16th December he wrote first to Mildred:

*Mine Beloved*

*Still here waiting for enough drafts of other regiments to fill the Transport. F(rank) has sent me two pounds which is very useful down here as I shall sleep out and not under canvas at my own expense of course. We had a route march today in full kit and I feel quite all right. We are having our photographs taken tomorrow including the Officers I will send it out to you (*see pages 20-21*).*

*Your very own Tommy*

*Johnnie*

*I thought of your kiss at 'last post' last night 10.12PM*

They stayed in Southampton Rest Camp until 20th December waiting for enough drafts of other regiments to fill the Transport. JSL wrote a letter a day during this time emphasising his optimism of his new way of life. To Frank he writes candidly about the appalling living conditions in Southampton and with the warning — *'don't say anything to Bill (Billa - Mildred) about the wet camp'* — a taste of things to come — little did he know it at that time. But the (misplaced) optimism shines through:

*16 December 1914*

*Many thanks for the 2 quid*

*Dear F(rank)*

*I am so sorry that I had to sub on you again but I arrived at the rest camp and found I had to sleep in a tent that was drenched 4 blankets also wet plus a ground sheet ditto. I was obliged to stick it to look after the kit but slept in my great coat fully dressed boots and all and they did two route marches in full kit and have not taken cold. I have permission tonight to sleep out at my own expense! hence the want of cash. We are waiting for our Transport I will*



14 Sep – 21 Dec 1914

*let you know when we go. We are 15 men and two officers and the first draft to reinforce the 1st Battalion which is considered a great honour as there are 1350 to choose from don't say anything to Bill(a) about the wet camp. I was inoculated the second time this afternoon before I left Haywards Heath I was entitled to 2 days sick leave!!! such is the army. Sedley Williams (Mildred's brother and JSL's brother-in-law) is in the Battalion we are reinforcing in Trenches 150 yds from the Huns.*

*Much love to B (Billa – Mildred) and yourself*

*J*

*17 December 1914*

*My Own darling*

*I have the morning off and am down town getting one or two things and having a cup of coffee. Still not sure when we are going it may be in a few hours or days. We all have our photograph taken today and I am having it sent on to you. It will be the first draft to go out to our 1st at the front and to be in it is considered a great honour as they had 1350 to pitch from.*

*Many hugs Beloved*

*Johnnie*

*18 December 1914*

*My Very Own*

*Yours this morning very many thanks. No I did not get Trixie's letter but I will get it returned ... and you can pay the little debts out of it. This morning it rained in torrents but cleared up in the afternoon. In the morning we drew our rifles from the Docks. We think we shall go tomorrow ... I am having two photographs sent to you both being paid for one is of course for you the other for F and Trixie you can also get PC's of the group at 3d each. Hollis, Martin and myself have had our photographs taken together (see pages 16-17). The proof is going on to you I have not paid for it but if you want any you can buy them direct from Chandler and Co ... Southampton. In the big group Hollis is on my left and Martin next but one on my right.*

*Goodnight my darling Billa.*

*Always your own Johnnie*

*19 December 1914*

*My Very Own darling*

*I shall not be able to write to you in England for some time as I go from here tonight, leaving camp at 8.45. All my love darling and I know you will always be a brave girl 40,000 troops here have passed through for the docks today coming from Winchester. I shall give Sedley your best love.*

*Goodnight Billa my Sweetheart.*

*Always your own*

*Johnnie*



*This motif was attached to the bottom of this photo. The four flags from left to right, are those of Russia, France, Great Britain and Belgium.*



19th December 1914  
London Rifle Brigade innocents ready for The Front  
- Riflemen Martin, Hollis and Lindsay.



19 December 1914

My Own darling

Your letter with the Postal Orders turned up tonight I should return it as I am sure it was from F and T (Frank and Trixie) but I am so hard up as I have had to pay for my bed and food that I may be unable to send much back. I expect to go tomorrow but one never knows. It has been raining this morning but is now fine. I am going over to see the proofs of the photograph (see pages 16-17) I told you about yesterday. Now I have some money I shall pay for them please let Trixie and F have one. Just back from seeing the CO, I have to parade at 2.20 to get our final equipment we may go tonight. I have bought an air cushion for 5/6d which I think will be useful. I shall not finish up this letter till later. We go down to draw kit at 2.20 and I think go off tomorrow Sunday. This is an awfully expressive place and I don't know what I should have done without the Postal Aides. I am having 4 photos of Hollis, Martin and myself sent to you and also 2 large groups they are all paid for. You can if you want have a small one of me taken of like this but I guess you will have enough. Goodnight dearest heart.

Always your loving

Johnnie

I bought a cannon cast by Bodley of Exeter I am having it sent to Wardour St and Mr Escaré will let you know when it turns up. I want you to have it.

JSL illustrates this letter to Mildred with a drawing of an ancient cannon (below) that he purchased in Southampton whilst waiting to embark for France. His pre-war interest in all things metal and mechanical were never to leave him despite his circumstances. Why he thought Mildred might be interested in having possession of a cannon, is quite beyond comprehension!

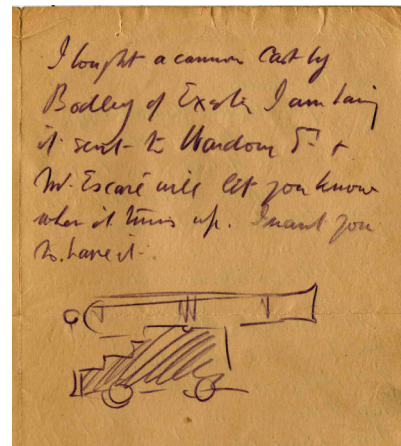
20 December 1914

Mine own Billa beloved

Owing to many thousands of troops being moved out from here we were told late last night that we could rest up and so here we are still waiting around in our white tent. Your letter turned up today with the card I am so jolly glad you are going there. I am enclosing a card I had from Stewart. I do hope you will not spend a fortune on photographs. The folk at our billet are very kind people and looked after me A1. I shall keep a card ready to dump in the letter box when we are going off definitely. Till next time my beloved.

Always your own Johnnie

Give my love to all at Brighton Churston and Leatherhead



19th December 1914  
JSL's cannon purchase!



*21 December 1914 Sunday*

*postcard*

*My Own*

*We are ready going tonight must be on the ship by 10 o'clock and start for France at 1am. I will write as soon as I can on the other side.*

*AYO (Always Your Own)*

*Johnnie*

So it appears that at last JSL and his colleagues in 'O' Company of the 2nd Battalion, were to follow the 1st Battalion to Le Havre, under the command of Major GR Tod. The official date of the formation of the 1st Battalion was 6th September 1914, so it is hardly surprising that recruitment, training, issuing of equipment and transport were 'difficult'. But the Battalion managed to emerge due to the sterling efforts of the new officers, Major Harvest (*see page 201*), Lieut Ambrose (*see page 199*) and Capt MacGill (*see page 204*). Eight new companies had been formed, and from Hayward's Heath an 18-mile cross-country march to the ranges at Crowborough had ensured the (relative) fitness of the new recruits. Although the billets at Jarvis Brook (*see pages 12-13*) were below expectations, the fever of approaching embarkation at Southampton appeared to make the battalion cheerfully accept the privations. At the end of November (*the 24th*), an amalgamation of companies had taken place with 'E' and 'O' (JSL's) company becoming No.2 under Capt Soames. And then suddenly they were off to war.

---

#### FOOTNOTE

1 Bunhill Row accordingly opened its doors for recruitment on 31st August 1914, despite the availability of only one officer, Lieut C Furze (*see page 201*) of the 1st Battalion; and many men enlisted on that and the days that immediately followed. Although the History (*The History of the London Rifle Brigade*) claims the establishment was reached by 4th September, the Silver War Badge (SWB) Roll, which shows the date of enlistment as well as discharge of men no longer fit to serve in the army, shows that the last recruits joined the Battalion around the 23rd September. That said, the SWB Roll shows that the majority, all bar less than one hundred, had enlisted on or before 9th September.

The Roll shows that most of the remainder joined on or near the 23rd September so perhaps they replaced original recruits who were found to be unsuitable. There is quite a lot of anecdotal evidence that shows men with poor eyesight and others really unfit for service managed to enlist by one means or another in that first mad rush of enthusiasm, no doubt their unsuitability for military service was revealed by more thorough medical examinations a little later on.

*(Thanks to Chris Rippingale for this information).*





Martin

Lindsay





Hollis

*The first draft of fifteen Riflemen and two Officers from the London Rifle Brigade.  
Taken in Southampton about 16th December 1914 on eve of departure for France.  
John Seymour Lindsay is 5th from the left in the back row  
and is sporting a moustache.*



# Bohemian Concert

## London Rifle Brigade

### 14 Nov 1914



# LONDON RIFLE BRIGADE

RÉSERVE BATTALION.

ENTERTAINMENT SOCIETY.

President:  
Lieut-Col. G. R. TOD.



## Grand Regimental Bohemian Concert

IN AID OF WAR CHARITIES

AT  
HEAD-QUARTERS, 130, BUNHILL ROW, E.C.

ON  
Saturday, 14th November, 1914, at 6.30 p.m.

Chairman .. CAPT. H. B. PRIOR.  
Vice-Chairman 2ND LT. R. ST. J. J. COLTHURST.



Musical Director STAFF-SERGT. REGINALD G. DAVIS.  
Hon. Sec. .. CORP. H. A. YERBURY.



## BOHEMIAN CONCERT

Despite the fact that some of the Regiment had already left for service on the continent, the London Rifle Brigade decided to hold a concert on 14th November 1914, in aid of War Charities at their Bunhill Row Headquarters in the City.

The full dance programme (below) shows some delightful insights into the etiquette of this period:

... SILENCE be observed during each Item

... Ladies will very greatly oblige by removing their hats

... Smoking allowed after 8 o'clock ... Fuller's Chocolates can be obtained

... The Committee desire to tender their very grateful thanks to the professional Lady

Artistes, all of whom are giving their services gratuitously.

The programme is fascinating. The 24 Items vary from orchestral items to songs, accompanied songs, mandolin solos, musical sketches, banjo solos, and musical monologues to a 'Ventriloquial Interlude with Belinda and Slavey' from Miss Amy Brook.

## L. R. B. AID SOCIETY.

### Comforts for the 1st Battalion whilst at the Front.

Permission has been granted by the Commanding Officer of the Reserve Battalion for a Committee to be formed to raise and administer funds for the purpose of providing tobacco, cigarettes, and necessaries such as socks, handkerchiefs, boot-laces, buttons, etc., for the Battalion now on active service.

The Committee asks all ranks of the Reserve Battalion to make this fund as widely known as possible so that the immediate friends of the Service Battalion, old members, and others interested, who may wish to subscribe, may have an opportunity of doing so.

Further information can be obtained from, and all remittances will be acknowledged by,

Major G. HARVEST.

2nd Lieut. F. FURZE (*Hon. Treasurer*).

Col.-Sergt. C. WHITTINGHAM.

Corpl. E. W. FULLER.

and Pte. G. S. PARKER (*Hon. Secretary*).



# BOHEMIAN CONCERT

## PROGR

It is particularly requested that SIL

The TATTOO will be sounded by the Drummers and Buglers of the Battalion.

1. OVERTURE .. .. . March "Blaze Away" .. .. . Holmann  
The L.R.B. AMATEUR ORCHESTRA.
2. SONG .. .. . "Jack Briton" .. .. . Squire  
Corp. L. H. WHITE.
3. SONG .. .. . "I'll make a Man of everyone of you" .. .. . Finch  
Miss RUBY WILSON.
4. SONG .. .. . "Follow me 'Ome" .. .. . Higgs  
Pte. R. J. OLLEY.
5. SONG .. .. . "I think" .. .. . Guy d'Hardelot  
Miss ANNIE BARTLE.
6. HUMOUROUS SONG .. .. . "Here we are again" .. .. . Charles Knight  
Pte. LEN FOWLER.
7. SONG .. .. . "The L. R. B." .. .. . Kennedy Russell  
Pte. W. R. MOIR.
8. SONGS AT THE PIANO .. .. . (a) "Florrie the Flapper" .. .. . Finch  
(b) "You're my Baby" .. .. . Ayer  
Miss DORIS CLAYTON.
9. SONG .. .. . "The Trumpeter" .. .. . Airlie Die  
L.-Corp. G. J. M. BEST.
10. SONG .. .. . "The Nightmare" (Iolanthe) .. .. . Sullivan  
Major J. GUPPY, T.D.
11. MANDOLINE SOLOS .. .. . (a) Selections from "Carmen" .. .. . Bizet  
(b) Intermezzo "Cavalleria Rusticana" .. .. . Mascagni  
Pte. E. H. MORLEY.  
as DOROTHY GEORGE.

God Save

LADIES WILL VERY GREATLY OB

Piano by Messrs. CRAMER & CO.

Accompanist ..

MR. MANSE

Fuller's Chocolates can be obtained.

SMOKING ALLOWE

This Programme is subject to alteration, but the Number of  
The Committee desire to tender their very grateful thanks to the profe

### Programme.

M J S. Lindsay

1. WALTZ .. .. . Nights of Gladness .. .. .
2. WALTZ .. .. . Mighty like a Rose .. .. .
3. LANCERS .. .. . Sunshine Girl .. .. .
4. WALTZ .. .. . Dreaming .. .. .
5. BARN DANCE Policeman's Holiday .. .. .
6. LA RINKA .. .. . The Only .. .. .
7. WALTZ COTILLON Eastern Nights .. .. .
8. TWO STEP .. .. . You're my Baby .. .. .
9. WALTZ .. .. . You, just You .. .. .
10. LANCERS .. .. . Reves of London .. .. .
11. WALTZ .. .. . Destiny .. .. .
12. MILITARY TWO STEP Blaze Away .. .. .
13. VALETA .. .. . Empire .. .. .
14. BARN DANCE You made me Love you .. .. .
15. LANCERS .. .. . Girl on the Film .. .. .
16. WALTZ .. .. . Songe d'Automne .. .. .
- Extras { 1. TWO STEP .. .. .
2. WALTZ .. .. .

THE ORCHESTRA IS COMPOSED ENTIRELY OF  
MEMBERS OF THE BATTALION.

BUGLE CALLS WILL BE SOUNDED BY  
SGT.-BUGLER C. VELLENOWETH.

Dance Card for Mr JS Lindsay

Note that he danced most dances, with a variety  
of young ladies.



# BOHEMIAN CONCERT

AMME. 20

NCE be observed during each Item.

13. MUSICAL SKETCH .. .. "Singers and Songs" .. .. L. Harris  
Pte. H. W. HARRIS.
14. SONG .. .. "Mandalay" .. .. Chas. Willeby  
Pte. W. E. PRITCHARD.
15. SELECTIONS ON THE BANJO.  
Miss DORRIE COURTNEY.
16. SONG .. .. "Nirvana" .. .. Stephen Adams  
Pte. FRED GANT.
17. VENTRILOQUIAL INTERLUDE WITH BELINDA THE SLAVEY.  
Miss AMY BROOK.
18. SONG .. .. "My Old Shako" .. .. Trotero  
Sergt. P. H. OTTAWAY.
19. SONGS .. .. (a) "The Call of the Motherland" .. .. Churchill Sibley  
.. .. (b) "My Dreams" .. .. Tosti  
Miss RUBY HELDER.
20. MUSICAL MONOLOGUE .. .. "How we saved the Barge" .. .. Hellier  
Corp. J. J. MORTIMORE.
21. SONG .. .. "Drake goes West" .. .. Sanderson  
Pte. H. LILLYWHITE.
22. SONG AT THE PIANO.  
Miss OLIVE TURNER.
23. SONG .. .. "Toreador" (Carmen) .. .. Bizet  
Pte. W. R. BABINGTON.
24. SONG AND CHORUS .. .. "All on account of Eliza" (Billie Taylor) .. .. Solomon  
Major J. GUPPY, T.D.

LAST POST by the Bu

the Ring.

LIGE BY REMOVING THEIR HATS.

LL STEVENS.

D AFTER 8 O'CLOCK.

f each Item will be displayed at the side of the Platform.

sional Lady Artistes, all of whom are giving their services gratuitously.

Dance Card for Miss M E Williams  
It appears she danced with JSL at least  
6 times during the evening.

Programme.

M Miss M E Williams

1. WALTZ ... .. Nights of Gladness
2. WALTZ ... .. Mighty like a Rose JSL
3. LANCERS ... .. Sunshine Girl KLS
4. WALTZ ... .. Dreaming
5. BARN DANCE Policeman's Holiday JSL
6. LA RINKA ... .. The Only KLS
7. WALTZ COTILLON Eastern Nights JSL
8. TWO STEP ... .. You're my Baby JSL
9. WALTZ ... .. You, just You JSL
10. LANCERS ... .. Revues of London
11. WALTZ ... .. Destiny KLS
12. MILITARY TWO STEP Blaze Away
13. VALETA ... .. Empire
14. BARN DANCE You made me Love you JSL
15. LANCERS ... .. Girl on the Film JSL
16. WALTZ ... .. Songe d'Automne JSL

Extras { 1. TWO STEP ... .. JSL  
2. WALTZ ... .. JSL

THE ORCHESTRA IS COMPOSED ENTIRELY OF  
MEMBERS OF THE BATTALION.

BUGLE CALLS WILL BE SOUNDED BY  
SGT.-BUGLER C. VELLENOWETH.