

A watercolor illustration of a rural scene. In the foreground, there is a green lawn with some grass. A wooden fence runs across the middle ground. Behind the fence is a house with a red-tiled roof and a green shuttered window. To the right of the house is a large barn with a thatched roof. The background shows more trees and a light blue sky. The text is overlaid on the illustration.

Paul Middleton

**The Art of
John
Seymour
Lindsay**

**THE
WATERCOLOURS**

The Art of John Seymour Lindsay

The Watercolours

Published by Paul Middleton
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Facts about this book

This copy of The Cartoons contains 38 paintings.

FOREWORD

JOHN SEYMOUR LINDSAY was a man of many parts, all of them fascinating, many of them important, some of them heroic.

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 (as we shall now call him) so special even in the context of the Great War. His age, his talent and his humility. He was born on 16 May 1882 in London. 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 a design studio in Adelphi, London. It was here that his talents developed. In the early 1900s 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.

But JSL had such a prodigious output in so many areas of art, both before, during and after the Great War. This second book of watercolours will be followed by his building sketches between 1905 and 1910, his wartime art between 1914 and 1919, his mastery of the pencil illustration between 1920 and 1966, his cartoons, his designs for Westminster Abbey and other London buildings and his amazing model making. As you will see, he was a true polymath.

His entry in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* can be found at the end of this book.

Paul Middleton 2013

Introduction

John Seymour Lindsay (JSL) showed a real talent for art throughout his life, and he expressed this talent in many art media. He was best known perhaps as a master of the pencil but it is clear that watercolour, with or without linework, was one of his favourites. Right up to the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, he carried with him at all times a little art kit of ink and watercolours, where he captured his mood. Most of his cartoons during this period were ink sketches with colourwash and are subject of a separate book. But when the mood took him he would produce the lovely creations with which we will become familiar in this chapter.

The subject matter varies enormously. His favourite subjects were houses in the south of England, but he experimented with, and enjoyed painting landscapes in various styles.

It has been difficult to date or locate some of the paintings as not all contain penciled information.

Chapter 1 Buildings

In my opinion, JSL's greatest skills were his draughtsmanship of buildings and his mastery of perspective. He combined these to perfection in the following paintings.





1902 Ashford Farm, Middlesex

(page 4) 15 May 1905 The Old Gaol, Steyning, West Sussex.



*The Old Rectory, Coombes, West Sussex (15th century).
Unknown date of painting.*



August 1910 Hotel Cecil from No.5 John Street, London WC1.



13 September 1906. Unknown location.



22 August 1918 This was painted just before JSL's Battalion moved from Aisne Barracks, Blackdown, Surrey to Newport in Monmouthshire to monitor the railway strike. Unknown location.